

The Town-Fop; or, Sir Timothy Tawdrey. Written by Mrs. A. Behn (LONDON, 1677).

This modernised text was produced by Elaine Hobby from the edition by Claire Bowditch in progress for Volume II of *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Aphra Behn*, and used by the Canterbury Commemoration Society as the basis for a script Stewart Ross made for a public reading in St Peter's Anglican Church, Canterbury in 2023. In modernising it, Elaine largely updated spelling and punctuation, but also occasionally substituted modern words for 1681 ones. As long as this origin is acknowledged, anyone is welcome to use this script for any purpose, but a 1681 copy must be checked if accuracy is essential

Dramatis Personae.

Lord Plotwell	
Bellmour	Lord Plotwell's nephew; engaged to Celinda.
Charles	Bellmour's brother.
Friendlove	Celinda's brother; in love with Diana.
Sir Timothy Tawdrey	a fop-knight, intended to marry Celinda.
Sham	hanger-on to Sir Timothy.
Sharp	hanger-on to Sir Timothy.
Trusty	an old steward to Bellmour's family.
page and dancers, and servants.	
Lady Diana	Lord Plotwell's niece.
Celinda	Friendlove's sister; engaged to Bellmour.
Phillis	Bellmour's sister.
Betty Flauntit	Sir Timothy's kept mistress.
Driver	a bawd.
Jenny	a whore.
Doll	a whore.
Nurse.	

Setting, Covent Garden.

Prologue

As country squire, who yet had never known
The long-expected joy of being in Town,
Whose careful parents scarce permitted heir
To ride from home unless to neighbouring fair,
At last by happy chance is hither led
To purchase clap with loss of maidenhead,
Turns wondrous gay, bedizened to excess,
Till he is all burlesque in mode and dress,
Learns to talk loud in pit, grows wily, too,
That is to say, makes mighty noise, and show,
 So a young poet, who had never been
Dabbling beyond the height of ballading,
Who, in his brisk attempts, durst ne'er excel
The lucky flight of rhyming doggerel,
Sets up, with this sufficient stock, on stage,
And has, perchance, the luck to please the age:
He draws you in, like cozening citizen,
Cares not, how bad the ware, if shop be fine
 As tawdry gown and petticoat gain more
(Though on a dull, diseased, ill-favoured whore)
Than prettier frugal, though on holiday, }

When every City spark has leave to play, }
 ... Damn her, she must be sound, she is so gay, }
 So, let the scenery be fine, you'll ne'er enquire
 For sense, but lofty flights on nimble wire.¹
 ... What we present today is none of these.
 But we could wish it were, for we would please,
 And that, you'll swear, we hardly meant to do.
 Yet here's no sense; pox on't, but here's no show,
 But a plain story that will give a taste
 Of what your grandsires loved in the age that's past.

Act I, scene 1. *The Street.* Enter Sir Timothy Tawdrey, Sham and Sharp.

SIR TIMOTHY Hereabouts is the house wherein dwells the mistress of my heart. For she has money, boys. Mind me, money in abundance, or she were not for me ... The wench herself is good-natured, and inclined to be civil. But, a pox on't ... she has a brother, a conceited fellow, whom the world mistakes for a fine gentleman. For he has travelled, talks languages, bows with a *bonne mine*, and the rest. But, by fortune, he shall entertain you with nothing but words.

SHAM Nothing else? ...

SIR TIMOTHY No ... He's no country squire, gentlemen. Will not game, whore, nay, in my conscience, you will hardly get yourselves drunk in his company ... He treats *à-la-mode*, half wine, half water, and the rest ... But, to the business: this fellow loves his sister dearly, and will not trust her in this lewd town, as he calls it, without him. And hither he has brought her to marry me.

SHAM A pox upon him for his pains ...

SIR TIMOTHY So say I ... But, my comfort is, I shall be as weary of her, as the best husband of 'em all ... But there's conveniency in it. Besides, the match being as good as agreed by the old folks in the country, I must submit ... The wench, I never saw yet, but they say she's handsome ... But no matter for that, there's money, my boys!

SHARP Well, sir, we will follow you ... But as dolefully as people do their friends to the grave, from whence they're never to return, at least not the same substance, the thin, airy vision of a brave good fellow. We may see thee hereafter, but that's the most.

SIR TIMOTHY Your pardon, sweet Sharp, my whole design in it is to be master of myself, and with part of her dowry to set up my kept mistress, Betty Flauntit. Which, by the way, is the main end of my marrying. The rest, you'll have your shares of ... Now I am forced to get you suits at treble prices, have damned wine and meat forced upon us, 'cause the tally is to be recorded on a tab. But, ready money, ye rogues! What charms it has! Makes the waiters fly, boys, and the master, with cap in hand: ... 'Excuse what's amiss, gentlemen ... Your Worship shall command the best' .. And the rest ... How briskly the box and dice dance, and the ready money submits to the lucky gamester, and the gay wench consults with every beauty to make herself agreeable to the man with ready money. In fine, dear rogues, all things are sacrificed to its power; and no mortal conceives the joy of *argent content*. 'Tis this powerful god that makes me submit to the devil matrimony. And then thou art assured of me, my stout lads of brisk debauch.

SHAM And is it possible you can be tied to a wife? Whilst here in London, and free, you have the whole world to range in, and like a wanton heifer, eat of every pasture.

SIR TIMOTHY Why, dost think I'll be confined to my own dull enclosure? No, I had rather feed coarsely upon the boundless common. Perhaps two or three days I may be in love, and remain constant, but that's the most.

SHARP And in three weeks, should you wed a virgin, you'd be a monster.

SIR TIMOTHY What? Thou meanst a cuckold, I warrant? God help thee! But a monster is only so from its rarity, and a cuckold is no such strange thing in our age.

¹ *lofty flights...nimble wire*: alluding to the versatile metal line used to suspend or move performers or stage machinery in the air during a performance. Several popular plays of the mid-1670s employed the feature, including Shadwell's *Tempest* (Duke's 1674), and *Psyche* (Duke's 1675).

Enter Bellmour and Friendlove.

But who comes here? Bellmour! Ah, my little dear rogue! How dost thou! ... Ned Friendlove, too! Dear lad, how dost thou too? Why, welcome to Town, i'faith, and I'm glad to see you both.

FRIENDLOVE Sir Tim Tawdrey! ...

SIR TIMOTHY The same, by fortune, dear Ned. And how, and how, man, how go matters?

FRIENDLOVE Between who, sir?

SIR TIMOTHY Why, anybody, man. But, by fortune, I'm overjoyed to meet thee. But where dost think I was going?

FRIENDLOVE Is't possible one should divine?

SIR TIMOTHY Is't possible you should not, and meet me so near your sister's lodgings? Faith, I was coming to pay my respects and services, and the rest ... Thou knowst my meaning ... The old business of the Silver world, Ned. By fortune, it's a mad age we live in, Ned, and here be so many ... wicked rogues, about this damned lewd Town, that, 'faith, I am obliged to speak in the vulgar, modish style in my own defence, and ridicule matrimony and the rest.

FRIENDLOVE Matrimony! ... I hope you are so exactly refined a Man-of-the-Town that you will not offer once to think of so dull a thing. Leave that for such cold complexions as Bellmour, here, and I that have not attained to that most excellent faculty of mistress-keeping yet, as you, Sir Timothy, have done; much to your glory, I assure you.

SIR TIMOTHY Who, I, sir? You do me much honour. I must confess, I do not find the softer sex cruel. I am received as well as another man of my parts.

FRIENDLOVE Of your money, you mean, sir.

SIR TIMOTHY Why, faith, Ned, thou art right. I love to buy my pleasure. For, by fortune, there's as much pleasure in vanity and variety, as any sins I know, What thinkst thou, Ned?

FRIENDLOVE I am not of your mind. I love to love squarely, and, so that I may be sure not to be cheated with false ware, I present 'em nothing but my heart.

SIR TIMOTHY Yes, and have the consolation of seeing your frugal housewifery miss sit in the pit at a play, in a long scarf, and dressing-gown, for want of lace and garniture.

FRIENDLOVE If she be clean, and pretty, and dressed in love, I can excuse the rest. And so will she.

SIR TIMOTHY I vow to fortune, Ned, thou must come to London, and be a little managed. 'Slife, man, shouldst thou talk so, aloud in good company, thou wouldst be counted a strange fellow: 'Pretty ... and dressed with love' ... A fine figure, by fortune. No, Ned, the painted chariot gives a lustre to every ordinary face, and makes a woman look like quality. Aye, so like, by fortune, that you shall not know one from t'other, till some scandalous, out-of-favoured, laid-aside fellow of the Town, cry ... 'Damn her, for a bitch ... How scornfully the whore regards me ... She has forgot since Jack ... someone or other ... and I, shared the cost of keeping her, when both our stocks, well-managed, would not amount to above seven shillings six pence a week, besides, now and then, a treat of a breast of mutton from the next cook's ...' Then the other laughs, and cries ... 'Aye ... Rot her ...' And tells his story too, and concludes with, 'Who manages the jilt now?' 'Why, faith, some dismal coxcomb or other, you may be sure,' replies the first. But, Ned, these are rogues and rascals that value no man's reputation, because they despise their own. But, faith, I have laid aside all these vanities, now I have thought of matrimony. But I desire my reformation may be a secret, because, as you know, for a man of my address, and the rest ... 'tis not altogether so gentlemanly.

FRIENDLOVE Sir, I assure you, it shall be so great a secret for me, that I will never ask you who the happy woman is that's chosen for this great work of your conversion.

SIR TIMOTHY Ask me! ... No, you need not, because you know already.

FRIENDLOVE Who I? I protest, Sir Timothy ...

SIR TIMOTHY No swearing, dear Ned, for 'tis not such a secret but I will trust my intimates. These are my friends, Ned. Pray, know them ... This Mr Sham and this — by fortune, a very honest fellow (*bows to 'em*) Mr Sharp, and may be trusted with a business that concerns you as well as me.

FRIENDLOVE Me? What do you mean, Sir Timothy?

SIR TIMOTHY Why, sir, you know what I mean.

FRIENDLOVE Not I, sir.

SIR TIMOTHY What, not that I am to marry your sister Celinda?

FRIENDLOVE Not at all.

BELLMOUR (*Aside*) Oh, this insufferable sot!

FRIENDLOVE My sister, sir, is very particular.

SIR TIMOTHY That's all one, sir. The old people have agreed the matter, and they are the most proper for a negotiation of that kind, which saves us the trouble of a tedious courtship.

FRIENDLOVE That the old people have agreed the matter is more than I know.

SIR TIMOTHY Why, Lord, sir, will you persuade me to that? Don't you know that your father (according to the method in such cases, being certain of my estate) came to me thus ... 'Sir Timothy Tawdrey! ... You are a young gentleman, and a knight. I knew your father well, and my right worshipful neighbour. Our estates lie together, therefore, sir, I have a desire to have a near relation with you.' ... At which, I interrupted him, and cried ... 'Oh, Lord, sir! I vow to fortune, you do me the greatest honour, sir,' and the rest ...

BELLMOUR (*Aside*) I can endure no more. He, marry fair Celinda?

FRIENDLOVE (*Aside*) Prithree, let him alone.

SIR TIMOTHY To which he answered ... 'I have a good fortune ... Have but my son, Ned, and this girl, called Celinda, whom I will make a fortune suitable to yours. Your honoured mother, the Lady Tawdrey and I, have as good as concluded the match already.' To which I (who, though I say it, am well enough bred for a knight) answered the civility thus: ... 'I vow to fortune, sir' ... I did not swear, but cried ... 'I protest, sir, Celinda deserves' ... No, no, I lie again, 'twas 'merits' ... aye, 'Celinda ... merits a much better husband than I'.

FRIENDLOVE (*Aside*) You speak more truth than you are aware of. (*Aloud*) Well, sir, I'll bring you to my sister, and if she likes you as well as my father does, she's yours. Otherwise, I have so much tenderness for her as to leave her choice free.

SIR TIMOTHY Oh, sir, you compliment. *Allons. Entrons.*

(*Exeunt.*)

Scene 2. A Chamber. Enter Celinda, and Nurse.

CELINDA I wonder my brother stays so long. Sure, Mr Bellmour is not yet arrived, yet he sent us word he would be here today. Lord, how impatient I grow.

NURSE Aye, so, methinks, if I had the hopes of enjoying so sweet a gentleman as Mr Bellmour, I should be so too ... But I am past it ... Well, I have had my pantings, and heavings, my impatience, and qualms, my heats, and my colds, and my I-know-not-whats ... But, I thank my stars, I have done with all those fooleries.

CELINDA Fooleries! ...

Is there anything in life but love?

Wouldst thou praise heaven for thy being

Without that welcome part of it?

For I confess I love.

NURSE You need not. Your sighs, and daily (nay, and nightly too) disorders, plainly enough betray the truth.

CELINDA Thou speakst as if it were a sin.

But if it be so, you yourself helped to make me wicked.

For ere I saw Mr Bellmour, you spoke the kindest things of him

As would have moved the dullest maid to love.

And ere I saw him, I was quite undone.

NURSE Quite undone! Now, God forbid it. What, for loving?

You said but now there was no life without it.

CELINDA But since my brother came from Italy

And brought young Bellmour to our house,

How very little thou hadst said of him.

How much above thy praise I found the youth!

NURSE Very pretty! You are grown a notable proficient in love ...

And you are resolved (if he please) to marry him.

CELINDA Or I must die.

NURSE Aye, but you know the Lord Plotwell has the possession of all his estate, and if he marry without his liking, has power to take away all his fortune. And then, I think, it were not so good marrying him.

CELINDA Not marrying him! Oh, canst thou think so poorly of me?

Yes, I would marry him, though our scanty fortune
Could only purchase us
A lonely cottage, in some silent place,
All covered o'er with thatch,
Defended from the outrages of storms
By leafless trees in winter, and from heat,
With shades, which their kind boughs would bear anew.
Under whose covert we'd feed our gentle flock,
That should, in gratitude, repay us food,
And mean and humble clothing.

NURSE Very fine!

CELINDA There we would practise such degrees of love,
Such lasting, innocent, unheard of joys,
As all the busy world should wonder at,
And amidst all their glories, find none such.

NURSE Good lack! How prettily love teaches his scholars to prattle! ... But hear ye, fair mistress Celinda, you have forgot to what end and purpose you came to Town. Not to marry Mr Bellmour, as I take it ... but Sir Timothy Tawdrey, that spark of men.

CELINDA Oh, name him not ... Let me not, in one moment,
Descend from heaven to hell ...
How came that wretched thing into thy noddle?

NURSE Faith, mistress I took pity on thee. I saw you so elevated with thoughts of Mr Bellmour, I found it necessary to take you down a degree lower.

CELINDA Why did not heaven make all men alike to Bellmour?
So strangely sweet and charming.

NURSE Marry, come up, you speak well for yourself.
Oh, intolerable, loving creature!
But here comes the utmost of your wishes.

CELINDA My brother and Bellmour! With strange men!

Enter Friendlove, Bellmour, Sir Timothy, Sham, and Sharp.

FRIENDLOVE Sister, I've brought you here a lover. This is the worthy person you have heard of, Sir Timothy Tawdrey.

SIR TIMOTHY Yes, faith, madam, I am Sir Timothy Tawdrey, at your service ... Pray, are not you Mistress Celinda Dresswell?

CELINDA The same, but cannot return your compliment.

SIR TIMOTHY Oh Lord, oh Lord, not return a compliment? Faith, Ned, thy sister's quite spoiled for want of Town education. 'Tis pity, for she's devilish pretty.

FRIENDLOVE She's modest, sir, before company. Therefore, these gentlemen and I will withdraw into the next room.

CELINDA *(Aside to Friendlove)* Inhuman brother. Will you leave me alone with this sot?

FRIENDLOVE *(Aside to Celinda)* Yes, and if you would be rid of the trouble of him, be not coy, nor witty; two things he hates.

BELLMOUR *(Aside to Friendlove)* 'Sdeath! Must she be blown upon by that fool?

FRIENDLOVE *(Aside to Bellmour)* Patience, dear Frank, a little while.

(Exeunt Friendlove, Bellmour, Sham and Sharp.)

(Sir Timothy walks about the room, expecting when Celinda should speak.)

CELINDA *(Aside to Nurse)* Oh, dear nurse, what shall I do?

NURSE *(Aside to Celinda)* I that ever help you in extremity, will not fail you now.

SIR TIMOTHY *(Aside)* What a pox. Not a word?

CELINDA *(Aside to Nurse)* Sure, this fellow believes I'll begin.

SIR TIMOTHY *(Aside)* Not yet ... Sure she has spoke her last ...

NURSE *(Aside to Celinda)* The gentleman's good-natured, and has took pity on you, and will not trouble you, I think.

SIR TIMOTHY (*Aside*) ... Hey day, here's wooing, indeed ... Will she never begin? ... This, some would call an excellent quality in her sex ... But, a pox on't, I do not like it ... Well, I see I must break silence at last ... (*Aloud*) Madam ... (*Aside*) Not answer me? ... 'Pshaw, this is mere ill-breeding ... By fortune ... it can be nothing else ... On my conscience, if I should kiss her, she would not bid me stand off ... I'll try ...

NURSE Hold, sir, you mistake your mark.

SIR TIMOTHY So I should, if I were to look in thy mouldy chaps, good matron ... Can your lady speak?

NURSE Try, sir.

SIR TIMOTHY Which way?

NURSE Why, speak to her first.

SIR TIMOTHY I never knew a woman want a cue for that, but all that I have met with were still beforehand with me in tittle-tattle.

NURSE Likely, those you have met with may, but this is no such creature, sir.

SIR TIMOTHY (*Aside*) I must confess, I am unused to this kind of dialogue, and I am an ass if I know what to say to such a creature... (*To Celinda*) But come, will you answer me to one question?

CELINDA If I can, sir.

SIR TIMOTHY But, first, I should ask you if you can speak. For that's a question, too.

CELINDA And if I cannot, how will you be answered?

SIR TIMOTHY Faith, that's right. Why, then you must do't by signs.

CELINDA But, grant I can speak. What is't you'll ask me?

SIR TIMOTHY Can you love?

CELINDA Oh yes, sir, many things. I love my meat, I love abundance of adorers, I love choice of new clothes, new plays. And, like a right woman, I love to have my will.

SIR TIMOTHY Spoke like a well-bred person, by fortune. I see there's hopes of thee, Celinda. Thou wilt, in time learn to make a very fashionable wife, having so much beauty, too. I see attractive qualities, and allurements, wanton eyes, the languishing turn of the head, and all that invites to temptation.

CELINDA Would that please you in a wife?

SIR TIMOTHY Please me? Why, madam, what do you take me to be? A sot? ... A fool? ... or a dull Italian, of the humour of your brother? ... No, no, I can assure you. She that marries me shall have franchise ... But, my pretty miss, you must learn to talk a little more. ...

CELINDA I have not wit and sense enough for that.

SIR TIMOTHY Wit! Oh la, oh la, wit! As if there were any wit required in a woman when she talks. No, no matter for wit, or sense. Talk but loud, and a great deal, to show your white teeth, and smile, and be very confident, and 'tis enough. ... Lord, what a sight 'tis to see a pretty woman stand right up straight in the middle of a room, playing with her fan, for want of something to keep her in countenance. No, she that is mine, I will teach to entertain at another rate.

NURSE What, sir? Why, what do you take my young mistress to be?

SIR TIMOTHY A woman ... and a fine one. And so fine as she, ought to permit herself to be seen, and be adored.

NURSE Out upon you, would you expose your wife? By my troth, if I were she, I know what I would do. ...

SIR TIMOTHY Thou do? ... What thou wouldst have done sixty years ago, thou meanst.

NURSE Marry come up, for a stinking knight! Worse than I have been agreeable to you ere now ... 'Sixty years ago,' quoth ye ... As old as I am ... I live without surgeons, wear my own hair, am not in debt to my tailor, as thou art, and art fain to kiss his wife to persuade her husband to be merciful to thee ... who wakes thee every morning with his clamour and expensive bills at thy chamber door.

SIR TIMOTHY Prithee, good matron, peace. I'll bargain with thee.

NURSE 'Tis more than thou wilt do with thy creditors, who, poor souls, despair of a penny in the pound for all thou owest them for points, lace, and garniture ... For all, in fine, that makes thee a complete fop.

SIR TIMOTHY Hold, hold, thy eternal clack.

NURSE And when none would trust thee farther, give judgments for twice the money thou borrowest, and swear thyself adult. And, lastly, ... to patch up your broken fortune, you would fain marry my sweet mistress Celinda here ... But, 'faith sir, you're mistaken. Her fortune shall not go to the maintenance of your misses, which, being once sure of, she, poor soul, is sent down to the country house, to learn housewifery, and live without mankind, unless she can serve herself with the handsome steward, or so ... Whilst you tear it away in Town, and live like man and wife with your jilt, and are every day seen in the glass coach, whilst your own natural lady is hardly worth the hire of a hack.

SIR TIMOTHY Why, thou damnable, confounded torment, wilt thou never cease?

NURSE No, not till you raise your siege, and be gone. Go, march to your lady of love and debauch ... Go ... You get no Celinda here.

SIR TIMOTHY The devil's in her tongue.

CELINDA Good, gentle nurse, have mercy upon the poor knight.

NURSE No more, mistress, than he'll have on you, if heaven had so abandoned you to put you into his power ... 'Mercy' ... quoth ye ... No, no more than his mistress will have when all his money's gone.

SIR TIMOTHY Will she never end?

CELINDA Prithee, forbear.

NURSE No more than the usurer to whom he has mortgaged his best part of his estate would forbear a day after the promised payment of the money. Forbear ...

SIR TIMOTHY Not yet end. (*To Celinda*) Can I, madam, give you a greater proof of my passion for you, than to endure this for your sake?

NURSE This? ... Thou art so sorry a creature, thou wilt endure anything for the lucre of her fortune. 'Tis that thou hast a passion for. Not that thou carest for money, but to sacrifice to thy lewdness, to purchase a mistress, to purchase the reputation of as arrant a fool as ever arrived at the honour of mistress-keeping, to purchase a little grandeur, as you call it. That is, to make everyone look at thee, and consider what a fool thou art, who else might pass unregarded amongst the common crowd.

SIR TIMOTHY The devil's in her tongue, and so 'tis in most women's of her age. For when 't has quitted the tail, it repairs to her upper level.

NURSE Do not persuade me, madam. I am resolved to make him weary of his wooing.

SIR TIMOTHY So, God be praised, the storm is subsided ... And now, Mistress Celinda, give me leave to ask you, if it be with your leave, this affront is put on a man of my quality?

NURSE Thy quality ...

SIR TIMOTHY Yes. I am a gentleman, and a knight.

NURSE Yes, sir, Knight of the Ill-favoured Countenance, is it?

SIR TIMOTHY You are beholding to *Don Quixote* for that, and 'tis so many ages since thou couldst see to read, I wonder thou hast not forgot all that ever belonged to books.

NURSE My eyesight's good enough to see thee in all thy colours, thou Knight of the Burning Pestle, thou.

SIR TIMOTHY Again, that was out of a play ... Hark ye, Witch of Endor, hold your prating tongue, or I shall most well-favouredly cudgel ye.

NURSE As your friend the Hostess has it in a play too, I take it. Final speeches which you pick up behind the scenes, when you go to be laughed at even by the player-women.

SIR TIMOTHY Wilt thou have done? By fortune I'll endure no more.

NURSE Murder, murder.

CELINDA Hold, hold.

Enter Friendlove, Bellmour, Sham and Sharp.

FRIENDLOVE Read here the worst of news that can arrive, *(Gives Bellmour a letter.*
 ... What's the matter here? ... Why, how now, Sir Timothy. What, up in arms with the women?

SIR TIMOTHY Oh Ned, I'm glad thou'rt come ... Never was Tom Dove² baited as I have been.

FRIENDLOVE By whom? My sister?

SIR TIMOTHY No, no. That old mastiff there. ... The young whelp came not on, thanks be praised.

BELLMOUR (*Aside*) What, her father here tomorrow, and here he says, that shall be the last moment he will defer the marriage of Celinda to this sot ... Oh God, I shall grow mad, and so undo 'em all ... I'll kill the villain at the altar ... By my lost hopes, I will ... And yet there is some left ... Could I but ... speak to her ... I must rely on Friendlove's friendship ... Oh God, tomorrow ... Can I endure that thought? ... Can I endure to see the traitor there, who must tomorrow rob me of my heaven? ... I'll own my flame ... and boldly tell this fop she must be mine ...

FRIENDLOVE I assure you, Sir Timothy, I am sorry, and will chastise her.

SIR TIMOTHY Aye, sir, I that am a knight ... A man of parts and wit, and one that is to be your brother-in-law, and designed to be the glory of marrying Celinda.

² **Tom Dove:** one of the bears at London's Bear-Garden in Southwark.

BELLMOUR (*Aside*) I can endure no more ... (*Aloud*) What, sir? ... You, marry fair Celinda!

SIR TIMOTHY Aye, Frank, aye ... Is she not a pretty little plump white rogue? Hah ...

BELLMOUR Yes.

SIR TIMOTHY Oh I had forgot, thou art a modest rogue, and, to thy eternal shame, hadst never the reputation of a mistress ... Lord, Lord, that I could see thee address thyself to a lady ... I fancy thee a very ridiculous figure in that posture, by fortune.

BELLMOUR Why, sir ... I can court a lady ...

SIR TIMOTHY No, no. Thou'rt modest; that is to say, a country gentleman; that is to say, ill-bred; that is to say, a fool by fortune, as the world goes.

BELLMOUR Neither, sir ... I can love ... and tell it too ... And so that you may believe me ... Look on this lady, sir

...

SIR TIMOTHY Look on this lady, sir ... Ha, ha, ha, ... Well, sir ... Well, sir ... And what then? ...

BELLMOUR Nay, view her well, sir ...

SIR TIMOTHY Pleasant, this .. Well, Frank, I do ... And what then?

BELLMOUR Is she not charming fair? ... Fair to a wonder!

SIR TIMOTHY Well sir, 'tis granted ..

BELLMOUR And canst thou think this beauty meant for thee, for thee, dull common man?

SIR TIMOTHY Very well, what will he say next?

BELLMOUR I say, let me no more see thee approach this lady.

SIR TIMOTHY What sir, what?

BELLMOUR Not speak to her, not look on her ... By heaven ... not think of her.

SIR TIMOTHY What, Frank? Art in earnest?

BELLMOUR Try, if thou darest.

SIR TIMOTHY Not think of her ...

BELLMOUR No, not so much as in a dream, could I divine it.

SIR TIMOTHY Is he in earnest, Mr Friendlove?

FRIENDLOVE I fear so, Sir Timothy.

SIR TIMOTHY What? Does he then pretend to your sister?

BELLMOUR Yes, and no man else shall dare do so.

SIR TIMOTHY (*To Friendlove*) Take notice I am affronted in your lodgings ... For you, Bellmour ... You take me for an ass ... Therefore, meet me tomorrow morning about 5, with your sword in your hand, behind Southampton House.

BELLMOUR 'Tis well ... There we'll dispute our title to Celinda. (*Exit Sir Timothy*)
Dull animal! Ye gods could ne'er decree
So bright a maid should be possessed by thee.

ACT II, scene 1 A Palace. *Enter Nurse with a light (indicating that it's dark)*

NURSE Well, 'tis an endless trouble to have the tuition of a maid in love. Here is such wishing and longing ... And yet one must force them to what they most desire, before they will admit of it .. Here am I, sent out a scout of the forlorn hope to discover the approach of the enemy ... Well ... Mr Bellmour. .You are not to know 'tis with the consent of Celinda that you come ... I must bear all the blame, what mischief soever comes of these nightworks.

Enter Bellmour

Oh, are you come? ... Your hour was twelve, and now 'tis almost two.

BELLMOUR I could not get from Friendlove ... Thou hast not told Celinda of my coming?

NURSE No, no. Just make peace for me, and yourself too.

BELLMOUR I warrant thee, nurse ... Oh, how I hope and fear this night's result! (*Exeunt.*)

Act II, scene 2. A chamber. Celinda in her night attire, leaning on a table.

Enter to her Bellmour and Nurse.

CELINDA Oh heavens! Mr Bellmour, at this late hour, in my chamber!

BELLMOUR Yes, madam; but will approach no nearer till you permit me.
And sure, you know my soul too well to fear.

CELINDA I do, sir, and you may approach yet nearer,
And let me know your business.

BELLMOUR Love is my business, that of all the world.
Only, my flame as much surmounts the rest
As is the object's beauty I adore.

CELINDA If this be all, to tell me of your love,
Tomorrow might have done as well.

BELLMOUR Oh no, tomorrow would have been too late,
Too late to make returns to all my pain.
... What disagreeing thing offends your eyes?
I've no deformity about my person.
I'm young, and have a fortune great as any
That do profess to love you.
And yet, I find my interest in your heart
Below those happy ones that are my rivals.
Nay, every fool that can but plead his title,
And the poor interest that a parent gives him,
Can merit more than I.
... What else, my lovely maid, can give a freedom
To that same talking, idle, knighted fop?

CELINDA Oh, if I am so wretched to be his,
Surely I cannot live.
For, sir, I must confess, I cannot love him.

BELLMOUR But thou mayst do as bad, and marry him.
And that's a sin I cannot over-live.
... No, hear my vows ..

CELINDA But are you, sir, in earnest?

BELLMOUR In earnest? Yes, by all that's good, I am.
I love you more than I do life, or heaven!

CELINDA (*Aside*) Oh what a pleasure 'tis to hear him say so!
... (*Aloud*) But pray, how long, sir, have you loved me so?

BELLMOUR From the first moment that I saw your eyes,
Your charming, killing eyes. I did adore 'em,
And ever since have languished, day and night.

NURSE (*To Celinda*) Come, come, ne'er stand asking of questions,
But follow your inclinations, and take him at his word.

BELLMOUR Celinda, take her counsel.
Perhaps this is the last opportunity,
Nay, and, by heaven, the last of all my life.
If you refuse me now ...
Say, will you never marry man but me?

CELINDA Pray, give me till tomorrow, sir, to answer you,
For I have yet some fears about my soul
That take away my rest.

BELLMOUR Tomorrow! You must then marry ... oh, fatal word!
Another! A beast, a fool, that knows not how to value you.

CELINDA Is't possible my fate should be so near?

NURSE Nay then, dispose of yourself, I say, and leave dissembling. 'Tis high time.

BELLMOUR This night the letter came, the dreadful news
Of thy being married, and tomorrow, too.
Oh, answer me, or I shall die with fear.

CELINDA I must confess it, sir, without a blush
(For 'tis no sin to love) that I could wish ...
Heaven and my father were inclined my way.
But I am all obedience to their wills.

BELLMOUR That sigh was kind,
But ere tomorrow this time,
You'll want this pitying sense, and feel no pantings,
But those which joys and pleasures do create.

CELINDA Alas, sir! What is't you'd have me do?

BELLMOUR Why ... I would have you love, and after that
You need not be instructed what to do.
Give me your faith, give me your solemn vow
To be my wife, and I shall be at peace.

CELINDA Have you considered, sir, your own condition?
'Tis in your uncle's power to take your fortune
If, in your choice, you disobey his will.
... And, sir, you know that mine is much below you.

BELLMOUR Oh, I shall calm his rage,
By urging so much reason as thy beauty,
And my own flame, on which my life depends.
... He now has kindly sent for me to London.
I fear his business ...
Yet, if you'll yield to marry me,
We'll keep it secret, till our kinder stars
Have made provision for the blest discovery.
Come, give me your vows, or we must part for ever.

CELINDA Part! Oh, 'tis a fatal word!
I will do anything to save that life
To which my own so nearly is allied.

Enter Friendlove

FRIENDLOVE So forward, sister!

BELLMOUR Ha! Friendlove!

FRIENDLOVE Was it so kindly done, to gain my sister
Without my knowledge?

BELLMOUR Ah, friend! 'Twas from herself alone
That I would take the blessing which I ask.

FRIENDLOVE And I'll assist her, sir, to give it you.
(*To Celinda*) Here, take him, as an honour, and be thankful.

BELLMOUR I, as a blessing sent from heaven, receive her,
And ere I sleep will justify my claim,
And make her mine.

FRIENDLOVE Be not so hasty, friend:
Endeavour first to reconcile your uncle to't.

BELLMOUR By such delays, we're lost. Hast thou forgot?
Tomorrow she's designed another's bride!

FRIENDLOVE For that, leave it to me to evade.

BELLMOUR If you must yet delay me,
Give me leave not to interest such wealth without security.
And I, Celinda, will instruct you how to satisfy my fears.
Bear witness to my vows ... (*Kneels, and takes her by the hand.*)
May every plague that heaven inflicts on sin
Fall down in thunder on my head,
If e'er I marry any but Celinda,

Or if I do not marry thee, fair maid.

NURSE Heartily sworn, as I vow.

CELINDA And here I wish as solemnly the same.

... May all arrive to me,

If e'er I marry any man but Bellmour!

NURSE We are witnesses as good as a thousand.

FRIENDLOVE But now, my friend, I'd have you take your leave. The day comes on apace, and you've not seen your uncle since your arrival.

BELLMOUR 'Tis death to part with thee, my fair Celinda,

But our hard fates impose this separation.

... Farewell ... Remember thou art all mine.

CELINDA What have I else of joy to think upon? ...

... Go ... Go ... Depart.

BELLMOUR I will ... But 'tis as misers part with gold,

Or people full of health depart from life.

FRIENDLOVE Go, sister, to your bed, and dream of him. *(Exeunt Celinda and Nurse.)*

BELLMOUR Whilst I prepare to meet this fop to fight him.

FRIENDLOVE Hang him, he'll ne'er meet thee. To beat a watchman, or kick a tapster, or batter windows, is the highest pitch of valour he e'er arrived to.

BELLMOUR However, I'll expect him, lest he be foolhardy enough to keep his word.

FRIENDLOVE Shall I wait on thee?

BELLMOUR No, no. There's no need of that ... Good morrow, my best friend.

FRIENDLOVE But ere you go, my dearest friend and brother,

Now you are sure of all the joys you wish

From heaven, do not forgetful grow of that great trust.

I gave you of all mine, but, like a friend,

Assist me in my great concern of love

With fair Diana, your lovely cousin.

You know how long I have adored that maid,

But still her haughty pride repelled my flame

And all its fierce efforts.

BELLMOUR She has a spirit equal to her beauty,

As mighty and tyrannic. Yet she has goodness,

And, I believe, enough inclined to love

When once her pride's o'ercome. I have the honour

To be the confidant of all her thoughts.

And to augment thy hopes, 'tis not long since,

She did, with sighs, confess to me she loved

A man she said scarce equal to her fortune.

But all my interest could not learn the object,

But it must needs be you, by what she said.

This I'll make use of, and to your advantage ...

FRIENDLOVE I neither doubt thy industry nor love.

Go, and be careful of my interest there,

Whilst I preserve thine as entirely here.

(Exeunt in different directions.)

Act II, scene 3. Enter Sir Timothy, Sham and Sharp.

SHARP Good morrow, Sir Timothy. What, not yet ready and to meet Mr Bellmour at five? The time's past.

SIR TIMOTHY ... Aye, pox on't ... I haven't slep tonight for thinking on't.

SHAM Well, Sir Timothy, I have most excellent news for you, that will do as well. I have found out ...

SIR TIMOTHY A new wench, I warrant ... But, prithee, Sham, I have other matters in hand. 'S heart, I am so mortified with the thought of fighting, that I shall hardly think of womankind again.

SHARP You were so forward, Sir Timothy ...

SIR TIMOTHY Aye, Sharp, I am always so when I'm angry. Had I been but a little more provoked then, that we might have gone to't when the heat was brisk, I had done well ... But, a pox on't, this fighting in cool blood I hate.

SHAM 'Pshaw, sir, 'tis nothing. A man would do't for exercise in a morning.

SIR TIMOTHY Aye, if there were no more in't than exercise. If a man could take a breathing without opening a vein ... But, Sham, this wounds. And 'blood' sounds terribly in my ears. But since thou sayst 'tis nothing, prithee, do thou meet Bellmour in my stead. Thou art a poor dog, and 'tis no matter if the world were well rid of thee.

SHAM I would do't with all my soul ... But, your honour, sir ...

SIR TIMOTHY ... My honour! 'Tis but custom that makes it honourable to fight duels ... I warrant you the wise Italian thinks himself a Man of Honour, and yet, when did you hear of an Italian that ever fought a duel? Is't not enough I am affronted, have my mistress taken away before my face, hear myself called 'Dull, common man, dull animal,' and the rest? ... but I must, after all, give him leave to kill me too, if he can? ... And this is your damned honourable English way of showing a man's courage?

SHAM I must confess, I am of your mind, and therefore have been studying a revenge suitable to the affront. And if I can judge anything, I have hit it.

SIR TIMOTHY Hast thou? Dear Sham, out with it.

SHAM Why, sir ... What think you of debauching his sister?

SIR TIMOTHY Why, is there such a thing in nature?

SHAM You know he has a sister, sir.

SIR TIMOTHY Yes. Rich and fair? ,

SHAM Both, or she were not worthy of your revenge.

SIR TIMOTHY Oh, how I love revenge that has a double pleasure in it ... And where ... And where ... is this fine piece of temptation?

SHAM In being, sir ... But Sharp, here, and I, have been at some cost in finding her out.

SIR TIMOTHY Ye shall be repaid ... There's gold, my little pimp. But she's very handsome?

SHARP As a goddess, sir.

SIR TIMOTHY And art thou sure she will be lewd?

SHARP Are we sure she's a woman, sir? ... Sure, she's in her teens. Has pride and vanity ... and two or three sins more that I could name, all which never fails to assist a woman in debauchery ... But, sir, there are certain people that are related to her that must be considered, too.

SIR TIMOTHY Stay, sir. Ere I part with more money, I'll be certain what returns 'twill make me ... That is ... I'll see the wench, not to inform myself how well I like her, for that I shall do, because she is new, and Bellmour's sister ... but to find what possibility there is in gaining her ... I am used to these things, and can guess from a look, or a kiss, or a touch of the hand ... But then, I warrant, 'twill come to the knowledge of Betty Flauntit.

SHAM What, sir? ... Then it seems you doubt us?

SIR TIMOTHY How do you mean? Your honesty, or judgment? I can assure you, I doubt both.

SHARP What, sir? Doubt our honesty?

SIR TIMOTHY Yes ... Why, I hope neither of you pretends to either, do you?

SHAM Why, sir, what do you take us for? Cheats?

SIR TIMOTHY As arrant as any in Christendom.

SHARP What, sir? ...

SIR TIMOTHY Why, how now ... What, fly at me? Are your stomachs so queasy that cheat won't please you?

SHAM Why, sir ... We are gentlemen ... and though our ill fortunes have thrown us on your bounty, ... We are not to be called names ...

SIR TIMOTHY Why, you pair of Hectors ... Whence this impudence? ... Do ye you know me, ye ragamuffins?

SHAM Yes, but we knew not that you were a coward before. You talked big, and huffed where'er you came, like an arrant bully, and so long we revered you ... But, now we find you have need of our courage ... we'll stand on our reputations.

SIR TIMOTHY Courage and reputation? ... Ha, ha, ha ... Why, you tatterdemalions ... Dare ye talk of courage and reputation?

SHARP Why, sir, who dares question either?

SIR TIMOTHY He that dares try it. *(Kicks 'em.*

SHARP Hold, sir, hold.

SHAM Enough, enough, we are satisfied.

SIR TIMOTHY So am not I, ye mangy mongrels, till I have kicked courage and reputation out of ye.

SHAM Hold there, sir. 'Tis enough we are satisfied that you have courage.

SIR TIMOTHY Oh, are you so? Then it seems I was not to be believed ... I told you I had courage when I was angry.

SHAM Aye, sir, we have proved it, and will now swear it. ... But we had an inclination to test, sir.

SIR TIMOTHY And all you did, was but to try my courage ... Hah!

SHARP On our honours, nothing else, Sir Timothy.

SIR TIMOTHY Though I know ye to be cursed, cowardly, lying rogues,
Yet because I have use of ye, I must forgive ye.

... Here, kiss my hand, and be forgiven.

SHAM 'Tis an honour we are proud of, sir.

SIR TIMOTHY Oh, is it so, rascallians? Then I hope I am to see the lady without contracts.

SHARP Oh Lord, sir! Anything we can serve you in.

SHAM And I have bribed her maid to bring her this morning into Pall Mall.

SIR TIMOTHY Well, let's about it, then. For I am for no fighting today ... Do ye hear, boy? ... Let the coach be got ready whilst I get myself dressed.

BOY The coach, sir! Why, you know Mr Shatter has pawned the horses.

SIR TIMOTHY I had forgot it ... A pox on't, this 'tis to have a partner in a coach. By fortune, I must marry, and set up a whole one. *(Exit*

Act II, scene 4. Enter Charles Bellmour and Trusty.

TRUSTY Mr Charles, your brother, my young Master Bellmour, is come.

CHARLES I'm glad on't. My uncle began to be impatient that he came not, you saying you left him but a day's journey behind you yesterday. My uncle has something of importance to say to him. I fancy it may be about a marriage between him and my lady Diana ... Such a whisper I heard ...

TRUSTY Aye, marry, sir, that were a match indeed. She being your uncle's only heir.

CHARLES Aye, but they are sisters' children, and too near akin to be happy.

TRUSTY 'Twere pity my young master should be unhappy in a wife; for he is the sweetest natured gentleman ... But one comfort is, Mr Charles, you, and your sister Mistress Phillis, will have your inheritances assigned you if he marry.

CHARLES Yes, that he can't deny us, the very day after his marriage.

TRUSTY I shall be glad to see you all disposed of well. But I was half afraid your brother would have married Mistress Celinda Friendlove, whom he courted in Yorkshire, I thought. Not but she's a fine lady; but her fortune is below that of my young master's, as much as my lady Diana's is above his ... But see, they come ... Let us retire, to give 'em leave to talk alone.

(Exeunt.

Enter Lord Plotwell and Bellmour

LORD And, well, Frank, how dost thou find thyself inclined? Thou shouldst begin to think of something more than books. Dost thou not wish to know the joys that are to be found in a woman, Frank? I well remember at thy age I fancied a thousand fine things of that kind.

BELLMOUR Aye, my Lord. A thousand more perhaps than are to be found.

LORD Not so. But I confess, Frank, unless the lady be fair, and there be some love, too, 'tis not altogether so well. Therefore I, who am still busy for thy good, have fixed upon a lady ...

BELLMOUR Ha! ...

LORD What, dost start? Nay, I'll warrant thee, she'll please. A lady rich, and fair, and nobly born, and thou shalt marry her, Frank.

BELLMOUR Marry her, my Lord? ...

LORD Why, yes, marry her ... I hope you are none of the fashionable fops that are always in mutiny against marriage; who never think themselves very witty, but when they rail against heaven and a wife ... But, Frank, I have found better principles in thee, and thou hast the reputation of a sober young gentleman. Thou art, besides, a man of great fortune, Frank.

BELLMOUR And therefore, sir, ought the less to be a slave.

LORD But, Frank, we are made for one another, and ought, by the Laws of God, to share our blessings.

BELLMOUR Sir, there are men enough, fitter much than I, to obey those laws. Nor do I think them made for everyone.

LORD But, Frank, you do not know what a wife I have provided for you.

BELLMOUR 'Tis enough I know she's a woman, sir.

LORD A woman? Why, what should she be else?

BELLMOUR An angel, sir, ere she can be my wife.

LORD In good time. But this is a mortal, sir ... and must serve your turn ... But, Frank, she is the finest mortal

...

BELLMOUR I humbly beg your pardon, if I tell you,
That had she beauty such as heaven ne'er made,
Nor meant again to enrich a woman with,
It could not take my heart.

LORD But, sir, perhaps you do not guess the lady.

BELLMOUR Or could I, sir, it could not change my nature.

LORD But sir, suppose it be my niece Diana?

BELLMOUR What, sir? The fair Diana?

LORD I thought thou'dst come about again.
What think you now of womankind, and wedlock?

BELLMOUR As I did before, my Lord.

LORD What, thou canst not think I am in earnest. I confess, Frank, she is above thee in point of fortune, she being my only heir ... But suppose 'tis she?

BELLMOUR (*Aside*) Oh, I'm undone ... (*Aloud*) Sir, I dare not suppose so greatly in favour of myself.

LORD But, Frank, you must needs suppose ...

BELLMOUR Oh, I am ruined, lost, for ever lost.

LORD What do you mean, sir?

BELLMOUR I mean, I cannot marry fair Diana.

LORD Death, how's this? ...

BELLMOUR She is a thing above my humble wishes ...

LORD Is that all? take you no care for that, for she loves you already. And I have resolved it, which is better yet.

BELLMOUR Love me, sir? I know she cannot,
And heaven forbid that I should injure her.

LORD Sir, this is a put-off. Resolve quickly, or I'll compel you.

BELLMOUR You would not use extremity.
What is the forfeit of my disobedience?

LORD The loss of all your fortune,
If you refuse the wife I have provided ...
Especially a handsome lady, as she is, Frank.

BELLMOUR Oh me, unhappy!
What cursèd laws provided this severity?

LORD Even those of your father's disposal, who, seeing so many examples, in this lewd age, of the ruin of whole families by imprudent marriages, provided otherwise for you.

BELLMOUR But, sir, what if Diana be inclined,
And I (by my unhappy stars so cursèd)
Should be unable to accept the honour?

LORD What, sir? What if? ... I can no more admit
Than you can suppose ... Therefore, give me your final answer.

BELLMOUR Sir, can you think a blessing e'er can fall
Upon that pair whom interest joins, not love?

LORD Why, what's in Diana that you should not love her?

BELLMOUR I must confess she has a thousand virtues,
The least of which would bless another man.

But, sir, I hope if I am so unhappy
As not to love that lady, you will pardon me.

LORD Indeed, sir, but I will not. Love me this lady, and marry me this lady, or I will teach you what it is to refuse such a lady.

BELLMOUR Sir, 'tis not in my power to obey you.

LORD How? Not in your power?

BELLMOUR No, sir. I see my fatal ruin in your eyes,
And know too well your force, and my own misery.
... But, sir ... when I shall tell you whom I've married ...

LORD Whom you've married ... By all that's sacred, if that be true, thou art undone forever.

BELLMOUR Oh, hear me, sir!

I came with hopes to have found you merciful.

LORD Expect none from me. No, thou shalt not have so much of thy estate as will afford thee bread.
By heaven, thou shalt not.

BELLMOUR Oh, pity me, my Lord. Pity my youth.

It is no beggar, nor none basely born
That I have given my heart to, but a maid
Whose birth, whose beauty, and whose education
Merits the best of men.

LORD Very fine! Where is the priest that durst dispose of you, without my order? Sirrah, you are my slave ...
At least, your whole estate is at my mercy ... And besides, I'll charge you with an action of £5,000 for
your ten years' maintenance. Do you know that this is in my power, too?

BELLMOUR Yes, sir, and dread your anger worse than death.

LORD Oh villain! Thus to dash my expectation.

BELLMOUR Sir, on my bended knees, thus low I fall
To beg your mercy.

LORD Yes, sir, I will have mercy.

I'll give you lodging ... but in a dungeon, sir,
Where you shall ask your food of passers-by.

BELLMOUR All this I know you have the power to do,
But, sir, were I thus cruel, this hard usage
Would give me cause to execute it.
I wear a sword, and I dare right myself;
And heaven would pardon it, if I should kill you.
But, heaven forbid I should correct that law
Which gives you power, and orders me obedience.

LORD Very well, sir. I shall tame that courage, and punish that harlot, whoe'er she be, that has seduced ye.

BELLMOUR What, harlot, sir! ... Death, such another word,
And through all laws and reason I will rush,
And reach thy soul, if mortal like thy body.
... No, sir, she's chaste, as are the new-made vows
I breathed upon her lips when last we parted.

LORD Who waits there?

Enter Trusty and servants

... Shall I be murdered in my own house?

(To Bellmour) 'Tis time you were removed ...

(To Trusty) Go, get an action of £5,000 entered against him,
With officers to arrest him.

TRUSTY My Lord, 'tis my young master, Bellmour.

LORD Ye all dote upon him, but he's not the man you take him for.

TRUSTY What, my Lord? Not this Mr Bellmour?

LORD Dogs, obey me.

(Offers to go.)

BELLMOUR Stay, sir ... Oh, stay ... What will become of me?
'Twere better that my life were lost, than fortune ...

For that being gone, Celinda must not love me.

... But to die wretchedly ...

... Poorly in prison ... whilst I can manage this ... *(Draws.*

... Is below him that does adore Celinda.

... I'll kill myself ... But then ... I kill Celinda.

... Should I obey this tyrant ... then too she dies.

... Yes, sir ... You may be cruel ... Take the law,

... And kill me quickly, 'twill become your justice. *(Weeps.*

LORD Was I called back for this? Yes, I shall take it, sir, do not fear. *(Offers to go.*

BELLMOUR Yet, stay, sir ... Have you lost all humanity?

Have you no sense of honour, nor of horrors!

LORD Away with him ... Go, be gone.

BELLMOUR Stay, sir! Oh, God! What is't you'd have me do?

... Here ... I resign myself unto your will ...

But oh, Celinda! ... What will become of thee! *(Weeps.*

... Yes, I will marry ... and Diana, too.

LORD 'Tis well you will. Had I not been good-natured now,

You had been undone, and missed Diana, too.

BELLMOUR But, must I marry? ... Needs marry, sir? ...

Or lose my fortune, and my liberty,

Whilst all my vows are given to another?

LORD By all means, sir ...

BELLMOUR If I must marry any but Celinda,

I shall not, sir, enjoy one moment's bliss!

I shall be quite unmanned, cruel and brutal!

A beast, unsafe for woman to converse with.

Besides, sir, I have given my heart and faith,

And any second marriage is adultery.

LORD Heart and faith? I am glad 'tis no worse. If the ceremony of the church has not passed, 'tis well enough.

BELLMOUR All, sir, that heaven and love requires is passed.

LORD Thou art a fool, Frank. Come ... Dry thy eyes,

And receive Diana. ... Trusty ... Call in my niece.

BELLMOUR Yet sir, relent, be kind, and save my soul. *(Exit Trusty.*

LORD No more ... By heaven, if you resist my will, I'll make a strange example of thee, and of that woman, whoever she be, that drew thee to this folly. 'Faith and vows,' quoth ye.

BELLMOUR Then I obey.

Enter Trusty and Diana

LORD Look ye here, Frank. Is this a lady to be disliked? Come hither, Frank ... Trusty ... Haste for Dr Tickletext, my chaplain's not in Town. I'll have them instantly married ... Come hither, Diana ... Diana, will you marry your cousin Frank Bellmour?

DIANA Yes, if it be your pleasure. *(Aside)* Heaven could not let fall a greater blessing.

LORD And you, Frank. Will you marry my niece, Diana?

BELLMOUR Since you will have it so.

LORD Come, follow me then, and you shall be both pleased.

BELLMOUR Oh, my Celinda ...

To preserve thee, what is't I would not do,

Forfeit my heaven. Nay, more, I forfeit you. *(Exeunt.*

Act II, scene 5. The Street. *Enter Sir Timothy Tawdrey, Sham and Sharp.*

SIR TIMOTHY Now Sham, art not thou a damned, lying rogue, to make me saunter up and down the Mall all this morning after a woman that thou knowst in thy conscience was not likely to be there?

SHAM Why, sir ... If her maid will be a jilting whore, how can I help it? ... Sharp ... Thou knowst we presented

her gifts handsomely, and she protested she'd do't.

SHARP Aye, aye, sir. *(Aside)* But the devil a maid we saw.

SHAM Sir, it may be things have so fallen out, that she could not possibly come.

SIR TIMOTHY Things! A pox of your tricks ... Well, I see there's no trusting a poor devil ... What device will your Rogueship find out to cheat me next?

SHAM *(Aside)* Prithee, help me out in a tight spot, Sharp.

SHARP Cheat you, sir! ... If I be not revenged on this she-counsellor of the patching and painting, this letter-in of midnight lovers, this receiver of bribes for stolen pleasures, may I be condemned never to make love to anything of higher quality.

SIR TIMOTHY Nay, nay. No threatening, Sharp. It may be she's innocent yet ... Give her t'other bribe, and try what that will do. *(Gives him money.)*

SHAM No, sir, I'll have no more to do with frail woman. In this case, I have a surer way to do your business.

Enter page with a letter

SIR TIMOTHY *(Aside)* Is not that Bellmour's page?

SHARP *(Aside)* It is, sir.

SIR TIMOTHY *(Aside)* By fortune, the rogue's looking for me. He has a challenge to a duel in his hand, too.

SHAM *(Aside)* No matter, sir. Huff it out.

SIR TIMOTHY *(Aside)* Prithee, do thee huff him. Thou knowst the way on't.

SHAM What's your business with Sir Timothy, sir?

PAGE Mine, sir? I don't know the gentleman. Pray, which is he?

SIR TIMOTHY *(Aside)* Aye, aye, 'tis so ... Pox on him.

SHARP Well, boy, I am he ... What ... your master ...

PAGE My master, sir ...

SHARP Are not you Bellmour's page?

PAGE Yes, sir.

SHARP Well, your news.

PAGE News, sir? I know of none, but of my master's being this morning ...

SIR TIMOTHY *(Aside)* Aye, there it is ... behind Southampton House.

PAGE Married this morning.

SIR TIMOTHY What? Married! 'Slife, has he served me so?

SHAM The boy is drunk ... Bellmour, married!

PAGE Yes, indeed, to the Lady Diana.

SIR TIMOTHY Diana! Mad, by fortune. What Diana?

PAGE Niece to the Lord Plotwell.

SIR TIMOTHY Come hither, boy ... Art thou sure of this?

PAGE Sir, I am sure of it; and I am going to bespeak music for the ball, anon.

SIR TIMOTHY What hast thou there? ... A letter to the divine Celinda. A dainty boy ... There's money for thee to buy marbles.

PAGE I humbly thank you. *(Exit.)*

SHARP Well, sir, if this be true, Celinda will be glad of you again.

SIR TIMOTHY Aye, but I will have none of her ... For, look you, Sham, there is but two sorts of love in this world ... Now I am sure the rogue did love her; and since it was not to marry her, it was for the thing you wot on, as appears by his writing to her now ... But yet, I will not believe what this boy said, till I see it.

SHAM Faith, sir, I have thought of a thing that may both clear your doubt, and give us a little mirth.

SIR TIMOTHY I understand thee.

SHAM I know you're quick of apprehension, Sir Timothy.

SIR TIMOTHY Oh, your servant, dear Sham ... But to let thee see I am none of the dullest, we are to jig it in masquerade this evening, hah?

SHAM Faith, sir, you have it. And there you may have an opportunity to court Bellmour's sister.

SIR TIMOTHY 'Tis a good motion, and we will follow it; send to the Duke's Playhouse, and borrow some costumes presently.

SHAM I'll about it, sir.

SIR TIMOTHY Make haste to my lodging ... But hark ye ... Not a word of this to Betty Flauntit. She'll be up in

arms these two days if she go not with us. And though I think the fond devil is true to me, yet 'twere worse than wedlock, if I should be so to her to.

Though whores in all things else the mastery get,
In this alone, like wives, they must submit.

ACT III, scene 1. *Enter Lord Plotwell, Bellmour leading in Diana, followed by Charles Bellmour, Phillis, and other ladies and gentlemen. Music plays till they are all seated.*

LORD (*To Bellmour*) Here, nephew, I resign that trust which was reposed in me by your dead father, which was that, on your wedding day, I should thus ... make you master of your whole fortune, you being married to my liking ... And now, Charles, and you, my niece, Phillis, you may demand your inheritances tomorrow, if you please. For he is obliged to pay you the day after that of his marriage.

PHILLIS There's time enough, my Lord.

LORD Come, come ladies. In troth, you must take but little rest tonight, in complaisance to the bride and bridegroom, who, I believe, will take but little ... Frank ... Why, Frank ... What, hast thou changed thy humour with thy condition? Thou wert not wont to hear the music play in vain.

BELLMOUR My Lord, I cannot dance.

DIANA Indeed, you're wondrous sad.

 And I, methinks, too, bear thee company.

 I know not why, and yet excess of joy

 Have had the same effects with equal grief.

BELLMOUR 'Tis true, and I have now felt the extremes of both.

LORD Why, nephew Charles ... Has your breeding at the academy instructed your heels in no motion?

CHARLES My Lord, I'll take part.

PHILLIS And I, too, for joy that my brother's made happy in so fair a bride.

BELLMOUR (*Aside*) Hell take your ignorance for thinking I am happy

 ... I wish heaven would strike me dead,

 That, by the loss of a poor, wretched life,

 I might preserve my soul ... But, oh, my error!

 That has already damned itself, when it consented

 To break a sacred vow, and marry here.

LORD Come, come begin, begin. Music, to your office.

(Soft music plays.)

BELLMOUR (*Aside*) Why does not this hard heart, this stubborn fugitive,

 Break with this load of griefs? But like ill spirits

 It promised fair, till it had drawn me in,

 And then betrayed me to damnation.

DIANA (*Aside*) There's something in disorder in his soul,

 Which I'm on fire to know the meaning of.

Enter Sir Timothy, Sham and Sharp in masks and masquerade costumes

SIR TIMOTHY The rogue is married, and I am so pleased, I can forgive him our last night's quarrel. Prithee, Sharp, if thou canst, learn that young thing's name ('tis a pretty, sprightly rogue) whilst I go talk to her.

SHARP I will, sir. I will.

(Someone goes to invite a lady to dance.)

CHARLES Nay, madam, you must dance.

(They dance.)

BELLMOUR I hope you will not call it rudeness, madam, if I refuse you here.

(The lady that danced goes to dance with the bridegroom. After the dance, she chooses Sir Timothy, and they walk a courant.)

Am I still tame and patient with my ills?

Gods! What is man? That he can live and bear

Yet know his power to rid himself of grief.

I will not live, or if my destiny

Compel me to't, it shall be worse than dying.

Enter page with a notebook

BELLMOUR What's this?

PAGE The answer to a letter, sir, you sent 'to the divine Celinda'. For so it was directed.

BELLMOUR ... Hah ... Celinda ... In my crowd of thoughts
I had forgot I sent ... Come nearer, boy ...
... What did she say to thee? ... Did she not smile?
And use thee with contempt and scorn? ... Tell me.

PAGE What, scorn, sir!

BELLMOUR ... Or she was angry ... Called me perjured villain ...
False, and forsworn ... Nay, tell me truth.

PAGE What, sir?

BELLMOUR Thou dost delay me ... Say she did, and please me.

PAGE Sir!

BELLMOUR Again ... Tell me, what answer, rascal, did she send me?

PAGE You have it, sir, there in the notebook.

BELLMOUR Oh I am mad, and know not what I do.
... Prithee forgive me, boy ... Take breath, my soul,
Before thou dost begin. For this ... perhaps may be
So cruel kind
To leave thee none when thou hast ended it. *(Opens it, and reads.*

'I have took in the poison which you sent, in these few fatal words ... "Forgive me, my Celinda, I am
married ...". 'Twas thus you said ... And I have only life left to return Forgive me, my sweet
Bellmour ... I am dead. Celinda.'

... Can I hear this, and live? ... I am a villain!
In my creation, destined for all mischief.
... To commit rapes and murders, to break vows
As fast as fools do jests.
Come hither, boy ...
And, said the lady nothing to thee?

PAGE Yes ... ere she read the letter, asked your health,
And joy dispersed itself in blushes through her cheeks.

BELLMOUR *(Aside)* Her beauty makes the very boy adore it.

PAGE And having read it,
She drew her notebook from her pocket,
And, trembling ... writ what I have brought you, sir.

BELLMOUR Though I before had loaded up my soul
With sins that would have weighed down any other,
Yet this one more it bears, this sin of murder.
And holds out still ... What have I more to do,
But, being plunged in, in blood, to wade it through.

Enter Friendlove in a mask and a masquerade costume. A jig is danced.

FRIENDLOVE *(Aside)* There stands the traitor with a guilty look,
That traitor, who, the easier to deceive me,
Betrayed my sister. Yet, till I came and saw
The perjury, I could not give a faith to't.
... By heaven, Diana loves him, nay, dotes on him.
I find it in her eyes, all languishing.
They feed the fire in his. Armed with a double rage,
I know I shall go through with my revenge.

SIR TIMOTHY Fair maid ...

PHILLIS How do you know that, sir?

SIR TIMOTHY I see you're fair, and I guess you're a maid.

PHILLIS Your guess is better than your eyesight, sir.

SIR TIMOTHY Whate'er you are, by fortune, I wish you would permit me to love you with all faults.

PHILLIS You? Pray, who are you?

SIR TIMOTHY A man, a gentleman ... and more, a knight, too, by fortune.

PHILLIS Then 'twas not by merit, sir ... But how shall I know you are either of these?

SIR TIMOTHY That I'm a man, the effects of my vigorous flame shall prove ... A gentleman, my Coat of Arms shall testify, and I have the king's patent for my title.

PHILLIS For the first, you may thank your youth. For the next, your father. And the last, your money.

SIR TIMOTHY By fortune, I love thee for thy pertness.

PHILLIS Is it possible you can love at all?

SIR TIMOTHY As much as I dare.

PHILLIS How do ye mean?

SIR TIMOTHY Not to be laughed at. 'Tis not the mode to love much. A 'platonic fop' I have heard of, but this is an age of sheer enjoyment, and little love goes to that. We have found it incommode, and loss of time, to make long addresses.

Enter Celinda dressed as a boy.

PHILLIS I find, sir, you and I shall never agree upon this matter.
But, see, sir, here's more company.

CELINDA *(Aside)* Oh heaven! 'Tis true. These eyes confirm my fate.

Yonder he is ... and that fair, splendid thing

That gazes on him with such kind desire,

Is my blessed rival ... Oh, he is married.

... Gods! and yet you let him live!

Live, too, with all his charms, as fine and gay

As if you meant he should undo all easy maids,

And kill 'em for their sin of loving him.

Wretched Celinda!

But I must turn my eyes from looking on

The fatal triumphs of my death ... Which of all these

Is my brother? Oh, this is he. I know him

(Points to Sir Timothy.)

By the costume he sent for to the playhouse.

And hither he's come in masquerade,

I know with some design against my Bellmour,

Whom, though he kill me, I must still preserve.

Whilst I, lost in despair, thus as a boy

Will seek a death from any welcome hand,

Since I lack courage to perform the sacrifice.

Enter someone and dances, and a jig at the end on't

LORD Enough, enough at this time. Let's see the bride to bed. The bridegroom thinks it long.

FRIENDLOVE *(Aside)* Hell! Can I endure to hear all this with patience?

Shall he depart with life to enjoy my right,

And to deprive my sister of her due?

... *(Aloud)* Stay ... Stay ... and resign

That virgin.

BELLMOUR Who art thou, that darest lay a claim to aught that's here?

FRIENDLOVE This sword shall answer ye. *(Draws.)*

BELLMOUR Though I could surrender my life, I'll not be robbed on't. *(Draws.)*

DIANA Oh, my dear Bellmour! *(All draw on Bellmour's side ... Diana holds Bellmour. Celinda runs between their swords, and defends Bellmour. Sir Timothy, Sham and Sharp draw, and run into separate corners, with signs of fear.)*

FRIENDLOVE *(To Celinda)* Who art thou, that thus fondly guardst his heart?

... Be gone ... and let me meet it.

CELINDA That, thou mayst do through mine, but no way else.

FRIENDLOVE Here are too many to encounter, and I'll defer my vengeance.

CHARLES Stay, sir, we must not part so. *(Charles drawing at the same door that Sir Timothy is sneaking out at.*
(To Sir Timothy) Come back, I say. (Pulls in Sir Timothy.)
Slave! dost thou tremble?

SIR TIMOTHY Sir, I'm not the man you look for ...
(Aside) By fortune, Sham, we're all undone!
He has mistook me for the fighting fellow.

CHARLES Villain! Defend thy life!

SIR TIMOTHY Who I, sir? I have no quarrel to you, nor no man breathing. Not I, by fortune.

CELINDA *(Aside)* This coward cannot be my brother!

CHARLES What made thee draw upon my brother?

SIR TIMOTHY Who? I, sir? By fortune, I love him ... I, draw upon him!

CHARLES I do not wonder thou canst lie, for thou'rt a coward!
Didst not thou draw upon him? Is not thy sword yet out?
Did I not see thee fierce, and active too, as if thou hadst dared?

SIR TIMOTHY Why, he's gone, sir. A pox of all mistakes and masqueradings, I say ... This was your plot, Sham.

CHARLES Coward! Show, then, thy face.

SIR TIMOTHY *(Aside)* I'll be hanged first, by fortune. For then 'twill be plain 'twas I, because I challenged Bellmour last night, and broke my assignation this morning.

CHARLES Show thy face without delay, or ...

SIR TIMOTHY My face, sir? I protest, by fortune, 'tis not worth seeing.

CHARLES Then, sirrah, you are worth a kicking ... Take that ... and that ... *(Kicks him.)*

SIR TIMOTHY What, sir? What?

CHARLES So, sir, so. *(Kicks him again.)*

SIR TIMOTHY Have a care. sir ... By fortune, I shall fight with a little more.

CHARLES Take that to raise you. *(Strikes him.)*

SIR TIMOTHY Nay, then I am angry, and I dare fight. *(They fight out.)*

LORD Go, ladies, see the bride to her chamber. *(Exeunt women.)*

BELLMOUR The knight, Sir Timothy Tawdrey
... The rascal missed me at the appointed place,
And comes to attack me here ... *(Turns to cross-dressed Celinda.)*
... Brave youth! I know not how
I came to merit this relief from thee.
Sure, thou'rt a stranger to me, thou'rt so kind.

CELINDA Sir, I believe those happy ones that know you
Had been far kinder, but I'm indeed a stranger.

BELLMOUR Mayst thou be ever so to one so wretched.
I will not ask thy name, lest, knowing it,
I am such a monster I should ruin thee.

CELINDA *(Aside)* Oh, how he melts my soul! I cannot stay,
Lest grief, my sex, and business should betray.
... *(Aloud)* Farewell, sir ...
... May you be happy in the maid you love. *(Exit Celinda.)*

BELLMOUR Oh, dost thou mock my griefs? ... By heaven, he did.
... Stay, sir ... He's gone.

Enter Charles Bellmour

CHARLES The rogue took courage when he saw there was no remedy. But there's no hurt done on either side.

LORD 'Tis fit such as he should be chastised that do abuse hospitality. Come, come, to bed. The lady, sir, expects you.

BELLMOUR Gentlemen, good night. *(Exeunt.)*

Act III, scene 2. A Bedchamber. Enter Diana.

DIANA I long to know the cause of Bellmour's disorder tonight,

And here he comes.

Enter Bellmour, Lord, Charles, and the rest

CHARLES Shan't we see you laid, brother?

BELLMOUR Yes, in my grave, dear Charles,
 But I'll excuse that ceremony here.

CHARLES Goodnight, and no rest to you, brother. *(Exeunt all but Bellmour and Diana.*

DIANA Till now, my Bellmour, I lacked opportunity
 To ask the cause, why, on a joyful day,
 When heaven has joined us by a sacred tie,
 Thou droopst like early flowers with winter storms.

BELLMOUR Thou art that winter storm that nips my bud.
 All my young, springing hopes, my gay desires,
 The prospect of approaching joys of love,
 Thou, in a hapless minute, hast took from me,
 And, in its room,
 Hast given me an eternal desperation.

DIANA Have you then given me vows ye can repent of?

BELLMOUR I, given ye vows! Be witness, ye just powers,
 How far I was from giving any vows!
 No, no, Diana, I had none to give!

DIANA No vows to give!
 What were they, which to the holy man
 Thou didst repeat, when I was made all thine?

BELLMOUR The effects of low submission! Such as slaves
 Condemned to die yield to the angry judge.

DIANA Dost thou not love me, then?

BELLMOUR Love thee! No, by heaven! Yet wish I were so happy.
 For thou art wondrous fair, and wondrous good!

DIANA *(Aside)* Oh, what a defeat is here!
 The only man who, from all nature's store,
 I found most charming, fit for my desires.
 And now, after a thousand expectations,
 Such as all maids that love like me do hope,
 Just ready for the highest joys of love!
 Then to be met, thus cold ... Nay, worse, with scorn.
 — *(Aloud)* Why, since you could not love me, did you marry me?

BELLMOUR Because I was a beast! A very villain!
 That staked a wretched fortune, to all my joys of life.
 And, like a prodigal gamester, lost that all.

DIANA How durst you, sir, knowing my quality,
 Return me this false pay for love so true?
 ... Was this a beauty, sir, to be neglected?

BELLMOUR Fair angry maid, frown on, frown till you kill,
 And I shall, dying, bless those eyes that did so.
 For should I live, I should deprive the happier world
 Of treasures I am too wretched to possess.
 And were it not pity that vast store of beauty,
 Should, like rich fruit, die on the yielding boughs?

DIANA And are you, then, resolved to be a stranger to me?

BELLMOUR For ever! For a long eternity.

DIANA Oh, thou'st undone me, then. Hast thou found out
 A maid more fair, more worthy of thy love?
 Look on me well.

BELLMOUR I have considered thee,
And find no blemish in thy soul or form.
Thou art all o'er divine, yet I must hate thee,
Since thou hast drawn me to a mortal sin
That cannot be forgiven, by men, or heaven:
... Oh, thou hast made me break a vow, Diana,
A sacred, solemn vow,
And made me wrong the sweetest innocence
That ever blessed the earth.

DIANA (*Aside*) Instead of cooling, this augments my fire.
No pain is like defeated new desire.
'Tis false, or but to try my constancy.
(*Aloud*) Your mistress is not so divine as I.
And should I, 'gainst himself, believe the man
Who first inspired my heart with love's soft flame?

BELLMOUR What bliss on me insensible you throw.
I'd rather hear thee swear thou art my foe,
And like some noble and romantic maid,
With daggers, would my stubborn heart invade.
And whilst thou dost the faithful relic tear,
In every vein, thoud'st find Celinda there.

DIANA Come, sir, you must forget Celinda's charms,
And reap delights within my circling arms,
Delights that may your errors undeceive
When you find joys as great as she can give.

BELLMOUR What do I hear? ... Is this the kind relief
Thou dost allow to my despair and grief?
Is this the comfort that thou dost impart
To my all-wounded, bleeding, dying heart?
Were I so brutal ...could thy love comply
To serve itself with base adultery?
For, could I love thee, could I love again,
Our lives would be but one continued sin;
A sin of that black dye, a sin so foul,
'Twould leave no hopes of heaven for either's soul.

DIANA Dull man! Dost think a feeble, vain excuse
Shall satisfy me for this night's abuse?
No, since my passion thou'st defeated thus,
And robbed me of my long-wished happiness,
I'll make thee know what a wronged maid can do,
Divided 'twixt her love, and injuries too.

BELLMOUR I dare thy worst.
Should hell assist thy aims, thou couldst not find
New plagues, unless thou shouldst continue kind;
Hard fate, Diana, when thy love must be
The greatest curse that can arrive to me.
... That friendship which our infant years begun,
And till this day has still continued on,
I will preserve, and my respects shall be
Profound, as what was ever paid by me.
But, for my love, 'tis to Celinda due,
And I can pay you none that's just and true.

DIANA The rest, I'd have thee know, I do despise.
I better understand my conquering eyes:

Those eyes that shall revenge my love and shame,
I'll kill thy reputation, and thy name.

(Exit.)

BELLMOUR My honour! And my reputation, now!
They both were forfeit, when I broke my vow.
Nor could my honour with thy fame decline,
Whoe'er profanes thee, injures nought of mine.
This night upon the couch myself I'll lay,
And, like Franciscans, let the ensuing day
Take care for all the toils it brings with it,
Whatever fate arrives, I can submit.

(Exit.)

Act III, scene 3. The setting, a street.

Enter Celinda, cross-dressed.

CELINDA Not one kind wound to send me to my grave.
And yet, between their angry swords I ran,
Expecting it from Bellmour, or my brother's.
Oh, my hard fate! that gave me so much misery,
And dealt no courage to prevent the shock.
... Why came I off alive? That fatal place
Where I beheld my Bellmour in the embrace
Of my extremely fair, and lovely rival.
... With what kind care she did prevent my arm,
Who, greedy of the last, sad, parting twine
I would have thrown about him, as if she knew
To what intent I made the passionate offer.
... What have I next to do, but seek a death
Wherever I can meet it? ... Who comes here?

(Goes aside.)

Enter Sir Timothy, Sham and Sharp, with musicians and boy.

SIR TIMOTHY I believe this is the bedchamber window where the bride and the bridegroom lie.

SHAM Well, and what do you intend to do, if it be sir?

SIR TIMOTHY Why, first sing a bawdy song, and then break the windows, in revenge for the affront was put upon me tonight.

SHARP Faith, sir, that's but a poor revenge, and which every footman may take of his lady, who has turned him away for filching ... You know, sir, windows are frail, and will yield to the lusty brick-bats. 'Tis an act below a gentleman.

SIR TIMOTHY That's all one. 'Tis my recreation. I served a woman so the other night to whom my mistress had a pique.

SHAM Aye, sir, 'tis a revenge fit only for a whore to take ... And the affront you received tonight was by mistake.

SIR TIMOTHY Mistake! How can that be?

SHAM Why, sir, did you not note that he that drew upon Bellmour was in the same dress with you?

SIR TIMOTHY How should his be like mine?

SHAM Why, by the same chance that yours was like his ... I suppose, sending to the playhouse for them, as we did, they happened to send him such another costume. For they have many such for dancing shepherds.

SIR TIMOTHY Well, I grant it a mistake, and that shall relieve the windows.

SHARP Then, sir, you showed so much courage that you may bless the minute that forced you to fight.

SIR TIMOTHY Aye, but between you and I, 'twas well he kicked me first, and made me angry, or I had been lustily swunged, by fortune ... But, thanks to my temper that saved my bones that bout ... But then I did well ... Hah! Came briskly off, and the rest.

SHAM With honour, sir, I protest.

SIR TIMOTHY Come, then, we'll serenade him. Come, sirrah, tune your pipes, and sing.

BOY What shall I sing, sir?

SIR TIMOTHY Anything suitable to the time and place.

Song

1

The happy minute's come. The nymph is laid,
Who means no more to rise a maid.
Blushing, and panting, she expects the approach
Of joys that kill with every touch;
Nor can her native modesty and shame
Conceal the ardour of her virgin flame.

2

And now the amorous youth is all undressed,
Just ready for love's mighty feast.
With vigorous haste, the veil aside he throws
That does all heaven at once disclose.
Swift as desire, into her naked arms
Himself he throws, and rifles all her charms.

Good morrow Mr Bellmour, and to your lovely bride. Long may you live and love.

Enter Bellmour on the balcony

BELLMOUR Who is't has sent that curse?
SIR TIMOTHY What a pox. Is that Bellmour? The rogue's furious. The bride has not pleased him.
BELLMOUR Dogs! Do you upbraid me? I'll be with you presently.
SIR TIMOTHY Will you so? ... But I'll not await your coming.
CELINDA But you shall, sir.
BELLMOUR Turn, villains!

Sir Timothy, etc. offers to go off. The cross-dressed Celinda steps forth, and draws. They draw, and set upon her. Enter Bellmour behind them. They turn, and Celinda sides with Bellmour, and fights. Enter Diana. Bellmour fights 'em out, and leaves Celinda breathless, leaning on her sword.

DIANA I'll ne'er demand the cause of this disorder,
But take this opportunity to fly
To the next hands will take me up ... Who's here?
CELINDA Not yet, my sullen heart!
DIANA Who's here? one wounded ... Alas ...
CELINDA 'Tis not so lucky ... But, who art thou
That dost with so much pity ask?
DIANA *(Aside)* He seems a gentleman ... Handsome, and young ...
(Aloud) Pray, ask no questions, sir. But if you're what you seem,
Give a protection to an unhappy maid.
... Do not reply, but let us haste away.
CELINDA *(Aside)* Hah ... What do I hear? Sure, 'tis Diana.
... *(Aloud)* Madam, with haste, and joy, I'll serve you.
... *(Aside)* I'll carry her to my own lodgings.
Fortune, in this, has done my sufferings right.
My rival's in my power upon her wedding-night. *(Exeunt.*

Enter Bellmour, Sir Timothy, Sham and Sharp.

SIR TIMOTHY Lord, Lord, that you should not know your friend and humble servant, Timothy Tawdrey ... But thou lookst as if thou hadst not been abed yet.
BELLMOUR No more I have.
SIR TIMOTHY Nay, then thou lovest precious time. I'll not detain thee. *(Offers to go.*
BELLMOUR Thou art mistaken. I hate all womankind ...
SIR TIMOTHY What, what!

BELLMOUR Above an hour ... Hark ye, knight ... I am as lewd, and as debauched as thou art.
 SIR TIMOTHY What do you mean, Frank?
 BELLMOUR To tell a truth, which yet I never did. ...I whore, drink, game, swear, lie, cheat, rob, pimp, hector.
 All, all I do, that's vicious.
 SIR TIMOTHY Bless me!
 BELLMOUR From such a villain, hah!
 SIR TIMOTHY No, but that thou shouldst hide it all this while.
 BELLMOUR Till I was married only, and now I can dissemble it no longer ... Come ... Let's to a bawdy-house.
 SIR TIMOTHY A bawdy-house! What, already!
 This is the very quintessence of lewdness.
 ... Why, I thought that I was wicked, but, by fortune,
 This dashes mine quite out of countenance.
 BELLMOUR Oh, thou'rt a puny sinner! ... I'll teach thee arts (so rare) of sin, the least of them shall damn thee.
 SIR TIMOTHY By fortune, Frank, I do not like these arts.
 BELLMOUR Then thou'rt a fool ... I'll teach thee to be rich, too.
 SIR TIMOTHY Aye, that I like.
 BELLMOUR Look here, my boys! *(Holds up his marriage contract, which he takes out of his pocket.*
 The writings of £3,000 a year. ... All this I got by perjury.
 SIR TIMOTHY By fortune, a thriving sin.
 BELLMOUR And we will live in sin while this holds out.
 ... And then to my cold home ... Come, let's be gone.
 ... Oh, that I ne'er might see the rising sun. *(Exeunt.*

ACT IV, scene 1. *Celinda, cross-dressed, sitting in a chair.
 Diana by her, in another, sings.*

1

Celinda, who did love disdain,
 For whom had languished many a swain,
 Leading her bleating flocks to drink,
 She spied upon the river's brink
 A youth, whose eyes did well declare
 How much he loved, but loved not her.

2

At first she laughed, but gazed the while,
 And soon it lessened to a smile;
 Thence, to surprise and wonder, came
 Her breast to heave, her heart to flame;
 Then cried she out, 'Ah now I prove
 Thou art a god! Almighty love'.

3

She would have spoke, but shame denied,
 And bad her first consult her pride.
 But soon she found that aid was gone,
 For love, alas!, had left her none.
 Oh, how she burns, but 'tis too late,
 For in his eyes she reads her fate.

CELINDA *(Aside)* Oh, how numerous are her charms ...
 ... *(Aloud)* How shall I repay this gracious kindness,
 Fair lovely maid? ...
 DIANA Why do you flatter, sir?
 CELINDA To say you're lovely by yourself I do not.

I'm young, and have not much conversed with beauty.
Yet I'll esteem my judgment, since it knows
Where my devotions should be justly paid.
... But, madam, may I not yet expect
To hear the story you so lately promised me?

DIANA I owe much, to your goodness, sir ... But ...

CELINDA I am too young, you think, to hear a secret.
Can I lack sense to pity your misfortunes,
Or passion to incite me to revenge 'em?

DIANA (*Aside*) Oh, I wish he were in earnest!

CELINDA (*Aside*) She's fond of me, and I must fan that flame,
Do anything to make her hate my Bellmour.
... (*Aloud*) But, madam, I'm impatient for your story,
That after that, you may expect my devotion.

DIANA The treatment you, this night, have given a distressed maid, enough obliges me. Nor need I tell you
I'm nobly born. Something about my dress, my looks and mien, will, doubtless, do me right.

CELINDA Sufficiently ...

DIANA But, in the family where I was educated, a youth of my own age, a kinsman, too, I chanced to fall in
love with. But with a passion my pride still got the better of, and he, I thought, repaid my young
desires, but bashfulness on his part did what pride had done on mine, and kept his, too, concealed. ...
At last my uncle, who had the absolute dominion of us both, thought good to marry us together.

CELINDA Punish him, heaven, for a sin so great.
... And are you married, then?

DIANA Why, is there terror in that word?

CELINDA By all that's sacred, 'tis a word that kills me.
Oh, say thou art not,
And I, thus low, will fall, and pay thee thanks. (*Kneels.*)

DIANA You'll wish, indeed, I were not, when you know
How very, very wretched it has made me.

CELINDA Should you be telling me a tale all day,
Such as would melt a heart that ne'er could love,
'Twould not increase my reason for the wish
That I had died ere known you had been married.

DIANA (*Aside*) So many soft words from my Bellmour's mouth
Had made me mad with joy. And next to that,
I wish to hear 'em from this youth.
If they be real, how I shall be revenged!
... (*Aloud*) But why, at my being married, should you sigh?

CELINDA Because I love. Is that a wonder, madam?
Have you not charms sufficient at first sight
To wound a heart tender and young as mine?
Are you not heavenly fair? ... Oh, there's my grief ...
... Since you must be another's.

DIANA Pray, hear me out, and if you love me after,
Perhaps you may not think yourself unhappy.
When night was come, she longed for night, and all
Retired, to give us silent room for joy. ...

CELINDA Oh, I can hear no more! ... By heaven, I cannot.
... Here ... Stab me to the heart ... Let out my life,
I cannot live, and hear what followed next.

DIANA Pray, hear me, sir ...

CELINDA Oh, you will tell me he was kind ...
Yes, yes ... Oh, God ... Were not his balmy kisses
Sweeter than incense offered up to heaven?

Did not his arms, softer and whiter far
Than those of Jove's transformed to wings of swans
Greedily clasp thee round? ... Oh, quickly speak,
Whilst thy fair rising bosom met with his.
And then ... Oh ... Then ...

DIANA Alas, sir! What's the matter? ... Sit down awhile.

CELINDA Now ... I am well ... Pardon me, lovely creature,
If I betray a passion. I'm too young
To've learnt the art of hiding.
I cannot hear you say that he was kind.

DIANA Kind, yes, as blasts to flowers, or early fruit.
All gay, I met him full of youthful heat.
But like a damp, he dashed my kindled flame,
And all his reason was ... He loved another,
A maid he called Celinda.

CELINDA Oh, blessed man!

DIANA What, sir?

CELINDA To leave thee free, to leave thee yet a virgin.

DIANA Yes, I have vowed he never shall possess me.

CELINDA Oh, how you bless me ... But you still are married,
And whilst you are so ... I must languish ...

DIANA (*Aside*) Oh, how his softness moves me!
... (*Aloud*) But, can all this disorder spring from love?

CELINDA Or may I still prove wretched.

DIANA And can you think there are no ways
For me to gratify that love?

(*Aside*) What ways am I constrained to use to work out my revenge.

CELINDA How mean you, madam?

DIANA Without a miracle, look on my eyes ...
... And beauty ... which you say can kindle fires,
... She that can give ... may too retain desires.

CELINDA (*Aside*) She'll ravish me ... (*Aloud*) Let me not understand you.

DIANA Look on my wrongs ...
Wrongs that would melt a frozen chastity
That a religious vow had made to heaven
... And next survey thy own perfections.

CELINDA Hah ...

DIANA Art thou so young, thou canst not apprehend me?
Fair, bashful boy, hast thou the power to move,
And yet not know the business of thy love?

CELINDA How, in an instant, thou hast chilled my blood,
And made me know, no woman can be good!
'Tis sin enough to yield ... But thus to sue!
Heaven ... 'tis my business ... and not meant for you.

DIANA How little love is understood by thee.
'Tis custom, and not passion, you pursue;
Because enjoyment first was named by me,
It does destroy what should your flame renew.
My easy yielding does your fire abate,
And mine as much your tedious courtship hate.
Tell heaven ... you will hereafter sacrifice
... And see how that will please the deities:
The ready victim is the noblest way
Your zeal and obligations too to pay.

CELINDA I think the gods would hardly be adored,
If they their blessings should unaskt afford,
And I that beauty can no more admire
Who, ere I sue, can yield to my desire.

DIANA Dull youth, farewell.
For since 'tis my revenge that I pursue
Less beauty, and more man, as well may do. *(Offers to go.*

Enter Friendlove, disguised as someone from an army camp.

CELINDA Madam, you must not go with this mistake. *(Holds her.*

FRIENDLOVE *(Aside)* Celinda has informed me true ... 'Tis she ...
(Aloud) Good morrow, brother. What, so early at your devotions?

CELINDA *(Aside)* Oh, my brother's come, and luckily relieves me.

FRIENDLOVE Your orisons are made to a fair saint.
... Pray sir, what lady's that?
Or is it blasphemy to repeat her name?
... By my bright arms, she's fair ... With what a charming
Fierceness, she charges through my body to my heart.
... Death, how her glittering eyes give fire, and wound!
And have already pierced my very soul!
... May I approach her, brother?

CELINDA Yes, if you dare. There's danger in it, though.
She has charms that will bewitch you.
... I dare not stand their mischief. *(Exit.*

FRIENDLOVE ... Lady ... I am a soldier ... Yet in my gentlest terms
I humbly beg to kiss your lovely hands ...
... Death! there's magic in the touch.
By heaven, you carry an artillery in every part.

DIANA *(Aside)* This is a man indeed fit for my purpose.

FRIENDLOVE Nay, do not view me. I am no lovely object.
I am a man bred up to noise and war,
And know not how to dress my looks in smiles.
Yet, trust me, fair one. I can love and serve
As well as an Endymion or Adonis.
I wish you were willing to permit that service.

DIANA Why, sir? ... What could you do?

FRIENDLOVE Why ... I could die for you.

DIANA I need the service of the living, sir.
But do you love me, sir?

FRIENDLOVE Or let me perish, flying from a single enemy.
I am a gentleman, and may profess to love you,
And what you can command, I can perform.

DIANA Take heed, sir, what you say. For I'm in earnest.

FRIENDLOVE Command me anything that's just and brave,
And, by my eyes, 'tis done.

DIANA I know not what you call just, or brave,
But those whom I do the honour to command,
Must not capitulate.

FRIENDLOVE Let him be blasted with the name of coward
That dares dispute your orders.

DIANA Dare you fight for me?

FRIENDLOVE With a whole army. 'Tis my trade to fight.

DIANA Nay, 'tis but a single man.

FRIENDLOVE Name him.

DIANA Bellmour.

FRIENDLOVE Of Yorkshire? ... Companion to young Friendlove, that came lately from Italy?

DIANA Yes. Do you know him?

FRIENDLOVE I do, who has oft spoke of Bellmour.
 We travelled into Italy together ... But since, I hear,
 He fell in love with a fair cruel maid,
 For whom he languishes,

DIANA Heard you her name?

FRIENDLOVE Diana. Rich in beauty as in fortune.
 I wish she had less of both, and more of pity.
 And that I knew not how to wish, till now
 That I became a lover, perhaps as unsuccessful.

DIANA(*Aside.*) I knew my beauty had a thousand darts,
 But knew not they could strike so quick and home.
 (*Aloud*) Let your good wishes for your friend alone,
 Lest he being happy, you should be undone.
 For he and you cannot be blessed at once.

FRIENDLOVE What, madam?

DIANA I am that maid he loves, and who hates him.

FRIENDLOVE Hates him?

DIANA To death.

FRIENDLOVE (*Aside*) Oh, me unhappy.

DIANA (*Aside*) He sighs, and turns away ... Am I again defeated?
 Surely I am not fair, or man's insensible.

FRIENDLOVE (*Aside*) She knows me not ...
 And 'twas discreetly done to change ... my shape;
 For woman is a strange, fantastic creature,
 And where before, I could not gain a smile,
 Thus I may win her heart.
 ... (*Aloud*) Say, madam, can you love a man that dies for you?

DIANA The way to gain me is to fight with Bellmour.
 Tell him from me you come, the wronged Diana,
 Tell him, you've an interest in my heart
 Equal to that which I have made in yours.

FRIENDLOVE I'll do't. I will not ask your reason, but obey.
 Swear, ere I go, that when I have performed it,
 You'll render me possession of your heart.

DIANA By all the vows that heaven ties hearts together with,
 I'll be entirely yours.

FRIENDLOVE (*Aside*) And I'll not be that conscientious fool
 To stop at blessings 'cause they are not lawful,
 But take 'em up, when heaven has thrown 'em down,
 Without the leave of a religious ceremony.
 (*Aloud*) Madam, this house, which I am master of,
 You shall command, whilst I go seek this Bellmour.

DIANA But ere you go, I must inform you why
 I do pursue him with my just revenge.

FRIENDLOVE I will attend, and hear impatiently. (*Exit.*)

Act IV, scene 2. A bawdy-house.

Enter Mrs Driver, and Betty Flauntit.

FLAUNTIT Driver, prithee call for a mirror, that I may set myself in order before I go up. For really, my knight has not been at home all this night, and I am so confused ...

Enter someone with a mirror, and two wenches.

Lord, Mistress Driver, I wonder you should send for me when other women are in company. You know, of all things in the world, I hate whores. They are the pratingest, lewdest, poor creatures in nature. And I would not, for anything, Sir Timothy should know that I keep company. 'Twere enough to lose him.

DRIVER Truly, Mistress Flauntit, this young squire that you were sent to for has two or three persons more with him that must be accommodated, too.

FLAUNTIT Driver, though I do entertain myself a little sometimes, yet you know I value my reputation and honour.

JENNY Mistress Driver, why should you send for us where Flauntit is? Stinking, proud flirt, who, because she has a tawdry petticoat, I warrant you, will think herself so much above us. When, if she were set out in her own natural colours, and her original garments, would be much below us in beauty.

DRIVER Look ye, Mistress Jenny, I know you, and I know Mistress Flauntit, but 'tis not beauty or wit that delight now-a-days. The age is altered since I took upon me this genteel occupation, but 'tis a fine petticoat, good lace, and clean garnitures that do me credit, and attracts the gallant, though on a stale woman. And again, Mistress Jenny, she's kept, men love as much for malice as for lechery, as they call it. Oh, 'tis a great mover to joy, as they say, to have a woman that's kept.

JENNY Well! Be it so, we may arrive to that excellent degree of prostitution, to be kept, too, one day.

DRIVER Well, well, get yourselves in order to go up to the gentlemen.

FLAUNTIT Driver, what, art thou talking to those poor creatures? Lord, how they stink of paint and pox, faugh ...

DRIVER They were only complaining that you, that were kept, should intrude upon the privileges of the Commoners.

FLAUNTIT Lord, they think there are such joys in mistress-keeping, when I vow, Driver, after a while, a miss has as painful a life as a wife. Our men drink, stay out late, and whore, like any husbands.

DRIVER But, I hope in the Lord, Mistress Flauntit, yours is no such man. I never saw him, but I have heard he is under decent correction.

FLAUNTIT Thou art mistaken, Driver. I can keep him within no moderate bounds without blows. But, for his filthy custom of wenching, I have almost broke him of that ... But, prithee, Driver, who are these gentlemen?

DRIVER Truly, I know not. But they are young, and fine as princes. Two of 'em were disguised in masquing costumes last night, but they have sent 'em away this morning, and they're free as emperors ... One of 'em has lost a thousand pounds gambling, and never repined at it. One's a knight, and I believe his courage is cooled, for he has ferretted my maids over and over tonight ... But 'tis the fine, young, handsome squire that I design you for.

FLAUNTIT No matter for his handsomeness. Let me have him that has most money. *(Exit.*

Act IV, scene 3 A chamber, a table with box and dice.

Enter Bellmour, Sir Timothy, Sham and Sharp.

BELLMOUR Damn it, give us more wine. *(Drinks.*

Where stands the box and dice? ... Why, Sham.

SHAM Faith, sir, your luck's so bad, I haven't the conscience to play longer ... Sir Timothy and you play off a hundred guineas, and see if luck will turn.

BELLMOUR Do you take me for a country squire whose reputation will be cracked at the loss of a petty thousand? You have my note for't to my goldsmith.

SHAM *(Aside)* 'Tis sufficient if it were for ten thousand.

BELLMOUR Why, Sir Timothy ... Pox on't, thou'rt dull. We are not half debauched and lewd enough. Give us more wine.

SIR TIMOTHY Faith, Frank, I'm a little mawkish with sitting up all night, and want a small refreshment this morning ... Did we not send for whores?

BELLMOUR No, I am not in humour for a wench ...

By heaven, I hate the sex.

All but divine Celinda

Appear strange monsters to my eyes and thoughts.

SIR TIMOTHY What art Italianized, and lovest thy own sex?

BELLMOUR I'm for anything that's out of the common road of sin. I love a man that will be damned for

something! To creep, by slow degrees, to hell, as if he were afraid the world should see which way he went, I scorn it, 'tis like a Nonconformist ... No, give me a man, who, to be certain of's damnation, will break a solemn vow to an engaged maid.

SIR TIMOTHY Ha, ha, ha. I thought thou wouldst have said, at least ... 'had murdered his father, or ravished his mother' ... Break a vow, quoth ye ... By fortune, I have broke a thousand.

BELLMOUR Well said, my boy! A man of honour! And will be ready whene'er the devil calls for thee ... So ... ho ... more wine, more wine, and dice.

Enter a servant with dice and wine.

Come, sir, let me ...

(Throws and loses.

SIR TIMOTHY What will you bet me, sir?

BELLMOUR Four and three ... a hundred guineas ... Oh, damn the dice ... 'Tis mine ... Come, a full glass ... Damnation to my uncle.

SIR TIMOTHY By fortune, I'll do thee reason ... Give me the glass ... And, Sham, to thee ... Confusion to the musty Lord.

BELLMOUR So ... Now I'm like myself, profanely wicked.

A little room for life ... But such a life

As hell itself shall wonder at ... I'll have a care

To do no one good deed in the whole course on't,

Lest that should save my soul in spite of vow-breach.

... I will not die ... That peace, my sins deserve not.

I'll live, and let my tyrant uncle see

The sad effects of perjury and forced marriage.

... Surely the powers above envied my bliss.

Marrying Celinda, I had been an angel!

So truly blest, and good.

(Weeps.

SIR TIMOTHY Why, how now, Frank ... By fortune, the rogue is maudlin ... So, ho, ho, so-ho.

BELLMOUR The matter?

SIR TIMOTHY Oh, art awake? ... What a devil ailst thou, Frank?

BELLMOUR A wench, or anything ... Come, let's drink a round.

SHAM They're come as wished for.

Enter Flauntit, Driver, Doll and Jenny, masked.

BELLMOUR *(Aside)* Oh, damn 'em! What shall I do?

Yet it would look like virtue to avoid 'em.

No, I must venture on ... *(Aloud)* Ladies, you're welcome.

SIR TIMOTHY What, the women? ... Hold, hold, Bellmour. Let me choose, too ... Come, come, unmask, and show your pretty faces.

FLAUNTIT *(Aside)* What? Sir Timothy! What devil owed me a spite?

SIR TIMOTHY Come, unmask, I say. A willing wench would have showed all in half this time.

FLAUNTIT Would she so, impudence! *(Pulls off her mask.*

SIR TIMOTHY What! My Betty!

FLAUNTIT This is the trade you drive, you eternal fop, when I sit at home expecting you night after night.

SIR TIMOTHY Nay, dear Betty! ...

FLAUNTIT 'Tis here you spend that which should buy me lace, and petticoats, whilst I go like nobody's mistress. I'd as well be your wife, at this rate, so I had. And I'm in no small danger of getting the foul disease by your lewdness.

SIR TIMOTHY Victorious Betty, be merciful, and do not ruin my reputation amongst my friends.

FLAUNTIT Your whores, you mean, you sot, you.

SIR TIMOTHY Nay, triumphant Betty, hear thy poor Timmy.

FLAUNTIT My poor Ninny. I'm used barbarously, and won't endure it.

SIR TIMOTHY I've won money tonight, Betty, to buy thee clothes ... Hum ... hum ... Well said, Frank, touse the little jilts. They came for the purpose.

FLAUNTIT *(Aside)* The devil confound him, what a prize have I lost by his being here ... My comfort is, he has not found me out though, but thinks I came to look for him. And accordingly, I must dissemble.

BELLMOUR What's here? A lady all in tears!

SIR TIMOTHY An old acquaintance of mine, that takes it unkindly that I am for change ... *(Aside)* Betty, say so, too. You know I can settle nothing on you till I'm married. And he can do it swingeingly, if we can but draw him in.

FLAUNTIT *(Aside to Sir Timothy)* This mollifies somewhat. Do this, and you'll make your peace. If not, you rascal, your ears shall pay for this night's transgression.

SIR TIMOTHY Come hither, Frank. Is not this a fine creature?

BELLMOUR By heaven, a very devil! ...

SIR TIMOTHY Come, come, approach her. For if you'll have a miss, this has all the good qualities of one ... Go, go ... Court her. Thou art so bashful ...

BELLMOUR *(Aside)* I cannot frame my tongue to so much blasphemy, as 'tis to say kind things to her ... I'll try my heart, though ... *(Aloud)* Fair lady ... *(Aside)* Damn her, she is not fair ... nor sweet ... nor good ... nor ... Something I must say, for a beginning. *(Aloud)* Come, lady ... Dry your eyes. This man deserves not all the tears you shed. ... *(Aside)* So ... at last the devil has got the better of me, and I am started.

FLAUNTIT You see, sir, how miserable we women are that love you men.

BELLMOUR How did you love him! Love him against his will.

FLAUNTIT So it seems, sir ...

BELLMOUR Oh, thou art wretched, then, indeed. No wonder if he hate thee ... Does he not curse thee? *(Aside)* Curse thee till thou'rt damned, as I do lost Diana?

FLAUNTIT Curse me! He were not best, in my hearing. Let him do what he will behind my back. What ails the gentleman? ...

BELLMOUR Gods! What an odious thing mere coupling is!
A thing which every sensual animal
Can do as well as we ... But prithee, tell me,
Is there nought else between the nobler creatures?

FLAUNTIT Not that I know of, sir ... *(Aside)* Lord, he's very silly, or very innocent. I hope he has his maidenhead. If so, and rich, too, oh, what a booty were this for me!

BELLMOUR 'Tis wondrous strange,
Why was not I created like the rest;
Wild, and insensible, to fancy all?

FLAUNTIT Come, sir, you must learn to be gay, to sing, to dance, and talk of anything, and fancy anything that's in your way, too.

BELLMOUR Oh, I can tousele and ruffle like any Leviathan, when I begin ...
Come, test my vigour. *(Tousles her.)*

FLAUNTIT Oh Lord, sir! You tumble all my garniture.

BELLMOUR There's gold, to buy thee more ...

FLAUNTIT Oh, sweet sir ... *(Aside)* I wish my knight were hanged, so I were well rid of him now ... *(Aloud)* Well, sir, I swear you are the most agreeable person ...

BELLMOUR Am I? ... Let us be more familiar, then ... I'll kiss thy hand; thy breast, thy lips ... and...

FLAUNTIT All ... you please, sir ...

BELLMOUR A tractable sinner! *(Offers to kiss her.)*
(Aside) Faugh ... How she smells ... Had I approached so near divine Celinda, what a natural fragrancy had sent itself through all my ravished senses!

FLAUNTIT *(Aside.)* The man's extasied, sure, I shall take him. *(Aloud)* Come, sir, you are sad.

BELLMOUR As angels fallen from the divine abode,
And now am lighted on a very hell!
... *(Aside)* But this is not the way to thrive in wickedness.
I must rush on to ruin ... *(Aloud)* Come, fair mistress,
Will you not show me some of your arts of love,
For I am very apt to learn of beauty? ... *(Aside)* Gods ...
What is it I negotiate for? ... A woman!
Making a bargain to possess a woman!
Oh, never, never!

FLAUNTIT *(Aside)* The man is in love, that's certain ... *(Aloud)* As I was saying, sir ...

BELLMOUR Be gone. repentance! Thou needless goodness,
Which, if I follow, canst lead me to no joys.
Come, tell me the price of all your pleasures.

SIR TIMOTHY *(To Driver)* Look you, mistress, I am but a country knight,
Yet I should be glad of your farther acquaintance.
... Pray, who may that lady be? ...

DRIVER Who, Mistress Flauntit, sir?

SIR TIMOTHY Aye, she's wildly fine, by fortune.

DRIVER I'll assure you, sir, she's a kept woman ... and is a great rarity, but to a friend or so ...

SIR TIMOTHY Hum ... kept ... Pray, by whom?

DRIVER Why, a silly knight, sir, that ...

SIR TIMOTHY Aye, aye, silly, indeed ... A pox upon her ... A silly knight, you say ...

DRIVER Aye, sir, one she makes a very ass of.

SIR TIMOTHY Aye so, methinks ... But she's kind, and will do reason despite him.

DRIVER To a friend, a man of quality ... or so.

SIR TIMOTHY Aye, she blinds the knight.

DRIVER Alas, sir, easily ... He, poor dupe, thinks her a very saint ... But when he's out of the way, she comes to me to pleasure a friend.

SIR TIMOTHY But what if the fool miss her?

DRIVER She cries 'whore' first, brings him upon his knees for her fault, and a piece of gold tableware, or a new petticoat, makes his peace again.

SIR TIMOTHY Why ... Look you, mistress, I am that fop, that very silly knight, and the rest that you speak of.

DRIVER What, sir? Then I'm undone. She's the upholder of my calling, the very grace of my function.

SIR TIMOTHY Is she so? Just keep her to yourself then. I'll have no more of her, by fortune ... I humbly thank you for your intelligence, and the rest. Well ... I see there's not one honest whore in the nation, by fortune.

Enter Charles Bellmour and Trusty.

Hark ye, mistress, what was your business here?

FLAUNTIT To meet a rogue! ...

SIR TIMOTHY And I, to meet a whore. And now we're well met.

FLAUNTIT What, sir?

SIR TIMOTHY Nay, never be surprised, for your intrigues are discovered. The good matron of the house (against her will) has done me that kindness ... You know how to live without your keeper, and so I'll leave you.

FLAUNTIT *(Aside)* You're too serviceable a fool to be lost so.

BELLMOUR Who knows this bold intruder?

CHARLES What, sir, am I a stranger to you? But I should not wonder at it, since all your last night's actions betrayed a strange depravity of sense. ... Sir, I have sought you long, and wish I had not found you yet, since both the place and company declare how grossly you've dissembled virtue all this while.

BELLMOUR Take hence that prating boy.

CHARLES What, sir? ... You are my elder brother, yet I may be allowed to do the business that I came for, and, from my uncle, to demand your wife.

BELLMOUR You may return and tell him that she's dead.

CHARLES Dead! Sure, sir, you rave. *(Turns him about.)*

BELLMOUR Indeed I do ... But yet she's dead, they say.

CHARLES How came she dead?

BELLMOUR I killed her ... Ask no more, but leave me. *(Turns him about again.)*

CHARLES Sir, this is madman's language, and not to be believed.

BELLMOUR Go to ... You're a saucy boy.

CHARLES Sir, I'm an angry boy ...
But yet, can bear much from a brother's mouth.
You've lost your sleep. Pray sir, go home and seek it.

BELLMOUR Home! I have no home, unless thou meanst my grave,
And thither I could wish thou wouldst conduct me. *(Weeps.)*

FLAUNTIT (*Aside*) Pray heaven this young, virtuous fellow don't spoil all.

... (*Aloud*) Sir, shall I send for a scrivener to draw the settlement you promised me?

BELLMOUR Do so, and I'll order him to get it ready.

CHARLES A settlement! On whom? This woman, sir?

BELLMOUR Yes, on this woman, sir.

CHARLES Are you stark mad? ... Know you where you are?

BELLMOUR Yes, in a bawdy-house.

CHARLES And this woman, sir ...

BELLMOUR A very whore! ... A tawdry, mercenary whore! And what of this?

CHARLES And can you love her, sir?

BELLMOUR No. If I did, I would not reward her.

CHARLES What ... Is't in charity to keep her honest?

BELLMOUR Neither.

CHARLES Is your lust grown so high ...

BELLMOUR Take that ... (*Strikes him.*

For naming but so base a thing to me.

CHARLES I wear a sword, but not to draw on madmen.

But since you're so free, sir, I demand that fortune which, by my father's Will, you're bound to pay the day after your wedding-day; my sister's, too, is due.

BELLMOUR Ha, ha, ha ... Sir Timothy, come hither ... Who dost think this is?

SIR TIMOTHY A fiddler perhaps ... Let him play in the next room.

BELLMOUR No, my brother ... come to demand his inheritance of me ... He says I am in lewd company, and, like a boy, he would correct me.

SIR TIMOTHY Why, this comes of idleness. Thou shouldst have bound him apprentice. In time, the boy would have made a good, saucy tailor.

CHARLES Sirrah, you're a rascal, whom I must thus chastise. (*Kicks him.*

(They all draw, and Bellmour stands foremost, and fights with Charles. The women run squeaking out. Sir Timothy, Sham and Sharp sneak behind. Trusty interposes.

TRUSTY Hold, hold, I beseech you, my dear masters! Oh, what a sight is this! Two brothers fighting with each other! Oh, were my old master alive, this would break his heart. Oh, sir, you've killed your brother.

(Charles is wounded.

BELLMOUR Why then, his inheritance is paid.

SIR TIMOTHY What, killed! Nay, 'tis time we departed, then, and shifted for ourselves.

(Ex. Sir Timothy, Sham and Sharp.

TRUSTY Oh sir, shall I send for a surgeon?

CHARLES No, for a coach, rather. I am not wounded much. (*Ex. Trusty.*

BELLMOUR How darest thou trust thyself alone with me?

CHARLES Why should I fear thee?

BELLMOUR Because I'm mad.

Mad as a tigress robbed of her dear young.

CHARLES What is't that makes you so?

BELLMOUR My uncle's principles, hell take him for't,

Has ruined me, thou, and my sister, too,

By marrying me to a fair, hated maid,

When I had plighted all my faith before.

Enter Trusty.

TRUSTY Sir, here's a coach.

CHARLES Come, brother, will you go home with me?

BELLMOUR Home! ... No, never to that place thou callst so.

If, when I'm dead, thou wouldst behold thy brother,

And take the last adieu from his cold lips

(If those so perjured can deserve that kindness),

Enquire for lost Celinda, at whose feet

Thou shalt behold me fallen a sacrifice.
Till then, I'll let mistaken parents know
The mischiefs that ensue a broken vow. *(Exeunt in different directions.)*

ACT. V, scene 1. Covent Garden. Enter Betty Flauntit, alone.

FLAUNTIT Sure, I got out of the wrong side of bed today, I have had such damned ill luck every way. First, to be sent for to such a man as this Bellmour, and, as the devil would have it, to find my knight there: Then, to be just upon the point of making my fortune, and to be interrupted by that virtuous brother of his. Then, to have a quarrel happen, that (before I could whisper him in the ear, to say so much as meet me here again ... anon) forced me to quit the house, lest the constable had done it for me. Then, that that silly bawd should discover all to my dupe. If this be not ill luck, the devil's in't ... But Driver must bring matters about, that I may see this liberal squire again ... But, here comes my fool. I must pretend to be angry.

Enter Sir Timothy.

SIR TIMOTHY Lord, Lord, how you look, now, as if you had committed no misdemeanor; alas, good innocent, what canst thou say for thyself, thou renegado, thou, for being false to my bosom? Say.

FLAUNTIT False to your bosom! You silly impudent sot, you ... Who dares accuse me?

SIR TIMOTHY Just your trusty and well-beloved friend, Mistress Driver, the bawd.

FLAUNTIT She! She's an impudent, confounded liar ... And because she would have your worshipful custom ... scandalized me, to breed a difference between us.

SIR TIMOTHY Aye, if you could make me believe that indeed, when she knew me not, nor ever saw me all days of her life before.

FLAUNTIT I know that, simpleton. But when I went to enquire for you by your name, and told her my business, our amours are not kept so secret. Nor was she so dull as not to understand how matters went between us.

SIR TIMOTHY Now, though I know this to be a damned lie, yet the devil has assisted her to make it look so like truth that I cannot, in honour, but forgive her.

FLAUNTIT Forgive me! ... Who shall forgive you your debauched whoring and drinking? ... Marry, you'd need so, you are such a ruffler. At least, if you're everywhere as you are at home with me ... No, sirrah, I'll never bed with you more. Here I live, poor, without a coach, or anything to appear withal; when even those that were scandalous two ages ago can be seen in Hyde Park in their fine chariots, as if they had purchased it with a maidenhead. Whilst I, who keep myself entirely for you, can get nothing but the fragments of your debauches ... I'll be damned before I'll endure it.

SIR TIMOTHY *(Aside)* Just as the bawd said. Yet I am mollified ... *(Aloud)* Nay, dear Betty, forgive me, and I'll be very good for the future.

FLAUNTIT Will you swear to be so?

SIR TIMOTHY Aye, by fortune, I will.

FLAUNTIT Come, what will you give me, then, to be friends? For you won money last night.

SIR TIMOTHY *(Aside)* Aye, that's it that appeases her highest storms ... *(Aloud)* Here, my jewel, here's a hundred guineas to buy thee fine things.

FLAUNTIT Yes, great store of fine things, indeed, with this pitiful sum. Let me feel in your pockets and see if you have no more. *(She feels in his pockets)*

SIR TIMOTHY *(Aside)* So, 'twas well I laid by the rest. My peace had not been made without surrendering every scrap of it, else. And what I was painstakingly cheating for all this night would have been laid out at the mercer's and laceman's in half an hour ... *(Aloud)* Well, are you satisfied I have no more?

FLAUNTIT Have you sunk none indeed, and indeed, my Timmy?

SIR TIMOTHY No, I need not *(Aside)* You sink mine fast enough, I thank ye.

FLAUNTIT Well, get yourself ready to go out with me. *(Exit Flauntit.)*

SIR TIMOTHY I have other matters in hand ... Now have I four hundred guineas in store which I won last night of Bellmour. Which I'll make use of to debauch his sister, with whom I'm damnably in love, and long for the return of my two setters, to bring me news of the game.

Enter Sham and Sharp.

Oh, are you come?

SHAM Aye, sir, with news worth the hearing. I have been diligent, sir, and got myself acquainted with the old steward of the family, an avaricious Judas that will betray for gold.

SIR TIMOTHY And that we'll furnish him with ... His master's gold, like all other mortal things, must return from whence it came.

SHARP Not all, sir. For Sham and I have disposed of part.

SIR TIMOTHY Indeed, you are a little shabby.

SHAM Aye, sir. Fools were made to repair the breaches of us that have wit enough to manage 'em.

SIR TIMOTHY What ... The goldsmith paid the money at sight, without demanding why?

SHARP Readily, sir ... He's a brave fellow, and must not be lost so.

SHAM By no means. We must make use of him whilst he's hot, for I fear the humour is not natural, and I fear he may cool.

SIR TIMOTHY But, to our business.

SHARP Aye, sir. This same sister of his you must have. *(Aside)* If it be but to put that insolent whore Flauntit out of favour, who manages this fop too entirely.

SIR TIMOTHY Aye, but art thou sure there is no danger in this enterprise? Shall I not have my throat cut? And the rest.

SHAM We have none of that Italian humour now-a-days, I can assure ye. They will sooner, with a brotherly kindness, assist the yielding sister to the willing gallant.

SIR TIMOTHY A good, thriving inclination, by fortune.

SHAM And, sir, you have all encouragement. Her brother, you heard, refused to pay her dowry, and you know the fate of a young, handsome wench in this town, that relies on weak virtue ... Then, because she's in the house with her uncle, this same steward has contrived matters so, to bring you in at the backdoor, her lodgings being near the garden.

SIR TIMOTHY This is something ... Oh, I'm impatient to be with her ... Well, I must in, and make some lie to Betty for my absence, and be with you presently. *(Exit.)*

SHARP What design hast thou in hand? For I suppose there is no such real thing, as the debauching of this lady.

SHAM Look ye, Sharp, take to thee an implicit faith, and believe impossibilities. For thou and I must cozen this knight.

SHARP What, our patron?

SHAM Aye, Sharp. We are bound to labour in our callings. But, shhhh ... Here he comes.

Enter Sir Timothy.

SIR TIMOTHY Come, let's away. My lioness begins to roar ... You, Sharp, go seek after Bellmour, watch his motions, and give us notice. *(Exit.)*

Betty Flauntit peeping out.

FLAUNTIT He is gone, and I believe for no goodness. I'll after him, and watch him.

(Exit crossing the stage.)

Enter Lord Plotwell, Charles, Trusty, and two Servants.

LORD In a bawdy-house, with whores, hectors, and dice! Oh, that I should be so deceived in mankind, he whom I thought all virtue and sobriety! *(To servants)* But go, some of you, immediately, and take officers along with you, and change his quarters from a bawdy-house to a prison. Charge him with the murder of his wife.

CHARLES My Lord, when I asked for her, he said, indeed, that she was dead, and killed by him. But this, I guess, was the effects of madness, which debauchery, and lack of sleep, has brought him to.

LORD That shall be tried. Go where Charles has directed you, and do as I command. *(Exit servants.)*

... Oh, sweet Diana, in whom I had placed my absolute delight,

And gave thee to this villain, because I wished thee happy.

And are my expectations fallen to this?

Upon his wedding night to abandon thee!

And show his long-dissembled, natural lewdness.

CHARLES My Lord, I hope, 'tis not his natural temper,

For ere we parted, from a brutal rudeness,
He grew to all the softness grief could dictate.
He talked of breach of vows, of death, and ruin,
And dying at the feet of a wronged maid.
I know not what he meant.

LORD Aye, there's his grief. There is some jilting hussy has drawn him in. But I'll revenge myself on both.

Enter a page.

PAGE A letter for your Lordship.

LORD (*reads*) My Lord, As your goodness has been ever great towards me, so I humbly beseech you to continue it. And the greatest proofs you can give me of it, is to use all your interest to undo that tie between Bellmour and myself, which with such joy you knit. I will say no more, but, as you love my life, and my dearer honour, get a separation, or you will see both ruined in Your Diana.

(He gives Charles the letter.)

A separation. Yes, if all my interest or estate can purchase it ... Some joy, yet, that thou art well.

CHARLES Doubtless, her reasons must be great for this request.

LORD Yes, for she loved him passionately when I first told her of my designs to marry 'em together: she could not hide her joy, which was one motive I urged it to him with such violence.

CHARLES Persons so near of kin do seldom prosper in the marriage bed.

LORD However 'tis, I now think fit to unmarry 'em;
And as for him, I'll use him with what rigour
The utmost limits of the law allows me.

CHARLES Sir, I beseech you.

LORD You, beseech me! You, the brother of the villain! That has abused the best of all my hopes? ... No, I think ... I shall grow (for his sake) to hate all that are related to him.

CHARLES Sir, how have I offended?

LORD Yes, sir, you have offended me, and nature has offended me. You are his brother, and that's an offence to me.

CHARLES Is that a fault, my Lord?

LORD Yes, sir, a great one, and I'll have it so. And let me tell you, you, nor your sister (for that reason) must expect no more friendship at my hands, than from those that are absolute strangers to you. Your brother has refused you your inheritances, and I'll have as little mercy as he. And so, farewell to you ... But where's the messenger that brought the letter?

PAGE Outside, my Lord. *(Exeunt Lord and page.)*

TRUSTY Here's likely to be a promising end of a noble family. My comfort is, I shall die with grief, and not see the last of ye. *(Weeps.)*

CHARLES No, Trusty. I have not been so meanly educated, but I know how to live, and like a gentleman. All that afflicts me in this misfortune is my dear sister, Phillis. She's young, and to be left poor in this loose town will ruin her forever.

TRUSTY Sir, I think we were best to marry her away from danger.

CHARLES Marry her! To whom? Who is't pays attention to poor virtue?

TRUSTY For that, leave that to me; and if you dare trust her to my management, I'll undertake to marry her to a man of £2,000 a year. And if I fail, I'll be sure to keep her honour safe.

CHARLES Prithee, how wilt thou do this?

TRUSTY Sir, I have served your family these thirty years with faith and love, and if I lose my credit now, I'll ne'er pretend to it more.

CHARLES Do what thou wilt, for I am sure thou'rt honest.

I'll resign my sister to thy conduct,

Whilst I endeavour the conversion of my brother.

(Exit Charles.)

Enter Phillis.

PHILLIS No news, yet, of my brother?

TRUSTY None. The next you'll hear, is that he's undone, and that you must go without your inheritances. And, worse than that, I can tell you, your uncle designs to turn you out of doors.

PHILLIS Alas! What should I do, if he should be so cruel? I wish I were in Flanders at my monastery again, if

this be true.

TRUSTY I have better business for you than telling of beads ... No, Mistress Phillis, you must be married.
PHILLIS Alas! I am too young and sad for love.
TRUSTY The younger, and the less love, the better.

Enter page.

PAGE Mr Trusty, here's a gentleman would speak with you. He says his name's Mr Sham.
TRUSTY Gud's me, mistress, put on all your holiday looks, for this is the little merchant of love by retail that brings you the husband I promised you.

Enter Sham.

SHAM Well, Mr Trusty, I have brought Sir Timothy, as I promised. He is at the garden door.
TRUSTY The best time in the world. My Lord's out of the way.
SHAM But you know our conditions?
TRUSTY Yes, that if he marry her, you are to have all the money that he offers to debauch her.
SHAM Right.
TRUSTY Bring him in, then, and I'll civilly withdraw. *(Exit Trusty.*

Enter Sham, bringing in Sir Timothy.

SIR TIMOTHY Well, Sham, thou hast prepared all things, and there needs no ceremony.
SHAM None, none, sir. You may fall straight to the business.

Enter Phillis.

SIR TIMOTHY *(sings)* Come, my Phillis, let us improve
Both our joys of equal love,
Whilst we in yonder shady grove,
Count minutes by our kisses.
PHILLIS What sort of courtship's this? 'Tis very odd!
SIR TIMOTHY 'Pox on formal fops, we have high-born and generous souls, and scorn the common road ... Come, let's enjoy, whilst youth and beauty lasts.
PHILLIS What means this rudeness? I'll tell my brother.
SIR TIMOTHY Your brother, by fortune? He's so lewd that should I be so unconscionable to leave thee a virgin but this night, he would ravish thee himself, and that at cheaper rates than I design to do it.
PHILLIS How dare you talk to me at this rate?
SIR TIMOTHY Talk to thee? ... By fortune, I'll play the Tarquin with thee, if thou yieldst not quickly ... For thou hast set me all on fire.
PHILLIS Defend me, heaven, from such a man.
SIR TIMOTHY Then it must defend you from all the sex, for all mankind are like me. Nay, and all womankind are, or would be, what I must make thee.
PHILLIS What's that, a wench?
SIR TIMOTHY Fie, fie, that's a gross name. No, a miss, that's the word ... A lady of delight, a person of pleasure, and the rest. I'll keep thee. Not a woman of quality shall be half so fine ... Come, dear Phillis, yield ... Oh, I am mad for the happy hour ... Come, say the word, 'Tis but inclining thy head a little, thus ... thy pretty eyes down, and thy cheeks all blushes, and fetching a long sigh ... thus ... with ... 'Do ... what you please' ... at the end on't ... and I shall take it for granted.
PHILLIS That, sir, you'll never hear me say to anything but a husband, if I must say it then.
SIR TIMOTHY A husband! It is enough to spoil a man's appetite, the very naming on't ... By fortune, thou hast been bred with thy great grandmother, some old Queen Elizabeth lady, that used to preach warnings to young maidens. But had she lived in this age, she would have repented her error, especially had she seen the sum that I offer thee ... Come, let's in. By fortune, I'm so vigorous I shall ravish, else.
PHILLIS Unhand me, or I'll call out. I assure you, this is not the way to gain me.
SIR TIMOTHY I know there is a way to gain all mortal womankind. But how to hit the critical minute of the pastoral shepherdess? ...
PHILLIS Is past your authority at this time, sir.
SIR TIMOTHY *(Aside)* I'll try all ways, and the devil's in it if I don't hit upon the right at last. *(Aloud)* All the

soft things I've said ...

PHILLIS That a knight of your parts ought to say.

SIR TIMOTHY Then I have kneeled ... and cried ... and swore ... and ...

PHILLIS And damned yourself five hundred times ...

SIR TIMOTHY Yet, still you're impregnable ... I'll make another proposition to you, which is both reasonable and modish ... If it prove a boy ... I'll marry you ... The devil's in it, if that's not fair.

PHILLIS You get no bargain from me, sir, and so farewell to you. *(Ex. Phillis.)*

Enter Sham.

SIR TIMOTHY Oh, Sham, I am all over fire, mad to enjoy! I have done what man can do (without doing what I would do) and still she's flint. Nothing will find acceptance with her but matrimony ... What shall I do? For thou knowst I cannot marry a wife without a fortune.

SHAM Sir, you know the old cheat: hire a lay rascal in a canonical costume, and put a false marriage upon her.

SIR TIMOTHY Lord, that this should not enter into my coxcomb before! Haste, then, and get one ... I'll have it done immediately, whilst I go after her to keep up my flame. *(Exit Sir Timothy.)*

SHAM And I'll you provide you with a parson presently. *(Exit.)*

Act V, scene 2. The setting, a street. *Enter Friendlove, disguised as before.*

FRIENDLOVE I find Diana knows me not. And this year's absence, since I first made my addresses to her, has altered me much, or she has lost the remembrance of a man whom she ever disesteemed till in this lucky dress. The price of her favour is Bellmour's life. I need not have been bribed for that. His breach of faith, both to my sister and myself, enough incites me to revenge ... He has not yet enjoyed her. That blessing is reserved for me alone. And though the priest have joined 'em, that marriage may be disannulled, and she has a fortune sufficient to excuse her other faults.

Enter Bellmour, sad.

... *(Aside)* Hah! The man I seek ... So near my lodgings, too ... *(Aloud)* Sir!

BELLMOUR Sir!

FRIENDLOVE Traitor! Thou knowst me, and my business. ... Look on this face, if thou darest look on him whom thou hast doubly wronged ... And draw thy sword.

BELLMOUR Thou shouldst be Friendlove, brother to Celinda.

FRIENDLOVE And lover of Diana, too ... Oh, quickly, draw,
Or I shall leave thee like a coward, dead.

BELLMOUR No, rather like a sacrifice, *(Offers to embrace him.)*
And thou shouldst be the priest should offer it.
But that I have yet
For some few moments, business for my life.

FRIENDLOVE I can allow no time for business, now.
My injuries are in haste, and so am I.

BELLMOUR Shouldst thou stab, here, a thousand gaping wounds
Upon this false, this perjured heart of mine,
It would not part with life, unless 'twere laid
Near to the sacred altar of my vows.
Lo, at the feet of my fair injured wife.

FRIENDLOVE *(Aside)* Ha ... Means he his wife?
(Aloud) Canst thou repent thy injuries to her,
And leave the rest of all thy sins neglected?

BELLMOUR Those I have done to thee, though foul and barbarous,
May plead the excuse of force ... But those to her,
Not thou, nor I, nor she, or heaven can pardon.

FRIENDLOVE Heavens!
My sister's wrongs, and mine, may plead excuse,
But those to her alone can ne'er be pardoned.

... This place, sir, is too open ... Come with me,
 For I've desired, and now resolve to kill thee.

BELLMOUR And so thou shalt. Defenceless, I will yield,
 And leave my bosom open to thy sword.
 ... But first conduct me to my wife.
 For I will see her ... Nor can I die unpardoned.

FRIENDLOVE (*Aside*) See his wife! ... (*Aloud*) Of whom do you demand her?

BELLMOUR Of thee! ... Darest thou detain me? (*Offers to go in.*)

FRIENDLOVE (*Aside*) Death, how should he know she's here?
 ... (*Aloud*) Stay, sir, this way our business lies. (*Pulls him back.*)

BELLMOUR I ask not thine, but mine lies only this way. (*Offers to go in again.*)

FRIENDLOVE By heaven, you shall not enter here!

BELLMOUR I know thou lovest her,
 And 'tis with reason thou denyst an entrance
 To one so much unworthy to approach her.

FRIENDLOVE Yes, I do love her, and dare own it, too;
 And will defend her from one so base and treacherous.

BELLMOUR Who dares deny thy reasons?

FRIENDLOVE She's made me take an oath to fight with thee.
 And every wound my lucky sword should make,
 She bade me say, was sent thee from her hate.

BELLMOUR Oh, I believe thee! Prithee, tell on, young man,
 That I may die without the aid of wounds.

FRIENDLOVE To break thy heart, know then, she loves another.
 And has took back the vows she made to thee,
 And given 'em to a man more worthy of 'em.

BELLMOUR Alas! I credit thee ... Yet ... Then, by heaven, she's false!
 And I will know why 'tis she is thus perjured. (*Offers to go.*)
 ... Nay, now ... Nor heaven, nor hell, shall hinder me.
 ... Stand off, or to the number I'll add one sin more,
 And make my passage to her through thy heart.

FRIENDLOVE And so you shall, sir. (*They fight. Bellmour disarms Friendlove and runs off.*)
 ... Disarmed! By heaven, you shall not so escape
 A rage that is too just here to give o'er.

Act V, scene 3. The setting changes to the inside of Friendlove's lodgings.

Enter Celinda, cross-dressed, met by nurse.

NURSE Oh, madam, here's Mr Bellmour. He has wounded my young master, who denied him entrance, and is
 come into the house, and, all in rage, demands his wife.

CELINDA Oh heaven! 'Demands his wife!' Is that sad curse
 Added to all the rest? ... Does he, then, love her?

Enter Bellmour with two swords.

NURSE Whither do you press, sir? And what's your business?

BELLMOUR To see my wife, my wife, impertinence.
 And must I meet with nought but opposition? (*Pushes her roughly away.*)

CELINDA Let him come in.

NURSE Marry, he lets himself in, I thank him.

CELINDA What man art thou, thus covered o'er with horror?

BELLMOUR One sent from hell, to punish perjury!
 ... Where's this perfidious fair? This blushless maid!
 That has by my example broke her vows!
 A precedent that fiends would shame to follow.

CELINDA Who is it you mean, sir?

BELLMOUR A thing that has no name, she is so bad!
One who, so lately, gave herself to me,
And now is flown into another's arms.
One that attacks my life, for the same sins,
Which she herself commits ... and thinks to live, too.
... Yet still she is my wife, whom I have injured:
Till when, she was a saint ... Come, lead me to her.
Though be false as I, yet I'll forgive it. *(Throws by the swords.)*

CELINDA *(Aside)* Heavens! He repents his cruelty to her,
And never mentions me! Ah then, 'tis time to die.
And that I may be sure of death ...
(Aloud) Well, sir, I will conduct this happy lady to you.

BELLMOUR Gods! Happy! ... whilst I am wretched. *(Exit Celinda.)*
... Oh, what a fever chills my shivering limbs,
Turns my hot rage to softest love and shame.
Were I not here to die ... here at her feet,
I would not stand the shock of her reproaches.
... But yet she need not speak, a look's sufficient
To call up all my sins to my undoing ...
... She comes ... Oh, heaven! She comes ...

Enter Celinda and Diana.

... Like penitent criminals, thus ... with my eyes declined,
I bow my head down, for the last, sad blow. *(Stands bowed.)*

CELINDA Sir, in obedience to your commands,
I've brought the lady.

DIANA What! The perfidious Bellmour!
The only object of my hate and scorn.

BELLMOUR Say on, my angry deity ... *(Kneels.)*
Whilst I, thus trembling, hear my fatal doom
Like sinners conscious ne'er to be forgiven,
I dare not lift my guilty eyes towards heaven.

CELINDA *(Aside)* Can I hear this? And yet retain my life!

DIANA *(Aside)* Had I, but two days' since, beheld this youth
Thus prostrate at my feet, I should have thought
Myself more blessed
Than to have been the deity he calls me.

Enter Friendlove.

FRIENDLOVE Defend me! The traitor, here! and at Diana's feet,
The fittest altar for my sacrifice!
... Turn, turn, from what thou lovest, and meet my justice!

CELINDA Oh hold, my dearest brother! *(Bellmour rises, and turns about.)*

BELLMOUR Nay, now I'm ready for the welcome sword,
Since my Celinda's false, and cannot pardon.

CELINDA Oh, do not die with that prophane opinion.
Celinda, false? Or cannot pardon thee!

DIANA Stay, generous sir. My pity has forgiven him.

BELLMOUR Thou! Why who art thou? ... Diana!

DIANA Yes, that Diana
Who, despite all the penitence thou showst,
Can scarce forgive the injuries thou'st done her.

BELLMOUR I, show a penitence for injuring thee?
By heaven, I never could do one, or other.
All that I am is the divine Celinda's.

FRIENDLOVE (*Aside*) He's stark mad!

BELLMOUR But since she cannot pardon, I can die. (*Offers to fall on his sword.*)

CELINDA Canst thou not credit me? She pardons thee. (*Turns her face from him.*)
Live ... and enjoy ... Diana.

BELLMOUR What art thou, who knowst her heart so well!
Art thou my rival? The blessed youth to whom
She has given her vows? ... Live ... and enjoy ... Diana!
... Yes ... yes ... Thou art my rival, and I'll kill thee.

CELINDA Do, whilst I meet thy sword.
(*Celinda opens her arms. Diana stays him. He lets fall his sword, and gazes.*)

BELLMOUR Dull ... Dull adorer! Not to know my saint.
Oh, how have I prophaned. To what strange idol
Was that I kneeled?
Mistaking it for a divinity!

CELINDA To your fair wife, Diana!

BELLMOUR Oh, cruel maid!
Has heaven designed me any, but Celinda!

DIANA 'Maid!' Bless me! ... Did I, then, love a woman?
... I am pleased thou shouldst renounce me. Make it good,
And set me free from fetters which I hate.

BELLMOUR If all our laws can do it, I will ... (*He gestures to Celinda.*) For here
Ends all my claim.

FRIENDLOVE Was this the 'wife' you did demand of me?

BELLMOUR Yes. I had no other.

DIANA Fair maid! Forgive me all my shameful passion!
And blame my fault upon your beauty, only.

CELINDA Excellent creature! I should sue for that
Which my deceit will never make me hope.

BELLMOUR And art thou true to love, and all thy vows?
Whilst I, to save my fortune
(That only which could make me merit thee)
Gave my unwilling hand to this fair noble maid.
... Ah, Friendlove, when thou hearest my story told,
Thou wilt forgive, and pity me.

DIANA What was't you said, sir? ... Friendlove.

FRIENDLOVE Yes, madam. I hope the name can make no difference.
Or, hate that still, so you love the man.

DIANA Though I'm again defeated, yet this last
Proves least offensive, nor shall an empty word,
Alter my fixed resolves, to love you still.

FRIENDLOVE Then I am blessed!

BELLMOUR But yet, the legal hour of marriage has passed.
What remedy for that?

DIANA My uncle's power; the nearness of our blood,
The contradiction of our circumstances.

BELLMOUR And above all that, my betrothal to Celinda.
... Methinks I feel a joy spread o'er my heart,
The blessed omen of approaching happiness.

CELINDA I do believe thee, for through our harmony,
Mine takes new fire and hope.

DIANA (*To Friendlove*) I have already writ to my uncle, and the messenger assured me, he would gratify my
desires. That done, I will be yours.

BELLMOUR But why thus dressed? It might have led my rage,
Full of despair and jealousy, to have hurt thee.

CELINDA Sir, when the letter came of your being married,
I will not tell you all the effects it had
Upon my desperate soul.
But this I know: I had resolved to die,
But first to see you. Your page informed the nurse
All that had passed, and of the last night's ball.
And, much concerned, she got this costume for me,
And informed me how 'twas I was to act,
And that my brother (describing of his dress) was gone before.
This made me haste, lest, ere I came,
His rage had done the business which it went for.

FRIENDLOVE And so it had, hadst thou not hindered me.

(To Bellmour) For I, sir, was the man who drew on you.

BELLMOUR *(To Celinda)* And was it thou that didst defend my heart,
That I might live to pay thy goodness back?

CELINDA It was to save your life, and to expose my own.

DIANA Come, let's in, and consult what's best for us to do.

BELLMOUR Come, my Celinda,
Let us no longer doubt the powers above
Will be propitious to united love.

(Exit Celinda.)

Enter a servant

SERVANT *(To Friendlove)* Sir, my Lord Plotwell is at the door in his coach.

DIANA My uncle come! Sir, we will not fear our fortune.
But how came he to know of my being here?

SERVANT Madam, I fear he followed me, after I had given him the letter.

Enter Lord Plotwell, Charles, Trusty.

(Bellmour and Diana kneel.)

LORD Bellmour and Diana, kneeling!
... Rise. The joy I have to see you thus
Makes me resolve to grant you anything,
And pardon all that's past.

BELLMOUR Be not so hasty in your goodness, sir,
Lest you repent as fast.

DIANA Sir, we have an humble suit to you.

LORD What is it ye can jointly ask, I will not grant?

DIANA By all that love you ever had for me,
By all those infant charms, which used to please you
When on your lap, you taught my tongue that art
Which made those dear impressions on your heart,
Which, ever since, to my advantage grew,
I do conjure you, hear me now I sue,
And grant the mighty grace I beg of you.

LORD What is it you would ask?

BELLMOUR Oh, dress your face and eyes in gentler looks,
If you would have us hope for any mercy.

LORD Rise, and whate'er you ask, I'll freely grant.

DIANA That you'll undo that knot that ties us two.

LORD What! This request from thee! who loved him once,
And wished no good, beyond possessing him.

DIANA Heaven has not, sir, decreed us for each other.
Something of fate or chance
Has otherwise disposed those first resolves.

LORD Too virtuous maid, I know thou dost but feign.
His wickedness has forced thee to this change.

DIANA No, sir. Were he the only man
Of kind and good, I never would be his.
... And if you should compel me, I should live
The infamous reproach of my whole sex.

LORD (*To Bellmour*) Well. And you, sir, that are the cause of this,
What canst thou say to move me for thy pardon?

BELLMOUR I am so guilty in your opinion,
My prayers would but make yours merciless.
I only say, Celinda is my wife,
And I should injure this too generous maid,
Not to adore her equal to her merit.

LORD I see, sir, you have found your wits again.
... (*To Diana*) Well, I see there's no opposing destiny,
And I have still such tenderness for thee
That, hadst thou pleaded his cause to me before,
I should have been less cruel to him.
... (*To Bellmour*) Where is that lady which you so admire,
Whose beauty does eclipse that of Diana?

Bellmour goes out, and brings in Celinda.

DIANA This, sir, is she who merits more than I.

LORD She's fair indeed. Here, Frank,
I give thee thy Celinda, whose beauty
Excuses all thy faults of disobedience.

BELLMOUR Thus low, I thank you for this goodness. sir. (*Bellmour kneels.*)

LORD There only lacks the ceremony of the law to undo what's between you and Diana, if she remain a
virgin.

BELLMOUR For me, by heaven she is,
And for the rest, I do not doubt her virtue.

DIANA You may believe him, sir, and this alone's the man in whom I will, or never will be happy.

LORD Mr Friendlove. I give consent to't. He has a noble character, and what he wants in fortune, has in
virtue. ... Take her, young man.

FRIENDLOVE 'Tis such an honour, sir, that my gratitude, without the mighty passion I have for her, would make
me ever thankful.

LORD This Parliamentary term we shall make the former marriage void. Till then, love on, and fear no
frowns from fortune ... But, nephew ... now, I hope, your brother shall have his inheritance.

BELLMOUR My dearest Charles, forgive me all that's passed,
And share the fortune heaven has given thy brother.

CHARLES The joy I have, sir, to be undeceived, is much the greatest blessing heaven can send me.

Enter Sir Timothy, followed by Phillis, Sham, Sharp, and Betty Flauntit.

SIR TIMOTHY I am pursued by two impertinent women. Prithee, Friendlove, tell 'em I am gone out at the back
door, and send 'em away.

LORD What's the news here?

SIR TIMOTHY (*Aside*) What? Celinda here, and Bellmour, too! Nay, now would I bargain for my life, at any
rate, by fortune.

PHILLIS Sir, this villain, here, has abused me, and with a false marriage has robbed me of my honour.

BELLMOUR What!

SIR TIMOTHY My Lord, I say this young jilt would rob me of myself, and, courting her, and enjoying her only for
a mistress, would persuade me I am married to her.

FLAUNTIT Sir, I say, I am doubly wronged. First, by this false knight, who has belonged to me these three years,
which gives me a right to him, as good as if I were married to him; who has now, unlawfully, left my
bed for that of this jill-flirt, who, on the other hand, takes away my knight, and, consequently, eats the
bread out of my mouth.

BELLMOUR What means all this?

Speak, some of ye that know.

FLAUNTIT (*Aside*) Oh Lord! Who's here? The fine squire.

TRUSTY Sir Timothy Tawdrey, sir, is married to Mistress Phillis.

SIR TIMOTHY How can that be a marriage, when he who joined us was but a hired fellow, dressed like a parson?

TRUSTY Sir, 'twas parson Tickletext, that married 'em.

SIR TIMOTHY Oh, what a damned lying pimp is this! ... Sham, didst not thou hire a fellow (because I was damnably in love, and in haste) to marry us, that was no parson?

SHAM Why, truly sir ... I did go to hire such an one ...

SIR TIMOTHY Look ye there, now.

SHAM But could meet with none. And because you said you should die if you enjoyed her not presently, and that she would not yield on any other terms but those of marriage, I just brought the parson that Trusty had provided for you.

SIR TIMOTHY Oh, villain to betray me! And for no reward!

TRUSTY Yes indeed, sir, the 400 guineas you left behind my young mistress's looking-glass fell to his share.

SIR TIMOTHY What, is my money gone! And am I married, too? This 'tis not to usually go to church. For then, I might have chanced to know the parson.

BELLMOUR Death, you dog! You deserve to die, for your base designs upon a maid of her quality ... How durst you, sister, without my leave, marry that rascal?

PHILLIS Sir, you denied me my inheritance, and my uncle designed to turn me out of doors. And in my despairs, I accepted of him.

FLAUNTIT Married! And to a wife of no fortune! That's the worst part on't ... What shall I do?

BELLMOUR (*To Phillis*) Renounce this lewd fool, and I'll make thee a fortune suitable to thy quality.

SIR TIMOTHY Say you so? ... Renounce me, sir! I'd have you to know, I merit her. And as for lewdness, I name nobody, Bellmour ... But only, some have the art of hiding it better than I ... But for whoring, drinking, dicing, and all the deadly sins that thereupon depend, I thank my stars I come short of you. And since you say I shall not have your sister, by fortune, I will have your sister, and love your sister, and lie with your sister, in spite of you.

LORD Well, Sir Timothy, since my niece has done amiss, 'tis too late to mend it ... And that you may not repent, I'll take care her fortune shall be suitable to the settlement you'll make her.

BELLMOUR With this proviso: that you make no settlements to mistresses, Sir Timothy ... I am not so unreasonable to tie you up from all of that profession. That were to spoil a fashionable husband, and so put you quite out of Fop Road.

LORD This day we'll set apart for mirth,
And all must make my house their happy home.

BELLMOUR To thee, Celinda, all my good I owe,
My life, my fortune, and my honour, too,
Since all had perished through a broken vow.

FLAUNTIT What, am I like to lose my Timmy? Canst thou have the heart to leave me forever? I, who have been true and constant to you.

SIR TIMOTHY Alas! Now do I melt again, by fortune ... (*Aside to Flauntit*) Thou art a fool. Dost think I would have had her, but for her fortune? Which shall only serve to make thee out-flaunt all the prostitutes in Town ... Go ... Go home and expect me. Thou'lt have me all to thyself within this day or two.

Since marriage but a larger licence is
For every fop of mode to keep a miss.

Epilogue spoken by Sir Timothy Tawdrey.

Sir Timothy, gallants, at last is come
To know his sentence, and receive his doom.
But, pray, before you are resolved to be
Severe, look on yourselves, and then on me.
Observe me well. I am a man of show,
Of noise and nonsense, as are most of you.

Though all of you don't share with me in title,
In character you differ very little.
Tell me in what you find a difference?
It may be, you will say, you're men of sense;
But, faith ...
Were one of you on the stage, and I in the audience,
He might be thought the fop, and I the wit.
On equal grounds, you'll scarce know one from t'other;
We are as like as brother is to brother.
To judge against me, then, would be ill nature,
For men are kind to those they're like in feature.
For judges, therefore, I accept you all.
By you, Sir Timothy will stand or fall.
He's too faint-hearted that his sentence fears,
Who has the honour to be tried by his peers.

Written by Mr E[dward] R[avenscroft]