

THE BASSET TABLE

ACT I

4 am. A large, elegant hall.

~~A large Hall, a Porter with a Staff, several Chairs Waiting, and Footmen a-sleep, with Torches and Flambeauxs standing about the Room.~~

FOOTMAN. Certainly they'l Play all Night, this is a cursed Life.

* PORTER. How long have you liv'd with your Lady?

FOOTMAN. A Month, too long by thirty Days, if this be her way of living; I shall be dead before the Year's out; she Games all Night, and Sleeps all Day.

PORTER. As long as you sleep, what's Matter?

FOOTMAN. But I do not, for while she sleeps, I'm Employ'd in Howdee's, from one end of the Town to the other.

PORTER. But you rest while she's Gaming; What would you do, if you led my Life? This is my Lady's constant Practice.

FOOTMAN. Your Lady keeps a *Basset Table*, much good may it do you with your Service—Hark, they are broke up. (*Within.*) Ha, hy, my Lady *Gamewel's* Chair ready there—Mr. *Sonica's* Servant.¹ (*The Footmen wake in a hurry.*)

FIRST FOOTMAN. Where the Devil is my Flambeaux?

SECOND FOOTMAN. So-hey—*Robin*, get the Chair ready, my Lady's coming; stay, stay, let me light my Flambeaux.

THIRD FOOTMAN. (*Waking.*) Hey, hoa, what han't they done Play yet?

PORTER. They are now coming down, but your Lady is gone half an hour ago.

THIRD FOOTMAN. The Devil she is, why did you not call me?

PORTER. I did not see you.

¹ *Sonica* is the name in *basset* given to a card which arrives early and causes a player to win or lose, so the word came to mean immediately, at once. From Thomas Dyche, *Nouveau Dictionnaire Universel* (Avignon, 1756), II, 418.

THIRD FOOTMAN. Was you Blind?—She has lost her Money, that's certain—She never flinches upon a Winning-Hand—her Plate and Jewels Walks to Morrow to replenish her Pocket—a Pox of Gaming, I say. (*Exit.*)

~~(Within.) Mr. Looseall's Man—~~

Second FOURTH FOOTMAN. Here—So-ho, who has stole my Flambeaux?

First Footman, (Within.) My Lady Umbray's Coach there—¹

FIFTH FOOTMAN. Hey! Will, pull up there. (*Exeunt Omnes.*)

~~Enter Lady Reveller and Alpiew, her Woman—~~

LADY REVELLER. My Lady Raffle is horridly out of humour at her ill Fortune, she lost 300 l.

ALPIEW. She has generally ill-luck, yet her Inclination for Play is as strong as ever.—Did your Ladyship win, or lose, Madam?

LADY REVELLER. I won about 50 l.—prethee what shall we do, Alpiew? 'Tis a fine Morning, 'tis pity to go to Bed.

ALPIEW. What does your Ladyship think of a Walk in the Park?—

The Park is pleasant in a Morning, the Air is so very sweet.

LADY REVELLER. I don't think so; the sweetness of the Park is at Eleven, when the Beau Monde makes their Tour† there, 'tis an unpolish'd Curiosity to walk when only Birds can see one.

ALPIEW. Bless me, Madam! Your Uncle—now for a Sermon of two Hours.

~~Enter Sir Richard Plainman, in a Night-Gown as from Bed.~~

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. So Niece! I find you're resolv'd to keep on your course of Life; I must be wak'd at Four with Coach, Coach, Chair, Chair; give over for shame, and Marry, Marry, Niece.

LADY REVELLER. Now would I forfeit the Heart of my next Admirer, to know the cause of this Reproach. Pray, Uncle,

¹ Lady Umbray: probably pronounced Ombre, a popular trick-taking card game of the time.

explain† your self; for I protest I can't guess what Crime I have unhappily committed to merit this advice.

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. How can you look me in the Face, and ask me that Question? Can you that keep a Basset-Table, a publick Gaming-House, be insensible of the shame on't? I have often told you how much the vast concourse of People, which Day and Night make my House their Rendevouze, incommode my Health; your Apartment is a Parade for Men of all Ranks, from the Duke to the Fidler, and your Vanity thinks they all pay Devoir to your Beauty—but you mistake, every one has his several end in Meeting here, from the Lord to the Sharper, and each their separate Interest to ~~Admire†~~^{Pursue}—some Fools there may be, for there's seldom a crowd without.

LADY REVELLER. Malice—some Fools? I can't bear it.

ALPIEW. Nay, 'tis very affronting, truly Madam.

LADY REVELLER. Ay, is it not *Alpiew*?—Yet, now I think on't, 'tis the defect of Age to rail at the Pleasures of Youth, therefore I shall not disorder my Face with a frown about it. Ha, ha, I hope, Uncle you'll take peculiar care of my Cousin *Valeria*, in disposing of her according to the Breeding you have given her.

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. The Breeding I have given her! I would not have her have your Breeding, Mistress, for all the Wealth of *England's Bank*; no, I bred† my Girl in the Country, a stranger to the Vices of this Town, and am resolv'd to Marry her to a Man of Honour, Probity and Courage.

LADY REVELLER. What the Sea Captain, Uncle? Faugh, I hate the smell of Pitch and Tarr; one that can Entertain one with nothing but Fire and Smoak, Larboard and Starboard, and t'other Bowl of Punch, ha, ha, ha.

ALPIEW. And for every fault that she commits he'll condemn her to the Bilboes,¹ ha, ha.

LADY REVELLER. I fancy my Cousin's Philosophy, and the Captain's Couragious Bluster, will make Angelick Harmony.

¹ A moveable set of shackles, usually a long bar fastened to the ankles of prisoners and locked to the floor. In popular understanding this was often used for mutineers aboard ship.

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. Yes, Madam, sweeter Harmony than your ~~Sept & Leva~~[†] Fops, Rakes and Gamesters; give me the Man that serves my Country, that preserves both my Estate and Life—Oh, the glorious Name of Soldier; if I were Young, I'd go my self in Person, but as it is—

ALPIEW. You'll send your Daughter—

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. Yes, Minx, and a good Dowry with her, as a reward for Virtue like the Captains.

ALPIEW. But suppose, Sir, Mrs. *Valeria* should not like him?

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. I'll suppose no such thing, Mistress, she shall like him.

LADY REVELLER. Why, there 'tis now, indeed, Uncle, you're too positive.

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. And you too[†] Impertinent: Therefore I resolve ^{you shall} ~~to quit your~~ ^{my} House;† you shan't keep your Revels under the Roof where I am.²

ALPIEW. I'll have you to know, Sir, my Lady keeps no Revels beneath her Quality.

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. Hold your Tongue, Mrs. *Pert*, or I shall display your Quality in its proper Colours.

ALPIEW. I don't care, say your worst of me, and spare not; but for my Lady—my Lady's a Widdow, and Widdows are accountable to none for their Actions—Well, I shall have a Husband one of these days, and be a Widow too, I hope.

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. Not unlikely, for the Man will hang himself the next day, I warrant him.

ALPIEW. And if any, Uncle, pretends to controul my Actions—

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. He'd lose his labour, I'm certain—

ALPIEW. I'd treat him—

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. Don't provoke me, Houswife, don't.

LADY REVELLER. Be gone, and wait in the next Room.

(*Ex. Alpieu.*)

1 A term from *basset*, meaning to win on a card three times and receive seven times your stake.

2 This implies that Sir Richard is staying at Lady Reveller's house. A few lines further on in this scene the reverse is implied. The second edition determines the house is Sir Richard's and Lady Reveller is the guest.

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. The Insolence of a Servant is a great Honour to the Lady, no doubt; but I shall find a way to humble you both.

LADY REVELLER. Lookee, Unkle, do what you can, I'm resolv'd to follow my own Inclinations.

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. Which infallibly carries you to Noise, Nonsense, Foppery and Ruin; but no matter, you shall out of my Doors, I'll promise you, my House shall no longer bear the Scandalous Name of a *Basset Table*: Husbands shall no more have cause to date their Ruin from my Door, nor cry there, there my Wife Gam'd my Estate away—Nor Children Curse my Posterity, for their Parents knowing my House.

LADY REVELLER. No more threatening, good Unkle, act as you please, but don't scold, or I shall be oblig'd to call *Alpiew* again.

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. Very well, very well, see what will come on't; the World will censure those that Game, and, in my Conscience, I believe not without Cause.

For she whose Shame, no good Advice can wake,

When Money's wanting, will her Virtue Stake. (Exit.)

LADY REVELLER. Advice! Ha, ha, ridiculous Advice. (*Enter Lady Lucy.*) No sooner rid of one mischief, but another follows—I foresee this is to be a day of Mortification, *Alpiew*.

~~*Enter Alpiew.*~~

ALPIEW. Madam.

LADY REVELLER. My Uncle's gone, you may come in, ha, ha, ha.

LADY LUCY. Fye, Cousin, does it become you to Laugh at those that give you Council for your good?

LADY REVELLER. For my good! Oh, mon cour?¹ Now cannot I Divine what 'tis, that I do more than the rest of the World, to deserve this blame.

ALPIEW. Nor I, for the Soul of me.

¹ French, properly "mon coeur" meaning "my heart."

LADY LUCY. Shou'd all the rest of the World follow your Ladyship's Example, the order of Nature would be inverted, and every good, design'd by Heaven, become a Curse, Health and Plenty no longer would be known among us.—You cross the purpose of the Day and Night, you Wake when you should Sleep, and make all who have any dependence on you, Wake while you Repose.

LADY REVELLER. Bless me, may not any Person Sleep when they please?

LADY LUCY. No, there are certain Hours, that good Manners, Modesty and Health require your Care; for Example, disorderly Hours are neither Healthful nor Modest—And 'tis not Civil to make Company wait Dinner for your Dressing.

LADY REVELLER. Why, does any body Dine before four a Clock in *London*?¹ For my part I think it an Ill-bred Custom, to make my Appetite Pendulum to the Twelfth hour.

ALPIEW. Besides, 'tis out of Fashion to Dine by Day light, and so I told Sir *Richard* yesterday, Madam.

LADY LUCY. No doubt, but you did, Mrs. *Alpiew*; and then you entertain such a Train of People, Cousin, that my Lady *Reveller*² is as noted as a publick Ordinary,^{house} where every Fool with Money finds a Welcome.

LADY REVELLER. Would you have me shut my doors against my Friends—Now she is jealous of Sir *James Courtly*. (*Aside*.) Besides, is it possible to pass the Evenings without Diversions.

ALPIEW. No certainly—

LADY LUCY. I think the Play-house, the much more innocent and commendable Diversion.

LADY REVELLER. To be seen there every Night, in my Opinion, is more destructive to the Reputation.

LADY LUCY. Well, I had rather be noted every Night in the front Box, then, by my absence, once be suspected of Gaming; one

1 The *Tatler* for 14 December 1710 notes that later rising and dinning times were fashionable in London. This mode of modern life found the older generation "all of them fast asleep at the same hours that their daughters are busy at crimp and basset."

2 An Ordinary was an inn with meals provided at a fixed price. During this period at expensive ordinaries "dinner was usually followed by gambling; hence the term was often used as synonymous with gambling-house" (*OED*).

ruins my Estate and Character, the other diverts my Temper, and improves my Mind. Then you have such a number of Lovers.

LADY REVELLER. Oh *Cupid*, is it a Crime to have a number of Lovers? If it be, 'tis the pleasantest Crime in the World. A Crime that falls not every day, to every Woman's Lot.

LADY LUCY. I dare be positive every Woman does not wish it.

LADY REVELLER. Because wishes have no Effect, Cousin, ha, ha.

LADY LUCY. Methinks my Lord *Worthy's* Assiduity might have banish'd the admiring Crowd† by this time.

LADY REVELLER. Banish'd 'em? Oh, Mon cour! what pleasure is there in one Lover; 'tis like being seen always in one Suit of Cloaths; a Woman, with one Admirer, will ne'er be a Reigning Toast.

LADY LUCY. I am sure those that Encourage more, will never have the Character of a Reigning Virtue.

LADY REVELLER. I slight the malicious Censure of the Town, yet defy it to asperse my Vertue; Nature has given me a Face, a Shape, a Mein,^r an Air for Dress, and Wit and Humour to subdue. And shall I lose my Conquest for a Name.

ALPIEW. Nay, and among the unfashionable sort of People too, Madam; for Persons of Breeding and Quality will allow that Gallantry and Virtue are not inseparable.

LADY LUCY. But Coquetry and Reputation are, and there is no difference† in the Eye of the World, between having really committed the Fault, and lying under the Scandal; for, my own part, I would take as much Care to preserve my Fame, as you would your Virtue.

LADY REVELLER. A little pains well serve you for that, Cousin; for I never once heard you nam'd—A Mortification would break my Heart, ha, ha.

LADY LUCY. 'Tis better never to be nam'd, than to be ill spoke of; but your Reflections shall not Disorder my Temper. I could wish, indeed, to convince you of your Error, because you share my Blood; but since I see the Vanity of the attempt, I shall desist.

r Mien; a look or bearing that reveals character.

LADY REVELLER. I humbly thank your Ladiship.

ALPIEW. Oh! Madam, here's my Lord *Worthy*, Sir *James Courtly*, and Ensign *Lovely*, coming down; will your Ladyship see them?

LADY REVELLER. Now have I a strong Inclination to Engage Sir *James*, to discompose her Gravity; for if I have any Skill in Glances, she loves him—but then my Lord *Worthy* is so peevish since our late Quarrel, that I'm afraid to Engage the Knight in a Duel; besides, my Absence, I know, will ~~teize~~ *tease* him more, therefore, upon Consideration, I'll retire, Cousin *Lucy*; Good Morrow. I'll leave you to better Company, there's a Person at hand may prevent your Six-a-Clock Prayers. (*Exit.*)

LADY LUCY. Ha! Sir *James Courtly*—I must own I think him agreeable—but am sorry she believes I do. I'll not be seen; for if what I scarce know my self be grown so visible to her, perhaps, he too may Discover it, and then I am lost.

*While in the Breast our Secrets close remain,
'Tis out of Fortunes power to give us Pain.* (*Exit.*)

~~Enter Lord *Worthy*, Sir *James*, Ensign *Lovely*.†~~

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Ha! was not that Lady *Lucy*?

ENSIGN LOVELY. It was—ah, Sir *James*, I find your Heart is out of Order about that Lady, and my Lord *Worthy* languishes for Lady *Reveller*.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. And thou art sick for *Valeria*, Sir *Richard's* Daughter. A poor distressed Company of us.

ENSIGN LOVELY. 'Tis true, that little she-Philosopher has made me do Penance more heartily than ever my sins did; I deserve her by meer Dint of Patience. I have stood whole hours to hear her Assert that Fire cannot Burn, nor Water Drown, nor Pain Afflict, and forty ridiculous Systems—

SIR JAMES COURTLY. And all her Experiments on Frogs, Fish—and Flies, ha, ha, ha, without the least Contradiction.†

ENSIGN LOVELY. Contradiction, no, no, I allow'd all she said with undoubtedly, Madam,—I am of your mind, Madam, it must be so—natural Causes, &c.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Ha, ha, ha, I think it is a supernatural cause which Enables thee to go thro' this Fatigue, if it were not to raise thy Fortune, I should think thee Mad to pursue her; but go on and prosper, nothing in my Power shall be wanting to assist you—My Lord *Worthy*—your Lordship is as Melancholy as a losing Gamester.

LORD WORTHY. Faith Gentlemen, I'm out of Humour, but I don't know at what.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Why then I can tell you, for the very same reason that made your Lordship stay here to be Spectator of the very Diversion you hate—Gaming—the same Cause makes you uneasy in all Company, my Lady *Reveller*.

LORD WORTHY. Thou hast hit it, *James*, I confess I love her Person, but hate her Humours, and her way of Living; I have some reasons to believe I'm not indifferent to her, yet I despair of fixing her, her Vanity has got so much the Mistress of her Resolution; and yet her Passion for Gain surmounts her Pride, and lays her Reputation open to the World. Every Fool that has ready Money, shall dare to boast himself her very humble Servant; 'ds Death, when I could cut the Rascal's Throat.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Your Lordship is even with her one Way, for you are as testy as she's vain, and as fond of an opportunity to Quarrel with her, as she of a Gaming Acquaintance; my Opinion is, my Lord, she'll ne're be won your Way.

*To gain all Women there's a certain Rule,
If Wit should fail to please, then Act the Fool;
And where you find simplicity not take,
Throw off Disguises—and Profess the Rake;
Observe which Way their chiefest Humours run,
They're by their own lov'd Cant the surest Way undone.*

LORD WORTHY. Thou'rt of a happy temper, Sir *James*, I wish I could be so too; but since I can't add to your Diversion, I'll take my leave, good Morrow, Gentlemen. (*Exit.*)

SIR JAMES COURTLY. This it is to have more Love than Reason about one; you and I *Lovely* will go on with Discretion, and yet I fear it's in Lady *Lucy's* Power to banish it.

ENSIGN LOVELY. I find Mrs. *Sago*, the Drugster's Wife's Interest, begins to shake, Sir *James*.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. And I fear her Love for Play begins to shake her Husband's Baggs too—faith, I am weary of that Intrigue,† lest I should be suspected to have a hand in his Ruin.

prthee ~~preethy~~, Sir James, what kind of a temper'd Woman is she? Has she Wit?

SIR JAMES COURTLY. That she has—A large Portion, and as much Cunning, or she could never have manag'd the old Fellow so nicely; she has a vast Passion for my Lady *Reveller*, and endeavours to mimick her in every thing—Not a sute of Cloaths, or a Top-knot,¹ that is not exactly the same with hers—then her Plots and Contrivances to supply these Expences, puts her continually upon the Rack; yet to give her her due, she has a fertile Brain that Way; but come, shall we go home and sleep two or three Hours, at Dinner I'll introduce you to Capt. *Hearty*, the Sea Officer, your Rival that is to be, he's just come to Town.

ENSIGN LOVELY. A powerful Rival, I fear, for Sir *Richard* resolves to Marry him to his Daughter; all my hopes lie† in her Arguments, and you know Philosophers are very positive—and if this Captain does but happen to Contradict one Whimsical Notion, the Poles will as soon join, as they Couple, and rather then yield, she would go to the Indies in search of *Dampier's Ants*.²

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Nay, she is no Woman if she Obeys.
*Women like Tides with Passions Ebb and Flow,
And like them too, their source no Man can know.
To watch their Motions, is the safest Guide,
Who hits their Humour, Sails with Wind and Tide. (Exit.)*

~~The End of the First ACT.~~

1 A ribbon worn on the top of the head.

2 William Dampier (1652-1715) published several accounts of voyages to the West Indies, with observations of the natural environment, including ants.

ACT II

~~Enter Buckle, meeting Mrs. Alpiew.~~

ALPIEW. Good Morrow.

BUCKLE. Good Morrow.

ALPIEW. Good Morrow, good Morrow, is that all your business here; What means that Affected Look, as if you long'd to be examin'd what's the Matter.

BUCKLE. The Capricio's of Love, *Madamoselle*; the Capricio's of Love.

ALPIEW. Why—are you in Love?

BUCKLE. I—in Love! No, the Devil take me if ever I shall be infected with that Madness, 'tis enough for one in a Family to Fall under the whimsical Circumstances of that Distemper. My Lord has a sufficient Portion for both; ~~here~~—here—here's a Letter for your Lady, I believe the Contents are not so full of Stars and Darts, and Flames, as they us'd to be.

ALPIEW. My Lady will not concern her self with your Lord, nor his Letters neither, I can assure you that.

BUCKLE. So much the better, I'll tell him what you say—Have you no more?

ALPIEW. Tell him it is not my fault, I have done as much for his Service, as lay in my Power, till I put her in so great a Passion, 'tis impossible to Appease her.

BUCKLE. Very good—my Lord is upon the Square, I promise ye, as much intraged as her Ladiship to the full. Well, Mrs. *Alpiew*, to the longest Day of his Life he swears, never to forget Yesterday's Adventure, that's given him perfect, perfect Liberty.

ALPIEW. I believe so—What was it, pray?

BUCKLE. I'll tell you; 'twas a matter of Consequence, I assure you, I've known Lovers part for a less Trifle by half.

ALPIEW. No Digressions,† but to the point, what was it?

BUCKLE. This—my Lord, was at the Fair with your Lady.

ALPIEW. What of that?

BUCKLE. In a Raffling-shop¹ she saw a young Gentleman, which she said was very handsome†—At the same time, my Lord, prais'd a young Lady; she redoubles her Commendations of the Beau—He enlarges on the Beauty of the Bell; their Discourse grew warm on the subject; they Pause; she begins again with the Perfections of the Gentleman; he ends with the same of the Lady; Thus they pursu'd† their Arguments, still finding such mighty Charms in their new Favourites, till they found one another so Ugly—so Ugly—that they parted with full Resolutions never to meet again.

ALPIEW. Ha, ha, ha, pleasant; well, if you have no more to tell me, adieu.

BUCKLE. Stay a Moment, I see my Lord coming, I thought he'd follow me. Oh, Lovers Resolutions—

~~Enter Lord Worthy.~~

LORD WORTHY. So, have you seen my Lady Reveller? (*To Buckle.*)

ALPIEW. My Lord—

LORD WORTHY. Ha! Mrs. *Alpiew*.

BUCKLE. There's your Lordship's Letter. (*Gives him his own Letter.*)

LORD WORTHY. An Answer! She has done me very much Honour.

ALPIEW. My Lord, I am commanded—

LORD WORTHY. Hold a little, dear Mrs. *Alpiew*. (*All this while he is opening the Letter, thinking it from the Lady.*)

BUCKLE. My Lord, she would not—

LORD WORTHY. Be quiet, I say—

ALPIEW. I am very sorry—

LORD WORTHY. But a moment—Ha, why, this is my own Letter.

¹ A place where the gentry might play raffle, a dice game; *The Tatler* 59, 23-25 August 1709, is stern on the appearance of a raffling-shop at Hampstead. Edward Ward records one in *The London Spy* (London, 1703), I, 265.

BUCKLE. Yes, my Lord.

LORD WORTHY. Yes, my Lord—what, she'd not receive it then?

BUCKLE. No my Lord.

LORD WORTHY. How durst you stay so long.

ALPIEW. I beg your Lordship not to harbour an ill Opinion of me, I opposed her anger with my utmost Skill, prais'd all your Actions, all your Parts, but all in Vain.

LORD WORTHY. Enough, Enough, Madam, she has taken the best method in the World—Well, then we are ne'er to meet again?

ALPIEW. I know not that, my Lord—

LORD WORTHY. I am over-joy'd at it, by my Life I am, she has only prevented me; I came a purpose to break with her—

BUCKLE. (*Aside.*) Yes, so 'twas a sign by the pleasure you discover'd, in thinking she had writ to you.

LORD WORTHY. I suppose, she has entertain'd you with the Cause of this?

ALPIEW. No, my Lord, never mention'd a Syllable, only said, she had for ever done with you; and charg'd me, as I valued her favour, to receive no Message nor Letter, from you.

LORD WORTHY. May I become the very'st Wretch alive, and all the Ills imaginable† fall upon my Head, if I speak to her more; nay, ever think of her but with Scorn—Where is she now? (*Walks about.*)

ALPIEW. In her Dressing-room.

LORD WORTHY. There let her be, I am weary of her fantastick Humours, affected Airs, and unaccountable Passions.

BUCKLE. For half an Hour. (*Aside.*)

LORD WORTHY. Do you know what she's a doing?

ALPIEW. I believe, my Lord, trying on a ^{gown} Mantua;[†] I left her with Mrs. Pleatwell, and that us'd to hold her a great while; for the Woman is saucily Familiar with all the ~~Quality~~ ^{Rumors,} and tells her all the Scandal.

† A mantua was a loose gown without stays.

LORD WORTHY. And conveys Letters upon occasion; 'tis tack'd to their Professions¹—But, my Lady *Reveller* may do what she pleases, I am no more her Slave, upon my Word; I have broke my Chain—She has not been out then since she Rose?

ALPIEW. No, my Lord.

LORD WORTHY. Nay, if she has, or has not, 'tis the same thing to me; she may go to the end of the World, if she will; I shan't take any pains to follow her—Whose Footman was that I met?

ALPIEW. I know not, my Lord, we have so many come with How-dee's, I ne'er mind them.

LORD WORTHY. You are uneasy, Child, come, I'll not detain you, I have no curiosity, I protest I'm satisfied if she's so, I assure ye, let her despise me, let her hate me, 'tis all one, adieu.
(*Going.*)

ALPIEW. My Lord, your Servant.

LORD WORTHY. Mrs. *Alpiew*, let me beg one favour of you,
(*Turns back.*) not to say I was here.

ALPIEW. I'll do just as you please, my Lord.

LORD WORTHY. Do that then, and you'll oblige me. (*Is going, and comes back often.*)†

ALPIEW. I will.

LORD WORTHY. Don't forget.

ALPIEW. Your Lordship may depend upon me.

LORD WORTHY. Hold, now I think on't—Pray tell her you did see me, do you hear?

ALPIEW. With all my Heart.

LORD WORTHY. Tell her how indifferent she is to me in every respect.

ALPIEW. I shan't fail.

LORD WORTHY. Tell her every thing, just as I exprest it to you.

ALPIEW. I will.

1 "Tacked" here is a metaphor for the seamstress's double function as needlewoman and courier. There may be a further, political allusion, as in 1704 high-church Anglicans and Tories tried to tack a bill to suppress Occasional Conformity (where dissenters qualified for office by taking occasional communion within the Anglican church) onto the Land Tax Bill. The move was defeated, but tacking was regarded as a devious or underhanded activity.

LORD WORTHY. Adieu. (*Going.*)

ALPIEW. Your Servant.

LORD WORTHY. Now, I think on't Mrs. *Alpiew*, I have a great mind she shou'd know my Sentiments from my own Mouth.

ALPIEW. Nay, my Lord, I can't promise you that.

LORD WORTHY. Why?

ALPIEW. Because she has expresly forbid your admittance.

LORD WORTHY. I'd speak but one Word with her.

ALPIEW. Impossible.

LORD WORTHY. Pugh, prethee do, let me see her. (*Intreating Mrs Alpiew.*)

BUCKLE. So now, all this mighty rage ends in a begging Submission.

LORD WORTHY. Only tell her I'm here.

ALPIEW. Why should you desire me to meet her Anger, my Lord?

LORD WORTHY. Come, you shall oblige me once. (*Puts a Ring upon her Finger.*)

ALPIEW. Oh, dear, my Lord, you have such a command over your Servant, I can refuse nothing. (*Exit.*)

LORD WORTHY. Have you been at the Goldsmiths about the Bills, for I am fix'd on Travelling.

BUCKLE. Your Lordship's so disturb'd, you have forgot you Countermanded me, and send me hither.

LORD WORTHY. True.

~~Enter Mrs. Alpiew.~~

ALPIEW. Just as I told your Lordship, she fell in a most violent Passion, at the bare mention of your Name; tell him, said she, in a heroick Strain, I'll never see him more, and command him to quit that Room, 'cause I'm coming to't.

LORD WORTHY. Tyrant, curse on my Follies, she knows her Power; well, I hope, I may walk in the Gallery; I would speak with her Uncle.

ALPIEW. To be sure, my Lord. (*Exit Lord Worthy.*)

BUCKLE. Learn, Mistress, learn, you may come to make me Mad in time, ha, ha, ha.

ALPIEW. Go Fool, follow your Lord. (*Exit. Buckle.*)

Enter Lady Reveller.

LADY REVELLER. Well, I'll swear, *Alpiew*, you have given me the Vapours for all Day.

ALPIEW. Ah! Madam, if you had seen him, you must have had Compassion: I would not have such a Heart of Adamant for the World; poor Lord, sure you have the strangest Power over him.

LADY REVELLER. Silly—one often Fancies one has Power, when one has none at all; I'll tell thee *Alpiew*, he vex'd me strangely before this grand Quarrel; I was at *Picquet*¹ with my Lady *Love-Witt* four Nights ago, and bid him read me a new Copy of Verses, because, you know, he never Plays, and I did not well know what to do with him; he had scarce begun, when I being eager at a Pique, he rose up and said, he believ'd I love'd the Musick of my own Voice, crying Nine and Twenty, Threescore, better than the sweetest Poetry in the Universe, and abruptly left us.

ALPIEW. A great Crime, indeed, not to read when People are at a Game they are oblig'd to talk to all the while.

LADY REVELLER. Crime, yes, indeed was it, for my Lady loves Poetry better than Play, and perhaps before the Poem had been done had lost her Money to me. But, I wonder, *Alpiew*, by what Art 'tis you engage me in this Discourse, why shou'd I talk of a Man that's utterly my Aversion—Have you heard from Mrs. *Sago* this Morning?

ALPIEW. Certainly, Madam, she never fails; she has sent your Ladship the finest Cargo made up of Chocolate, Tea, Montifiasco Wine, and 50 Rarities beside, with something to remember me, good Creature, that she never forgets. Well, indeed Madam, she is the best natur'd Woman in the World; it grieves me to think what Sums she loses at Play.

¹ A card game for two players, where players score points for runs, sets, and taking tricks. Lady Reveller's excitement about scoring "nine-and-twenty, threescore" suggests that she scored a *repique*, where reaching thirty before your opponent scores brings you an extra sixty points, and probably the game.

LADY REVELLER. Oh fye, she must, a Citizen's Wife is not to be endur'd amongst Quality; had she not Money, 'twere impossible to receive her—

ALPIEW. Nay, indeed, I must say that of you Women of Quality, if there is but Money enough, you stand not upon Birth or Reputation, in either Sex; if you did, so many Sharpers of *Covent-Garden*, and Mistresses of *St. James's* would not be daily admitted.

LADY REVELLER. Peace, Impertinence, you take strange Freedoms. (*Enter Valeria† running.*) Why in such hast Cousin Valeria. (*Stopping her.*)

VALERIA. Oh! dear Cousin, don't stop me, I shall lose the finest Insect for Desection, a huge Flesh Fly, which Mr. *Lovely* sent me just now, and opening the Box to try the Experiment away it flew.

LADY REVELLER. I am glad the poor Fly escap'd; will you never be weary of these Whimsies?

VALERIA. Whimsies! natural Philosophy† a Whimsy! Oh, the unlearn'd World.

LADY REVELLER. Ridiculous Learning?

ALPIEW. Ridiculous, indeed, for Women; Philosophy suits† our Sex, as Jack Boots¹ would do.

VALERIA. Custom would bring them as much in Fashion as ~~Fur Collars~~ ^{Fur Collars} ~~Embroiders~~², and Practice would make us as Valiant as e're a Hero of them all; the Resolution is in the Mind,—Nothing can enslave that.

LADY REVELLER. My Stars! this Girl will be Mad, that's certain.

VALERIA. Mad! so *Nero* Banish'd Philosophers from *Rome*, and the first Discoverer of the *Antipodes* was Condemn'd for a Heretick.³

LADY REVELLER. In my Conscience, *Alpiew*, this pritty Creature's spoil'd. Well, Cousin, might I Advise, you should bestow your Fortune in Founding a College for the Study of Philosophy, wherè none but Women should be admitted, and

1 Long military boots, usually worn by cavalry soldiers.

2 Ornamental flounces on a dress or petticoat.

3 Nero (ca. 15-68), the Roman emperor, was celebrated in Nathaniel Lee's *The Tragedy of Nero* (1675). He was responsible for Seneca's death, after the latter's rebellion.

to Immortalize your Name, they should be call'd *Valerians*,
ha, ha, ha.¹

VALERIA. What you make a Jest of, I'de Execute, were Fortune
in my Power.

ALPIEW. All Men would not be Excluded, the handsome† Ensign,
Madam.

LADY REVELLER. In Love? Nay, there's no Philosophy against
Love, ~~Solo~~ for that?

VALERIA. Pisha, no more of this Triffling Subject; Cousin, will
you believe there's any thing without ~~God~~ soul?

LADY REVELLER. I am satisfy'd I have one, when I lose at
Play, or see a Lady Address when I am by, and 'tis equal to me,
whether the rest of Creation have or not.

VALERIA. Well, but I'le convince you then, I have dissected my
Dove—and positively I think the Vulgar Notion true, for I
could find none.

LADY REVELLER. Oh, Barbarous; kill'd your pritty Dove! (*Starting.*)

VALERIA. Kill'd it! Why, what did you Imagine I bred it up for?
Can Animals, Insects or Reptils, be put to a Noble use, than
to improve our Knowledge? Cousin, I'll give you this Jewel
for your *Italian* Grey-hound.

LADY REVELLER. What, to Cut to Pieces? Oh, horrid! he had
need be a Soldier that ventures on you, for my part, I should
Dream of nothing but Incision, Dissection and amputation,
and always fancy the Knife at my Throat.

~~Enter Servant.~~

* SERVANT. Madam, here's Sir *Richard*, and a—

VALERIA. A—What, is it an Accident, a Substance, a Material
Being, or, a Being of Reason?

SERVANT. I don't know what you call a Material Being; it is a Man.

VALERIA. P'sha, a Man, that's nothing.

1 This is a mocking reference to Mary Astell's suggestion in *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies* (1694); see Appendix A1.

2 Solon (ca. 638–558 BCE) was an Athenian lawmaker who also wrote love poetry.

LADY REVELLER. She'll prove by and by out of *Descartes*,¹ that we are all Machines.¹

~~(Enter Sir Richard, and Capt. Firebrand.)²~~

ALPIEW. Oh, Madam, do you see who observes you? My Lord walking in the Gallery, and every Minute gives a Peep.

LADY REVELLER. Does he so? I'll fit him for Eves-dropping—

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. Sir, I like the Relation you have given me of your Naval Expedition, your Discourse speaks you a Man fit for the Sea.

CAPTAIN HEARTY. You had it without a flourish, Sir *Richard*, my Word is this, I hate the *French*, Love a handsome Woman, and a Bowl of Punch.

VALERIA. Very Blunt.

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. This is my Daughter, Captain, a Girl of sober Education; she understands nothing of Gaming, Parks and Plays.

ALPIEW. But wanting these Diversions, she has supply'd the Vacancy with greater Follies. (*Aside.*)

CAPTAIN HEARTY. A Tite little Frigate, (*Salutes her*) Faith, I think, she looks like a freshman Sea-Sick—but here's a Gallant Vessel—with all her Streamers out, Top and Top Gallant³—with your leave, Madam, (*Salutes her*) who is that Lady, Sir *Richard*?

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. 'Tis a Niece of mine, Captain—tho' I am sorry she is so, she values nothing that does not spend their days at their Glass, and their Nights at *Basset*, such who ne'er did good to their Prince, nor Country, except their Taylor, ~~Peruke~~^{wig}-maker,⁴ and Perfumer.

- 1 René Descartes (1596–1650), philosopher. One of his central arguments was that the mind and body were distinct entities, and that animals were only mechanical beings, without a soul; see his “Letters to Henry More,” *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, ed. Cottingham, Stoothoff, Murdoch, and Kenny (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991), III, 365–66.
- 2 Actually Captain Hearty. This textual “slip” suggests that this figure began life as an allusion to Farquhar’s sea captain Fireball in *Sir Harry Wildair* (1671), played by Johnson, who acted Sago in *The Basset Table*.
- 3 Captain Hearty uses nautical terms to describe Lady Reveller, comparing the ribbons placed high in her hair or wig to sails on the highest point of the topmast.
- 4 Wig maker.

LADY REVELLER. Fy, fy, Sir, believe him not, I have a Passion, an extream Passion, for a Hero—especially if he belongs to the Sea; methinks he has an Air so Fierce, so Piercing, his very Looks commands Respect from his own Sex, and all the Hearts of ours.

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. The Divel—Now, rather than let another Female have a Man to her self, she'll make the first Advances. (*Aside.*)

CAPTAIN HEARTY. Ay, Madam, we are preferr'd by you fine Ladies sometimes before the sprucer Sparks—there's a Conveniency in't; a fair Wind, and we hale out, and leave you Liberty and Money, two things the most acceptable to a Wife in Nature.

LADY REVELLER. Oh! ay, it is so pretty to have one's Husband gone Nine Months of the Twelve, and then to bring one home fine China, fine Lace, fine Muslin, and fine Indian Birds, and a thousand Curiosities.

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. No, no, Nine is a little too long, six would do better for one of your Constitution, Mistress.†

CAPTAIN HEARTY. Well, Madam, what think you of a cruising Voyage towards the Cape of Matrimony, your Father designs me for the Pilot, if you agree to it, we'll hoist Sail immediately.

VALERIA. I agree with any thing dictated by good Sense, and comprehended within the Borders of Elocution. The ~~conversing~~ *conversing* I hold with your Sex is only to improve and cultivate the Notions of my Mind.

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. What the Devil is she going upon now? (*Aside.*)

VALERIA. I presume you're† a Mariner, Sir—

CAPTAIN HEARTY. I have the Honour to bear the Queen's Commission, Madam.

VALERIA. Pray, speak properly, positively, Laconically and Naturally.

LADY REVELLER. So she has given him a Broadside already.

CAPTAIN HEARTY. Laconically? Why, why, what is your Daughter? Sir *Richard*, ha.

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. May I be redue'd to Wooden-Shoes, if I can tell you, the Devil;¹ had I liv'd near a College, the Haunts of some Pedant† might have brought this Curse upon me; but to have got my Estate in the City, and to have a Daughter run Mad after Philosophy, I'll ne'er suffer it in the rage I am in, I'll throw all the Books and Mathematical Instruments out of the Window.

LADY REVELLER. I dare say, Uncle, you have shook hands with Philosophy—for I am sure you have banish'd Patience, ha, ha, ha.

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. And you Discretion—By all my hatred for the *French*, they'll drive me Mad; Captain, I'll expect you in the next Room, and you Mrs. *Laconick*, with your Philosophy at your Tail. (*Exit.*)

LADY REVELLER. Shan't I come too, Uncle, ha, ha.

CAPTAIN HEARTY. By *Neptune*, this is a kind of a whimsical Family; well, Madam, what was you going to say to positively and properly, and so forth?

VALERIA. I would have ask'd you, Sir, if ever you had the curiosity to inspect a Mermaid—Or if you are convinc'd there is a World in every Star²—We, by our Telliscopes, find Seas, Groves and Plains, and all that; but what they are Peopled with, there's the Query.³

CAPTAIN HEARTY. Let your next Contrivance be how to get thither, and then you'll know a World in every Star—
Ha, ha, she's fitter for ~~the world~~⁴ than Matrimony, pray,
mental halls

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- 1 A political reference indicating Sir Richard Plainman's hatred of the French. Clogs or wooden shoes were an emblem of French slavery, and were carried in electoral processions and protests in the early 1700s; see the Whig newspaper, *The Flying Post*, 30 October 1714.
 - 2 A reference perhaps to John Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667), Book 7, lines 621–22: "every star perhaps a world/ Of destined habitation."
 - 3 This was a hotly debated scientific question of the period, popularized by Bernard de Fontenelle's *A Discourse on the Plurality of Worlds* (1686), aimed at a female readership and was translated by Aphra Behn as *A Discovery of New Worlds* (1688). Centlivre wrote a poem in the front of Anne Oldfield's copy of Behn's translation.
 - 4 Hospital for the mentally ill, London. The Hospital of St. Mary's Bethlehem, or Bedlam, the only hospital in England for the mentally ill, was relocated to a purpose-built structure in Moorfields in 1675. To recoup costs it charged an entrance fee for visitors to view the inmates.

Madam, are you always infected, full and change, with this Distemper?

VALERIA. How has my reason err'd, to hold converse with an irrational Being—Dear, dear Philosophy, what immense pleasures dwell in thee!

~~Enter Servant.~~

* SERVANT. Madam, *John*, has got the Fish you sent him in search of.
VALERIA. Is it alive?

SERVANT. Yes, Madam.

VALERIA. Your Servant, your Servant, I would not lose the Experiment for any thing, but the tour of the new World.
(*Exit.*)

CAPTAIN HEARTY. Ha, ha, ha, is your Ladship troubled with these Vagaries too; is the whole House possess'd?

LADY REVELLER. Not I, Captain, the speculative faculty is not my Talent; I am for the practick, can listen† all Day, to hear you talk of Fire, substantial Fire, Rear and Front, and Line of Battle—admire a Seaman, hate the *French*—love a Bowl of Punch? Oh, nothing so agreeable as your Conversation, nothing so Jaunty as a Sea Captain.

ALPIEW. So this engages him to Play,—If he has either Manners or Money. (*Aside.*)

CAPTAIN HEARTY. Ay, give me the Woman that can hold me tack in my own Dialect—She's Mad too, I suppose, but I'll humour her a little. (*Aside.*) Oh, Madam, not a fair Wind, nor a rich Prize, nor Conquest o're my Enemies, can please like you; accept my Heart without Capitulation—'Tis yours, a Prisoner at Discretion. (*Kisses her Hand.*)

~~Enter Lord Worthy.~~

LORD WORTHY. Hold, Sir, you must there contend with me; the Victory is not so easy as you imagine.

LADY REVELLER. Oh fye, my Lord, you won't fight for one you hate and despise? I may trust you with the Captain, ha, ha, ha. (*Exit.*)

CAPTAIN HEARTY. This must be her Lover—And he is Mad another way; this is the most unaccountable Family I ever met with. (*Aside.*) Lookye, Sir, what you mean by contending I know not; but I must tell you, I don't think any Woman I have seen since I came ashoar worth Fighting for. The Philosophical ~~Gimcrack~~^{nick knack} I don't value of a Cockle Shell—And am too well acquainted with the danger of Rocks and Quick-sands to steer into t'others Harbour.

LORD WORTHY. He has discover'd her already; I, only I, am blind. (*Aside.*)

CAPTAIN HEARTY. But, Sir, if you have a mind to a Breathing, here tread upon my Toe, or speak but one Word in favour of the *French*, or against the Courage of our Fleet, and my Sword will start of its self, to do its Master, and my Country, Justice.

LORD WORTHY. How ridiculous do I make my self—Pardon me, Sir, you are in the right. I confess I scarce knew what I did.

CAPTAIN HEARTY. I thought so, poor Gentleman, I pity him; this is the effect of Love on shoar—When do we hear of a Tarr in these fits, longer then the first fresh Gale—Well, I'll into Sir *Richard*. Eat with him, Drink with him: but to Match into his Generation, I'd as soon Marry one of his Daughters Mermaids. (*Exit.*)

LORD WORTHY. Was ever Man so stupid as my self? But I will rouse from this Lethargick Dream, and seek elsewhere what is deny'd at home, absence may restore my Liberty.

~~Enter Mr. Sago.~~

MR. SAGO. Pray, my Lord, did you see my *Keecky*?²

LORD WORTHY. *Keecky*, what's that?

MR. SAGO. My Wife, you must know, I call her *Keecky*, ha, ha.

LORD WORTHY. Not I, indeed—

MR. SAGO. Nay, pray my Lord, ben't angry, I only want her, to tell her what a Present of fine Wine is sent her just now; and

¹ "A showy, unsubstantial thing ... a knick-knack" (*OED*); also, a theatrical reference to Sir Nicholas Gimcrack, the crazed philosopher of Thomas Shadwell's *The Virtuoso* (1676).

² An affectionate term from keek, to peep, used by children in hide and seek, "keek-bo."

ha, ha, ha, ha, what makes me Laugh—Is that, no Soul can tell from whence it comes.

LORD WORTHY. Your Wife knows, no doubt.

MR. SAGO. No more than my self, my Lord—We have often Wine and Sweetmeats; nay, whole pieces of Silk, and the duce take me, if she could devise from whence; nay, sometimes she has been for sending them back again, but I cry'd, whose a Fool then—

LORD WORTHY. I'm sure thou art one in perfection, and to me insupportable. (*Going.*)

MR. SAGO. My Lord, I know your Lordship has the Priviledge of this House, pray do me the Kindness if you find my Wife to send her out to me. (*Exit Lord.*)

I ne'er saw so much of this Lord's Humour before; he is very Surly Methinks—Adod' there are some Lords of my Wives Acquaintance, as Civil and Familiar with me, as I am with my Journeyman—Oh! here she comes.

~~Enter Mrs. Sago and Alpiew.~~

MRS. SAGO. Oh Puddy,² see what my Lady *Reveller* has presented me withal.

MR. SAGO. Hey Keecky, why sure you Rise—as the saying is, for at Home there's Four Hampers of Wine sent ye.

MRS. SAGO. From whence, Dear Puddy?

MR. SAGO. Nay, there's the Jest, neither you nor I know. I offer'd the Rogue that brought it a Guinea to tell from whence it came, and he Swore he durst not.

MRS. SAGO. No, if he had I'd never have Employ'd him again. (*Aside.*)

MR. SAGO. So I gave him Half a Crown, and let him go.

MRS. SAGO. It comes very Opportunely pray Puddy send a Couple of the Hampers to my Lady *Reveller* as a small Acknowledgement for the Rich Present she has made me.

1 Short for "Ah God," one of many variants employed by playwrights to escape the charge of using blasphemous language on stage. This particular coinage used by Centlivre is intended to mark Sago's lower class status.

2 Centlivre was fond of using Puddy in babytalk between characters. *The Artifice* (1722) reuses the verbal tick between its citizen-class characters.

MR. SAGO. With all my Heart, my Jewel, my Precious.

MRS. SAGO. Puddy, I am strangely oblig'd to Mrs. *Alpiew*, do Puddy, do, Dear Puddy.

MR. SAGO. What?

MRS. SAGO. Will ye, then? Do, Dear Puddy, do, lend me a Guinea to give to her, do. (*Hanging upon him in a Wheedling Tone.*)

MR. SAGO. P'shaw, you are always wanting Guineas, I'll send her Half a Pound of *Tea*, Keecky.

MRS. SAGO. *Tea*—sha—she Drinks Ladies *Tea*; do, Dear Pudd, do; can you deny Keecky now?

MR. SAGO. Well, well, there. (*Gives it her.*)

MRS. SAGO. Mrs. *Alpiew*, will you please to lay the Silk by for me, till I send for it, and accept of That?

ALPIEW. Your Servant Madam, I'll be careful of it.

MRS. SAGO. Thank ye, Borrow as much as you can on't, Dear *Alpiew*. (*Aside to her.*)

ALPIEW. I warrant you, Madam. (*Exit.*)

MRS. SAGO. I must Raise a Summ for *Basset* against ~~Night~~ ^{tonight}.

MR. SAGO. Preethy Keecky, what kind of Humour'd Man is Lord *Worthy*? I did but ask him if he saw thee, and I Thought he would snapp'd my Nose off.

MRS. SAGO. Oh a meer Woman, full of Spleen and Vapours, he and I never agree.

MR. SAGO. Adod, I thought so—I guess'd† he was none of thy Admirers—Ha, ha, ha, why there's my Lord *Courtall*, and my Lord *Horncit*, bow down to the Ground to me wherever they meet me.

~~Enter Alpiew.~~

ALPIEW. Madam, Madam, the *Goldsmith* has sent in the Plate.

MRS. SAGO. Very well, take it along with the Silk. (*Aside to her.*)

ALPIEW. Here's the *Jeweller*; Madam, with the Diamond Ring, but he don't seem willing to leave it without Money. (*Exit Alpiew.*)

MRS. SAGO. Humph? I have a sudden Thought, bid him stay and bring me the Ring—Now for the Art of Wheedling.—

MR. SAGO. What are you Whispering about? Ha? Precious.—

MRS. SAGO. Mrs. *Alpiew* says, a Friend of her has a Diamond Ring to Sell, a great Penny-worth and I know you love a Bargain Puddy.

Alpiew, Mrs. Sago; Oooh! Aah! (etc)
~~Enter Alpiew, gives her the Ring.~~

MR. SAGO. P'shaw, I don't care for Rings; it may be a Bargain, and it may not; and I can't spare Money; I have Paid for a Lot this Morning; consider Trade must go forward, Lambkin.

ALPIEW. See how it Sparkles.

MRS. SAGO. Nay, Puddy, if it be not Worth your Money I don't desire you to Buy it; but don't it become my Finger, Puddy? See now.—

MR. SAGO. Ah! that Hand, that Hand it was which first got hold of my Heart; well what's the Price of it; Ha, I am ravish'd to see it upon Keecky's Finger.—

MRS. SAGO. What did he say the Price was? (*To Alpiew.*)

ALPIEW. Two Hundred *Guineas*, Madam. (*Aside to Mrs. Sago.*)

MRS. SAGO. Threescore Pound, Dear Pudd, the Devils in't if he won't give that. (*Aside.*)

MR. SAGO. Threescore Pounds? Why 'tis Worth a Hundred Child, Richly—'tis Stole—'tis Stole.—

ALPIEW. Stole? I'd have you know the Owner is my Relation, and has been as great a Merchant as any in *London*, but has had the Misfortune to have his Ships fall into the Hands of the *French*, or he'd not have parted with it at such a Rate; it Cost him Two Hundred *Guineas*.

MRS. SAGO. I believe as much, indeed 'tis very fine.

MR. SAGO. So it is Keecky, and that Dear little Finger shall have it to let me Bite it; a little Tiny bit.—(*Bites her Finger.*)

MRS. SAGO. Oh! Dear Pudd, you Hurt me.

MR. SAGO. Here—I han't so much Money about me, but there's't a Bill, Lambkin—there now, you'll Buss poor Puddy now, won't you?

MRS. SAGO. Buss him—yes, that I will agen, and agen, and agen, Dear Pudd. (*Flies about his Neck.*)

MR. SAGO. You'll go Home with Puddy now to Dinner, won't you?

MRS. SAGO. Yes—a—Dear Puddy, if you desire it—I will—
but—a—

MR. SAGO. But what?

MRS. SAGO. But I promis'd my Lady *Reveller* to Dine with her,
Deary—do, let me Pudd—I'll Dine with you to Morrow-day.

ALPIEW. Nay, I'm sure my Lady won't Eat a bit if she don't stay.

MR. SAGO. Well, they are so Fond of my Wife, by Keecky, show
me the Little Finger agen—Oh! Dear Little Finger, by by
Keecky.

MRS. SAGO. By own Pudd—Here *Alpiew* give him his Ring
agen, I have my End, tell him 'tis too† Dear. (*Aside.*)

ALPIEW. But what will you say when Mr. *Sago* misses it.

MRS. SAGO. I'll say—that it was too big for my Finger, and I
lost it; 'tis but a Crying-bout, and the good Man melts into
Pity—

*I'th' Married State, this only Bliss we find,
An Easie Husband to our Wishes kind.
I've Gain'd my Point, Replenish'd Purse once more,
Oh! cast me Fortune on the Winning Shore.
Now let me Gain what I have Lost before.*

~~(Exit)~~

ACT III

opens to
The Scene ~~draws, and discovers~~ Valeria with Books upon a Table, a Microscope, putting a Fish upon it, ^{with} several Animals lying by.

VALERIA. Sha! Thou fluttering Thing.—So now I've fix'd it.

~~Enter Alpiew.~~

ALPIEW. Madam, here's Mr. *Lovely*; I have introduc'd him as One of my Lady's Visitors, and brought him down the Back-stairs.

VALERIA. I'm oblig'd to you, he comes opportunely.

~~Enter Lovely.~~

Oh! Mr. *Lovely*, come, come here, look through this Glass, and see how the Blood Circulates in the Tale of this Fish.

ENSIGN LOVELY. Wonderful! but it Circulates prettier in this Fair Neck.

VALERIA. Pshaw—be quiet—I'll show you a Curiosity, the greatest that ever Nature made—(*Opens a Box*) in opening a Dog the other Day I found this Worm.

ENSIGN LOVELY. Prodigious! 'tis the Joint-Worm, which the Learned talk of so much.

VALERIA. Ay, the *Lumbricus Latus*, or *Foescia*, as *Hippocrates* calls it, or Vulgarly in *English* the Tape-Worm.—*Thudaeus* tells us of One of these Worms found in a Human Body 200 Foot long, without Head or Tail.¹

¹ Edward Tyson (1651-1708) read his *Lumbricus Latus, or a Discourse Read before the Royal Society of the Joynted Worm*, and his study on the round worm, *Lumbricus teres* (1683), and published them with illustrations of dissections in *Philosophical Transactions* (1683-1775), 13, 113-44. It is from these publications that Centlivre directly copies the reference to Hippocrates (ca. 470-380 BCE), the Greek physician, and the story of the large tapeworm taken from a human seen by Thaddaeus Dunus. Valeria's interest in *Lumbricus teres Intestinalis* and her observations on joints and mouths come from the same source.

ENSIGN LOVELY. I wish they be not got into thy Brain. (*Aside.*)

Oh you Charm me with these Discoveries.

VALERIA. Here's another Sort of Worm call'd *Lumbricus teres Intestinalis*.

ENSIGN LOVELY. I think the First you show'd me the greatest Curiosity.

VALERIA. 'Tis very odd, really, that there should be every Inch a Joint, and ever Joint a Mouth.—Oh the profound Secrets of Nature!

ENSIGN LOVELY. 'Tis strangely Surprizing.—But now let me be heard, for mine's the Voice of Nature too; methinks you neglect your self, the most Perfect Piece of all her Works.

VALERIA. Why? What Fault do you find in me?

ENSIGN LOVELY. You have not Love enough; that Fire would Consume and Banish all Studies but its own; your Eyes wou'd Sparkle, and spread I know not what, of Lively and Touching, o'er the whole Face; this Hand, when Press'd by him you Love, would Tremble to your Heart.

VALERIA. Why so it does—have I not told you Twenty Times I Love you,—for I hate Disguise; your Temper being Adapted to mine, gave my Soul the First Impression;—you know my Father's Positive,—but do not believe he shall Force me to any Thing that does not Love Philosophy.

ENSIGN LOVELY. But that Sea Captain *Valeria*.

VALERIA. If he was a Whale he might give you Pain, for I should long to Dissect him; but as he is a Man, you have no Reason to Fear him.

ENSIGN LOVELY. Consent then to Fly with me.

VALERIA. What, and leave my Microscope, and all my Things, for my Father to break in Pieces.

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. *Valeria, Valeria. (Within.)*

VALERIA. Oh Heav'ns! Oh Heav'ns! he is coming up the Backstairs. What shall we do?

ENSIGN LOVELY. Humph, ha, cann't you put me in that Closet there?

VALERIA. Oh no, I han't the Key.

ENSIGN LOVELY. I'll run down the Great Stairs, let who will see me. (*Going.*)

VALERIA. Oh no, no, no, no, not for your Life;—here, here, here, get under this Tub. (Throws out some Fish in Haste and Turns the Tub over him.)
Sir, I'm here.

~~Enter Sir Richard.~~

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. What, at your Whims—and Whirligigs, ye Baggage? I'll out at Window with them. (Throwing away the Things.)

VALERIA. Oh Dear Father, save my *Lumbricus Latus*.

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. I'll Lamprey¹ and Latum you; what's that I wonder? Ha? Where the Devil got you Names that your Father don't understand? Ha? (Treads upon them.)

VALERIA. Oh my poor Worm! Now have you destroy'd a Thing, that, for ought I know, *England* can't produce again.

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. What is it good for? Answer me that?—What's this Tub here for? Ha? (Kicks it.)

VALERIA. What shall I do now?—it is, a 'tis a—Oh Dear Sir! Don't touch the Tub,—for there's a Bear's Young Cub that I have brought for Dissection,—but I dare not touch it till the Keeper comes.

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. I'll Cub you, and Keeper you, with a Vengeance to you; is my Money laid out on Bears Cubs?—I'll drive out your Cub.—(Opens the Door, stands at a Distance off, and with his Cane, lifts up the Tub. Lovely rises.)

ENSIGN LOVELY. Oh the Devil discover'd, your Servant Sir. (Exit.)

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. Oh! your Servant Sir—What is this your Bear Cub? Ha Mistress? His Taylor has lick'd him into Shape I find.—What did this Man do here? Ha Huswife?—I doubt you have been studying Natural Philosophy with a Vengeance.

VALERIA. Indeed, Sir, he only brought me a strange Fish, and hearing your Voice, I was afraid you should be Angry, and so that made me hide him.

1 An eel-like fish.

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. A Fish,—'tis the Flesh I fear;
I'll have you Married to'Night.—I believe this Fellow was
the Beggarly Ensign, who never March'd further than from
Whitehall to the *Tower*, who wants your Portion to make him
a Brigadier, without ever seeing a Battel'—Huswife, ha—tho'
your Philosophical Cant, with a ~~Mustang~~ ^{plague upon} to you—has put the
Captain out of Conceit, I have a Husband still for you;—come
along, come along, I'll send the Servants to clear this Room of
your Bawbles,—(*pulls her off*) I will so.

VALERIA. But the Servants won't, Old Gentleman, that's my
Comfort still. (*Exit.*)

~~Re-enter Lovely.~~

ENSIGN LOVELY. I'm glad they are gone, for the ~~Devil~~ ^{Devil} take me
if I cou'd ~~find~~ ^{find} the Way out.

~~Enter Sir James.~~

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Ha—Ensign! luckily met; I have been
Labouring for you, and I hope done you a Piece of Service.
Why, you look surpriz'd.

ENSIGN LOVELY. Surpriz'd! so wou'd you, Sir *Harry*,³ if you
had been whelm'd under a Tub, without Room to Breath.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Under a Tub! Ha, ha, ha.

ENSIGN LOVELY. 'Twas the only Place of Shelter.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Come, come, I have a better Prospect,
the Captain is a very Honest Fellow, and thinks if you can

1 Sir Richard suggests Ensign Lovely has marched the length of London, but no further, in procession from Whitehall (what remained of the royal household and Banqueting Hall after a fire in 1698) in the west of London to the Tower of London in the east. The buying of a promotion in the army was a recognized route for preferment. Lovely would undergo a considerable rise from ensign, the lowest rank of officer, to brigadier, in charge of a brigade.

2 An antiquated phrase at the time of the play; a curse, meaning to wish infection or plague on a person.

3 Centlivre conflates Sir James with the popular stage figure Harry Wildair, a gambling rake played by Robert Wilks in George Farquhar's two great successes *The Constant Couple* (1699) and *Sir Harry Wildair* (1701).

bear with the Girl, you deserve her Fortune; here's your Part,¹
(Gives a Paper) he'll give you your Cue, he stays at his Lodging
for you.

ENSIGN LOVELY. What's the Design?

SIR JAMES COURTLY. That will tell you; quick Dispatch.

ENSIGN LOVELY. Well, Sir *James*, I know you have a Prolifick
Brain, and will rely on your Contrivances, and if it succeeds
the Captain shall have a Bowl of Punch large enough to set his
Ship afloat. (Exit.)

~~Lady Reveller, Lady Lucy, Mrs. Sago, appear.~~

SIR JAMES COURTLY. The Tea-Table broke up already! I fear
there has been but small Recruits of Scandal to Day.

MRS. SAGO. Well, I'll swear I think the Captain's a Pleasant
Fellow.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. That's because he made his Court to
her. (Aside.)

LADY REVELLER. Uh—I Nauseate those Amphibious Creatures.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Umph, she was not Address'd to.

LADY LUCY. He seems neither to want Sense, Honour, nor
True Courage, and methinks there is a Beauty in his Plain
Delivery.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. There spoke Sincerity without
Affectation.

LADY REVELLER. How shall we pass the Afternoon?

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Aye, Ladies, how shall we?

LADY REVELLER. You here! I thought you had Listed your
self Volunteer under the Captain to Board some Prize,² you
whisper'd so often, and sneak'd out one after another.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Who would give one self the Pains to
Cruise Abroad, when all one Values is at Home?

LADY REVELLER. To whom is this Directed? Or will you
Monopolize and Ingross us all?³

1 An actor's role was separately written out as a "part."

2 Enlisted with the Captain to pursue women.

3 The impact of monopolies on English trade, and the "engrossing" or wholesale purchase of commodities or trading rights, was hotly debated at this time.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. No,—tho' you would wake Desire in every Beholder, I resign you to my Worthy Friend.

LADY LUCY. And the rest of the Company have no Pretence to you.

MRS. SAGO. That's more than she knows. (*Aside.*)

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Beauty, like yours, wou'd give all Mankind Pretence.

MRS. SAGO. So, not a Word to me; are these his Vows? (*In an uneasy Air.*)

LADY LUCY. There's One upon the Teaze already. (*Aside.*)

LADY REVELLER. Why, you are in Disorder, my Dear; you look as if you had lost a ~~Prize hand~~ ^{prize hand.} What have you said to her, Sir James?

SIR JAMES COURTLY. I said, Madam? I hope I never say any Thing to offend the Ladies. The Devils in these Married Women, they can't conceal their own Intrigues,† though they Swear us to Secrecy. (*Aside.*)

LADY LUCY. You mistake, Cousin, 'tis his saying nothing to her has put her upon the Fret.

LADY REVELLER. Ay, your Observations are always Malicious.

MRS. SAGO. I despise them, Dear Lady *Reveller*, let's in to Picquet; I suppose Lady *Lucy* would be pleas'd with Sir *James* alone to finish her Remarks.

LADY LUCY. Nay, if you remove the Cause, the Discourse ceases.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. (*Going up to her.*) This you draw upon your self, you will discover it. (*To her.*)

MRS. SAGO. Yes, your Falshood.

LADY REVELLER. Come my Dear, Sir *James*, will you make One at a Pool?²

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Pardon me, Madam, I'm to be at *White's* in Half an Hour,³ anon at the *Basset-Table*. I'm Yours.

MRS. SAGO. No, no, he can't leave her. (*Going, still looking back.*)

1 A term from basset, to gamble for thirty-three times your stake.

2 To become part of a group in a card game.

3 *White's* Chocolate House in St. James was a Whig meeting place.

LADY LUCY. They play Gold, Sir *James*.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. (*Going up to Lady Lucy*) Madam, were your Heart the Stake I'd Renounce all Engagements to win that, or retrieve my own.

LADY LUCY. I must like the Counterstake very well ere I play so high.

MRS. SAGO. Sir *James*, hearkee, One Word with you. (*Breaking from Lady Reveller's Hand, pulling Sir James by the Sleeve.*)

LADY LUCY. Ha, ha, I knew she could not stir; I'll remove your Constraint, but, with my wonted Freedom, will tell you plainly—your Husband's Shop wou'd better become you than Gaming and Gallants. Oh Shame to Virtue, that we† shou'd Copy Men in their most Reigning Vices!

Of Virtue's wholesome Rules unjustly we complain,

When Search of Pleasures gives us greater Pain.

How slightly we our Reputation Guard,

Which lost but once can never be Repair'd.

LADY REVELLER. Farewel Sentences.

Enter Alpiew.

ALPIEW. Madam—(*Whispers her Lady.*)

MRS. SAGO. So then, you'd persuade me 'twas the Care of my Fame.

SIR ~~HARRY~~^{JAMES}.¹ Nothing else I protest, my Dear Little Rogue; I have as much Love as you, but I have more Conduct.

MRS. SAGO. Well, you know how soon I forgive you your Faults.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Now to what Purpose have I Lied my self into her good Graces, when I would be glad to be rid of her? (*Aside.*)

LADY REVELLER. Booted and Spurr'd say you? Pray send him up, Sir *James*; I suppose Trusty *Buckle* is come with some Diverting Embassy from your Friend.

1 Once again Sir James is called Sir Harry, in an intertextual slip which reminds the reader of Sir Harry Wildair; see page 80, note 3 above.

Full Riding Gear.

Enter Buckle in a Riding Dress.

LADY REVELLER. † Why in this Equipage?

BUCKLE. Ah! Madam.—

LADY REVELLER. Out with it.

BUCKLE. Farewell Friends, Parents, and my Country; thou Dear
Play-house, and sweet Park, Farewell.

LADY REVELLER. Farewel, why, whither are you going?

BUCKLE. My Lord and I am going where they never knew Deceit.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. That Land is Invisible, *Buckle*.

LADY REVELLER. Ha, ha, ha.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Were my Lord of my Mind your
Ladship should not have had so large a Theme for your Mirth.
Your Servant Ladies. (*Exit.*)

LADY REVELLER. Well, but what's your Business?

BUCKLE. My Lord charg'd me in his Name to take his Everlasting
Leave of your Ladship.

LADY REVELLER. Why, where is he a going pray?

BUCKLE. In search of a Country where there is no Women.

MRS. SAGO. Oh dear, why what have the Women done to him
pray?

BUCKLE. Done to him, Madam? He says they are Proud,
Perfidious, Vain, Inconstant, Coquets in *England*.

MRS. SAGO. Oh! He'll find they are everywhere the same.

LADY REVELLER. And this is the Cause of his Whimsical
Pilgrimage? Ha, ha.

BUCKLE. And this proceeds from your ill Usage, Madam; when
he left your House,—he flung himself into his Coach with
such a Force, that he broke all the Windows,—as they say,—
for my Part I was not there;—when he came Home he beat all
his Servants round to be Reveng'd.

ALPIEW. Was you there, *Buckle*?

BUCKLE. No, I thank my Stars, when I arriv'd the Expedition
was over;—in Haste he Mounted his Chamber;—flung himself
upon his Bed,—Bursting out into a Violent Passion,—Oh that
ever I should suffer my self to be impos'd upon, said he, by this
Coquetish Beauty!

LADY REVELLER. Meaning me, *Buckle*, Ha, ha?

BUCKLE. Stay till I have finish'd the Piece, Madam, and your Ladiship shall judge;—she's Fickle as she's Fair,—she does not use more Art to Gain a Lover, said he, than to deceive him when he is fix'd.—Humph. (*Leering at her.*)

LADY REVELLER. Pleasant—and does he call this taking Leave?

MRS. SAGO. A Comical Adieu.

BUCKLE. Oh, Madam, I'm not come to the Tragical Part of it yet, starting from his Bed.—

LADY REVELLER. I thought it had been all Farce,—if there be any Thing Heroick in't I'll set my Face and look Grave.

BUCKLE. My Relation will require it, Madam, for I am ready to weep at the Repetition: Had you but seen how often he ~~was~~ ^{travest} the Room, (*Acting it*) heard how often he stamp'd, what distort'd Faces he made, casting up his Eyes thus, Biting his Thumbs thus.

LADY REVELLER. Ha, ha, ha, you'll make an Admirable Actor,—shall I speak to the (Patentees¹) for you?

MRS. SAGO. But pray how did this end?

BUCKLE. At last, Madam, quite spent with Rage, he sunk down upon his Elbow, and his Head fell upon his Arm.

LADY REVELLER. What, did he faint away?

BUCKLE. Oh, no.

MRS. SAGO. He did not die?

BUCKLE. No, Madam, but he fell asleep.

LADY REVELLER. Oh Brave Prince (*Prettiman.*²)

OMNES. Ha, ha, ha.

BUCKLE. After Three Hours Nap he Wak'd—and calling hastily—my Dear *Buckle*, said he, let's to the End of the World; and try to find a Place where the Sun Shines not here and there at one Time—for 'tis not fit that it should at once look

¹ The theatre managers. Technically Drury Lane, where *The Basset Table* was performed, under the management of Christopher Rich, was the only theatre holding royal patents from the Crown at this time.

² Prince Pretty-man is the absurd heroic figure mocked in the Duke of Buckingham's *The Rehearsal* (1671). In Bayes's terrible play-within-a-play the Prince sees his love Cloris and, overcome with emotion ("I am so surpris'd with sleep, I cannot speak the rest"), immediately falls asleep.

upon Two Persons whose Sentiments are so Different—She no longer regards my Pain, Ungrateful, False, Inhumane, Barbarous Woman.

LADY REVELLER. Foolish, Fond, Believing, Easie Man; there's my Answer—Come, shall we to *Picquet*, my Dear?

BUCKLE. Hold, hold, Madam, I han't half done—

MRS. SAGO. Oh! Pray my Dear Lady *Reveller*, let's have it out, 'tis very Diverting—

BUCKLE. He call'd me in a feeble Voice; *Buckle*, said he, bring me my little (*Scrutore*)¹— for I will write to Lady *Reveller* before I part from this Place, never to behold her more—what, don't you Cry, Madam?

LADY REVELLER. Cry—No, no, go on, go on.

BUCKLE. 'Tis done, Madam—and there's the Letter. (*Gives her a Letter.*)

LADY REVELLER. So, this Compleats the Narration. (*Reads.*)
Madam, *Since I cannot Live in a Place where there is a Possibility of seeing you without Admiring, I resolve to Fly; I am going for Flanders; since you are False I have no Business here—I need not describe the Pain I feel, you are but too well Acquainted with that—therefore I'll chuse Death rather than Return.—Adieu.*

BUCKLE. Can any Man in the World write more Tenderly, Madam? Does he not say 'tis Impossible to Love you, and go for *Flanders*? And that he would rather hear of your Death than Return.—

LADY REVELLER. Excellent, Ha, ha.

BUCKLE. What, do you Laugh?

MRS. SAGO. Who can forbear?

BUCKLE. I think you ought to Die with Grief; I warrant Heaven will punish you all. (*Going.*)

ALPIEW. But hearkee, *Buckle*, where are you going now?

BUCKLE. To tell my Lord in what Manner your Lady receiv'd his Letter; Farewel—now for *Flanders*.²—

¹ Writing case.

² The War of the Spanish Succession, which sought to limit French expansion, resist the French claim to the Spanish throne, and to safeguard Protestant Europe, was fought in Spain and west Europe. Early battles were centred in Flanders, part of the French-held southern Spanish Netherlands, in order to prevent French expansion north into the Protestant United Provinces.

ALPIEW. A fair Wind, and a good Voyage to you. (*As he goes out enter Lord Worthy.*)

BUCKLE. My Lord here? So now may I have my Head Broke for my long Harangue if it comes out.

LADY REVELLER. Oh! Miraculous—my Lord, you have not finish'd your Campaign already, have you? Ha, ha, ha; or has the *French* made Peace hearing of your Lordship's intended Bravery, and left you no Enemies to Combat?†

LORD WORTHY. My worst of Foes are here—here, within my Breast; your Image, Madam.

LADY REVELLER. Oh Dear, my Lord, no more of that Theme, for *Buckle* has given us a Surfeit on't already—even from your Breaking the Glasses of your Coach—to your falling fast Asleep. Ha, ha, ha.

LORD WORTHY. The Glasses of my Coach! What do you mean, Madam—Oh Hell! (*Biting his Thumbs.*)

BUCKLE. Ruined quite—Madam, for Heaven's sake what does your Ladiship Mean? I Li'd in every Syllable I told you, Madam.

LADY REVELLER. Nay, if your Lordship has a Mind to Act it over agen we will Oblige you for once—*Alpiew* set Chairs—come, Dear *Sago*, sit down—and let the Play begin—*Buckle* knows his Part, and upon Necessity cou'd Act yours too my Lord.

LORD WORTHY. What has this Dog been doing? When he was only to deliver my Letter, to give her new Subject for her Mirth—Death, methinks I hate her,—Oh that I cou'd hold that Mind—what makes you in this Equipage? Ha, Sirrah? (*Aside.*)

BUCKLE. My Lord, I, I, I, I,

LORD WORTHY. Peace Villain—(*Strikes him.*)

LADY REVELLER. Hey—this is Changing the Scene—

BUCKLE. Who the Devil would Rack his Brains for these People of Quality, who like no Body's Wit but their own?—(*Aside.*)

MRS. SAGO. If the Beating were Invention before, thou hast it now in Reality; if Wars begin I'll Retire. They may agree better alone perhaps. (*Exit.*)

LADY REVELLER. Where did you learn this Rudeness, my Lord, to Strike your Servant before me?

LORD WORTHY. When you have depriv'd a Man of his Reason how can you blame his Conduct?

BUCKLE. Reason—Egad—there's not Three Drams of Reason between you both—as my Cheek can testify. (*Aside.*)

LADY REVELLER. The Affront was meant to me—nor will I endure these Passions—I thought I had forbid your Visits.

LORD WORTHY. I thought I had Resolv'd against them too.

ALPIEW. But Resolutions are of small force of either side. (*Aside.*)

LORD WORTHY. Grant me but this One Request and I'll remove this hated Object.

LADY REVELLER. Upon Condition 'tis the last.

LORD WORTHY. It shall—I think it shall at least—Is there a Happy Man for whom I am Despised?

LADY REVELLER. I thought 'twas some such ridiculous Question; I'm of the *Low-Church*, my Lord, consequently hate Confessors; ha, ha, ha.

BUCKLE. And Penance too† I dare Swear. (*Aside.*)

LORD WORTHY. And every thing but Play.

LADY REVELLER. Dare you, the Subject of my Power—you, that Petition Love, Arraign my Pleasures? Now I'm fixt—and will never see you more.

BUCKLE. Now wou'd any Body Swear she's in Earnest.

LORD WORTHY. I cannot bear that Curse—see me at your Feet again, (*Kneels*) Oh! you have Tortur'd me enough, take Pity now Dear Tyrant, and let my Suffering end.

LADY REVELLER. I must not be Friends with him, for then I shall have him at my Elbow all Night, and spoil my Luck at the *Basset-Table*. (*Aside.*) Either Cringing or Correcting, always in Extreams—I am weary of this Fatigue.

He that wou'd gain my Heart must Learn the Way

Not to Controul, but readily to Obey.

For he that once Pretends my Faults to see,

That Moment makes himself all Faults to me. (Exit.)

BUCKLE. There's the Inside of a Woman. (*Aside.*)

LORD WORTHY. Gon—now Curses on me for a Fool—the worst of Fools—a Woman's Fool—

*Whose only Pleasure is to feed her Pride,
Fond of her Self, she cares for none beside.
So true Coquets on their numerous Charms Display,
And strive to Conquer on purpose to betray.*

ACT IV†

~~Enter Lord Worthy and Sir James.~~

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Well, my Lord. I have left my Cards in the Hand of a Friend to hear what you have to say to me. Love I'm sure is the Text, therefore Divide and Subdivide as quick as you can.

LORD WORTHY. Could'st thou Infuse into me thy Temper, Sir James, I shou'd have thy Reason too; but I am Born to Love this Fickle, Faithless Fair—what have I not Essay'd to Race her from my Breast?¹ But all in Vain; I must have her, or I must not Live.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Nay, if you are so far gone, my Lord, your Distemper requires an Able Physician—what think you of *Lovely's* bringing a File of Muscqueteers, and carry her away, *Via & Armis*?²

LORD WORTHY. That Way might give her Person to my Arms, but where's the Heart?

SIR JAMES COURTLY. A Trifle in Competition with her Body.

LORD WORTHY. The Heart's a Gem that I prefer.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Say you so my Lord? I'll Engage Three Parts of Europe will make that Exchange with you; Ha, ha, ha.

LORD WORTHY. That Maxim wou'd hold with me perhaps in all but her, there I must have both or none; therefore Instruct me Friend, thou who negligent in Love, keeps always on the Level with the Fair—what Method shou'd I take to Sound her Soul's Design? For tho' her Carriage puts me on the Rack when I behold that Train of Fools about her, yet my Heart will plead in her Excuse, and Calm my Anger Spite of all Efforts.

1 An excessively poetic way to say "What have I not tried to erase her from my heart."

2 A unit of soldiers armed with muskets. "Vi et armis" Latin for by force of arms, by compulsion.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Humph? I have a Plot, my Lord, if you'll comply with it.

LORD WORTHY. Nothing of Force.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Whate're it be you shall be Witness of it, 'twill either Quench your Flame, or Kindle hers. I only will appear the Guilty; but here's Company, I'll tell you all within.

~~Enter Captain and Lovely Drest like a Tar¹~~

LORD WORTHY. I'll expect you. (*Exit.*)

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Ha, Captain, How sits the Wind between you and your Mistress? Ha?

CAPTAIN HEARTY. North and by South, Faith; but here's one Sails full East, and without some unexpected Tornado, from the Old Man's Coast—he makes his Port I warrant ye.

ENSIGN LOVELY. I wish I were at Anchor once.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Why, thou art as arrant a Tar as if thou hadst made an *East-India Voyage*, ha, ha.²

ENSIGN LOVELY. Ay, am I not, Sir *James*? But Egad I hope the Old Fellow understands nothing of Navigation; if he does I shall be at a loss for the Terms.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Oh! no matter for Terms—look big, and Bluster for your Country—describe the *Vigo Business*³—publick News will furnish you with that, and I'll engage the Success.

CAPTAIN HEARTY. Ay, Ay, let me alone, I'll bear up with Sir *Richard*, and thou shalt Board his ~~Ship~~^{vessel} with Consent ne'er fear—ho, here he comes full Sail.

1 A sailor.

2 The united East India Company, after 1702, was one of the largest trading concerns in Britain. Trade with India accounted for a large proportion of Britain's imports, and voyages were regular.

3 The naval battle of Vigo (1702) in north-west Spain was one of the opening skirmishes of the War of the Spanish Succession. Much of a Spanish treasure fleet was taken from French protection. This was a welcome success after the ignominious failure of the Anglo-Dutch siege of Cadiz.

4 A small two-masted vessel, frequently used as a metaphor for a woman, or mistress, here Valeria.

~~Enter Sir Richard.~~

Sir Richard. I'm glad to see you; this is my Kinsman which I told you of, as soon as he Landed; I brought him to Kiss your Hands.

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. I Honour you, you are welcome.

ENSIGN LOVELY. I thank you Sir,—I'm not for Compliments; 'tis a Land Language I understand it not; Courage, Honesty, and Plain-dealing Truth, is the Learning of our Element; if you like that I am for ye.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. (*Aside to the Captain.*) The Rogue does it to a Miracle.

CAPTAIN HEARTY. He's an improving Spark I find, ha, ha.

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN.† Like it, Sir, why 'tis the only Thing I do like, hang Compliments, and Court-Breeding, it serves only to make Men a Prey to one another, to Encourage Cowardice, and Ruin Trade—No, Sir, give me the Man that dares meet Death and Dinner with the same Appetite—one who rather than let in Popery, wou'd let out his Blood; to Maintain such Men I'd pay Double Custom; nay, all my Gain shou'd go for their Support.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. The best Well-wisher to his Country of an *Englishman* I ever heard.

ENSIGN LOVELY. Oh, Sir *Richard*, I wish the Nation were all of your Mind, 'twould give the Soldiers and the Sailors Life.

(*Captain launch off a round Lie or Two.†¹*) ?

CAPTAIN HEARTY. And make us Fight with Heart and Hand; my Kinsman, I'll assure you, fits your Principle to a Hair; He hates the *French* so much he ne'er fails to give them a Broadside where'er he meets them; and has Brought in more Privateers² this War than half the Captains in the *Navy*; he was the first Man that Boarded the *French Fleet* at *Vigo*—and in *Gibraltar*

1 "Captain launch off a round Lie or Two (*Aside to Ensign*)" is a mis-transposed line, corrected to this setting in D1 and 1735 editions, but probably intended for Sir James Courtly immediately after Sir Richard's previous speech.

2 Private mercenary vessels, under government commission, that specialized in attack on merchant vessels.

Business¹—the *Gazettes*² will inform you of the Name of Captain *Match*.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Is this that Captain *Match*?

ENSIGN LOVELY. For want of better, Sir.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Sir, I shall be Proud of being known to you.

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. And I of being Related to you, Sir—I have a Daughter Young and Handsome, and I'll give her a Portion shall make thee an Admiral Boy; for a Soul like thine is fit only to Command a Navy—what say'st thou, art thou for a Wife?

SIR JAMES COURTLY. So, 'tis done, ha, ha, ha. (*Aside.*)

CAPTAIN HEARTY. A prosperous Gale I'faith.

ENSIGN LOVELY. I don't know, Sir *Richard*, mehap a Woman may not like me; I am Rough and Storm-like in my Temper, unacquainted with the Effeminacy of Courts; I was Born upon the Sea, and since I can remember never Liv'd Two Months on Shore; if I Marry my Wife must go Abroad, I promise you that.

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. Abroad Man? Why she shall go to the *Indies* with thee—Oh! such a Son-in-Law—how shall I be Blest in My Posterity? Now do I foresee the Greatness of my Grand-Children; the Sons of this Man shall, in the Age to come, make *France* a Tributary Nation.

ENSIGN LOVELY. Once in an Engagement, Sir, as I was giving Orders to my Men, comes a Ball and took off a Fellow's Head, and struck it full in my Teeth; I wipp'd it up, clapp'd it into a Gun, and shot it at the Enemy again.

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. Without the least Concern?

ENSIGN LOVELY. Concern, Sir,—ha, ha, ha, if it had been my own Head I would have done the like.

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. Prodigious Effect of Courage!—Captain I'll fetch my Girl, and be here again in an Instant:—What an Honour 'twill be to have such a Son! (*Exit.*)

¹ The English captured Gibraltar from the Spanish in 1704.

² The *Gazettes* were official government newspapers, printed in London, Dublin, and Edinburgh.

CAPTAIN HEARTY. Ha, ha, ha, ha, you outdo your Master.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Ha, ha, ha, ha, the Old Knight's Transported.

ENSIGN LOVELY. I wish 'twas over, I am all in a Sweat; here he comes again.

~~Enter Sir Richard and Valeria~~

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. I'll hear none of your Excuses,—Captain your Hand,—there take her,—and these Gentlemen shall be Witnesses, if they please, to this Paper, wherein I give her my whole Estate when I die, and Twenty Thousand Pounds down upon the Nail; I care not whether my Boy be worth a Groat,—get me but Grandsons and I'm Rich enough.

CAPTAIN HEARTY. Generously said I'faith—much Good may do him with her.

ENSIGN LOVELY. I'll do my Endeavour;† Father, I promise you.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. I wish you Joy, Captain and you, Madam.

VALERIA. That's Impossible;—can I have Joy in a Species so very different from my own? Oh my Dear *Lovely*!—We were only form'd one for another;—thy Dear Enquiring Soul is more to me—than all these useless Lumps of Animated Clay: Duty compels my Hand,—but my Heart is subject only to my Mind,—the Strength of that they cannot Conquer;—no, with the Resolution of the Great Unparall'd ^{Stoics} ~~Epictetus~~,—I here protest my Will shall ne're assent to any but my *Lovely*.

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. Ay, you and your Will may Philosophize as long as you please,—Mistress,—but your Body shall be taught another Doctrine,—it shall so,—Your Mind,—and your Soul, quotha! Why, what a Pox has my Estate to do with them? Ha? 'Tis the Flesh Huswife, that must raise Heirs,—and Supporters of my Name;—and since I knew the getting of the Estate, 'tis fit I shou'd dispose of it,—and therefore no more Excuses, this is your Husband do you see,—take my Word for it.

† Epictetus (ca. 55–135) was a Stoic philosopher who taught that a philosophical life of reason, free from the passions, brought happiness.

VALERIA.

*The outward empty Form of Marriage take
But all beyond I keep for Lovely's Sake.
Thus on the Ground for ever fix my Eyes;
All Sights but Lovely shall their Balls despise.*

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. Come, Captain,—my Chaplain is within, he shall do the Business this Minute: If I don't use the Authority of a Father, this Baggage will make me lose such a Son-in-Law that the City's Wealth can't purchase me his Fellow. (*Aside.*)

ENSIGN LOVELY.

*Thanks Dear Invention for this Timely Aid.
The Bait's gone† down, he's by himself betray'd.
Thus still where Art both True and Honest fail,
Deceitful Wit and Policy prevail.*

VALERIA. To Death, or any Thing,—'tis all alike to me. (*Exit cum Valeria.*)

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. Get you in I say,—Hussey, get you in. In my Conscience my Niece has spoil'd her already; but I'll have her Married this Moment; Captain, you have bound me ever to you by this Match, command me and my House for ever.—But shall I not have your Company, Gentlemen, to be Witnesses of this Knot, this joyful Knot?

CAPTAIN HEARTY. Yes Faith, Sir *Richard*, I have too much Respect for my Kinsman to leave him—till I see him safe in Harbour; I'll wait upon you presently.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. I am engag'd in the next Room at Play, I beg your Pardon, Sir *Richard*, for an Hour; I'll bring the whole Company to Congratulate the Bride and Bridegroom.

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. Bride and Bridegroom? Congratulate me, Man: Methinks I already see my Race Recorded amongst the foremost Heroes of my Nation.—Boys, all Boys, and all Soldiers.
*They shall the Pride of France and Spain pull down,
And add their Indies to our English Crown. (Exit.)*

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Ha, ha, ha, never was Man so Bigotted before;—how will this end when he discovers the Cheat? Ha, ha, won't you make One with the Ladies, Captain?

CAPTAIN HEARTY. I don't care if I do venture a Piece or Two,

I'll but dispatch a little Business and meet you at the Table, Sir James. (*Exit.*)

~~Enter Lady Lucy.~~

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Ha, Lady *Lucy*! Is your Ladiship reconcil'd to *Basset* yet? Will you give me leave to lose this Purse to you, Madam?

LADY LUCY. I thank Fortune I neither wish, nor need it, Sir *James*; I presume the next Room is furnish'd with Avarice enough to serve you in that Affair, if it is a Burden to you; or Mrs. *Sago's* ill Luck may give you an Opportunity of returning some of the Obligations you lye under.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Your Sex, Madam, extorts a Duty from ours, and a well-bred Man can no more refuse his Money to a Lady, than his Sword to a Friend.

LADY LUCY. That Superfluity of good Manners, Sir *James*, would do better Converted into Charity; this Town abounds with Objects—wou'd it not leave a more Glorious Fame behind you to be the Founder of some Pious Work; when all the Poor at mention of your Name shall Bless your Memory; than that Posterity shou'd say you Wasted your Estate on Cards and Women?

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Humph, 'tis pity she were not a Man, she Preaches so Emphatically. (*Aside.*) Faith, Madam, you have a very good Notion, but something too Early—when I am Old, I may put your Principles in Practice, but Youth for Pleasure was design'd—

LADY LUCY. The truest Pleasure must consist in doing Good, which cannot be in Gaming.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Every thing is good in its Kind, Madam; Cards are harmless Bits of Paper, Dice insipid Bones—and Women made for Men.

LADY LUCY. Right, Sir *James*—but all these things may be perverted—Cards are harmless Bits of Paper in themselves, yet through them what Mischiefs have been Done? What Orphans Wrong'd? What Tradesmen Ruin'd? What Coach and Equipage¹ dismiss for them?

¹ Attendant servants for a carriage.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. But then, how many fine Coaches and Equipages have they set up, Madam?

LADY LUCY. Is it the more Honourable for that? How many ~~Mistress~~ ^{mistresses} keep Coaches too? Which Arrogance in my Opinion only makes them more Eminently Scandalous—

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Oh! those are such, as have a Mind to be Damn'd in this State, Madam—but I hope your Ladiships don't Rank them amongst us Gamesters.

LADY LUCY. They are Inseparable, Sir *James*; Madam's Grandeur must be Upheld—tho' the Baker and Butcher shut up Shop.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Oh! your Ladiship wrongs us middling Gentlemen there; to Ruin Tradesmen is the Qualities Prerogative only; and none beneath a Lord can pretend to do't with an Honourable Air, ha, ha.

LADY LUCY. Their Example sways the meaner Sort; I grieve to think that Fortune shou'd Exalt such Vain, such Vicious† Souls—whilst Virtue's Cloath'd in Raggs.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Ah! Faith, she'd make but a scurvy Figure at Court, Madam, the States-men and Politicians wou'd Suppress her quickly—but whilst she remains in your Breast she's safe—and makes us all in Love with that Fair Covering.

LADY LUCY. Oh! Fie, Fi, Sir *James*, you cou'd not Love one that hates your chief Direction.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. I shou'd Hate it too, Madam, on some Terms† I coul'd Name.

LADY LUCY. What wou'd make that Conversion pray?

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Your Heart.

LADY LUCY. I cou'd pay that Price—but dare not Venture on one so Wild—(*Aside.*) First let me see the Fruit e'er I take a Lease of the Garden, Sir *James*.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Oh! Madam, the best Way is to Secure the Ground, and then you may Manure and Cultivate it as you please.

LADY LUCY. That's a certain Trouble and uncertain Profit, and in this Affair; I prefer the Theory before the Practick. But I detain you from the Table, Sir *James*—you are wanted to

† Kept mistresses.

(Tally) your Servant—(Exit.)

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Nay, if you leave me, Madam, the Devil will Tempt me—she's gone, and now can't I shake off the Thought of Seven Wins, Eight Loses—for the Blood of me—and all this Grave Advice of hers is lost, Faith—tho' I do Love her above the rest of her Sex—she's an exact Model of what all Women ought to be,—and yet your Merry little Coquettish Tits² are very Diverting—well, now for *Basset*; let me see what Money I have about—me, Humph, about a Hundred Guineas—half of which will set the Ladies to Cheating—false ~~Paroles~~ ^{plays} in Abundance.
*Each Trifling toy wou'd Tempt in Times of Old,
Now nothing Melts a Woman's Heart like Gold.
Some Bargains Drive, other's more Nice then they,
Who'd have you think they Scorn to Kiss for Pay;
To Purchase them you must Lose Deep at Play.
With several Women, several Ways Prevail;
But Gold's a certain Way that cannot Fail.* (Exit.)

The Scene ~~Draws, and Discovers~~ ^{Reveals} Lady Reveller, Mrs. Sago, and several Gentlemen and Ladies round a Table at Basset.

Enter Sir James.

LADY REVELLER. Oh! Sir James, are you come? We want you to Tally for us.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. What Luck, Ladies?

LADY REVELLER. I have only won a *Sept & Leva*.⁴

MRS. SAGO. And I have lost a *Trante & Leva*⁵—my Ill Fortune has not forsook me yet I see.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. I go a *Guinea* upon that Card.⁶

LADY REVELLER. You lose that Card.

1 To deal at basset, to play the role of banker.

2 Young women, "usually in depreciation or disapproval: esp. one of loose character, a hussy" (OED).

3 A term from basset, to turn up the corner of a winning card to increase your stake.

4 To win twice on the same card, and take seven times your stake.

5 To win four times on the same card and take thirty-three times your stake.

6 Charles Cotton's description of basset (Appendix B1) suggests players only bet on their own cards, but here the players also bet on the fortunes of each other's cards.

MRS. SAGO. I Mace¹ Sir James's Card Double.

BANKER. Seven wins, and Five loses; you have lost it, Madam.

MRS. SAGO. Agen?²—sure never was Woman so Unlucky—

BANKER. Knave wins, and Ten loses; you have Won, Sir James.

LADY REVELLER. Clean Cards here.

MRS. SAGO. Burn this Book,² 't has an unlucky† Air. (Tears her

gaming books them.) Bring some more Books.

~~Enter Captain.~~

LADY REVELLER. Oh! Captain—here set a Chair, come, Captain, you shall sit by me—now if we can but Strip this Tarr. (*Aside.*)

CAPTAIN HEARTY. Withal my Heart, Madam—come, what do you Play Gold?—that's something High tho'—well a Guinea upon this Honest Knave of Clubs.

LADY REVELLER. You lose it for a Guinea more.

CAPTAIN HEARTY. Done, Madam.

BANKER. The Five Wins, and the Knave loses.

LADY REVELLER. You have lost it, Captain.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. The Knave wins, for Two Guineas more, Madam.

LADY REVELLER. Done Sir James.

BANKER. Six Wins—Knave, Loses.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Oh! the Devil, I'm Fac'd,†³ I had rather have lost it all.

BANKER. Nine wins, Queen loses—you have won.

MRS. SAGO. I'll make a Paroli—I Mace as much more; your Card loses Sir James, for Two Guineas, your's Captain, loses for a Guineas more.

BANKER. Four wins, Nine loses—you have Lost, Madam.

MRS. SAGO. Oh! I cou'd Tear my Flesh—as I Tear these Cards—Confusion—I can never win above a wretch'd Paroli; for if I

1 Technically, Masse, to increase your stake on a winning card.

2 Each player in basset has a "book" of thirteen cards before them.

3 Possibly, beaten by a face card, a court card; or Fasse, the Tallier turns the first card in a new pack and wins money from every card of that kind with a stake on it; see Appendix B1.

push to *Sept & Leva*, 'tis gone. (*Walks about Disorderly.*)

BANKER. Ace wins, Knave loses.

CAPTAIN HEARTY. Sink the Knave, I'll set no more on't.

LADY REVELLER. Fac't† agen—what's the meaning of this Ill-luck to Night? Bring me a Book of Hearts, I'll try if they are more Successful, that on the Queen; yours and your Cards loses.

MRS. SAGO. Bring me a fresh Book; bring me another Book; bring me all Diamonds. (*Looks upon them One by One, then throws them over her Shoulders.*)

LADY REVELLER. That can never be lucky, the Name of Jewels don't become a Citizen's Wife. (*Aside.*)

BANKER. King wins, the ~~Knave~~ *loses three loses.*

SIR JAMES COURTLY. You have great Luck to Night, Mr. *Sharper.*

SHARPER. So I have Sir James—I have won *Sonica* every time.

LADY REVELLER. But if he has got the Nack of winning thus he shall sharp no more here, I promise him. (*Aside.*)

MRS. SAGO. I Mace that.

LADY REVELLER. Sir James, pray will you Tally.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. With all my Heart, Madam. (*Takes the Cards and shuffles them.*)

MRS. SAGO. Pray give me the Cards, Sir. (*Takes 'em and shuffles 'em, and gives 'em to him again.*)

CAPTAIN HEARTY. I set that.³

LADY REVELLER. I set Five Guineas upon this Card, Sir *James.*

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Done Madam,—Five wins,—Six loses.

MRS. SAGO. I Set that.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Five don't go, and Seven loses.

CAPTAIN HEARTY. I Mace double.

LADY REVELLER. I Mace that.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Three wins, Six loses.

MRS. SAGO. I Mace, I Mace double, and that—Oh ye malicious

1 Version of French "trois," three.

2 Sonica: immediately; see page 49, note 1.

3 Lay down a bet.

Stars!—again.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Eight wins Seven loses.

CAPTAIN HEARTY. So, this *Trante & leva* makes some Amends;—
Adsbud I hate Cheating,—What's that false ~~luck~~ made for
now? Ha, Madam? *turn*

LADY REVELLER. Nay, Mrs. Sago, if you begin to play foul.

MRS. SAGO. Rude Brute, to take Notice of the Slight of Hand
in our Sex—I protest he wrongs me, Madam,—there's the
last ~~Down~~ Stake,—and I set it all,—now Fortune Favour me, or
this Moment is my last.

LADY REVELLER. There's the last of Fifty Pounds,—what's the
meaning of this?

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Now for my Plot, her Stock is low I
perceive. (*Slips a Purse of Gold into the Furbeloes of Lady Reveller's* *lap.*)
Apron)

LADY REVELLER. I never had such ill Luck,—I must fetch more
Money: Ha; from whence comes this? This is the Genteelst
Piece of Gallantry, the Action is Sir Harry's I see by his Eyes.³
(*Discovers the Purse in the Furbeloes of her Apron.*)

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Nine wins, Six loses.

MRS. SAGO. I am ruin'd and undone for ever; oh, oh, oh, to lose
every Card, oh, oh, oh. (*Burst out a Crying.*)

CAPTAIN HEARTY. So there's one Vessel sprung aleek, and I
am almost ashoar—If I go on at this Rate, I shall make but a
lame Voyage on't I doubt.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Duce wins, King loses.

CAPTAIN HEARTY. I Mace again,—I Mace Double, I mace
again;—now the Devil blow my Head off if ever I saw
Cards run so; Dam 'em. (*Tears the Cards, and stamps on*
'em.)

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Fie, Captain, this Concern among the
Ladies is indecent.

CAPTAIN HEARTY. Dam the Ladies,—mayn't I swear,—or

¹ Mrs. Sago has turned up the corner of a card (a paroli) as if it had won, to increase her winnings from it on the next turn.

² French, last.

³ Once again, Robert Wilks as Sir James is referred to as Sir Harry, from his success in Farquhar's *Sir Harry Wildair*; see page 80, note 3.

tear my Cards if I please, I'm sure I have paid for them; pray count the Cards, I believe there's is a false Tally.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. No, they are Right, Sir. (*Sir James counts em.*)

MRS. SAGO. Not to turn One Card! Oh, oh, oh. (*Stamps up and down.*)

LADY REVELLER. Madam, if you play no longer pray don't disturb those that do.—Come, Courage, Captain,—*Sir James's* Gold was very lucky;—who cou'd endure these Men did they not lose their Money? (*Aside.*)

CAPTAIN HEARTY. Bring another Book here;—that upon Ten,—and I Mace that. (*Puts down a Card, and turns another.*)

SIR JAMES COURTLY. King face't, Eight wins, Ten loses.

CAPTAIN HEARTY. Fire and Gunpowder. (*Exit.*)

LADY REVELLER. Ha, ha, ha, what is the Captain vanish'd in his own Smoak?—Come, I Bett with you, Mr. *Sharper*; your Card loses.

Re-enter Captain, pulling in a Stranger, which he had fetch'd out of the Street.

CAPTAIN HEARTY. Sir, do you think it is possible to lose a *Trante & Leva*, a *Quinze-leva*,—and a *Sept-et-leva*,—and never turn once.

STRANGER. No sure, 'tis almost Impossible.

CAPTAIN HEARTY. Ounds you lie, I did Sir. (*Laying his Hand on his Sword.*)

LADY REVELLER and all the Women. Ah, ah, ah, ah. (*Shrieks and run off.*)

CAPTAIN HEARTY. What the Devil, had I to do among these Land-Rats?—Zounds, to lose Forty Pounds for nothing, not so much as a Wench for it; Ladies, quotha,—a Man had as good be acquainted with Pick-pockets. (*Exit.*)

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Ha, ha, ha, the Captain has frighted the Women out of their Wits,—now to keep my Promise with my Lord, tho' the Thing has but an ill Face, no Matter.

*They join together to Enslave us Men,
And why not we to Conquer them again.*

ACT V

Enter Sir James on one side, and Lady Reveller on the other.

LADY REVELLER. Sir *James*, what have you done with the Rude Porpois?

SIR JAMES COURTLY. He is gone to your Uncle's Apartment, Madam, I suppose.—I was in Pain till I knew how your Ladiship did after your Fright.

LADY REVELLER. Really, Sir *James*, the Fellow has put me into the Spleen by his ill Manners. Oh my Stars! That there should be such an unpolished Piece of Humane Race, to be in that Disorder for losing his Money to us Women.—I was apprehensive he would have beat me, ha, ha.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Ha, ha, your Ladiship must impute his ill Breeding to the Want of Conversation with your Sex; but he is a Man of Honour with his own, I assure you.

LADY REVELLER. I hate out of fashion'd Honour.—But where's the Company, Sir *James*? Shan't we Play again?

SIR JAMES COURTLY. All disperss'd, Madam.

LADY REVELLER. Come, you and I'll go to Picquet then.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Oh I'm tir'd with Cards, Madam, can't you think of some other Diversion to pass a chearful Hour?—I cou'd tell you One if you'd give me leave.

LADY REVELLER. Of your own Invention? Then it must be a pleasant One.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Oh the pleasantest one in the World.

LADY REVELLER. What is it I pray?

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Love, Love, my Dear Charmer.

(Approaches her.)

LADY REVELLER. Oh Cupid! How came that in your Head?

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Nay, 'tis in my Heart, and except you pity me the Wound is Mortal.

LADY REVELLER. Ha, ha, ha, is Sir *James* got into my Lord *Worthy's* Class?—You that could tell me I should not have so large a Theme for my Diversion, were you in his Place, ha, ha, ha; what, and is the Gay, the Airy, the Witty, Inconstant, Sir *James* overtaken? Ha, ha.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Very true, Madam,—you see there is no jesting with Fire.—Will you be kind? (Gets between her and the Door.)

LADY REVELLER. Kind? What a dismal Sound was there?—I'm afraid your Feaver's high, Sir *James*, ha, ha.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. If you think so, Madam, 'tis time to apply cooling Medicines. (Locks the Door.)

LADY REVELLER. Ha, what Insolence is this? The Door lock'd! What do you mean Sir *James*?

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Oh 'tis something indecent to Name it, Madam, but I intend to show you. (Lays hold on her.)

LADY REVELLER. Unhand me, Villain, or I'll cry out—

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Do, and make your self the Jest of Servants, expose your Reputation to their vile Tongues,—which if you please shall remain safe within my Breast; but if with your own Noise you Blast it, here I bid Defiance to all Honour and Secrecy,—the First Man than enters dies. (Struggles with her.)

LADY REVELLER. What shall I do? Instruct me Heaven—Monster, is this your Friendship to my Lord? And can you wrong the Woman he Adores.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Ay, but the Woman does not care a Souse¹ for him; and therefore he has no Right above me; I love you as much, and will possess.

LADY REVELLER. Oh! hold—Kill me rather than destroy my Honour—what Devil has Debauch'd your Temper? Or how has my Carriage drawn this Curse upon me? What have I done to give you cause to think you ever shou'd succeed this hated Way. (Weeps.)

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Why this Question, Madam? Can a Lady that loves Play so passionately as you do—that takes as much Pains to draw Men in to lose their Money, as a Town

¹ French "sou," a very small coin.

Miss to their Destruction—that Caresses all Sorts of People for your Interest, that divides your time between your Toylet and the *Basset-Table*; Can you, I say, boast of Innate Virtue?—Fie, fie, I am sure you must have guess'd for what I Play'd so Deep—we never part with our Money without Design—or writing Fool upon our Foreheads;¹—therefore no more of this Resistance, except you would have more Money.

LADY REVELLER. Oh! horrid.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. There was Fifty Guineas in that Purse, Madam—here's Fifty more; Money shall be no Dispute. (*Offers her Money.*) (*Throws money at her feet.*)

LADY REVELLER. (*Strikes it Down.*) Perish your Money with your self—you Villain—there, there; take your boasted Favours which I resolv'd before to have Repaid, in ^{Kind} ~~Species~~ Basest of Men I'll have your Life for this Affront—what ho, within there.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Hush—Faith, you'll Raise the House. (*Lays hold on her.*) And 'tis in Vain—you are mine; nor will I quit this Room till I'm Possesst. (*Struggles.*)

LADY REVELLER. Raise the House, I'll raise the World in my Defence, help, Murther, Murther,—a Rape, a Rape—

Enter Lord Worthy from another Room with his Sword Drawn.

LORD WORTHY. Ha! Villain, unhand the Lady—or this Moment is thy last.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Villain, Back my Lord—follow me. (*Exit.*)

LADY REVELLER. By the Bright Sun that Shines you shall not go—no, you have sav'd my Virtue, and I will preserve your Life—let the vile Wretch be punish'd by viler Hands—yours shall not be Prophan'd with Blood so Base, if I have any Power—

LORD WORTHY. Shall the Traytor Live?—Tho' your Barbarous Usage does not Merit this from me, yet in Consideration that I Lov'd you once—I will Chastise his Insolence.

¹ “Unless we are obvious fools”; also an allusion to cuckolding, where a cuckolded fool is said to wear horns on his forehead.

² Latin, in kind.

LADY REVELLER. Once—Oh! say not once; do you not Love me still? Oh! how pure your Soul appears to me above that Detested Wretch. (*Weeps.*)

SIR JAMES COURTLY. (*Peeping.*) It takes as I cou'd Wish—

LORD WORTHY. Yet how have I been slighted, every Fop preferr'd to me?—Now you Discover what Inconveniency your Gaming has brought you into—this from me wou'd have been unpardonable Advice—now you have prov'd it at your own Expence.

LADY REVELLER. I have, and hate my self for all my Folly—Oh! forgive me—and if still you think me Worthy of your Heart—I here Return you Mine—and will this Hour Sign it with my Hand.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. How I Applaud my self for this Contrivance.

LORD WORTHY. Oh! the Transporting Joy, it is the only Happiness I Covet here.

Haste then my Charmer, haste the long'd-for Bliss.

The only Happy Minutes of my Life is this. (Exit.)

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Ha, ha, ha, ha, how I am Censur'd now for doing this Lady a Piece† of Service, in forcing that upon her, which only her Vanity and Pride Restrain'd.

So Blushing Maids refuse the Court'd Joy,

Tho' wishing Eys—and pressing Hands Comply,

Till by some Stratagem the Lover Gains,

What she deny'd to all his Amorous Pains.

~~As Sir James is going off, enter Lady Lucy meeting him.~~

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Ha, Lady Lucy!—Having Succeeded for my Friend, who knows but this may be my Lucky Minute too?—Madam, you come Opportunely to hear. (*Takes her by the Hand.*)

LADY LUCY. Stand off Basest of Men, I have heard too much; could'st thou Chuse no House but this to Act thy Villanies in? And cou'd'st thou fairly offer Vows to me, when thy Heart, Poison'd by vicious Thoughts, harbour'd these Designs against my Family?

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Very fine, Faith, this is like to be my
Lucky Minute with a Witness; but Madam—

LADY LUCY. Offer not at Excuses, 'tis height of Impudence to
look me in the Face.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Egad she Loves me—Oh! Happy
Rogue—this Concern can proceed from nothing else. (*Aside.*)

LADY LUCY. My Heart till now unus'd to Passion swells with
this Affront, wou'd Reproach thee—wou'd Reproach my self,
for having Harbour'd one favourable Thought of thee.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Why did you, Madam?—Egad I owe
more to her Anger than ever I did to her Morals.

LADY LUCY. Ha! What have I said?

SIR JAMES COURTLY. The only kind Word you ever utter'd.

LADY LUCY. Yes, Imposture, know to thy Confusion that I did love
thee,† and fancy'd I Discover'd some Seeds of Virtue amongst
that Heap of Wickedness; but this last Action has betray'd the
Fond Mistake, and show'd thou art all o'er Feign'd.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Give me leave, Madam—

LADY LUCY. Think not this Confession meant to advance thy
Impious Love, but hear my Final Resolution.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Egad I must hear it—I find for there's
no stopping her.

LADY LUCY. From this Moment I'll never—

SIR JAMES COURTLY. (*Clapping his Hand before Her Mouth.*)
Nay, nay, nay, after Sentence no Criminal is allow'd to Plead
therefore I will be heard—not Guilty, not Guilty. Madam
by—if I don't prove that this is all a Stratagem, Contriv'd
Study'd, Design'd, Prosecut'd, and put in Execution, to reclaim
your Cousin, and give my Lord Possession—may you Finish
your Curse, and I Doom'd to Everlasting Absence—Egad I'm
out of Breath—

LADY LUCY. Oh! Coud'st thou prove this?

SIR JAMES COURTLY. I can, if by the Proof you'll make me
Happy; my Lord shall Convince you.

LADY LUCY. To him I will refer it, on this Truth your Hope
Depend.

*In Vain we strive our Passions to Conceal,
Our very Passions does our Loves Reveal;*

*When once the Heart, yields to the Tyrants Sway,
The Eyes or Tongue will soon the Flame Betray. (Exit.)*

SIR JAMES COURTLY. I was never out at a Critical Minute in my Life.

in handcuffs,
Enter Mr. Sago and Two Baliffs ~~meeting~~ Alpiew.

MR. SAGO.† Heakee, Mistress, is my Wife here?

ALPIEW. Truly I shant give my self the Trouble of seeking her for him; now she has lost all her Money—your Wife is a very Indiscreet Person, Sir.

MR. SAGO. I'm afraid I shall find it to my Cost.

BALIFFS. Come, come, Sir, we can't wait all Day—the Actions are a Thousand Pound—you shall have time to send for Bail, and what Friends you Please.

MR. SAGO. A Thousand Pound? (*Enter Mrs. Sago.*) Oh! Lambkin have you Spent me a Thousand Pound.

MRS. SAGO. Who, I Pudd? Oh! undone for Ever—

MR. SAGO. Pud me no Pud,—do you Owe Mr. *Tabby the Mercer* Two Hundred Pounds? Ha.

MRS. SAGO. I, I, I, don't know the Sum Dear Pudd—but, but, but I do Owe him something; but I believe he made me Pay too Dear.

MR. SAGO. Oh! thou Wolfkin instead of Lambkin—for thou hast Devour'd my Substance; and dost thou Owe Mr. *Dollor the Goldsmith* Three Hundred Pound? Dost thou? Ha, speak Tygress.

MRS. SAGO. Sure it can't be quite Three Hundred Pound.
(*Sobbing.*)

MR. SAGO. Thou *Island Crocodile* thou—and dost thou Owe *Ratsbane the Vintner* a Hundred Pound? and were those Hampers of Wine which I receiv'd so Joyfully sent by thy self, to thy self? Ha.

MRS. SAGO. Yes indeed, Puddy—I, I, I, beg your Pardon. (*Sobbing.*)

MR. SAGO. And why didst not thou tell me of them? Thou *Rattle-snake*—for they say they have sent a Hundred times for their Money—else I had not been Arrested in my Shop.

MRS. SAGO. Be, be, be, because I, I, I was afraid, Dear Puddy.

(Crying.)

MR. SAGO. But wer't not thou afraid to Ruin me tho, Dear Pudd. Ah! I need ask thee, no more Questions, thou Serpent in Petticoats; did I Doat upon thee for this? Here's a Bill from *Calico* the *Linnen-Draper*, another from *Setwell* the *Jeweller*—from *Coupler* a ~~Man~~^{gown}-Maker, and *Pimpwell* the *Milliner*; a Tribe of Locusts enough to undo a Lord Mayor.

MRS. SAGO. I hope not, truly, Dear, Dearey, I'm sure that's all.

MR. SAGO. All with a Pox—no Mrs. *Jezebel*, that's not all, there's Two Hundred Pound Due to my self for Tea, Coffee and Chocolet, which my Journey-man has Confess'd since your Roguery came out—that you have Imbezell'd Huswife, you have; so, this comes of your keeping Quality Company—e'en let them keep you now, for I have done with you, you shall come no more within my Doors: I promise you.

MRS. SAGO. Oh! Kill me rather; I never did it with Design to part with you, indeed Puddy. (Sobbing.)

MR. SAGO. No, no, I believe not whilst I was Worth a Groat. Oh!

~~Enter Sir James.~~

SIR JAMES COURTLY. How! Mrs. *Sago* in Tears, and my honest Friend in Ruffins Hands; the meaning of this.

MR. SAGO.† Oh! Sir *James*—my Hypocritical Wife is as much a Wife as any Wife in the City—I'm Arrested here in an Action of a Thousand Pound, that she has taken up Good for, and Gam'd away; get out of my sight, get out of my sight, I say.

MRS. SAGO. Indeed and indeed. (Sobbing.) Dear Puddy but cannot—no, here will I Hang for ever on this Neck. (Flie about his Neck.)

MR. SAGO.† Help, Murder, Murder, why, why, what will you Collar me?†

† To fetter or constrain around the neck.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Right Woman, I must try to make up this Breach—Oh! Mr. *Sago*, you are unkind—'tis pure Love that thus Transports your Wife, and not such Base Designs as you Complain of.

MR. SAGO.† Yes, yes, and she run me in Debt out of pure Love too no doubt.

MRS. SAGO. So it was Pudd.

MR. SAGO. What was it? (Ha, Mistress) out of love to me that you have undone me? Thou, thou, thou, I don't know what to call thee bad enough.

MRS. SAGO. You won't hear your Keckey out, Dear Pudd, it was out of Love for Play,—but for Lo, Lo, Love to you, Dear Pudd; if you'll forgive me I'll ne'er play again. (*Crying and Sobbing all the while.*)

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Nay, now Sir, you must forgive her.

MR. SAGO.† What, forgive her that would send me to Jayl?

SIR JAMES COURTLY. No, no, there's no Danger of that, I'll Bail you, Mr. *Sago*, and try to Compound those Debts.—You know me Officers.

BALIFFS. Very well, Sir *James*, your Worship's Word is sufficient.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. There's you Fees, then leave here your Prisoner, I'll see him forth coming.

BALIFFS. With all our Hearts; your Servant, Sir. (*Exit.*)

MR. SAGO. Ah thou wicked Woman, how I have doated on those Eyes! How often have I kneel'd to kiss that Hand! Ha, is not this true, Keckey?

MRS. SAGO. Yes, Deary, I, I, I, I do confess it.

MR. SAGO. Did ever I refuse to grant whatever thou ask'd me?

MRS. SAGO. No, never, Pudd—(*Weeps still.*)

MR. SAGO. Might'st thou not have eaten Gold, as the Saying is? Ha?—Oh Keecky, Keecky! (*Ready to weep.*)

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Leave Crying, and wheedle him, Madam, wheedle him.

MRS. SAGO. I do confess it, and can't you forgive your Keckey then that you have been so Tender of, that you so often confest your Heart has jump'd up to your Mouth when you have heard my Beauty prais'd.

MR. SAGO. So it has I profess, Sir *James*—I begin to melt,—I do; I am a good-nature'd Fool, that's the Truth on't: But if I should forgive you, what would you do to make me Amends? For that Fair Face, if I turn you out of Doors, will quickly be a cheaper Drug than any in my Shop.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. And not maintain her half so well;—promise largely, Madam. (*To Mrs. Sago.*)

MRS. SAGO. I'll Love you for ever, Deary.

MR. SAGO. But you'll Jigg to *Covent-Garden* again.

MRS. SAGO. No, indeed I won't come within the Air on't, but take up with City Acquaintance, rail at the Court, and go Twice a Week with Mrs. *Outside* to *Pin-makers-hall*.

MR. SAGO. That would rejoice my Heart. (*Ready to weep.*)

SIR JAMES COURTLY. See, if the good Man is not ready to weep; your last Promise has conquer'd.—Come, come, Buss and be Friends and end the Matter.—I'm glad the Quarrel is made up, or I had had her upon my Hands. (*Aside.*)

MRS. SAGO. Pudd, don't you hear Sir *James*, Pudd?

MR. SAGO. I can't hold no longer,—yes, I do hear him,—come then to the Arms of thy n'own Pudd. (*Runs into one another's Arms.*)

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Now all's well; and for your Comfort Lady *Reveller* is by this Time married to my Lord *Worthy*, and there will be no more Gaming I assure you in that House.

MR. SAGO. Joy upon Joys. Now if these Debts were but Accommodated, I should be happier than ever; I should indeed Kickky.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Leave that to me, Mr. *Sago*, I have won Part of your Wife's Money, and will that Way restore it to you.

MR. SAGO. I thank you, good Sir *James*, I believe you are the First Gamester that ever Refunded.

MRS. SAGO. Generously done,—Fortune has brought me off this Time, and I'll never trust her more.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. But see the Bride and Bridegroom.

~~Enter Lord Worthy and Lady Reveller, Lady Lucy, Buckle, Alpiew.~~

LADY LUCY. This Match which I have now been Witness to, is what I long have wish'd, your Course of Life must of Necessity be chang'd.

LADY REVELLER. Ha, Sir *James* here!—Oh if you love me, my Lord let us avoid that Brute, you must not meet him.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Oh, there's no Danger, Madam.—My Lord, I wish you Joy with all my Heart; we only quarrell'd to make you Friends, Madam, ha, ha, ha.

LADY REVELLER. What, am I trick'd into a Marriage then?

LORD WORTHY. Not against your Will, I hope.

LADY REVELLER. No, I forgive you; tho' had I been aware of it, it should have cost you a little more Pains.

LORD WORTHY. I wish I could return thy Plot, and make this Lady thine, Sir *James*.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. Then I should be paid with Interest, my Lord.

LADY LUCY. My Fault is Consideration you know, I must think a little longer on't.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. And my whole Study shall be to improve those Thoughts to my own Advantage.

MR. SAGO. I wish your Ladiship Joy, and hope I shall keep my Kickey to my self now.

LADY REVELLER. With all my Heart Mr. *Sago*, she has had ill Luck of late, which I am sorry for.

MR. SAGO. My Lord *Worthy* will you confine your Ladiship from Play as well as I, and my Injunction will be more easie when I have your Example.

BUCKLE. Nay 'tis Time to throw up the Cards when the Games out.

~~Enter Sir Richard, Captain Hearty, Lovely and Valeria.~~

CAPTAIN HEARTY. Well, Sir *James*, the Danger's over, we have doubled the Cape,¹ and my Kinsman is Sailing directly to the Port.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. A Boon Voyage.

¹ The Cape of Good Hope, South Africa, also known as the Cape of Storms, was a treacherous stretch of water mid-way on the voyages to India of the East India Company vessels.

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. 'Tis done, and my Heart is at Ease.—Did you ever see such a perverse Baggage, look in his Face I say, and thank your Stars, for their best influences gave you this Husband.

ENSIGN LOVELY. Will not *Valeria* look upon me? She us'd to be more Kind when we have fish'd for Eels† in Vinegar.

VALERIA. My *Lovely*, is it thee? And has natural Sympathy forborn to inform my Sense thus Long? (*Flies to him.*)

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. How! how! This *Lovely*? What does it prove the Ensign I have so carefully avoided!

ENSIGN LOVELY. Yes Sir, the same; I hope you may be brought to like a Land Soldier as well as a Seaman.

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. And, Captain, have you done this?

CAPTAIN HEARTY. Yes, Faith, she was too whimsical for our Element; her hard Words might have Conjur'd up a Storm for ought I know—so I have set her ashore.

LADY REVELLER. What, my Uncle deceiv'd with his Stock of Wisdom? Ha, ha, ha.

BUCKLE. Here's such a Coupling, Mrs. *Alpiew*, han't you a Month's Mind?¹

ALPIEW. Not to you I assure you.

BUCKLE. I was but in Jest, Child, say nay when you're ask'd.

SIR JAMES COURTLY. The principal Part of this Plot was mine, Sir *Richard*.

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. Wou'd 'twas in my Power to hang you for't. (*Aside.*)

SIR JAMES COURTLY. And I have no Reason to doubt you should repent it, he is a Gentleman, tho' a younger Brother, he loves your Daughter, and she him, which has the best Face of Happiness in a married State; you like a Man of Honour, and he has as much as any one, that I assure you, Sir *Richard*.

SIR RICHARD PLAINMAN. Well, since what's past is past Recal I had as good be satisfied as not, therefore take her, and bless ye together.

LORD WORTHY. So now each Man's Wish is Crown'd, but mine with double Joy.

¹ "An inclination, fancy" (*OED*).

CAPTAIN HEARTY. Well said, Sir *Richard*, let's have a Bowl of Punch, and Drink to the Bridegroom's good Voyage to Night,—steady, steady, ha, ha.

MR. SAGO. I'll take a Glass with you Captain,—I reckon my self a Bridegroom too.

BUCKLE. I doubt Kickey won't find him such. (*Aside.*)

MRS. SAGO. Well,—poor Keckky's bound to good Behaviour, or she had lost quite her Puddy's Favour.

Shall I for this repine at Fortune?—No.

I'm glad at Heart that I'm forgiven so.

Some Neighbours Wives have but too lately shown,

When Spouse had left 'em all their Friends were flown.

Then all you Wives that wou'd avoid my Fate.

Remain contented with your present State.

~~FINIS~~

END OF PLAY.