

William Wycherley
(1641–1716)

The Country Wife (1675)

PROLOGUE, SPOKEN BY MR. HART

Poets like Cudgel'd Bullys, never do
At first, or second blow, submit to you;
But will provoke you still, and ne're have done,
Till you are weary first, with laying on:
The late so baffled Scribler of this day, 5
Though he stands trembling, bids me boldly say,
What we, before most Playes are us'd to do,
For Poets out of fear, first draw on you;
In a fierce Prologue, the still Pit defie,
And e're you speak, like Castril, give the lye; 10
But though our Bayses Batles oft I've fought,
And with bruised knuckles, their dear Conquests bought;
Nay, never yet fear'd Odds upon the Stage,
In Prologue dare not Hector with the Age,
But wou'd take Quarter from your saving hands, 15
Though Bayse within all yielding Countermands,
Says you Confed'rate Wits no Quarter give,
Ther'fore his Play shan't ask your leave to live:
Well, let the vain rash Fop, by huffing so,
Think to obtain the better terms of you; 20
But we the Actors humbly will submit,
Now, and at any time, to a full Pit;
Nay, often we anticipate your rage,
And murder Poets for you, on our Stage:
We set no Guards upon our Tyring-Room, 25
But when with flying Colours, there you come,
We patiently you see, give up to you,
Our Poets, Virgins, nay our Matrons too.

THE PERSONS

<i>Mr. Horner,</i>	<i>Mr. Hart.</i>
<i>Mr. Harcourt,</i>	<i>Mr. Kenaston.</i>
<i>Mr. Dorilant,</i>	<i>Mr. Lydal.</i>

Mr. <i>Pinchwife</i> ,	Mr. <i>Mobun</i> .
Mr. <i>Sparkish</i> ,	Mr. <i>Haymes</i> .
Sir. <i>Jaspar Fidget</i> ,	Mr. <i>Cartwright</i> .
Mrs. <i>Margery Pinchwife</i> ,	Mrs. <i>Bowtel</i> .
Mrs. <i>Alithea</i> ,	Mrs. <i>James</i> .
My Lady <i>Fidget</i> ,	Mrs. <i>Knep</i> .
Mrs. <i>Dainty Fidget</i> ,	Mrs. <i>Corbet</i> .
Mrs. <i>Squeamish</i> ,	Mrs. <i>Wyatt</i> .
Old Lady <i>Squeamish</i> ,	Mrs. <i>Rutter</i> .
Waiters, Servants, and Attendants.	
A Boy.	
A <i>Quack</i> ,	Mr. <i>Schotterel</i> .
<i>Lucy</i> , <i>Alithea's Maid</i> ,	Mrs. <i>Cory</i> .

The Scene, London.

ACT I

Scene I

Enter Horner, and Quack following him at a distance.

Hor. A Quack is as fit for a Pimp, as a Midwife for a Bawd; they are still but in their way, both helpers of Nature. – [*aside.*] – Well, my dear Doctor, hast thou done what I desired.

Qu. I have undone you for ever with the Women, and reported you throughout the whole Town as bad as an *Eunuch*, with as much trouble as if I had made you one in earnest. 5

Hor. But have you told all the Midwives you know, the Orange Wenches at the Play-houses, the City Husbands, and old Fumbling Keepers of this end of the Town, for they'l be the readiest to report it.

Qu. I have told all the Chamber-maids, Waiting women, Tyre women, and Old women of my acquaintance; nay, and whisper'd it as a secret to'em, and to the Whisperers of *Whitehal*; so that you need not doubt 'twill spread, and you will be as odious to the handsome young Women, as – 10

Hor. As the small Pox. – Well – 15

Qu. And to the married Women of this end of the Town, as –

Hor. As the great ones; nay, as their own Husbands.

Qu. And to the City Dames as Annis-seed *Robin* of filthy and contemptible memory; and they will frighten their Children with your name, especially their Females. 20

Hor. And cry *Horner's* coming to carry you away: I am only afraid 'twill not be believ'd; you told'em 'twas by an *English-French* disaster, and an *English-French* Chirurgeon, who has given me at once, not only a Cure, but an Antidote for the future, against that damn'd malady, and that worse distemper, love, and all other Womens evils. 25

Qu. Your late journey into *France* has made it the more credible, and your being here a fortnight before you appear'd in publick, looks as if you apprehended the shame, which I wonder you do not: Well I have been hired by young Gallants to bely'em t'other way; but you are the first wou'd be thought a Man unfit for Women. 30

Hor. Dear Mr. Doctor, let vain Rogues be contented only to be thought abler Men than they are, generally 'tis all the pleasure they have, but mine lyes another way.

Qu. You take, methinks, a very preposterous way to it, and as ridiculous as if we Operators in Physick, shou'd put forth Bills to disparage our Medicaments, with hopes to gain Customers. 35

Hor. Doctor, there are Quacks in love, as well as Physick, who get but the fewer and worse Patients, for their boasting; a good name is seldom got by giving it ones self, and Women no more than honour are compass'd by bragging: Come, come Doctor, the wisest Lawyer never discovers the merits of his cause till the tryal; the wealthiest Man conceals his riches, and the cunning Gamster his play; Shy Husbands and Keepers like old Rooks are not to be cheated, but by a new unpractis'd trick; false friendship will pass now no more than false dice upon'em, no, not in the City. 40 45

Enter Boy.

Boy. There are two Ladies and a Gentleman coming up.

Hor. A Pox, some unbelieving Sisters of my former acquaintance, who I am afraid, expect their sense shou'd be satisfy'd of the falsity of the report.

Enter Sir Jasp. Fidget, Lady Fidget, and Mrs. Dainty Fidget.

No – this formal Fool and Women! 50

Qu. His Wife and Sister.

Sr. Jas. My Coach breaking just now before your door Sir, I look upon as an occasional reprimand to me Sir, for not kissing your hands Sir, since your coming out of *France* Sir; and so my disaster Sir, has been my good fortune Sir; and this is my Wife, and Sister Sir. 55

Hor. What then, Sir?

Sr. Jas. My Lady, and Sister, Sir. – Wife, this is Master *Horner*.

La. Fid. Master *Horner*, Husband!

Sr. Jas. My Lady, my Lady *Fidget*, Sir.

Hor. So, Sir. 60

Sr. Jas. Won't you be acquainted with her Sir? [So the report is true, I find by his coldness or aversion to the Sex; but I'll play the wag with him.]

Aside.

Pray salute my Wife, my Lady, Sir.

Hor. I will kiss no Mans Wife, Sir, for him, Sir; I have taken my eternal leave, Sir, of the Sex already, Sir. 65

Sr. Jas. Hah, hah, hah; I'll plague him yet.

Aside.

Not know my Wife, Sir?

Hor. I do know your Wife, Sir, she's Woman, Sir, and consequently a
 Monster, Sir, a greater Monster than a Husband, Sir. 70

Sr. Jas. A Husband; how, Sir?*Hor.* So, Sir; but I make no more Cuckholds, Sir.*Makes horns.**Sr. Jas.* Hah, hah, hah, *Mercury, Mercury.**La. Fid.* Pray, Sir *Jaspar*, let us be gone from this rude fellow.

Mrs. Daint. Who, by his breeding, wou'd think, he had ever been in
 France? 75

La. Fid. Foh, he's but too much a French fellow, such as hate Women
 of quality and virtue, for their love to their Husbands, *Sr. Jaspar*; a
 Woman is hated by 'em as much for loving her Husband, as for
 loving their Money: But pray, let's be gone. 80

Hor. You do well, Madam, for I have nothing that you came for: I
 have brought over not so much as a Bawdy Picture, new Postures,
 nor the second Part of the *Ecole de Filles*, Nor –

Qu. Hold for shame, Sir; what d'y mean? you'l ruine your self for ever
 with the Sex – 85

*Apart to Horner.**Sr. Jas.* Hah, hah, hah, he hates Women perfectly I find.*Dain.* What pitty 'tis he shou'd.

L. Fid. Ay, he's a base rude Fellow for't; but affectation makes not a
 Woman more odious to them, than Virtue.

Hor. Because your Virtue is your greatest affectation, Madam. 90*Lad. Fid.* How, you sawcy Fellow, wou'd you wrong my honour?*Hor.* If I cou'd.*Lad. Fid.* How d'y mean, Sir?

Sr. Jas. Hah, hah, hah, no he can't wrong your Ladyships honour, upon
 my honour; he poor Man – hark you in your ear – a meer Eunuch. 95

Lad. O filthy French Beast, foh, foh; why do we stay? let's be gone; I
 can't endure the sight of him.

Sr. Jas. Stay, but till the Chairs come, they'l be here presently.*Lad.* No, no.

Sr. Jas. Nor can I stay longer; 'tis – let me see, a quarter and a half
 quarter of a minute past eleven; the Council will be state, I must
 away: business must be preferr'd always before Love and Ceremony
 with the wise Mr. *Horner*. 100

Hor. And the Impotent Sir *Jaspar*.*Sr. Jas.* Ay, ay, the impotent Master *Horner*, hah, ha, ha. 105*Lad.* What leave us with a filthy Man alone in his lodgings?

Sr. Jas. He's an innocent Man now, you know; pray stay, I'll hasten
 the Chaires to you. – Mr. *Horner* Your Servant, I shoul'd be glad to
 see you at my house; pray, come and dine with me, and play at Cards
 with my Wife after dinner, you are fit for Women at that game yet; 110

hah, ha – [’Tis as much a Husbands prudence to provide innocent diversion for a Wife, as to hinder her unlawful pleasures; and he had better employ her, than let her employ her self.

Aside.

Farewel.

Exit Sir Jaspar.

Hor. Your Servant Sr. *Jaspar.* 115

Lad. I will not stay with him, foh –

Hor. Nay, Madam, I beseech you stay, if it be but to see, I can be as civil to Ladies yet, as they wou’d desire.

Lad. No, no, foh, you cannot be civil to Ladies.

Dain. You as civil as Ladies wou’d desire. 120

Lad. No, no, no, foh, foh, foh.

Exeunt Ladie Fid. and Dainty.

Qu. Now I think, I, or you your self rather, have done your business with the Women.

Hor. Thou art an Ass, don’t you see already upon the report and my carriage, this grave Man of business leaves his Wife in my lodgings, invites me to his house and wife, who before wou’d not be acquainted with me out of jealousy. 125

Qu. Nay, by this means you may be the more acquainted with the Husbands, but the less with the Wives.

Hor. Let me alone, if I can but abuse the Husbands, I’ll soon disabuse the Wives: Stay – I’ll reckon you up the advantages, I am like to have by my Stratagem: First, I shall be rid of all my old Acquaintances, the most insatiable sorts of Duns, that invade our Lodgings in a morning: And next, to the pleasure of making a New Mistriss, is that of being rid of an old One, and of all old Debts Love when it comes to be so, is paid the most unwillingly. 135

Qu. Well, you may be so rid of your old Acquaintances; but how will you get any new Ones?

Hor. Doctor, thou wilt never make a good Chymist, thou art so incredulous and impatient; ask but all the young Fellows of the Town, if they do not loose more time like Huntsmen, in starting the game, than in running it down; one knows not where to find’em, who will, or will not; Women of Quality are so civil, you can hardly distinguish love from good breeding, and a Man is often mistaken; but now I can be sure, she that shews an aversion to me loves the sport, as those Women that are gone, whom I warrant to be right: And then the next thing, is your Women of Honour, as you call’em, are only chary of their reputations, not their Persons, and ’tis scandal they wou’d avoid, not Men: Now may I have, by the reputation of an Eunuch, the Priviledges of One; and be seen in a Ladies Chamber, in a morning as early as her Husband; kiss Virgins 150

before their Parents, or Lovers; and may be in short the *Pas par tout* of the Town. Now Doctor.

Qu. Nay, now you shall be the Doctor; and your Process is so new, that we do not know but it may succeed. 155

Hor. Not so new neither, *Probatum est* Doctor.

Qu. Well, I wish you luck and many Patients whil'st I go to mine.

Exit Quack.

Enter Harcourt, and Dorilant to Horner.

Har. Come, your appearance at the Play yesterday, has I hope hardned you for the future against the Womens contempt, and the Mens raillery; and now you'l abroad as you were wont. 160

Dor. Did I not bear it bravely?

Dor. With a most Theatrical impudence; nay more than the Orange-wenchens shew there, or a drunken vizard Mask, or a great belly'd Actress; nay, or the most impudent of Creatures, an ill Poet; or what is yet more impudent, a second-hand Critick. 165

Hor. But what say the Ladies, have they no pity?

Har. What Ladies? the vizard Masques you know never pity a Man when all's gone, though in their Service.

Dor. And for the Women in the boxes, you'd never pity them, when 'twas in your power. 170

Har. They say 'tis pity, but all that deal with common Women shou'd be serv'd so.

Dor. Nay, I dare swear, they won't admit you to play at Cards with them, go to Plays with 'em, or do the little duties which other Shadows of men, are wont to do for'em. 175

Hor. Who do you call Shadows of Men?

Dor. Half Men.

Hor. What Boyes?

Dor. Ay your old Boyes, old *beaux Garcons*, who like superannuated Stallions are suffer'd to run, feed, and whinney with the Mares as long as they live, though they can do nothing else. 180

Hor. Well a Pox on love and wenching, Women serve but to keep a Man from better Company; though I can't enjoy them, I shall you the more: good fellowship and friendship, are lasting, rational and manly pleasures. 185

Har. For all that give me some of those pleasures, you call effeminate too, they help to relish one another.

Hor. They disturb one another.

Har. No, Mistresses are like Books; if you pore upon them too much, they doze you, and make you unfit for Company; but if us'd discreetly, you are the fitter for conversation by'em. 190

Dor. A Mistress shou'd be like a little Country retreat near the Town, not to dwell in constantly, but only for a night and away; to tast the Town the better when a Man returns.

Hor. I tell you, 'tis as hard to be a good Fellow, a good Friend, and a Lover of Women, as 'tis to be a good Fellow, a good Friend, and

a Lover of Money: You cannot follow both, then choose your side;
Wine gives you liberty, Love takes it away.

Dor. Gad, he's in the right on't.

Hor. Wine gives you joy, Love grief and tortures, besides the Chir- 200
urgeon's: Wine makes us witty, Love only Sots: Wine makes us
sleep, Love breaks it.

Dor. By the World he has reason, *Harcourt.*

Hor. Wine makes –

Dor. Ay, Wine makes us – makes us Princes, Love makes us Beggars, 205
poor Rogues, y gad – and Wine –

Hor. So, there's one converted. – No, no, Love and Wine, Oil and
Vinegar.

Har. I grant it; Love will still be uppermost.

Hor. Come, for my part I will have only those glorious, manly pleas- 210
ures of being very drunk, and very slovenly.

Enter Boy.

Boy. Mr. *Sparkish* is below, Sir.

Har. What, my dear Friend! a Rogue that is fond of me, only I think
for abusing him.

Dor. No, he can no more think the Men laugh at him, than that 215
Women jilt him, his opinion of himself is so good.

Hor. Well, there's another pleasure by drinking, I thought not of; I
shall loose his acquaintance, because he cannot drink; and you
know 'tis a very hard thing to be rid of him, for he's one of those
nauseous offerers at wit, who like the worst Fidlers run themselves 220
into all Companies.

Har. One, that by being in the Company of Men of sense wou'd pass
for one.

Hor. And may so to the short-sighted World, as a false Jewel
amongst true ones, is not discern'd at a distance; his Company is 225
as troublesome to us, as a Cuckolds, when you have a mind to his
Wife's.

Har. No, the Rogue will not let us enjoy one another, but ravishes
our conversation, though he signifies no more to't, than Sir *Martin*
Mar-all's gaping, and auker'd thrumming upon the Lute, does to 230
his Man's Voice, and Musick.

Dor. And to pass for a wit in Town, shewes himself a fool every night
to us, that are guilty of the plot.

Hor. Such wits as he, are, to a Company of reasonable Men, like
Rooks to the Gamsters, who only fill a room at the Table, but 235
are so far from contributing to the play, that they only serve to spoil
the fancy of those that do.

Dor. Nay, they are us'd like Rooks too, snub'd, check'd, and abus'd;
yet the Rogues will hang on.

Hor. A Pox on'em, and all that force Nature, and wou'd be still what 240
she forbids'em; Affectation is her greatest Monster.

Har. Most Men are the contraries to that they wou'd seem; your bully you see, is a Coward with a long Sword; the little humbly fawning Physician with his Ebony cane, is he that destroys Men.

Dor. The Usurer, a poor Rogue, possess'd of moldy Bonds, and Mortgages; and we they call Spend-thrifts, are only wealthy, who lay out his money upon daily new purchases of pleasure. 245

Hor. Ay, your errantest cheat, is your Trustee, or Executor; your jealous Man, the greatest Cuckhold; your Church-man, the greatest Atheist; and your noisy pert Rogue of a wit, the greatest Fop, 250
dullest Ass, and worst Company as you shall see: For here he comes.

Enter Sparkish to them.

Spar. How is't, Sparks, how is't? Well Faith, *Harry*, I must railly thee a little, ha, ha, ha, upon the report in Town of thee, ha, ha, ha, I can't hold y Faith; shall I speak?

Hor. Yes, but you'l be so bitter then. 255

Spar. Honest *Dick* and *Franck* here shall answer for me, I will not be extream bitter by the Univers.

Har. We will be bound in ten thousand pound Bond, he shall not be bitter at all.

Dor. Nor sharp, nor sweet. 260

Hor. What, not down right insipid?

Spar. Nay then, since you are so brisk, and provoke me, take what follows; you must know, I was discoursing and raillying with some Ladies yesterday, and they hapned to talk of the fine new signes in Town. 265

Hor. Very fine Ladies I believe.

Spar. Said I, I know where the best new sign is. Where, says one of the Ladies? In *Covent-Garden*, I reply'd. Said another, In what street? In *Russel-street*, answer'd I. Lord says another, I'm sure there was ne're a fine new sign there yesterday. Yes, but there was, said I again, and it came out of *France*, and has been there a fortnight. 270

Dor. A Pox I can hear no more, prethee.

Hor. No hear him out; let him tune his crowd a while.

Har. The worst Musick the greatest preparation. 275

Spar. Nay faith, I'll make you laugh. It cannot be, says a third Lady. Yes, yes, quoth I again. Says a fourth Lady,

Hor. Look to't, we'l have no more Ladies.

Spar. No. – then mark, mark, now, said I to the fourth, did you never see Mr. *Horner*, he lodges in *Russel-street*, and he's a sign of a Man, 280
you know, since he came out of *France*, heh, hah, he.

Hor. But the Divel take me, if thine be the sign of a jest.

Spar. With that they all fell a laughing, till they bepiss'd themselves; what, but it do's not move you, methinks? well I see one had as good go to Law without a witness, as break a jest without a laugher 285
on ones side. – Come, come Sparks, but where do we dine, I have left at *Whitehal* an Earl to dine with you.

Dor. Why, I thought thou hadst lov'd a Man with a title better, than a Suit with a French trimming to't.

Har. Go, to him again. 290

Spar. No, Sir, a wit to me is the greatest title in the World.

Hor. But go dine with your Earl, Sir, he may be exceptious; we are your Friends, and will not take it ill to be left, I do assure you.

Har. Nay, faith he shall go to him.

Spar. Nay, pray Gentlemen. 295

Dor. We'l thrust you out, if you wo'not, what disappoint any Body for us.

Spar. Nay, dear Gentlemen hear me.

Hor. No, no, Sir, by no means; pray go Sir.

Spar. Why, dear Rogues. 300

They all thrust him out of the room.

Dor. No, no.

All. Ha, ha, ha.

Spar. returns.

Spar. But, Sparks, pray hear me; what d'ye think I'll eat then with gay shallow Fops, and silent Coxcombs? I think wit as necessary at dinner as a glass of good wine, and that's the reason I never have any stomach when I eat alone. – Come, but where do we dine? 305

Hor. Ev'n where you will.

Spar. At *Chateline's*.

Dor. Yes, if you will.

Spar. Or at the *Cock*. 310

Dor. Yes, if you please.

Spar. Or at the *Dog* and *Partridg*.

Hor. Ay, if you have mind to't, for we shall dine at neither.

Spar. Pshaw, with your fooling we shall loose the new Play; and I wou'd no more miss seeing a new Play the first day, than I wou'd miss setting in the wits Row; therefore I'll go fetch my Mistriss and away. 315

Exit Sparkish.

Manent Horner, Harcourt, Dorilant; *Enter to them*

Mr. Pinchwife.

Hor. Who have we here, *Pinchwife*?

Mr. *Pinch*. Gentlemen, your humble Servant.

Hor. Well, *Jack*, by thy long absence from the Town, the grumness of thy countenance, and the slovenlyness of thy habit; I shou'd give thee joy, shou'd I not, of Marriage? 320

Mr. *Pinch*. [Death does he know I'm married too? I thought to have conceal'd it from him at least.]

Aside.

My long stay in the Country will excuse my dress, and I have a suit 325
of Law, that brings me up to Town, that puts me out of humour;
besides I must give *Sparkish* to morrow five thousand pound to lye
with my Sister.

Hor. Nay, you Country Gentlemen rather than not purchase, will buy
any thing, and he is a crackt title, if we may quibble: Well, but am I 330
to give thee joy, I heard thou wert marry'd.

Mr. Pin. What then?

Hor. Why, the next thing that is to be heard, is thou'rt a Cuckold.

Mr. Pin. Insupportable name.

Aside.

Hor. But I did not expect Marriage from such a Whoremaster as you, 335
one that knew the Town so much, and Women so well.

Mr. Pin. Why, I have marry'd no *London* Wife.

Hor. Pshaw, that's all one, that grave circumspection in marrying a
Country Wife, is like refusing a deceitful pamper'd *Smithfield* Jade,
to go and be cheated by a Friend in the Country. 340

Mr. Pin. A Pox on him and his Simile.

Aside.

At least we are a little surer of the breed there, know what her
keeping has been, whether foyl'd or unsound.

Hor. Come, come, I have known a clap gotten in *Wales*, and there are
Cozens, Justices, Clerks, and Chaplains in the Country, I won't say 345
Coach-men, but she's handsome and young.

Pin. I'll answer as I shou'd do.

Aside.

No, no, she has no beauty, but her youth; no attraction, but her
modesty, wholesome, homely, and huswifely, that's all.

Dor. He talks as like a Grasier as he looks. 350

Pin. She's too auker'd, ill favour'd, and silly to bring to Town.

Har. Then methinks you shou'd bring her, to be taught breeding.

Pin. To be taught; no, Sir, I thank you, good Wives, and private
Souldiers shou'd be ignorant. – [I'll keep her from your instruc-
tions, I warrant you. 355

Har. The Rogue is as jealous, as if his wife were not ignorant.

Aside.

Hor. Why, if she be ill favour'd, there will be less danger here for you,
than by leaving her in the Country; we have such variety of dainties,
that we are seldom hungry.

Dor. But they have always coarse, constant, swinging stomachs in 360
the Country.

Har. Foul Feeders indeed.

Dor. And your Hospitality is great there.

Har. Open house, every Man's welcome.

Pin. So, so, Gentlemen. 365

Hor. But prethee, why wou'd'st thou marry her? if she be ugly, ill-bred, and silly, she must be rich then.

Pin. As rich as if she brought me twenty thousand pound out of this Town; for she'l be as sure not to spend her moderate portion, as a *London* Baggage wou'd be to spend hers, let it be what it wou'd; so 'tis all one: then because shes ugly, she's the likelier to be my own; and being ill-bred, she'l hate conversation; and since silly and innocent, will not know the difference betwixt a 'Man of one and twenty, and one of forty – 370

Hor. Nine – to my knowledge; but if she be silly, she'l expect as much from a Man of forty nine, as from him of one and twenty: But methinks wit is more necessary than beauty, and I think no young Woman ugly that has it, and no handsome Woman agreeable without it. 375

Pin. 'Tis my maxime, he's a Fool that marrys, but he's a greater that does not marry a Fool; what is wit in a Wife good for, but to make a Man a Cuckold? 380

Hor. Yes, to keep it from his knowledge.

Pin. A Fool cannot contrive to make her husband a Cuckold.

Hor. No, but she'l club with a Man that can; and what is worse, if she cannot make her Husband a Cuckold, she'l make him jealous, and pass for one, and then 'tis all one. 385

Pin. Well, well, I'll take care for one, my Wife shall make me no Cuckold, though she had your help Mr. *Horner*, I understand the Town, Sir.

Dor. His help! 390

Aside.

Har. He's come newly to Town it seems, and has not heard how things are with him.

Aside.

Hor. But tell me, has Marriage cured thee of whoring, which it seldom does.

Har. 'Tis more than age can do. 395

Hor. No, the word is, I'll marry and live honest; but a Marriage vow is like a penitent Gamesters Oath, and entering into Bonds, and penalties to stint himself to such a particular small sum at play for the future, which makes him but the more eager, and not being able to hold out, looses his Money again, and his forfeit to boot. 400

Dor. Ay, ay, a Gamester will be a Gamester, whilst his Money lasts; and a Whoremaster, whilst his vigour.

Har. Nay, I have known'em, when they are broke and can loose no more, keep a fumbling with the Box in their hands to fool with only, and hinder other Gamesters. 405

Dor. That had wherewithal to make lusty stakes.

Pin. Well, Gentlemen, you may laugh at me, but you shall never lye with my Wife, I know the Town.

Hor. But prethee, was not the way you were in better, is not keeping
better than Marriage? 410

Pin. A Pox on't, the Jades wou'd jilt me, I cou'd never keep a Whore
to my self.

Hor. So then you only marry'd to keep a Whore to your self; well,
but let me tell you, Women, as you say, are like Souldiers made
constant and loyal by good pay, rather than by Oaths and Coven- 415
ants, therefore I'd advise my Friends to keep rather than marry;
since too I find by your example, it does not serve ones turn, for I
saw you yesterday in the eighteen penny place with a pretty Coun-
try-wench.

Pin. How the Divel, did he see my Wife then? I sate there that she 420
might not be seen; but she shall never go to a play again.

Aside.

Hor. What dost thou blush at nine and forty, for having been seen
with a Wench?

Dor. No Faith, I warrant 'twas his Wife, which he seated there out of
sight, for he's a cunning Rogue, and understands the Town. 425

Har. He blushes, then 'twas his Wife; for Men are now more ashamed
to be seen with them in publick, than with a Wench.

Pin. Hell and damnation, I'm undone, since *Horner* has seen her, and
they know 'twas she.

Aside.

Hor. But prethee, was it thy Wife? she was exceedingly pretty; I was in 430
love with her at that distance.

Pin. You are like never to be nearer to her. Your Servant Gentlemen.

Offers to go.

Hor. Nay, prethee stay.

Pin. I cannot, I will not.

Hor. Come you shall dine with us. 435

Pin. I have din'd already.

Hor. Come, I know thou hast not; I'll treat thee dear Rogue, thou
sha't spend none of thy *Hampshire* Money to day.

Pin. Treat me; so he uses me already like his Cuckold.

Aside.

Hor. Nay, you shall not go. 440

Pin. I must, I have business at home.

Exit Pinchwife.

Hor. To beat his Wife, he's as jealous of her, as a *Cheapside* Husband
of a *Covent-garden* Wife.

Hor. Why, 'tis as hard to find an old Whoremaster without jealousy
and the gout, as a young one without fear or the Pox. 445

As Gout in Age, from Pox in Youth proceeds;

So Wenching past, then jealousy succeeds:
The worst disease that Love and Wenching breeds.

ACT II

Scene I

*Mrs. Margery Pinchwife, and Alithea: Mr. Pinchwife peeping
behind at the door.*

Mrs. Pin. Pray, Sister, where are the best Fields and Woods, to walk in
in London?

Alit. A pretty Question; why, Sister! *Mulberry Garden*, and *St.
James's Park*; and for close walks the *New Exchange*.

Mrs. Pin. Pray, Sister, tell me why my Husband looks so grum here in 5
Town? and keeps me up so close, and will not let me go a walking,
nor let me wear my best Gown yesterday?

Alith. O he's jealous, Sister.

Mrs. Pin. Jealous, what's that?

Alith. He's afraid you shou'd love another Man. 10

Mrs. Pin. How shou'd he be afraid of my loving another man, when
he will not let me see any but himself.

Alith. Did he not carry you yesterday to a Play?

Mrs. Pin. Ay, but we sate amongst ugly People, he wou'd not let me 15
come near the Gentry, who sate under us, so that I cou'd not
see'em: He told me, none but naughty Women sate there, whom
they tous'd and mous'd; but I wou'd have ventur'd for all that.

Alith. But how did you like the Play?

Mrs. Pin. Indeed I was a weary of the Play, but I lik'd hugely the 20
Actors; they are the goodlyest proper'st Men, Sister.

Alith. O but you must not like the Actors, Sister.

Mrs. Pin. Ay, how shou'd I help it, Sister? Pray, Sister, when my
Husband comes in, will you ask leave for me to go a walking?

Alith. A walking, hah, ha; Lord, a Country Gentlewomans leasure is 25
the drudgery of a foot-post; and she requires as much airing as her
Husbands Horses.

Aside.

Enter Mr. Pinchwife to them.

But here comes your Husband; I'll ask, though I'm sure he'l not
grant it.

Mrs. Pin. He says he won't let me go abroad, for fear of catching the 30
Pox.

Alith. Fye, the small Pox you shou'd say.

Mrs. Pin. Oh my dear, dear Bud, welcome home; why dost thou look
so fropish, who has nanger'd thee?

Mr. Pin. You're a Fool.

Mrs. Pinch. goes aside, & cries.

Alith. Faith so she is, for crying for no fault, poor tender Creature! 35

Mr. Pin. What you wou'd have her as impudent as yourself, as errant a Jilflirt, a gadder, a Magpy, and to say all a meer notorious Town-Woman?

Alit. Brother, you are my only Censurer; and the honour of your Family shall sooner suffer in your Wife there, than in me, though I take the innocent liberty of the Town. 40

Mr. Pin. Hark you Mistriss, do not talk so before my Wife, the innocent liberty of the Town!

Alith. Why, pray, who boasts of any intrigue with me? what Lampon has made my name notorious? what ill Women frequent my Lodgings? I keep no Company with any Women of scandalous reputations. 45

Mr. Pin. No, you keep the Men of scandalous reputations Company.

Alith. Where? wou'd you not have me civil? answer'em in a Box at the Plays? in the drawing room at *Whitehal*? in *St. James's Park*? *Mulberry-garden*? or – 50

Mr. Pin. Hold, hold, do not teach my Wife, where the Men are to be found; I believe she's the worse for your Town documents already; I bid you keep her in ignorance as I do.

Mrs. Pin. Indeed be not angry with her Bud, she will tell me nothing of the Town, though I ask her a thousand times a day. 55

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

Mrs. Pin. Not I indeed, Dear, I hate *London*; our Place-house in the Country is worth a thousand of't, wou'd I were there again.

Mr. Pin. So you shall I warrant; but were you not talking of Plays, and Players, when I came in? you are her encourager in such discourses. 60

Mr. Pin. No indeed, Dear, she chid me just now for liking the Player Men.

Mr. Pin. Nay, if she be so innocent as to own to me her liking them, there is no hurt in't – 65

Aside.

Come my poor Rogue, but thou lik'st none better then me?

Mrs. Pin. Yes indeed, but I do, the Player Men are finer Folks.

Mr. Pin. But you love none better then me?

Mrs. Pin. You are mine own Dear Bud, and I know you, I hate a Stranger. 70

Mr. Pin. Ay, my Dear, you must love me only, and not be like the naughty Town Women, who only hate their Husbands, and love every Man else, love Plays, Visits, fine Coaches, fine Cloaths, Fiddles, Balls, Treates, and so lead a wicked Town-life. 75

Mrs. Pin. Nay, if to enjoy all these things be a Town-life, *London* is not so bad a place, Dear.

Mr. Pin. How! if you love me, you must hate *London*.

Ali. The Fool has forbid me discovering to her the pleasures of the Town, and he is now setting her a gog upon them himself. 80

Mrs. Pin. But, Husband, do the Town-women love the Player Men too?

Mr. Pin. Yes, I warrant you.

Mrs. Pin. Ay, I warrant you.

Mr. Pin. Why, you do not, I hope? 85

Mrs. Pin. No, no, Bud; but why have we no Player-men in the Country?

Mr. Pin. Ha – Mrs. Minx, ask me no more to go to a Play.

Mrs. Pin. Nay, why, Love? I did not care for going; but when you forbid me, you make me as't were desire it. 90

Alith. So 'twill be in other things, I warrant.

Aside.

Mrs. Pin. Pray, let me go to a Play, Dear.

Mr. Pin. Hold your Peace, I wo'not.

Mrs. Pin. Why, Love?

Mr. Pin. Why, I'll tell you. 95

Alith. Nay, if he tell her, she'l give him more cause to forbid her that place.

Aside.

Mrs. Pin. Pray, why, Dear?

Mr. Pin. First, you like the Actors, and the Gallants may like you.

Mrs. Pin. What, a homely Country Girl? no Bud, no body will like me. 100

Mr. Pin. I tell you, yes, they may.

Mrs. Pin. No, no, you jest – I won't believe you, I will go.

Mr. Pin. I tell you then, that one of the lewdest Fellows in Town, who saw you there, told me he was in love with you.

Mrs. Pin. Indeed! who, who, pray who wast? 105

Mr. Pin. I've gone too far, and slipt before I was aware; how overjoy'd she is!

Aside.

Mrs. Pin. Was it any *Hampshire* Gallant, any of our Neighbours? I promise you, I am beholding to him.

Mr. Pin. I promise you, you lye; for he wou'd but ruin you, as he has done hundreds: he has no other love for Women, but that, such as he, look upon Women like Basilicks, but to destroy'em. 110

Mrs. Pin. Ay, but if he loves me, why shou'd he ruin me? answer me to that: methinks he shou'd not, I wou'd do him no harm.

Alith. Hah, ha, ha. 115

Mr. Pin. 'Tis very well; but I'll keep him from doing you any harm, or me either.

Enter Sparkish and Harcourt.

But here comes Company, get you in, get you in.

Mrs. Pin. But pray, Husband, is he a pretty Gentleman, that loves me?

Mr. Pin. In baggage, in. 120

Thrusts her in: shuts the door.

What all the lewd Libertines of the Town brought to my Lodging,
by this easie Coxcomb! S'death I'll not suffer it.

Spar. Here *Harcourt*, do you approve my choice? Dear, little Rogue, I
told you, I'd bring you acquainted with all my Friends, the wits, and—

Harcourt salutes her.

Mr. Pin. Ay, they shall know her, as well as you your self will, I warrant 125
you.

Spar. This is one of those, my pretty Rogue, that are to dance at your
Wedding to morrow; and him you must bid welcome ever, to what
you and I have.

Mr. Pin. Monstrous! — 130

Aside.

Spar. *Harcourt* how dost thou like her, Faith? Nay, Dear, do not look
down; I should hate to have a Wife of mine out of countenance at
any thing.

Mr. Pin. Wonderful!

Spar. Tell me, I say, *Harcourt*, how dost thou like her? thou hast 135
star'd upon her enough, to resolve me.

Har. So infinitely well, that I cou'd wish I had a Mistriss too, that might
differ from her in nothing, but her love and engagement to you.

Alith. Sir, Master *Sparkish* has often told me, that his Acquaintance
were all Wits and Raillieurs, and now I find it. 140

Spar. No, by the Universe, Madam, he does not raily now; you may
believe him: I do assure you, he is the honestest, worthiest, true
hearted Gentleman — A man of such perfect honour, he wou'd say
nothing to a Lady, he does not mean.

Mr. Pin. Praising another Man to his Mistriss! 145

Har. Sir, you are so beyond expectation obliging, that —

Spar. Nay, I gad, I am sure you do admire her extreamly, I see't in
your eyes. — He does admire you Madam. — By the World, don't
you?

Har. Yes, above the World, or, the most glorious part of it, her whole 150
Sex; and till now I never thought I shou'd have envy'd you, or any
Man about to marry, but you have the best excuse for Marriage I
ever knew.

Alith. Nay, now, Sir, I'm satisfied you are of the Society of the Wits,
and Raillieurs, since you cannot spare your Friend, even when he 155
is but too civil to you; but the surest sign is, since you are an Enemy
to Marriage, for that I hear you hate as much as business or bad
Wine.

Har. Truly, Madam, I never was an Enemy to Marriage, till now,
because Marriage was never an Enemy to me before. 160

Alith. But why, Sir, is Marriage an Enemy to you now? Because it robs you of your Friend here; for you look upon a Friend married, as one gone into a Monastery, that is dead to the World.

Har. 'Tis indeed, because you marry him; I see Madam, you can guess my meaning: I do confess heartily and openly, I wish it were in my power to break the Match, by Heavens I wou'd. 165

Spar. Poor *Franck!*

Alith. Wou'd you be so unkind to me?

Har. No, no, 'tis not because I wou'd be unkind to you.

Spar. Poor *Franck*, no gad, 'tis only his kindness to me. 170

Pin. Great kindness to you indeed; insensible Fop, let a Man make love to his Wife to his face.

Aside.

Spar. Come dear *Franck*, for all my Wife there that shall be, thou shalt enjoy me sometimes dear Rogue; by my honour, we Men of wit condole for our deceased Brother in Marriage, as much as for one dead in earnest: I think that was prettily said of me, ha *Harcourt?* – But come *Franck*, be not melancholy for me. 175

Har. No, I assure you I am not melancholy for you.

Spar. Prethee, *Frank*, dost think my Wife that shall be there a fine Person? 180

Har. I cou'd gaze upon her, till I became as blind as you are.

Spar. How, as I am! how!

Har. Because you are a Lover, and true Lovers are blind, stockblind.

Spar. True, true; but by the World, she has wit too, as well as beauty: go, go with her into a corner, and trye if she has wit, talk to her any thing, she's bashful before me. 185

Har. Indeed if a Woman wants wit in a corner, she has it no where.

Alith. Sir, you dispose of me a little before your time. –

Aside to Sparkish.

Spar. Nay, nay, Madam let me have an earnest of your obedience, or – go, go, Madam – 190

Harcourt courts Alithea aside.

Pin. How, Sir, if you are not concern'd for the honour of a Wife, I am for that of a Sister; he shall not debauch her: be a Pander to your own Wife, bring Men to her, let'em make love before your face, thrust'em into a corner together, then leav'em in private! is this your Town wit and conduct? 195

Spar. Hah, ha, ha, a silly wise Rogue, wou'd make one laugh more then a stark Fool, hah, ha: I shall burst. Nay, you shall not disturb'em; I'll vex thee, by the World.

Struggles with Pinch. to keep him from Harc. and Alith.

Alith. The writings are drawn, Sir, settlements made; 'tis too late, Sir, and past all revocation. 200

Har. Then so is my death.

Alith. I wou'd not be unjust to him.

Har. Then why to me so?

Alith. I have no obligation to you.

Har. My love. 205

Alith. I had his before.

Har. You never had it; he wants you see jealousy, the only infallible sign of it.

Alith. Love proceeds from esteem; he cannot distrust my virtue, besides he loves me, or he wou'd not marry me. 210

Har. Marrying you, is no more sign of his love, then bribing your Woman, that he may marry you, is a sign of his generosity: Marriage is rather a sign of interest, then love; and he that marries a fortune, covets a Mistress, not loves her: But if you take Marriage for a sign of love, take it from me immediately. 215

Alith. No, now you have put a scruple in my head; but in short, Sir, to end our dispute, I must marry him, my reputation wou'd suffer in the World else.

Har. No, if you do marry him, with your pardon, Madam, your reputation suffers in the World, and you wou'd be thought in necessity for a cloak. 220

Alith. Nay, now you are rude, Sir. – Mr. *Sparkish*, pray come hither, your Friend here is very troublesom, and very loving.

Har. Hold, hold –

Aside to Alithea.

Mr. Pin. D'ye hear that? 225

Spar. Why, d'ye think I'll seem to be jealous, like a Country Bumpkin?

Mr. Pin. No, rather be a Cuckold, like a credulous Cit.

Har. Madam, you wou'd not have been so little generous as to have told him.

Alith. Yes, since you cou'd be so little generous, as to wrong him. 230

Har. Wrong him, no Man can do't, he's beneath an injury; a Bubble, a Coward, a senseless Idiot, a Wretch so contemptible to all the World but you, that –

Alith. Hold, do not rail at him, for since he is like to be my Husband, I am resolv'd to like him: Nay, I think I am oblig'd to tell him, you are not his Friend. – Master *Sparkish*, Master *Sparkish*. 235

Spar. What, what; now dear Rogue, has not she wit?

Har. Not so much as I thought, and hoped she had.

Speaks surlily.

Alith. Mr. *Sparkish*, do you bring People to rail at you?

Har. Madam – 240

Spar. How! no, but if he does rail at me, 'tis but in jest I warrant; what we wits do for one another; and never take any notice of it.

Alith. He spoke so scurrilously of you, I had no patience to hear him; besides he has been making love to me.

Har. True damn'd tell-tale-Woman. 245

Aside.

Spar. Pshaw, to shew his parts – we wits rail and make love often, but to shew our parts; as we have no affections, so we have no malice, we –

Alith. He said, you were a Wretch, below an injury.

Spar. Pshaw. 250

Har. Damn'd, senseless, impudent, virtuous Jade; well since she won't let me have her, she'l do as good, she'l make me hate her.

Alith. A Common Bubble.

Spar. Pshaw.

Alith. A Coward. 255

Spar. Pshaw, pshaw.

Alith. A senseless driveling Idiot.

Spar. How, did he disparage my parts? Nay, then my honour's concern'd, I can't put up that, Sir; by the World, Brother help me to kill him; [I may draw now, since we have the odds of him: – 'tis a good, 260 occasion too before my Mistriss] –

Aside.

Offers to draw.

Alith. Hold, hold.

Spar. What, what.

Alith. I must not let'em kill the Gentleman neither, for his kindness to me; I am so far from hating him, that I wish my Gallant had his 265 person and understanding: – Nay if my honour –

Aside.

Spar. I'll be thy death.

Alith. Hold, hold, indeed to tell the truth, the Gentleman said after all, that what he spoke, was but out of friendship to you.

Spar. How! say, I am, I am a Fool, that is no wit, out of friendship to 270 me.

Alith. Yes, to try whether I was concern'd enough for you, and made love to me only to be satisfy'd of my virtue, for your sake.

Har. Kind however –

Aside.

Spar. Nay, if it were so, my dear Rogue, I ask thee pardon; but why 275 wou'd not you tell me so, faith.

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

Spar. Come, *Horner* does not come, *Harcourt*, let's be gone to the new Play. – Come Madam.

Alith. I will not go, if you intend to leave me alone in the Box, and 280 run into the pit, as you use to do.

Spar. Pshaw, I'll leave *Harcourt* with you in the Box, to entertain you, and that's as good; if I sate in the Box, I shou'd be thought

no Judge, but of trimmings. – Come away *Harcourt*, lead her down. 285

Exeunt Sparkish, Harcourt, and Alithea.

Pin. Well, go thy wayes, for the flower of the true Town Fops, such as spend their Estates, before they come to'em, and are Cuckolds before they'r married. But let me go look to my own Free-hold – How –

Enter my Lady Fidget, Mistriss Dainty Fidget, and Mistriss Squeamish.

Lad. Your Servant, Sir, where is your Lady? we are come to wait upon her to the new Play. 290

Pin. New Play!

Lad. And my Husband will wait upon you presently.

Pin. Damn your civility –

Aside.

Madam, by no means, I will not see Sir *Jaspar* here, till I have waited upon him at home; nor shall my Wife see you, till she has waited upon your Ladyship at your lodgings. 295

Lad. Now we are here, Sir –

Pin. No, Madam.

Dain. Pray, let us see her. 300

Squeam. We will not stir, till we see her.

Pin. A Pox on you all –

Aside.

Goes to the door, and returns.

she has lock'd the door, and is gone abroad.

Lad. No, you have lock'd the door, and she's within.

Dain. They told us below, she was here. 305

Pin. [Will nothing do?] – Well it must out then, to tell you the truth, Ladies, which I was afraid to let you know before, least it might endanger your lives, my Wife has just now the Small Pox come out upon her, do not be frighten'd; but pray, be gone Ladies, you shall not stay here in danger of your lives; pray get you gone Ladies. 310

Lad. No, no, we have all had'em.

Squeam. Alack, alack.

Dain. Come, come, we must see how it goes with her, I understand the disease.

Lad. Come. 315

Pin. Well, there is no being too hard for Women at their own weapon, lying, therefore I'll quit the Field.

Aside.

Exit Pinchwife.

Squeam. Here's an example of jealousy.

- Lad.* Indeed as the World goes, I wonder there are no more jealous,
since Wives are so neglected. 320
- Dain.* Pshaw, as the World goes, to what end shou'd they be jealous.
- Lad.* Foh, 'tis a nasty World.
- Squeam.* That Men of parts, great acquaintance, and quality shou'd
take up with, and spend themselves and fortunes, in keeping little
Play-house Creatures, foh. 325
- Lad.* Nay, that Women of understanding, great acquaintance, and
good quality, shou'd fall a keeping too of little Creatures, foh.
- Squeam.* Why, 'tis the Men of qualities fault, they never visit Women
of honour, and reputation, as they us'd to do; and have not so much
as common civility, for Ladies of our rank, but use us with the same 330
indifferency, and ill breeding, as if we were all marry'd to'em.
- Lad.* She says true, 'tis an errant shame Women of quality shou'd be
so slighted; methinks, birth, birth, shou'd go for something; I have
known Men admired, courted, and followed for their titles only.
- Squeam.* Ay, one wou'd think Men of honour shou'd not love no 335
more, than marry out of their own rank.
- Dain.* Fye, fye upon'em, they are come to think cross breeding for
themselves best, as well as for their Dogs, and Horses.
- Lad.* They are Dogs, and Horses for't.
- Squeam.* One wou'd think if not for love, for vanity a little. 340
- Dain.* Nay, they do satisfy their vanity upon us sometimes; and are
kind to us in their report, tell all the World they lye with us.
- Lad.* Damn'd Rascals, that we shou'd be only wrong'd by'em; to
report a Man has had a Person, when he has not had a Person, is
the greatest wrong in the whole World, that can be done to a person. 345
- Squeam.* Well, 'tis an errant shame, Noble Persons shou'd be so
wrong'd, and neglected.
- Lad.* But still 'tis an erranter shame for a Noble Person, to neglect her
own honour, and defame her own Noble Person, with little incon-
siderable Fellows, foh! – 350
- Dain.* I suppose the crime against our honour, is the same with a Man
of quality as with another.
- Lad.* How! no sure the Man of quality is likest one's Husband, and
therefore the fault shou'd be the less.
- Dain.* But then the pleasure shou'd be the less. 355
- Lad.* Fye, fye, fye, for shame Sister, whither shall we ramble? be
continent in your discourse, or I shall hate you.
- Dain.* Besides an intrigue is so much the more notorious for the
man's quality.
- Squeam.* 'Tis true, no body takes notice of a private Man, and there- 360
fore with him, 'tis more secret, and the crime's the less, when 'tis
not known.
- Lad.* You say true; y faith I think you are in the right on't: 'tis not an
injury to a Husband, till it be an injury to our honours; so that a
Woman of honour looses no honour with a private Person; and to 365
say truth –

Dain. So the little Fellow is grown a private Person – with her –

Apart to Squeamish.

Lad. But still my dear, dear Honour.

Enter Sir Jaspar, Horner, Dorilant.

Sr. Jas. Ay, my dear, dear of honour, thou hast still so much honour in thy mouth – 370

Hor. That she has none elsewhere –

Aside.

Lad. Oh, what d’ye mean to bring in these upon us?

Dain. Foh, these are as bad as Wits.

Squeam. Foh!

Lad. Let us leave the Room. 375

Sr. Jas. Stay, stay, faith to tell you the naked truth.

Lad. Fye, Sir *Jaspar*, do not use that word naked.

Sr. Jas. Well, well, in short I have business at *Whitehal*, and cannot go to the play with you, therefore wou’d have you go –

Lad. With those two to a Play? 380

Sr. Jas. No, not with t’other, but with Mr. *Horner*; there can be no more scandal to go with him, than with Mr. *Tattle*, or Master *Limberham*.

Lad. With that nasty Fellow! no – no.

Sr. Jas. Nay, prethee Dear, hear me. 385

Whispers to Lady Fid.

Hor. Ladies.

Horner, Dorilant drawing near Squeamish, and Daint.

Dain. Stand off.

Squeam. Do not approach us.

Dain. You heard with the wits, you are obscenity all over.

Squeam. And I wou’d as soon look upon a Picture of *Adam* and *Eve*, 390 without fig leaves, as any of you, if I cou’d help it, therefore keep off, and do not make us sick.

Dor. What a Divel are these?

Hor. Why, these are pretenders to honour, as criticks to wit, only by censuring others; and as every raw peevish, out-of-humour’d, 395 affected, dull, Tea-drinking, Arithmetical Fop sets up for a wit, by railing at men of sence, so these for honour, by railing at the Court, and Ladies of as great honour, as quality.

Sr. Jas. Come, Mr. *Horner*, I must desire you to go with these Ladies to the Play, Sir. 400

Hor. I! Sir.

Sr. Jas. Ay, ay, come, Sir.

Hor. I must beg your pardon, Sir, and theirs, I will not be seen in Womens Company in publick again for the World.

Sr. Jas. Ha, ha, strange Aversion! 405

Squeam. No, he's for Womens company in private.

Sr. Jas. He – poor Man – he! hah, ha, ha.

Dain. 'Tis a greater shame amongst lew'd fellows to be seen in virtuous Womens company, than for the Women to be seen with them. 410

Hor. Indeed, Madam, the time was I only hated virtuous Women, but now I hate the other too; I beg your pardon Ladies.

Lad. You are very obliging, Sir, because we wou'd not be troubled with you.

Sr. Jas. In sober sadness he shall go. 415

Dor. Nay, if he wo't, I am ready to wait upon the Ladies; and I think I am the fitter Man.

Sr. Jas. You, Sir, no I thank you for that – Master Horner is a privileg'd Man amongst the virtuous Ladies, 'twill be a great while before you are so; heh, he, he, he's my Wive's Gallant, heh, he, he; no pray withdraw, Sir, for as I take it, the virtuous Ladies have no business with you. 420

Dor. And I am sure, he can have none with them: 'tis strange a Man can't come amongst virtuous Women now, but upon the same terms, as Men are admitted into the great Turks Seraglio; but Heavens keep me, from being an hombre Player with'em: but where is *Pinchwife* – 425

Exit Dorilant.

Sr. Jas. Come, come, Man; what avoid the sweet society of Woman-kind? that sweet, soft, gentle, tame, noble Creature Woman, made for Man's Companion – 430

Hor. So is that soft, gentle, tame, and more noble Creature a Spaniel, and has all their tricks, can fawn, lye down, suffer beating, and fawn the more; barks at your Friends, when they come to see you; makes your bed hard, gives you Fleas, and the mange sometimes: and all the difference is, the Spaniel's the more faithful Animal, and fawns but upon one Master. 435

Sr. Jas. Heh, he, he.

Squeam. O the rude Beast.

Dain. Insolent brute.

Lad. Brute! stinking mortify'd rotten French Weather, to dare – 440

Sr. Jas. Hold, an't please your Ladyship; for shame Master *Horner*, your Mother was a Woman – [Now shall I never reconcile'em]

Aside.

Hark you, Madam, take my advice in your anger; you know you often want one to make up your droling pack of hombre Players; and you may cheat him easily, for he's an ill Gamester, and consequently loves play: Besides you know, you have but two old civil Gentlemen (with stinking breaths too) to wait upon you abroad, take in the third, into your service; the other are but crazy: and a 445

Lady shou'd have a supernumerary Gentleman-Usher, as a supernumerary Coach-horse, least sometimes you shou'd be forc'd to stay at home. 450

Lad. But are you sure he loves play, and has money?

Sr. Jas. He loves play as much as you, and has money as much as I.

Lad. Then I am contented to make him pay for his scurrillity; money makes up in a measure all other wants in Men. – Those whom we cannot make hold for Gallants, we make fine. 455

Aside.

Sr. Jas. So, so; now to mollify, to wheedle him, –

Aside.

Master *Horner* will you never keep civil Company, methinks 'tis time now, since you are only fit for them: Come, come, Man you must e'en fall to visiting our Wives, eating at our Tables, drinking Tea with our virtuous Relations after dinner, dealing Cards to'em, reading Plays, and Gazets to'em, picking Fleas out of their shocks for'em, collecting Receipts, New Songs, Women, Pages, and Footmen for'em. 460

Hor. I hope they'l afford me better employment, Sir.

Sr. Jas. Heh, he, he, 'tis fit you know your work before you come into your place; and since you are unprovided of a Lady to flatter, and a good house to eat at, pray frequent mine, and call my Wife Mistriess, and she shall call you Gallant, according to the custom. 465

Hor. Who I? –

Sr. Jas. Faith, thou sha't for my sake, come for my sake only. 470

Hor. For your sake –

Sr. Jas. Come, come, here's a Gamester for you, let him be a little familiar sometimes; nay, what if a little rude; Gamesters may be rude with Ladies, you know.

Lad. Yes, losing Gamesters have a privilege with Women. 475

Hor. I alwayes thought the contrary, that the winning Gamester had most privilege with Women, for when you have lost your money to a Man, you'l loose any thing you have, all you have, they say, and he may use you as he pleases.

Sr. Jas. Heh, he, he, well, win or loose you shall have your liberty with her. 480

Lad. As he behaves himself; and for your sake I'll give him admittance and freedom.

Hor. All sorts of freedom, Madam?

Sr. Jas. Ay, ay, ay, all sorts of freedom thou can't take, and so go to her, begin thy new employment; wheedle her, jest with her, and be better acquainted one with another. 485

Hor. I think I know her already, therefore may venter with her, my secret for hers. –

Aside.

Horner, and Lady Fidget whisper.

Sr. Jas. Sister *Cuz*, I have provided an innocent Play-fellow for you 490
there.

Dain. Who he!

Squeam. There's a Play-fellow indeed.

Sr. Jas. Yes sure, what he is good enough to play at Cards, Blind-mans
buff, or the fool with sometimes. 495

Squeam. Foh, we'l have no such Play-fellows.

Dain. No, Sir, you shan't choose Play-fellows for us, we thank you.

Sr. Jas. Nay, pray hear me.

Whispering to them.

Lad. But, poor Gentleman, cou'd you be so generous? so truly a Man
of honour, as for the sakes of us Women of honour, to cause your 500
self to be reported no Man? No Man! and to suffer your self the
greatest shame that cou'd fall upon a Man, that none might fall
upon us Women by your conversation; but indeed, Sir, as perfectly,
perfectly, the same Man as before your going into *France*, Sir; as
perfectly, perfectly, Sir. 505

Hor. As perfectly, perfectly, Madam; nay, I scorn you shou'd take my
word; I desire to be try'd only, Madam.

Lad. Well, that's spoken again like a Man of honour, all Men of
honour desire to come to the test: But indeed, generally you Men
report such things of your selves, one does not know how, or whom 510
to believe; and it is come to that pass, we dare not take your words,
no more than your Taylors, without some staid Servant of yours be
bound with you; but I have so strong a faith in your honour, dear,
dear, noble Sir, that I'd forfeit mine for yours at any time, dear Sir.

Hor. No, Madam, you shou'd not need to forfeit it for me, I have 515
given you security already to save you harmless, my late reputation
being so well known in the World, Madam.

Lady. But if upon any future falling out, or upon a suspicion of my
taking the trust out of your hands, to employ some other, you your
self shou'd betray your trust, dear Sir; I mean, if you'l give me leave 520
to speak obscenely, you might tell, dear Sir.

Hor. If I did, no body wou'd believe me; the reputation of impotency
is as hardly recover'd again in the World, as that of cowardise, dear
Madam.

Lad. Nay then, as one may say, you may do your worst, dear, dear, Sir. 525

Sr. Jas. Come, is your Ladyship reconciled to him yet? have you
agreed on matters? for I must be gone to *Whitehal*.

Lad. Why, indeed, Sir *Jaspar*, Master *Horner* is a thousand, thousand
times a better Man, than I thought him: Cosen *Squeamish*, Sister
Dainty, I can name him now, truly not long ago you know, I 530
thought his very name obscenity, and I wou'd as soon have lain
with him, as have nam'd him.

Sr. Jas. Very likely, poor Madam.

Dain. I believe it.

Squeam. No doubt on't. 535

Sr. Jas. Well, well – that your Ladyship is as virtuous as any she, – I know, and him all the Town knows – heh, he, he; therefore now you like him, get you gone to your business together; go, go, to your business, I say, pleasure, whilst I go to my pleasure, business.

Lad. Come then dear Gallant.

540

Hor. Come away, my dearest Mistriss.

Sr. Jas. So, so, why 'tis as I'd have it.

Exist Sr. Jaspar.

Hor. And as I'd have it.

Lad. Who for his business, from his Wife will run; Takes the best care, to have her bus'ness done.

545

Exeunt omnes.

ACT III

Scene I

Alitha, and Mrs. Pinchwife.

Alith. Sister, what ailes you, you are grown melancholy?

Mrs. Pin. Wou'd it not make any one melancholy, to see you go every day fluttering about abroad, whilst I must stay at home like a poor lonely, sullen Bird in a cage?

Alit. Ay, Sister, but you came young, and just from the nest to your cage, so that I thought you lik'd it; and cou'd be as chearful in't, as others that took their flight themselves early, and are hopping abroad in the open Air.

5

Mrs. Pin. Nay, I confess I was quiet enough, till my Husband told me, what pure lives, the *London* Ladies live abroad, with their dancing, meetings, and junketings, and drest every day in their best gowns; and I warrant you, play at nine Pins every day of the week, so they do.

10

Enter Mr. Pinchwife.

Mr. Pin. Come, what's here to do? you are putting the Town pleasures in her head, and setting her a longing.

Alit. Yes, after Nine-pins; you suffer none to give her those longings, you mean, but your self.

15

Mr. Pin. I tell her of the vanities of the Town like a Confessor.

Alith. A Confessor! just such a Confessor, as he that by forbidding a silly Oastler to grease the Horses teeth, taught him to do't.

Mr. Pin. Come Mistriss *Flippant*, good Precepts are lost, when bad Examples are still before us; the liberty you take abroad makes her hanker after it; and out of humour at home, poor Wretch! she desired not to come to *London*, I wou'd bring her.

20

Alith. Very well.

Mr. Pin. She has been this week in Town, and never desired, till this afternoon, to go abroad. 25

Alith. Was she not at a Play yesterday?

Mr. Pin. Yes, but she ne'er ask'd me; I was my self the cause of her going.

Alith. Then if she ask you again, you are the cause of her asking, and not my example. 30

Mr. Pin. Well, to morrow night I shall be rid of you; and the next day before 'tis light, she and I'll be rid of the Town, and my dreadful apprehensions: Come, be not melancholly, for thou sha't go into the Country after to morrow, Dearest. 35

Alith. Great comfort.

Mrs. Pin. Pish, what d'ye tell me of the Country for?

Mr. Pin. How's this! what, pish at the Country?

Mrs. Pin. Let me alone, I am not well.

Mr. Pin. O, if that be all – what ailes my dearest? 40

Mrs. Pin. Truly I don't know; but I have not been well, since you told me there was a Gallant at the Play in love with me.

Mr. Pin. Ha –

Alith. That's by my example too.

Mr. Pin. Nay, if you are not well, but are so concern'd, because a lew'd Fellow, chanc'd to lye, and say he lik'd you, you'l make me sick too. 45

Mrs. Pin. Of what sickness?

Mr. Pin. O, of that which is worse than the Plague, Jealousy.

Mrs. Pin. Pish, you jear, I'm sure there's no such disease in our Receipt-book at home. 50

Mr. Pin. No, thou never met'st with it, poor Innocent – well, if thou Cuckold me, 'twill be my own fault – for Cuckolds and Bastards, are generally makers of their own fortune.

Aside.

Mrs. Pin. Well, but pray Bud, let's go to a Play to night. 55

Mr. Pin. 'Tis just done, she comes from it; but why are you so eager to see a Play?

Mrs. Pin. Faith Dear, not that I care one pin for their talk there; but I like to look upon the Player-men, and wou'd see, if I cou'd, the Gallant you say loves me; that's all dear Bud. 60

Mr. Pin. Is that all dear Bud?

Alith. This proceeds from my example.

Mr. Pin. But if the Play be done, let's go abroad however, dear Bud.

Mr. Pin. Come have a little patience, and thou shalt go into the Country on Friday. 65

Mrs. Pin. Therefore I wou'd see first some sights, to tell my Neighbours of. Nay, I will go abroad, that's once.

Alith. I'm the cause of this desire too.

Mr. Pin. But now I think on't, who was the cause of *Horners* coming to my Lodging to day? that was you. 70

Alith. No, you, because you wou'd not let him see your handsome Wife out of your Lodging.

Mrs. Pin. Why, O Lord! did the Gentleman come hither to see me indeed?

Mr. Pin. No, no; – You are not cause of that damn'd question too, 75
Mistriss Alithea? – [Well she's in the right of it; he is in love with my Wife – and comes after her – 'tis so – but I'll nip his love in the bud; least he should follow us into the Country, and break his Chariot-wheel near our house, on purpose for an excuse to come to't; but I think I know the Town. 80

Aside.

Mrs. Pin. Come, pray Bud, let's go abroad before 'tis late; for I will go, that's flat and plain.

Mr. Pin. So! the obstinacy already of a Town-wife, and I must, whilst she's here, humour her like one.

Aside.

Sister, how shall we do, that she may not be seen, or known? 85

Alith. Let her put on her Mask.

Mr. Pin. Pshaw, a Mask makes People but the more inquisitive, and is as ridiculous a disguise, as a stage- beard; her shape, stature, habit will be known: and if we shou'd meet with *Horner*, he wou'd be sure to take acquaintance with us, must wish her joy, kiss her, talk to her, leer 90 upon her, and the Devil and all; no I'll not use her to a Mask, 'tis dangerous; for Masks have made more Cuckolds, than the best faces that ever were known.

Alith. How will you do then?

Mrs. Pin. Nay, shall we go? the *Exchange* will be shut, and I have a mind to see that. 95

Mr. Pin. So – I have it – I'll dress her up in the Suit, we are to carry down to her Brother, little Sir *James*; nay, I understand the Town tricks: Come let's go dress her; a Mask! no – a Woman mask'd, like a cover'd Dish, gives a Man curiosity, and appetite, when, it may be, 100 uncover'd, 'twou'd turn his stomach; no, no.

Alith. Indeed your comparison is something a greasie one: but I had a gentle Gallant, us'd to say, a Beauty mask'd, like the Sun in Eclipse, gathers together more gazers, than if it shin'd out.

Exeunt.

Scene II

The Scene changes to the new Exchange: Enter Horner, Harcourt, Dorilant.

Dor. Engag'd to Women, and not Sup with us?

Hor. Ay, a Pox on'em all.

- Har.* You were much a more reasonable Man in the morning, and had as noble resolutions against'em, as a Widdower of a weeks liberty.
- Dor.* Did I ever think, to see you keep company with Women in vain. 5
- Hor.* In vain! no – 'tis, since I can't love'em, to be reveng'd on'em.
- Har.* Now your Sting is gone, you look'd in the Box amongst all those Women, like a drone in the hive, all upon you; shov'd and ill-us'd by'em all, and thrust from one side to t'other.
- Dor.* Yet he must be buzzing amongst'em still, like other old beetle-headed, lycorish drones; avoid'em, and hate'm as they hate you. 10
- Hor.* Because I do hate'em, and wou'd hate'em yet more, I'll frequent'em; you may see by Marriage, nothing makes a Man hate a Woman more, than her constant conversation: In short, I converse with'em, as you do with rich Fools, to laugh at'em, and use'em ill. 15
- Dor.* But I wou'd no more Sup with Women, unless I cou'd lye with'em, than Sup with a rich Coxcomb, unless I cou'd cheat him.
- Hor.* Yes, I have known thee Sup with a Fool, for his drinking, if he cou'd set out your hand that way only, you were satisfy'd; and if he were a Wine-swallowing mouth 'twas enough. 20
- Har.* Yes, a Man drink's often with a Fool, as he tosses with a Marker, only to keep his hand in Ure; but do the Ladies drink?
- Hor.* Yes, Sir, and I shall have the pleasure at least of laying'em flat with a Bottle; and bring as much scandal that way upon'em, as formerly t'other. 25
- Har.* Perhaps you may prove as weak a Brother amongst'em that way, as t'other.
- Dor.* Foh, drinking with Women, is as unnatural, as scolding with'em; but 'tis a pleasure of decay'd Fornicators, and the basest way of quenching Love. 30
- Har.* Nay, 'tis drowning Love, instead of quenching it; but leave us for civil Women too!
- Dor.* Ay, when he can't be the better for'em; we hardly pardon a Man, that leaves his Friend for a Wench, and that's a pretty lawful call.
- Hor.* Faith, I wou'd not leave you for'em, if they wou'd not drink. 35
- Dor.* Who wou'd disappoint his Company at *Lewis's*, for a Gossiping?
- Har.* Foh, Wine and Women good apart, together as nauseous as Sack and Sugar: But hark you, Sir, before you go, a little of your advice, an old maim'd General, when unfit for action is fittest for Counsel; I have other designs upon Women, than eating and drinking with them: I am in love with *Sparkish's* Mistriss, whom he is to marry to morrow, now how shall I get her? 40
- Enter Sparkish, looking about.*
- Hor.* Why, here comes one will help you to her.
- Har.* He! he, I tell you, is my Rival, and will hinder my love.
- Hor.* No, a foolish Rival, and a jealous Husband assist their Rivals designs; for they are sure to make their Women hate them, which is the first step to their love, for another Man. 45
- Har.* But I cannot come near his Mistriss, but in his company.

Hor. Still the better for you, for Fools are most easily cheated, when they themselves are accessaries; and he is to be bubbled of his Mistriss, as of his Money, the common Mistriss, by keeping him company. 50

Spar. Who is that, that is to be bubbled? Faith let me snack, I han't met with a buble since Christmas: gad; I think bubbles are like their Brother Woodcocks, go out with the cold weather.

Har. A Pox, he did not hear all I hope. 55

Apart to Horner.

Spar. Come, you bubbling Rogues you, where do we sup – Oh, *Harcourt*, my Mistriss tells me, you have been making fierce love to her all the Play long, hah, ha – but I –

Har. I make love to her?

Spar. Nay, I forgive thee; for I think I know thee, and I know her, but I am sure I know my self. 60

Har. Did she tell you so? I see all Women are like these of the *Exchange*, who to enhance the price of their commodities, report to their fond Customers offers which were never made'em.

Hor. Ay, Women are as apt to tell before the intrigue, as Men after it, and so shew themselves the vainer Sex; but hast thou a Mistriss, *Sparkish*? 'tis as hard for me to believe it, as that thou ever hadst a buble, as you brag'd just now. 65

Spar. O your Servant, Sir; are you at your raillery, Sir? but we were some of us beforehand with you to day at the Play: the Wits were something bold with you, Sir; did you not hear us laugh? 70

Har. Yes, But I thought you had gone to Plays, to laugh at the Poets wit, not at your own.

Spar. Your Servant, Sir, no I thank you; gad I go to a Play as to a Country-treat, I carry my own wine to one, and my own wit to t'other, or else I'm sure I shou'd not be merry at either; and the reason why we are so often lowder, than the Players, is, because we think we speak more wit, and so become the Poets Rivals in his audience: for to tell you the truth, we hate the silly Rogues; nay, so much that we find fault even with their Bawdy upon the Stage, whilst we talk nothing else in the Pit as lowd. 80

Hor. But, why should'st thou hate the silly Poets, thou hast too much wit to be one, and they like Whores are only hated by each other; and thou dost scorn writing, I'am sure.

Spar. Yes, I'd have you to know, I scorn writing; but Women, Women, that make Men do all foolish things, make'em write Songs too; every body does it: 'tis ev'n as common with Lovers, as playing with fans; and you can no more help Rhyming to your *Phyllis*, than drinking to your *Phyllis*. 85

Har. Nay, Poetry in love is no more to be avoided, than jealousy. 90

Dor. But the Poets damn'd your Songs, did they?

Spar. Damn the Poets, they turn'd'em into Burlesque, as they call it; that Burlesque is a *Hocus-Pocus*-trick, they have got, which by the virtue of *Hictius doctius*, *topsey turvey*, they make a wise and witty

Man in the World, a Fool upon the Stage you know not how; and 95
 'tis therefore I hate 'em too, for I know not but it may be my own
 case; for they'l put a Man into a Play for looking a Squint: Their
 Predecessors were contented to make Serving-men only their
 Stage-Fools, but these Rogues must have Gentlemen, with a Pox
 to 'em, nay Knights: and indeed you shall hardly see a Fool upon the 100
 Stage, but he's a Knight; and to tell you the truth, they have kept
 me these six years from being a Knight in earnest, for fear of being
 knighted in a Play, and dubb'd a Fool.

Dor. Blame 'em not, they must follow their Copy, the Age.

Har. But why should'st thou be afraid of being in a Play, who expose 105
 your self every day in the Play- houses, and as publick Places.

Hor. 'Tis but being on the Stage, instead of standing on a Bench in
 the Pit.

Dor. Don't you give money to Painters to draw you like? and are you 110
 afraid of your Pictures, at length in a Play-house, where all your
 Mistresses may see you.

Spar. A Pox, Painters don't draw the Small Pox, or Pimples in ones
 face; come damn all your silly Authors whatever, all Books and
 Booksellers, by the World, and all Readers, courteous or uncour-
 teous. 115

Har. But, who comes here, *Sparkish*?

*Enter Mr. Pinchwife, and his Wife in Mans Cloaths,
 Alithea, Lucy her Maid.*

Spar. Oh hide me, there's my Mistriss too.

Sparkish hides himself behind Harcourt.

Har. She sees you.

Spar. But I will not see her, 'tis time to go to *Whitehal*, and I must not
 fail the drawing Room. 120

Har. Pray, first carry me, and reconcile me to her.

Spar. Another time, faith the King will have sup't.

Har. Not with the worse stomach for thy absence; thou art one of
 those Fools, that think their attendance at the King's Meals, as
 necessary as his Physicians, when you are more troublesom to 125
 him, than his Doctors, or his Dogs.

Spar. Pshaw, I know my interest, Sir, prethee hide me.

Hor. Your Servant, *Pinchwife*, – what he knows us not –

Mr. Pin. Come along.

To his Wife aside.

Mrs. Pin. Pray, have you any Ballads, give me sixpenny worth? 130

Clasp. We have no Ballads.

Mrs. Pin. Then give me *Covent-garden*-Drollery, and a Play or two –
 Oh here's *Tarugos* Wiles, and the Slighted Maiden, I'll have them.

Mr. Pin. No, Playes are not for your reading; come along, will you discover your self? 135

Apart to her.

Hor. Who is that pretty Youth with him, *Sparkish*?

Spar. I believe his Wife's Brother, because he's something like her, but I never saw her but once.

Hor. Extremely handsome, I have seen a face like it too; let us follow'em.

Exeunt Pinchwife, Mistriss Pinchwife.

Alithea, Lucy, Horner, Dorilant following them.

Har. Come, *Sparkish*, your Mistriss saw you, and will be angry you go not to her; besides I wou'd fain be reconcil'd to her, which none but you can do, dear Friend. 140

Spar. Well that's a better reason, dear Friend; I wou'd not go near her now, for her's, or my sake, but I can deny you nothing; for though I have known thee a great while, never go, if I do not love thee, as well as a new Acquaintance. 145

Har. I am oblig'd to you indeed, dear Friend, I wou'd be well with her only, to be well with thee still; for these tyes to Wives usually dissolve all tyes to Friends: I wou'd be contended, she shou'd enjoy you a nights, but I wou'd have you to my self a dayes, as I have had, dear Friend. 150

Spar. And thou shalt enjoy me a dayes, dear, dear Friend, never stir; and I'll be divorced from her, sooner than from thee; come along –

Har. So we are hard put to't, when we make our Rival our Procurer; but neither she, nor her Brother, wou'd let me come near her now: when all's done, a Rival is the best cloak to steal to a Mistress under, without suspicion; and when we have once got to her as we desire, we throw him off like other Cloaks. 155

Aside.

[*Exit Sparkish, and Harcourt following him. Re-enter Mr. Pinchwife, Mistress Pinchwife in Man's Cloaths.*]

Mr. Pin. Sister, if you will not go, we must leave you – 160

To Alithea.

The Fool her Gallant, and she, will muster up all the young santerers of this place, and they will leave their dear Seamstresses to follow us; what a swarm of Cuckolds, and Cuckold-makers are here?

Aside.

Come let's be gone Mistriss *Margery*.

Mrs. Pin. Don't you believe that, I han't half my belly full of sights yet. 165

Mr. Pin. Then walk this way.

Mrs. Pin. Lord, what a power of brave signs are here! stay – the Bull's-head, the Rams-head, and the Stags-head, Dear –

Mr. Pin. Nay, if every Husbands proper sign here were visible, they
wou'd be all alike. 170

Mr. Pin. What d'ye mean by that, Bud?

Mr. Pin. 'Tis no matter – no matter, Bud.

Mrs. Pin. Pray tell me; nay, I will know.

Mr. Pin. They wou'd be all Bulls, Stags, and Rams heads.

Exeunt Mr. Pinchwife, Mrs. Pinchwife.

Re-enter Sparkish, Harcourt, Alithea, Lucy, at t'other door.

Spar. Come, dear Madam, for my sake you shall be reconciled to him. 175

Alith. For your sake I hate him.

Har. That's something too cruel, Madam, to hate me for his sake.

Spar. Ay indeed, Madam, too, too cruel to me, to hate my Friend for
my sake.

Alith. I hate him because he is your Enemy; and you ought to hate
him too, for making love to me, if you love me. 180

Spar. That's a good one, I hate a Man for loving you; if he did love
you, 'tis but what he can't help, and 'tis your fault not his, if he
admires you: I hate a Man for being of my opinion, I'll ne'er do't,
by the World. 185

Alith. Is it for your honour or mine, to suffer a Man to make love to
me, who am to marry you to morrow?

Spar. Is it for your honour or mine, to have me jealous? That he
makes love to you, is a sign you are handsome; and that I am not
jealous, is a sign you are virtuous, that I think is for your honour. 190

Alith. But 'tis your honour too, I am concerned for.

Har. But why, dearest Madam, will you be more concern'd for his
honour, than he is himself; let his honour alone for my sake, and his.
He, he, has no honour –

Spar. How's that? 195

Har. But what, my dear Friend can guard himself.

Spar. O ho – that's right again.

Har. Your care of his honour argues his neglect of it, which is no
honour to my dear Friend here; therefore once more, let his honour
go which way it will, dear Madam. 200

Spar. Ay, ay, were it for my honour to marry a Woman, whose virtue I
suspected, and cou'd not trust her in a Friends hands?

Alith. Are you not afraid to loose me?

Har. He afraid to loose you, Madam! No, no – you may see how the
most estimable, and most glorious Creature in the World, is valued
by him; will you not see it? 205

Spar. Right, honest *Franck*, I have that noble value for her, that I
cannot be jealous of her.

Spar. You mistake him, he means you care not for me, nor who has me.

Spar. Lord, Madam, I see you are jealous; will you wrest a poor Mans
meaning from his words? 210

Alith. You astonish me, Sir, with your want of jealousy.

Spar. And you make me giddy, Madam, with your jealousy, and fears, and virtue, and honour; gad, I see virtue makes a Woman as troublesome, as a little reading, or learning. 215

Alith. Monstrous!

Lucy. [Well to see what easie Husbands these Women of quality can meet with, a poor Chamber-maid can never have such Lady-like luck; besides he's thrown away upon her, she'll make no use of her fortune, her blessing, none to a Gentleman, for a pure Cuckold, for it requires good breeding to be a Cuckold. 220

Behind.

Alith. I tell you then plainly, he pursues me to marry me.

Spar. Pshaw –

Har. Come, Madam, you see you strive in vain to make him jealous of me; my dear Friend is the kindest Creature in the World to me. 225

Spar. Poor fellow.

Har. But his kindness only is not enough for me, without your favour; your good opinion, dear Madam, 'tis that must perfect my happiness: good Gentleman he believes all I say, wou'd you wou'd do so, jealous of me! I wou'd not wrong him nor you for the World. 230

Spar. Look you there; hear him, hear him, and do not walk away so.

Alithea walks carelessly, to and fro.

Har. I love you, Madam, so –

Spar. How's that! Nay – now you begin to go too far indeed.

Har. So much I confess, I say I love you, that I wou'd not have you miserable, and cast your self away upon so unworthy, and inconsiderable a thing, as what you see here. 235

Clapping his hand on his breast, points at Sparkish.

Spar. No faith, I believe thou wou'd'st not, now his meaning is plain: but I knew before thou wou'd'st not wrong me nor her.

Har. No, no, Heavens forbid, the glory of her Sex shou'd fall so low as into the embraces of such a contemptible Wretch, the last of Mankind – my dear Friend here – I injure him. 240

Embracing Sparkish.

Alith. Very well.

Spar. No, no, dear Friend, I knew it Madam, you see he will rather wrong himself than me, in giving himself such names.

Alith. Do not you understand him yet? 245

Spar. Yes, how modestly he speaks of himself, poor Fellow.

Alith. Methinks he speaks impudently of your self, since – before your self too, insomuch that I can no longer suffer his scurrilous abusiveness to you, no more than his love to me.

offers to go.

Spar. Nay, nay, Madam, pray stay, his love to you: Lord, Madam, has he not spoke yet plain enough? 250

Alith. Yes indeed, I shou'd think so.

Spar. Well then, by the World, a Man can't speak civilly to a Woman now, but presently she says, he makes love to her: Nay, Madam, you shall stay, with your pardon, since you have not yet understood him, 255
till he has made an eclaircismment of his love to you, that is what kind of love it is; answer to thy Catechisme: Friend, do you love my Mistriss here?

Har. Yes, I wish she wou'd not doubt it.

Spar. But how do you love her? 260

Har. With all my Soul.

Alith. I thank him, methinks he speaks plain enough now.

Spar. You are out still.

To Alithea.

But with what kind of love, *Harcourt*?

Har. With the best, and truest love in the World. 265

Spar. Look you there then, that is with no matrimonial love, I'm sure.

Alith. How's that, do you say matrimonial love is not best?

Spar. Gad, I went too far e're I was aware: But speak for thy self

Harcourt, you said you wou'd not wrong me, nor her.

Har. No, no, Madam, e'n take him for Heaven's sake. 270

Spar. Look you there, Madam.

Har. Who shou'd in all justice be yours, he that loves you most.

Claps his hand on his breast.

Alith. Look you there, Mr. *Sparkish*, who's that?

Spar. Who shou'd it be? go on *Harcourt*.

Har. Who loves you more than Women, Titles, or fortune Fools. 275

Points at Sparkish.

Spar. Look you there, he means me stil, for he points at me.

Alith. Ridiculous!

Har. Who can only match your Faith, and constancy in love.

Spar. Ay.

Har. Who knows, if it be possible, how to value so much beauty and 280
virtue.

Spar. Ay.

Har. Whose love can no more be equall'd in the world, than that
Heavenly form of yours.

Spar. No – 285

Har. Who cou'd no more suffer a Rival, than your absence, and yet
cou'd no more suspect your virtue, than his own constancy in his
love to you.

Spar. No –

Har. Who in fine loves you better than his eyes, that first made him 290
love you.

Spar. Ay – nay, Madam, faith you shan't go, till –

Alith. Have a care, lest you make me stay too long –

Spar. But till he has saluted you; that I may be assur'd you are friends, after his honest advice and declaration: Come pray, Madam, be friends with him. 295

Enter Master Pinchwife, Mistriss Pinchwife.

Alith. You must pardon me, Sir, that I am not yet so obedient to you.

Mr. Pin. What, invite your Wife to kiss Men? Monstrous, are you not asham'd? I will never forgive you.

Spar. Are you not asham'd, that I shou'd have more confidence in the chastity of your Family, than you have; you must not teach me, I am a man of honour, Sir, though I am frank and free; I am frank, Sir – 300

Mr. Pin. Very frank, Sir, to share your Wife with your friends.

Spar. He is an humble, menial Friend, such as reconciles the differences of the Marriage-bed; you know Man and Wife do not always agree, I design him for that use, therefore wou'd have him well with my Wife. 305

Mr. Pin. A menial Friend – you will get a great many menial Friends, by shewing your Wife as you do.

Spar. What then, it may be I have a pleasure in't, as I have to shew fine Clothes, at a Play-house the first day, and count money before poor Rogues. 310

Mr. Pin. He that shews his wife, or money will be in danger of having them borrowed sometimes.

Spar. I love to be envy'd, and wou'd not marry a Wife, that I alone cou'd love; loving alone is as dull, as eating alone; is it not a frank age, and I am a frank Person? and to tell you the truth, it may be I love to have Rivals in a Wife, they make her seem to a Man still, but as a kept Mistriss; and so good night, for I must to *Whitehal.* Madam, I hope you are now reconcil'd to my Friend; and so I wish you a good night, Madam, and sleep if you can, for tomorrow you know I must visit you early with a Canonical Gentleman. Good night dear *Harcourt.* 315
320

Exit Sparkish.

Har. Madam, I hope you will not refuse my visit to morrow, if it shou'd be earlyer, with a Canonical Gentleman, than Mr. *Sparkish's.*

Mr. Pin. This Gentle-woman is yet under my care, therefore you must yet forbear your freedom with her, Sir. 325

Coming between Alithea and Harcourt.

Har. Must, Sir –

Mr. Pin. Yes, Sir, she is my Sister.

Har. 'Tis well she is, Sir – for I must be her Servant, Sir. Madam –

Mr. Pin. Come away Sister, we had been gone, if it had not been for you, and so avoided these lewd Rakehells, who seem to haunt us. 330

Enter Horner, Dorilant to them.

Hor. How now *Pinchwife?*

Mr. Pin. Your Servant.

Hor. What, I see a little time in the Country makes a Man turn wild
and unsociable, and only fit to converse with his Horses, Dogs, and 335
his Herds.

Mr. Pin. I have business, Sir, and must mind it; your business is
pleasure, therefore you and I must go different ways.

Hor. Well, you may go on, but this pretty young Gentleman –

Takes hold of Mrs. Pinchwife.

Har. The Lady – 340

Dor. And the Maid –

Hor. Shall stay with us, for I suppose their business is the same with
ours, pleasure.

Mr. Pin. 'Sdeath he knows her, she carries it so sillily, yet if he does
not, I shou'd be more silly to discover it first. 345

Aside.

Alith. Pray, let us go, Sir.

Mr. Pin. Come, come –

Hor. Had you not rather stay with us?

To Mrs. Pinchwife.

Prethee *Pinchwife*, who is this pretty young Gentleman?

Mr. Pin. One to whom I'm a guardian. 350

[I wish I cou'd keep her out of your hands –

Aside.

Hor. Who is he? I never saw any thing so pretty in all my life.

Mr. Pin. Pshaw, do not look upon him so much, he's a poor
bashful youth, you'l put him out of countenance. Come away
Brother. 355

Offers to take her away.

Hor. O your Brother!

Mr. Pin. Yes, my Wifes Brother; come, come, she'l stay supper for us.

Hor. I thought so, for he is very like her I saw you at the Play with,
whom I told you, I was in love with.

Mr. Pin. O Jeminy! is this he that was in love with me, I am glad on't 360
I vow, for he's a curious fine Gentleman, and I love him already
too.

Aside.

Is this he Bud?

To Mr. Pinchwife.

Mr. Pin. Come away, come away.

To his Wife.

Hor. Why, what haste are you in? why wont you let me talk with him? 365

Mr. Pin. Because you'l debauch him, he's yet young and innocent,
and I wou'd not have him debauch'd for any thing in the World.
How she gazes on him! the Divil –

Aside.

Hor. Harcourt, Dorilant, look you here, this is the likeness of that
Dowdey he told us of, his Wife, did you ever see a lovelyer Creature? 370
the Rogue has reason to be jealous of his Wife, since she is like him,
for she wou'd make all that see her, in love with her.

Har. And as I remember now, she is as like him here as can be.

Dor. She is indeed very pretty, if she be like him.

Hor. Very pretty, a very pretty commendation – she is a glorious 375
Creature, beautiful beyond all things I ever beheld.

Mr. Pin. So, so.

Har. More beautiful than a Poets first Mistriss of Imagination.

Hor. Or another Mans last Mistriss of flesh and blood.

Mr. Pin. Nay, now you jeer, Sir; pray don't jeer me – 380

Mr. Pin. Come, come. [By Heavens she'l discover her self.

Aside.

Hor. I speak of your Sister, Sir.

Mr. Pin. Ay, but saying she was handsome, if like him, made him
blush. [I am upon a wrack –

Aside.

Hor. Methinks he is so handsome, he shou'd not be a Man. 385

Mr. Pin. O there 'tis out, he has discovered her, I am not able to
suffer any longer.

[Come, come away, I say –

To his Wife.

Hor. Nay, by your leave, Sir, he shall not go yet –

Harcourt, Dorilant, let us torment this jealous Rogue a little. 390

To them.

Hor. {How?
Dor. {

Hor. I'll shew you.

Mr. Pin. Come, pray let him go, I cannot stay fooling any longer; I
tell you his Sister stays supper for us.

Hor. Do's she, come then we'l all go sup with her and thee. 395

Mr. Pin. No, now I think on't, having staid so long for us, I warrant
she's gone to bed – [I wish she and I were well out of their hands –

Aside.

Come, I must rise early to morrow, come.

Hor. Well then, if she be gone to bed, I wish her and you a good night.

But pray, young Gentleman, present my humble service to her. 400

Mrs. Pin. Thank you heartily, Sir.

Mr. Pin. S'death, she will discover her self yet in spight of me.

Aside.

He is something more civil to you, for your kindness to his Sister,
than I am, it seems.

Hor. Tell her, dear sweet little Gentleman, for all your Brother there, 405
that you have reviv'd the love, I had for her at first sight in the
Playhouse.

Mrs. Pin. But did you love her indeed, and indeed?

Mr. Pin. So, so.

Aside.

Away, I say. 410

Hor. Nay stay; yes indeed, and indeed, pray do you tell her so, and
give her this kiss from me.

Kisses her.

Mr. Pin. O Heavens! what do I suffer; now 'tis too plain he knows
her, and yet –

Aside.

Hor. And this, and this –

415

Kisses her again.

Mrs. Pin. What do you kiss me for, I am no Woman.

Mr. Pin. So – there 'tis out.

Aside.

Come, I cannot, nor will stay any longer.

Hor. Nay, they shall send your Lady a kiss too; here *Harcourt, Dor-*
ilant, will you not? 420

They kiss her.

Mr. Pin. How, do I suffer this? was I not accusing another just now,
for this rascally patience, in permitting his Wife to be kiss'd before
his face? ten thousand ulcers gnaw away their lips.

Aside.

Come, come.

Hor. Good night dear little Gentleman; Madam good-night; farewell 425
Pinchwife. [Did not I tell you, I wou'd raise his jealous gall.

Apart to Harcourt and Dorilant.

Exeunt Horner, Harcourt, and Dorilant.

Mr. Pin. So they are gone at last; stay, let me see first if the Coach be
at this door.

Exit.

Hor. What not gone yet? will you be sure to do as I desired you, sweet Sir? 430

Horner, Harcourt, Dorilant *return.*

Mrs. Pin. Sweet Sir, but what will you give me then?

Hor. Any thing, come away into the next walk.

Exit Horner, *baling away* *Mrs.* Pinchwife.

Alith. Hold, hold, – what d’ye do?

Lucy. Stay, stay, hold –

Har. Hold Madam, hold, let him present him, he’l come presently; 435
nay, I will never let you go, till you answer my question.

Alitheia, Lucy *struggling with* Harcourt, *and* Dorilant.

Lucy. For God’s sake, Sir, I must follow’em.

Dor. No, I have something to present you with too, you shan’t follow them.

Pinchwife *returns.*

Mr. Pin. Where? – how? – what’s become of? gone – whither? 440

Lucy. He’s only gone with the Gentleman, who will give him something, an’t please your Worship.

Mr. Pin. Something – give him something, with a Pox – where are they?

Alith. In the next walk only, Brother. 445

Mr. Pin. Only, only; where, where?

Exit Pinchwife, *and returns presently, then goes out again.*

Har. What’s the matter with him? why so much concern’d? but dearest Madam –

Alith. Pray, let me go, Sir, I have said, and suffer’d enough already.

Har. Then you will not look upon, nor pitty my sufferings? 450

Alith. To look upon’em, when I cannot help’em, were cruelty, not pitty, therefore I will never see you more.

Har. Let me then, Madam, have my priviledge of a banished Lover, complaining or railing, and giving you but a farewell reason; why, if you cannot condescend to marry me, you shou’d not take that 455
wretch my Rival.

Alith. He only, not you, since my honour is engag’d so far to him, can give me a reason, why I shou’d not marry him; but if he be true, and what I think him to me, I must be so to him; your Servant, Sir.

Har. Have Women only constancy when ’tis a vice, and like fortune 460
only true to fools?

Dor. Thou sha’t not stir thou robust Creature, you see I can deal with you, therefore you shou’d stay the rather, and be kind.

To Lucy, *who struggles to get from him.*

Enter Pinchwife.

Mr. Pin. Gone, gone, not to be found; quite gone, ten thousand
plagues go with 'em; which way went they? 465

Alith. But into t'other walk, Brother.

Lucy. Their business will be done presently sure, an't please your
Worship, it can't be long in doing I'm sure on't.

Alith. Are they not there?

Mr. Pin. No, you know where they are, you infamous Wretch, Eternal 470
shame of your Family, which you do not dishonour enough your
self, you think, but you must help her to do it too, thou legion of
Bawds.

Alith. Good Brother.

Mr. Pin. Damn'd, damn'd Sister. 475

Alith. Look you here, she's coming.

*Enter Mistriss Pinchwife in Mans cloaths, running with her hat under
her arm, full of Oranges and dried fruit, Horner following.*

Mrs. Pin. O dear Bud, look you here what I have got, see.

Mr. Pin. And what I have got here too, which you can't see.

Aside rubbing his forehead.

Mrs. Pin. The fine Gentleman has given me better things yet.

Mr. Pin. Ha's he so? [Out of breath and colour'd – I must hold yet. 480

Aside.

Hor. I have only given your little Brother an Orange, Sir.

Mr. Pin. Thank you, Sir.

To Horner.

You have only squeez'd my Orange, I suppose, and given it me
again; yet I must have a City-patience.

Aside.

Come, come away – 485

To his Wife.

Mrs. Pin. Stay, till I have put up my fine things, Bud.

Enter Sir Jaspar Fidget.

Sr. Jas. O Master *Horner*, come, come, the Ladies stay for you; your
Mistriss, my Wife, wonders you make not more hast to her.

Hor. I have staid this half hour for you here, and 'tis your fault I am
not now with your Wife. 490

Sr. Jas. But pray, don't let her know so much, the truth on't is, I was
advancing a certain Project to his Majesty, about – I'll tell you.

Hor. No, let's go, and hear it at your house: Good night sweet little
Gentleman; one kiss more, you'l remember me now I hope.

Kisses her.

Dor. What, Sir *Jaspar*, will you separate Friends? he promis'd to sup 495
with us; and if you take him to your house, you'l be in danger of our
company too.

Sr. Jas. Alas Gentlemen my house is not fit for you, there are none but
civil Women there, which are not for your turn; he you know can
bear with the society of civil Women, now, ha, ha, ha; besides he's 500
one of my Family; – he's – heh, heh, heh.

Dor. What is he?

Sr. Jas. Faith my Eunuch, since you'l have it, heh, he, he.

Exit Sir Jaspar Fidget, and Horner.

Dor. I rather wish thou wert his, or my Cuckold: *Harcourt*, what a
good Cuckold is lost there, for want of a Man to make him one; 505
thee and I cannot have *Horners* privilege, who can make use of it.

Har. Ay, to poor *Horner* 'tis like coming to an estate at threescore,
when a Man can't be the better for't.

Mr. Pin. Come.

Mrs. Pin. Presently Bud. 510

Dor. Come let us go too: Madam, your Servant.

To Alith.

Good night Strapper. –

To Lucy.

Har. Madam, though you will not let me have a good day, or night, I
wish you one; but dare not name the other half of my wish.

Alith. Good night, Sir, for ever. 515

Mrs. Pin. I don't know where to put this here, dear Bud, you shall eat
it; nay, you shall have part of the fine Gentlemans good things, or
treat as you call it, when we come home.

Mr. Pin. Indeed I deserve it, since I furnish'd the best part of it.

Strikes away the Orange.

The Gallant treats, presents, and gives the Ball; 520
But 'tis the absent Cuckold, pays for all.

ACT IV

Scene I

In Pinchwife's house in the morning.

Lucy, Alitha dress'd in new Cloths.

Lucy. Well – Madam, now have I dress'd you, and set you out with so
many ornaments, and spent upon you ounces of essence, and
pulvilio; and all this for no other purpose, but as People adorn,

- and perfume a Corps, for a stinking second-hand-grave, such or as
 bad I think Master *Sparkish's* bed. 5
- Alith.* Hold your peace.
- Lucy.* Nay, Madam, I will ask you the reason, why you wou'd banish
 poor Master *Harcourt* for ever from your sight? how cou'd you be
 so hard-hearted?
- Alith.* 'Twas because I was not hard-hearted. 10
- Lucy.* No, no; 'twas stark love and kindness, I warrant.
- Alith.* It was so; I wou'd see him no more, because I love him.
- Lucy.* Hey day, a very pretty reason.
- Alith.* You do not understand me.
- Lucy.* I wish you may your self. 15
- Alith.* I was engag'd to marry, you see, another man, whom my
 justice will not suffer me to deceive, or injure.
- Lucy.* Can there be a greater cheat, or wrong done to a Man, than to
 give him your person, without your heart, I shou'd make a con-
 science of it. 20
- Alith.* I'll retrieve it for him after I am married a while.
- Lucy.* The Woman that marries to love better, will be as much mis-
 taken, as the Wencher that marries to live better. No, Madam,
 marrying to encrease love, is like gaming to become rich; alas you
 only loose, what little stock you had before. 25
- Alith.* I find by your Rhetorick you have been brib'd to betray me.
- Lucy.* Only by his merit, that has brib'd your heart you see against your
 word, and rigid honour; but what a Divel is this honour? 'tis sure a
 disease in the head, like the Megrim, or Falling-sickness, that always
 hurries People away to do themselves mischief; Men loose their lives 30
 by it: Women what's dearer to'em, their love, the life of life.
- Alith.* Come, pray talk you no more of honour, nor Master *Harcourt*;
 I wish the other wou'd come, to secure my fidelity to him, and his
 right in me.
- Lucy.* You will marry him then? 35
- Alith.* Certainly, I have given him already my word, and will my hand
 too, to make it good when he comes.
- Lucy.* Well, I wish I may never stick pin more, if he be not an errant
 Natural, to t'other fine Gentleman.
- Alith.* I own he wants the wit of *Harcourt*, which I will dispense 40
 withal, for another want he has, which is want of jealousy, which
 men of wit seldom want.
- Lucy.* Lord, Madam, what shou'd you do with a fool to your Hus-
 band, you intend to be honest don't you? then that husbandly
 virtue, credulity, is thrown away upon you. 45
- Alith.* He only that could suspect my virtue, shou'd have cause to do
 it; 'tis *Sparkish's* confidence in my truth, that obliges me to be so
 faithful to him.
- Lucy.* You are not sure his opinion may last.
- Alith.* I am satisfied, 'tis impossible for him to be jealous, after the 50
 proofs I have had of him: Jealousie in a Husband, Heaven defend

me from it, it begets a thousand plagues to a poor Woman, the loss of her honour, her quiet, and her –

Lucy. And her pleasure.

Alith. What d'ye mean, Impertinent? 55

Lucy. Liberty is a great pleasure, Madam.

Alith. I say loss of her honour, her quiet, nay, her life sometimes; and what's as bad almost, the loss of this Town, that is, she is sent into the Country, which is the last ill usage of a Husband to a Wife, I think.

Lucy. O do's the wind lye there? 60

Aside.

Then of necessity, Madam, you think a man must carry his Wife into the Country, if he be wise; the Country is as terrible I find to our young English Ladies, as a Monastery to those abroad: and on my Virginity, I think they wou'd rather marry a *London-Goaler*, than a high Sheriff of a Country, since neither can stir from his employment: formerly Women of wit married Fools, for a great Estate, a fine seat, or the like; but now 'tis for a pretty seat only in *Lincoln's Inn-fields*, *St. James's-fields*, or the *Pall-mall*. 65

Enter to them Sparkish, and Harcourt dress'd like a Parson.

Spar. Madam, your humble Servant, a happy day to you, and to us all.

Har. Amen. – 70

Alith. Who have we here?

Spar. My Chaplain faith – O Madam, poor *Harcourt* remembers his humble service to you; and in obedience to your last commands, refrains coming into your sight.

Alith. Is not that he? 75

Spar. No, fy e no; but to shew that he ne're intended to hinder our Match has sent his Brother here to joyn our hands: when I get me a Wife, I must get her a Chaplain, according to the Custom; this is his Brother, and my Chaplain.

Alith. His Brother? 80

Lucy. And your Chaplain, to preach in your Pulpit then –

Aside.

Alith. His Brother!

Spar. Nay, I knew you wou'd not believe it; I told you, Sir, she wou'd take you for your Brother *Frank*.

Alith. Believe it! 85

Lucy. His Brother! hah, ha, he, he has a trick left still it seems –

Aside.

Spar. Come my dearest, pray let us go to Church before the Canonical hour is past.

Alith. For shame you are abus'd still.

Spar. By the World 'tis strange now you are so incredulous. 90

Alith. 'Tis strange you are so credulous.

- Spar.* Dearest of my life, hear me, I tell you this is *Ned Harcourt* of *Cambridge*, by the world, you see he has a sneaking Colledg look; 'tis true he's something like his Brother *Frank*, and they differ from each other no more than in their age, for they were Twins. 95
- Lucy.* Hah, ha, he.
- Alith.* Your Servant, Sir, I cannot be so deceiv'd, though you are; but come let's hear, how do you know what you affirm so confidently?
- Spar.* Why, I'll tell you all; *Frank Harcourt* coming to me this morning, to wish me joy and present his service to you: I ask'd him, if he cou'd help me to a Parson; whereupon he told me, he had a Brother in Town who was in Orders, and he went straight away, and sent him, you see there, to me. 100
- Alith.* Yes, *Frank* goes, and puts on a black-coat, then tell's you, he is *Ned*, that's all you have for't. 105
- Spar.* Pshaw, pshaw, I tell you by the same token, the Midwife put her Garter about *Frank's* neck, to know'em asunder, they were so like.
- Alith.* *Frank* tell's you this too.
- Spar.* Ay, and *Ned* there too; nay, they are both in a Story.
- Alith.* So, so, very foolish. 110
- Spar.* Lord, if you won't believe one, you had best trye him by your Chamber-maid there; for Chamber-maids must needs know Chaplains from other Men, they are so us'd to 'em.
- Lucy.* Let's see; nay, I'll be sworn he has the Canonical smirk, and the filthy, clammy palm of a Chaplain. 115
- Alith.* Well, most reverend Doctor, pray let us make an end of this fooling.
- Har.* With all my soul, Divine, Heavenly Creature, when you please.
- Alith.* He speaks like a Chaplain indeed.
- Spar.* Why, was there not, soul, Divine, Heavenly, in what he said. 120
- Alith.* Once more, most impertinent Black-coat, cease your persecution, and let us have a Conclusion of this ridiculous love.
- Har.* I had forgot, I must sute my Stile to my Coat, or I wear it in vain.
- Aside.*
- Alith.* I have no more patience left, let us make once an end of this troublesome Love, I say. 125
- Har.* So be it, Seraphick Lady, when your Honour shall think it meet, and convenient so to do.
- Spar.* Gad I'm sure none but a Chaplain cou'd speak so, I think.
- Alith.* Let me tell you Sir, this dull trick will not serve your turn, though you delay our marriage, you shall not hinder it. 130
- Har.* Far be it from me, Munificent Patroness, to delay your Marriage, I desire nothing more than to marry you presently, which I might do, if you your self wou'd; for my Noble, Good-natur'd and thrice Generous Patron here wou'd not hinder it.
- Spar.* No, poor man, not I faith. 135
- Har.* And now, Madam, let me tell you plainly, no body else shall marry you by Heavens, I'l die first, for I'm sure I shou'd die after it.

- Lucy.* How his Love has made him forget his Function, as I have seen
it in real Parsons.
- Alith.* That was spoken like a Chaplain too, now you understand him, 140
I hope.
- Spar.* Poor man, he takes it hainously to be refus'd; I can't blame him,
'tis putting an indignity upon him not to be suffer'd, but you'l
pardon me Madam, it shan't be, he shall marry us, come away, pray
Madam. 145
- Lucy.* Hah, ha, he, more ado! 'tis late.
- Alith.* Invincible stupidity, I tell you he wou'd marry me, as your
Rival, not as your Chaplain.
- Spar.* Come, come Madam.

Pulling her away.

- Lucy.* I pray Madam, do not refuse this Reverend Divine, the honour 150
and satisfaction of marrying you; for I dare say, he has set his heart
upon't, good Doctor.
- Alith.* What can you hope, or design by this?
- Har.* I cou'd answer her, a reprieve for a day only, often revokes a
hasty doom; at worst, if she will not take mercy on me, and let me 155
marry her, I have at least the Lovers second pleasure, hindring my
Rivals enjoyment, though but for a time.
- Spar.* Come Madam, 'tis e'ne twelve a clock, and my Mother charg'd
me never to be married out of the Canonical hours; come, come,
Lord here's such a deal of modesty, I warrant the first day. 160
- Lucy.* Yes, an't please your Worship, married women shew all their
Modesty the first day, because married men shew all their love the
first day.

Exeunt Sparkish, Alitha, Harcourt, and Lucy.

Scene II

*The Scene changes to a Bed-chamber, where appear Pinchwife,
Mrs. Pinchwife.*

- Mr. Pinch.* Come tell me, I say.
- Mrs. Pinch.* Lord, han't I told it an hundred times over.
- Mr. Pinch.* I wou'd try, if in the repetition of the ungrateful tale, I
cou'd find her altering it in the least circumstance, for if her story be
false, she is so too. 5

Aside.

Come how was't Baggage?

- Mrs. Pinch.* Lord, what pleasure you take to hear it sure!
- Mr. Pinch.* No, you take more in telling it I find, but speak how was't?
- Mrs. Pinch.* He carried me up into the house, next to the Exchange.
- Mr. Pin.* So, and you two were only in the room. 10

Mrs. Pin. Yes, for he sent away a youth that was there, for some dried fruit, and China Oranges.

Mr. Pin. Did he so? Damn him for it – and for –

Mrs. Pin. But presently came up the Gentlewoman of the house.

Mr. Pin. O 'twas well she did, but what did he do whilst the fruit came? 15

Mrs. Pin. He kiss'd me an hundred times, and told me he fancied he kiss'd my fine Sister, meaning me you know, whom he said he lov'd with all his Soul, and bid me be sure to tell her so, and to desire her to be at her window, by eleven of the clock this morning, and he wou'd walk under it at that time. 20

Mr. Pin. And he was as good as his word, very punctual, a pox reward him for't.

Aside.

Mrs. Pin. Well, and he said if you were not within, he wou'd come up to her, meaning me you know, Bud, still. 25

Mr. Pin. So – he knew her certainly, but for this confession, I am oblig'd to her simplicity.

Aside.

But what you stood very still, when he kiss'd you?

Mrs. Pin. Yes I warrant you, wou'd you have had me discover'd my self? 30

Mr. Pin. But you told me, he did some beastliness to you, as you call'd it, what was't?

Mrs. Pin. Why, he put –

Mr. Pin. What?

Mrs. Pin. Why he put the tip of his tongue between my lips, and so musl'd me – and I said, I'd bite it. 35

Mr. Pin. An eternal canker seize it, for a dog.

Mrs. Pin. Nay, you need not be so angry with him neither, for to say truth, he has the sweetest breath I ever knew.

Mr. Pin. The Devil – you were satisfied with it then, and wou'd do it again. 40

Mrs. Pin. Not unless he shou'd force me.

Mr. Pin. Force you, changeling! I tell you no woman can be forced.

Mrs. Pin. Yes, but she may sure, by such a one as he, for he's a proper, goodly strong man, 'tis hard, let me tell you, to resist him. 45

Mr. Pin. So, 'tis plain she loves him, yet she has not love enough to make her conceal it from me, but the sight of him will increase her aversion for me, and love for him; and that love instruct her how to deceive me, and satisfie him, all Ideot as she is: Love, 'twas he gave women first their craft, their art of deluding; out of natures hands, they came plain, open, silly and fit for slaves, as she and Heaven intended 'em; but damn'd Love – Well – I must strangle that little Monster, whilst I can deal with him. 50

Go fetch Pen, Ink and Paper out of the next room.

Mrs. Pin. Yes Bud.

55

Exit Mrs. Pinchwife.

Mr. Pin. Why should Women have more invention in love than men?
It can only be, because they have more desires, more solliciting
passions, more lust, and more of the Devil.

Aside.

Mistriss Pinchwife returns.

Come, Minks, sit down and write.

Mrs. Pin. Ay, dear Bud, but I can't do't very well. 60

Mr. Pin. I wish you cou'd not at all.

Mrs. Pin. But what shou'd I write for?

Mr. Pin. I'll have you write a Letter to your Lover.

Mrs. Pin. O Lord, to the fine Gentleman a Letter!

Mr. Pin. Yes, to the fine Gentleman. 65

Mrs. Pin. Lord, you do but jeer; sure you jest.

Mr. Pin. I am not so merry, come write as I bid you.

Mrs. Pin. What, do you think I am a fool?

Mr. Pin. She's afraid I would not dictate any love to him, therefore
she's unwilling; but you had best begin. 70

Mrs. Pin. Indeed, and indeed, but I won't, so I won't.

Mr. Pin. Why?

Mrs. Pin. Because he's in Town, you may send for him if you will.

Mr. Pin. Very well, you wou'd have him brought to you; is it come to
this? I say take the pen and write, or you'll provoke me. 75

Mrs. Pin. Lord, what d'ye make a fool of me for? Don't I know that
Letters are never writ, but from the Countrey to *London*, and from
London into the Countrey; now he's in Town, and I am in Town
too; therefore I can't write to him you know.

Mr. Pin. So I am glad it is no worse, she is innocent enough yet. 80

Aside.

Yes you may when your Husband bids you write Letters to people
that are in Town.

Mrs. Pin. O may I so! Then I'm satisfied.

Mr. Pin. Come begin – Sir –

Dictates.

Mrs. Pin. Shan't I say, Dear Sir? You know one says always something 85
more than bare Sir.

Mr. Pin. Write as I bid you, or I will write Whore with this Penknife in
your Face.

Mrs. Pin. Nay good Bud – Sir –

She writes.

Mr. Pin. Though I suffer'd last night your nauseous, loath'd Kisses 90
and Embraces – Write.

Mrs. Pin. Nay, why shou'd I say so, you know I told you, he had a sweet breath.

Mr. Pin. Write.

Mrs. Pin. Let me but put out, loath'd. 95

Mr. Pin. Write I say.

Mrs. Pin. Well then.

Writes.

Mr. Pin. Let's see what have you writ?

Though I suffer'd last night your kisses and embraces –

Takes the paper, and reads.

Thou impudent creature, where is nauseous and loath'd? 100

Mrs. Pin. I can't abide to write such filthy words.

Mr. Pin. Once more write as I'd have you, and question it not, or I will spoil thy writing with this, I will stab out those eyes that cause my mischief.

Holds up the penknife.

Mrs. Pin. O Lord, I will. 105

Mr. Pin. So – so – Let's see now!

Reads.

Though I suffer'd last night your nauseous, loath'd kisses, and embraces; Go on – Yet I would not have you presume that you shall ever repeat them – So –

She writes.

Mrs. Pin. I have writ it. 110

Mr. Pin. On then – I then conceal'd my self from your knowledge, to avoid your insolencies –

She writes.

Mrs. Pin. So –

Mr. Pin. The same reason now I am out of your hands –

She writes.

Mrs. Pin. So – 115

Mr. Pin. Makes me own to you my unfortunate, though innocent frolick, of being in man's cloths.

She writes.

Mrs. Pin. So –

Mr. Pin. That you may for ever more cease to pursue her, who hates and detests you – 120

She writes on.

Mrs. Pin. So – h –

Sighs.

Mr. Pin. What do you sigh? – detests you – as much as she loves her
Husband and her Honour –

Mrs. Pin. I vow Husband he'll ne'er believe, I shou'd write such a
Letter. 125

Mr. Pin. What he'd expect a kinder from you? come now your name
only.

Mrs. Pin. What, shan't I say your most faithful, humble Servant till
death?

Mr. Pin. No, tormenting Fiend; her stile I find wou'd be very soft. 130

Aside.

Come wrap it up now, whilst I go fetch wax and a candle; and write
on the back side, for Mr. *Horner*.

Exit Pinchwife.

Mrs. Pin. For Mr. *Horner* – So, I am glad he has told me his name;
Dear Mr. *Horner*, but why should I send thee such a Letter, that will
vex thee, and make thee angry with me; – well I will not send it – Ay 135
but then my husband will kill me – for I see plainly, he won't let me
love Mr. *Horner* – but what care I for my Husband – I won't so I
won't send poor Mr. *Horner* such a Letter – but then my Husband
– But oh – what if I writ at bottom, my Husband made me write it –
Ay but then my Husband wou'd see't – Can one have no shift, ah, a 140
London woman wou'd have had a hundred presently; stay – what if I
shou'd write a Letter, and wrap it up like this, and write upon't too;
ay but then my Husband wou'd see't – I don't know what to do –
But yet y vads I'll try, so I will – for I will not send this Letter to
poor Mr. *Horner*, come what will on't. 145

She writes, and repeats what she hath writ.

Dear, Sweet Mr. *Horner* – So – my Husband wou'd have me send
you a base, rude, unmannerly Letter – but I won't – so – and wou'd
have me forbid you loving me – but I wont – so – and wou'd have
me say to you, I hate you poor Mr. *Horner* – but I won't tell a lye for
him – *there* – for I'm sure if you and I were in the Countrey at cards 150
together, – so – I cou'd not help treading on your Toe under the
Table – so – or rubbing knees with you, and staring in your face, 'till
you saw me – *very well* – and then looking down, and blushing for
an hour together – so – but I must make haste before my Husband
come; and now he has taught me to write Letters: You shall have 155
longer ones from me, who am

Dear, dear, poor dear Mr. *Horner*, your most Humble Friend, and Servant
to command 'till death, *Margery Pinchwife*.

Stay I must give him a hint at bottom – so – now wrap it up just like
t'other – so – now write for Mr. *Horner*, – But oh now what shall I
do with it? for here comes my Husband.

Enter Pinchwife.

Mr. Pin. I have been detained by a Sparkish Coxcomb, who pre- 160
tended a visit to me; but I fear 'twas to my Wife.

Aside.

What, have you done?

Mrs. Pin. Ay, ay Bud, just, now.

Mr. Pin. Let's see't, what d'ye tremble for; what, you wou'd not have
it go? 165

Mrs. Pin. Here – No I must not give him that, so I had been served if
I had given him this.

He opens, and reads the first Letter.

Aside.

Mr. Pin. Come, where's the Wax and Seal?

Mrs. Pin. Lord, what shall I do now? Nay then I have it –

Aside.

*Snatches the Letter from him, changes it for the
other, seals it, and delivers it to him.*

Pray let me see't, Lord you think me so errand a fool, I cannot seal a 170
Letter, I will do't, so I will.

Mr. Pin. Nay, I believe you will learn that, and other things too,
which I wou'd not have you.

Mrs. Pin. So, han't I done it curiously?
I think I have, there's my Letter going to Mr. *Horner*, since he'll 175
needs have me send Letters to Folks.

Aside.

Mr. Pin. 'Tis very well, but I warrant, you wou'd not have it go now?

Mrs. Pin. Yes indeed, but I wou'd, Bud, now.

Mr. Pin. Well you are a good Girl then, come let me lock you up in
your chamber, 'till I come back; and be sure you come not within 180
three strides of the window, when I am gone; for I have a spye in the
street.

Exit Mrs. Pin.

Pinchwife locks the door.

At least, 'tis fit she think so, if we do not cheat women, they'll cheat
us; and fraud may be justly used with secret enemies, of which a
Wife is the most dangerous; and he that has a handsome one to 185
keep, and a Frontier Town, must provide against treachery, rather
than open Force – Now I have secur'd all within, I'll deal with the
Foe without with false intelligence.

Holds up the Letter.

Exit Pinchwife.

*Scene III**The Scene changes to Horner's Lodging.*

Quack and Horner.

Quack. Well Sir, how fadges the new design; have you not the luck of all your brother Projectors, to deceive only your self at last.

Hor. No, good *Domine* Doctor, I deceive you it seems, and others too; for the grave Matrons, and old ridgid Husbands think me as unfit for love, as they are; but their Wives, Sisters and Daughters, know some of'em better things already. 5

Quack. Already!

Hor. Already, I say; last night I was drunk with half a dozen of your civil persons, as you call 'em, and people of Honour, and so was made free of their Society, and dressing rooms for ever hereafter; and am already come to the privileges of sleeping upon their Pallats, warming Smocks, tying Shooes and Garters, and the like Doctor, already, already Doctor. 10

Quack. You have made use of your time, Sir.

Hor. I tell thee, I am now no more interruption to 'em, when they sing, or talk bawdy, than a little squab French Page, who speaks no English. 15

Quack. But do civil persons, and women of Honour drink, and sing bawdy Songs?

Hor. O amongst Friends, amongst Friends; for your Bigots in Honour, are just like those in Religion; they fear the eye of the world, more than the eye of Heaven, and think there is no virtue, but railing at vice; and no sin, but giving scandal: They rail at a poor, little, kept Player, and keep themselves some young, modest Pulpit Comedian to be privy to their sins in their Closets, not to tell 'em of them in their Chappels. 20 25

Quack. Nay, the truth on't is, Priests amongst the women now, have quite got the better of us Lay Confessors, Physicians.

Hor. And they are rather their Patients, but –

Enter my Lady Fidget, looking about her.

Now we talk of women of Honour, here comes one, step behind the Screen there, and but observe; if I have not particular privileges, with the women of reputation already, Doctor, already. 30

La. Fid. Well *Horner*, am not I a woman of Honour? you see I'm as good as my word. 35

Hor. And you shall see Madam, I'll not be behind hand with you in honour; and I'll be as good as my word too, if you please but to withdraw into the next room.

La. Fid. But first, my dear Sir, you must promise to have a care of my dear Honour. 40

- Hor.* If you talk a word more of your Honour, you'll make me incapable to wrong it; to talk of Honour in the mysteries of Love, is like talking of Heaven, or the Deity in an operation of Witchcraft, just when you are employing the Devil, it makes the charm impotent.
- La. Fid.* Nay, fie, let us not be smooty; but you talk of mysteries, and bewitching to me, I don't understand you. 45
- Hor.* I tell you Madam, the word money in a Mistresses mouth, at such a nick of time, is not a more disheartning sound to a younger Brother, than that of Honour to an eager Lover like myself.
- La. Fid.* But you can't blame a Lady of my reputation to be chary. 50
- Hor.* Chary – I have been chary of it already, by the report I have caus'd of my self.
- La. Fid.* Ay, but if you shou'd ever let other women know that dear secret, it would come out; nay, you must have a great care of your conduct; for my acquaintance are so censorious, (oh 'tis a wicked censorious world, Mr. *Horner*) I say, are so censorious, and detracting, that perhaps they'll talk to the prejudice of my Honour, though you shou'd not let them know the dear secret. 55
- Hor.* Nay Madam, rather than they shall prejudice your Honour, I'll prejudice theirs; and to serve you, I'll lye with 'em all, make the secret their own, and then they'll keep it: I am a *Machiavel* in love Madam. 60
- La. Fid.* O, no Sir, not that way.
- Hor.* Nay, the Devil take me, if censorious women are to be silenc'd any other way.
- La. Fid.* A secret is better kept I hope, by a single person, than a multitude; therefore pray do not trust any body else with it, dear, dear Mr. *Horner*. 65

Embracing him.

Enter Sir Jaspar Fidget.

- Sir Jas.* How now!
- La. Fid.* O my Husband – prevented – and what's almost as bad, found with my arms about another man – that will appear too much – what shall I say? 70
- Aside.*
- Sir Jaspar* come hither, I am trying if Mr. *Horner* were ticklish, and he's as ticklish as can be, I love to torment the confounded Toad; let you and I tickle him.
- Sir Jas.* No, your Ladyship will tickle him better without me, I suppose, but is this your buying China, I thought you had been at the China House? 75
- Hor.* China-House, that's my Cue, I must take it.

Aside.

- A Pox, can't you keep your impertinent Wives at home? some men are troubled with the Husbands, but I with the Wives; but I'd have 80

you to know, since I cannot be your Journey-man by night, I will not be your drudge by day, to squire your wife about, and be your man of straw, or scare-crow only to Pyes and Jays, that would be nibbling at your forbidden fruit; I shall be shortly the Hackney Gentleman-Usher of the Town. 85

Sir Jas. Heh, heh, he, poor fellow he's in the right on't faith, to squire women about for other folks, is as ungrateful an employment, as to tell money for other folks;

Aside.

heh, he, he, ben't angry *Horner* –

La. Fid. No, 'tis I have more reason to be angry, who am left by you, to go abroad indecently alone; or, what is more indecent, to pin my self upon such ill bred people of your acquaintance, as this is. 90

Sir Jas. Nay, pr'ythee what has he done?

La. Fid. Nay, he has done nothing.

Sir Jas. But what d'ye take ill, if he has done nothing? 95

La. Fid. Hah, hah, hah, Faith, I can't but laugh however; why d'ye think the unmannerly toad wou'd not come down to me to the Coach, I was fain to come up to fetch him, or go without him, which I was resolved not to do; for he knows China very well, and has himself very good, but will not let me see it, lest I should be gone; but I will find it out, and have what I came for yet. 100

*Exit Lady Fidget, and locks the door,,
followed by Horner to the door.*

Hor. Lock the door Madam –

Apart to Lady Fidget.

So, she has got into my chamber, and lock'd me out; oh the impertinency of woman-kind! Well *Sir Jasper*, plain dealing is a Jewel; if ever you suffer your Wife to trouble me again here, she shall carry you home a pair of Horns, by my Lord Major she shall; though I cannot furnish you my self, you are sure, yet I'll find a way. 105

Sir Jas. Hah, ha, he, at my first coming in, and finding her arms about him, tickling him it seems, I was half jealous, but now I see my folly. 110

Aside.

Heh, he, he, poor *Horner*.

Hor. Nay, though you laugh now, 'twill be my turn e're long: Oh women, more impertinent, more cunning, and more mischievous than their Monkeys, and to me almost as ugly – now is she throwing my things about, and rifling all I have, but I'll get into her the back way, and so rifle her for it – 115

Sir Jas. Hah, ha, ha, poor angry *Horner*.

Hor. Stay here a little, I'll ferret her out to you presently, I warrant. 120

Exit Horner at t'other door.

*Sir Jaspar calls through the door to his Wife,
she answers from within.*

Sir Jas. Wife, my Lady *Fidget*, Wife, he is coming into you the back way.

La. Fid. Let him come, and welcome, which way he will.

Sir Jas. He'll catch you, and use you roughly, and be too strong for you. 125

La. Fid. Don't you trouble your self, let him if he can.

Quack. [*Behind*] This indeed, I cou'd not have believ'd from him, nor any but my own eyes.

Enter Mistriss Squeamish.

Squeam. Where's this Woman-hater, this Toad, this ugly, greasie, dirty Sloven? 130

Sir Jas. So the women all will have him ugly, methinks he is a comely person; but his wants make his form contemptible to 'em; and 'tis e'en as my Wife said yesterday, talking of him, that a proper handsome Eunuch, was as ridiculous a thing, as a Gigantick Coward.

Squeam. *Sir Jaspar*, your Servant, where is the odious Beast? 135

Sir Jas. He's within in his chamber, with my Wife; she's playing the wag with him.

Squeam. Is she so, and he's a clownish beast, he'll give her no quarter, he'll play the wag with her again, let me tell you; come, let's go help her – What, the door's lock't? 140

Sir Jas. Ay, my Wife lock't it –

Squeam. Did she so, let us break it open then?

Sir Jas. No, no, he'll do her no hurt.

Squeam. No – But is there no other way to get into 'em, whither goes this? I will disturb 'em. 145

Aside.

Exit Squeamish at another door.

Enter old Lady Squeamish.

Old L. Squeam. Where is this Harlotry, this Impudent Baggage, this rambling Tomrigg? O *Sir Jaspar*, I'm glad to see you here, did you not see my vil'd Grandchild come in hither just now?

Sir Jas. Yes.

Old L. Squeam. Ay, but where is she then? where is she? Lord *Sir Jaspar* 150
I have e'ne rattled my self to pieces in pursuit of her, but can you tell what she makes here, they say below, no woman lodges here.

Sir Jas. No.

Old L. Squeam. No – What does she here then? say if it be not a womans lodging, what makes she here? but are you sure no woman 155
lodges here?

Sir Jas. No, nor no man neither, this is Mr. *Horners* Lodging.

Old L. Squeam. Is it so are you sure?

Sir Jas. Yes, yes.

Old L. Squeam. So then there's no hurt in't I hope, but where is he? 160

Sir Jas. He's in the next room with my Wife.

Old L. Squeam. Nay if you trust him with your wife, I may with my Biddy, they say he's a merry harmless man now, e'ne as harmless a man as ever came out of *Italy* with a good voice, and as pretty harmless company for a Lady, as a Snake without his teeth. 165

Sir Jas. Ay, ay poor man.

Enter Mrs. Squeamish.

Squeam. I can't find 'em – Oh are you here, Grandmother, I follow'd you must know my Lady *Fidget* hither, 'tis the prettiest lodging, and I have been staring on the prettiest Pictures.

Enter Lady Fidget with a piece of China in her hand, and Horner following.

La. Fid. And I have been toying and moyling, for the pretti'st piece 170 of China, my Dear.

Hor. Nay she has been too hard for me do what I cou'd.

Squeam. Oh Lord I'll have some China too, good Mr. *Hornor*, don't think to give other people China, and me none, come in with me too. 175

Hor. Upon my honour I have none left now.

Squeam. Nay, nay I have known you deny your China before now, but you shan't put me off so, come –

Hor. This Lady had the last there.

La. Fid. Yes indeed Madam, to my certain knowledge he has no more 180 left.

Squeam. O but it may be he may have some you could not find.

La. Fid. What d'y think if he had had any left, I would not have had it too, for we women of quality never think we have China enough.

Hor. Do not take it ill, I cannot make China for you all, but I will have 185 a Rol-waggon for you too, another time.

Squeam. Thank you dear Toad.

La. Fid. What do you mean by that promise?

To Horn. aside.

Hor. Alas she has an innocent, literal understanding.

Apart to Lady Fidget.

Old L. Squeam. Poor Mr. *Hornor*, he has enough to doe to please you 190 all, I see.

Hor. Ay Madam, you see how they use me.

Old L. Squeam. Poor Gentleman I pity you.

Hor. I thank you Madam, I could never find pity, but from such reverend Ladies as you are, the young ones will never spare a man. 195

Squeam. Come come, Beast, and go dine with us, for we shall want a man at Hombre after dinner.

Hor. That's all their use of me Madam you see.

Squeam. Come Sloven, I'll lead you to be sure of you.

Pulls him by the Crevat.

Old L. Squeam. Alas poor man how she tuggs him, kiss, kiss her, 200
that's the way to make such nice women quiet.

Hor. No Madam, that Remedy is worse than the Torment, they know
I dare suffer any thing rather than do it.

Old La. Squeam. Prythee kiss her, and I'll give you her Picture in
little, that you admir'd so last night, prythee do. 205

Hor. Well nothing but that could bribe me, I love a woman only in
Effigie, and good Painting as much as I hate them – I'll do't, for I
cou'd adore the Devil well painted.

Kisses Mrs. Squeam.

Squeam. Foh, you filthy Toad, nay now I've done jesting.

Old L. Squeam. Ha, ha, ha, I told you so. 210

Squeam. Foh a kiss of his –

Sir Jas. Has no more hurt in't, than one of my Spaniels.

Squeam. Nor no more good neither.

Quack. I will now believe any thing he tells me.

Behind.

Enter Mr. Pinchwife.

La. Fid. O Lord here's a man, Sir *Jaspar*, my Mask, my Mask, I would 215
not be seen here for the world.

Sir Jas. What not when I am with you.

La. Fid. No, no my honour – let's be gone.

Squeam. Oh Grandmother, let us be gone, make hast, make hast, I
know not how he may censure us. 220

La. Fid. Be found in the lodging of any thing like a man, away.

Exeunt Sir Jas. La. Fid. Old La. Squeam.

Mrs. Squeamish.

Quack. What's here another Cuckold – he looks like one, and none
else sure have any business with him.

Behind.

Hor. Well what brings my dear friend hither?

Mr. Pinch. Your impertinency. 225

Hor. My impertinency – why you Gentlemen that have got handsome
Wives, think you have a privilege of saying any thing to your friends,
and are as brutish, as if you were our Creditors.

Mr. Pinch. No Sir, I'll ne're trust you any way.

Hor. But why not, dear *Jack*, why diffide in me, thou knowst so well. 230

Mr. Pin. Because I do know you so well.

Hor. Han't I been always thy friend honest *Jack*, always ready to serve thee, in love, or battle, before thou wert married, and am so still.

Mr. Pin. I believe so you wou'd be my second now indeed.

Hor. Well then dear *Jack*, why so unkind, so grum, so strange to me, 235
come prythee kiss me deare *Rogue*, gad I was always I say, and am still as much thy Servant as –

Mr. Pin. As I am yours Sir. What you wou'd send a kiss to my Wife, is that it?

Hor. So there 'tis – a man can't shew his friendship to a married man, 240
but presently he talks of his wife to you, prythee let thy Wife alone, and let thee and I be all one, as we were wont, what thou art as shy of my kindness, as a *Lumbard-street Alderman* of a *Courtiers* civility at *Lockets*.

Mr. Pin. But you are over kind to me, as kind, as if I were your 245
Cuckold already, yet I must confess you ought to be kind and civil to me, since I am so kind, so civil to you, as to bring you this, look you there Sir.

Delivers him a Letter.

Hor. What is't?

Mr. Pinch. Only a Love Letter Sir. 250

Hor. From whom – how, this is from your Wife – hum – and hum –

Reads.

Mr. Pin. Even from my Wife Sir, am I not wondrous kind and civil to you, now too?
But you'l not think her so.

Aside.

Hor. Ha, is this a trick of his or hers? 255

Aside.

Mr. Pin. The Gentleman's surpriz'd I find, what you expected a kinder Letter?

Hor. No faith not I, how cou'd I.

Mr. Pin. Yes yes, I'm sure you did, a man so well made as you are must needs be disappointed, if the women declare not their passion at 260
first sight or opportunity.

Hor. But what should this mean? stay the Postscript.

Be sure you love me whatsoever my husband says to the contrary, and let him not see this, lest he should come home, and pinch me, or kill my Squirrel. 265

Reads aside.

It seems he knows not what the Letter contains.

Aside.

Mr. Pin. Come ne're wonder at it so much.

Hor. Faith I can't help it.

Mr. Pin. Now I think I have deserv'd your infinite friendship, and kindness, and have shewed my self sufficiently an obliging kind friend and husband, am I not so, to bring a Letter from my Wife to her Gallant? 270

Hor. Ay, the Devil take me, art thou, the most obliging, kind friend and husband in the world, ha, ha.

Mr. Pin. Well you may be merry Sir, but in short I must tell you Sir, my honour will suffer no jesting. 275

Hor. What do'st thou mean?

Mr. Pin. Does the Letter want a Comment? then know Sir, though I have been so civil a husband, as to bring you a Letter from my Wife, to let you kiss and court her to my face, I will not be a Cuckold Sir, I will not. 280

Hor. Thou art mad with jealousy, I never saw thy Wife in my life, but at the Play yesterday, and I know not if it were she or no, I court her, kiss her!

Mr. Pin. I will not be a Cuckold I say, there will be danger in making me a Cuckold. 285

Hor. Why, wert thou not well cur'd of thy last clap?

Mr. Pin. I weare a Sword.

Hor. It should be taken from thee, lest thou should'st do thy self a mischief with it, thou art mad, Man. 290

Mr. Pin. As mad as I am, and as merry as you are, I must have more reason from you e're we part, I say again though you kiss'd, and courted last night my Wife in man's clothes, as she confesses in her Letter.

Hor. Ha – 295

Aside.

Mr. Pin. Both she and I say you must not design it again, for you have mistaken your woman, as you have done your man.

Hor. Oh – I understand something now –

Aside.

Was that thy Wife? why would'st thou not tell me 'twas she? faith my freedome with her was your fault, not mine. 300

Mr. Pin. Faith so 'twas –

Aside.

Hor. Fye, I'de never do't to a woman before her husbands face, sure.

Mr. Pin. But I had rather you should do't to my wife before my face, than behind my back, and that you shall never doe.

Hor. No – you will hinder me. 305

Mr. Pin. If I would not hinder you, you see by her Letter, she wou'd.

Hor. Well, I must e'ne acquiesc then, and be contented with what she writes.

Mr. Pin. I'll assure you 'twas voluntarily writ, I had no hand in't you may believe me. 310

Hor. I do believe thee, faith.

Mr. Pin. And believe her too, for she's an innocent creature, has no dissembling in her, and so fare you well Sir.

Hor. Pray however present my humble service to her, and tell her I will obey her Letter to a title, and fulfill her desires be what they will, or with what difficulty soever I do't, and you shall be no more jealous of me, I warrant her, and you – 315

Mr. Pin. Well then fare you well, and play with any mans honour but mine, kiss any mans wife but mine, and welcome –

Exit Mr. Pinch.

Hor. Ha, ha, ha, Doctor. 320

Quack. It seems he has not heard the report of you, or does not believe it.

Hor. Ha, ha, now Doctor what think you?

Quack. Pray let's see the Letter – hum – for – deare – love you –

Reads the Letter.

Hor. I wonder how she cou'd contrive it! what say'st thou to't, 'tis an Original. 325

Quack. So are your Cuckolds too Originals: for they are like no other common Cuckolds, and I will henceforth believe it not impossible for you to Cuckold the Grand Signior amidst his Guards of Eunuchs, that I say – 330

Hor. And I say for the Letter, 'tis the first love Letter that ever was without Flames, Darts, Fates, Destinies, Lying and Dissembling in't.

Enter Sparkish pulling in Mr. Pinchwife.

Spar. Come back, you are a pretty Brother-in-law, neither go to Church, nor to dinner with your Sister Bride.

Mr. Pin. My Sister denies her marriage, and you see is gone away from you dissatisfy'd. 335

Spar. Pshaw, upon a foolish scruple, that our Parson was not in lawful Orders, and did not say all the Common Prayer, but 'tis her modesty only I believe, but let women be never so modest the first day, they'l be sure to come to themselves by night, and I shall have enough of her then; in the mean time, *Harry Horner*, you must dine with me, I keep my wedding at my Aunts in the Piazza. 340

Hor. Thy wedding, what stale Maid has liv'd to despair of a husband, or what young one of a Gallant?

Spar. O your Servant Sir – this Gentlemans Sister then – No stale Maid. 345

Hor. I'm sorry for't.

Mr. Pin. How comes he so concern'd for her –

Aside.

Spar. You sorry for't, why do you know any ill by her?

Hor. No, I know none but by thee, 'tis for her sake, not yours, and 350
another mans sake that might have hop'd, I thought –

Spar. Another Man, another man, what is his Name?

Hor. Nay since 'tis past he shall be nameless. Poor *Harcourt* I am
sorry thou hast mist her –

Aside.

Mr. Pin. He seems to be much troubled at the match – 355

Aside.

Spar. Prythee tell me – nay you shan't go Brother.

Mr. Pin. I must of necessity, but I'll come to you to dinner.

Exit Pinchwife.

Spar. But *Harry*, what have I a Rival in my Wife already? but with all
my heart, for he may be of use to me hereafter, for though my
hunger is now my sawce, and I can fall on heartily without, but the 360
time will come, when a Rival will be as good sawce for a married
man to a wife, as an Orange to Veale.

Hor. O thou damn'd Rogue, thou hast set my teeth on edge with thy
Orange.

Spar. Then let's to dinner, there I was with you againe, come. 365

Hor. But who dines with thee?

Spar. My Friends and Relations, my Brother *Pinchwife* you see of
your acquaintance.

Hor. And his Wife.

Spar. No gad, he'll nere let her come amongst us good fellows, 370
your stingy country Coxcomb keeps his wife from his friends, as
he does his little Firkin of Ale, for his own drinking, and a Gentle-
man can't get a smack on't, but his servants, when his back is turn'd
broach it at their pleasures, and dust it away, ha, ha, ha, gad I am
witty, I think, considering I was married to day, by the world, but 375
come –

Hor. No, I will not dine with you, unless you can fetch her too.

Spar. Pshaw what pleasure can'st thou have with women now,
Harry?

Hor. My eyes are not gone, I love a good prospect yet, and will not
dine with you, unless she does too, go fetch her therefore, but do
not tell her husband, 'tis for my sake. 380

Spar. Well I'll go try what I can do, in the mean time come away to
my Aunts lodging, 'tis in the way to *Pinchwife's*.

Hor. The poor woman has call'd for aid, and stretch'd forth her 385
hand Doctor, I cannot but help her over the Pale out of the
Bryars.

Exeunt Sparkish, Horner, Quack.

Scene IV

The Scene changes to Pinchwife's house.

Mrs. Pinchwife alone leaning on her elbow.

A Table, Pen, Ink, and Paper.

Mrs. Pin. Well 'tis even so, I have got the *London* disease, they call Love, I am sick of my Husband, and for my Gallant; I have heard this distemper, call'd a Fever, but methinks 'tis liker an Ague, for when I think of my Husband, I tremble and am in a cold sweat, and have inclinations to vomit, but when I think of my Gallant, dear Mr. *Horner*, my hot fit comes, and I am all in a Fever, indeed, & as in other Feavers, my own Chamber is tedious to me, and I would fain be remov'd to his, and then methinks I shou'd be well; ah poor Mr. *Horner*, well I cannot, will not stay here, therefore I'll make an end of my Letter to him, which shall be a finer Letter than my last, because I have studied it like any thing; O Sick, Sick!

Takes the Pen and writes.

Enter Mr. Pinchwife who seeing her writing steals softly behind her, and looking over her shoulder, snatches the paper from her.

Mr. Pin. What writing more Letters?

Mrs. Pin. O Lord Budd, why d'ye fright me so?

She offers to run out: he stops her, and reads.

Mr. Pin. How's this! nay you shall not stir Madam. Deare, Deare, deare, Mr *Horner* – very well – I have taught you to write Letters to good purpose – but let's see't. First I am to beg your pardon for my boldness in writing to you, which I'de have you to know, I would not have done, had not you said first you lov'd me so extreamly, which if you doe, you will never suffer me to lye in the arms of another man, whom I loathe, nauseate, and detest – [Now you can write these filthy words] but what follows – Therefore I hope you will speedily find some way to free me from this unfortunate match, which was never, I assure you, of my choice, but I'm afraid 'tis already too far gone; however if you love me, as I do you, you will try what you can do, but you must help me away before to morrow, or else alas I shall be for ever out of your reach, for I can defer no longer our – our – what is to follow our – speak what?

The Letter concludes.

our Journey into the Country I suppose – Oh Woman, damn'd Woman, and Love, damn'd Love, their old Tempter, for this is one of his miracles, in a moment, he can make those blind that cou'd see, and those see that were blind, those dumb that could speak, and those prattle who were dumb before, nay what is more than all,

make these dow-bak'd, senseless, indocile animals, Women, too hard for us their Politick Lords and Rulers in a moment; But make an end of your Letter, and then I'll make an end of you thus, and all my plagues together. 35

Draws his Sword.

Mr. Pin. O Lord, O Lord you are such a Passionate Man, Budd.

Enter Sparkish.

Spar. How now what's here to doe.

Mr. Pin. This Fool here now!

Spar. What drawn upon your Wife? you shou'd never do that but at night in the dark when you can't hurt her, this is my Sister in Law is it not? ay faith e'ne our Country *Margery*, one may know her, come she and you must go dine with me, dinner's ready, come, but where's my Wife, is she not come home yet, where is she? 40

Pulls aside her Handkercheife.

Mr. Pin. Making you a Cuckold, 'tis that they all doe, as soon as they can. 45

Spar. What the Wedding day? no, a Wife that designs to make a Cully of her Husband, will be sure to let him win the first stake of love, by the world, but come they stay dinner for us, come I'll lead down our *Margery*. 50

Mrs. Pin. No – Sir go we'll follow you.

Spar. I will not wag without you.

Mr. Pin. This Coxcomb is a sensible torment to me amidst the greatest in the world.

Spar. Come, come Madam *Margery*. 55

Mr. Pin. No I'll lead her my way, what wou'd you treat your friends with mine, for want of your own Wife?

Leads her to t'other door, and locks her in and returns.

I am contented my rage shou'd take breath –

Aside.

Spar. I told *Horner* this.

Mr. Pin. Come now. 60

Spar. Lord, how shy you are of your Wife, but let me tell you Brother, we men of wit have amongst us a saying, that Cuckolding like the small Pox comes with a fear, and you may keep your Wife as much as you will out of danger of infection, but if her constitution incline her to't, she'll have it sooner or later by the world, say they. 65

Mr. Pin. What a thing is a Cuckold, that every fool can make him ridiculous –

Aside.

Well Sir – But let me advise you, now you are come to be concern'd, because you suspect the danger, not to neglect the means to prevent

it, especially when the greatest share of the Malady will light upon
your own head, for – 70

Hows'ere the kind Wife's Belly comes to swell,
The Husband breeds for her, and first is ill.

ACT V

Scene I

Mr. Pinchwife's House.

Enter Mr. Pinchwife and Mrs. Pinchwife, a Table and Candle.

Mr. Pin. Come take the Pen and make an end of the Letter, just as you
intended, if you are false in a tittle, I shall soon perceive it, and punish
you with this as you deserve, write what was to follow – let's see –

Lays his hand on his Sword.

[You must make haste and help me away before to-morrow, or else I
shall be for ever out of your reach, for I can defer no longer our –] 5
What follows our? –

Mrs. Pin. Must all out then Budd? –

Mrs. Pin. takes the Pen and writes.

Look you there then.

Mr. Pin. Let's see – [For I can defer no longer our – Wedding – Your
slighted *Alitha*] What's the meaning of this, my Sisters name to't, 10
speak, unriddle?

Mrs. Pin. Yes indeed Budd.

Mr. Pin. But why her name to't speak – speak I say?

Mrs. Pin. Ay but you'll tell her then again, if you wou'd not tell her
again. 15

Mr. Pin. I will not, I am stunn'd, my head turns round, speak.

Mrs. Pin. Won't you tell her indeed, and indeed.

Mr. Pin. No, speak I say.

Mrs. Pin. She'll be angry with me, but I had rather she should be
angry with me than you Budd; and to tell you the truth, 'twas she 20
made me write the Letter, and taught me what I should write.

Mr. Pin. Ha – I thought the stile was somewhat better than her own,
but how cou'd she come to you to teach you, since I had lock'd you
up alone.

Mrs. Pin. O through the key hole Budd. 25

Mr. Pin. But why should she make you write a Letter for her to him,
since she can write her self?

Mrs. Pin. Why she said because – for I was unwilling to do it.

Mr. Pin. Because what – because.

Mrs. Pin. Because lest Mr. *Horner* should be cruel, and refuse her, or
vaine afterwards, and shew the Letter, she might disown it, the
hand not being hers. 30

Mr. Pin. How's this? ha – then I think I shall come to my self again –
This changeling cou'd not invent this lye, but if she cou'd, why
should she? she might think I should soon discover it – stay – now I
think on't too, *Horner* said he was sorry she had married *Sparkish*,
and her disowning her marriage to me, makes me think she has
evaded it, for *Horner's* sake, yet why should she take this course,
but men in love are fools, women may well be so. – 35

Aside.

But hark you Madam, your Sister went out in the morning, and I
have not seen her within since. 40

Mrs. Pin. A lack a day she has been crying all day above it seems in a
corner.

Mr. Pin. Where is she, let me speak with her.

Mrs. Pin. O Lord then he'l discover all – 45

Aside.

Pray hold Budd, what d'y mean to discover me, she'l know I have
told you then, pray Budd let me talk with her first –

Mr. Pin. I must speak with her to know whether *Horner* ever made
her any promise; and whether she be married to *Sparkish* or no.

Mrs. Pin. Pray dear Budd don't, till I have spoken with her and told
her that I have told you all, for she'll kill me else. 50

Mr. Pin. Go then and bid her come out to me.

Mrs. Pin. Yes, yes Budd –

Mr. Pin. Let me see –

Mrs. Pin. I'll go, but she is not within to come to him, I have just got
time to know of *Lucy* her Maid, who first set me on work, what lye I
shall tell next, for I am e'ne at my wits end – 55

Exit Mrs. Pinchwife.

Mr. Pin. Well I resolve it, *Horner* shall have her, I'd rather give him
my Sister than lend him my Wife, and such an alliance will prevent
his pretensions to my Wife sure, – I'll make him of kinn to her, and
then he won't care for her. 60

Mrs. Pin. returns.

Mrs. Pin. O Lord Budd I told you what anger you would make me
with my Sister.

Mr. Pin. Won't she come hither?

Mrs. Pin. No no, alack a day, she's asham'd to look you in the face,
and she says if you go in to her, she'l run away down stairs,
and shamefully go her self to Mr. *Horner*, who has promis'd
her marriage she says, and she will have no other, so she
won't – 65

Mr. Pin. Did he so – promise her marriage – then she shall have no other, go tell her so, and if she will come and discourse with me a little concerning the means, I will about it immediately, go – 70

Exit Mrs. Pin.

His estate is equal to *Sparkish's*, and his extraction as much better than his, as his parts are, but my chief reason is, I'd rather be of kin to him by the name of Brother-in-law, than that of Cuckold – Well what says she now? 75

Enter Mrs. Pin.

Mrs. Pin. Why she says she would only have you lead her to *Horners* lodging – with whom she first will discourse the matter before she talk with you, which yet she cannot doe; for alack poor creature, she says she can't so much as look you in the face, therefore she'l come to you in a mask, and you must excuse her if she make you no answer to any question of yours, till you have brought her to *Mr. Horner*, and if you will not chide her, nor question her, she'l come out to you immediately. 80

Mr. Pin. Let her come I will not speak a word to her, nor require a word from her. 85

Mrs. Pin. Oh I forgot, besides she says, she cannot look you in the face, though through a mask, therefore wou'd desire you to put out the Candle.

Exit Mrs. Pin. puts out the Candle.

Mr. Pin. I agree to all, let her make haste – there 'tis out – My case is something better, I'd rather fight with *Horner* for not lying with my Sister, than for lying with my Wife, and of the two I had rather find my Sister too forward than my Wife; I expected no other from her free education, as she calls it, and her passion for the Town – well – Wife and Sister are names which make us expect Love and duty, pleasure and comfort, but we find 'em plagues and torments, and are equally, though differently troublesome to their keeper; for we have as much a doe to get people to lye with our Sisters, as to keep 'em from lying with our Wives. 90
95

Enter Mrs. Pinchwife Masked, and in Hoods and Scarves, and a night Gown and Petticoat of Alitheas in the dark.

What are you come Sister? let us go then – but first let me lock up my Wife, *Mrs. Margery* where are you? 100

Mrs. Pin. Here Budd.

Mr. Pin. Come hither, that I may lock you up, get you in, Come Sister where are you now?

Locks the door.

Mrs. Pin. gives him her hand, but when he lets her go, she steals softly on t'other side of him, and is lead away by him for his Sister Alitheas.

Scene II

The Scene changes to Horners Lodging.

Quack, Horner.

Quack. What all alone, not so much as one of your Cuckolds here, nor one of their Wives! they use to take their turns with you, as if they were to watch you.

Hor. Yes it often happens, that a Cuckold is but his Wifes spye, and is more upon family duty, when he is with her gallant abroad hindring his pleasure, than when he is at home with her playing the Gallant, but the hardest duty a married woman imposes upon a lover is, keeping her husband company always. 5

Quack. And his fondness wearies you almost as soon as hers.

Hor. A Pox, keeping a Cuckold company after you have had his Wife, is as tiresome as the company of a Country Squire to a witty fellow of the Town, when he has got all his Mony. 10

Quack. And as at first a man makes a friend of the Husband to get the Wife, so at last you are faine to fall out with the Wife to be rid of the Husband. 15

Hor. Ay, most Cuckold-makers are true Courtiers, when once a poor man has crack'd his credit for 'em, they can't abide to come neer him.

Quack. But at first to draw him in are so sweet, so kind, so dear, just as you are to *Pinchwife*, but what becomes of that intrigue with his Wife? 20

Hor. A Pox he's as surly as an Alderman that has been bit, and since he's so coy, his Wife's kindness is in vain, for she's a silly innocent.

Quack. Did she not send you a Letter by him?

Hor. Yes, but that's a riddle I have not yet solv'd – allow the poor creature to be willing, she is silly too, and he keeps her up so close – 25

Quack. Yes, so close that he makes her but the more willing, and adds but revenge to her love, which two when met seldome faile of satisfying each other one way or other.

Hor. What here's the man we are talking of I think.

Enter Mr. Pinchwife leading in his Wife Masqued, Muffled, and in her Sisters Gown.

Hor. Pshaw. 30

Quack. Bringing his Wife to you is the next thing to bringing a Love Letter from her.

Hor. What means this?

Mr. Pin. The last time you know Sir I brought you a love Letter, now you see a Mistress, I think you'l say I am a civil man to you. 35

Hor. Ay the Devil take me will I say thou art the civillest man I ever met with, and I have known some; I fancy, I understand thee now, better than I did the Letter, but hark thee in thy eare –

Mr. Pin. What?

- Hor.* Nothing but the usual question man, is she sound on thy word? 40
Mr. Pin. What you take her for a Wench and me for a Pimp?
Hor. Pshaw, wench and Pimp, paw words, I know thou art an honest fellow, and hast a great acquaintance among the Ladies, and perhaps hast made love for me rather than let me make love to thy Wife –
Mr. Pin. Come Sir, in short, I am for no fooling. 45
Hor. Nor I neither, therefore prythee let's see her face presently, make her show man, art thou sure I don't know her?
Mr. Pin. I am sure you doe know her.
Hor. A Pox why dost thou bring her to me then?
Mr. Pin. Because she's Relation of mine. 50
Hor. Is she faith man, then thou art still more civil and obliging, dear Rogue.
Mr. Pin. Who desir'd me to bring her to you.
Hor. Then she is obliging, dear Rogue.
Mr. Pin. You'l make her welcome for my sake I hope. 55
Hor. I hope she is handsome enough to make her self wellcome; prythee let her unmask.
Mr. Pin. Do you speak to her, she wou'd never be rul'd by me.
Hor. Madam –

Mrs. Pin. whispers to Hor.

- She says she must speak with me in private, withdraw prythee. 60
Mr. Pin. She's unwilling it seems I shou'd know all her undecent conduct in this business –

Aside.

- Well then Ile leave you together, and hope when I am gone you'l agree, if not you and I shan't agree Sir. –
Hor. What means the Fool? – if she and I agree 'tis no matter what you and I do. 65

Whispers to Mrs Pin, who makes signs with her hand for him to be gone.

- Mr. Pin.* In the mean time I'll fetch a Parson, and find out *Sparkish* and disabuse him. You wou'd have me fetch a Parson, would you not, well then – Now I think I am rid of her, and shall have no more trouble with her – Our Sisters and Daughters like Usurers money, 70 are safest, when put out; but our Wives, like their writings, never safe, but in our Closets under Lock and Key.

Exit Mr. Pin.

Enter Boy.

- Boy.* Sir *Jaspar Fidget* Sir is coming up.
Hor. Here's the trouble of a Cuckold, now we are talking of, a pox on him, has he not enough to doe to hinder his Wifes sport, but he 75 must other women's too. – Step in here Madam.

Exit Mrs. Pin.

Enter Sir Jaspar.

Sir Jas. My best and dearest Friend.

Hor. The old stile Doctor – Well be short, for I am busie, what would your impertinent Wife have now?

Sir Jas. Well guess'd y'faith, for I do come from her. 80

Hor. To invite me to supper, tell her I can't come, go.

Sir Jas. Nay, now you are out faith, for my Lady and the whole knot of the virtuous gang, as they call themselves, are resolv'd upon a frolick of coming to you to night in a Masquerade, and are all drest already.

Hor. I shan't be at home. 85

Sir Jas. Lord how churlish he is to women – nay prythee don't disappoint 'em, they'l think 'tis my fault, prythee don't, I'll send in the Banquet and the Fiddles, but make no noise on't, for the poor virtuous Rogues would not have it known for the world, that they go a Masquerading, and they would come to no mans Ball, but yours. 90

Hor. Well, well – get you gone, and tell 'em if they come, 'twill be at the peril of their honour and yours.

Sir Jas. Heh, he, he – we'l trust you for that, farewell –

Exit Sir Jaspar.

Hor. Doctor anon you too shall be my guest. But now I'm going to a private feast. 95

Scene III

The Scene changes to the Piazza of Covent Garden.

Sparkish, Pinchwife.

Spar. But who would have thought a woman could have been false to me, by the world, I could not have thought it.

Spar. with the Letter in his hand.

Mr. Pin. You were for giving and taking liberty, she has taken it only Sir, now you find in that Letter, you are a frank person, and so is she you see there. 5

Spar. Nay if this be her hand – for I never saw it.

Mr. Pin. 'Tis no matter whether that be her hand or no, I am sure this hand at her desire lead her to Mr. *Hornor*, with whom I left her just now, to go fetch a Parson to 'em at their desire too, to deprive you of her for ever, for it seems yours was but a mock marriage. 10

Spar. Indeed she wou'd needs have it that 'twas *Harcourt* himself in a Parsons habit, that married us, but I'm sure he told me 'twas his Brother Ned.

Mr. Pin. O there 'tis out and you were deceiv'd not she, for you are such a frank person – but I must be gone – you'll find her at Mr. *Horners*, goe and believe your eyes. 15

Exit Mr. Pin.

Spar. Nay I'll to her, and call her as many Crocodiles, Syrens, Harpies, and other heathenish names, as a Poet would do a Mistress, who had refus'd to heare his suit, nay more his Verses on her.
But stay, is not that she following a Torch at t'other end of the Piazza, and from *Horners* certainly – 'tis so – 20

Enter Alithea following a Torch, and Lucy behind.

You are well met Madam though you don't think so; what you have made a short visit to Mr. *Horner*, but I suppose you'll return to him presently, by that time the Parson can be with him.

Ali. Mr. *Horner*, and the Parson Sir – 25

Spar. Come Madam no more dissembling, no more jilting for I am no more a frank person.

Alith. How's this.

Lucy. So 'twill work I see –

Aside.

Spar. Cou'd you find out no easie Country Fool to abuse? none but me, a Gentleman of wit and pleasure about the Town, but it was your pride to be too hard for a man of parts, unworthy false woman, false as a friend that lends a man mony to lose, false as dice, who undoe those that trust all they have to 'em. 30

Lucy. He has been a great bubble by his similes as they say – 35

Aside.

Ali. You have been too merry Sir at your wedding dinner sure.

Spar. What d'y mock me too?

Ali. Or you have been deluded.

Spar. By you.

Ali. Let me understand you. 40

Spar. Have you the confidence, I should call it something else, since you know your guilt, to stand my just reproaches? you did not write an impudent Letter to Mr. *Horner*, who I find now has club'd with you in deluding me with his aversion for women, that I might not forsooth suspect him for my Rival. 45

Lucy. D'y think the Gentleman can be jealous now Madam –

Aside.

Ali. I write a Letter to Mr. *Horner*!

Spar. Nay Madam, do not deny it, your Brother shew'd it me just now, and told me likewise he left you at *Horners* lodging to fetch a Parson to marry you to him, and I wish you joy Madam, joy, joy, and to him too much joy, and to my self more joy for not marrying you. 50

Ali. So I find my Brother would break off the match, and I can consent to't, since I see this Gentleman can be made jealous.

Aside.

O Lucy, by his rude usage and jealousy, he makes me almost afraid I am married to him, art thou sure 'twas *Harcourt* himself and no Parson that married us. 55

Spar. No Madam I thank you, I suppose that was a contrivance too of Mr. *Horners* and yours, to make *Harcourt* play the Parson, but I would as little as you have him one now, no not for the world, for shall I tell you another truth, I never had any passion for you, 'till now, for now I hate you, 'tis true I might have married your portion, as other men of parts of the Town do sometimes, and so your Servant, and to shew my unconcernedness, I'll come to your wedding, and resign you with as much joy as I would a stale wench to a new Cully, nay with as much joy as I would after the first night, if I had been married to you, there's for you, and so your Servant, Servant. 60 65

Exit Spar.

Ali. How was I deceiv'd in a man!

Lucy. You'l believe then a fool may be made jealous now? for that easiness in him that suffers him to be led by a Wife, will likewise permit him to be perswaded against her by others. 70

Ali. But marry Mr. *Horner*, my brother does not intend it sure; if I thought he did, I would take thy advice, and Mr. *Harcourt* for my Husband, and now I wish, that if there be any over-wise woman of the Town, who like me would marry a fool, for fortune, liberty, or title, first that her husband may love Play, and be a Cully to all the Town, but her, and suffer none but fortune to be mistress of his purse, then if for liberty, that he may send her into the Country under the conduct of some housewifely mother-in law; and if for title, may the world give 'em none but that of Cuckold. 75

Lucy. And for her greater curse Madam, may he not deserve it. 80

Ali. Away impertinent – is not this my old Lady *Lanterlus*?

Lucy. Yes Madam. [and here I hope we shall find Mr. *Harcourt* –

Aside.

Excunt Ali. Lucy.

Scene IV

The Scene changes again to *Horner's Lodging.*

Horner, Lady Fidget, Mrs. Daynty Fidget, Mrs. Squeamish,
a Table, Banquet, and Bottles.

Hor. A Pox they are come too soon – before I have sent back my new – Mistress, all I have now to do, is to lock her in, that they may not see her –

Aside.

La. Fid. That we may be sure of our wellcome, we have brought our
entertainment with us, and are resolv'd to treat thee, dear Toad. 5

Dayn. And that we may be merry to purpose, have left Sir *Jaspar* and
my old Lady *Squeamish* quarrelling at home at Baggammon.

Squeam. Therefore let us make use of our time, lest they should
chance to interrupt us.

La. Fid. Let us sit then. 10

Hor. First that you may be private, let me lock this door, and that, and
I'll wait upon you presently.

La. Fid. No Sir, shut 'em only and your lips for ever, for we must trust
you as much as our women.

Hor. You know all vanity's kill'd in me, I have no occasion for talking. 15

La. Fid. Now Ladies, supposing we had drank each of us our two
Bottles, let us speak the truth of our hearts.

Dayn. and *Squeam.* Agreed.

La. Fid. By this brimmer, for truth is no where else to be found, [Not
in thy heart false man. 20

Aside to Hor.

Hor. You have found me a true man I'm sure.

Aside to Lady Fid.

La. Fid. Not every way –

Aside to Hor.

But let us sit and be merry.

Lady Fidget sings.

1.

*Why should our damn'd Tyrants oblige us to live
On the pittance of Pleasure which they only give. 25*

*We must not rejoyce,
With Wine and with noise.*

*In vaine we must wake in a dull bed alone,
Whilst to our warm Rival the Bottle, they're gone. 30*

*Then lay aside charms,
And take up these arms.* 30*

*The Glasses.

2.

*'Tis Wine only gives 'em their Courage and Wit,
Because we live sober to men we submit. 35*

*If for Beauties you'd pass,
Take a lick of the Glass. 35*

*'Twill mend your complexions, and when
they are gone,*

*The best red we have is the red of the Grape.
Then Sisters lay'r on,
And dam a good shape. 40*

- Dayn.* Dear Brimmer, well in token of our openness and plain dealing, let us throw our Masques over our heads.
- Hor.* So 'twill come to the Glasses anon.
- Squeam.* Lovely Brimmer, let me enjoy him first.
- La. Fid.* No, I never part with a Gallant, till I've try'd him. Dear 45
Brimmer that mak'st our Husbands short sighted.
- Dayn.* And our bashful gallants bold.
- Squeam.* And for want of a Gallant, the Butler lovely in our eyes,
drink Eunuch.
- La. Fid.* Drink thou representative of a Husband, damn a Husband. 50
- Dayn.* And as it were a Husband, an old keeper.
- Squeam.* And an old Grandmother.
- Hor.* And an English Bawd, and a French Chirurgion.
- La. Fid.* Ay we have all reason to curse 'em.
- Hor.* For my sake Ladies. 55
- La. Fid.* No, for our own, for the first spoils all young gallants
industry.
- Dayn.* And the others art makes 'em bold only with common
women.
- Squeam.* And rather run the hazard of the vile distemper amongst 60
them, than of a denial amongst us.
- Dayn.* The filthy Toads chuse Mistresses now, as they do Stuffs, for
having been fancy'd and worn by others.
- Squeam.* For being common and cheap.
- La. Fid.* Whilst women of quality, like the richest Stuffs, lye 65
untumbled, and unask'd for.
- Hor.* Ay neat, and cheap, and new often they think best.
- Dayn.* No Sir, the Beasts will be known by a Mistriss longer than
by a suit.
- Squeam.* And 'tis not for cheapness neither. 70
- La. Fid.* No, for the vain fopps will take up Druggets, and embroider
'em, but I wonder at the depraved appetites of witty men, they use
to be out of the common road, and hate imitation, pray tell me
beast, when you were a man, why you rather chose to club with a
multitude in a common house, for an entertainment, than to be the 75
only guest at a good Table.
- Hor.* Why faith ceremony and expectation are unsufferable to those
that are sharp bent, people always eat with the best stomach at an
ordinary, where every man is snatching for the best bit.
- La. Fid.* Though he get a cut over the fingers – but I have heard 80
people eat most heartily of another man's meat, that is, what they
do not pay for.
- Hor.* When they are sure of their wellcome and freedome, for cere-
mony in love and eating, is as ridiculous as in fighting, falling on
briskly is all should be done in those occasions. 85
- La. Fid.* Well then let me tell you Sir, there is no where more
freedome than in our houses, and we take freedom from a
young person as a sign of good breeding, and a person may be

- as free as he pleases with us, as frolick, as gamesome, as wild as he
will. 90
- Hor.* Han't I heard you all declaim against wild men.
- La. Fid.* Yes, but for all that, we think wildness in a man, as desireable
a quality, as in a Duck, or Rabbet; a tame man, foh.
- Hor.* I know not, but your Reputations frightned me, as much as your
Faces invited me. 95
- La. Fid.* Our Reputation, Lord! Why should you not think, that we
women make use of our Reputation, as you men of yours, only to
deceive the world with less suspicion; our virtue is like the State-
man's Religion, the Quakers Word, the Gamesters Oath, and the
Great Man's Honour, but to cheat those that trust us. 100
- Squeam.* And that Demureness, Coyness, and Modesty, that you see
in our Faces in the Boxes at Plays, is as much a sign of a kind
woman, as a Vizard-mask in the Pit.
- Dayn.* For I assure you, women are least mask'd, when they have the
Velvet Vizard on. 105
- La. Fid.* You wou'd have found us modest women in our denials
only.
- Squeam.* Our bashfulness is only the reflection of the Men's.
- Dayn.* We blush, when they are shame-fac'd.
- Hor.* I beg your pardon Ladies, I was deceiv'd in you devilishly, but 110
why, that mighty pretence to Honour?
- La. Fid.* We have told you; but sometimes 'twas for the same reason
you men pretend business often, to avoid ill company, to enjoy the
better, and more privately those you love.
- Hor.* But why, wou'd you ne'er give a Friend a wink then? 115
- La. Fid.* Faith, your Reputation frightned us as much, as ours did
you, you were so notoriously lewd.
- Hor.* And you so seemingly honest.
- La. Fid.* Was that all that deterr'd you?
- Hor.* And so expensive – you allow freedom you say. 120
- La. Fid.* Ay, ay.
- Hor.* That I was afraid of losing my little money, as well as my little
time, both which my other pleasures required.
- La. Fid.* Money, foh – you talk like a little fellow now, do such as we
expect money? 125
- Hor.* I beg your pardon, Madam, I must confess, I have heard that
great Ladies, like great Merchants, set but the higher prizes upon
what they have, because they are not in necessity of taking the first
offer.
- Dayn.* Such as we, make sale of our hearts? 130
- Squeam.* We brib'd for our Love? Foh.
- Hor.* With your pardon, Ladies, I know, like great men in Offices, you
seem to exact flattery and attendance only from your Followers, but
you have receivers about you, and such fees to pay, a man is afraid to
pass your Grants; besides we must let you win at Cards, or we lose 135
your hearts; and if you make an assignation, 'tis at a Goldsmiths,

Jewellers, or China house, where for your Honour, you deposit to him, he must pawn his, to the punctual Citt, and so paying for what you take up, pays for what he takes up.

Dayn. Wou'd you not have us assur'd of our Gallants Love? 140

Squeam. For Love is better known by Liberality, than by Jealousie.

La. Fid. For one may be dissembled, the other not – but my Jealousie can be no longer dissembled, and they are telling-ripe:

Aside.

Come here's to our Gallants in waiting, whom we must name, and I'll begin, this is my false Rogue. 145

Claps him on the back.

Squeam. How!

Hor. So all will out now –

Squeam. Did you not tell me, 'twas for my sake only, you reported your self no man?

Aside to Horner.

Dayn. Oh Wretch! did you not swear to me, 'twas for my Love, and Honour, you pass'd for that thing you do? 150

Aside to Horner.

Hor. So, so.

La. Fid. Come, speak Ladies, this is my false Villain.

Squeam. And mine too.

Dayn. And mine. 155

Horn. Well then, you are all three my false Rogues too, and there's an end on't.

La. Fid. Well then, there's no remedy, Sister Sharers, let us not fall out, but have a care of our Honour; though we get no Presents, no Jewels of him, we are savers of our Honour, the Jewel of most value and use, which shines yet to the world unsuspected, though it be counterfeit. 160

Hor. Nay, and is e'en as good, as if it were true, provided the world think so; for Honour, like Beauty now, only depends on the opinion of others.

La. Fid. Well Harry Common, I hope you can be true to three, swear, but 'tis no purpose, to require your Oath; for you are as often forsworn, as you swear to new women. 165

Hor. Come, faith Madam, let us e'en pardon one another, for all the difference I find betwixt we men, and you women, we forswear our selves at the beginning of an Amour, you, as long as it lasts. 170

Enter Sir Jaspar Fidget, and old Lady Squeamish.

Sir Jas. Oh my Lady *Fidget*, was this your cunning, to come to Mr. *Horner* without me; but you have been no where else I hope.

La. Fid. No, Sir *Jaspar*.

Old La. Squeam. And you came straight hither *Biddy*.

Squeam. Yes indeed, Lady Grandmother. 175
Sir Jas. 'Tis well, 'tis well, I knew when once they were thoroughly acquainted with poor *Horner*, they'd ne'er be from him; you may let her masquerade it with my Wife, and *Horner*, and I warrant her Reputation safe.

Enter Boy.

Boy. O Sir, here's the Gentleman come, whom you bid me not suffer 180 to come up, without giving you notice, with a Lady too, and other Gentlemen –

Hor. Do you all go in there, whil'st I send 'em away, and Boy, do you desire 'em to stay below 'til I come, which shall be immediately.

Exeunt Sir Jaspar, Lad. Squeam. Lad.
Fidget, Mistriss Dainty, Squeamish.

Boy. Yes Sir. 185

Exit.

Exit Horner at t'other door, and returns with
Mistriss Pinchwife.

Hor. You wou'd not take my advice to be gone home, before your Husband came back, he'll now discover all, yet pray my Dearest be perswaded to go home, and leave the rest to my management, I'll let you down the back way.

Mrs. Pin. I don't know the way home, so I don't. 190

Hor. My man shall wait upon you.

Mrs. Pin. No, don't you believe, that I'll go at all; what are you weary of me already?

Hor. No my life, 'tis that I may love you long, 'tis to secure my love, and your Reputation with your Husband, he'll never receive you 195 again else.

Mrs. Pin. What care I, d'ye think to frighten me with that? I don't intend to go to him again; you shall be my Husband now.

Hor. I cannot be your Husband, Dearest, since you are married to him. 200

Mrs. Pin. O wou'd you make me believe that – don't I see every day at *London* here, women leave their first Husbands, and go, and live with other men as their Wives, pish, pshaw, you'd make me angry, but that I love you so mainly.

Hor. So, they are coming up – In again, in, I hear 'em: 205

Exit Mistriss Pinchwife.

Well, a silly Mistriss, is like a weak place, soon got, soon lost, a man has scarce time for plunder; she betrays her Husband, first to her Gallant, and then her Gallant, to her Husband.

Enter Pinchwife, Alithea, Harcourt, Sparkish, Lucy, and a Parson.

Mr. Pin. Come Madam, 'tis not the sudden change of your dress, the confidence of your asseverations, and your false witness there, shall 210
perswade me, I did not bring you hither, just now; here's my
witness, who cannot deny it, since you must be confronted – *Mr.*
Horner, did not I bring this Lady to you just now?

Hor. Now must I wrong one woman for anothers sake, but that's no
new thing with me; for in these cases I am still on the criminal's side, 215
against the innocent.

Aside.

Alith. Pray, speak Sir.

Hor. It must be so – I must be impudent, and try my luck, impudence
uses to be too hard for truth.

Aside.

Mr. Pin. What, you are studying an evasion, or excuse for her, 220
speak Sir.

Hor. No faith, I am something backward only, to speak in womens
affairs or disputes.

Mr. Pin. She bids you speak.

Alith. Ay, pray Sir do, pray satisfie him. 225

Hor. Then truly, you did bring that Lady to me just now.

Mr. Pin. O ho –

Alith. How Sir –

Har. How, *Horner!*

Alith. What mean you Sir, I always took you for a man of Honour? 230

Hor. Ay, so much a man of Honour, that I must save my Mistriss, I
thank you, come what will on't.

Aside.

Spar. So if I had had her, she'd have made me believe, the Moon had
been made of a Christmas pye.

Lucy. Now cou'd I speak, if I durst, and 'solve the Riddle, who am the 235
Author of it.

Aside.

Alith. O unfortunate Woman! a combination against my Honour,
which most concerns me now, because you share in my disgrace, Sir,
and it is your censure which I must now suffer, that troubles me,
not theirs. 240

Har. Madam, then have no trouble, you shall now see 'tis possible for
me to love too, without being jealous, I will not only believe your
innocence my self, but make all the world believe it –

Horner I must now be concern'd for this Ladies Honour.

Apart to Horner.

Hor. And I must be concern'd for this Ladies Honour too. 245

Har. This Lady has her Honour, and I will protect it.

Hor. My Lady has her Honour, but has given it me to keep, and I will preserve it.

Har. I understand you not.

Hor. I wou'd not have you. 250

Mrs. Pin. What's the matter with 'em all.

Mistress Pinchwife peeping in behind.

Mr. Pin. Come, come, Mr. *Horner*, no more disputing, here's the Parson, I brought him not in vain.

Har. No Sir, I'll employ him, if this Lady please.

Mr. Pin. How, what d'ye mean? 255

Spark. Ay, what does he mean?

Hor. Why, I have resign'd your Sister to him, he has my consent.

Mr. Pin. But he has not mine Sir, a womans injur'd Honour, no more than a man's, can be repair'd or satisfied by any, but him that first wrong'd it; and you shall marry her presently, or – 260

Lays his hand on his Sword.

Enter to them Mistress Pinchwife.

Mistress Pin. O Lord, they'll kill poor Mr. *Horner*, besides he shan't marry her, whilst I stand by, and look on, I'll not lose my second Husband so.

Mr. Pin. What do I see?

Aliith. My Sister in my cloaths! 265

Spark. Ha!

Mr. Pin. Nay, pray now don't quarrel about finding work for the Parson, he shall marry me to Mr. *Horner*; for now I believe, you have enough of me.

To Mr. Pinchwife.

Hor. Damn'd, damn'd loving Changeling. 270

Mrs. Pin. Pray Sister, pardon me for telling so many lyes of you.

Har. I suppose the Riddle is plain now.

Lucy. No, that must be my work, good Sir, hear me.

Kneels to Mr. Pinchwife, who stands doggedly, with his hat over his eyes.

Mr. Pin. I will never hear woman again, but make 'em all silent, thus –

Offers to draw upon his Wife.

Hor. No, that must not be. 275

Mr. Pin. You then shall go first, 'tis all one to me.

Offers to draw on Hor. stopt by Harcourt.

Har. Hold –

Enter Sir Jaspar Fidget, Lady Fidget, Lady Squeamish,
Mrs. Dainty Fidget, Mrs. Squeamish.

Sir Jas. What's the matter, what's the matter, pray what's the matter
Sir, I beseech you communicate Sir.

Mr. Pin. Why my Wife has communicated Sir, as your Wife may have 280
done too Sir, if she knows him Sir –

Sir Jas. Pshaw, with him, ha, ha, ha.

Mr. Pin. D'ye mock me Sir, a Cuckold is a kind of a wild Beast, have a
care Sir –

Sir Jas. No sure, you mock me Sir – he cuckold you! it can't be, ha, 285
ha, he, why, I'll tell you Sir.

Offers to whisper.

Mr. Pin. I tell you again, he has whor'd my Wife, and yours too, if he
knows her, and all the women he comes near; 'tis not his dissem-
bling, his hypocrisie can wheedle me.

Sir Jas. How does he dissemble, is he a Hypocrite? nay then – how – 290
Wife – Sister is he an Hypocrite?

Old La. Squeam. An Hypocrite, a dissembler, speak young Harlotry,
speak how?

Sir Jas. Nay then – O my head too – O thou libidinous Lady!

Old La. Squeam. O thou Harloting, Harlotry, hast thou done't then? 295

Sir Jas. Speak good *Horner*, art thou a dissembler, a Rogue? hast thou –
Hor. Soh –

Lucy. I'll fetch you off, and her too, if she will but hold her tongue.

Apart to Hor.

Hor. Canst thou? I'll give thee –

Apart to Luc.

Lucy to Mr. Pin. Pray have but patience to hear me Sir, who am the 300
unfortunate cause of all this confusion, your Wife is innocent, I only
culpable; for I put her upon telling you all these lyes, concerning my
Mistress, in order to the breaking off the match, between Mr.
Sparkish and her, to make way for Mr. *Harcourt*.

Spark. Did you so eternal Rotten-tooth, then it seems my Mistress 305
was not false to me, I was only deceiv'd by you, brother that shou'd
have been, now man of conduct, who is a frank person now, to
bring your Wife to her Lover – ha –

Lucy. I assure you Sir, she came not to Mr. *Horner* out of love, for she
loves him no more – 310

Mr. Pin. Hold, I told lyes for you, but you shall tell none for me, for
I do love Mr. *Horner* with all my soul, and no body shall say me nay;
pray don't you go to make poor Mr. *Horner* believe to the contrary,
'tis spitefully done of you, I'm sure.

Hor. Peace, Dear Idiot. 315

Aside to Mrs. Pin.

Mrs. Pin. Nay, I will not peace.

Mr. Pin. Not 'til I make you.

Enter Dorilant, Quack.

Dor. Horner, your Servant, I am the Doctors Guest, he must excuse our intrusion.

Quack. But what's the matter Gentlemen, for Heavens sake, what's the matter? 320

Hor. Oh 'tis well you are come – 'tis a censorious world we live in, you may have brought me a reprieve, or else I had died for a crime, I never committed, and these innocent Ladies had suffer'd with me, therefore pray satisfie these worthy, honourable, jealous Gentlemen – that – 325

Whispers.

Quack. O I understand you, is that all – Sir *Jasper,* by heavens and upon the word of a Physician Sir, –

Whispers to Sir Jasper.

Sir Jas. Nay I do believe you truly – pardon me my virtuous Lady, and dear of honour. 330

Old La. Squeam. What then all's right again.

Sir Jas. Ay, ay, and now let us satisfie him too.

They whisper with Mr. Pinch.

Mr. Pin. An Eunuch! pray no fooling with me.

Quack. I'll bring half the Chirurgions in Town to swear it.

Mr. Pin. They – they'll swear a man that bled to death through his wounds died of an Apoplexy. 335

Quack. Pray hear me Sir – why all the Town has heard the report of him.

Mr. Pin. But does all the Town believe it.

Quack. Pray inquire a little, and first of all these. 340

Mr. Pin. I'm sure when I left the Town he was the lewdest fellow in't.

Quack. I tell you Sir he has been in *France* since, pray ask but these Ladies and Gentlemen, your friend Mr. *Dorilant,* Gentlemen and Ladies, han't you all heard the late sad report of poor Mr. *Horner.* 345

All Lad. Ay, ay, ay.

Dor. Why thou jealous Fool do'st thou doubt it, he's an errant French Capon.

Mrs. Pin. 'Tis false Sir, you shall not disparage poor Mr. *Horner,* for to my certain knowledge –

Lucy. O hold – 350

Squeam. Stop her mouth –

Aside to Lucy.

La. Fid. Upon my honour Sir, 'tis as true.

To Pinch.

Dayn. D'y think we would have been seen in his company –

Squeam. Trust our unspotted reputations with him!

La. Fid. This you get, and we too, by trusting your secret to a fool – 355

Aside to Hor.

Hor. Peace Madam, – well Doctor is not this a good design that carries a man on unsuspected, and brings him off safe. –

Aside to Quack.

Mr. Pin. Well, if this were true, but my Wife –

Aside

Dorilant whispers with Mrs. Pinch.

Ali. Come Brother your Wife is yet innocent you see, but have a care of too strong an imagination, least like an over-concern'd timerous 360 Gamester by fancying an unlucky cast it should come, Women and Fortune are truest still to those that trust 'em.

Lucy. And any wild thing grows but the more fierce and hungry for being kept up, and more dangerous to the Keeper.

Ali. There's doctrine for all Husbands Mr. *Harcourt.* 365

Har. I edifie Madam so much, that I am impatient till I am one.

Dor. And I edifie so much by example I will never be one.

Spar. And because I will not disparage my parts I'll ne're be one.

Hor. And I alas can't be one.

Mr. Pin. But I must be one – against my will to a Country-Wife, with 370 a Country-murrain to me.

Mrs. Pin. And I must be a Country Wife still too I find, for I can't like a City one, be rid of my musty Husband and doe what I list.

Aside.

Hor. Now Sir I must pronounce your Wife Innocent, though I blush whilst I do it, and I am the only man by her now expos'd to shame, 375 which I will straight drown in Wine, as you shall your suspicion, and the Ladies troubles we'll divert with a Ballet, Doctor where are your Maskers.

Lucy. Indeed she's Innocent Sir, I am her witness, and her end of coming out was but to see her Sisters Wedding, and what she has 380 said to your face of her love to Mr. *Horner* was but the usual innocent revenge on a Husbands jealousy, was it not Madam speak –

Mrs. Pin. Since you'll have me tell more lyes –

Aside to Lucy and Horner.

Yes indeed Budd.

Mr. Pin. For my own sake fain I wou'd all believe. Cuckolds like 385 Lovers shou'd themselves deceive.

But –

Sighs.

His honour is least safe, (too late I find)
Who trusts it with a foolish Wife or Friend.

A Dance of Cuckolds.

Hor. Vain Fopps, but court, and dress, and keep a putther, 390
To pass for Womens men, with one another.
But he who aims by women to be priz'd,
First by the men you see must be despis'd.

[FINIS.]

EPILOGUE SPOKEN BY MRS. KNEP

<p><i>Now you the Vigorous, who dayly here O're Vizard-Mask, in publick domineer, And what you'd doe to her if in Place where;</i></p>	}	
<p><i>Nay have the confidence, to cry come out, Yet when she says lead on, you are not stout; But to your well-drest Brother straight turn round And cry, Pox on her Ned, she can't be sound:</i></p>	}	5
<p><i>Then slink away, a fresh one to ingage, With so much seeming heat and loving Rage, You'd frighten listning Actress on the Stage:</i></p>	}	10
<p><i>Till she at last has seen you huffing come, And talk of keeping in the Tyreing-Room, Yet cannot be provok'd to lead her home:</i></p>	}	
<p><i>Next you Fallstaffs of fifty, who beset Your Buckram Maidenheads, which your friends get; And whilst to them, you of Atchievements boast, They share the booty, and laugh at your cost.</i></p>	}	15
<p><i>In fine, you Essens't Boyes, both Old and Young, Who wou'd be thought so eager, brisk, and strong, Yet do the Ladies, not their Husbands, wrong:</i></p>	}	20
<p><i>Whose Purses for your manhood make excuse, And keep your Flanders Mares for shew, not use; Encourag'd by our Womans Man to day, A Horners part may vainly think to Play; And may Intreagues so bashfully disown</i></p>	}	25
<p><i>That they may doubted be by few or none, May kiss the Cards at Picquet, Hombre, - Lu, And so be thought to kiss the Lady too; But Gallants, have a care faith, what you do.</i></p>	}	30
<p><i>The World, which to no man his due will give, You by experience know you can deceive, And men may still believe you Vigorous, But then we Women, - there's no cous'ning us.</i></p>		

[FINIS.]