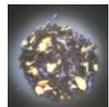


The Man of Mode
or,
Sir Fopling Flutter

A Comedy
by
George Etherege
1676

Acting Edition of 2009



Eithin

To her Royal Highness the Duchess

Madam,

Poets, however they may be modest otherwise, have always too good an opinion of what they write. The world, when it sees this play dedicated to your Royal Highness, will conclude I have more than my share of that vanity. But I hope the honour I have of belonging to you will excuse my presumption. 'Tis the first thing I have produced in your service, and my duty obliges me to what my choice durst not else have aspired.

I am very sensible, madam, how much it is beholding to your indulgence for the success it had in the acting, and your protection will be no less fortunate to it in the printing; for all are so ambitious of making their court to you, that none can be severe to what you are pleased to favour.

This universal submission and respect is due to the greatness of your rank and birth; but you have other illustrious qualities which are much more engaging. Those would but dazzle, did not these really charm the eyes and understandings of all who have the happiness to approach you.

Authors, on these occasions, are never wanting to publish a particular of their patron's virtues and perfections; but your Royal Highness's are so eminently known, that, did I follow their examples, I should but paint those wonders here of which every one already has the idea in his mind. Besides, I do not think it proper to aim at that in prose which is so glorious a subject for verse; in which hereafter if I show more zeal than skill, it will not grieve me much, since I less passionately desire to be esteemed a poet than to be thought,

Madam,
Your Royal Highness's
most humble, most obedient,
and most faithful servant,
George Etherege.

Prologue by Sir Car Scroope, Baronet

Like dancers on the ropes poor poets fare,
Most perish young, the rest in danger are;
This, one would think, should make our authors wary,
But, gamester like, the giddy fools miscarry.
A lucky hand or two so tempts 'em on,
They cannot leave off play till they're undone.
With modest fears a muse does first begin,
Like a young wench newly enticed to sin;
But tickled once with praise, by her good will,
The wanton fool would never more lie still.
'Tis an old mistress you'll meet here to-night,
Whose charms you once have look'd on with delight;
But now of late such dirty drabs have known ye,
A muse o'th' better sort's ashamed to own ye.
Nature well drawn, and wit, must now give place
To gaudy nonsense and to dull grimace:
Nor is it strange that you should like so much
That kind of wit, for most of yours is such.
But I'm afraid that while to France we go,
To bring you home fine dresses, dance, and show,
The stage, like you, will but more foppish grow.
Of foreign wares why should we fetch the scum
When we can be so richly served at home?
For, heaven be thank'd, 'tis not so wise an age
But your own follies may supply the stage.
Though often plough'd, there's no great fear the soil
Should barren grow by the too frequent toil,
While at your doors are to be daily found
Such loads of dunghill to manure the ground.
'Tis by your follies that we players thrive,
As the physicians by diseases live;
And as each year some new distemper reigns,
Whose friendly poison helps t'increase their gains,
So among you there starts up every day
Some new unheard-of fool for us to play.
Then for your own sakes be not too severe,
Nor what you all admire at home, damn here:
Since each is fond of his own ugly face,
Why should you, when we hold it, break the glass?

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Dramatis Personae

Mr. Dorimant – a Rake
Mr. Medley – a Gossip
Old Bellair – a Gentleman of Substance
Lady Townley – his Sister
Young Bellair – a Gentleman about Town
Sir Fopling Flutter – a Gentleman of Paris and London
Lady Woodvil – a Lady of moderately advanced years
Harriet Woodvil – her eminently marriageable Daughter
Emilia, Mrs Loveit, Belinda - Gentlewomen
Pert – waiting-woman to Mrs Loveit
Busy – waiting-woman to Harriet
Handy – valet-de-chambre to Mr. Dorimant
Mr. Smirk, a parson
A Shoemaker
An Orange-Woman
Three Slovenly Bullies
Two Chairmen
Pages, Footmen, &c. as required

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Act I

Scene 1

[*DORIMANT's dressing-room. A table covered with a toilet; clothes laid ready. Enter DORIMANT in his gown and slippers, with a note in his hand made up, repeating verses.*]

DORIMANT: "Now for some ages had the pride of Spain/Made the sun shine on half the world in vain." [*looking on the note:*] "For Mrs Loveit." What a dull insipid thing is a billet-doux written in cold blood, after the heat of the business is over! It is a tax upon good-nature which I have here been labouring to pay, and have done it, but with as much regret as ever fanatic paid the Royal Aid or Church Duties. 'Twill have the same fate, I know, that all my notes to her have had of late, 'twill not be thought kind enough. Faith, women are i' the right when they jealously examine our letters, for in them we always first discover our decay of passion.—Hey! Who waits?

[*enter HANDY*]

HANDY: Sir—

DORIMANT: Call a footman.

HANDY: None of'em are come yet.

DORIMANT: Dogs! Will they ever lie snoring a-bed till noon?

HANDY: 'Tis all one, sir: if they're up, you indulge 'em so they're ever poaching after whores all the morning.

DORIMANT: Take notice henceforward, who's wanting in his duty, the next clap he gets, he shall rot for an example. What vermin are those chattering without?

HANDY: Foggy Nan the orange-woman and swearing Tom the shoemaker.

DORIMANT: Go; call in that overgrown jade with the flasket of guts before her; fruit is refreshing in a morning.

[*exit HANDY*]

DORIMANT: "It is not that I love you less / Than when before your feet I lay" -

[*enter ORANGE-WOMAN with HANDY*]

DORIMANT: How now, double-tripe! What news do you bring?

ORANGE-WOMAN: News! Here's the best fruit has come to town t'year; gad, I was up before four o'clock this morning, and bought all the choice i' the market.

DORIMANT: The nasty refuse of your shop.

ORANGE-WOMAN: You need not make mouths at it; I assure you 'tis all culled ware.

DORIMANT: The citizens buy better on a holiday in their walk to Totnam.

ORANGE-WOMAN: Good or bad, 'tis all one; I never knew you commend anything. Lord! would the ladies had heard you talk of 'em as I have done. Here, bid your man give me an angel.

[*sets down the fruit*]

DORIMANT: [*to HANDY*] Give the bawd her fruit again.

ORANGE-WOMAN: Well, on my conscience, there never was the like of you. God's my life, I had almost forgot to tell you there is a young gentlewoman lately come to town with her mother, that is so taken with you.

DORIMANT: Is she handsome?

ORANGE-WOMAN: Nay, gad, there are few finer women, I tell you but so, and a hugeous fortune, they say. Here, eat this peach, it comes from the stone; 'tis better than any Newington y' have tasted.

DORIMANT: This fine woman, I'll lay my life, [*taking the peach*] is some awkward, ill-fashioned,

country toad, who, not having above four dozen of black hairs on her head, has adorned her baldness with a large white fruz, that she may look sparkishly in the forefront of the King's box at an old play.

ORANGE-WOMAN: Gad, you'd change your note quickly if you did but see her.

DORIMANT: How came she to know me?

ORANGE-WOMAN: She saw you yesterday at the Change; she told me you came and fooled with the woman at the next shop.

DORIMANT: I remember there was a mask observed me indeed. Fooled, did she say?

ORANGE-WOMAN: Ay, I vow she told me twenty things you said too; and acted with her head and with her body so like you—

[*enter MEDLEY*]

MEDLEY: Dorimant, my life, my joy, my darling sin, how dost thou?

[*embraces him*]

ORANGE-WOMAN: Lord! what a filthy trick these men have got of kissing one another!

[*she spits*]

MEDLEY: Why do you suffer this cartload of scandal to come near you and make your neighbours think you so improvident to need a bawd?

ORANGE-WOMAN: [*to DORIMANT*] Good, now we shall have it! You did but want him to help you; come, pay me for my fruit.

MEDLEY: Make us thankful for it, huswife; bawds are as much out of fashion as gentlemen-ushers: none but old formal ladies use the one, and none but foppish old strangers employ the other—go, you are an insignificant brandy bottle.

DORIMANT: Nay, there you wrong her, three quarts of canary is her business.

ORANGE-WOMAN: What you please, gentlemen.

DORIMANT: To him! Give him as good as he brings.

ORANGE-WOMAN: Hang him, there is not such another heathen in the town again, except it be the shoemaker without.

MEDLEY: I shall see you hold up your hand at the bar next sessions for murder, huswife; that shoemaker can take his oath you are in fee with the doctors to sell green fruit to the gentry, that the crudities may breed diseases.

ORANGE-WOMAN: Pray give me my money.

DORIMANT: Not a penny; when you bring the gentlewoman hither you spoke of, you shall be paid.

ORANGE-WOMAN: The gentlewoman! The gentlewoman may be as honest as your sister, for aught as I know. Pray pay me, Mr Dorimant, and do not abuse me so; I have an honester way of living, you know it.

MEDLEY: Was there ever such a restiff bawd?

DORIMANT: Some jade's tricks she has, but she makes amends when she's in good-humour. Come, tell me the lady's name, and Handy shall pay you.

ORANGE-WOMAN: I must not, she forbid me.

DORIMANT: That's a sure sign she would have you.

MEDLEY: Where does she live?

ORANGE-WOMAN: They lodge at my house.

MEDLEY: Nay, then she's in a hopeful way.

ORANGE-WOMAN: Good Mr. Medley, say your pleasure of me, but take heed how you affront my house. God's my life, in a hopeful way!

DORIMANT: Prithee, peace! What kind of woman's the mother?

ORANGE-WOMAN: A goodly grave gentlewoman. Lord! How she talks against the wild young men o' the town! As for your part, she thinks you an arrant devil; should she see you, on my conscience she

would look if you had not a cloven foot.

DORIMANT: Does she know me?

ORANGE-WOMAN: Only by hearsay; a thousand horrid stories have been told her of you, and she believes 'em all.

MEDLEY: By the character, this should be the famous Lady Woodvil and her daughter Harriet.

ORANGE-WOMAN: [*aside*] The devil's in him for guessing, I think.

DORIMANT: Do you know 'em?

MEDLEY: Both very well; the mother's a great admirer of the forms and civility of the last age.

DORIMANT: An antiquated beauty may be allowed to be out of humour at the freedoms of the present. This is a good account of the mother; pray, what is the daughter?

MEDLEY: Why, first she's an heiress, vastly rich.

DORIMANT: And handsome?

MEDLEY: What alteration a twelvemonth may have bred in her I know not, but a year ago she was the beautifullest creature I ever saw; a fine, easy, clean shape; light brown hair in abundance; her features regular; her complexion clear and lively; large wanton eyes; but above all, a mouth that has made me kiss it a thousand times in imagination, teeth white and even, and pretty pouting lips, with a little moisture ever hanging on them, that look like the Provence rose fresh on the bush, ere the morning sun has quite drawn up the dew.

DORIMANT: Rapture, mere rapture!

ORANGE-WOMAN: Nay, gad, he tells you true; she's a delicate creature.

DORIMANT: Has she wit?

MEDLEY: More than is usual in her sex, and as much malice. Then she's as wild as you would wish her, and has a demureness in her looks that makes it so surprising.

DORIMANT: Flesh and blood cannot hear this, and not long to know her.

MEDLEY: I wonder what makes her mother bring her up to town; an old dotting keeper cannot be more jealous of his mistress.

ORANGE-WOMAN: She made me laugh yesterday; there was a judge came to visit 'em, and the old man, she told me, did so stare upon her, and when he saluted her smacked so heartily; who would think it of 'em?

MEDLEY: God a mercy, a judge!

DORIMANT: Do 'em right, the gentlemen of the long robe have not been wanting by their good examples to countenance the crying sin o' the nation.

MEDLEY: Come, on with your trappings; 'tis later than you imagine.

DORIMANT: Call in the shoemaker, Handy.

ORANGE-WOMAN: Good Mr Dorimant, pay me; gad, I had rather give you my fruit than stay to be abused by that foul-mouthed rogue; what you gentlemen say, it matters not much, but such a dirty fellow does one more disgrace.

DORIMANT: Give her ten shillings, and be sure you tell the young gentlewoman I must be acquainted with her.

ORANGE-WOMAN: Now do you long to be tempting this pretty creature. Well, heavens mend you!

MEDLEY: Farewell.

[*exeunt ORANGE-WOMAN and HANDY*]

MEDLEY: Dorimant, when did you see your pis-aller, as you call her Mrs Loveit?

DORIMANT: Not these two days.

MEDLEY: And how stand affairs between you?

DORIMANT: There has been great patching of late, much ado; we make a shift to hang together.

MEDLEY: I wonder how her mighty spirit bears it.

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DORIMANT: Ill enough, on all conscience; I never knew so violent a creature.

MEDLEY: She's the most passionate in her love, and the most extravagant in her jealousy, of any woman I ever heard of. What note is that?

DORIMANT: An excuse I am going to send her for the neglect I am guilty of.

MEDLEY: Prithee read it.

DORIMANT: No; but if you will take the pains you may.

MEDLEY: [*reads*] "I never was a lover of business, but now I have a just reason to hate it, since it has kept me these two days from seeing you. I intend to wait upon you in the afternoon, and in the pleasure of your conversation forget all I have suffered during this tedious absence." This business of yours, Dorimant, has been with a vizard at the playhouse; I have had an eye on you. If some malicious body should betray you, this kind note would hardly make your peace with her.

DORIMANT: I desire no better.

MEDLEY: Why, would her knowledge of it oblige you?

DORIMANT: Most infinitely; next to the coming to a good understanding with a new mistress, I love a quarrel with an old one; but the devil's in't, there has been such a calm in my affairs of late, I have not had the pleasure of making a woman so much as break her fan, to be sullen, or forswear herself these three days.

MEDLEY: A very great misfortune. Let me see, I love mischief well enough to forward this business myself; I'll about it presently and though I know the truth of what you've done will set her a-raving, I'll heighten it a little with invention, leave her in a fit o' the mother, and be here again before you're ready.

DORIMANT: Pray stay; you may spare yourself the labour; the business is undertaken already by one who will manage it with as much address, and I think with a little more malice than you can.

MEDLEY: Who i' the devil's name can this be?

DORIMANT: Why the vizard—that very vizard you saw me with.

MEDLEY: Does she love mischief so well as to betray herself to spite another?

DORIMANT: Not so neither, Medley. I will make you comprehend the mystery: this mask, for a farther confirmation of what I have been these two days swearing to her, made me yesterday at the playhouse make her a promise before her face utterly to break off with Loveit; and because she tenders my reputation, and would not have me do a barbarous thing, has contrived a way to give me a handsome occasion.

MEDLEY: Very good.

DORIMANT: She intends, about an hour before me, this afternoon to make Loveit a visit, and (having the privilege, by reason of a professed friendship between 'em) to talk of her concerns.

MEDLEY: Is she a friend?

DORIMANT: Oh, an intimate friend!

MEDLEY: Better and better; pray proceed.

DORIMANT: She means insensibly to insinuate a discourse of me, and artificially raise her jealousy to such a height, that transported with the first motions of her passion, she shall fly upon me with all the fury imaginable as soon as ever I enter; the quarrel being thus happily begun, I am to play my part, confess and justify all my roguery, swear her impertinence and ill-humour makes her intolerable, tax her with the next fop that comes into my head, and in a huff march away; slight her, and leave her to be taken by whosoever thinks it worth his time to lie down before her.

MEDLEY: This vizard is a spark, and has a genius that makes her worthy of yourself, Dorimant.

[*enter HANDY, SHOEMAKER, and FOOTMAN*]

DORIMANT: You rogue there, who sneak like a dog that has flung down a dish, if you do not mend your waiting I'll uncase you, and turn you loose to the wheel of fortune. Handy, seal this, and let him run with it presently.

[*exeunt HANDY and FOOTMAN*]

MEDLEY: Since you're resolved on a quarrel, why do you send her this kind note?

DORIMANT: To keep her at home in order to the business. [*to the SHOEMAKER:*] How now, you drunken sot?

SHOEMAKER: 'Zbud, you have no reason to talk; I have not had a bottle of sack of yours in my belly this fortnight.

MEDLEY: The orange-woman says your neighbours take notice what a heathen you are, and design to inform the bishop and have you burned for an atheist.

SHOEMAKER: Damn her, dunghill! If her husband does not remove her, she stinks so the parish intend to indict him for a nuisance.

MEDLEY: I advise you like a friend, reform your life; you have brought the envy of the world upon you by living above yourself. Whoring and swearing are vices too genteel for a shoemaker.

SHOEMAKER: 'Zbud, I think you men of quality will grow as unreasonable as the women; you would engross the sins o the nation; poor folks can no sooner be wicked, but they're railed at by their betters.

DORIMANT: Sirrah, I'll have you stand i' the pillory for this libel.

SHOEMAKER: Some of you deserve it, I'm sure; there are so many of 'em, that our journeymen nowadays, instead of harmless ballads, sing nothing but your damned lampoons.

DORIMANT: Our lampoons, you rogue?

SHOEMAKER: Nay, good master, why should not you write your own commentaries as well as Cæsar?

MEDLEY: The rascal's read, I perceive.

SHOEMAKER: You know the old proverb—ale and history.

DORIMANT: Draw on my shoes, sirrah.

SHOEMAKER: Here's a shoe

DORIMANT: Sits with more wrinkles than there are in an angry bully's forehead.

SHOEMAKER: 'Zbud, as smooth as your mistress's skin does upon her; so strike your foot in home. 'Zbud, if e'er amonsieur of 'em all make more fashionable wear, I'll be content to have my ears whipped off with my own paring-knife.

MEDLEY: And served up in a ragoût instead of coxcombs to a company of French shoemakers for a collation.

SHOEMAKER: Hold, hold! damn 'em, caterpillars! let 'em feed upon cabbage. Come, master, your health this morning next my heart now.

DORIMANT: Go, get you home, and govern your family better; do not let your wife follow you to the alehouse, beat your whore, and lead you home in triumph.

SHOEMAKER: 'Zbud, there's never a man i' the town lives more like a gentleman with his wife than I do. I never mind her motions, she never inquires into mine; we speak to one another civilly, hate one another heartily, and because 'tis vulgar to lie and soak together, we have each of us our several settle-bed.

DORIMANT: Give him half-a-crown.

MEDLEY: Not without he will promise to be bloody drunk.

SHOEMAKER: Tope's the word i' the eye of the world, for my master's honour, Robin.

DORIMANT: Do not debauch my servants, sirrah.

SHOEMAKER: I only tip him the wink; he knows an alehouse from a hovel.

[*exit SHOEMAKER*]

DORIMANT: My clothes, quickly.

MEDLEY: Where shall we dine to-day?

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[*enter YOUNG BELLAIR*]

DORIMANT: Where you will; here comes a good third man.

YOUNG BELLAIR: Your servant, gentlemen.

MEDLEY: Gentle sir, how will you answer this visit to your honourable mistress? 'Tis not her interest you should keep company with men of sense, who will be talking reason.

YOUNG BELLAIR: I do not fear her pardon, do you but grant me yours for my neglect of late.

MEDLEY: Though you've made us miserable by the want of your good company, to show you I am free from all resentment, may the beautiful cause of our misfortune give you all the joys happy lovers have shared ever since the world began.

YOUNG BELLAIR: You wish me in heaven, but you believe me on my journey to hell.

MEDLEY: You have a good strong faith, and that may contribute much towards your salvation. I confess I am but of an untoward constitution, apt to have doubts and scruples, and in love they are no less distracting than in religion; were I so near marriage, I should cry out by fits as I ride in my coach, "Cuckold, Cuckold", with no less fury than the mad fanatic does "Glory" in Bedlam.

YOUNG BELLAIR: Because religion makes some run mad, must I live an atheist?

MEDLEY: Is it not great indiscretion for a man of credit, who may have money enough on his word, to go and deal with Jews who for little sums make men enter into bonds and give judgments?

YOUNG BELLAIR: Preach no more on this text, I am determined, and there is no hope of my conversion.

DORIMANT: [*to HANDY, who is fiddling about him:*] Leave your unnecessary fiddling; a wasp that's buzzing about a man's nose at dinner is not more troublesome than thou art.

HANDY: You love to have your clothes hang just, sir.

DORIMANT: I love to be well dressed, sir; and think it no scandal to my understanding.

HANDY: Will you use the essence, or orange-flower water?

DORIMANT: I will smell as I do to-day, no offence to the ladies' noses.

HANDY: Your pleasure, sir.

DORIMANT: That a man's excellency should lie in neatly tying of a ribbon or a cravat! How careful's nature in furnishing the world with necessary coxcombs?

YOUNG BELLAIR: That's a mighty pretty suit of yours, Dorimant.

DORIMANT: I am glad't has your approbation.

YOUNG BELLAIR: No man in town has a better fancy in his clothes than you have.

DORIMANT: You will make me have an opinion of my genius.

MEDLEY: There is a great critic, I hear, in these matters lately arrived piping hot from Paris.

YOUNG BELLAIR: Sir Fopling Flutter. you mean.

MEDLEY: The same.

YOUNG BELLAIR: He thinks himself the pattern of modern gallantry.

DORIMANT: He is indeed the pattern of modern foppery

MEDLEY: He was yesterday at the play, with a pair of gloves up to his elbows and a periwig more exactly curled than a lady's head newly dressed for a ball.

YOUNG BELLAIR: What a pretty lisp he has!

DORIMANT: Ho! that he affects in imitation of the people of quality in France.

MEDLEY: His head stands for the most part on one side, and his looks are more languishing than a lady's when she lolls at stretch in her coach or leans her head carelessly against the side of a box i' the playhouse.

DORIMANT: He is a person indeed of great acquired follies.

MEDLEY: He is like many others, beholding to his education for making him so eminent a coxcomb; many a fool had been lost to the world had their indulgent parents wisely bestowed neither learning

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nor good breeding on 'em.

YOUNG BELLAIR: He has been, as the sparkish word is, brisk upon the ladies already; he was yesterday at my Aunt Townley's, and gave Mrs Loveit a catalogue of his good qualities under the character of a complete gentleman, who, according to Sir Fopling, ought to dress well, dance well, fence well, have a genius for love-letters, an agreeable voice for a chamber, be very amorous, something discreet, but not over-constant.

MEDLEY: Pretty ingredients to make an accomplished person.

DORIMANT: I am glad he pitched upon Loveit.

YOUNG BELLAIR: How so?

DORIMANT: I wanted a fop to lay to her charge, and this is as pat as may be.

YOUNG BELLAIR: I am confident she loves no man but you.

DORIMANT: The good fortune were enough to make me vain, but that I am in my nature modest.

YOUNG BELLAIR: Hark you, Dorimant; with your leave, Mr. Medley, 'tis only a secret concerning a fair lady.

MEDLEY: Your good breeding, sir, gives you too much trouble; you might have whispered without all this ceremony.

YOUNG BELLAIR: [*to DORIMANT:*]. How stand your affairs with Belinda of late?

DORIMANT: She's a little jilting baggage.

YOUNG BELLAIR: Nay, I believe her false enough, but she's ne'er the worse for your purpose; she was with you yesterday in a disguise at the play.

DORIMANT: There we fell out, and resolved never to speak to one another more.

YOUNG BELLAIR: The occasion?

DORIMANT: Want of courage to meet me at the place appointed. These young women apprehend loving as much as the young men do fighting at first; but once entered, like them too, they all turn bullies straight.

[*enter HANDY*]

HANDY: [*to BELLAIR:*] Sir, your man without desires to speak with you.

YOUNG BELLAIR: Gentlemen, I'll return immediately.

[*exit YOUNG BELLAIR*]

MEDLEY: A very pretty fellow this.

DORIMANT: He's handsome, well-bred, and by much the most tolerable of all the young men that do not abound in wit.

MEDLEY: Ever well-dressed, always complaisant, and seldom impertinent; you and he are grown very intimate, I see.

DORIMANT: It is our mutual interest to be so: it makes the women think the better of his understanding and judge more favourably of my reputation; it makes him pass upon some for a man of very good sense and I upon others for a very civil person.

MEDLEY: What was that whisper?

DORIMANT: A thing which he would fain have known, but I did not think it fit to tell him; it might have frightened him from his honourable intentions of marrying.

MEDLEY: Emilia, give her her due, has the best reputation of any young woman about the town who has beauty enough to provoke detraction; her carriage is unaffected, her discourse modest, not at all censorious nor pretending, like the counterfeits of the age.

DORIMANT: She's a discreet maid, and I believe nothing can corrupt her but a husband.

MEDLEY: A husband?

DORIMANT: Yes, a husband; I have known many women make a difficulty of losing a maidenhead who have afterwards made none of a cuckold.

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MEDLEY: This prudent consideration, I am apt to think, has made you confirm poor Bellair in the desperate resolution he has taken.

DORIMANT: Indeed, the little hope I found there was of her, in the state she was in, has made him by my advice contribute something towards the changing of her condition. [*enter YOUNG BELLAIR*] Dear Bellair, by heavens I thought we had lost thee; men in love are never to be reckoned on when we would form a company.

YOUNG BELLAIR: Dorimant I am undone; my man has brought the most surprising news i' the world.

DORIMANT: Some strange misfortune is befallen your love.

YOUNG BELLAIR: My father came to town last night, and lodges i' the very house where Emilia lies.

MEDLEY: Does he know it is with her you are in love?

YOUNG BELLAIR: He knows I love, but knows not whom, without some officious sot has betrayed me.

DORIMANT: Your Aunt Townley is your confidante and favours the business.

YOUNG BELLAIR: I do not apprehend any ill office from her; I have received a letter, in which I am commanded by my father to meet him at my aunt's this afternoon; he tells me farther he has made a match for me, and bids me resolve to be obedient to his will or expect to be disinherited.

MEDLEY: Now's your time, Bellair; never had lover such an opportunity of giving a generous proof of his passion.

YOUNG BELLAIR: As how, I pray?

MEDLEY: Why, hang an estate, marry Emilia out of hand, and provoke your father to do what he threatens; 'tis but despising a coach, humbling yourself to a pair of goloshes, being out of countenance when you meet your friends, pointed at and pitied wherever you go by all the amorous fops that know you, and your fame will be immortal.

YOUNG BELLAIR: I could find in my heart to resolve not to marry at all.

DORIMANT: Fie, fie! that would spoil a good jest and disappoint the well-natured town of an occasion of laughing at you.

YOUNG BELLAIR: The storm I have so long expected hangs o'er my head and begins to pour down upon me; I am on the rack, and can have no rest till I'm satisfied in what I fear; where do you dine?

DORIMANT: At Long's or Locket's.

MEDLEY: At Long's let it be.

YOUNG BELLAIR: I'll run and see Emilia, and inform myself how matters stand; if my misfortunes are not so great as to make me unfit for company, I'll be with you.

[*exit YOUNG BELLAIR. Enter a FOOTMAN with a letter*]

FOOTMAN: [*to DORIMANT:*]. Here's a letter, sir.

DORIMANT: The superscription's right: For Mr. Dorimant.

MEDLEY: Let's: the very scrawl and spelling of a true-bred whore.

DORIMANT: I know the hand; the style is admirable, I assure you.

MEDLEY: Prithee read it.

DORIMANT: [*reads*] "I told a you you dud not love me, if you dud, you would have seen me again e'er now; I have no mony, and am very mallicolly; pray send me a guynie to see the operies. Your servant to command, Molly."

MEDLEY: Pray let the whore have a favourable answer, that she may spark it in a box and do honour to her profession.

DORIMANT: She shall, and perk up i' the face of quality. Is the coach at door?

HANDY: You did not bid me send for it.

DORIMANT: Eternal blockhead! [*HANDY offers to go out*] Hey, sot.

The Man of Mode, or, Sir Fopling Flutter - a Comedy

HANDY: Did you call me, sir?

DORIMANT: I hope you have no just exception to the name, sir?

HANDY: I have sense, sir.

DORIMANT: Not so much as a fly in winter.—How did you come, Medley?

MEDLEY: In a chair.

FOOTMAN: You may have hackney coach if you please, sir.

DORIMANT: I may ride the elephant if I please, sir; call another chair, and let my coach follow to Long's.

[exeunt singing, Be calm, ye great parents, &c.]

Act II

Scene 1

[enter LADY TOWNLEY and EMILIA]

LADY TOWNLEY: I was afraid, Emilia, all had been discovered.

EMILIA: I tremble with the apprehension still.

LADY TOWNLEY: That my brother should take lodgings i' the very house where you lie!

EMILIA: 'Twas lucky we had timely notice to warn the people to be secret; he seems to be a mighty good-humoured old man.

LADY TOWNLEY: He ever had a notable smirking way with him.

EMILIA: He calls me rogue, tells me he can't abide me, and does so bepat me.

LADY TOWNLEY: On my word you are much in his favour then.

EMILIA: He has been very inquisitive, I am told, about my family, my reputation, and my fortune.

LADY TOWNLEY: I am confident he does not i' the least suspect you are the woman his son's in love with.

EMILIA: What should make him then inform himself so particularly of me?

LADY TOWNLEY: He was always of a very loving temper himself; it may be he has a doting fit upon him; who knows?

EMILIA: It cannot be.

[enter YOUNG BELLAIR]

LADY TOWNLEY: Here comes my nephew. Where did you leave your father?

YOUNG BELLAIR: Writing a note within. Emilia, this early visit looks as if some kind jealousy would not let you rest at home.

EMILIA: The knowledge I have of my rival gives me a little cause to fear your constancy.

YOUNG BELLAIR: My constancy! I vow—

EMILIA: Do not vow—Our love is frail as is our life, and full as little in our power; and are you sure you shall outlive this day?

YOUNG BELLAIR: I am not; but when we are in perfect health 'twere an idle thing to fright ourselves with the thoughts of sudden death

LADY TOWNLEY: Pray what has passed between you and your father i' the garden?

YOUNG BELLAIR: He's firm in his resolution, tells me I must marry Mrs Harriet, or swears he'll marry himself and disinherit me; when I saw I could not prevail with him to be more indulgent, I dissembled an obedience to his will which has composed his passion, and will give us time, and I hope opportunity, to deceive him.

[*enter OLD BELLAIR with a note in his hand*]

LADY TOWNLEY: Peace, here he comes.

OLD BELLAIR: Harry, take this, and let your man carry it for me to Mr. Fourbes's chamber, my lawyer, i' the Temple. [*exit YOUNG BELLAIR. To EMILIA:*] Neighbour, adod, I am glad to see thee here; make much of her, sister, she's one of the best of your acquaintance; I like her countenance and her behaviour well, she has a modesty that is not common i' this age, adod, she has.

LADY TOWNLEY: I know her value, brother, and esteem her accordingly.

OLD BELLAIR: Advise her to wear a little more mirth in her face, adod, she's too serious.

LADY TOWNLEY: The fault is very excusable in a young woman.

OLD BELLAIR: Nay, adod, I like her ne'er the worse, a melancholy beauty has her charms; I love a pretty sadness in a face which varies now and then, like changeable colours, into a smile.

LADY TOWNLEY: Methinks you speak very feelingly, brother.

OLD BELLAIR: I am but five-and-fifty, sister, you know, an age not altogether insensible! [*to EMILIA:*] Cheer up, sweetheart, I have a secret to tell thee may chance to make thee merry; we three will make collation together anon; i' the meantime mum, I can't abide you; go, I can't abide you.

[*enter YOUNG BELLAIR*] Harry, come, you must along with me to my Lady Woodvil's. I am going to slip the boy at a mistress.

YOUNG BELLAIR: At a wife, sir, you would say.

OLD BELLAIR: You need not look so grum, sir; a wife is no curse when she brings the blessing of a good estate with her; but an idle town flirt, with a painted face, a rotten reputation, and a crazy fortune, adod, is the devil and all; and such a one I hear you are in league with

YOUNG BELLAIR: I cannot help detraction, sir.

OLD BELLAIR: Out, a pise o' their breeches, there are keeping fools enough for such flaunting baggages, and they are e'en too good for 'em. [*to EMILIA:*] Remember night, go, you're a rogue, you're a rogue; fare you well, fare you well; come, come, come along, sir.

[*exeunt OLD and YOUNG BELLAIR*]

LADY TOWNLEY: On my word the old man comes on apace; I'll lay my life he's smitten.

EMILIA: This is nothing but the pleasantness of his humour.

LADY TOWNLEY: I know him better than you; let it work, it may prove lucky.

[*enter a PAGE*]

PAGE: Madam, Mr. Medley has sent to know whether a visit will not be troublesome this afternoon?

LADY TOWNLEY: Send him word his visits never are so.

[*exit PAGE*]

EMILIA: He's a very pleasant man.

LADY TOWNLEY: He's a very necessary man among us women; he's not scandalous i' the least, perpetually contriving to bring good company together, and always ready to stop up a gap at ombre; then he knows all the little news o' the town.

EMILIA: I love to hear him talk o' the intrigues; let 'em be never so dull in themselves, he'll make 'em pleasant i' the relation.

LADY TOWNLEY: But he improves things so much one can take no measure of the truth from him. Mr. Dorimant swears a flea or a maggot is not made more monstrous by a magnifying glass than a story is by his telling it.

EMILIA: Hold, here he comes.

[*enter MEDLEY*]

LADY TOWNLEY: Mr. Medley.

MEDLEY: Your servant, madam.

LADY TOWNLEY: You have made yourself a stranger of late.

The Man of Mode, or, Sir Fopling Flutter - a Comedy

EMILIA: I believe you took a surfeit of ombre last time you were here.

MEDLEY: Indeed I had my bellyful of that termagant lady-dealer; there never was so insatiable a carder, an old gleeker never loved to sit to't like her; I have played with her now at least a dozen times till she's worn out all her fine complexion, and her tour would keep in curl no longer.

LADY TOWNLEY: Blame her not, poor woman; she loves nothing so well as a black ace.

MEDLEY: The pleasure I have seen her in when she has had hope in drawing for a matadore!

EMILIA: 'Tis as pretty sport to her as persuading masks off is to you to make discoveries.

LADY TOWNLEY: Pray, where's your friend Mr. Dorimant?

MEDLEY: Soliciting his affairs; he's a man of great employment, has more mistresses now depending than the most eminent lawyer in England has causes.

EMILIA: Here has been Mrs Loveit, so uneasy and out of humour these two days.

LADY TOWNLEY: How strangely love and jealousy rage in that poor woman!

MEDLEY: She could not have picked out a devil upon earth so proper to torment her; he has made her break a dozen or two of fans already, tear half a score points in pieces, and destroy hoods and knots without number.

LADY TOWNLEY: We heard of a pleasant serenade he gave her t'other night.

MEDLEY: A Danish serenade, with kettledrums and trumpets.

EMILIA: Oh, barbarous!

MEDLEY: What, you are of the number of the ladies whose ears are grown so delicate since our operas, you can be charmed with nothing but *flutes douces* and French hautboys.

EMILIA: Leave your raillery, and tell us is there any new wit come forth, songs or novels?

MEDLEY: A very pretty piece of gallantry by an eminent author called *The Diversions of Brussels*; very necessary to be read by all old ladies who are desirous to improve themselves at questions and commands, blindman's buff, and the like fashionable recreations.

EMILIA: Oh, ridiculous!

MEDLEY: Then there is *The Art of Affectation*, written by a late beauty of quality, teaching you how to draw up your breasts, stretch up your neck, to thrust out your breech, to play with your head, to toss up your nose, to bite your lips, to turn up your eyes, to speak in a silly soft tone of a voice, and use all the foolish French words that will infallibly make your person and conversation charming, with a short apology at the latter end, in the behalf of young ladies who notoriously wash and paint, though they have naturally good complexions.

EMILIA: What a deal of stuff you tell us?

MEDLEY: Such as the town affords, madam. The Russians hearing the great respect we have for foreign dancing have lately sent over some of the best balladines, who are now practising a famous ballet, which will be suddenly danced at the Bear Garden.

LADY TOWNLEY: Pray forbear your idle stories, and give us an account of the state of love as it now stands.

MEDLEY: Truly there has been some revolutions in those affairs, great chopping and changing among the old, and some new lovers, whom malice, indiscretion, and misfortune have luckily brought into play.

LADY TOWNLEY: What think you of walking into the next room, and sitting down before you engage in this business?

MEDLEY: I wait upon you, and I hope (though women are commonly unreasonable) by the plenty of scandal I shall discover to give you very good content, ladies.

[*exeunt*]

Scene 2

[*enter MRS LOVEIT and PERT. MRS LOVEIT puts away a letter, then pulls out her pocket-mirror and looks in it*]

MRS LOVEIT: Pert.

PERT: Madam.

MRS LOVEIT: I hate myself, I look so ill to-day.

PERT: Hate the wicked cause on't, that base man Mr. Dorimant, who makes you torment and vex yourself continually.

MRS LOVEIT: He is to blame, indeed.

PERT: To blame to be two days without sending, writing, or coming near you, contrary to his oath and covenant! 'twas to much purpose to make him swear: I'll lay my life there's not an article but he has broken—talked to the vizards i' the pit; waited upon the ladies from the boxes to their coaches; gone behind the scenes and fawned upon those little insignificant creatures the players; 'tis impossible for a man of his inconstant temper to forbear, I'm sure.

MRS LOVEIT: I know he is a devil, but he has something of the angel yet undefaced in him, which makes him so charming and agreeable that I must love him be he never so wicked.

PERT: I little thought, madam, to see your spirit tamed to this degree, who banished poor Mr. Lackwit but for taking up another lady's fan in your presence.

MRS LOVEIT: My knowing of such odious fools contributes to the making of me love Dorimant the better.

PERT: Your knowing of Mr. Dorimant, in my mind, should rather make you hate all mankind.

MRS LOVEIT: So it does, besides himself.

PERT: Pray, what excuse does he make in his letter?

MRS LOVEIT: He has had business.

PERT: Business in general terms would not have been a current excuse for another; a modish man is always very busy when he is in pursuit of a new mistress.

MRS LOVEIT: Some fop has bribed you to rail at him; he had business, I will believe it, and will forgive him.

PERT: You may forgive him anything, but I shall never forgive him his turning me into ridicule, as I hear he does.

MRS LOVEIT: I perceive you are of the number of those fools his wit has made his enemies.

PERT: I am of the number of those he's pleased to rally, madam; and if we may believe Mr. Wagfan and Mr. Caperwell, he sometimes makes merry with yourself too among his laughing companions.

MRS LOVEIT: Blockheads are as malicious to witty men as ugly women are to the handsome; 'tis their interest, and they make it their business to defame 'em.

PERT: I wish Mr. Dorimant would not make it his business to defame you.

MRS LOVEIT: Should he, I had rather be made infamous by him than owe my reputation to the dull discretion of those fops you talk of. [*enter BELINDA. MRS LOVEIT runs to her*] Belinda!

BELINDA: My dear.

MRS LOVEIT: You have been unkind of late.

BELINDA: Do not say unkind, say unhappy!

MRS LOVEIT: I could chide you; where have you been these two days?

BELINDA: Pity me rather, my dear, where I have been so tired with two or three country gentlewomen, whose conversation has been more insufferable than a country fiddle.

MRS LOVEIT: Are they relations?

BELINDA: No, Welsh acquaintance I made when I was last year at St. Winifred's; they have asked me a thousand questions of the modes and intrigues of the town, and I have told 'em almost as many things for news that hardly were so when their gowns were in fashion.

MRS LOVEIT: Provoking creatures, how could you endure 'em?

BELINDA: [*aside*] Now to carry on my plot; nothing but love could make me capable of so much falsehood; 'tis time to begin, lest Dorimant should come before her jealousy has stung her.

[*laughs, and then speaks on*] I was yesterday at a play with 'em, where I was fain to show 'em the living, as the man at Westminster does the dead; that is Mrs. Such-a-one, admired for her beauty; this is Mr. Such-a-one, cried up for a wit; that is sparkish Mr. Such-a-one, who keeps reverend Mrs. Such-a-one, and there sits fine Mrs. Such-a-one, who was lately cast off by my Lord Such-a-one.

MRS LOVEIT: Did you see Dorimant there?

BELINDA: I did, and imagine you were there with him and have no mind to own it.

MRS LOVEIT: What should make you think so?

BELINDA: A lady masked in a pretty *dëshabillë*, whom Dorimant entertained with more respect than the gallants do a common vizard.

MRS LOVEIT: [*aside*] Dorimant at the play entertaining a mask, oh heavens!

BELINDA: [*aside*] Good.

MRS LOVEIT: Did he stay all the while?

BELINDA: Till the play was done, and then led her out, which confirms me it was you.

MRS LOVEIT: Traitor!

PERT: Now you may believe he had business, and you may forgive him too.

MRS LOVEIT: Ungrateful, perjured man!

BELINDA: You seem so much concerned, my dear, I fear I have told you unawares what I had better have concealed for your quiet.

MRS LOVEIT: What manner of shape had she?

BELINDA: Tall and slender, her motions very genteel; certainly she must be some person of condition.

MRS LOVEIT: Shame and confusion be ever in her face when she shows it!

BELINDA: I should blame your discretion for loving that wild man, my dear; but they say he has a way so bewitching that few can defend their hearts who know him.

MRS LOVEIT: I will tear him from mine, or die i' the attempt.

BELINDA: Be more moderate.

MRS LOVEIT: Would I had daggers, darts, or poisoned arrows in my breast, so I could but remove the thoughts of him from thence!

BELINDA: Fie, fie! your transports are too violent, my dear. This may be but an accidental gallantry, and 'tis likely ended at her coach.

PERT: Should it proceed farther, let your comfort be, the conduct Mr. Dorimant affects will quickly make you know your rival, ten to one let you see her ruined, her reputation exposed to the town; a happiness none will envy her but yourself, madam.

MRS LOVEIT: Whoe'er she be, all the harm I wish her is, may she love him as well as I do, and may he give her as much cause to hate him!

PERT: Never doubt the latter end of your curse, madam.

MRS LOVEIT: May all the passions that are raised by neglected love, jealousy, indignation, spite, and thirst of revenge, eternally rage in her soul as they do now in mine!

[*she walks up and down with a distracted air. Enter a PAGE*]

PAGE: Madam, Mr. Dorimant.

MRS LOVEIT: I will not see him.

PAGE: I told him you were within, madam.

The Man of Mode, or, Sir Fopling Flutter - a Comedy

MRS LOVEIT: Say you lied, say I'm busy, shut the door; say anything.

PAGE: He's here, madam.

[*enter DORIMANT*]

DORIMANT: They taste of death who do at Heaven arrive, But we this paradise approach alive. [*to*

LOVEIT:] What, dancing the galloping nag without a fiddle? [*offers to catch her by the hand; she flings away and walks on*] I fear this restlessness of the body, madam, [*pursuing her*] proceeds from an unquietness of the mind. What unlucky accident puts you out of humour; a point ill washed, knots spoiled i' the making up, hair shaded awry, or some other little mistake in setting you in order?

PERT: A trifle, in my opinion, sir, more inconsiderable than any you mention.

DORIMANT: Oh, Mrs Pert, I never knew you sullen enough to be silent; come, let me know the business.

PERT: The business, sir, is the business that has taken you up these two days; how have I seen you laugh at men of business, and now to become a man of business yourself!

DORIMANT: We are not masters of our own affections, our inclinations daily alter; now we love pleasure, and anon we shall dote on business: human frailty will have it so, and who can help it?

MRS LOVEIT: Faithless, inhuman, barbarous man!—

DORIMANT: Good, now the alarm strikes.—

MRS LOVEIT: Without sense of love, of honour, or of gratitude, tell me —for I will know—what devil, masked she were you with at the play yesterday?

DORIMANT: Faith, I resolved as much as you. but the devil was obstinate and would not tell me.

MRS LOVEIT: False in this as in your vows to me! you do know.

DORIMANT: The truth is, I did all I could to know.

MRS LOVEIT: And dare you own it to my face? Hell and furies!

[*she tears her fan in pieces*]

DORIMANT: Spare your fan, madam; you are growing hot, and will want it to cool you.

MRS LOVEIT: Horror and distraction seize you, sorrow and remorse gnaw your soul, and punish all your perjuries to me!—[*weeps*]

DORIMANT: So thunder breaks the cloud in twain, And makes a passage for the rain.

[*turning to BELINDA*] Belinda, you are the devil that have raised this storm; you were at the play yesterday, and have been making discoveries to your dear.

BELINDA: You're the most mistaken man i' the world.

DORIMANT: It must be so, and here I vow revenge; resolve to pursue and persecute you more impertinently than ever any loving fop did his mistress, hunt you i' the Park, trace you i' the Mall, dog you in every visit you make, haunt you at the plays and i' the Drawing-room, hang my nose in your neck, and talk to you whether you will or no, and ever look upon you with such dying eyes, till your friends grow jealous of me, send you out of town, and make the world suspect your reputation. [*in a lower voice*] At my Lady Townley's when we go from hence.

[*he looks kindly on BELINDA*]

BELINDA: I'll meet you there.

DORIMANT: Enough.

MRS LOVEIT: Stand off, you shall not stare upon her so.

[*she pushes DORIMANT away*]

DORIMANT: Good! There's one made jealous already.

MRS LOVEIT: Is this the constancy you vowed?

DORIMANT: Constancy at my years! 'tis not a virtue in season; you might as well expect the fruit the autumn ripens i' the spring.

MRS LOVEIT: Monstrous principle!

The Man of Mode, or, Sir Fopling Flutter - a Comedy

DORIMANT: Youth has a long journey to go, madam: should I have set up my rest at the first inn I lodged at, I should never have arrived at the happiness I now enjoy.

MRS LOVEIT: Dissembler, damned dissembler!

DORIMANT: I am so, I confess; good nature and good manners corrupt me. I am honest in my inclinations, and would not, were't not to avoid offence, make a lady a little in years believe I think her young, wilfully mistake art for nature, and seem as fond of a thing I am weary of as when I doted on't in earnest.

MRS LOVEIT: False man!

DORIMANT: True woman!

MRS LOVEIT: Now you begin to show yourself!

DORIMANT: Love gilds us over and makes us show fine things to one another for a time, but soon the gold wears off, and then again the native brass appears.

MRS LOVEIT: Think on your oaths, your vows and protestations, perjured man.

DORIMANT: I made 'em when I was in love.

MRS LOVEIT: And therefore ought they not to bind? Oh, impious!

DORIMANT: What we swear at such a time may be a certain proof of a present passion; but to say truth, in love there is no security to be given for the future.

MRS LOVEIT: Horrid and ungrateful, begone, and never see me more.

DORIMANT: I am not one of those troublesome coxcombs, who because they were once well received take the privilege to plague a woman with their love ever after; I shall obey you, madam, though I do myself some violence.

[he offers to go, and LOVEIT pulls him back]

MRS LOVEIT: Come back, you shall not go. Could you have the ill-nature to offer it?

DORIMANT: When love grows diseased, the best thing we can do is to put it to a violent death; I cannot endure the torture of a lingering and consumptive passion.

MRS LOVEIT: Can you think mine sickly?

DORIMANT: Oh, 'tis desperately ill! What worse symptoms are there than your being always uneasy when I visit you, your picking quarrels with me on slight occasions, and in my absence kindly listening to the impertinencies of every fashionable fool that talks to you?

MRS LOVEIT: What fashionable fool can you lay to my charge?

DORIMANT: Why, the very cock-fool of all those fools, Sir Fopling Flutter.

MRS LOVEIT: I never saw him in my life but once.

DORIMANT: The worse woman you, at first sight to put on all your charms, to entertain him with that softness in your voice and all that wanton kindness in your eyes you so notoriously affect when you design a conquest.

MRS LOVEIT: So damned a lie did never malice yet invent. Who told you this?

DORIMANT: No matter; that ever I should love a woman that can dote on a senseless caper, a tawdry French ribbon, and a formal cravat.

MRS LOVEIT: You make me mad.

DORIMANT: A guilty conscience may do much; go on, be the gamemistress o' the town, and enter all our young fops as fast as they come from travel.

MRS LOVEIT: Base and scurrilous!

DORIMANT: A fine mortifying reputation 'twill be for a woman of your pride, wit, and quality!

MRS LOVEIT: This jealousy's a mere pretence, a cursed trick of your own devising; I know you.

DORIMANT: Believe it, and all the ill of me you can: I would not have a woman have the least good thought of me that can think well of Fopling; farewell; fall to, and much good may [it] do you with your coxcomb.

MRS LOVEIT: Stay, oh! stay, and I will tell you all.

DORIMANT: I have been told too much already.

[*exit DORIMANT*]

MRS LOVEIT: Call him again.

PERT: E'en let him go, a fair riddance.

MRS LOVEIT: Run, I say; call him again. I will have him called.

PERT: The devil should carry him away first, were it my concern.

[*exit PERT*]

BELINDA: He's frightened me from the very thoughts of loving men; for heaven's sake, my dear, do not discover what I told you; I dread his tongue as much as you ought to have done his friendship.

[*enter PERT*]

PERT: He's gone, madam.

MRS LOVEIT: Lightning blast him!

PERT: When I told him you desired him to come back, he smiled, made a mouth at me, flung into his coach, and said—

MRS LOVEIT: What did he say?

PERT: "Drive away"; and then repeated verses.

MRS LOVEIT: Would I had made a contract to be a witch, when first I entertained this great devil, monster, barbarian; I could tear myself in pieces. Revenge, nothing but revenge can ease me: plague, war, famine, fire, all that can bring universal ruin and misery on mankind; with joy I'd perish to have you in my power but this moment.

[*exit LOVEIT*]

PERT: Follow, madam; leave her not in this outrageous passion.

[*PERT gathers up the things*]

BELINDA: He's given me the proof which I desired of his love:

But 'tis a proof of his ill-nature too;

I wish I had not seen him use her so.

I sigh to think that Dorimant may be

One day as faithless and unkind to me.

[*exeunt*]

Act III

Scene 1

[*Lady Woodvil's lodgings. Enter HARRIET and BUSY, her woman*]

BUSY: Dear madam! Let me set that curl in order.

HARRIET: Let me alone, I will shake 'em all out of order.

BUSY: Will you never leave this wildness?

HARRIET: Torment me not.

BUSY: Look! there's a knot falling off.

HARRIET: Let it drop.

BUSY: But one pin, dear madam.

HARRIET: How do I daily suffer under thy officious fingers!

BUSY: Ah, the difference that is between you and my Lady Dapper! How uneasy she is if the least

thing be amiss about her!

HARRIET: She is indeed most exact; nothing is ever wanting to make her ugliness remarkable.

BUSY: Jeering people say so.

HARRIET: Her powdering, painting, and her patching never fail in public to draw the tongues and eyes of all the men upon her.

BUSY: She is indeed a little too pretending.

HARRIET: That women should set up for beauty as much in spite of nature as some men have done for wit!

BUSY: I hope, without offence, one may endeavour to make oneself agreeable.

HARRIET: Not when 'tis impossible. Women then ought to be no more fond of dressing than fools should be talking Hoods and modesty, masks and silence, things that shadow and conceal: they should think of nothing else.

BUSY: Jesu! madam, what will your mother think is become of you? For heaven's sake, go in again.

HARRIET: I won't.

BUSY: This is the extravagant'st thing that ever you did in your life, to leave her and a gentleman who is to be your husband.

HARRIET: My husband! Hast thou so little wit to think I spoke what I meant when I overjoyed her in the country with a low curtsey and What you please, madam, I shall ever be obedient?

BUSY: Nay, I know not, you have so many fetches.

HARRIET: And this was one to get her up to London; nothing else, I assure thee.

BUSY: Well, the man, in my mind, is a fine man.

HARRIET: The man indeed wears his clothes fashionably, and has a pretty negligent way with him, very courtly and much affected; he bows, and talks, and smiles so agreeably as he thinks.

BUSY: I never saw anything so genteel.

HARRIET: Varnished over with good breeding many a blockhead makes a tolerable show.

BUSY: I wonder you do not like him.

HARRIET: I think I might be brought to endure him, and that is all a reasonable woman should expect in a husband; but there is duty 'i' the case—and like the haughty Merab, I find much aversion in my stubborn mind, Which is bred by being promised and design'd.

BUSY: I wish you do not design your own ruin! I partly guess your inclinations, madam,—that Mr. Dorimant—

HARRIET: Leave your prating, and sing some foolish song or other.

BUSY: I will; the song you love so well ever since you saw Mr. Dorimant.

[*song*]

When first Amintas charm'd my heart,
My heedless sheep began to stray;
The wolves soon stole the greatest part,
And all will now be made a prey.
Ah! let not love your thoughts possess,
'Tis fatal to a shepherdess;
The dangerous passion you must shun,
Or else, like me, be quite undone.

HARRIET: Shall I be paid down by a covetous parent for a purchase? I need no land; no, I'll lay myself out all in love. It is decreed—

[*enter YOUNG BELLAIR*]

YOUNG BELLAIR: What generous resolution are you making, madam?

HARRIET: Only to be disobedient, sir.

The Man of Mode, or, Sir Fopling Flutter - a Comedy

YOUNG BELLAIR: Let me join hands with you in that.

HARRIET: With all my heart; I never thought I should have given you mine so willingly. Here I, Harriet—

YOUNG BELLAIR: And I, Harry—

HARRIET: Do solemnly protest—

YOUNG BELLAIR: And vow—

HARRIET: That I with you—

YOUNG BELLAIR: And I with you—

BOTH: Will never marry.

HARRIET: A match!

YOUNG BELLAIR: And no match! How do you like this indifference now?

HARRIET: You expect I should take it ill, I see.

YOUNG BELLAIR: 'Tis not unnatural for you women to be a little angry if you miss a conquest, though you would slight the poor man were he in your power.

HARRIET: There are some, it may be, have an eye like Bartholomew, big enough for the whole fair, but I am not of the number, and you may keep your gingerbread: 'twill be more acceptable to the lady whose dear image it wears, sir.

YOUNG BELLAIR: I must confess, madam, you came a day after the fair

HARRIET: You own then you are in love.

YOUNG BELLAIR: I do.

HARRIET: The confidence is generous, and in return I could almost find in my heart to let you know my inclinations.

YOUNG BELLAIR: Are you in love?

HARRIET: Yes, with this dear town, to that degree I can scarce endure the country in landscapes and in hangings.

YOUNG BELLAIR: What a dreadful thing 'twould be to be hurried back to Hampshire?

HARRIET: Ah! name it not!

YOUNG BELLAIR: As for us, I find we shall agree well enough! Would we could do something to deceive the grave people!

HARRIET: Could we delay their proceeding, 'twere well; a reprieve is a good step towards the getting of a pardon.

YOUNG BELLAIR: If we give over the game we are undone; what think you of playing it on booty?

HARRIET: What do you mean?

YOUNG BELLAIR: Pretend to be in love with one another; 'twill make some dilatory excuses we may feign pass the better.

HARRIET: Let us do't, if it be but for the dear pleasure of dissembling.

YOUNG BELLAIR: Can you play your part?

HARRIET: I know not what 'tis to love, but I have made pretty remarks by being now and then where lovers meet. Where did you leave their gravities?

YOUNG BELLAIR: I' th' next room; your mother was censuring our modern gallant.

[*enter OLD BELLAIR and LADY WOODVIL*]

HARRIET: Peace! Here they come, I will lean against this wall and look bashfully down upon my fan, while you like an amorous spark modishly entertain me.

LADY WOODVIL: Never go about to excuse 'em; come, come, it was not so when I was a young woman.

OLD BELLAIR: Adod, they're something disrespectful.

LADY WOODVIL: Quality was then considered, and not rallied by every leering fellow.

The Man of Mode, or, Sir Fopling Flutter - a Comedy

OLD BELLAIR: Youth will have its jest, adod it will.

LADY WOODVIL: 'Tis good breeding now to be civil to none but players and Exchange women; they are treated by 'em as much above their condition as others are below theirs.

OLD BELLAIR: Out, a pise on 'em! talk no more; the rogues ha' got an ill habit of preferring beauty, no matter where they find it.

LADY WOODVIL: See your son and my daughter, they have improved their acquaintance since they were within.

OLD BELLAIR: Adod, methinks they have; let's keep back and observe.

YOUNG BELLAIR: Now for a look and gestures that may persuade 'em I am saying all the passionate things imaginable.

HARRIET: Your head a little more on one side, ease yourself on your left leg, and play with your right hand.

YOUNG BELLAIR: Thus, is it not?

HARRIET: Now set your right leg firm on the ground, adjust your belt, then look about you.

YOUNG BELLAIR: A little exercising will make me perfect.

HARRIET: Smile, and turn to me again very sparkish.

YOUNG BELLAIR: Will you take your turn and be instructed?

HARRIET: With all my heart.

YOUNG BELLAIR: At one motion play your fan, roll your eyes, and then settle a kind look upon me.

HARRIET: So.

YOUNG BELLAIR: Now spread your fan, look down upon it, and tell the sticks with a finger.

HARRIET: Very modish!

YOUNG BELLAIR: Clap your hand up to your bosom, hold down your gown; shrug a little, draw up your breasts, and let 'em fall again gently, with a sigh or two, etc.

HARRIET: By the good instructions you give, I suspect you for one of those malicious observers who watch people's eyes and from innocent looks make scandalous conclusions.

YOUNG BELLAIR: I know some, indeed, who, out of mere love to mischief, are as vigilant as jealousy itself, and will give you an account of every glance that passes at a play and i' th' circle.

HARRIET: 'Twill not be amiss now to seem a little pleasant.

YOUNG BELLAIR: Clap your fan then in both your hands, snatch it to your mouth, smile, and with a lively motion fling your body a little forwards. So,—now spread it; fall back on the sudden, cover your face with it, and break out in to a loud laughter— take up! look grave, and fall a-fanning of yourself— admirably well acted.

HARRIET: I think I am pretty apt at these matters.

OLD BELLAIR: Adod, I like this well.

LADY WOODVIL: This promises something.

OLD BELLAIR: Come! there is love i' th' case, adod there is, or will be; what say you, young lady?

HARRIET: All in good time, sir; you expect we should fall to and love, as gamecocks fight, as soon as we are set together; adod, you're unreasonable!

OLD BELLAIR: Adod, sirrah, I like thy wit well.

[*enter a SERVANT*]

SERVANT: The coach is at the door, madam.

OLD BELLAIR: Go, get you and take the air together.

LADY WOODVIL: Will not you go with us?

OLD BELLAIR: Out a pise. Adod, I ha' business and cannot. We shall meet at night at my sister Townley's.

YOUNG BELLAIR: [*aside*] He's going to Emilia. I overheard him talk of a collation.

The Man of Mode, or, Sir Fopling Flutter - a Comedy

[*exeunt*]

Scene 2

[*enter LADY TOWNLEY, EMILIA, and MEDLEY*]

LADY TOWNLEY: I pity the young lovers we last talked of; though, to say truth, their conduct has been so indiscreet they deserve to be unfortunate.

MEDLEY: You've had an exact account, from the great lady i' th' box down to the little orange-wench.

EMILIA: You're a living libel, a breathing lampoon; I wonder you are not torn in pieces.

MEDLEY: What think you of setting up an office of intelligence for these matters? The project may get money.

LADY TOWNLEY: You would have great dealings with country ladies.

MEDLEY: More than Muddiman has with their husbands.

[*enter BELINDA*]

LADY TOWNLEY: Belinda, what has been become of you? we have not seen you here of late with your friend Mrs Loveit.

BELINDA: Dear creature, I left her but now so sadly afflicted.

LADY TOWNLEY: With her old distemper, jealousy?

MEDLEY: Dorimant has played her some new prank.

BELINDA: Well, that Dorimant is certainly the worst man breathing.

EMILIA: I once thought so.

BELINDA: And do you not think so still?

EMILIA: No, indeed!

BELINDA: Oh, Jesu!

EMILIA: The town does him a great deal of injury, and I will never believe what it says of a man I do not know again, for his sake.

BELINDA: You make me wonder!

LADY TOWNLEY: He's a very well-bred man.

BELINDA: But strangely ill-natured.

EMILIA: Then he's a very witty man.

BELINDA: But a man of no principles.

MEDLEY: Your man of principles is a very fine thing indeed!

BELINDA: To be preferred to men of parts by women who have regard to their reputation and quiet. Well, were I minded to play the fool, he should be the last man I'd think of.

MEDLEY: He has been the first in many lady's favours, though you are so severe, madam.

LADY TOWNLEY: What he may be for a lover I know not, but he's a very pleasant acquaintance, I am sure.

BELINDA: Had you seen him use Mrs Loveit as I have done, you would never endure him more.

EMILIA: What, he has quarrelled with her again?

BELINDA: Upon the slightest occasion; he's jealous of Sir Fopling.

LADY TOWNLEY: She never saw him in her life but yesterday, and that was here.

EMILIA: On my conscience, he's the only man in town that's her aversion; how horribly out of humour she was all the while he talked to her!

BELINDA: And somebody has wickedly told him—

EMILIA: Here he comes.

[*enter DORIMANT*]

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MEDLEY: Dorimant! you are luckily come to justify yourself— here's a lady—

BELINDA: Has a word or two to say to you from a disconsolate person.

DORIMANT: You tender your reputation too much, I know, madam, to whisper with me before this good company.

BELINDA: To serve Mrs Loveit, I'll make a bold venture.

DORIMANT: Here's Medley, the very spirit of scandal.

BELINDA: No matter!

EMILIA: 'Tis something you are unwilling to hear, Mr. Dorimant.

LADY TOWNLEY: Tell him, Belinda, whether he will or no.

BELINDA: [*aloud*] Mrs Loveit—

DORIMANT: Softly, these are laughers, you do not know 'em.

BELINDA: [*to DORIMANT, apart*] In a word, you've made me hate you, which I thought you never could have done.

DORIMANT: In obeying your commands.

BELINDA: 'Twas a cruel part you played! how could you act it?

DORIMANT: Nothing is cruel to a man who could kill himself to please you; remember, five o'clock to-morrow morning.

BELINDA: I tremble when you name it.

DORIMANT: Be sure you come.

BELINDA: I shall not.

DORIMANT: Swear you will.

BELINDA: I dare not.

DORIMANT: Swear, I say.

BELINDA: By my life! by all the happiness I hope for—

DORIMANT: You will.

BELINDA: I will.

DORIMANT: Kind.

BELINDA: I am glad I've sworn, I vow I think I should ha' failed you else!

DORIMANT: Surprisingly kind! In what temper did you leave Loveit?

BELINDA: Her raving was prettily over, and she began to be in a brave way of defying you and all your works. Where have you been since you went from thence?

DORIMANT: I looked in at the play.

BELINDA: I have promised, and must return to her again.

DORIMANT: Persuade her to walk in the Mall this evening.

BELINDA: She hates the place, and will not come.

DORIMANT: Do all you can to prevail with her.

BELINDA: For what purpose?

DORIMANT: Sir Fopling will be here anon; I'll prepare him to set upon her there before me.

BELINDA: You persecute her too much; but I'll do all you'll ha' me.

DORIMANT: [*aloud*] Tell her plainly, 'tis grown so dull a business I can drudge on no longer.

EMILIA: There are afflictions in love, Mr. Dorimant.

DORIMANT: You women make 'em, who are commonly as unreasonable in that as you are at play; without the advantage be on your side a man can never quietly give over when he's weary.

MEDLEY: If you would play without being obliged to complaisance, Dorimant, you should play in public places. "O bear me to the paths of fair Pell Mell." Trivia, ii, 257.

DORIMANT: Ordinaries were a very good thing for that, but gentlemen do not of late frequent 'em; the deep play is now in private houses.

The Man of Mode, or, Sir Fopling Flutter - a Comedy

[*BELINDA makes to steal away*]

LADY TOWNLEY: Belinda, are you leaving us so soon?

BELINDA: I am to go to the Park with Mrs Loveit, madam.

[*exit BELINDA*]

LADY TOWNLEY: This confidence will go nigh to spoil this young creature.

MEDLEY: 'Twill do her good, madam. Young men who are brought up under practising lawyers prove the abler counsel when they come to be called to the Bar themselves.

DORIMANT: The town has been very favourable to you this afternoon, my Lady Townley; you use to have an embarras of chairs and coaches at your door, an uproar of footmen in your hall, and a noise of fools above here.

LADY TOWNLEY: Indeed my house is the general rendezvous, and, next to the playhouse, is the common refuge of all the young idle people.

EMILIA: Company is a very good thing, madam, but I wonder you do not love it a little more chosen.

LADY TOWNLEY: 'Tis good to have an universal taste; we should love wit, but for variety be able to divert ourselves with the extravagancies of those who want it.

MEDLEY: Fools will make you laugh.

EMILIA: For once or twice; but the repetition of their folly after a visit or two grows tedious and unsufferable.

LADY TOWNLEY: You are a little too delicate, Emilia.

[*enter a PAGE*]

PAGE: Sir Fopling Flutter, madam, desires to know if you are to be seen.

LADY TOWNLEY: Here's the freshest fool in town, and one who has not cloyed you yet. Page!

PAGE: Madam!

LADY TOWNLEY: Desire him to walk up.

[*exit PAGE*]

DORIMANT: Do not you fall on him, Medley, and snub him. Soothe him up in his extravagance; he will show the better.

MEDLEY: You know I have a natural indulgence for fools, and need not this caution, sir.

[*enter SIR FOPLING FLUTTER, with his PAGE after him*]

SIR FOPLING: Page, wait without. Madam [*to LADY TOWNLEY:*], I kiss your hands. I see yesterday was nothing of chance; the belles assemblées form themselves here every day. Lady [*to EMILIA:*], your servant. Dorimant, let me embrace thee; without lying, I have not met with any of my acquaintance who retain so much of Paris as thou dost—the very air thou hadst when the marquis mistook thee i' th' Tuileries, and cried, He! Chevalier! and then begged thy pardon.

DORIMANT: I would fain wear in fashion as long as I can, sir; 'tis a thing to be valued in men as well as baubles.

SIR FOPLING: Thou art a man of wit, and understandest the town; prithee let thee and I be intimate, there is no living without making some good man the confidant of our pleasures.

DORIMANT: 'Tis true! but there is no man so improper for such a business as I am.

SIR FOPLING: Prithee, why hast thou so modest an opinion of thyself?

DORIMANT: Why, first, I could never keep a secret in my life, and then there is no charm so infallibly makes me fall in love with a woman as my knowing a friend loves her. I deal honestly with you.

SIR FOPLING: Thy humour's very gallant, or let me perish; I knew a French count so like thee.

LADY TOWNLEY: Wit, I perceive, has more power over you than beauty, Sir Fopling, else you would not have let this lady stand so long neglected.

SIR FOPLING: [*to EMILIA:*]. A thousand pardons, madam; some civilities due, of course, upon the meeting a long absent friend. The éclat of so much beauty, I confess, ought to have charmed me sooner.

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EMILIA: The brilliant of so much good language, sir, has much more power than the little beauty I can boast.

SIR FOPLING: I never saw anything prettier than this high work on your point d'Espagne.

EMILIA: 'Tis not so rich as point de Venise.—

SIR FOPLING: Not altogether, but looks cooler, and is more proper for the season. Dorimant, is not that Medley?

DORIMANT: The same, sir.

SIR FOPLING: Forgive me, sir; in this embarrass of civilities I could not come to have you in my arms sooner. You understand an equipage the best of any man in town. I hear.

MEDLEY: By my own you would not guess it.

SIR FOPLING: There are critics who do not write, sir.

MEDLEY: Our peevish poets will scarce allow it.

SIR FOPLING: Damn 'em, they'll allow no man wit who does not play the fool like themselves, and show it! Have you taken notice of the calèche I brought over?

MEDLEY: Oh, yes! It has quite another air than the English makes.

SIR FOPLING: 'Tis as easily known from an English tumbrel as an Inns of Court man is from one of us.

DORIMANT: Truly, there is a bel-air in calèches as well as men.

MEDLEY: But there are few so delicate to observe it.

SIR FOPLING: The world is generally very grossier here, indeed.

LADY TOWNLEY: He's very fine.

EMILIA: Extreme proper.

SIR FOPLING: A slight suit I made to appear in at my first arrival, not worthy your consideration, ladies.

DORIMANT: The pantaloons are very well mounted.

SIR FOPLING: The tassels are new and pretty.

MEDLEY: I never saw a coat better cut.

SIR FOPLING: It makes me show long-waisted, and, I think, slender.

DORIMANT: That's the shape our ladies dote on.

MEDLEY: Your breech, though, is a handful too high in my eye, Sir Fopling.

SIR FOPLING: Peace, Medley; I have wished it lower a thousand times, but a pox on't, 'twill not be.

LADY TOWNLEY: His gloves are well fringed, large and graceful.

SIR FOPLING: I was always eminent for being bien-gante.

EMILIA: He wears nothing but what are originals of the most famous hands in Paris.

SIR FOPLING: You are in the right, madam.

LADY TOWNLEY: The suit?

SIR FOPLING: Barroy.

EMILIA: The garniture?

SIR FOPLING: Le Gras.

MEDLEY: The shoes?

SIR FOPLING: Piccat.

DORIMANT: The periwig?

SIR FOPLING: Chedreux.

LADY TOWNLEY and EMILIA: The gloves?

SIR FOPLING: Orangerie: you know the smell, ladies. Dorimant, I could find in my heart for an amusement to have a gallantry with some of our English ladies.

DORIMANT: 'Tis a thing no less necessary to confirm the reputation of your wit than a duel will be to satisfy the town of your courage.

The Man of Mode, or, Sir Fopling Flutter - a Comedy

SIR FOPLING: Here was a woman yesterday—

DORIMANT: Mistress Loveit.

SIR FOPLING: You have named her.

DORIMANT: You cannot pitch on a better for your purpose.

SIR FOPLING: Prithee, what is she?

DORIMANT: A person of quality, and one who has a rest of reputation enough to make the conquest considerable. Besides, I hear she likes you too.

SIR FOPLING: Methought she seemed, though, very reserved and uneasy all the time I entertained her. “Their tawdry clothes, pulvilios, essences; Their chedreux perruques and their vanities.”

DORIMANT: Grimace and affection. You will see her i’ th’ Mall to-night.

SIR FOPLING: Prithee let thee and I take the air together.

DORIMANT: I am engaged to Medley, but I’ll meet you at St. James’s and give you some information upon the which you may regulate your proceedings.

SIR FOPLING: All the world will be in the Park to-night: ladies, ’twere pity to keep so much beauty longer within doors and rob the Ring of all those charms that should adorn it.—Hey, page.

[*enter PAGE, and goes out again*] See that all my people be ready. Dorimant, au revoir!

[*exit SIR FOPLING*]

MEDLEY: A fine mettled coxcomb.

DORIMANT: Brisk and insipid.

MEDLEY: Pert and dull.

EMILIA: However you despise him, gentlemen, I’ll lay my life he passes for a wit with many.

DORIMANT: That may very well be; nature has her cheats, stums a brain, and puts sophisticate dulness often on the tasteless multitude for true wit and good-humour. Medley, come.

MEDLEY: I must go a little way, I will meet you i’ the Mall.

DORIMANT: I’ll walk through the garden thither. [*to the women:*] We shall meet anon and bow.

LADY TOWNLEY: Not to-night; we are engaged about a business the knowledge of which may make you laugh hereafter.

MEDLEY: Your servant, ladies.

DORIMANT: Au revoir! as Sir Fopling says.

[*exeunt MEDLEY and DORIMANT*]

LADY TOWNLEY: The old man will be here immediately.

EMILIA: Let’s expect him i’ th’ garden.

LADY TOWNLEY: Go, you are a rogue.

EMILIA: I can’t abide you.

[*exeunt*]

Scene 3

[*The Mall. Enter HARRIET and YOUNG BELLAIR, she pulling him*]

HARRIET: Come along.

YOUNG BELLAIR: And leave your mother?

HARRIET: Busy will be sent with a hue and cry after us; but that’s no matter.

YOUNG BELLAIR: ’Twill look strangely in me.

HARRIET: She’ll believe it a freak of mine and never blame your manners.

YOUNG BELLAIR: What reverend acquaintance is that she has met?

HARRIET: A fellow-beauty of the last King’s time, though by the ruins you would hardly guess it.

[*exeunt. DORIMANT enters, crosses the stage, and exits. Enter YOUNG BELLAIR and HARRIET*]

YOUNG BELLAIR: By this time your mother is in a fine taking.

HARRIET: If your friend Mr. Dorimant were but here now, that she might find me talking with him.

YOUNG BELLAIR: She does not know him, but dreads him, I hear, of all mankind.

HARRIET: She concludes if he does but speak to a woman she's undone; is on her knees every day to pray heaven defend me from him.

YOUNG BELLAIR: You do not apprehend him so much as she does.

HARRIET: I never saw anything in him that was frightful.

YOUNG BELLAIR: On the contrary, have you not observed something extreme delightful in his wit and person?

HARRIET: He's agreeable and pleasant I must own, but he does so much affect being so, he displeases me.

YOUNG BELLAIR: Lord, madam, all he does and says is so easy and so natural.

HARRIET: Some men's verses seem so to the unskilful, but labour i' the one and affectation in the other to the judicious plainly appear.

YOUNG BELLAIR: I never heard him accused of affectation before.

[*enter DORIMANT, who stares upon her*]

HARRIET: It passes on the easy town, who are favourably pleased in him to call it humour.

[*exeunt YOUNG BELLAIR and HARRIET*]

DORIMANT: 'Tis she! it must be she, that lovely hair, that easy shape, those wanton eyes, and all those melting charms about her mouth which Medley spoke of; I'll follow the lottery, and put in for a prize with my friend Bellair.

DORIMANT: [*as he exits*] "In love the victors from the vanquish'd fly; They fly that wound, and they pursue that die."

[*enter YOUNG BELLAIR and HARRIET, and after them DORIMANT, standing at a distance*]

YOUNG BELLAIR: Most people prefer High Park to this place.

HARRIET: It has the better reputation, I confess; but I abominate the dull diversions there, the formal bows, the affected smiles, the silly by-words, and amorous tweers in passing; here one meets with a little conversation now and then.

YOUNG BELLAIR: These conversations have been fatal to some of your sex, madam.

HARRIET: It may be so; because some who want temper have been undone by gaming, must others who have it wholly deny themselves the pleasure of play?

DORIMANT: [*coming up gently, and bowing to her*] Trust me, it were unreasonable, madam.

[*she starts, and looks grave*]

HARRIET: Lord! who's this?

YOUNG BELLAIR: Dorimant.

DORIMANT: Is this the woman your father would have you marry?

YOUNG BELLAIR: It is.

DORIMANT: Her name?

YOUNG BELLAIR: Harriet.

DORIMANT: I am not mistaken, she's handsome.

YOUNG BELLAIR: Talk to her, her wit is better than her face; we were wishing for you but now.

DORIMANT: [*to HARRIET*] Overcast with seriousness o' the sudden! A thousand smiles were shining in that face but now; I never saw so quick a change of weather.

HARRIET: [*aside*] I feel as great a change within; but he shall never know it.

DORIMANT: You were talking of play, madam; pray what may be your stint?

HARRIET: A little harmless discourse in public walks, or at most an appointment in a box barefaced at

the playhouse; you are for masks and private meetings where women engage for all they are worth, I hear.

DORIMANT: I have been used to deep play, but I can make one at small game when I like my gamester well.

HARRIET: And be so unconcerned you'll ha' no pleasure in it.

DORIMANT: Where there is a considerable sum to be won the hope of drawing people in makes every trifle considerable.

HARRIET: The sordidness of men's natures, I know, makes 'em willing to flatter and comply with the rich, though they are sure never to be the better for 'em.

DORIMANT: 'Tis in their power to do us good, and we despair not but at some time or other they may be willing.

HARRIET: To men who have fared on this town like you, 'twould be a great mortification to live on hope; could you keep a Lent for a mistress?

DORIMANT: In expectation of a happy Easter, and though time be very precious, think forty days well lost to gain your favour.

HARRIET: Mr. Bellair! let us walk, 'tis time to leave him; men grow dull when they begin to be particular.

DORIMANT: You're mistaken, flattery will not ensue, though I know you're greedy of the praises of the whole Mall.

HARRIET: You do me wrong.

DORIMANT: I do not; as I followed you I observed how you were pleased when the fops cried: "She's handsome, very handsome, By God she is," and whispered aloud your name, the thousand several forms you put your face into; then, to make yourself more agreeable, how wantonly you played with your head, hung back your locks, and looked smilingly over your shoulder at 'em.

HARRIET: I do not go begging the men's, as you do the ladies' good liking, with a sly softness in your looks and a gentle slowness in your bows as you pass by 'em—as thus, sir;— [*impression of*

DORIMANT's bow] Is not this like you?

[*enter LADY WOODVIL and BUSY*]

YOUNG BELLAIR: Your mother, madam.

[*pulls HARRIET; she composes herself*]

LADY WOODVIL: Ah, my dear child Harriet!

BUSY: Now is she so pleased with finding her again she cannot chide her.

LADY WOODVIL: Come away!

DORIMANT: 'Tis now but high Mall, madam, the most entertaining time of all the evening.

HARRIET: I would fain see that Dorimant, mother, you so cry out for a monster; he's in the Mall, I hear.

LADY WOODVIL: Come away then! the plague is here, and you should dread the infection.

YOUNG BELLAIR: You may be misinformed of the gentleman.

LADY WOODVIL: Oh, no! I hope you do not know him! He is the prince of all the devils in the town, delights in nothing but in rapes and riots.

DORIMANT: If you did but hear him speak, madam!

LADY WOODVIL: Oh! he has a tongue, they say, would tempt the angels to a second fall.

[*enter SIR FOPLING with his Equipage, six FOOTMEN and a PAGE*]

SIR FOPLING: Hey, Champagne, Norman, La Rose, La Fleur, La Tour, La Verdue. Dorimant!—

LADY WOODVIL: Here, here he is among this rout, he names him; come away, Harriet, come away.

[*exeunt LADY WOODVIL, HARRIET, BUSY, and YOUNG BELLAIR*]

DORIMANT: This fool's coming has spoiled all; she's gone, but she has left a pleasing image of herself

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behind that wanders in my soul —It must not settle there.

SIR FOPLING: What reverie is this? Speak, man.

DORIMANT: “Snatch’d from myself, how far behind Already I behold the shore!”

[*enter MEDLEY*]

MEDLEY: Dorimant, a discovery! I met with Bellair.

DORIMANT: You can tell me no news, sir; I know all.

MEDLEY: How do you like the daughter?

DORIMANT: You never came so near truth in your life as you did in her description.

MEDLEY: What think you of the mother?

DORIMANT: Whatever I think of her, she thinks very well of me, I find.

MEDLEY: Did she know you?

DORIMANT: She did not; whether she does now or no, I know not. Here was a pleasant scene towards, when in came Sir Fopling, mustering up his equipage, and at the latter end named me and frightened her away.

MEDLEY: Loveit and Belinda are not far off, I saw ’em alight at St. James’s.

DORIMANT: [*whispers*] Sir Fopling, hark you, a word or two. Look you do not want assurance.

SIR FOPLING: I never do on these occasions.

DORIMANT: Walk on, we must not be seen together; make your advantage of what I have told you; the next turn you will meet the lady.

SIR FOPLING: Hey— Follow me all.

[*exeunt SIR FOPLING and his Equipage*]

DORIMANT: Medley, you shall see good sport anon between Loveit and this Fopling.

MEDLEY: I thought there was something toward by that whisper

DORIMANT: You know a worthy principle of hers?

MEDLEY: Not to be so much as civil to a man who speaks to her in the presence of him she professes to love.

DORIMANT: I have encouraged Fopling to talk to her to-night.

MEDLEY: Now you are here she will go nigh to beat him.

DORIMANT: In the humour she’s in, her love will make her do some very extravagant thing, doubtless.

MEDLEY: What was Belinda’s business with you at my Lady Townley’s?

DORIMANT: To get me to meet Loveit here in order to an éclaircissement. I made some difficulty of it, and have prepared this rencontre to make good my jealousy.

MEDLEY: Here they come!

[*enter LOVEIT, BELINDA, and PERT*]

DORIMANT: I’ll meet her and provoke her with a deal of dumb civility in passing by, then turn short and be behind her when Sir Fopling sets upon her. “See how unregarded now That piece of beauty passes.”

[*exeunt DORIMANT and MEDLEY*]

BELINDA: How wonderful respectfully he bowed!

PERT: He’s always over-mannerly when he has done a mischief

BELINDA: Methought indeed at the same time he had a strange despising countenance.

PERT: The unlucky look, he thinks, becomes him.

BELINDA: I was afraid you would have spoke to him, my dear.

MRS LOVEIT: I would have died first; he shall no more find me the loving fool he has done.

BELINDA: You love him still!

MRS LOVEIT: No.

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PERT: I wish you did not.

MRS LOVEIT: I do not, and I will have you think so. What made you hale me to this odious place, Belinda?

BELINDA: I hate to be hulched up in a coach; walking is much better.

MRS LOVEIT: Would we could meet Sir Fopling now!

BELINDA: Lord! would you not avoid him?

MRS LOVEIT: I would make him all the advances that may be.

BELINDA: That would confirm Dorimant's suspicion, my dear.

MRS LOVEIT: He is not jealous, but I will make him so, and be revenged a way he little thinks on.

BELINDA: [*aside*] If she should make him jealous, that may make him fond of her again: I must dissuade her from it. Lord! my dear, this will certainly make him hate you.

MRS LOVEIT: 'Twill make him uneasy, though he does not care for me; I know the effects of jealousy on men of his proud temper.

BELINDA: 'Tis a fantastic remedy, its operations are dangerous and uncertain.

MRS LOVEIT: 'Tis the strongest cordial we can give to dying love, it often brings it back when there's no sign of life remaining. But I design not so much the reviving his, as my revenge.

[*enter SIR FOPLING and his Equipage*]

SIR FOPLING: Hey! bid the coachman send home four of his horses, and bring the coach to Whitehall; I'll walk over the Park— Madam, the honour of kissing your fair hands is a happiness I missed this afternoon at my Lady Townley's.

MRS LOVEIT: You were very obliging, Sir Fopling, the last time I saw you there.

SIR FOPLING: The preference was due to your wit and beauty. Madam, your servant; there never was so sweet an evening.

BELINDA: 'T has drawn all the rabble of the town hither.

SIR FOPLING: 'Tis pity there's not an order made that none but the beau monde should walk here.

MRS LOVEIT: 'T would add much to the beauty of the place. See what a sort of nasty fellows are coming.

[*enter three ill-fashioned FELLOWS*]

FELLOWS: [*singing, more or less*] 'Tis not for kisses alone...

MRS LOVEIT: Faugh! Their periwigs are scented so strong—

SIR FOPLING: It overcomes our pulvillio —Methinks I smell the coffee-house they came from.

FELLOW 1: Dorimant's convenient, Madam Loveit.

FELLOW 2: I like the oily buttock with her.

FELLOW 3: What spruce prig is that?

FELLOW 1: A caravan lately come from Paris.

FELLOW 2: Peace, they smoke us!

[*all of them cough; exeunt FELLOWS, singing again.*] There's something else to be done...

[*Enter DORIMANT and MEDLEY*]

DORIMANT: They're engaged.

MEDLEY: She entertains him as if she liked him.

DORIMANT: Let us go forward; seem earnest in discourse, and show ourselves. Then you shall see how she'll use him.

BELINDA: Yonder's Dorimant, my dear.

MRS LOVEIT: [*aside*] I see him, he comes insulting; but I will disappoint him in his expectation. [*to SIR FOPLING:*] I like this pretty nice humour of yours, Sir Fopling. With what a loathing eye he looked upon those fellows!

SIR FOPLING: I sat near one of 'em at a play to-day, and was almost poisoned with a pair of cordovan

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gloves he wears.

MRS LOVEIT: Oh! filthy cordovan, how I hate the smell!

[laughs in a loud affected way]

SIR FOPLING: Did you observe, madam, how their cravats hung loose an inch from their neck, and what a frightful air it gave'em?

MRS LOVEIT: Oh! I took particular notice of one that is always spruced up with a deal of dirty sky-coloured ribbon.

BELINDA: That's one of the walking flageolets who haunt the Mall o' nights.

MRS LOVEIT: Oh! I remember him; he's a hollow tooth enough to spoil the sweetness of an evening.

SIR FOPLING: I have seen the tallest walk the streets with a dainty pair of boxes neatly buckled on.

MRS LOVEIT: And a little footboy at his heels pocket-high, with a flat cap—a dirty face.

SIR FOPLING: And a snotty nose.

MRS LOVEIT: Oh—odious! there's many of my own sex with that Holborn equipage trip to Gray's Inn Walks, and now and then travel hither on a Sunday.

MEDLEY: She takes no notice of you.

DORIMANT: Damn her! I am jealous of a counterplot!

MRS LOVEIT: Your liveries are the finest, Sir Fopling.—Oh, that page! that page is the prettily'st dressed—They are all Frenchmen?

SIR FOPLING: There's one damned English blockhead among'em, you may know him by his mien.

MRS LOVEIT: Oh! that's he, that's he! what do you call him?

SIR FOPLING: Hey!—I know not what to call him.—

MRS LOVEIT: What's your name?

FOOTMAN: John Trott, madam!

SIR FOPLING: Oh, unsufferable! Trott, Trott, Trott! there's nothing so barbarous as the names of our English servants. What countryman are you, sirrah?

FOOTMAN: Hampshire, sir.

SIR FOPLING: Then Hampshire be your name. Hey, Hampshire!

MRS LOVEIT: Oh, that sound! that sound becomes the mouth of a man of quality!

MEDLEY: Dorimant, you look a little bashful on the matter.

DORIMANT: She dissembles better than I thought she could have done.

MEDLEY: You have tempted her with too luscious a bait: she bites at the coxcomb.

DORIMANT: She cannot fall from loving me to that?

MEDLEY: You begin to be jealous in earnest.

DORIMANT: Of one I do not love?

MEDLEY: You did love her.

DORIMANT: The fit has long been over.

MEDLEY: But I have known men fall into dangerous relapses when they have found a woman inclining to another.

DORIMANT: *[to himself]* He guesses the secret of my heart! I am concerned, but dare not show it lest Belinda should mistrust all I have done to gain her.

BELINDA: *[aside]* I have watched his look, and find no alteration there: did he love her, some signs of jealousy would have appeared.

DORIMANT: I hope this happy evening, madam, has reconciled you to the scandalous Mall; we shall have you now hankering here again.

MRS LOVEIT: Sir Fopling, will you walk?

SIR FOPLING: I am all obedience, madam.

MRS LOVEIT: Come along then, and let's agree to be malicious on all the ill-fashioned things we meet.

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SIR FOPLING: We'll make a critique on the whole Mall, madam.

MRS LOVEIT: Belinda, you shall engage—

BELINDA: To the reserve of our friends, my dear.

MRS LOVEIT: No, no exceptions—

SIR FOPLING: We'll sacrifice all to our diversion.

MRS LOVEIT: All—all—

SIR FOPLING: All.

BELINDA: All? Then let it be. [*exeunt SIR FOPLING, LOVEIT, BELINDA, and PERT, laughing*]

MEDLEY: Would you had brought some more of your friends, Dorimant, to have been witnesses of Sir Fopling's disgrace and your triumph.

DORIMANT: 'Twere unreasonable to desire you not to laugh at me; but pray do not expose me to the town this day or two.

MEDLEY: By that time you hope to have regained your credit?

DORIMANT: I know she hates Fopling, and only makes use of him in hope to work me on again; had it not been for some powerful considerations which will be removed to-morrow morning, I had made her pluck off this mask and show the passion that lies panting under.

[*enter a FOOTMAN*]

MEDLEY: Here comes a man from Bellair, with news of your last adventure.

DORIMANT: I am glad he sent him. I long to know the consequence of our parting.

FOOTMAN: Sir, my master desires you to come to my Lady Townley's presently, and bring Mr. Medley with you. My Lady Woodvil and her daughter are there.

MEDLEY: Then all's well, Dorimant.

FOOTMAN: They have sent for the fiddles and mean to dance! He bid me tell you, sir, the old lady does not know you, and would have you own yourself to be Mr. Courtage. They are all prepared to receive you by that name.

DORIMANT: That foppish admirer of quality who flatters the very meat at honourable tables, and never offers love to a woman below a lady-grandmother.

MEDLEY: You know the character you are to act, I see.

DORIMANT: This is Harriet's contrivance—wild, witty, lovesome, beautiful and young—come along, Medley.

MEDLEY: This new woman would well supply the loss of Loveit.

DORIMANT: That business must not end so; before to-morrow's sun is set I will revenge and clear it: "And you and Loveit to her cost shall find, I fathom all the depths of womankind."

[*exeunt*]

Act IV

Scene 1

[*LADY TOWNLEY's house. The scene opens with the fiddles playing a country dance. Enter DORIMANT and LADY WOODVIL, YOUNG BELLAIR and HARRIET, OLD BELLAIR and EMILIA, MEDLEY and LADY TOWNLEY, having just ended the dance*]

OLD BELLAIR: So, so, so, a smart bout, a very smart bout, adod!

LADY TOWNLEY: How do you like Emilia's dancing, brother?

OLD BELLAIR: Not at all, not at all.

LADY TOWNLEY: You speak not what you think, I am sure.

OLD BELLAIR: No matter for that; go, bid her dance no more, it don't become her, it don't become her, tell her I say so. [*aside*] Adod, I love her.

DORIMANT: [*to LADY WOODVIL:*] All people mingle nowadays, madam, and in public places women of quality have the least respect showed 'em.

LADY WOODVIL: I protest you say the truth, Mr. Courtage.

DORIMANT: Forms and ceremonies, the only things that uphold quality and greatness, are now shamefully laid aside and neglected.

LADY WOODVIL: Well! this is not the women's age, let 'em think what they will; lewdness is the business now, love was the business in my time.

DORIMANT: The women indeed are little beholding to the young men of this age; they're generally only dull admirers of themselves, and make their court to nothing but their periwigs and their cravats, and would be more concerned for the disordering of 'em, though on a good occasion, than a young maid would be for the tumbling of her head or handkerchief.

LADY WOODVIL: I protest you hit 'em.

DORIMANT: They are very assiduous to show themselves at Court well dressed to the women of quality, but their business is with the stale mistresses of the town, who are prepared to receive their lazy addresses by industrious old lovers who have cast 'em off and made 'em easy.

HARRIET: He fits my mother's humour so well, a little more and she'll dance a kissing dance with him anon.

MEDLEY: Dutifully observed, madam.

DORIMANT: They pretend to be great critics in beauty; by their talk you would think they liked no face, and yet can dote on an ill one if it belong to a laundress or a tailor's daughter; they cry a woman's past her prime at twenty, decayed at four-and-twenty, old and unsufferable at thirty.

LADY WOODVIL: Unsufferable at thirty! That they are in the wrong, Mr. Courtage, at five-and-thirty there are living proofs enough to convince 'em.

DORIMANT: Ay, madam, there's Mrs Setlooks, Mrs Droplip, and my Lady Lowd; show me among all our opening buds a face that promises so much beauty as the remains of theirs.

LADY WOODVIL: The depraved appetite of this vicious age tastes nothing but green fruit, and loathes it when 'tis kindly ripened.

DORIMANT: Else so many deserving women, madam, would not be so untimely neglected.

LADY WOODVIL: I protest, Mr. Courtage, a dozen such good men as you would be enough to atone for that wicked Dorimant and all the under-debauchees of the town. [**HARRIET, EMILIA, YOUNG BELLAIR, MEDLEY, and LADY TOWNLEY break out into laughter**] What's the matter there?

MEDLEY: A pleasant mistake, madam, that a lady has made, occasions a little laughter.

OLD BELLAIR: Come, come, you keep 'em idle, they are impatient till the fiddles play again.

DORIMANT: You are not weary, madam?

LADY WOODVIL: One dance more; I cannot refuse you, Mr. Courtage.

[*they dance. After the dance OLD BELLAIR comes singing and dancing up to EMILIA*]

EMILIA: You are very active, sir.

OLD BELLAIR: Adod, sirrah, when I was a young fellow I could had capered up to my woman's gorget.

DORIMANT: You are willing to rest yourself, madam?

LADY TOWNLEY: We'll walk into my chamber and sit down.

MEDLEY: Leave us Mr. Courtage, he's a dancer, and the young ladies are not weary yet.

LADY WOODVIL: We'll send him out again.

HARRIET: If you do not quickly, I know where to send for Mr. Dorimant.

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LADY WOODVIL: This girl's head, Mr. Courtage, is ever running on that wild fellow.

DORIMANT: 'Tis well you have got her a good husband, madam; that will settle it.

[*exeunt LADY TOWNLEY, LADY WOODVIL, and DORIMANT*]

OLD BELLAIR: [*to EMILIA*] Adod, sweetheart, be advised, and do not throw thyself away on a young idle fellow.

EMILIA: I have no such intention, sir.

OLD BELLAIR: Have a little patience, thou shalt have the man I spake of. Adod, he loves thee, and will make a good husband; but no words.

EMILIA: But, sir.—

OLD BELLAIR: No answer—out a pise! peace! and think on't.

[*enter DORIMANT*]

DORIMANT: Your company is desired within, sir.

OLD BELLAIR: I go, I go, good Mr. Courtage— [*to EMILIA:*] Fare you well; go, I'll see you no more.

EMILIA: What have I done, sir?

OLD BELLAIR: You are ugly, you are ugly; is she not, Mr. Courtage?

EMILIA: Better words, or I shan't abide you.

OLD BELLAIR: Out a pise—adod, what does she say? Hit her a pat for me there.

[*exit OLD BELLAIR*]

MEDLEY: You have charms for the whole family.

DORIMANT: You'll spoil all with some unseasonable jest, Medley.

MEDLEY: You see I confine my tongue and am content to be a bare spectator, much contrary to my nature.

EMILIA: Methinks, Mr. Dorimant, my Lady Woodvil is a little fond of you.

DORIMANT: Would her daughter were!

MEDLEY: It may be you may find her so; try her, you have an opportunity.

DORIMANT: And I will not lose it. Bellair, here's a lady has something to say to you.

YOUNG BELLAIR: I wait upon her. Mr. Medley, we have both business with you.

DORIMANT: Get you all together then. [*to HARRIET:*] That demure curtsey is not amiss in jest, but do not think in earnest it becomes you.

HARRIET: Affectation is catching, I find; from your grave bow I got it.

DORIMANT: Where had you all that scorn and coldness in your look?

HARRIET: From nature, sir; pardon my want of art: I have not learnt those softnesses and languishings which now in faces are so much in fashion.

DORIMANT: You need 'em not; you have a sweetness of your own, if you would but calm your frowns and let it settle.

HARRIET: My eyes are wild and wandering like my passions, and cannot yet be tied to rules of charming.

DORIMANT: Women, indeed, have commonly a method of managing those messengers of love; now they will look as if they would kill, and anon they will look as if they were dying. They point and rebate their glances the better to invite us.

HARRIET: I like this variety well enough, but hate the set face that always looks as it would say, Come, love me—a woman who at plays makes the *doux yeux* to a whole audience and at home cannot forbear 'em to her monkey.

DORIMANT: Put on a gentle smile, and let me see how well it will become you.

HARRIET: I am sorry my face does not please you as it is, but I shall not be complaisant and change it.

DORIMANT: Though you are obstinate, I know'tis capable of improvement, and shall do you justice, madam, if I chance to be at Court when the critics of the circle pass their judgment; for thither you must

come.

HARRIET: And expect to be taken in pieces, have all my features examined, every motion censured, and on the whole be condemned to be but pretty, or a beauty of the lowest rate. What think you?

DORIMANT: The women, nay, the very lovers who belong to the drawing-room, will maliciously allow you more than that; they always grant what is apparent that they may the better be believed when they name concealed faults they cannot easily be disproved in.

HARRIET: Beauty runs as great a risk exposed at Court as wit does on the stage, where the ugly and the foolish all are free to censure.

DORIMANT: [*aside*] I love her, and dare not let her know it; I fear she has an ascendant o'er me, and may revenge the wrongs I have done her sex. [*to her:*] Think of making a party, madam, love will engage.

HARRIET: You make me start! I did not think to have heard of love from you.

DORIMANT: I never knew what'twas to have a settled ague yet, but now and then have had irregular fits.

HARRIET: Take heed! sickness after long health is commonly more violent and dangerous.

DORIMANT: [*aside*] I have took the infection from her, and feel the disease now spreading in me— [*to her:*] Is the name of love so frightful that you dare not stand it?

HARRIET: 'Twill do little execution out of your mouth on me, I am sure.

DORIMANT: It has been fatal—

HARRIET: To some easy women, but we are not all born to one destiny; I was informed you use to laugh at love. and not make it.

DORIMANT: The time has been, but now I must speak—

HARRIET: If it be on that idle subject, I will put on my serious look, turn my head carelessly from you, drop my lip, let my eyelids fall and hang half o'er my eyes—thus—while you buzz a speech of an hour long in my ear, and I answer never a word; why do you not begin?

DORIMANT: That the company may take notice how passionately I make advances of love, and how disdainfully you receive 'em.

HARRIET: When your love's grown strong enough to make you bear being laughed at, I'll give you leave to trouble me with it: till when, pray forbear, sir.

[*enter SIR FOPLING and others in masks*]

DORIMANT: What's here, masquerades?

HARRIET: I thought that foppery had been left off and people might have been in private with a fiddle.

DORIMANT: 'Tis endeavoured to be kept on foot still by some who find themselves the more acceptable the less they are known.

YOUNG BELLAIR: This must be Sir Fopling.

MEDLEY: That extraordinary habit shows it.

YOUNG BELLAIR: What are the rest?

MEDLEY: A company of French rascals whom he picked up in Paris and has brought over to be his dancing equipage on these occasions. Make him own himself; a fool is very troublesome when he presumes he is incognito.

SIR FOPLING: [*to HARRIET:*]. Do you know me?

HARRIET: Ten to one but I guess at you.

SIR FOPLING: Are you women as fond of a vizard as we men are?

HARRIET: I am very fond of a vizard that covers a face I do not like, sir.

YOUNG BELLAIR: Here are no masks, you see, sir, but those which came with you; this was intended a private meeting, but because you look like a gentleman, if you discover yourself, and we know you to

be such, you shall be welcome.

SIR FOPLING: [*pulling off his mask*] Dear Bellair.

MEDLEY: Sir Fopling! how came you hither?

SIR FOPLING: Faith, I was coming late from Whitehall, after the King's couché, one of my people told me he had heard fiddles at my Lady Townley's, and—

DORIMANT: You need not say any more, sir.

SIR FOPLING: Dorimant, let me kiss thee.

DORIMANT: [*whispers*] Hark you, Sir Fopling.

SIR FOPLING: Enough, enough—Courtage. A pretty kind of young woman that, Medley; I observed her in the Mall; more éveillée than our English women commonly are; prithee, what is she?

MEDLEY: The most noted coquette in town; beware of her.

SIR FOPLING: Let her be what she will, I know how to take my measures; in Paris the mode is to flatter the prude, laugh at the faux-prude, make serious love to the demi-prude, and only rally with the coquette. Medley, what think you?

MEDLEY: That for all this smattering of the mathematics, you may be out in your judgment at tennis.

SIR FOPLING: What a coq-à-l'âne is this! I talk of women, and thou answer'st tennis.

MEDLEY: Mistakes will be for want of apprehension.

SIR FOPLING: I am very glad of the acquaintance I have with this family.

MEDLEY: My lady truly is a good woman.

SIR FOPLING: Ah! Dorimant—Courtage I would say—would thou hadst spent the last winter in Paris with me. When thou wert there La Corneus and Sallyes were the only habitudes we had; a comedian would have been a bonne fortune. No stranger ever passed his time so well as I did some months before I came over. I was well received in a dozen families where all the women of quality used to visit; I have intrigues to tell thee more pleasant than ever thou read'st in a novel.

HARRIET: Write 'em, sir, and oblige us women; our language wants such little stories.

SIR FOPLING: Writing, madam, is a mechanic part of wit; a gentleman should never go beyond a song or a billet.

HARRIET: Bussy was a gentleman.

SIR FOPLING: Who, d'Ambois?

MEDLEY: Was there ever such a brisk blockhead?

HARRIET: Not d'Ambois, sir, but Rabutin—he who writ *The Loves of France*.

SIR FOPLING: That may be madam: many gentlemen do things that are below 'em. Damn your authors, Courtage; women are the prettiest things we can fool away our time with.

HARRIET: I hope ye have wearied yourself to-night at Court sir, and will not think of fooling with anybody here.

SIR FOPLING: I cannot complain of my fortune there, madam—Dorimant—

DORIMANT: Again!

SIR FOPLING: Courtage, a pox on't! I have something to tell thee. When I had made my court within, I came out and flung myself upon the mat under the State i' th' outward room i' th' midst of half a dozen beauties who were withdrawn to jeer among themselves, as they called it.

DORIMANT: Did you know 'em?

SIR FOPLING: Not one of 'em by heavens! not I. But they were all your friends.

DORIMANT: How are you sure of that?

SIR FOPLING: Why we laughed at all the town; spared nobody but yourself; they found me a man for their purpose.

DORIMANT: I know you are malicious to your power.

SIR FOPLING: And faith I had occasion to show it for I never saw more gaping fools at a ball or on a

Birthday.

DORIMANT: You learned who the women were?

SIR FOPLING: No matter; they frequent the drawing-room.

DORIMANT: And entertain themselves pleasantly at the expense of all the fops who come there.

SIR FOPLING: That's their business; faith, I sifted 'em, and find they have a sort of wit among them—
Ah! Filthy. [*he pinches a tallow candle*]

DORIMANT: Look, he has been pinching the tallow candle.

SIR FOPLING: How can you breathe in a room where there's grease frying? Dorimant, thou art intimate with my lady, advise her for her own sake, and the good company that comes hither, to burn wax lights.

HARRIET: What are these masquerades who stand so obsequiously at a distance?

SIR FOPLING: A set of balladins whom I picked out of the best in France, and brought over with a flutes douces or two, my servants; they shall entertain you.

HARRIET: I had rather see you dance yourself, Sir Fopling.

SIR FOPLING: And I had rather do it—all the company knows it—but, madam—

MEDLEY: Come, come, no excuses, Sir Fopling.

SIR FOPLING: By heavens, Medley!

MEDLEY: Like a woman, I find you must be struggled with before one brings you to what you desire.

HARRIET: [*aside*] Can he dance?

EMILIA: And fence and sing too, if you'll believe him.

DORIMANT: He has no more excellence in his heels than in his head. He went to Paris a plain bashful English blockhead, and is returned a fine undertaking French fop.

MEDLEY: I cannot prevail.

SIR FOPLING: Do not think it want of complaisance, madam.

HARRIET: You are too well bred to want that, Sir Fopling. I believe it want of power.

SIR FOPLING: By heavens! and so it is. I have sat up so damned late and drunk so cursed hard since I came to this lewd town, that I am fit for nothing but low dancing now, a corant, bourée, or a menuet; but St. André tells me, if I will but be regular, in one month I shall rise again. Pox on this debauchery!
[*endeavours at a caper*]

EMILIA: I have heard your dancing much commended.

SIR FOPLING: It had the good fortune to please in Paris. I was judged to rise within an inch as high as the basque, in an entry I danced there.

HARRIET: I am mightily taken with this fool; let us sit. Here's a seat, Sir Fopling.

SIR FOPLING: At your feet, madam; I can be nowhere so much at ease: by your leave, gown.

HARRIET: and **EMILIA:** Ah! you'll spoil it.

SIR FOPLING: No matter, my clothes are my creatures; I make 'em to make my court to you ladies, hey— [*dance*] Qu'on commence— [*to an English dancer*] English motions! I was forced to entertain this fellow, one of my set miscarrying— Oh, horrid! leave your damned manner of dancing, and put on the French air; have you not a pattern before you— [*dances*] pretty well! Imitation in time may bring him to something.

[*after the dance enter OLD BELLAIR, LADY WOODVIL, and LADY TOWNLEY*]

OLD BELLAIR: Hey, adod! what have we here, a mumming?

LADY WOODVIL: Where's my daughter—Harriet?

DORIMANT: Here, here, madam. I know not but under these disguises there may be dangerous sparks; I gave the young lady warning.

LADY WOODVIL: Lord! I am so obliged to you, Mr. Courtage.

HARRIET: Lord! how you admire this man.

The Man of Mode, or, Sir Fopling Flutter - a Comedy

LADY WOODVIL: What have you to except against him?

HARRIET: He's a fop.

LADY WOODVIL: He's not a Dorimant, a wild extravagant fellow of the times.

HARRIET: He's a man made up of forms and common places sucked out of the remaining lees of the last age.

LADY WOODVIL: He's so good a man, that were you not engaged—

LADY TOWNLEY: You'll have but little night to sleep in.

LADY WOODVIL: Lord! 'tis perfect day—

DORIMANT: [*aside*] The hour is almost come I appointed Belinda, and I am not so foppishly in love here to forget: I am flesh and blood yet.

LADY TOWNLEY: I am very sensible, madam.

LADY WOODVIL: Lord, madam!

HARRIET: Look, in what struggle is my poor mother yonder?

YOUNG BELLAIR: She has much ado to bring out the compliment.

DORIMANT: She strains hard for it.

HARRIET: See, see! her head tottering, her eyes staring, and her under lip trembling

DORIMANT: [*aside*] Now, now she's in the very convulsions of her civility. 'Sdeath, I shall lose Belinda. I must fright her hence; she'll be an hour in this fit of good manners else. [*to LADY WOODVIL:*] Do you not know Sir Fopling, madam?

LADY WOODVIL: I have seen that face Oh, heaven! 'tis the same we met in the Mall; how came he here?

DORIMANT: A fiddle in this town is a kind of fop-call; no sooner it strikes up but the house is besieged with an army of masquerades straight.

LADY WOODVIL: Lord! I tremble, Mr. Courtage; for certain Dorimant is in the company.

DORIMANT: I cannot confidently say he is not; you had best begone. I will wait upon you; your daughter is in the hands of Mr. Bellair.

LADY WOODVIL: I'll see her before me. Harriet, come away

YOUNG BELLAIR: Lights! lights!

LADY TOWNLEY: Light down there.

OLD BELLAIR: Adod, it needs not

DORIMANT: Call my Lady Woodvil's coach to the door quickly.

[*exeunt DORIMANT and YOUNG BELLAIR, with the Ladies*]

OLD BELLAIR: Stay, Mr. Medley, let the young fellows do that duty; we will drink a glass of wine together. 'Tis good after dancing; what mumming spark is that?

MEDLEY: He is not to be comprehended in few words.

SIR FOPLING: Hey! La Tour.

MEDLEY: Whither away, Sir Fopling?

SIR FOPLING: I have business with Courtage—

MEDLEY: He'll but put the ladies into their coach, and come up again.

OLD BELLAIR: In the meantime I'll call for a bottle.

[*exit OLD BELLAIR. Enter YOUNG BELLAIR*]

MEDLEY: Where's Dorimant?

YOUNG BELLAIR: Stolen home; he has had business waiting for him there all this night, I believe, by an impatience I observed in him.

MEDLEY: Very likely; 'tis but dissembling drunkenness, railing at his friends, and the kind soul will embrace the blessing and forget the tedious expectation.

SIR FOPLING: I must speak with him before I sleep.

The Man of Mode, or, Sir Fopling Flutter - a Comedy

YOUNG BELLAIR: Emilia and I are resolved on that business.

MEDLEY: Peace, here's your father.

[*enter OLD BELLAIR and BUTLER, with a bottle of wine*]

OLD BELLAIR: The women are all gone to bed. Fill, boy; Mr. Medley, begin a health.

MEDLEY: [*whispers*] To Emilia.

OLD BELLAIR: Out, a pise! she's a rogue, and I'll not pledge you.

MEDLEY: I know you will.

OLD BELLAIR: Adod, drink it then.

SIR FOPLING: Let us have the new bachique.

OLD BELLAIR: Adod, that is a hard word; what does it mean, sir?

MEDLEY: A catch or drinking song.

OLD BELLAIR: Let us have it then.

SIR FOPLING: Fill the glasses round, and draw up in a body. Hey! music!

[*all singing*]

The pleasures of love and the joys of good wine
To perfect our happiness wisely we join.
We to beauty all day
Give the sovereign sway,
And her favourite nymphs devoutly obey.
At the plays we are constantly making our court,
And when they are ended we follow the sport,
To the Mall and the Park,
Where we love till 'tis dark;
Then sparkling champagne
Puts an end to their reign;
It quickly recovers
Poor languishing lovers,
Makes us frolic and gay, and drowns all our sorrow;
But, alas! we relapse again on the morrow.
Let ev'ry man stand
With his glass in his hand,
And briskly discharge at the word of command.
Here's a health
to all those
Whom to-night we depose:
Wine and beauty by turns great souls should inspire.
Present altogether, and now, boys, give fire!

OLD BELLAIR: Adod, a pretty business, and very merry.

SIR FOPLING: Hark you, Medley, let you and I take the fiddles, and go waken Dorimant.

MEDLEY: We shall do him a courtesy, if it be as I guess. For after the fatigue of this night, he'll quickly have his bellyful, and be glad of an occasion to cry: 'Take away, Handy!'

YOUNG BELLAIR: I'll go with you, and there we'll consult about affairs, Medley.

OLD BELLAIR: [*looks at his watch*] Adod, 'tis six o'clock.

SIR FOPLING: Let's away then.

OLD BELLAIR: Mr. Medley, my sister tells me you are an honest man, and, adod, I love you. Few words and hearty—that's the way with old Harry, old Harry.

SIR FOPLING: Light your flambeaux. Hey!

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OLD BELLAIR: What does the man mean?

MEDLEY: 'Tis day, Sir Fopling.

SIR FOPLING: No matter. Our serenade will look the greater. [*exeunt omnes*]

Scene 2

[*DORIMANT's Lodging. A table, a candle, a toilet, etc. HANDY is tying up linen. Enter DORIMANT in his gown, and BELINDA*]

DORIMANT: Why will you be gone so soon?

BELINDA: Why did you stay out so late?

DORIMANT: Call a chair, Handy. [*exit HANDY*] What makes you tremble so?

BELINDA: I have a thousand fears about me. Have I not been seen, think you?

DORIMANT: By nobody but myself and trusty Handy.

BELINDA: Where are all your people?

DORIMANT: I have dispersed 'em on sleeveless errands. What does that sigh mean?

BELINDA: Can you be so unkind to ask me?—Well—[*sighs*] were it to do again—

DORIMANT: We should do it, should we not?

BELINDA: I think we should; the wickeder man you to make me love so well. Will you be discreet now?

DORIMANT: I will.

BELINDA: You cannot.

DORIMANT: Never doubt it.

BELINDA: I will not expect it.

DORIMANT: You do me wrong.

BELINDA: You have no more power to keep the secret than I had not to trust you with it.

DORIMANT: By all the joys I have had, and those you keep in store—

BELINDA: You'll do for my sake what you never did before—

DORIMANT: By that truth thou hast spoken, a wife shall sooner betray herself to her husband—

BELINDA: Yet I had rather you should be false in this, than in any other thing you promised me.

DORIMANT: What's that?

BELINDA: That you would never see Loveit more but in public places, in the Park, at Court, and plays.

DORIMANT: 'Tis not likely a man should be fond of seeing a damned old play when there is a new one acted.

BELINDA: I dare not trust your promise.

DORIMANT: You may.

BELINDA: This does not satisfy me. You shall swear you never will see her more.

DORIMANT: I will! A thousand oaths—By all—

BELINDA: Hold—You shall not, now I think on't better.

DORIMANT: I will swear.

BELINDA: I shall grow jealous of the oath, and think I owe your truth to that, not to your love.

DORIMANT: Then, by my love, no other oath I'll swear.

[*enter HANDY*]

HANDY: Here's a chair.

BELINDA: Let me go.

DORIMANT: I cannot

BELINDA: Too willingly, I fear.

The Man of Mode, or, Sir Fopling Flutter - a Comedy

DORIMANT: Too unkindly feared When will you promise me again?

BELINDA: Not this fortnight

DORIMANT: You will be better than your word.

BELINDA: I think I shall. Will it not make you love me less? [*starting as fiddles sound without*] Hark! what fiddles are these?

DORIMANT: Look out Handy.

[*exit HANDY and returns*]

HANDY: Mr. Medley, Mr. Bellair, and Sir Fopling; they are coming up.

DORIMANT: How got they in?

HANDY: The door was open for the chair.

BELINDA: Lord! let me fly—

DORIMANT: Here, here, down the back stairs. I'll see you into your chair.

BELINDA: No, no, stay and receive 'em, and be sure you keep your word and never see Loveit more: let it be a proof of your kindness.

DORIMANT: It shall—Handy, direct her. Everlasting love go along with thee.

[*he kisses her hand. Exeunt BELINDA and HANDY. Enter YOUNG BELLAIR, MEDLEY, and SIR FOPLING*]

YOUNG BELLAIR: Not a-bed yet!

MEDLEY: You have had an irregular fit, Dorimant?

DORIMANT: I have.

YOUNG BELLAIR: And is it off already?

DORIMANT: Nature has done her part, gentlemen; when she falls kindly to work, great cures are effected in little time, you know.

SIR FOPLING: We thought there was a wench in the case by the chair that waited. Prithee make us a confidence.

DORIMANT: Excuse me.

SIR FOPLING: Le sage Dorimant! was she pretty?

DORIMANT: So pretty she may come to keep her coach and pay parish duties if the good humour of the age continue.

MEDLEY: And be of the number of the ladies kept by public-spirited men for the good of the whole town.

SIR FOPLING: Well said, Medley.

[*SIR FOPLING dances a bit by himself*]

YOUNG BELLAIR: See, Sir Fopling dancing.

DORIMANT: You are practising and have a mind to recover, I see.

SIR FOPLING: Prithee, Dorimant, why hast not thou a glass hung up here? A room is the dullest thing without one.

YOUNG BELLAIR: Here is company to entertain you.

SIR FOPLING: But I mean in case of being alone. In a glass a man may entertain himself

DORIMANT: The shadow of himself indeed.

SIR FOPLING: Correct the errors of his motions and his dress.

MEDLEY: I find, Sir Fopling, in your solitude you remember the saying of the wise man, and study yourself.

SIR FOPLING: 'Tis the best diversion in our retirements. Dorimant, thou art a pretty fellow, and wear'st thy clothes well, but I never saw thee have a handsome cravat. Were they made up like mine, they'd give another air to thy face. Prithee let me send my man to dress thee but one day. By heavens! an Englishman cannot tie a ribbon.

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DORIMANT: They are something clumsy-fisted

SIR FOPLING: I have brought over the prettiest fellow that ever spread a toilet; he served some time under Merille, the greatest genie in the world for a valet-de-chambre.

DORIMANT: What, he who formerly belonged to the Duke of Candale?

SIR FOPLING: The same, and got him his immortal reputation.

DORIMANT: You've a very fine brandenburgh on, Sir Fopling.

SIR FOPLING: It serves to wrap me up after the fatigue of a ball.

MEDLEY: I see you often in it, with your periwig tied up.

SIR FOPLING: We should not always be in a set dress; 'tis more en cavalier to appear now and then in a déshabillé.

MEDLEY: Pray how goes your business with Loveit?

SIR FOPLING: You might have answered yourself in the Mall last night. Dorimant! did you not see the advances she made me? I have been endeavouring at a song.

DORIMANT: Already!

SIR FOPLING: 'Tis my coup d'essai in English; I would fain have thy opinion of it.

DORIMANT: Let's see it.

SIR FOPLING: Hey, Page! give me my song—Bellair, here, thou hast a pretty voice, sing it.

YOUNG BELLAIR: Sing it yourself, Sir Fopling.

SIR FOPLING: Excuse me.

YOUNG BELLAIR: You learnt to sing in Paris.

SIR FOPLING: I did, of Lambert, the greatest master in the world; but I have his own fault, a weak voice, and care not to sing out of a ruelle.

DORIMANT: A ruelle is a pretty cage for a singing fop, indeed.

YOUNG BELLAIR [*reading the song, not singing*]

How charming Phyllis is! how fair!
 Ah, that she were as willing
 To ease my wounded heart of care,
 And make her eyes less killing!
 I sigh! I sigh! I languish now,
 And love will not let me rest;
 I drive about the Park, and bow
 Still as I meet my dearest.

SIR FOPLING: Sing it, sing it, man; it goes to a pretty new tune, which I am confident was made by Baptiste.

MEDLEY: Sing it yourself, Sir Fopling; he does not know the tune.

SIR FOPLING: I'll venture.

[**SIR FOPLING** sings]

DORIMANT: Ay, marry, now 'tis something. I shall not flatter you, Sir Fopling; there is not much thought in't, but 'tis passionate, and well turned.

MEDLEY: After the French way.

SIR FOPLING: That I aimed at. Does it not give you a lively image of the thing? Slap down goes the glass, and thus we are at it.

DORIMANT: It does indeed. I perceive, Sir Fopling, you'll be the very head of the sparks who are lucky in compositions of this nature.

[*enter SIR FOPLING's FOOTMAN*]

SIR FOPLING: La Tour, is the bath ready?

FOOTMAN: Yes, sir.

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SIR FOPLING: Adieu donc, mes chers.

[*exit SIR FOPLING and LA TOUR*]

MEDLEY: When have you your revenge on Loveit, Dorimant?

DORIMANT: I will but change my linen, and about it.

MEDLEY: The powerful considerations which hindered have been removed then?

DORIMANT: Most luckily this morning; you must along with me, my reputation lies at stake there.

MEDLEY: I am engaged to Bellair.

DORIMANT: What's your business?

MEDLEY: Ma-tri-mony, an't like you.

DORIMANT: It does not, sir.

YOUNG BELLAIR: It may in time, Dorimant; what think you of Mrs Harriet?

DORIMANT: What does she think of me?

YOUNG BELLAIR: I am confident she loves you.

DORIMANT: How does it appear?

YOUNG BELLAIR: Why, she's never well but when she's talking of you; but then she finds all the faults in you she can. She laughs at all who commend you; but then she speaks ill of all who do not.

DORIMANT: Women of her temper betray themselves by their over-cunning. I had once a growing love with a lady who would always quarrel with me when I came to see her, and yet was never quiet if I stayed a day from her.

YOUNG BELLAIR: My father is in love with Emilia.

DORIMANT: That is a good warrant for your proceedings: go on and prosper; I must to Loveit. Medley, I am sorry you cannot be a witness.

MEDLEY: Make her meet Sir Fopling again in the same place, and use him ill before me.

DORIMANT: That may be brought about, I think. I'll be at your aunt's anon, and give you joy, Mr. Bellair.

YOUNG BELLAIR: You had not best think of Mrs Harriet too much; without church security there's no taking up there.

DORIMANT: I may fall into the snare too. But The wise will find a difference in our fate; You wed a woman, I a good estate.

[*exeunt*]

Scene 3

[*enter the Chair with BELINDA; the MEN set it down and open it. BELINDA starting*]

BELINDA: [*surprised*] Lord! where am I? in the Mall? Whither have you brought me?

1 CHAIRMAN: You gave us no directions, madam.

BELINDA: [*aside*] The fright I was in made me forget it.

1 CHAIRMAN: We use to carry a lady from the squire's hither.

BELINDA: [*aside*] This is Loveit; I am undone if she sees me. Quickly carry me away.

1 CHAIRMAN: Whither, an't like your honour?

BELINDA: Ask no questions.

[*enter LOVEIT's FOOTMAN*]

FOOTMAN: Have you seen my lady, madam?

BELINDA: I am just come to wait upon her.

FOOTMAN: She will be glad to see you, madam. She sent me to you this morning to desire your company, and I was told you went out by five o'clock.

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BELINDA: [*aside*] More and more unlucky!

FOOTMAN: Will you walk in, madam?

BELINDA: I'll discharge my chair and follow. Tell your mistress I am here. [*exit FOOTMAN.*

BELINDA gives the Chairmen money] Take this, and if ever you should be examined, be sure you say you took me up in the Strand, over against the Exchange, as you will answer it to Mr. Dorimant.

CHAIRMEN: We will, an't like your honour.

[*exeunt CHAIRMEN*]

BELINDA: Now to come off, I must on— In confidence and lies some hope is left; 'Twere hard to be found out in the first theft.

[*exit*]

Act V

Scene 1

[*enter MISTRESS LOVEIT and PERT*]

PERT: Well, in my eyes Sir Fopling is no such despicable person.

MRS LOVEIT: You are an excellent judge!

PERT: He's as handsome a man as Mr. Dorimant, and as great a gallant.

MRS LOVEIT: Intolerable! is't not enough I submit to his impertinences, but I must be plagued with yours too?

PERT: Indeed, madam—

MRS LOVEIT: 'Tis false, mercenary malice—

[*enter her FOOTMAN*]

FOOTMAN: Mrs Belinda, madam

MRS LOVEIT: What of her?

FOOTMAN: She's below.

MRS LOVEIT: How came she?

FOOTMAN: In a chair; ambling Harry brought her.

MRS LOVEIT: He bring her! His chair stands near Dorimant's door, and always brings me from thence—Run and ask him where he took her up; go, there is no truth in friendship neither. Women as well as men—all are false, or all are so to me at least.

PERT: You are jealous of her too.

MRS LOVEIT: You had best tell her I am. 'Twill become the liberty you take of late. This fellow's bringing of her, her going out by five o'clock—I know not what to think. [*enter BELINDA*] Belinda, you are grown an early riser, I hear.

BELINDA: Do you not wonder, my dear, what made me abroad so soon?

MRS LOVEIT: You do not use to be so.

BELINDA: The country gentlewomen I told you of (Lord! they have the oddest diversions!) would never let me rest till I promised to go with them to the markets this morning to eat fruit and buy nosegays.

MRS LOVEIT: Are they so fond of a filthy nosegay?

BELINDA: They complain of the stinks of the town, and are never well but when they have their noses in one.

MRS LOVEIT: There are essences and sweet waters.

BELINDA: Oh! they cry out upon perfumes they are unwholesome, one of 'em was falling into a fit

with the smell of these nerolii.

MRS LOVEIT: Methinks, in complaisance you should have had a nosegay too.

BELINDA: Do you think, my dear, I could be so loathsome to trick myself up with carnations and stock gillyflowers? I begged their pardon, and told them I never wore anything but orange flowers and tuberose. That which made me willing to go was a strange desire I had to eat some fresh nectarines.

MRS LOVEIT: And had you any?

BELINDA: The best I ever tasted.

MRS LOVEIT: Whence came you now?

BELINDA: From their lodgings, where I crowded out of a coach, and took a chair to come and see you, my dear.

MRS LOVEIT: Whither did you send for that chair?

BELINDA: 'Twas going by empty.

MRS LOVEIT: Where do these country gentlewomen lodge, I pray?

BELINDA: In the Strand, over against the Exchange.

PERT: That place is never without a nest of 'em; they are always as one goes by fleering in balconies or staring out of windows.

[*enter FOOTMAN*]

MRS LOVEIT: [*whispers to the Footman*] Come hither.

BELINDA: [*aside*] This fellow by her order has been questioning the chairmen—I threatened 'em with the name of Dorimant; if they should have told truth I am lost for ever.

MRS LOVEIT: In the Strand, said you?

FOOTMAN: Yes, madam, over against the Exchange.

[*exit FOOTMAN*]

MRS LOVEIT: She's innocent, and I am much to blame.

BELINDA: [*aside*] I am so frightened my countenance will betray me.

MRS LOVEIT: Belinda! what makes you look so pale?

BELINDA: Want of my usual rest, and jolting up and down so long in an odious hackney.

[*enter FOOTMAN*]

FOOTMAN: Madam, Mr. Dorimant!

MRS LOVEIT: What makes him here?

BELINDA: [*aside*] Then I am betrayed indeed; he's broke his word, and I love a man that does not care for me.

MRS LOVEIT: Lord! you faint, Belinda.

BELINDA: I think I shall; such an oppression here on the sudden.

PERT: She has eaten too much fruit, I warrant you.

MRS LOVEIT: Not unlikely!

PERT: 'Tis that lies heavy on her stomach.

MRS LOVEIT: Have her into my chamber, give her some surfeit water, and let her lie down a little.

PERT: Come, madam, I was a strange devourer of fruit when I was young, so ravenous—

[*exit BELINDA, PERT leading her off*]

MRS LOVEIT: Oh, that my love would be but calm awhile! that I might receive this man with all the scorn and indignation he deserves.

[*enter DORIMANT*]

DORIMANT: Now for a touch of Sir Fopling to begin with. Hey—page—give positive order that none of my people stir—let the canaille wait as they should do: since noise and nonsense have such powerful charms, I, that I may successful prove, Transform myself to what you love.

MRS LOVEIT: If that would do, you need not change from what you are; you can be vain and loud

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enough.

DORIMANT: But not with so good a grace as Sir Fopling. Hey, Hampshire!—Oh! that sound! that sound becomes the mouth of a man of quality.

MRS LOVEIT: Is there a thing so hateful as a senseless mimic?

DORIMANT: He's a great grievance indeed to all who like yourself, madam, love to play the fool in quiet.

MRS LOVEIT: A ridiculous animal who has more of the ape than the ape has of the man in him.

DORIMANT: I have as mean an opinion of a sheer mimic as yourself; yet were he all ape I should prefer him to the gay, the giddy, brisk, insipid, noisy fool you dote on.

MRS LOVEIT: Those noisy fools, however you despise 'em, have good qualities, which weigh more (or ought at least) with us women than all the pernicious wit you have to boast of.

DORIMANT: That I may hereafter have a just value for their merit, pray do me the favour to name 'em.

MRS LOVEIT: You'll despise 'em as the dull effects of ignorance and vanity, yet I care not if I mention some. First, they really admire us, while you at best but flatter us well.

DORIMANT: Take heed! fools can dissemble too—

MRS LOVEIT: They may, but not so artificially as you: there is no fear they should deceive us. Then they are assiduous, sir; they are ever offering us their service, and always waiting on our will.

DORIMANT: You owe that to their excessive idleness; they know not how to entertain themselves at home, and find so little welcome abroad, they are fain to fly to you who countenance 'em as a refuge against the solitude they would be otherwise condemned to.

MRS LOVEIT: Their conversation too diverts us better.

DORIMANT: Playing with your fan, smelling to your gloves, commending your hair, and taking notice how 'tis cut and shaded after the new way.

MRS LOVEIT: Were it sillier than you can make it, you must allow 'tis pleasanter to laugh at others than to be laughed at ourselves, though never so wittily. Then though they want skill to flatter us, they flatter themselves so well they save us the labour; we need not take that care and pains to satisfy 'em of our love, which we so often lose on you.

DORIMANT: They commonly indeed believe too well of themselves, and always better of you than you deserve.

MRS LOVEIT: You are in the right; they have an implicit faith in us which keeps 'em from prying narrowly into our secrets, and saves us the vexatious trouble of clearing doubts which your subtle and causeless jealousies every moment raise.

DORIMANT: There is an inbred falsehood in women which inclines 'em still to them whom they may most easily deceive.

MRS LOVEIT: The man who loves above his quality does not suffer more from the insolent impertinence of his mistress than the woman who loves above her understanding does from the arrogant presumptions of her friend.

DORIMANT: You mistake the use of fools: they are designed for properties, and not for friends. You have an indifferent stock of reputation left yet. Lose it all like a frank gamester on the square; 'twill then be time enough to turn rook and cheat it up again on a good substantial bubble.

MRS LOVEIT: The old and the ill-favoured are only fit for properties indeed, but young and handsome fools have met with kinder fortunes.

DORIMANT: They have, to the shame of your sex be it spoken; 'twas this, the thought of this, made me, by a timely jealousy, endeavour to prevent the good fortune you are providing for Sir Fopling—but against a woman's frailty all our care is vain.

MRS LOVEIT: Had I not with a dear experience bought the knowledge of your falsehood, you might

have fooled me yet. This is not the first jealousy you have feigned to make a quarrel with me and get a week to throw away on some such unknown inconsiderable slut as you have been lately lurking with at plays.

DORIMANT: Women, when they would break off with a man, never want th' address to turn the fault on him.

MRS LOVEIT: You take a pride of late in using of me ill, that the town may know the power you have over me, which now (as unreasonably as yourself) expects that I (do me all the injuries you can) must love you still.

DORIMANT: I am so far from expecting that you should, I begin to think you never did love me.

MRS LOVEIT: Would the memory of it were so wholly worn out in me that I did doubt it too! What made you come to disturb my growing quiet?

DORIMANT: To give you joy of your growing infamy.

MRS LOVEIT: Insupportable! insulting devil! this from you, the only author of my shame! This from another had been but justice, but from you 'tis a hellish and inhuman outrage. What have I done?

DORIMANT: A thing that puts you below my scorn and makes my anger as ridiculous as you have made my love.

MRS LOVEIT: I walked last night with Sir Fopling.

DORIMANT: You did, madam, and you talked and laughed aloud, ha, ha, ha!—Oh! that laugh! that laugh becomes the confidence of a woman of quality.

MRS LOVEIT: You, who have more pleasure in the ruin of a woman's reputation than in the endearments of her love, reproach me not with yourself, and I defy you to name the man can lay a blemish on my fame.

DORIMANT: To be seen publicly so transported with the vain follies of that notorious fop, to me is an infamy below the sin of prostitution with another man.

MRS LOVEIT: Rail on, I am satisfied in the justice of what I did; you had provoked me to't.

DORIMANT: What I did was the effect of a passion whose extravagances you have been willing to forgive.

MRS LOVEIT: And what I did was the effect of a passion you may forgive if you think fit.

DORIMANT: Are you so indifferent grown?

MRS LOVEIT: I am.

DORIMANT: Nay! then 'tis time to part. I'll send you back your letters you have so often asked for. I have two or three of 'em about me.

MRS LOVEIT: Give 'em me.

DORIMANT: You snatch as if you thought I would not—there— and may the perjuries in 'em be mine if e'er I see you more.

[he offers to go; she catches him]

MRS LOVEIT: Stay!

DORIMANT: I will not.

MRS LOVEIT: You shall.

DORIMANT: What have you to say?

MRS LOVEIT: I cannot speak it yet.

DORIMANT: Something more in commendation of the fool. Death! I want patience, let me go.

MRS LOVEIT: *[aside]*. I cannot. I can sooner part with the limbs that hold him. I hate that nauseous fool, you know I do.

DORIMANT: Was it the scandal you were fond of then?

MRS LOVEIT: You'd raised my anger equal to my love, a thing you ne'er could do before, and in revenge I did—I know not what I did.—Would you would not think on't any more!

The Man of Mode, or, Sir Fopling Flutter - a Comedy

DORIMANT: Should I be willing to forget it, I shall be daily minded of it, 'twill be a commonplace for all the town to laugh at me; and Medley, when he is rhetorically drunk, will ever be declaiming on it in my ears.

MRS LOVEIT: 'Twill be believed a jealous spite! Come, forget it.

DORIMANT: Let me consult my reputation; you are too careless of it [*pauses*] You shall meet Sir Fopling in the Mall again tonight.

MRS LOVEIT: What mean you?

DORIMANT: I have thought on't, and you must: 'tis necessary to justify my love to the world; you can handle a coxcomb as he deserves when you are not out of humour, madam.

MRS LOVEIT: Public satisfaction for the wrong I have done you! This is some new device to make me more ridiculous.

DORIMANT: Hear me.

MRS LOVEIT: I will not.

DORIMANT: You will be persuaded.

MRS LOVEIT: Never.

DORIMANT: Are you so obstinate?

MRS LOVEIT: Are you so base?

DORIMANT: You will not satisfy my love?

MRS LOVEIT: I would die to satisfy that, but I will not to save you from a thousand racks do a shameless thing to please your vanity.

DORIMANT: Farewell, false woman!

MRS LOVEIT: Do! go!

DORIMANT: You will call me back again.

MRS LOVEIT: Exquisite fiend! I knew you came but to torment me.

[*enter BELINDA and PERT*]

DORIMANT: [*surprised*] Belinda here!

BELINDA: [*aside*] He starts and looks pale; the sight of me has touched his guilty soul.

PERT: 'Twas but a qualm, as I said, a little indigestion; the surfeit water did it, madam, mixed with a little mirabilis.

DORIMANT: I am confounded, and cannot guess how she came hither!

MRS LOVEIT: 'Tis your fortune, Belinda, ever to be here when I am abused by this prodigy of ill-nature.

BELINDA: I am amazed to find him here! How has he the face to come near you?

DORIMANT: [*aside*] There is no remedy; I must submit to their tongues now, and some other time bring myself off as well as I can.

BELINDA: Other men are wicked, but then they have some sense of shame: he is never well but when he triumphs, nay, glories to a woman's face in his villainies.

MRS LOVEIT: You are in the right, Belinda; but methinks your kindness for me makes you concern yourself too much with him.

BELINDA: It does indeed, my dear; his barbarous carriage to you yesterday made me hope you ne'er would see him more, and the very next day to find him here again provokes me strangely; but, because I know you love him, I have done.

DORIMANT: You have reproached me handsomely, and I deserve it for coming hither; but—

PERT: You must expect it, sir; all women will hate you for my lady's sake.

DORIMANT: [*aside to BELINDA*] Nay, if she begins too, 'tis time to fly; I shall be scolded to death else. I am to blame in some circumstances, I confess; but as to the main, I am not so guilty as you imagine. I shall seek a more convenient time to clear myself.

The Man of Mode, or, Sir Fopling Flutter - a Comedy

MRS LOVEIT: Do it now! what impediments are here?

DORIMANT: I want time, and you want temper.

MRS LOVEIT: These are weak pretences!

DORIMANT: You were never more mistaken in your life, and so farewell.

[*DORIMANT flings off*]

MRS LOVEIT: Call a footman, Pert, quickly; I will have him dogged.

PERT: I wish you would not for my quiet and your own.

MRS LOVEIT: I'll find out the infamous cause of all our quarrels, pluck her mask off, and expose her barefaced to the world.

BELINDA: [*aside*] Let me but escape this time I'll never venture more.

MRS LOVEIT: Belinda! you shall go with me.

BELINDA: I have such a heaviness hangs on me with what I did this morning, I would fain go home and sleep, my dear.

MRS LOVEIT: Death and eternal darkness! I shall never sleep again. Raging fevers seize the world, and make mankind as restless all as I am!

[*exit LOVEIT, dramatically*]

BELINDA: I knew him false, and helped to make him so. Was not her ruin enough to fright me from the danger? It should have been, but love can take no warning.

[*exit BELINDA*]

Scene 2

[*LADY TOWNLEY's house. Enter MEDLEY, YOUNG BELLAIR, LADY TOWNLEY, EMILIA, and SMIRK the parson*]

MEDLEY: Bear up, Bellair, and do not let us see that repentance in thine we daily do in married faces.

LADY TOWNLEY: This wedding will strangely surprise my brother when he knows it.

MEDLEY: Your nephew ought to conceal it for a time, madam, since marriage has lost its good name; prudent men seldom expose their own reputations till 'tis convenient to justify their wives.

OLD BELLAIR: [*without*] Where are you all there? Out, adod, will nobody hear?

LADY TOWNLEY: My brother! quickly, Mr. Smirk, into this closet; you must not be seen yet.

[*SMIRK goes into the closet. Enter OLD BELLAIR and LADY TOWNLEY's PAGE*]

OLD BELLAIR: Desire Mr. Fourbes to walk into the lower parlour, I will be with him presently.

[*To YOUNG BELLAIR:*] Where have you been, sir, you could not wait on me to-day?

YOUNG BELLAIR: About a business.

OLD BELLAIR: Are you so good at business? Adod, I have a business too you shall despatch out of hand, sir. Send for a parson, sister; my Lady Woodvil and her daughter are coming.

LADY TOWNLEY: What need you huddle up things thus!

OLD BELLAIR: Out a pise! youth is apt to play the fool, and 'tis not good it should be in their power.

LADY TOWNLEY: You need not fear your son.

OLD BELLAIR: He's been idling this morning, and, adod, I do not like him. [*to EMILIA:*] How dost thou do, sweetheart?

EMILIA: You are very severe, sir; married in such haste.

OLD BELLAIR: Go to, thou'rt a rogue, and I will talk with thee anon. Here's my Lady Woodvil come.

[*enter LADY WOODVIL, HARRIET, and BUSY*] Welcome, madam; Mr. Fourbes is below with the writings.

LADY WOODVIL: Let us down, and make an end then.

OLD BELLAIR: Sister, show the way. [*to YOUNG BELLAIR, who is talking to HARRIET*] Harry, your business lies not there yet; excuse him till we have done, lady, and then, adod, he shall be for thee. Mr. Medley, we must trouble you to be a witness.

MEDLEY: I luckily came for that purpose, sir.

[*exeunt OLD BELLAIR, MEDLEY, YOUNG BELLAIR, LADY TOWNLEY, and LADY WOODVIL*]

BUSY: What will you do, madam?

HARRIET: Be carried back and mewed up in the country again, run away here, anything rather than be married to a man I do not care for—Dear Emilia, do thou advise me.

EMILIA: Mr. Bellair is engaged you know.

HARRIET: I do; but know not what the fear of losing an estate may fright him to.

EMILIA: In the desperate condition you are in you should consult with some judicious man; what think you of Mr. Dorimant?

HARRIET: I do not think of him at all.

BUSY: She thinks of nothing else, I am sure.

EMILIA: How fond your mother was of Mr. Courtage!

HARRIET: Because I contrived the mistake to make a little mirth you believe I like the man.

EMILIA: Mr. Bellair believes you love him.

HARRIET: Men are seldom in the right when they guess at a woman's mind; would she whom he loves loved him no better!

BUSY: [*aside*] That's e'en well enough, on all conscience.

EMILIA: Mr. Dorimant has a great deal of wit.

HARRIET: And takes a great deal of pains to show it.

EMILIA: He's extremely well-fashioned.

HARRIET: Affectedly grave or ridiculously wild and apish.

BUSY: You defend him still against your mother.

HARRIET: I would not were he justly rallied, but I cannot hear any one underservedly railed at.

EMILIA: Has your woman learnt the song you were so taken with?

HARRIET: I was fond of a new thing; 'tis dull at second hearing.

EMILIA: Mr. Dorimant made it.

BUSY: She knows it, madam, and has made me sing it at least a dozen times this morning.

HARRIET: Thy tongue is as impertinent as thy fingers.

EMILIA: You have provoked her.

BUSY: 'Tis but singing the song, and I shall appease her.

EMILIA: Prithee do.

HARRIET: She has a voice will grate your ears worse than a cat-call, and dresses so ill she's scarce fit to trick up a yeoman's daughter on a holiday.

BUSY: [*sings*]

As Amoret with Phyllis sat
One evening on the plain,
And saw the charming Strephon wait
To tell the nymph his pain,
The threatening danger to remove
She whisper'd in her ear,
Ah, Phyllis! if you would not love,
This shepherd do not hear.
None ever had so strange an art
His passion to convey

The Man of Mode, or, Sir Fopling Flutter - a Comedy

Into a listening virgin's heart,
And steal her soul away.
Fly, fly betimes, for fear you give
Occasion for your fate.
In vain, said she, in vain I strive,
Alas! 'tis now too late.

[*enter DORIMANT*]

DORIMANT: Music so softens and disarms the mind—

HARRIET: That not one arrow does resistance find.

DORIMANT: Let us make use of the lucky minute then.

HARRIET: [*aside, turning from DORIMANT*] My love springs with my blood into my face, I dare not look upon him yet.

DORIMANT: What have we here, the picture of celebrated beauty giving audience in public to a declared lover?

HARRIET: Play the dying fop and make the piece complete, sir.

DORIMANT: What think you if the hint were well improved—the whole mystery of making love pleasantly designed and wrought in a suit of hangings?

HARRIET: 'Twere needless to execute fools in effigy who suffer daily in their own persons.

DORIMANT: [*aside to Emilia*] Mrs Bride, for such I know this happy day has made you.

EMILIA: Defer the formal joy you are to give me and mind your business with her. [*aloud*] Here are dreadful preparations, Mr. Dorimant, writings sealing, and a parson sent for.

DORIMANT: To marry this lady?

BUSY: Condemned she is, and what will become of her I know not, without you generously engage in a rescue.

DORIMANT: In this sad condition, madam, I can do no less than offer you my service.

HARRIET: The obligation is not great; you are the common sanctuary for all young women who run from their relations.

DORIMANT: I have always my arms open to receive the distressed. But I will open my heart, and receive you where none yet did ever enter: you have filled it with a secret, might I but let you know it—

HARRIET: Do not speak it if you would have me believe it; your tongue is so famed for falsehood 'twill do the truth an injury.

[*turns away her head*]

DORIMANT: Turn not away then; but look on me and guess it.

HARRIET: Did you not tell me there was no credit to be given to faces? that women nowadays have their passions as much at will as they have their complexions, and put on joy and sadness, scorn and kindness, with the same ease they do their paint and patches—Are they the only counterfeits?

DORIMANT: You wrong your own while you suspect my eyes; by all the hope I have in you, the inimitable colour in your cheeks is not more free from art than are the sighs I offer.

HARRIET: In men who have been long hardened in sin we have reason to mistrust the first signs of repentance.

DORIMANT: The prospect of such a heaven will make me persevere and give you marks that are infallible.

HARRIET: What are those?

DORIMANT: I will renounce all the joys I have in friendship and in wine, sacrifice to you all the interest I have in other women—

HARRIET: Hold!—though I wish you devout I would not have you turn fanatic—Could you neglect these awhile and make a journey into the country?

The Man of Mode, or, Sir Fopling Flutter - a Comedy

DORIMANT: To be with you I could live there and never send one thought to London.

HARRIET: Whate'er you say, I know all beyond High Park's a desert to you, and that no gallantry can draw you farther.

DORIMANT: That has been the utmost limit of my love, but now my passion knows no bounds, and there's no measure to be taken of what I'll do for you from anything I ever did before.

HARRIET: When I hear you talk thus in Hampshire I shall begin to think there may be some truth enlarged upon.

DORIMANT: Is this all?—will you not promise me?—

HARRIET: I hate to promise! What we do then is expected from us, and wants much of the welcome it finds when it surprises.

DORIMANT: May I not hope?

HARRIET: That depends on you and not on me; and 'tis to no purpose to forbid it.

[*turns to BUSY*]

BUSY: Faith, madam, now I perceive the gentleman loves you too; e'en let him know your mind, and torment yourselves no longer.

HARRIET: Dost think I have no sense of modesty?

BUSY: Think, if you lose this you may never have another opportunity.

HARRIET: May he hate me—a curse that frights me when I speak it—if ever I do a thing against the rules of decency and honour!

DORIMANT: [*to EMILIA:*] I am beholding to you for your good intentions, madam.

EMILIA: I thought the concealing of our marriage from her might have done you better service.

DORIMANT: Try her again.

EMILIA: What have you resolved, madam? The time draws near.

HARRIET: To be obstinate, and protest against this marriage.

[*enter LADY TOWNLEY in haste*]

LADY TOWNLEY: [*to EMILIA:*] Quickly, quickly, let Mr. Smirk out of the closet.

[*SMIRK comes out of the closet*]

HARRIET: A parson! had you laid him in here?

DORIMANT: I knew nothing of him.

HARRIET: Should it appear you did, your opinion of my easiness may cost you dear.

[*enter OLD BELLAIR, YOUNG BELLAIR, MEDLEY, and LADY WOODVIL*]

OLD BELLAIR: Out a pise! the canonical hour is almost past. Sister, is the man of God come?

LADY TOWNLEY: He waits your leisure.

OLD BELLAIR: By your favour, sir. Adod, a pretty spruce fellow! what may we call him?

LADY TOWNLEY: Mr. Smirk, my Lady Biggot's chaplain.

OLD BELLAIR: A wise woman! adod, she is. The man will serve for the flesh as well as the spirit. Please you, sir, to commission a young couple to go to bed together i' God's name? Harry.

YOUNG BELLAIR: Here, sir.

OLD BELLAIR: Out a pise! without your mistress in your hand!

SMIRK: Is this the gentleman?

OLD BELLAIR: Yes, sir.

SMIRK: Are you not mistaken, sir?

OLD BELLAIR: Adod, I think not, sir.

SMIRK: Sure you are, sir.

OLD BELLAIR: You look as if you would forbid the banns; Mr. Smirk, I hope you have no pretension to the lady?

SMIRK: Wish him joy, sir! I have done him the good office to-day already.

The Man of Mode, or, Sir Fopling Flutter - a Comedy

OLD BELLAIR: Out a pise! what do I hear?

LADY TOWNLEY: Never storm, brother, the truth is out.

OLD BELLAIR: How say you, sir? is this your wedding-day?

YOUNG BELLAIR: It is, sir.

OLD BELLAIR: And, adod, it shall be mine too; give me thy hand, sweetheart. [*to EMILIA:*] What dost thou mean? give me thy hand, I say.

[*EMILIA kneels, and YOUNG BELLAIR*]

LADY TOWNLEY: Come, come give her your blessing; this is the woman your son loved and is married to.

OLD BELLAIR: Ha! cheated! cozened! and by your contrivance, sister!

LADY TOWNLEY: What would you do with her? She's a rogue, and you can't abide her.

MEDLEY: Shall I hit her a pat for you, sir?

OLD BELLAIR: Adod, you are all rogues, and I never will forgive you.

LADY TOWNLEY: Whither! whither away?

MEDLEY: Let him go and cool awhile.

LADY WOODVIL: [*to DORIMANT:*] Here's a business broke out now; Mr. Courtage, I am made a fine fool of.

DORIMANT: You see the old gentleman knows nothing of it.

LADY WOODVIL: I find he did not. I shall have some trick put upon me if I stay in this wicked town any longer. Harriet! dear child! where art thou? I'll into the country straight.

OLD BELLAIR: Adod, madam, you shall hear me first.

[*enter LOVEIT and BELINDA*]

MRS LOVEIT: Hither my man dogged him.

BELINDA: Yonder he stands, my dear.

MRS LOVEIT: I see him. [*aside*] And with the face that has undone me! Oh, that I were but where I might throw out the anguish of my heart! here it must rage within and break it.

LADY TOWNLEY: Mrs Loveit, are you afraid to come forward?

MRS LOVEIT: I was amazed to see so much company here in a morning, the occasion sure is extraordinary.

DORIMANT: [*aside*] Loveit and Belinda! the devil owes me a shame to-day, and I think never will have done paying it.

MRS LOVEIT: Married! dear Emilia! how am I transported with the news?

HARRIET: [*to DORIMANT:*] I little thought Emilia was the woman Mr. Bellair was in love with; I'll chide her for not trusting me with the secret.

DORIMANT: How do you like Mrs Loveit?

HARRIET: She's a famed mistress of yours, I hear.

DORIMANT: She has been on occasion.

OLD BELLAIR: [*to LADY WOODVIL:*] Adod, madam, I cannot help it.

LADY WOODVIL: You need make no more apologies, sir

EMILIA: [*to LOVEIT:*] The old gentleman's excusing himself to my Lady Woodvil.

MRS LOVEIT: Ha, ha, ha! I never heard of anything so pleasant.

HARRIET: [*to DORIMANT:*] She's extremely overjoyed at something.

DORIMANT: At nothing; she is one of those hoiting ladies who gaily fling themselves about and force a laugh when their aching hearts are full of discontent and malice.

MRS LOVEIT: Oh, heaven! I was never so near killing myself with laughing. Mr. Dorimant, are you a brideman?

LADY WOODVIL: Mr. Dorimant! Is this Mr. Dorimant, madam?

The Man of Mode, or, Sir Fopling Flutter - a Comedy

MRS LOVEIT: If you doubt it, your daughter can resolve you, I suppose.

LADY WOODVIL: I am cheated too, basely cheated.

OLD BELLAIR: Out a pise! what's here? more knavery yet?

LADY WOODVIL: Harriet! on my blessing, come away, I charge you.

HARRIET: Dear mother, do but stay and hear me.

LADY WOODVIL: I am betrayed, and thou art undone, I fear.

HARRIET: Do not fear it. I have not, nor never will do anything against my duty; believe me, dear mother, do.

DORIMANT: [*to LOVEIT:*] I had trusted you with this secret, but that I knew the violence of your nature would ruin my fortune, as now unluckily it has. I thank you, madam.

MRS LOVEIT: She's an heiress, I know, and very rich.

DORIMANT: To satisfy you I must give up my interest wholly to my love; had you been a reasonable woman, I might have secured 'em both and been happy.

MRS LOVEIT: You might have trusted me with anything of this kind, you know you might. Why did you go under a wrong name?

DORIMANT: The story is too long to tell you now—be satisfied, this is the business, this is the mask has kept me from you.

BELINDA: [*aside*] He's tender of my honour, though he's cruel to my love.

MRS LOVEIT: Was it no idle mistress then?

DORIMANT: Believe me, a wife, to repair the ruins of my estate that needs it.

MRS LOVEIT: The knowledge of this makes my grief hang lighter on my soul; but I shall never more be happy.

DORIMANT: Belinda!

BELINDA: Do not think of clearing yourself with me, it is impossible. Do all men break their words thus?

DORIMANT: Th' extravagant words they speak in love; 'tis as unreasonable to expect we should perform all we promise then, as do all we threaten when we are angry. When I see you next—

BELINDA: Take no notice of me, and I shall not hate you.

DORIMANT: How came you to Mrs Loveit?

BELINDA: By a mistake the chairmen made for want of my giving them directions.

DORIMANT: 'Twas a pleasant one. We must meet again.

BELINDA: Never.

DORIMANT: Never?

BELINDA: When we do, may I be as infamous as you are false.

LADY TOWNLEY: Men of Mr. Dorimant's character always suffer in the general opinion of the world.

MEDLEY: You can make no judgment of a witty man from common fame, considering the prevailing faction, madam.

OLD BELLAIR: Adod, he's in the right.

MEDLEY: Besides, 'tis a common error among women to believe too well of them they know and too ill of them they don't.

OLD BELLAIR: Adod, he observes well

LADY TOWNLEY: Believe me, madam, you will find Mr. Dorimant as civil a gentleman as you thought Mr. Courtage.

HARRIET: If you would but know him better—

LADY WOODVIL: You have a mind to know him better; come away! You shall never see him more.

HARRIET: Dear mother, stay!

LADY WOODVIL: I won't be consenting to your ruin.

The Man of Mode, or, Sir Fopling Flutter - a Comedy

HARRIET: Were my fortune in your power

LADY WOODVIL: Your person is.

HARRIET: Could I be disobedient I might take it out of yours, and put it into his.

LADY WOODVIL: 'Tis that you would be at; you would marry this Dorimant?

HARRIET: I cannot deny it; I would, and never will marry any other man.

LADY WOODVIL: Is this the duty that you promised?

HARRIET: But I will never marry him against your will—

LADY WOODVIL: [*aside*] She knows the way to melt my heart. [*to HARRIET:*] Upon yourself light your undoing.

MEDLEY: [*to OLD BELLAIR:*] Come, sir, you have not the heart any longer to refuse your blessing

OLD BELLAIR: Adod, I ha' not—Rise, and God bless you both! Make much of her, Harry, she deserves thy kindness. [*to EMILIA:*] Adod, sirrah, I did not think it had been in thee.

[*enter SIR FOPLING and his PAGE*]

SIR FOPLING: 'Tis a damned windy day; hey, page? Is my periwig right?

PAGE: A little out of order, sir.

SIR FOPLING: Pox o' this apartment! it wants an antechamber to adjust oneself in. [*to LOVEIT:*] Madam, I came from your house, and your servants directed me hither.

MRS LOVEIT: I will give order hereafter they shall direct you better.

SIR FOPLING: The great satisfaction I had in the Mall last night has given me much disquiet since.

MRS LOVEIT: 'Tis likely to give me more than I desire.

SIR FOPLING: What the devil makes her so reserved? Am I guilty of an indiscretion, madam?

MRS LOVEIT: You will be of a great one if you continue your mistake sir.

SIR FOPLING: Something puts you out of humour.

MRS LOVEIT: The most foolish inconsiderable thing that ever did.

SIR FOPLING: Is it in my power?

MRS LOVEIT: To hang or drown it; do one of 'em, and trouble me no more.

SIR FOPLING: So fière? Serviteur, madame. Medley, where's Dorimant?

MEDLEY: Methinks the lady has not made you those advances to-day she did last night, Sir Fopling.

SIR FOPLING: Prithee do not talk of her.

MEDLEY: She would be a bonne fortune

SIR FOPLING: Not to me, at present.

MEDLEY: How so?

SIR FOPLING: An intrigue now would be but a temptation to me to throw away that vigour on one which I mean shall shortly make my court to the whole sex in a ballet.

MEDLEY: Wisely considered, Sir Fopling.

SIR FOPLING: No one woman is worth the loss of a cut in a caper.

MEDLEY: Not when 'tis so universally designed.

LADY WOODVIL: Mr. Dorimant, every one has spoke so much in your behalf that I can no longer doubt but I was in the wrong.

MRS LOVEIT: There's nothing but falsehood and impertinence in this world; all men are villains or fools. Take example from my misfortunes, Belinda; if thou wouldst be happy, give thyself wholly up to goodness.

HARRIET: [*to LOVEIT:*] Mr. Dorimant has been your God Almighty long enough; 'tis time to think of another.

MRS LOVEIT: Jeered by her! I will lock myself up in my house, and never see the world again.

HARRIET: A nunnery is the more fashionable place for such a retreat, and has been the fatal consequence of many a belle passion.

The Man of Mode, or, Sir Fopling Flutter - a Comedy

MRS LOVEIT: Hold, heart! till I get home; should I answer 'twould make her triumph greater. [*is going out*]

DORIMANT: Your hand, Sir Fopling

SIR FOPLING: Shall I wait upon you. madam?

MRS LOVEIT: Legion of fools, as many devils take thee! — [*exit LOVEIT*]

MEDLEY: Dorimant! I pronounce thy reputation clear and henceforward when I would know anything of woman, I will consult no other oracle.

SIR FOPLING: Stark mad, by all that's handsome! Dorimant, thou hast engaged me in a pretty business.

DORIMANT: I have not leisure now to talk about it.

OLD BELLAIR: Out a pise! what does this Man of Mode do here again?

LADY TOWNLEY: He'll be an excellent entertainment within, brother, and is luckily come to raise the mirth of the company.

LADY WOODVIL: Madam, I take my leave of you.

LADY TOWNLEY: What do you mean, madam?

LADY WOODVIL: To go this afternoon part of my way to Hartley.

OLD BELLAIR: Adod, you shall stay and dine first; come, we will all be good friends, and you shall give Mr. Dorimant leave to wait upon you and your daughter in the country.

LADY WOODVIL: If his occasions bring him that way, I have now so good an opinion of him he shall be welcome.

HARRIET: To a great rambling lone house that looks as it were not inhabited, the family's so small; there you'll find my mother, an old lame aunt, and myself, sir, perched up on chairs at a distance in a large parlour, sitting moping like three or four melancholy birds in a spacious volery. Does not this stagger your resolution?

DORIMANT: Not at all, madam. The first time I saw you you left me with the pangs of love upon me, and this day my soul has quite given up her liberty.

HARRIET: This is more dismal than the country, Emilia; pity me who am going to that sad place. Methinks I hear the hateful noise of rooks already — know, know, know. There's music in the worst cry in London, My dill and cucumbers to pickle.

OLD BELLAIR: Sister, knowing of this matter, I hope you have provided us some good cheer.

LADY TOWNLEY: I have, brother, and the fiddles too.

OLD BELLAIR: Let 'em strike up then; the young lady shall have a dance before she departs. [*dance. After the dance:*] So, now we'll in and make this an arrant wedding-day. [*to the audience:*] And if these honest gentlemen rejoice, Adod, the boy has made a happy choice.

[*exeunt omnes*]

Epilogue (by Mr. Dryden)

Most modern wits such monstrous fools have shown,
They seem'd not of heaven's making, but their own.
Those nauseous harlequins in farce may pass,
But there goes more to a substantial ass;
Something of man must be exposed to view,
That, gallants, they may more resemble you:
Sir Fopling is a fool so nicely writ,
The ladies would mistake him for a wit,
And when he sings, talks loud, and cocks, would cry,
I vow, methinks he's pretty company!
So brisk, so gay, so travell'd, so refined,
As he took pains to graft upon his kind.
True fops help nature's work, and go to school
To file and finish God Almighty's fool.
Yet none Sir Fopling him, or him, can call;
He's knight o' th' shire, and represents ye all.
From each he meets he culls whate'er he can,
Legion's his name, a people in a man:
His bulky folly gathers as it goes,
And, rolling o'er you, like a snowball grows.
His various modes from various fathers follow;
One taught the toss, and one the new French wallow
His sword-knot this, his cravat this design'd,
And this the yard-long snake he twirls behind.
From one the sacred periwig he gain'd,
Which wind ne'er blew, nor touch of hat profaned
Another's diving bow he did adore,
Which with a shog casts all the hair before;
Till he, with full decorum, brings it back,
And rises with a water-spaniel shake.
As for his songs (the ladies' dear delight)
Those sure he took from most of you who write.
Yet every man is safe from what he fear'd,
For no one fool is hunted from the herd.
Yet no one coxcomb in this play is shown,
No one man's humour makes a part alone,
But scatter'd follies gather'd into one.