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THE ABBEY CLASSICS—XIV

*THE PLAYS OF
JOHN GAY
VOLUME ONE*





THE
Abbey Classics

THE PLAYS OF
JOHN GAY

VOLUME ONE

Ornamented by Martin Travers

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THE LIFE OF JOHN GAY

(Taken from Dr. Johnson's Lives of the Poets.)

JOHN GAY, descended from an old family that had been long in possession of the manour of Goldworthy in Devonshire, was born in 1688, at or near Barnstaple, where he was educated by Mr. Luck, who taught the school of that town with good reputation, and, a little before he retired from it, published a volume of Latin and English verses. Under such a master he was likely to form a taste for poetry. Being born without prospect of hereditary riches, he was sent to London in his youth, and placed apprentice with a silk-mercant.

How long he continued behind the counter, or with what degree of softness and dexterity he received and accommodated the Ladies, as he probably took no delight in telling it, is not known. The report is, that he was soon weary of either the restraint or servility of his occupation, and easily persuaded his master to discharge him.

The dutchess of Monmouth, remarkable for inflexible perseverance in her demand to be treated as a princess, in 1712 took Gay into her service as secretary: by quitting a shop for such service, he might gain leisure, but he certainly advanced little in the boast of independence. Of his leisure he made so good use, that he published next year a poem on *Rural Sports*, and inscribed it to Mr. Pope, who was then rising fast into reputation. Pope was pleased with the honour; and when he became acquainted with Gay, found such attractions in his manners and conversation, that he seems to have received him into his inmost confidence; and a friendship was formed

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between them which lasted to their separation by death, without any known abatement on either part. Gay was the general favourite of the whole association of wits; but they regarded him as a playfellow rather than a partner, and treated him with more fondness than respect.

Next year he published *The Shepherd's Week*, six English Pastorals, in which the images are drawn from real life, such as it appears among the rusticks in parts of England remote from London. Steele, in some papers of the *Guardian*, had praised Ambrose Philips, as the Pastoral writer that yielded only to Theocritus, Virgil, and Spenser. Pope, who had also published Pastorals, not pleased to be overlooked, drew up a comparison of his own compositions with those of Philips, in which he covertly gave himself the preference, while he seemed to disown it. Not content with this, he is supposed to have incited Gay to write the *Shepherd's Week*, to shew, that if it be necessary to copy nature with minuteness, rural life must be exhibited such as grossness and ignorance have made it. So far the plan was reasonable; but the Pastorals are introduced by a *Proeme*, written with such imitation as they could attain of obsolete language, and by consequence in a style that was never spoken nor written in any language or in any place.

But the effect of reality and truth became conspicuous, even when the intention was to shew them groveling and degraded. These Pastorals became popular, and were read with delight, as just representations of rural manners and occupations, by those who had no interest in the rivalry of the poets, nor knowledge of the critical dispute.

In 1713 he brought a comedy called *The Wife of Bath* upon the stage, but it received no applause; he printed it, however; and seventeen years after, having altered it, and, as he thought, adapted it more to the publick taste; he offered it again to the town; but, though he was flushed with the success of the *Beggar's Opera*, had the mortification to see it again rejected.

In the last year of queen Anne's life, Gay was made secretary to the earl of Clarendon, ambassador to the

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court of Hanover. This was a station that naturally gave him hopes of kindness from every party; but the Queen's death put an end to her favours, and he had dedicated his *Shepherd's Week* to Bolingbroke, which Swift considered as the crime that obstructed all kindness from the house of Hanover.

He did not, however, omit to improve the right which his office had given him to the notice of the royal family. On the arrival of the princess of Wales, he wrote a poem, and obtained so much favour, that both the Prince and Princess went to see his *What d'ye call it*, a kind of mock-tragedy, in which the images were comick, and the action grave; so that, as Pope relates, Mr. Cromwell, who could not hear what was said, was at a loss how to reconcile the laughter of the audience with the solemnity of the scene.

Of this performance the value certainly is but little; but it was one of the lucky trifles that give pleasure by novelty, and was so much favoured by the audience, that envy appeared against it in the form of criticism; and Griffin, a player, in conjunction with Mr. Theobald, a man afterwards more remarkable, produced a pamphlet called the *Key to the What d'ye call it*; which, says Gay, *calls me a blockhead, and Mr. Pope a knave.*

But Fortune has always been inconstant. Not long afterwards (1717) he endeavoured to entertain the town with *Three Hours after Marriage*; a comedy written, as there is sufficient reason for believing, by the joint assistance of Pope and Arbuthnot. One purpose of it was to bring into contempt Dr. Woodward the Fossilist, a man not really or justly contemptible. It had the fate which such outrages deserve: the scene in which Woodward was directly and apparently ridiculed, by the introduction of a mummy and a crocodile, disgusted the audience, and the performance was driven off the stage with general condemnation.

Gay is represented as a man easily incited to hope, and deeply depressed when his hopes were disappointed. This is not the character of a hero; but it may naturally imply something more generally welcome, a soft and

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civil companion. Whoever is apt to hope good from others is diligent to please them; but he that believes his powers strong enough to force their own way, commonly tries only to please himself.

He had been simple enough to imagine that those who laughed at the *What d'ye call it* would raise the fortune of its author; and finding nothing done, sunk into dejection. His friends endeavoured to divert him. The earl of Burlington sent him (1716) into Devonshire; the year after, Mr. Pulteney took him to Aix; and in the following year lord Harcourt invited him to his seat, where, during his visit, the two rural lovers were killed with lightning, as is particularly told in Pope's Letters.

Being now generally known, he published (1720) his Poems by subscription with such success, that he raised a thousand pounds; and called his friends to a consultation, what use might be best made of it. Lewis, the steward of lord Oxford, advised him to intrust it to the funds, and live upon the interest; Arbuthnot bade him intrust it to Providence, and live upon the principal; Pope directed him, and was seconded by Swift, to purchase an annuity.

Gay in that disastrous year had a present from young Craggs of some South-sea-stock, and once supposed himself to be master of twenty thousand pounds. His friends persuaded him to sell his share; but he dreamed of dignity and splendour, and could not bear to obstruct his own fortune. He was then importuned to sell as much as would purchase an hundred a year for life, *which, says Fenton, will make you sure of a clean shirt and a shoulder of mutton every day.* This counsel was rejected; the profit and principal were lost, and Gay sunk under the calamity so low that his life became in danger.

By the care of his friends, among whom Pope appears to have shewn particular tenderness, his health was restored; and, returning to his studies, he wrote a tragedy called *The Captives*, which he was invited to read before the princess of Wales. When the hour came, he saw the princess and her ladies all in expectation, and advancing with reverence, too great for any other attention, stumbled

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at a stool, and falling forwards, threw down a weighty Japan screen. The princess started, the ladies screamed, and poor Gay after all the disturbance was still to read his play.

The fate of *The Captives*, which was acted at Drury-Lane in 1723, I know not; but he now thought himself in favour, and undertook (1726) to write a volume of Fables for the improvement of the young duke of Cumberland. For this he is said to have been promised a reward, which he had doubtless magnified with all the wild expectations of indigence and vanity.

Next year the Prince and Princess became King and Queen, and Gay was to be great and happy; but upon the settlement of the household he found himself appointed gentleman usher to the princess Louisa. By this offer he thought himself insulted, and sent a message to the Queen, that he was too old for the place. There seems to have been many machinations employed afterwards in his favour; and diligent court was paid to Mrs. Howard, afterwards countess of Suffolk, who was much beloved by the King and Queen, to engage her interest for his promotion; but solicitations, verses, and flatteries were thrown away; the lady heard them, and did nothing.

All the pain which he suffered from the neglect, or, as he perhaps termed it, the ingratitude of the court, may be supposed to have been driven away by the unexampled success of the *Beggar's Opera*. This play, written in ridicule of the musical Italian Drama, was first offered to Cibber and his brethren at Drury-Lane, and rejected; it being then carried to Rich, had the effect, as was ludicrously said, of *making Gay rich*, and Rich *gay*.

Of this lucky piece, as the reader cannot but wish to know the original and progress, I have inserted the relation which Spence has given in Pope's words.

'Dr. Swift had been observing once to Mr. Gay, what an odd pretty sort of a thing a Newgate Pastoral might make. Gay was inclined to try at such a thing for some time; but afterwards thought it would be better to write a comedy on the same plan. This was what gave rise to

the *Beggar's Opera*. He began on it; and when first he mentioned it to Swift, the Doctor did not much like the project. As he carried it on, he shewed what he wrote to both of us, and we now and then gave a correction, or a word or two of advice; but it was wholly of his own writing.—When it was done, neither of us thought it would succeed.—We showed it to Congreve; who, after reading it over, said, It would either take greatly, or be damned confoundedly.—We were all, at the first night of it, in great uncertainty of the event; till we were very much encouraged by overhearing the duke of Argyle, who sat in the next box to us, say, “It will do—it must do! I see it in the eyes of them.” This was a good while before the first Act was over, and so gave us ease soon; for that duke (besides his own good taste) has a particular knack, as any one now living, in discovering the taste of the publick. He was quite right in this, as usual; the good nature of the audience appeared stronger and stronger every act, and ended in a clamour of applause.’

Its reception is thus recorded in the notes to the *Dunciad*:
 ‘This piece was received with greater applause than was ever known. Besides being acted in London sixty-three days without interruption, and renewed the next season with equal applause, it spread into all the great towns of England; was played in many places to the thirtieth and fortieth time; at Bath and Bristol fifty, &c. It made its progress into Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, where it was performed twenty-four days successively. The ladies carried about with them the favourite songs of it in fans, and houses were furnished with it in screens. The fame of it was not confined to the author only. The person who acted Polly, till then obscure, became all at once the favourite of the town; her pictures were engraved, and sold in great numbers; her Life written, books of letters and verses to her published, and pamphlets made even of her sayings and jests. Furthermore, it drove out of England (for that season) the Italian Opera, which had carried all before it for ten years.’

Of this performance, when it was printed, the reception

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was different, according to the different opinions of its readers. Swift commended it for the excellence of its morality, as a piece that *placed all kinds of vice in the strongest and most odious light*; but others, and among them Dr. Herring, afterwards archbishop of Canterbury, censured it as giving encouragement not only to vice but to crimes, by making a highwayman the hero, and dismissing him at last unpunished. It has been even said, that after the exhibition of the *Beggar's Opera* the gangs of robbers were evidently multiplied.

Both these decisions* are surely exaggerated. The play, like many others, was plainly written only to divert, without any moral purpose, and is therefore not likely to do good; nor can it be conceived, without more speculation than life requires or admits, to be productive of much evil. Highwaymen and housebreakers seldom frequent the playhouse, or mingle in any elegant diversion; nor is it possible for any one to imagine that he may rob with safety, because he sees Macheath reprieved upon the stage.

*This objection, however, or some other rather political than moral, obtained such prevalence, that when Gay produced a second part under the name of Polly, it was prohibited by the Lord Chamberlain; and he was forced to recompense his repulse by a subscription, which is said to have been so liberally bestowed, that what he called oppression ended in profit. The publication was so much favoured, that though the first part gained him four hundred pounds, near thrice as much was the profit of the second.

He received yet another recompense for this supposed hardship, in the affectionate attention of the duke and dutchess of Queensberry, into whose house he was taken, and with whom he passed the remaining part of his life. The duke, considering his want of œconomy, undertook the management of his money, and gave it to him as he wanted it. But it is supposed that the discountenance of the Court sunk deep into his heart, and gave him more discontent than the applauses or tenderness of his friends

could overpower. He soon fell into his old distemper, an habitual colick, and languished, though with many intervals of ease and cheerfulness, till a violent fit at last seized him, and hurried him to the grave, as Arbuthnot reported, with more precipitance than he had ever known. He died on the fourth of December 1732, and was buried in Westminster Abbey. The letter which brought an account of his death to Swift was laid by for some days unopened, because when he received it he was impressed with the preconception of some misfortune.

After his death was published a second volume of Fables more political than the former. His opera of *Achilles* was acted, and the profits were given to two widow sisters, who inherited what he left, as his lawful heirs; for he died without a will, though he had gathered three thousand pounds. There have appeared likewise under his name a comedy called the *Distrest Wife*, and the *Rehearsal at Gotham*, a piece of humour.

The character given him by Pope is this, that *he was a natural man, without design, who spoke what he thought, and just as he thought it; and that he was of a timid temper, and fearful of giving offence to the great; which caution, however, says Pope, was of no avail.*

As a poet, he cannot be rated very high. He was, as I once heard a female critick remark, *of a lower order*. He had not in any great degree the *mens divini*, the dignity of genius. Much however must be allowed to the author of a new species of composition, though it be not of the highest kind. We owe to Gay the Ballad Opera; a mode of comedy which at first was supposed to delight only by its novelty, but has now by the experience of half a century been found so well accommodated to the disposition of a popular audience, that it is likely to keep long possession of the stage. Whether this new drama was the product of judgment or of luck, the praise of it must be given to the inventor; and there are many writers read with more reverence, to whom such merit of originality cannot be attributed.

His first performance, the *Rural Sports*, is such as was

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easily planned and executed; it is never contemptible, nor ever excellent. The *Fan* is one of those mythological fictions which antiquity delivers ready to the hand; but which, like other things that lie open to every one's use, are of little value. The attention naturally retires from a new tale of Venus, Diana, and Minerva.

His Fables seem to have been a favourite work; for, having published one volume, he left another behind him. Of this kind of Fables, the authors do not appear to have formed any distinct or settled notion. Phaedrus evidently confounds them with *Tales*, and Gay both with *Tales* and *Allegorical Prosopopoeias*. A *Fable* or *Apologue*, such as is now under consideration, seems to be, in its genuine state, a narrative in which beings irrational, and sometimes inanimate, *arbores loquuntur, non tantum ferae*, are, for the purpose of moral instruction, feigned to act and speak with human interests and passions. To this description the compositions of Gay do not always conform. For a Fable he gives now and then a Tale or an abstracted Allegory; and from some, by whatever name they may be called, it will be difficult to extract any moral principle. They are, however, told with liveliness; the versification is smooth, and the diction, though now and then a little constrained by the measure or the rhyme, is generally happy.

To *Trivia* may be allowed all that it claims; it is spritely, various, and pleasant. The subject is of that kind which Gay was by nature qualified to adorn; yet some of his decorations may be justly wished away. An honest blacksmith might have done for Patty what is performed by Vulcan. The appearance of Cloacina is nauseous and superfluous; a shoeboy could have been produced by the casual cohabitation of mere mortals. Horace's rule is broken in both cases; there is no *dignus vindice nodus*, no difficulty that required any supernatural interposition. A patten may be made by the hammer of a mortal, and a bastard may be dropped by a human strumpet. On great occasions, and on small, the mind is repelled by useless and apparent falsehood.

Of his little Poems the publick judgement seems to be right; they are neither much esteemed, nor totally despised. The story of the Apparition is borrowed from one of the tales of Poggio. Those that please least are the pieces to which *Gulliver* gave occasion; for who can much delight in the echo of an unnatural fiction?

Dione is a counterpart to *Amynta*, and *Pastor Fido*, and other trifles of the same kind, easily imitated, and unworthy of imitation. What the Italians call comedies from a happy conclusion, Gay calls a tragedy from a mournful event; but the style of the Italians and of Gay is equally tragical. There is something in the poetical *Arcadia* so remote from known reality and speculative possibility, that we can never support its representation through a long work. A Pastoral of an hundred lines may be endured; but who will hear of sheep and goats, and myrtle bowers and purling rivulets, through five acts? Such scenes please Barbarians in the dawn of literature, and children in the dawn of life; but will be for the most part thrown away, as men grow wise, and nations grow learned.

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4. *Three Hours after Marriage*. A comedy (1717).
(*This rightly abused piece was ascribed to Gay, although the authors of the greater part of the play were Pope and Arbuthnot.*)
5. *The Captives*. A tragedy (1724).
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10. *The Distress'd Wife*. A comedy (*post.* 1743).
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THE MOHOCKS:

A

TRAGI-COMICAL FARCE

Quo, quo, scelesti, ruitis? aut cur dexteris
Aptantur enses conditi?

Hor.

TO MR. D * * *

SIR,

THERE are several Reasons which induce me to lay this Work at your Feet: The subject of it is *Horrid* and *Tremendous*, and the whole Piece written according to the exactest Rules of Dramatic Poetry, as I have with great care collected them from several of your elaborate Dissertations.

The World will easily perceive that the Plot of it is form'd upon that of *Appius* and *Virginia*, which Model, indeed, I have in a great measure followed throughout the whole Conduct of the Play.

The Action is plain and simple, the Time not above an hour and three quarters, and the Scene shifted but twice in the whole *Drama*: I am apt to flatter myself that those two Transitions are extremely natural and easy; being only out of the Tavern into the Watch-house, and, *vice versa*, out of the Watch-house into the Tavern

I am inform'd that several of these Scenes have already received your Approbation, in your elegant Retreat in the Country; where, I have the Pleasure to learn, that you are laying out your Time in such Rhapsodies and Speculations as cannot but be beneficial to the Commonwealth of Letters.

As we look upon you to have the Monopoly of *English* Criticism in your Head, we hope you will very shortly chastise the Insolence of the *Spectator*, who has lately had the *Audaciousness* to shew that there are more Beauties than Faults in a Modern Writer.

I am not at all concerned at this *Tragedy's* being rejected by the Players, when I consider how many of your immortal Compositions have met with no better Reception.

DEDICATION

I am proud to answer the malicious World in this Case, with that memorable Saying which was formerly applied to *Scaliger* :—*I had rather be in the wrong with the ingenious Mr. D***, than in the Right with any body else.*

I am, Sir, with great Respect and Gratitude,

Your most obliged,

most obedient,

most humble,

and most devoted Servant,

THE AUTHOR

THE PROLOGUE

To be SPOKEN by the PUBLISHER.

THIS Farce, if the kind Players had thought fit,
With Action had supply'd its want of Wit.
Oh Readers! had you seen the Mohocks rage,
And frighted Watchmen tremble on the Stage;
Had you but seen our Mighty Emp'ror stalk;
And heard, in Cloudy, honest Dicky talk,
Seen Pinkethman in strutting Prig appear,
And, 'midst of Danger, wisely lead the Rear,
It might have pleas'd; for now-a-days the Joke
Rises or falls as with Grimace 'tis spoke.
' As matters stand, there's but this only way,
T' applaud our disappointed Author's Play:
Let all those Hands that would have clapp'd, combine
To take the whole Impression off from mine.
That's a sure way to raise the Poet's Name:
A New Edition gains immortal Fame!

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

The Emperor of the *Mohocks*.

Abaddon,
Molock,
Whisker,
Myrmidon,
Cannibal,
Gogmagog,
Constable Prig.

}

Mohocks.

Peter Cloudy,
Starlight,
Frost,
Windy,
Moonshine,
Bleak,

}

Watchmen.

Gentle, *a Beau.*

Joan Cloudy, Cloudy's *Wife.*

Justice Wiseman.

Justice Kindle.

Justice Scruple.

Peg Firebrand,

Jenny Cracker,

}

Whores.

Other Watchmen.



THE MOHOCKS

• *A TRAGI-COMICAL FARCE*

SCENE I. A TAVERN.

• The EMPEROR of the MOHOCKS sitting in State, MOHOCKS attending him.

ABADDON.

THUS far our riots with success are crown'd,
Have found no stop, or what they found o'ercome;
• In vain th' embattell'd Watch in deep array,
Against our rage oppose their lifted poles;
Through Poles we rush triumphant, watchman rolls
On watchman; while their lanthorns kick'd aloft
Like blazing stars, illumine all the air.

Mol. Such acts as these have made our fame immortal,
And wide through all *Britannia's* distant towns,

THE MOHOCKS

The name of *Mohock* ev'ry tongue employs;
While each fond mother at the sound grows pale
And trembles for her absent son——

Whisk. Let's lose no longer time in idle talk,
Which might be better spent in new exploits.——
Most mighty emperor ! a noble youth,
Fir'd by our deeds to glorious emulation
Desires admittance——

Emp. Go, and introduce him:
But search with care th' intentions of his heart,
See he be not a superficial sinner,
That talks of mischiefs which he ne'er perform'd:
Those are mean villains, and unworthy us.

Mir. I'll answer for him, for I've known him long,
Know him a subject worthy such a prince;
Sashes and casements felt his early rage,
He has twisted knockers, broken drawers heads,
And never flinch'd his glass, or baulk'd his wench.
But see he comes——

Enter new Mohock.

New Moh. Great potentate! who leadst the *Mohock*
squadrons
To nightly expeditions, whose dread nod
Gives law to those, lawless to all besides:
To thee I come——to serve beneath thy banner.
Mischief has long lain dormant in my bosom
Like smother'd fire, which now shall blaze abroad
In glorious enterprize——

Emp. Bravely resolv'd——henceforth thy name
Be *Cannibal*——like them, devour mankind.
But come——night wears apace——begin the rites.

[*They all take hands in a circle and kneel.*]

Gog. By all the elements, and all the powers
Celestial, nay terrestrial, and infernal;
By *Acheron*, and the black streams of *Styx*,
An oath irrevocable to *Jove* himself,
We swear true fealty, and firm allegiance

THE MOHOCKS

To our most high and mighty emperor.

All. We swear.

Gog. That we'll to virtue bear invet'rate hate,
Renounce humanity, defy religion;
That villany, and all outrageous crimes
Shall ever be our glory and our pleasure.

All. We swear.

Gog. Let all hell's curses light upon his head,
That dares to violate this solemn oath;
May pains and aches cramp all his rotten bones;
May constant impotence attend his lust;
May the dull slave be bigotted to virtue;
And tread no more the pleasing paths of vice,
And then, at last die a mean, whining penitent.

All. This curse involve us all.

Emp. 'Tis well—[*The Emperor stands in the midst of them, and speaks this Speech.*

Now bring the generous bowl—come—pledge me all—
Rouse up your souls with this celestial nectar.
What gain'd the *Macedonian* youth the world?

• 'Twas wine. What rais'd the soul of *Catiline*

To such a brave, unparallell'd ambition?

Wine, potent, heav'nly juice, immortal wine.

Slothful a-while inglorious mortals lay,

But wine to noble actions led the way;

• Wine conquers all things—all must wine obey. }

[*Drinks.*

A SONG.

[*The Mohocks stand in a Circle, with the Glasses in their Hands.*

Come, fill up the glass!

Round, round, let it pass,

'Till our reason be lost in our wine:

Leave conscience's rules

To women and fools,

THIS only can make us divine.

THE MOHOCKS

Chorus. Then a *Mohock*, a *Mohock* I'll be,
No laws shall restrain
Our libertine reign,
We'll riot, drink on, and be free. [All drink.]

We will scour the town,
Knock the constable down,
Put the watch and the beadle to flight:
We'll force all we meet
To kneel down at our feet,
And own this great prince of the night.

Chor. Then a *Mohock*, a *Mohock*, &c. [All drink.]

The Grand Seignior shall own
His seraglio outdone,
For all womankind is our booty;
No condition we spare
Be they brown, black or fair
We make them fall down, and do duty.

Chorus. Then a *Mohock*, a *Mohock* I'll be,
No laws shall restrain
Our libertine reign
We'll riot, drink on, and be free. [All drink,
[Exeunt.]

SCENE II.

The Street before the Watch-house.

Enter several Watchmen.

Moon. Lookye, brother watchman, you are a man of learning and can read the news.

Windy. Why, neighbour, for that matter as a body may say, Mr. Constable is a great man! a great man, neighbour, and fair words cost nothing—But as I was saying, *Peter Cloudy* there, is ready with his verses.

THE MOHOCKS

Frost. Ay, ay! *Peter's* verses may be seen pasted up in every barber's shop in the parish; *Peter* shall be our spokesman to induce our new Mr. Constable.

• *Enter Constable.*

Come *Cloudy*, begin.

Cloudy. O Magistrate, thou art, as I may say,
So great by night, as is *Queen Anne* by day,
And what greater power can any where be seen?
For you do represent the person of the Queen.
The greatest Judge in *England* cannot do,
Or execute more greater things than you.
God save you, Master Constable, we pray,
Who are your honest Watch-men night and day.

Const. Well said, *Peter*——but harkye, my lads,
we are like to have hot work on't to-night——the *Mohocks*
without doubt, will be abroad.

Starl. Oh, master constable, bloody-minded fellows!
that have broke more windows than the great storm,
and are more mischievous than a press-gang.

Cloudy. You may take my word for it, Mr. Constable
——sufferers may have leave to complain——my head
and ribs have been thwack'd over and over again like a
flock-bed by them.

Const. Why, they say that they slit noses, cut and
slash all they meet with, poach folks in the calves of the
legs, and disturb us and our officers in our lawful author-
ity——I charge you all, knock down upon suspicion——
that we may not be forced to cut capers against our wills
——Pox of such dancing masters, say I, that will make a
man dance without a fiddle!

Starl. They make no more of our poles than so many
straws. Let me tell you, Sir, that I have seen them
do such things as would make a man's hair stand on
end——let me see——ay——to-morrow night, 'twill be
three nights ago——when I was going my round
——I met about five or six and thirty of these *Mohocks*;

THE MOHOCKS

by the same token 'twas a very windy morning—they all had swords as broad as butchers clevers, and hack'd and hew'd down all before them—I saw—as I am a man of credit, in the neighbourhood—all the ground covered with noses—as thick as 'tis with hail-stones after a storm.

Const. So—between whores and *Mohocks*, we shall not have a man left with a handle to his face—heav'n keep us, say I,—and preserve that member from danger—for a man of reputation would never be able to shew his nose after such an affront.

Frost. Ha, ha, ha!—But that is nothing to what I have seen—I saw them hook a man as cleverly as a fisherman would a great fish—and play him up and down from *Charing-Cross* to *Temple-Bar*—they cut off his ears, and eat them up, and then gave him a swinging slash in the arm—told him that bleeding was good for a fright, and so turn'd him loose.

Const. And where were you all the while?

Frost. I blowed out my candle, and lay snug in the corner of a bulk.

Starl. Poh——poh!——that's nothing at all——I saw them cut off a fellow's legs, and if the poor man had not run hard for it, they had cut off his head into the bargain.

Cloudy. Poor *John Mopstaff's* wife was likely to come to damage by them——for they took her up by the heels and turned her quite inside out——the poor woman, they say, will ne'er be good for any thing more——honest *John* can hardly find the head from the tail of her.

Windy. Hark! hark! what noise is that?—oh the *Mohocks*——the *Mohocks*——oh——*Will, Harry, Gregory, Peter, George, Thomas*, to your poles——quickly——ay——there——stand to it——stand to it.

[*Pushing them forwards.*

Const. Where?——where are they?——ay, gentlemen——stand to it. [*Pushing them forwards.*

Starl. Oh——there they come——oh——yon-

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der is one with a face like a lion——the *Guildhall Giant* is a meer Dwarf to him.

Cloudy. Where, where?——Oh!——keep your ranks, brothers——hark!

Starl. Nothing but fancy, neighbours, all's well, only a shadow, only a shadow; but if they had come——

All. Ay, if they had come——

[*All with their poles lifted up and advancing.*

Bleak. We would have——hark——keep your ranks, *Peter*,——stand to them, boys. [*Pushing 'em.*] Nothing, nothing, neighbours.

Cloudy. I'm afraid these plaguy suspexions are fore-runners of them; but if they had come——

Const. Open thy lanthorn, *Peter*.

[*The Constable speaks, lighting his Pipe.*

The *Mohocks*——are but men——and——we be men as well as they be——and——a man——is a man, neighbours——now——you be the watch——and I——am the Constable——they may——mayhap——venture upon a single stragglng watchman——but we——are a garrison——a garrison, brothers.

Bleak. Ay, Mr. Constable, and we'll stand by you with our lives and fortunes.

Const. A *Mohock*,——brothers,——a *Mohock*, I say, will no more come near a watch-house than a whore——
• Here——we are unattackable——but we be——not only to be upon the defensive——brothers——I mean, to defend the watch-house——but upon the offensive——I mean, to offend——destroy——knock down——take up——and——commit——and bring *Mohocks* to justice.——
• Therefore, neighbours,——as our duty requires us——I order the greatest party of you to go——through all the several——streets——lanes and alleys——to endeavour——to seize——and apprehend the *Mohocks*——if you apprehend them——d'ye hear——bring them hither before me——But if——they apprehend you——d'ye hear——then——you need not come——The Justices are now sitting——and have ordered all the *Mohocks* that we shall take, to be immediately brought

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before them. [They all go out, but the Constable and six Watchmen.]

Cloudy. Mr. Constable—d'ye see, Mr. Constable, here is this pole, Mr. Constable—I'll engage that this pole—Mr. Constable, if it takes a *Mohock* in the' right place—it shall knock him down as flat as a flounder, Mr. Constable—*Pole* is the word, Sir,—I, one night, Mr. Constable, clapped my back against the Watch-house, and kept nine *Mohocks*, with their swords drawn, at pole's length, broke three of their heads, knock'd down four, and trimmed the jackets of the other six.

Bleak. I, for my part, remember the ancient *Mohocks* of King *Charles's* days; I was but a young man then; now times are altered with me——some of the greatest men of the kingdom were *Mohocks*, yet for all that we did not care a fig for them.

Const. There have been *Mohocks* in all reigns and in all ages, but, thank Heaven, there have been Constables too, with heart and hand to suppress them——though a Constable be a civil magistrate, yet upon great occasions he is allowed to take up arms; and there is not a man among you that shall step a step farther than myself.

[A Noise of the Mohocks.]

Windy. Mr. Constable stands in the front.

[Pushing one another forward.]

Frost. A brave man! A gallant man! I warrant him.

Const. Hold, hold, Gentlemen, let us do all things in order.—Do you advance, Gentlemen, d'ye see, and while you advance I'll lead up the rear.

Enter the Mohocks singing.

'Tis wine and a whore,
That we *Mohocks* adore,
We'll drink 'till our senses we quench;
When the liquor is in,
We're heightened for sin;
Then heigh! for a brisk jolly wench.
Fa, la, la, la.

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Abad. Holla! the watch! Down—down with them; oh, the devil!—down with your poles you dogs—upon your knees—worship the *Mohocks* and be damned to you. [*The Watch throw down their poles, and fall on their knees.*]

Starl. Oh for pity's sake, Gentlemen, I've a wife and four children.

Mol. Rot your wife and children! Make fricassees of them, Sirrah, and invite the devil to supper.

Whisk. And I'll cut off the noses of all these rascals to garnish the dish.

Myrm. Heighday!—what, *Peg Firebrand* in limbo?
[*Looking towards two wenches whom the watch have in custody.*]

Gog. Come, you scoundrel there—unhand the doxies—Upon your knees, you dog, and receive sentence.

Peg. Your humble servant, Mr. *Myrmidon*.

Jenny. Who thought to have found Mr. *Gogmagog* here!

Peg. Pox of these destroyers of game!—and Mr. *Moloch* too! Mr. *Moloch*, I am your humble servant.

Can. Come, I'll sacrifice this rascal's ears to you, *Peg*.

Emp. The Constable is my prisoner—harkye, sirrah, are you married?

Const. Yes, an' please your honour.

Emp. Then you are a cuckold, coxcomb.

Const. Yes—an—an—an—please—your worship.

[*Trembling for fear.*]

Abad. This dog's face is scarce worth the spoiling. Come, sirrah, I'll save your wife the charge of more children, and make you cry a dark cloudy morning like an *Italian*.

Cloudy. Oh pray your honour, good your honour, my ears or my nose are wholly at your worship's service; but pray, good, dear loving Sir, don't let poor *Gillian* lose her only comfort.

Mol. Come, let's dispatch, cut, flash, and mangle and pursue more noble game.

Emp. Hold, hold! For once we'll have a merry frolic.

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Since we have the Constable and watch in our power, we will divest ourself of our imperial dignity, make them *Mohocks*, and ourselves Constable and watchmen.

All. Agreed, agreed!—Come strip, sirrah, strip sirrah.

Emp. Ay, ay, come, come, sirrah, let us put the lion's skin upon the ass.

Const. Yes, Sir, yes; oh pray, Sir! I'll be an ass or any thing—but pray your honour let me be an ass with ears.

Starl. Little does my poor wife at home think what a pityful taking her husband is in.—Poor soul!—She is sound asleep—and thinks nought of all this. [*Aside.* *The Emperor changes cloaths with the Constable, and places a patch like an half Moon in his forehead; the other Mohocks strip the Watchmen, and take their poles and lanterns.*]

Myrm. Come, strip this scoundrel, *Jenny*, and plague the rogue now thou hast got him in thy power.

Jenny. Pox on't! Mr. *Myrmidon*—'tis as dangerous for us to use a watchman ill, as for a stage-coachman to be uncivil to an highwayman; for our trade forces us to travel the streets all the year round.—Remember, sirrah, you owe me an escape without a fee to the Constable.

Peg. And me.

Whisk. Why, the dog looks as terrible as a Janizary.

Cloudy. Oh law! Sir, I'm a poor quiet harmless fellow, and no Janzary—*Peter Cloudy* by name.—I'm known all the neighbourhood over, and can bring several good creditable housekeepers to vouch for my honesty.

Can. The next man that speaks a word forfeits an ear; and for the second fault, a nose—

Cloudy. Let me see! oh, ay, I was afraid he had took him off as a mountebank draws a tooth—with a touch.

[*Feeling his Nose. Aside.*]

Can. Silence in the court!—while our most mighty Emperor sits in judgment.

Emp. You *Cannibal*, you *Abaddon*, with *Whisker* and the rest of you, bring all you meet before me.

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Enter Gentle.

Mol. Heigh-day! here's a fellow got into the trammels already. Come, you Sir, before the Constable—
on, on. [Theys:ize Gentle.

Gent. Pray, gentlemen, treat a man of fashion with more civility.

Can. Damme Sir!—you are a *Mohock*!

Gent. I vow and protest, gentlemen, I just now came from my lady *Pride*'s in the city, from playing at ombre, and had there been a coach or chair to be found, I had not walked on foot.

Abad. Before the Constable—Come, come, before the Constable.

Gent. Be civil, I beg you, gentlemen, disengage your poles from my full bottom—and I'll wait upon you.

Emp. Harkye, fellow, you seem very suspicious, you have a downcast, hanging look.

Gent. A languishing air, you mean, Sir.

Emp. Give an account of yourself, fellow, whence come you? whither are you going? What is your business abroad at this time of night—take his sword from him there, lest he should have some evil design against the Queen's officer.

•*Gent.* I am a gentleman, Sir.

Emp. A doubtful, a shuffling answer! we need no farther proof that he is a *Mohock*—commit him.

Gent. 'Tis a strange thing that the vulgar cannot distinguish the Gentleman—Pray Sir, may I ask you one question—have you ever seen a *Mohock*? Has he that softness in his look? That sweetness of delivery in his discourse? Believe me, Sir, there is a certain *Je ne sçai quoi* in my manner that shews my conversation to have lain altogether among the politer part of the world.

Emp. Lookye, Sir, your manners in talking *Latin* before her majesty's officer, shew you to be an ill-designing person.

Gent. Ha! ha! ha! very merry, as I hope to be caressed. *Latin* and *French* sound alike in the ears of the vulgar—

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Je ne sçai quoi is a *French* phrase much in vogue at the court end of the town. Ha! ha! ha!

Emp. Mere prevarication! To the round-house with him—A *Mohock* without dispute—here's evidence against you, friend, downright evidence against you.

Mol. With these very eyes, Mr. Constable, I saw him in a dark alley, where one could not see one's hand, slit a cinder wench's nose, because she would not yield to his brutality.

Gent. Is there any thing in my appearance that shows a *goût* for a cinder wench? Improbable! downright falsity!—This usage, Sir, will make me complain to some higher power of your illegal proceedings.

Emp. What! dispute my authority! Bind him, and see you guard him strictly.

Gent. Pray—Gentlemen—indeed—I vow—Gentlemen—you daub my ruffles; let not your lanthorns come nigh my cloaths—bless me! My perriwig!—hold! hold! I vow and protest upon the word of a gentleman, that I am a civil person—fogh! the stench of the lanthorns confounds me.—Have a care what you do Mr. Constable, for I shall find redress.

Emp. Bind him! bind him! I value not his threats. *Mohocks* are thus to be treated, where and whenever they shall be taken. [They bind Gentle.

Enter Joan Cloudy.

Gog. Come on, woman, before the Constable—Here is a straggler that is just now fallen into my hands, Mr. Constable.

Joan. Where is *Peter*?—What, is *Peter* going his rounds? I'm *Peter's* wife, Mr. Constable,—an' please your worship—and am come to take a pot with him, and take care of him this cold weather. What, is not *Peter* among you? What! is not *Peter* come back from his rounds?—*Peter*, Mr. Constable, an' please your worship, is a diligent man in his office—I have been in bed these two hours, and was so strangely a-dreamed of

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the *Mohocks* that I could not rest, but must come and see him.—Alas! alas! These are strange hazardous times! I was a-dreamed methought that the *Mohocks*—

Emp. Hold! hold! Woman, are you drunk with mild, stale, or stout?

Cloudy. Heaven grant that I may not be made a cuckold before my own face.—What a plague made her stirring?

[*Aside.*

Joan. Drunk! Mr. Constable, drunk! Whether you know it or not; though I am a poor woman, I am a sober woman—I work for what I get, and I thank nobody for a maintenance.—Drunk! Tell your wife of being drunk with mild, stale, and stout—would *Peter* was here, he should not hear his wife affronted after this manner.

Emp. I'll take care and tongue-tie you, woman.

Joan. To be tongue-tied is fit for nothing but liars and swearers. I'll speak the truth, and shame the devil. Tho' a Constable be to keep peace and quietness, yet the greatest Constable in *England* shall not make me hold my tongue, when there is occasion for speaking. My husband is a Watchman, *Peter Cloudy* by name, a good house-keeper, though he be a poor man.—Why these are all strange faces, methinks. Where is *Peter*, friend? Oh law! oh dear! this ugly dream runs in my head most strangely?—[*Spies Peter.*] Oh gracious! What's this our *Peter*? Why *Peter*!—Sure I be'nt out of my dream yet!—Why, *Peter*! I say, *Peter*. [*Bawls. Cloudy shakes his head.*

Gog. Ay, why there now, good woman, while you thought he was upon the watch, he was about *Mohocking*.—Why he is a *Mohock*, good woman.

Joan. Oh good lord!

Whisk. Here—we took him in company with these two wenches.

Joan. What? and Constable *Prig* a *Mohock* too! and honest *Harry Starlight*!

Can. *Mohocks* all, good woman, every soul of them.

Joan. Why, *Peter, Peter*! Mr. *Prig, Harry Starlight*!

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What are you all dumb? [Cloudy *shakes his head.*] Oh, you ungracious rogue! You ungodly wretch! What, must you have your wenches, Sirrah, while your poor children at home?—Ay, and your poor wife, nay, your honest, true and careful wife, are ready to starve. Why, *Peter*, I say, fye upon't! What, hast thee no more wit than to be a *Mohock* too? [Cloudy *shakes his head.*]

Joan. Why! you notorious rogue, won't you answer your wife? [Cloudy *shakes his head.*]

Joan. Alack, alack! do I live to see this with my own eyes? Oh, *Peter, Peter!* an old fool of all fools is the worst—a *Hawkubite!* a rogue! I hope I shall see thee at the gallows for this, blockhead! What, you there, with your hairy bush upon your head, I suppose are the ring-leader of them:—I'll *Hawkubite* you, Sirrah.

[*To Gentle.*]

Gent. I vow and protest, Madam, you do me the greatest injustice in the world, I am a gentleman of honour, but at present labour under the misfortune of being suspected.

Emp. Come, come, woman, don't be troublesome, we can see through your designs; you are a female *Mohock*, I perceive—and under that denomination I order you to be apprehended.

Joan. I a female *Mohock!* a female Jesuit as soon—

Emp. Bind her, bind her.

Joan. But my tongue shall still be at liberty; he must have good luck, i'fackins that ties a woman's tongue. Why, *Peter*, Sirrah, all this comes of your ungracious tricks, you *Hawkubite* rogue!

Emp. Hey-dey! what's here—[*Takes a paper out of the Constable's pocket.*] A warrant for the apprehending us *Mohocks!* I find the Justices are sitting in all the several quarters of the town this night, to examine them. What think you, my heroes?—shall we improve the jest? carry the scoundrels before some Justices of a ward where they are unknown, and so make them commit their own officers instead of us?

All. A merry frolic! With all our hearts.

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Emp. We'll immediately carry them before the Justices of the next ward, commit the rascals to the round-house, and so finish the night's adventure.

Whis. Come, come! To the Justices—To the Justices!

Emp. Leave this fellow, and this female *Mohock* till our return; bind them back to back, and there will be no fear of *Peter's* being jealous. [They bind them.]

Gent. I beg you, gentlemen!—This posture is so like man and wife, that a man of mode may be perfectly ashamed of it.

Joan. Go, you *Hawkubite* rogue, you ungracious wretch!

Gent. Figurative matrimony, as I hope to be caressed; one pulls one way, and the other the other.

[They bolt Gentle and Joan into the Watch-house and
Exeunt.

SCENE III. A TAVERN.

• *The Justices sitting.*

Scrup. What says the Statute Book, brother *Wiseman*, in relation to these kind of enormities? I am informed that there were *Mohocks* in Queen *Elizabeth's* days. Have you searched all the statutes of her reign for an Act in relation to this affair?

Kind. What occasion for all these doubts, Mr. Justice *Scruple*? for where the law is silent, there, our will is the law—If we have no precedents of *Mohocks*—come, Mr. Justice *Scruple*, my hearty service to you—if we have no precedents, I say, of any *Mohocks*—my hearty service to you again, Mr. Justice—yet *Mohocks* inclusively are comprehended in disorderly persons, and disturbers of her Majesty's peace, and as such, I say, they may and ought to be committed.

Scrup. But we must refer to the Statute-Books upon all occasions—The Statute-Books must be our guide in all cases—and where the statutes will not come

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within our cases—we must make our cases come within the statute's cases—That's the method of all judicious practising Lawyers, brothers.

Wise. Let us act justice, and be guided by reason.

Kind. What has reason to do with law, brother *Wiseman*? If we follow the law, we must judge according to the letter of the law.

Scrup. You are in the right, brother *Kindle*—reason and law have been at variance in our courts these many years—a mis-spell'd word, or a quibble will baffle the most convincing argument in the world; and therefore if we are guided—Mr. Justice *Wiseman*, my hearty respects to you—if we are guided, I say, in any measure by the law, 'tis my opinion, that we must keep strictly to the letter of the law.

Enter the Mohocks, Constable and Watchmen.

Emp. An' please your worships we have brought some *Mohocks* before your honours; this, an please your honours, is the Emperor, and this his Grand Vizir, and ail the rest are Princes of the blood.

Abad. I, my own self, an' please your honours, saw this very self-same fellow here, tip the lion upon five several of her Majesty's true-born subjects, and afterwards slit all their noses.

Mol. This fellow here—is a Dancing-master—an' please your worships, he pricks passengers in the calves of the legs to make them shew their agility.

Whisk. And this terrible-look'd fellow, an' please your honours, is their master cooper,—his office is to barrel up old women—all the rest of them have their proper employments.

Wise. Where, and how were they taken?

Can. In an attack upon the Watch-house—After an obstinate fight of about an hour and an half we made them all prisoners.

Star. The devil is a most confounded liar! [*Aside.*

Emp. We took this *Mohock*, Mr. Justices in an actual

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assault to ravish these two women—oh—he's a devilish fellow for a wench—the rogue has no conscience with him—no more conscience than a woman—What two women! why a woman with common modesty in her demands would not have desired above two men—what, two women at once!

Peg. He gagg'd me, and please your worships; then drew his sword, and threatened to kill me, if I did not—

Jen. And if the watchman had not come just in the nick—

Cloudy. If I lose both my tongue and my ears—I must and will speak—An' please your worships, I am an honest Watchman—*Peter Cloudy.*—

Whisk. What are you, sirrah?—what are you—say a word more!—

[*Aside to him.*

[*The Mohocks prick Cloudy behind.*

Cloudy. I am—oh—yes—I am—oh—I am a *Mohock*, an' please your worships—a Watchman I mean—and this is Mr. Constable *Prig*—oh no—I beg your worships pardon, he is—oh no—oh no—he is not—

Gog. Come, come, confess— [*Aside to Cloudy.*

Cloudy. Yes, he is—Emperor of the *Mohocks*, an' please ye—

• *Kind.* I perceive that you are a prevaricating, shuffling rogue.—Commit him, commit him—when a man talks backwards and forwards—I have done with him.

Cloudy. Oh, dear Mr. Justice—indeed—oh pray sweet, loving, good, kind Mr. Justice—I have been a watchman, these twenty years.

Mol. What's that you say, rascal? [*Aside to Cloudy.*

Cloudy. A *Mohock* these twenty years, an' please your honours.

Kind. Commit them—commit them—we need no further proof—impudent—impudent—rogue—pretend to be the Queen's Officer! I'll hear no more—away—away with them.

Scrup. But hold, brother *Kindle*—Though the case

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is plain in relation to this fellow—yet we must not punish the guilty with the innocent—

Kind. The innocent with the guilty, you would say, brother—They are all of a gang—all rogues alike—Away—away with them.

Wise. Do you confess what is alledged against you by these honest Watchmen. Friends? You are accused of being a riotous sort of creature called *Mohocks*—Answer to your charge—are you guilty or not guilty—

[*The Mohocks prick them behind.*]

All. Not guilty—an' please your worship—Oh yes, yes—guilty—guilty—guilty.

Kind. What need we examine further?

Cloudy. But as to the ravishing—Mr. Justices—oh me!—Yes I will speak [*Aside to the Mohocks.*] as I was saying, Mr. Justices, as to the ravishing—I know nothing of that matter—oh, oh! yes, yes—I did ravish—I did ravish them—an' please your worships.

Kind. A most impudent rogue—the fellow has a confounded ravishing look—Heaven preserve our wives and daughters!—Away, away—they are dangerous persons—Commit them.

[*As they are carrying them out, Enter the other party of the watch—with Joan Cloudy and beau Gentle.*]

1st Watch. An' please your worships—we found this gentleman here, and woman here, joined together in a very odd posture.

Kind. As how—Friend, as how?

1st Watch. Why they were tied together—back to back—an please your worships.

Wise. A very odd posture—brother *Scruple*—a very odd posture.

Joan. But Mr. Justices—Oh you ungracious wretch! Mr. Justices—you are Justices of the Peace, and I hope your worshipful honours will do me justice—Look, how the sneaking rogue looks upon me now!

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Scrup. Proceed woman, to the matter in hand.

Joan. Why, an' please your worshipful honours, to make short of my story—This great boobily lubber here—it seems, while I thought he was upon the watch, went 'about *Mohocking*—The Laird keep us, say I, from the Great *Turk*, and from popery! but to make short of my story, Mr. Justices,—this slave here, this *Hawku-bite* rogue, throws away upon two wenches in one night, [*Weeping.*] what with good housewifry would have satisfied his poor wife for a fortnight; can you deny this, sirrah, can you deny it?—but to make short of my story, an' please your worshipful honours; when I came to the watch-house, thinking to find him in his office, I found him [*Weeping.*] taken up for a *Mohock*.

Emp. Faith, 'tis high time for us to sneak off. [*Aside.*
[*The Mohocks are going.*]

Wise. Hold—hold!—let us examine farther into these affairs.

2d Watch. Why, *Harry*—how comest thee in this pickle? [*Aside to Starlight.*]

• *Gent.* These, gentlemen, Sirs, treat all alike without the least distinction—one would rather fall into the hands of the *Mohocks*, than suffer the barbarities of these ill bred sort of creatures.

• *Cloudy.* Why they are all *Mohocks*—an' please your worshipful honours.—They unconstabled the Constable.

Star. And unwatched the watch—an' please your honours.

Cloudy. Ay—faith—I don't value your staring—it shall all out—faith—now I have got all my friends about me. [*Aside to the Mohocks.*] They stripped us—an' please your worshipful honours—made us *Mohocks*, and themselves Constable and Watch.

Kind. Very strange—brother *Scruple*—very strange.

Cloudy. This is Mr. Constable *Prig*, an' please your honours.

Star. And I am *Harry Starlight*, an' please ye.

Joan. And is not my *Peter* a *Mohock* then!—Art

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not thee a *Hawkubite*, *Peter*?—are not these thy wenches?
—oh, *Peter*! [Hugging him.]

All the Watch. These are all our brother watchmen, we'll vouch for them—an' please your worships.

Wise. A plain case, brothers,—Oh, then you are the *Mohocks*, it seems, Gentlemen.

All the Mohocks. We are Gentlemen, Sirs: 'twas only an innocent frolick.

Wise. Frolicks for brutes and not for men.—Watchmen, seize your prisoners.

Cloudy. Harkye, Sir—are you a *Mohock*—or are you not a *Mohock*—[Takes away the dagger, with which they pricked him.] Come, come, give up your poles and your lanthorns—hold up your head, friend—Mr. *Hannibal* I think they call him—oh—I find you have ears to lose—I was afraid the pillory had been beforehand with me—come, strip.

[The Watchmen strip the Mohocks.]

Joan. Oh *Peter*! *Peter*! and art not thee a *Mohock* then, *Peter*?

Gent. Have I been a captive of the *Mohocks*—well—I vow, 'tis mighty happy, that I have preserved all my features entire for the ladies.

Emp. Pray, Gentlemen, give us our liberty.

All the Mohocks. We'll ask pardon.

Emp. Treat us like gentlemen.

Wise. Let them be brought before us by ten o'clock—You may assure yourselves, Gentlemen—these proceedings of yours shall be punished with the utmost severity. [Exeunt Justices.]

All the Mohocks. We'll submit, ask pardon, or do anything.

Const. Come—let's call up the music that is below, and rejoice for our happy deliverance—Let us shew the Emperor here, that we can dance without his instructions.

All. Agreed.

A Dance of Watchmen.

THE MOHOCKS

Const. This is the day—the joyful night indeed
In which *Great-Britain's* sons from the *Mohocks* are freed.
Our wives and daughters they may walk the street,
Nor *Mohock* now, nor *Hawkubite* shall meet.
Mohock and *Hawkubite*, both one and all,
Shall from this very night date their down—fall.

THE EPILOGUE

Designed to be spoken by the person who should have
play'd *Joan Cloudy*.

WHAT woeful things do we poor folks endure,
To keep our spouses to ourselves secure?
We wives—(of one and all this may be said,)
Ne'er think our husbands safe,—but when in bed.
But now, to quit the wife—How would it please ye,
Could you dissolve the marriage noose as easy.
Marriage would then no more entail for life,
And coquets venture on the name of wife:
What woman would not!—if this scheme would do,
Just for a frolick—take a spouse or two.
Ye criticks that are scatter'd o'er the pit,
And stare and gape to catch descending wit,
Mere *Mohocks*, that on harmless authors prey,
And damn for want of sense a modern play,
I vow 'tis hard!—Yet if it must be so,
I still must ask one favour e'er I go.

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*If you condemn him, grant him a reprieve,
Three days of grace to the young sinner give,
And then—if this sad downfal does delight ye,
As witness of his Exit, I invite ye.*



THE
WHAT D'YE CALL IT

A
TRAGI-COMI-PASTORAL FARCE

—Spirat Tragicum satis, & feliciter audet Hor.

—Locus est & pluribus Umbris Hor.

THE PREFACE.

AS I am the first who have introduced this kind of Dramatick entertainment upon the stage, I think it absolutely necessary to say something by way of Preface, not only to shew the nature of it, but to answer some objections that have been already raised against it by the graver sort of Wits, and other interested people.

We have often had Tragi-Comedies upon the English Theatre with success: but in that sort of composition the Tragedy and Comedy are in distinct scenes, and may be easily separated from each other. But the whole Art of the Tragi-comi-Pastoral Farce lies in interweaving the several kinds of the Drama with each other, so that they cannot be distinguished or separated.

The objections that are raised against it as a Tragedy, are as follow:

First, As to the Plot, they deny it to be Tragical, because its Catastrophe is a wedding, which hath ever been accounted Comical.

Secondly, As to the Characters; that those of a Justice of Peace, a Parish Clerk, and an Embryo's Ghost, are very improper to the dignity of Tragedy, and were never introduced by the Ancients.

Thirdly, they say the Sentiments are not Tragical, because they are those of the lowest country people.

Lastly, They will not allow the Moral to be proper for Tragedy, because the end of Tragedy being to shew human life in its distresses, imperfections and infirmities, thereby to soften the mind of man from its natural obduracy and haughtiness, the Moral ought to have the same tendency; but this Moral, they say, seems entirely calculated to flatter the Audience in their vanity and self-conceitedness.

You all have sense enough to find it out.

To the first objection I answer, that it is still a disputable point, even among the best Criticks, whether a Tragedy may not have a happy Catastrophe; that the French Authors are of this opinion, appears from most of their Modern Tragedies.

In answer to the second objection, I cannot affirm, that any of the Ancients have either a Justice of Peace, a Parish-Clerk, or an Embryo Ghost in their Tragedies; yet whoever will look into Sophocles, Euripides, or Seneca, will find that they greatly affected to introduce Nurses in all their pieces, which every one must grant to be an inferior Character to a Justice of Peace; in imitation of which also, I have introduced a grandmother and an Aunt.

To the third objection which is the meanness of the sentiments, I answer, that the sentiments of Princes and clowns have not in reality that difference which they seem to have: their thoughts are almost the same, and they only differ as the same thought is attended with a meanness or pomp of diction, or receive a different light from the circumstances each Character is conversant with. But these Critic's have forgot the precepts of their Master Horace, who tells them,

—Tragicus plerumque dolet sermone pedestri.

In answer to the objection against the Moral, I have only this to alledge, That the Moral of this piece is concealed; and Morals that are couched so as to exercise the judgments of the audience, have not been disapproved by the best Criticks. And I would have those that object against it as a piece of Flattery, consider, that there is such a Figure as the Irony.*

The Objections against it as a Comedy are,

First, They object to the Plot, that it throws the Characters into the deepest circumstances of distress: Inferior trampled upon by the Tyranny of Power, a soldier to be shot for desertion, and an innocent maid in the utmost despair.

Secondly, That Ghosts are introduced, which move terror, a Passion not proper to be movèd in Comedy.

* See Bossu's Chapter of concealed sentences.

THE PREFACE

Thirdly, They will not allow the Sentiments to be comical, because they are such as naturally flow from the deep distresses abovementioned. The Speech of a dying man, and his last advice to his child, are what one could not reasonably expect should raise the mirth of an audience.

First, That the Plot is comical, I argue from the Peripætia and the Catastrophe. Peascod's change of fortune upon the reprieve's being produced, Kitty's distress ending in the discharge of her sweetheart, and the wedding, are all incidents that are truly comical.

To the second objection I answer, That Ghosts have not been omitted in the antient Comedy; Aristophanes having laid the Scene of his Βαίρα χου among the shades; and Plautus has introduced a Lar familiaris in his Prologue to the Aulularia, which though not actually a Ghost, is very little better.

As to the third objection, That the Sentiments are not Comical, I answer, That the Ghosts are the only characters which are objected to as improper for Comedy, which I have already proved to be justly introduced, as following the manner of the old Comedy; but as they allow that the Sentiments naturally flow from the characters, those of the Justice, Clowns, &c. which are indisputably Comical characters, must be Comical. For the Sentiments being conveyed in number and rhyme, I have the authority of the best Modern French Comedies.

The only objection against it as a Pastoral falls upon the characters, which they say are partly Pastoral, and partly not so. They insist particularly, that a Sergeant of Grenadiers is not a pastoral character, and that the others are so far from being in the state of innocence, that the Clowns are whoremasters, and the damsels with child.

To this I reply, that Virgil talks of Soldiers among his Shepherds.

Impius hæc tam culta Novalia miles habebit.

And the character of the Sergeant is drawn according to the Epithet of Virgil, Impius Miles, which may be seen in that speech of his,

THE PREFACE

You Dog, die like a Soldier—and be damn'd.

For, in short, a Soldier to a Swain is but just the same thing that a Wolf is to his Flocks, and is as naturally talk'd of or introduced. As for the rest of the characters, I can only say I have copied nature, making the youths amorous before wedlock, and the damsels complying and fruitful. Those that are the most conversant in the country are the best judges of this sort of nature.

Lastly, they object against it as a Farce.

First, Because the irregularity of the Plot should answer to the extravagance of the characters, which they say this piece wants, and therefore is no Farce.

Secondly, They deny the characters to be Farcical, because they are actually in nature.

Thirdly, If it was a true Farce, the Sentiments ought to be strain'd, to bear a proportional irregularity with the plot and characters.

To the First I answer, That the Farcical Scene of the Ghosts is introduced without any coherence with the rest of the piece, might be entirely left out, and would not be allowed in a regular Comedy. There are indeed a great number of Dramatick entertainments, where are Scenes of this kind; but those pieces in reality are not Comedies, but five Act Farces.

Secondly, Let the Criticks consider only the nature of Farce, that it is made up of absurdities and incongruities, and that those pieces which have these qualities in the greatest degree are the most Farces; and they will allow this to be so from the characters, and particularly from that of the speaking Ghost of an Embryo, in the conclusion of the first Act. I have 'tis true, Aristophanes's Authority for things of this sort in comedy, who hath introduced a Chorus of Frogs, and made them talk in the following manner :

Βρεκεκεκε, κοαξ, κοαξξ,
Βρεκεκεκε, κοαξ, κοαξξ,
Διμναῖα κρηῶν τέκνα, &c.

Mr. D'Urfey of our own nation has given all the fowls of the air the faculty of speech equal with the parrot. Swans

THE PREFACE

and elbow-chairs in the Opera of Dioclesian have danced upon the English Stage with good success. Shakespear hath some characters of this sort, as a speaking wall, and Moonshine. The former he designed to introduce (as he tells us himself) with something rough cast about him and the latter comes in with a lantern and candle; which in my opinion are characters that make a good figure in the modern Farce.*

Thirdly, The sentiments are truly of the Farce kind, as they are the sentiments of the meanest Clowns convey'd in the pomp of numbers and rhyme; which is certainly forced and out of nature, and therefore Farcical.

After all I have said, I would have these Criticks only consider, when they object against it as a Tragedy, that I designed it something of a Comedy; when they cavil at it as a Comedy, that I had partly a view to Pastoral; when they attack it as a Pastoral, that my endeavours were in some degree to write a Farce, and when they would destroy its character as a Farce, that my design was a Tragi-Comi-Pastoral: I believe when they consider this, they will all agree, that I have happily enough executed what I proposed, which is all I contend for. Yet that I might avoid the cavils and misinterpretations of severe Criticks, I have not called it a Tragedy, Comedy, Pastoral, or Farce, but left the name entirely undermined in the doubtful appellation of the What d'ye call it, which name I thought unexceptionable; but I added to it a Tragi-Comi-Pastoral Farce, as it comprized all those several kinds of the Drama.

The judicious Reader will easily perceive, that the unities are kept as in the most perfect pieces, that the Scenes are unbroken, and Poetical Justice strictly observed; the Ghost of the Embryo and the Parish Girl are entire new characters. I might enlarge further upon the conduct of the particular Scenes, and of the piece in general, but shall only say, that the Success this piece has met with upon the Stage, gives encouragement to our Dramatic Writers to follow its Model; and evidently demonstrates that this sort of Drama is no less fit for the Theatre than those they have succeeded in.

* See his *Midsummer Night's Dream.*

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

<p>Sir <i>Roger</i>, Sir <i>Humphrey</i>, Justice <i>Statute</i>, Squire <i>Thomas</i>, Sir <i>Roger</i>'s Son, <i>alias Thomas Filbert</i>, <i>Jonas Dock</i>, <i>alias Timothy Peascod</i>, <i>Peter Nettle</i>, the Serjeant, Steward to Sir <i>Roger</i>, Constable, Corporal, <i>Stave</i>, a Parish-Clerk. The Ghost of a Child unborn, Countrymen, Ghosts, and Soldiers.</p>	<p>Mr. <i>Miller</i>. Mr. <i>Cross</i>. Mr. <i>Shepherd</i>. } Mr. <i>Johnson</i>. Mr. <i>Penkethman</i>. Mr. <i>Norris</i>. Mr. <i>Quin</i>. Mr. <i>Penroy</i>. Mr. <i>Weller</i>. Mr. <i>Norris</i>, junior.</p>
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W O M E N.

<p><i>Kitty</i>, the Steward's Daughter, <i>alias Kitty Carrot</i>, <i>Dorcas</i>, <i>Peascod</i>'s Sister, <i>Joyce</i>, <i>Peascod</i>'s Daughter, left upon the Parish, Aunt, Grandmother.</p>	<p>} Mrs. <i>Bicknell</i>. Mrs. <i>Willis</i>, senior. } Miss <i>Younger</i>. Mrs. <i>Baker</i>.</p>
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THE WHAT D'YE CALL IT

A TRAGI-COMI-PASTORAL FARCE.

SCENE, *A Country Justice's Hall, adorned with Scutcheons and Stags Horns.*

Enter STEWARD, SQUIRE, KITTY, DOCK, and others in
Country Habits.

Steward. SO, you are ready in your parts, and in your dress too, I see; your own best cloaths do the business. Sure never was play and actors so suited. Come, range yourselves before me, women on the right, and men on the left. Squire *Thomas*, you make a good figure. [*The actors range themselves.*]

Squire. Ay, thanks to *Barnaby's* Sunday cloaths; but call me *Thomas Filbert*, as I am in the play.

Steward. Chear up, daughter, and make *Kitty Carrot* the shining part: Squire *Thomas* is to be in love with you to-night, girl.

Kitty. Ay, I have felt Squire *Thomas's* love to my cost.

THE WHAT D'YE CALL IT

I have little stomach to play, in the condition he hath put me into. [*aside.*]

Steward. *Jonas Dock*, dost thou remember thy name?

Dock. My name? *Jo*— *Jo*— *Jonas*. No—that was the name my godfathers gave me. My play name is *Timothy Pea*— *Pea*— *Peascod*; ay, *Peascod*—and am to be shot for a deserter—

Steward. And you, *Dolly*?

Dolly. An't please ye, I am *Dorcas*, *Peascod's* sister, and am to be with child, as it were.

1st Countryman. And I am to take her up, as it were—
I am the Constable.

2d Countryman. And I am to see *Tim* shot, as it were—
I am the Corporal.

Steward. But what is become of our sergeant?

Dorcas. Why *Peter Nettle*, *Peter*, *Peter*. [*Enter Nettle.*]

Nettle. These stockings of *Susan's* cost a woundy deal of pains the pulling on: But what's a sergeant without red stockings?

Dock. I'll dress thee, *Peter*, I'll dress thee. Here, stand still, I must twist thy neckcloth; I would make thee hold up thy head, and have a ruddy complexion; but pr'ythee don't look black in the face, man. [*Rolling his neckcloth.*] Thou must look fierce and dreadful. [*Making whiskers with a burnt cork.*] But what shall we do for a grenadier's cap?

Steward. Fetch the leathern bucket that hangs in the belfry; that is curiously painted before, and will make a figure.

Nettle. No, no, I have what's worth twenty, on't; the Pope's mitre, that my master *Sir Roger* seiz'd, when they would have burnt him at our market town.

Steward. So, now let ev'ry body withdraw, and prepare to begin the play. [*Exeunt actors.*] My daughter debauch'd! and by that booby *Squire*! well, perhaps the conduct of this play may retrieve her folly, and preserve her reputation. Poor girl! I cannot forget thy tears.

Enter Sir Roger.

THE WHAT D'YE CALL IT

Sir Roger. Look ye, Steward, don't tell me you can't bring them in. I will have a ghost; nay, I will have a competence of ghosts. What, shall our neighbours think we are not able to make a ghost? A play without a ghost is like, is like—i'gad it is like nothing.

Steward. Sir, be satisfied; you shall have ghosts.

Sir Roger. And is the play as I order'd it, both a Tragedy and a Comedy? I would have it a pastoral too; and if you could make it a farce, so much the better—and what if you crown'd all with the spice of your Opera? You know my neighbours never saw a play before; and d'ye see, I would shew them all sorts of plays under one.

Steward. Sir Roger, it is contrived for that very purpose.

[Enter two Justices.]

Sir Roger. Neighbours, ye are welcome. Is not this Steward of mine a pure ingenious fellow now, to make such a play for us these *Christmas* holidays. [Exit Steward bowing.]—A rare headpiece! he has it here, i'faith. [Pointing to his own head.] But indeed, I gave him the hint—To see now what contrivance some folks have! We have so fitted the parts to my tenants, that every man talks in his own way!—and then we have made just three justices in the play, to be play'd by us three justices of the *Quorum*.

1st Justice. Zooks!—so it is;—main ingenious—and can we sit and smoak at the same time we act?

Sir Roger. Ay, ay,—we have but three or four words to say—and may drink and be good company in peace and silence all the while after.

2d Justice. But how shall we know when we are to say these same words?

Sir Roger. This shall be the signal—when I set down the tankard, then speak you, Sir *Humphry*—and when Sir *Humphry* sets down the tankard, speak you, Squire *Statute*.

1st Justice. Ah, Sir Roger, you are an old dog at these things.

2d Justice. To be sure.

Sir Roger. Why neighbours, you know, experience,

THE WHAT D'YE CALL IT

experience—I remember your *Harts* and your *Bettertons*—
But to see your *Othello*, neighbours,—how he would
rave and roar, about a foolish flower'd handkerchief!—
and then he would groul so manfully,—and he would
put out the light, and put the light out so clevefly! but
hush—the Prologue, the Prologue.

[*They seat themselves with much ceremony at the table,
on which are pipes and tobacco, and a large silver
tankard.*

THE WHAT D'YE CALL IT

THE PROLOGUE

Spoken by Mr. PINKETHMAN.

*THE entertainment of this night—or day,
This something, or this nothing of a Play,
Which strives to please all palates at a time,
With ghosts and men, songs, dances, prose and rhyme,
This comic story, or this tragic jest,
May make you laugh, or cry, as you like best;
May exercise your good, or your ill-nature,
Move with distress, or tickle you with satyr.
All must be pleas'd too with their parts, we think:
Our maids have sweethearts, and their worships drink.
Criticks, we know, by ancient rules may maul it;
But sure Gallants must like—the What d'ye call it.*

THE WHAT D'YE CALL IT

ACT I. SCENE I.

Sir ROGER, Sir HUMPHRY, Justice STATUTE, CONSTABLE,
FILBERT, SERGEANT, KITTY, DORCAS, GRAND-
MOTHER, AUNT.

Sir Roger. **H**ERE, *Thomas Filbert*, to answer your name,
Dorcas hath sworn to you she owes her
shame:

Or wed her strait, or else you're sent afar,
To serve his gracious Majesty in war.

Filbert. 'Tis false, 'tis false—I scorn thy odious touch.
[Pushing *Dorcas* from him.]

Dorcas. When their turn's serv'd, all men will do as
much.

Kitty. Ah, good your Worships, ease a wretched maid.
To the right father let the child be laid.
Art thou not perjur'd?—mark his harmless look.
How canst thou, *Dorcas*, kiss the Bible book?
Hast thou no conscience, dost not fear *Old Nick*?
Sure sure the ground will open, and take thee
quick.

Sergeant. Zooks: never wed, 'tis safer much to roam;
For what is war abroad to war at home?
Who wou'd not sooner bravely risque his life;
For what's a cannon to a scolding wife?

Filbert. Well, if I must, I must—I hate the wench,
I'll bear a musquet then against the *French*.
From door to door I'd sooner whine and beg,
Both arms shot off, and on a wooden leg,
Than marry such a trapes—No, no, I'll not:
—Thou wilt too late repent when I am shot.
But, *Kitty*, why dost cry?

Grandmother. —Stay, Justice, stay:
Ah, little did I think to see this day!
Must Grandson *Filbert* to the wars be prest?
Alack! I knew him when he suck'd the breast,

THE WHAT D'YE CALL IT

- Taught him his catechism, the fescue held,
And join'd his letters, when the bantling spell'd,
His loving mother left him to my care.
Fine child, as like his Dad as he could stare!
Come *Candlemas*, nine years ago she dy'd,
And now lies bury'd by the yew-tree's side.
- Aunt.* O tyrant Justices! have you forgot
How my poor brother was in *Flanders* shot?
You pres'd my brother—he shall walk in
white,
He shall—and shake your curtains ev'ry night.
What though the paultry hare he rashly kill'd,
That cross'd the furrows while he plough'd
the field?
You sent him o'er the hills and far away;
Left his old mother to the parish pay,
With whom he shared his ten-pence ev'ry day. }
Wat kill'd a bird, was from his farm turn'd out;
You took the law of *Thomas* for a trout:
You ruin'd my poor uncle at the sizes,
And made him pay nine pounds for *Nisiprises*.
Now will you press my harmless nephew too?
Ah, what has conscience with the rich to do!
[*Sir Roger takes up the Tankard.*
Though in my hand no silver tankard shine,
Nor my dry lip be dy'd with claret wine,
Yet I can sleep in peace—
- Sir Roger.* [After having drunk.
—Woman, forbear.
- Sir Humphry.* [Drinking.
The man's within the act—
- Justice Statute.* [Drinking also.
—The law is clear.
- Sergeant.* Haste, let their worships orders be obey'd.
Kitty. [Kneeling.
Behold how low you have reduc'd a maid.
Thus to your worships on my knees I sue,
(A posture never known but in the pew)
If we can money for our taxes find,

THE WHAT D'YE CALL IT

Take that—but ah! our sweethearts leave behind.

To trade so barb'rous he was never bred,
The blood of vermine all the blood he shed:
How should he, harmless youth, how should he then

Dorcas. Who kill'd but poulcats, learn to murder men?
O *Thomas, Thomas!* hazard not thy life;
By all that's good, I'll make a loving wife:
I'll prove a true pains-taker day and night,
I'll spin and card, and keep our children tight.
I can knit stockings, you can thatch a barn;
If you earn ten-pence, I my groat can earn.
How shall I weep to hear this infant cry?

[*her hand on her belly*]

Kitty. He'll have no father—and no husband I.
Hold, *Thomas*, hold, nor hear that shameless
witch:

I can sow plain-work, I can darn and stitch;
I can bear sultry days and frosty weather;
Yes, yes, my *Thomas*, we will go together;
Beyond the seas together will we go,
In camps together, as at harvest, glow.
This arm shall be a bolster for thy head,
I'll fetch clean straw to make my soldier's bed;
There, while thou sleep'st, my apron o'er thee
hold,

Or with it patch thy tent against the cold.
Pigs in hard rains I've watch'd, and shall I do
That for the pigs, I would not bear for you?
Filbert. Oh, *Kitty, Kitty*, canst thou quit the rake,
And leave these meadows for thy sweetheart's
sake?

Canst thou so many gallant soldiers see,
And captains and lieutenants slight for me?
Say, canst thou hear the guns, and never shake,
Nor start at oaths that make a christian quake?
Canst thou bear hunger, canst thou march and
toil

THE WHAT D'YE CALL IT

A long long way, a thousand thousand mile?
And when thy *Tom's* blown up, or shot away,
Then canst thou starve?—they'll cheat thee of
my pay.

Sir Roger. [Drinking.

Take out that wench——

Sir Humphry. [Drinking.

——But give her penance meet.

Justice Statute. [Drinking also.

I'll see her stand——next Sunday——in a sheet.

Dorcas. Ah! why does nature give us so much cause
To make kind-hearted lasses break the laws?
Why should hard laws kind-hearted lasses bind,
When too soft nature draws us after kind?

SCENE II.

SIR ROGER, SIR HUMPHRY, JUSTICE STATUTE, FILBERT,
SERGEANT, KITTY, GRANDMOTHER, AUNT, SOLDIER.

Soldier. Sergeant, the captain to your quarters sent;
To ev'ry ale-house in the town I went.
Our Corp'ral now has the deserter found;
The men are all drawn out, the pris'ner bound.

Sergeant. [To Filbert.

Come, soldier, come——

Kitty. ——Ah! take me, take me too.

Grandmother. Stay, forward wench;——

Aunt. ——What would the creature do?

This week thy mother means to wash and brew.

Kitty. Brew then she may herself, or wash or bake;
I'd leave ten mothers for one sweetheart's sake
O justice most unjust!——

Filbert. ——O tyranny!

Kitty. How can I part?

Filbert. ——Alas! and how can I?

Kitty. O rueful day!

Filbert. ——Rueful indeed, I trow.

THE WHAT D'YE CALL IT

- Kitty.* O woeful day!
Filbert. ———A day indeed of woe!
Kitty. When gentle folks their sweethearts leave behind,
They can write letters, and say something kind;
But how shall *Filbert* unto me endite,
When neither I can read, nor he can write?
Yet, Justices, permit us ere we part
To break this nine-pence, as you've broke our heart.
- Filbert.* [Breaking the nine-pence.
As this divides, thus are we torn in twain.
- Kitty.* [Joining the pieces.
And as this meets, thus may we meet again.
[She is drawn away on one side of the Stage by Aunt and Grandmother.
Yet one look more——
- Filbert.* [Haul'd off on the other side by the Sergeant.
——One more ere yet we go.
- Kitty.* To part is death.——
Filbert. ——'Tis death to part.
Kitty. ——Ah!
Filbert. ——Oh!

SCENE III.

Sir ROGER, Sir HUMPHRY, Justice STATUTE and CONSTABLE.

Sir Roger. [Drinking.

See, constable, that ev'ry one withdraw.

Sir Humphry. [Drinking.

We've business——

Justice Statute. [Drinking also.

——To discuss a point of Law.

THE WHAT D'YE CALL IT

SCENE IV.

Sir ROGER, Sir HUMPHRY, Justice STATUTE. *They seem in earnest discourse.*

Sir Roger. I say the Press act plainly makes it out.

Sir Humphry. Doubtless, Sir Roger——

Justice Statute. ——Brother, without doubt.

A Ghost rises

1st Ghost. I'm Jeffry Cackle.——You my death shall rue
For I was pres'd by you, by you, by you.

[Pointing to the Justices.

Another Ghost rises.

2d Ghost. I'm Smut, the farrier.——You my death shall
rue;

For I was pres'd by you, by you, by you.

A Woman's Ghost rises.

3d Ghost. I'm Bess that hang'd myself for Smut so true;
So owe my death to you, to you, to you.

••

A Ghost of an Embryo rises.

4th Ghost. I was begot before my mother married,
Who whipt by you, of me poor child miscarried.

Another Woman's Ghost arises.

5th Ghost. Its mother I, whom you whipt black and blue;
• Both owe our deaths to you, to you, to you.

[All Ghosts shake their heads.

Sir Roger. Why do you shake your mealy heads at me?

You cannot say I did it——

Both Justices. ——No——nor we.

1st Ghost. All three——

2d Ghost. ——All three——

3d Ghost. ——All three——

4th Ghost. ——All three——

5th Ghost. ——All three.

THE WHAT D'YE CALL IT

A SONG sung dismally by a Ghost.

Y^E goblins and fairys,
With frisks and vagarys,
Ye fairys and goblins,
With hoppings and hobblings,
Come all, come all
To Sir Roger's great hall.

All fairys and goblins,
All goblins and fairys,
With hoppings and hobblings,
With frisks and vagarys.

CHORUS.

Sing goblins and fairys,
Sing, fairys and goblins,
With frisks and vagarys,
And hoppings and hobblings.
The ghosts dance round the Justices, who go off in a
fright, and the ghosts vanish.

ACT II. SCENE I.

A FIELD.

TIMOTHY PEASCOD bound; CORPORAL, SOLDIERS and
COUNTRYMEN.

Corporal. **S**TAND off there, countrymen; and you,
the guard,
Keep close your pris'ner—see that all's
prepar'd.

Peascod. Prime all your firelocks—fasten well the stake.
'Tis too much trouble, too much trouble for my
sake.

THE WHAT D'YE CALL IT

O fellow soldiers, countrymen and friends,
Be warn'd by me to shun untimely ends:
For evil courses am I brought to shame,
And from my soul I do repent the same.
Oft my kind *Grannam* told me—*Tim*, take
warning,
Be good—and say thy pray'rs—and mind thy
learning.

But I, sad wretch, went on from crime to crime;
I play'd at nine-pins first in sermon time:
I rob'd the parson's orchard next; and then
(For which I pray forgiveness) stole—a hen.
When I was press'd, I told them the first day
I wanted heart to fight, so ran away;

[*Attempts to run off, but is prevented.*]

For which behold I die. 'Tis a plain case,
'Twas all a judgment for my want of grace.

[*The soldiers prime with their muskets towards
him.*]

Hold, hold, my friends; nay hold, hold, hold,
I pray;

They may go off—and I have more to say.

1st Countryman.

Come, 'tis no time to talk—

2d Countryman. —Repent thine ill,

• And pray in this good book.— [*Gives him a book.*]

Peascod. —I will, I will.

Lend me thy handkercher—*The Pilgrim's
pro—* [*Reads and weeps.*]

• (I cannot see for tears) *Pro—Progress—Oh!
The Pilgrim's Progress—eighth—e-di-ti-on,
Lon-don—print-ed—for—Ni-cho-las Bod-
dington:*

With new ad-di-tions never made before.

Oh! 'tis so moving, I can read no more.

[*Drops the book.*]

THE WHAT D'YE CALL IT

SCENE II.

PEASCOD, CORPORAL, SOLDIERS, COUNTRYMEN, SERGEANT,
FILBERT.

Sergeant. What whining's this?—boys, see your guns
well ramm'd.

You dog, die like a soldier—and be damn'd.

Filbert. My friend in ropes!—

Peascod. —I should not thus be bound,
If I had Means, and could but raise five pound.
The cruel Corp'ral whisper'd in my ear,
Five pounds, if rightly tipt, would set me clear.

Filbert. Here—*Peascod*, take my pouch—'tis all I own.
(For what is means and life when *Kitty's* gone!)
'Tis my press-money—can this silver fail?
'Tis all, except one six-pence spent in ale.
This had a ring for *Kitty's* finger bought,
Kitty on me had by that token thought.
But for thy life, poor *Tim*, if this can do't;
Take it, with all my soul—thou'rt welcome
to't. [Offers him his purse.

1st Countryman.

And take my fourteen-pence—

2d Countryman. —And my cramp-ring.

Would for thy sake, it were a better thing.

3d Countryman.

And master Sergeant, take my box of copper.

4th Countryman.

And my wife's thimble—

5th Countryman.

—And this 'bacco-stopper.

Sergeant. No bribes. Take back your things—I'll
have them not.

Peascod. Oh! must I die?—

Chorus of Countrymen.

—Oh! must poor *Tim* be shot!

Peascod. But let me kiss thee first— [Embracing *Filbert*.

THE WHAT D'YE CALL IT

SCENE III.

PEASCOD, CORPORAL, SOLDIERS, COUNTRYMEN, SERGEANT,
FILBERT, DORCAS.

Dorcas. —Ah, brother *Tim*,
Why these close hugs? I owe my shame to him.
He scorns me now, he leaves me in the lurch;
In a white sheet poor I must stand at church.
Oh marry me—[*To Filbert.*] Thy sister is with
child. [To *Tim*.]
And he, 'twas he my tender heart beguil'd.

Peascod. Could'st thou do this? could'st thou—
[*In anger to Filbert.*]

Sergeant. —Draw out the men:
Quick to the stake; he must be dead by ten.

Dorcas. Be dead! must *Tim* be dead!—

Peascod. —He must—he must.

Dorcas. Ah! I shall sink downright; my heart will burst.
—Hold, Sergeant, hold—yet ere you sing the
Psalms,

Ah let me ease my conscience of its qualms.

O brother, brother! *Filbert* still is true.

I foully wrong'd him—do, forgive me, do.

[*To Filbert.*]

The Squire betray'd me; nay,—and what is
worse,

Brib'd me with two gold guineas in this purse,

To swear this child to *Filbert*.—

Peascod. —What a *Jew*

My sister is!—Do, *Tom*, forgive her, do.

[*To Filb.*]

Filbert. [kisses *Dorcas.*]

But see thy base-born child, thy babe of shame,

Who left by thee, upon our parish came,

Comes for thy blessing—

THE WHAT D'YE CALL IT

SCENE IV.

PEASCOD, CORPORAL, SOLDIERS, COUNTRYMEN, SERGEANT,
FILBERT, DORCAS, JOYCE.

Peascod. ———Oh! my sins of youth!
Why on the haycock didst thou tempt me, *Ruth*?
O save me, Sergeant:—how shall I comply?
I love my daughter so——I cannot die.

Joyce. Must father die! and I be left forlorn?
Alack-a-day! that ever *Joyce* was born!
No grandsire in his arms e'er dandled me,
And no fond mother danc'd me on her knee.
They said, if ever father got his pay,
I should have two-pence ev'ry market day.

Peascod. Poor child; hang sorrow, and cast care behind
thee,
The parish by this badge is bound to find thee.

Joyce. The parish finds indeed——but our church-
wardens
[*Pointing to the badge on her arm.*

Feast on the silver, and give us the farthings.
Then my school mistress like a vixen *Turk*,
Maintains her lazy husband by our work:
Many long tedious days I've worsted^c spun;
She grudg'd me victuals when my task was
done.

Peascod. Heav'n send me a good service! for I now
Am big enough to wash, or milk a cow.
O that I had by charity been bred!
I then had been much better——taught' than
fed.

Instead of keeping nets against the law,
I might have learnt accounts, and sung *Sol-fa*.
Farewell, my child; spin on, and mind thy
book,

And send thee store of grace therein to look.
Take warning by thy shameless Aunt; lest thou

THE WHAT D'YE CALL IT

Should'st o'er thy bastard weep—as I do
now.

Mark my last words—an honest living get;
Beware of Papishes, and learn to knit.

[Dorcas leads out Joyce sobbing and crying.]

SCENE V.

PEASCOD, CORPORAL, SOLDIERS, COUNTRYMEN, SERGEANT,
FILBERT.

Filbert. Let's drink before we part—for sorrow's dry.
To *Tim's* safe passage—

[Takes out a brandy bottle and drinks]

1st Countryman. —I'll drink too.

2d Countryman. —And I.

Peascod. Stay, let me pledge—'tis my last earthly
liquor. [Drinks.]

—When I am dead you'll bind my grave with
wicker. [They lead him to the stake.]

1st Countryman.

He was a special ploughman— [Sighing.]

2d Countryman. —Harrow'd well!

3d Countryman.

• And at our may-pole ever bore the bell!

Peascod. Say, is it fitting in this very field,
Where I so oft have reap'd, so oft have till'd;
This field, where from my youth I've been a
• carter,

I, in this field, should die for a deserter?

Filbert. 'Tis hard, 'tis wondrous hard!—

Sergeant. —Zooks, here's a pother.

Strip him; I'd stay no longer for my brother.

Peascod. [Distributing his things among his friends.]

Take you my 'bacco-box—my neckcloth, you.
To our kind Vicar send this bottle skrew.

But wear these breeches, *Tom*; they're quite
bran-new.

THE WHAT D'YE CALL IT

Filbert. Farewell—

1st Countryman. —B'ye, *Tim.*—

2d Countryman. —B'ye, *Tim.*—

3d Countryman. —Adieu.

4th Countryman. —Adieu.

[*They all take leave of Peascod by shaking hands with him.*]

SCENE VI.

PEASCOD, CORPORAL, SOLDIERS, COUNTRYMEN, SERGEANT,
FILBERT, to them a SOLDIER in great haste.

Soldier. Hold—why so furious, sergeant? by your
leave,
Untye the pris'ner—see, here's a reprieve.

[*Shows a paper.*]

Chorus of Countrymen. [Huzzaing.]

A reprieve, a reprieve, a reprieve!

[*Peascod is unty'd, and embraces his friends.*]

SCENE VII.

PEASCOD, CORPORAL, SOLDIERS, COUNTRYMEN, SERGEANT,
FILBERT, CONSTABLE.

Constable. Friends, reprehend him, reprehend him there.

Sergeant. For what?—

Constable. .. —For stealing gaffer *Gap's* grey mare.

[*They seize the Sergeant.*]

Peascod. Why, hark ye, friend; you'll go to pot.

Would you be rather hang'd—hah!—hang'd
or shot?

Sergeant. Nay, hold, hold, hold—

Peascod. —Not if you were my brother.

Why, friend, should you not hang as well's
another?

THE WHAT D'YE CALL IT

Constable. Thus said Sir *John*—the law must take its course;

'Tis law that he may 'scape who steals a horse.

But (said Sir *John*) the statutes all declare,

The man shall sure be hang'd—that steals a mare.

Peascod.

[*To the Sergeant.*

Ay—right—he shall be hang'd that steals a mare
He shall be hang'd—that's certain; and good cause.

A rare good sentence this—how is't?—
the laws,

No—not the laws—the statutes all declare,

The man that steals a mare shall sure—be
—hang'd,

No, no—he shall be hang'd that steals a mare.

[*Exit Sergeant guarded, Countrymen, etc.,
huzzaing after him.*

SCENE VIII.

KITTY, with her hair loose, GRANDMOTHER, AUNT, HAY-
MAKERS, CHORUS of SIGHS and GROANS.

Kitty. Dear happy fields, farewell; ye flocks, and you
Sweet meadows, glitt'ring with the pearly dew:
And thou, my rake, companion of my cares,
Giv'n by my mother in my younger years:
With thee the toils of full eight springs I've
known,

'Tis to thy help I owe this hat and gown:

On thee I lean'd, forgetful of my work,

While *Tom* gaz'd on me, propt upon his fork:

Farewell, farewell; for all thy task is o'er,

Kitty shall want thy service now no more.

[*Flings away the rake.*]

Chorus of Sighs and Groans.

Ah—O!—Sure never was the like before!

THE WHAT D'YE CALL IT

- Kitty.* Happy the maid, whose sweetheart never hears
The soldier's drum, nor writ of Justice fears.
Our bans thrice bid! and for my wedding-
day
My kerchief bought! then press'd, then forc'd
away! }
- Chorus of Sighs and Groans.*
Ah! O! poor soul! alack! and well a day! }
- Kitty.* You, *Bess*, still reap with *Harry* by your side;
You, *Jenny*, shall next *Sunday* be a bride:
But I forlorn!—This ballad shews my care; }
[Gives Susan a ballad.]
Take this sad ballad, which I bought at fair: }
Susan can sing—do you the burthen bear. }

A BALLAD.

I.

'TWAS when the seas were roaring
With hollow blasts of wind;
A damsel lay deploring,
All on a rock reclin'd.
Wide o'er the foaming billows
She cast a wistful look;
Her head was crown'd with willows
That tremble o'er the brook.

II.

Twelve months are gone and over,
And nine long tedious days.
Why didst thou, vent'rous lover,
Why didst thou trust the seas?
Cease, cease, thou cruel ocean,
And let my lover rest;
Ah! what's thy troubled motion
To that within my breast?

THE WHAT D'YE CALL IT

III.

*The merchant, rob'd of pleasure,
Sees tempests in despair;
But what's the loss of treasure
To losing of my dear?
Should you some coast be laid on
Where gold and di'monds grow,
You'd find a richer maiden,
But none that loves you so.*

IV.

*How can they say that nature
Has nothing made in vain;
Why then beneath the water
Should hideous rocks remain?
No eyes the rocks discover,
That lurk beneath the deep,
To wreck the wand'ring lover,
And leave the maid to weep.*

V.

*All melancholy lying,
Thus wail'd she for her dear;
Repay'd each blast with sighing,
Each billow with a tear;
When, o'er the white wave stooping
His floating corpse she 'spy'd;
Then like a lily drooping,
She bow'd her head and dy'd.*

Kitty. Why in this world should wretched *Kitty* stay?
What if these hands should make myself away?
I could not sure do otherwise than well.
A maid so true's too innocent for hell.
But heark ye, *Cis*—[*Whispers and gives her a
penknife.*]

THE WHAT D'YE CALL IT

- Aunt.* —I'll do't—'tis but to try,
If the poor soul can have the heart to die.
[*Aside to the Haymakers.*
Thus then I strike—but turn thy head aside.
- Kitty.* 'Tis shameful sure to fall as pigs have 'dy'd.
No—take this cord— [Gives her a cord.
- Aunt.* —With this thou shalt be sped.
[Putting the noose round her neck.
- Kitty.* But curs are hang'd.—
- Aunt.* —Christians should die in bed.
- Kitty.* Then lead me thither; there I'll mourn and weep
And close these weary eyes in death.
- Aunt.* —or sleep. [Aside.
- Kitty.* When I am cold, and stretch'd upon my bier,
My restless sprite shall walk at midnight here:
Here shall I walk—for 'twas beneath yon tree
Filbert first said he lov'd—lov'd only me.
[*Kitty faints.*
- Grandmother.*
She swoons, poor soul—help *Dolly*.
- Aunt.* —She's in fits.
Bring water, water, water.— [Screaming.
- Grandmother.* —Fetch her wits.
[They throw water upon her.
- Kitty.* Hah!—I am turn'd a stream—look all below;
It flows, and flows, and will for ever flow.
The meads are all afloat—the haycocks swim.
Hah! who comes here!—my *Filbert!* drown not
him.
Bagpipes in butter, flocks in fleecy fountains,
Churns, sheep-hooks, seas of milk, and honey-
mountains.

SCENE IX.

KITTY, GRANDMOTHER, AUNT, HAYMAKERS, FILBERT.

Kitty. It is his ghost—or is it he indeed?

THE WHAT D'YE CALL IT

Wert thou not sent to war; hah, dost thou bleed?

No——'tis my *Filbert*.

Filbert.

——Yes, 'tis he, 'tis he, [Embracing her.

Dorcas confess'd; the Justice set me free.
I'm thine again.——

Kitty.

——I thine——

Filbert.

——Our fears are fled.

Come, let's to church, to church.——

Kitty.

——To wed.

Filbert.

——To bed.

Chorus of Haymakers.

A wedding, a bedding; a wedding, a bedding.

[Exeunt all the Actors.]

Sir Roger. Ay now for the wedding. Where's he that plays the Parson? Now, neighbours, you shall see what was never shewn upon the *London* stage.——Why, heigh day! what's our play at a stand?

Enter a Countryman.

* *Countryman*. So please your worship, I should have play'd the Parson, but our Curate would not lend his gown, for he says it is a profanation.

Sir Roger. What a scrupulous whim is this? an innocent thing! believe me, an innocent thing.

[The Justices assent by nods and signs.]

Enter Stave the Parish-clerk.

Stave. Master Doctor saith he hath two and twenty good reasons against it from the Fathers, and he is come himself to utter them to your Worship.

Sir Roger. What, shall our Play be spoil'd? I'll have none of his reasons——call in Mr. *Inference*.

Stave goes out and re-enters.

Stave. Sir, he saith he never greatly affected stage plays.

[Within.] *Stave, Stave, Stave*.

Sir Roger. Tell him that I say——

[Within.] *Stave, Stave*.

Sir Roger. What, shall the Curate controul me? have

THE WHAT D'YE CALL IT

not I the presentation? tell him that I will not have my play spoil'd; nay, that he shall marry the couple himself—I say, he shall.

Stave goes out and re-enters.

Stave. The steward hath persuaded him to join their hands in the parlour within—but he saith he will not, and cannot in conscience consent to expose his character before neighbouring gentlemen; neither will he enter into your worship's hall; for he calleth it a stage *pro tempore*.

Sir Humphry. Very likely: The good man may have reason.

Justice Statute. In troth, we must in some sort comply with the scrupulous tender conscienced doctor.

Sir Roger. Why, what's a play without a marriage? and what is a marriage if one sees nothing of it? Let him have his humour—but set the doors wide open, that we may see how all goes on. [Exit Stave.

[*Sir Roger at the door pointing.*
So natural! d'ye see now, neighbours? the ring i'faith. To have and to hold! right again—well play'd, doctor; well play'd, Son *Thomas*. Come, come, I'm satisfy'd—now for the fiddles and dances.

Enter Steward, Squire Thomas, Kitty, Stave, &c.

Steward. *Sir Roger*, you are very merry.

*So comes a reck'ning when the banquet's o'er,
The dreadful reck'ning, and men smile no more.*

I wish you joy of your play, and of your daughter. I had no way but this to repair the injury your son had done my child—she shall study to deserve your favour.

[*Presenting Kitty to Sir Roger.*

Sir Roger. Married! how married! can the marriage of *Filbert* and *Carrot* have any thing to do with my son?

Steward. But the marriage of *Thomas* and *Katherine* may, *Sir Roger*.

Sir Roger. What a plague, am I trick'd then? I must have a stage play, with a pox!

Sir Humphry. If this speech be in the play, remember the tankard, *Sir Roger*.

THE WHAT D'YE CALL IT

Squire *Thomas*. Zooks, these stage plays are plaguy dangerous things—but I am no such fool neither, but I know this was all your contrivance.

Justice *Statute*. Ay, Sir *Roger*, you told us it was you that gave him the hint.

Sir *Roger*. Why blockhead! puppy! had you no more wit than to say the ceremony? he should only have married you in rhyme, fool.

Squire *Thomas*. Why, what did I know, ha? but so it is—and since murder will out, as the saying is; look ye, farther, I was under some sort of promise too, d'ye see—so much for that—If I be a husband, I be a husband, there's an end on't—sure I must have been married some time or other.

[*Sir Roger walks up and down fretting, and goes out in a passion.*]

Sir *Humphry*. In troth it was in some sort my opinion before; it is good in law.

Justice *Statute*. Good in law, good in law—but hold, we must not lose the dance.

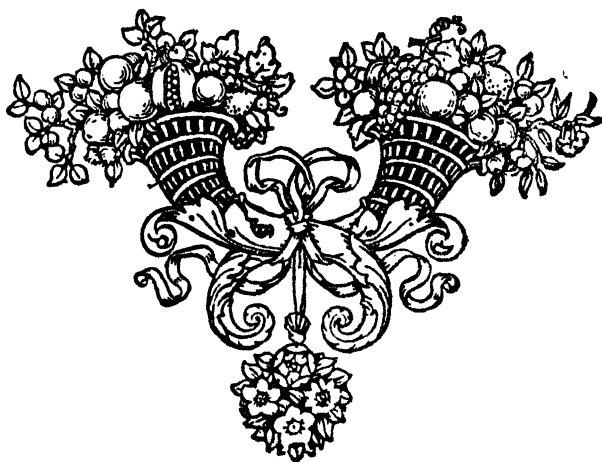
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A D A N C E.

THE WHAT D'YE CALL IT

EPILOGUE.

Stave. *Our stage play has a moral—and no doubt
 You all have sense enough to find it out.*



THE CAPTIVES

A

TRAGEDY

• Splendidè mendax, & in omne Virgo
Nobilis ævum.

Hor.

TO
HER ROYAL HIGHNESS
THE PRINCESS.

MADAM,

THE honour I received from Your ROYAL HIGHNESS, in being permitted to read this play to you before it was acted, made me more happy than any other success that could have happened to me. If it had the good fortune to gain Your ROYAL HIGHNESS's approbation, I have been often reflecting to what to impute it, and I think, it must have been the Catastrophe of the fable, the rewarding virtue, and the relieving the distressed: For that could not fail to give you some pleasure in fiction, which, it is plain, gives you the greatest in reality; or else Your ROYAL HIGHNESS would not (as you always have done) make it your daily practice.

I am,

MADAM,

Your Royal Highness's most dutiful
and most humbly devoted Servant,

JOHN GAY.

PROLOGUE.

SPOKEN BY MR. WILKS.

I Wish some author, careless of renown,
Would without formal prologue risque the town.
For what is told you by this useless ditty?
Only that tragedy should move your pity:
That when you see theatric heroes shown,
Their virtues you should strive to make your own.
What gain we by this solemn way of teaching?
Our precepts mend your lives no more than preaching.
Since then our Bard declines this beaten path;
What if we lash'd the critics into wrath?
Poets should ne'er be drones; mean, harmless things;
But guard, like bees, their labours by their stings.
That mortal sure must all ambition smother,
Who dares not hurt one man to please another.
What, sink a joke! That's but a mere pretence:
He shows most wit, who gives the most offence.
But still our squeamish author satire loaths,
As children, physic; or as women, oaths.
He knows he's at the bar, and must submit;
For ev'ry man is born a judge of wit.
How can you err? Plays are like paintings try'd,
You first enquire the hand, and then decide:
Yet judge him not before the curtain draws,
Lest a fair hearing should reverse the cause.

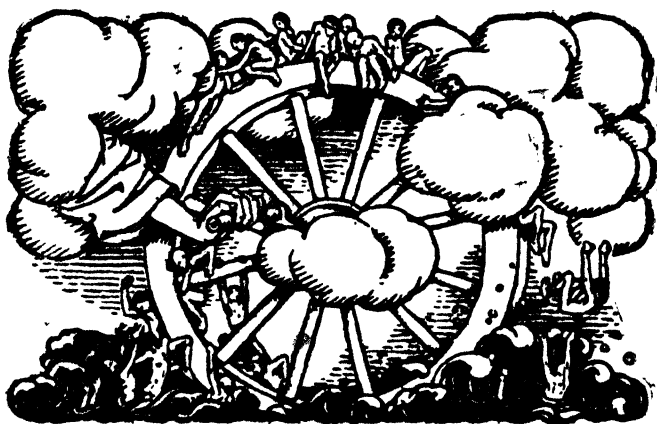
DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

Phraortes,	Mr. <i>Wilks.</i>
Sophernes,	Mr. <i>Booth.</i>
Hydarnes,	Mr. <i>Mills.</i>
Araxes,	Mr. <i>Williams.</i>
Orbasius,	Mr. <i>Bridgewater.</i>
Magi.	
Conspirators.	

WOMEN.

Astarbe,	Mrs. <i>Porter.</i>
Captive,	Mrs. <i>Oldfield.</i>
Doraspe,	Mrs. <i>Campbell.</i>



THE CAPTIVES :

A TRAGEDY.

ACT I.

SCENE, *The Palace.*

HYDARNES, CONSPIRATORS.

1st Conspirator.

IS night near spent?

2d Consp. 'Tis yet the dead of night;

• And not a glimm'ring ray behind yon hills
Fore-runs the morning's dawn.

1st Consp. Thus far w'are safe.

2d Consp. Silence and sleep throughout the palace
reign.

1st Consp. Success is now secure.

2d Consp. Are all assembled?

1st Consp. Our number's not complete.

THE CAPTIVES

- 2d Consp.* What, not yet come!
Those two were over-zealous. It looks ill.
- 1st Consp.* Why fear ye? I'm their pledge. I know them brave.
They'll soon be with us and partake our glory.
- Hyd.* What mean these murmurs?
- 1st Consp.* If mistrust divide us,
Our enterprize is foil'd, and we are lost.
- Hyd.* My vengeful heart pants for the glorious deed,
And my thirst quickens for *Phraortes'* blood.
Why stops the lazy night?—O morning, rise;
Call up the drowsy priests to the day's task;
The king to day the holy hill ascends,
And prostrate falls before the rising sun.
- 1st Consp.* The sun shall rise, but rise to him no more.
For as he passes from the royal chamber
This strikes him home.
- 2d Consp.* Let each man give him death.
We cannot be too sure.
- Hyd.* Revenge is mine.
By him my father fell, by him my brothers;
They fail'd, they perish'd in the great design:
Success and vengeance are reserv'd for me.
My father led the *Median* hosts to battle,
And all the hosts of *Media* sung his triumphs.
- 1st Consp.* The people's hearts were his.
- Hyd.* The people saw
His royal virtues. He, to please his country,
Grasp'd at the sceptre which *Phraortes* holds.
For this he suffer'd ignominious death:
His house was raz'd; my brave, unhappy brothers
Fell in his ruin; I alone escap'd;
In banishment I've sigh'd whole years away,
Unknown, forgot.—But now, even in his glory,
Now, while he leads the *Persian* princes captive,
And overflows whole nations with his armies,
I'll stab him to the heart.
- 2d Consp.* What sound was that?
- 1st Consp.* Lights pass across the rooms, and hasty steps

THE CAPTIVES

Move to the king's apartment. Sleep is fled,
And all the palace lives; *Phraortes* wakes.

2d Consp. Hush! hark again!

1st Consp. The echoes of the night
Catch ev'ry whisper.

2d Consp. Some have overheard us.

1st Consp. It must be so. The guards have took th'
alarm.

Our lives, (what's worse) our enterprize is lost!

2d Consp. Retreat, my friends; let us reserve ourselves
For some more prosp'rous hour.

Hyd. You raise up phantoms.

Then start at them yourselves. Some sickly qualm
Has wak'd the king too soon. Hence spring your fears,
Hence grows this mean surprize. Are these your boasts?
Danger but whets the edge of resolution,
And at each noise I grasp my dagger faster.
Is every thing dispos'd to give th' alarm
Among the *Persian* captives? Hope of freedom
Will arm them on our side.

1st Consp. Were the blow struck,
The rest would follow.

Hyd. See a gleam of light

Darts from the king's apartment. Man your hearts,
Be firm, be ready. Let not trembling fear
Misguide your aim; let ev'ry wound be mortal.

1st Consp. This way and that way danger presses
near us.

Where shall we fly? The tread of nimble feet
Hurries from room to room, and all the palace
Swarms as at noon.

2d Consp. Let us consult our safety.

1st Consp. To stay and to be taken is despair;
And what's despair? but poor, mean cowardice.
By timely caution heroes are preserv'd
For glorious enterprize, and mighty kingdoms
Are levell'd with the dust.

Hyd. Withdraw yourselves.

Be still, and listen. These will best inform us

THE CAPTIVES

If still it may be done; or if the blow
Must be deferr'd. But hush, they come upon us.

Enter Orbasius, Araxes, at one door; two Magi at the other, servants with lights. Hydarnes and Conspirators listning.

Ara. Whence come ye, rev'rend fathers; why these looks

Of terror and amaze? why gaze ye back
As if the strides of Death stalk'd close behind you?

1st Mag. The king ev'n at this solemn hour of night
Sent privately to call us to his presence.

Ye Gods preserve him!

Ara. Why this wild confusion?

In ev'ry passing face I read suspicion,

[*People crossing the stage.*]

And haggard fear. Has sickness seiz'd the king,
And groans he with the latest pang of death?
Speak forth your terrors.

2d Mag. May *Phraortes* live!

Orba. Tell us the cause. If violence or treachery,
Our duty bids us interpose our lives

Between the king and death. O heaven, defend him!

1st Mag. The king, disturb'd by visionary dreams,
Bade the most learn'd magicians stand before him.

We stood before the king; and the king trembled
While he declar'd his dream; and thus I spoke:

' O may the great *Phraortes* live for ever!

' Avert the dire presages of the dream!

' This night the Gods have warn'd thee to beware

' Of deep-laid treasons, ripe for execution;

' Assassination lurks within the palace

' And murder grasps the dagger for the blow.

' If the king trust his steps beyond his chamber,

' I see him bleed! I hear his dying groan!

' Obey the voice of Heaven.

2d Mag. The king is wise;

And therefore to the will of Heaven assented;

THE CAPTIVES

Nor will he trust his life, a nation's safety,
From out the royal chamber. See the dawn
Breaks in the East, and calls us to devotion.
It is not man, but 'tis the Gods he fears. [*Ex. Magi.*
Hyd. 'Let's quit the palace while retreat is safe.
The deed must be deferr'd. Revenge, be calm.
This day is his, to-morrow shall be ours.

[*Ex. Conspirators on one side. Enter guards on the other.*

Orba. See that each centinel is on strict watch.
Let all the guards be doubled; bar the gates,
That not a man pass forth without observance.

[*Ex. a party of soldiers.*

Go you; and with the utmost vigilance
Search ev'ry room; for treason lies in wait.

[*Ex. a party of soldiers.*

Ara. Divide yourselves this instant o'er the palace,
Think *Media* is in danger; and remember
That he who takes a traytor, saves the king.

[*Exeunt soldiers.*

Orba. Whence can these dangers threaten?

Ara. From the *Persians*.

Captivity's a yoke that galls the shoulders
Of new-made slaves, and makes them bold and resty.
He that is born in chains may tamely bear them;
But he that once has breath'd the air of freedom,
Knows life is nothing when depriv'd of that.
Our lord the king has made a people slaves,
And ev'ry slave is virtuously rebellious.
I fear the *Persian* prince.

Orba. You injure him.

I know him, have convers'd with him whole days,
And ev'ry day I stronger grew in virtue.
Load not th' unhappy with unjust suspicion;
Adversity ne'er shakes the heart of honour:
He who is found a villain in distress,
Was never virtuous.

Ara. Who suspects his virtue?

'Tis not dishonest to demand our right;
And freedom is the property of man.

THE CAPTIVES

Orba. That glorious day when *Persia* was subdu'd,
Sophernes fought amidst a host of foes,
Disdaining to survive his country's fate:
When the whole torrent of the war rush'd on,
Phraortes interpos'd his shield, and sav'd him.
And canst thou think this brave, this gen'rous prince
Would stab the man to whom he owes his life?

Ara. Whoever is, must feel himself, a slave,
And 'tis worth struggling to shake off his chains.

Orba. But gratitude has cool'd his soul to patience.
Ingratitude's a crime the *Persians* hate;
Their laws are wise, and punish it with death.

Enter Guards with Sophernes.

Ara. Behold, *Orbasius*; have I wrong'd your
friend?

Behold a slave oblig'd by gratitude
To wear his chains with patience! This is he
Phraortes honours with his royal favours!
This is the man that I accus'd unjustly!
Soldiers, advance, and bring the prisoner near us.

Soph. Why am I thus insulted? why this force?
If 'tis a crime to be unfortunate,
I well deserve this usage.

Ara. 'Tis our duty.
If you are innocent, let justice clear you.
Orbasius, to your charge I leave the prince;
Mean while I'll search the palace. On this instant
Perhaps the safety of the king depends.
Come, soldiers, there are others to be taken,
Mine be that care. I'll bring them face to face,
When each man conscious of the other's crime,
Shall in his guilty look confess his own.
Guard him with strictness, as you prize your life.

[*Exit Araxes.*

Orba. Keep off a while, and leave us to ourselves.

[*Guards retire to the back part of the stage.*
I own, I think this rash suspicion wrongs you;

THE CAPTIVES

For murder is the mean revenge of cowards,
And you are brave.

Soph. By whom am I accus'd?
Let him stand forth. Of murder, murder say you?
Bear I the marks of an abandon'd wretch?
How little man can search the heart of man!

Orba. Our priests are train'd up spies by education;
They pry into the secrets of the state,
And then, by way of prophecy, reveal them:
'Tis by such artifice they govern kings.
The last night's rumour of conspiracy
Form'd the king's dream, and from that very rumour
They venture to speak out, what we but whisper'd.
'Twas they that call'd us to this early watch,
'Twas they inform'd us that assassination
Lies hid, ev'n now, within the palace walls.
And we but execute the king's command
In seizing all we find.

Soph. It is your duty,
And I submit. You cannot be too watchful
To guard the life of such a worthy prince.
I saw his prowess in the rage of battle,
I found his mercy in the flush of conquest.
Do not I share his palace, though a captive?
What can set limits to his gen'rous soul,
Or close his lib'ral hand? Am I a viper,
To sting the man that warms me in his bosom?

Orba. Why is power given into the hands of kings,
But to distinguish virtue and protect it?
If then *Phraortes* loves and honours you,
Why seek you thus to nourish your misfortunes
With midnight walks and pensive solitude?

Soph. To lose the pomp and glories of a crown,
Is not a circumstance so soon forgot!
But I have humbled me to this affliction.
To lead the flower of *Persia* forth to battle,
And meet with overthrow and foul defeat,
Is no such trifle in a soldier's breast!
But I submit; for 'tis the will of Heaven.

THE CAPTIVES

To see a father bleed amidst the carnage,
Must touch the heart of filial piety.
Why was his lot not mine? His fall was glorious.
To see my brave, but now unhappy people
Bow down their necks in shameful servitude,
Is not a spectacle of slight compassion.
All these calamities I have subdu'd,
But——my dear wife! *Cylene!*

Orba. Still there's hope.

Can you support the load of real ills,
And sink beneath imaginary sorrows?
Perhaps she still may live.

Soph. Had I that hope,
'Twou'd banish from my heart all other cares.
Perhaps she still may live! no: 'tis impossible.
When storms of arrows clatter'd on our shields,
Love arm'd her breast, and where I led, she follow'd;
Then vict'ry broke our ranks, and like a torrent
Bore my *Cylene* from my sight for ever.
But say, she did survive that fatal day;
Was she not then the spoil of some rude soldier,
Whose blood was riotous and hot with conquest?
—Who can gaze on her beauty and resist it!
Methinks I see her now, ev'n now before me,
The hand of lust is tangled in her hair
And drags her to his arms:——

I see her snatch the dagger from his grasp,
And resolutely plunge it in her bosom.

Orba. Yet think she may have found a milder fate.
All soldiers are not of that savage temper;
May she not chance to be some brave man's captive?
And valour ever lov'd to shield distress.

Soph. Can I think thus? I cannot be so happy.

Orba. Is still the king a stranger to this sorrow,
That day and night lies rankling in your breast?

Soph. A grateful heart is all I've left to pay him.
Phruortes is as liberal as Heaven,
And daily pours new benefits upon me.
Last night he led me to the royal garden

THE CAPTIVES

(His task all bent to soften my misfortunes)

Like a fond friend he grew inquisitive,
And drew the story from me.

Orba. All his heart

Is turn'd to your relief. What further happen'd?

Soph. The king was mov'd, and straight sent forth
commands

That all the female captives of his triumph
Should stand before his presence. Thus (says he)
Unhappy prince, I may retrieve your peace,
And give *Cylene* to your arms again.

O source of light! O Sun, whose piercing eye
Views all below on earth, in sea or air;
Who at one glance can comprehend the globe,
Who ev'ry where art present, point me out
Where my *Cylene* mourns her bitter bondage;
If she yet live!

Orba. Why will you fear the worst?

Why seek you to anticipate misfortune?

The king commands. Obedience on swift wing
Flies through the whole dominions to redress you;
From hence you soon will learn what chance befell her.
'Tis soon enough to feel our adverse fortune
When there's no room for hope. This last distress
I know must move the king to tend'rest pity.

Soph. He dwelt on ev'ry little circumstance,
And as I talk'd, he sigh'd.

Orba. It reach'd his heart.

A tale of love is fuel to a lover.

Phraortes dotes with such excess of fondness,
All his pursuits are lost in that of love.

Astarbe suffers him to hold the sceptre,
But she directs his hand which way to point.

The king's decrees were firm and absolute,
Not the whole earth's confederate powers could shake 'em;
But now a frown, a smile, from fair *Astarbe*,
Renders them light as air.

Soph. If you have lov'd,
You cannot think this strange.

Orba. Yet this same woman,
 To whom the king has given up all himself,
 Can scarce prevail upon her haughty temper
 To show dissembled love. She loves his power,
 She loves his treasures; but she loaths his person:
 Thus ev'ry day he buys dissimulation.
 Whene'er a woman knows you in her power,
 She never fails to use it.

Soph. That's a sure proof
 Of cold indifference and fixt dislike.
 In love both parties have the power to govern,
 But neither claims it. Love is all compliance.
Astarbe seem' to me of gentlest manners,
 A tender softness languish'd in her eyes,
 Her voice, her words, bespoke an easy temper.
 I thought I scarce had ever seen till then
 Such beauty and humility together.

Orba. How beauty can mis-lead and cheat our reason!
 The queen knows all the ways to use her charms
 In their full force, and *Media* feels their power.
 Whoever dares dispute her hourly will,
 Wakens a busy fury in her bosom.
 Sure, never love exerted greater sway;
 For her he breaks through all the regal customs,
 For she is not confin'd like former queens,
 But with controlling power enjoys full freedom.
 I am to blame, to talk upon this subject.

Soph. My innocence had made me quite forget
 That I'm your prisoner. Load me with distresses,
 They better suit my state. I've lost my kingdom,
 A palace ill befits me. I'm a captive,
 And captives should wear chains. My fellow soldiers
 Now pine in dungeons, and are gall'd with irons,
 And I the cause of all! Why live I thus
 Amidst the pomp and honours of a court?
 Why breathe I morn and ev'n in fragrant bowers?
 Why am I suffer'd to behold the day?
 For I am lost to ev'ry sense of pleasure.
 Give me a dungeon, give me chains and darkness;

THE CAPTIVES

Nor courts, nor fragrant bowers, nor air, nor day-light
Give me one glimpse of joy—O lost *Cylene*!

Orba. Misfortunes are the common lot of man,
And each man has his share of diff'rent kinds:
He who has learnt to bear them best is happiest.
But see, *Araxes* comes with guards and prisoners.

Enter Araxes, Hydarnes, Conspirators, with guards.

Arax. Behold your leader. Where are now your
hopes * [To the Conspirators.
Of murd'ring kings and over-turning nations?
See with what stedfast eyes they gaze upon him,
As thinking him the man that has betray'd them.
Angry suspicion frowns on ev'ry brow;
They know their guilt, and each mistrusts the other.
We seiz'd them in th' attempt to make escape,
All arm'd, all desperate, all of them unknown,
And ev'ry one is obstinately dumb. [To Orba.
I charge you, speak. Know you that prisoner there?
Ay, view him well. Confess, and merit grace.
What, not a word! Will you accept of life? [To Hyd.
Speak, and 'tis granted. Tortures shall compel you.
Will you, or you, or you, or any of you?
What, all resolv'd on death! Bring forth the chains.
[Exit soldier.

Orba. Be not too rash, nor treat the prince too roughly.
He may be innocent.

Arax. You are too partial.
I know my duty. Justice treats alike
Those who alike offend, without regard
To dignity or office. Bring the chains.
[Enter soldiers with chains.

Orba. This over zeal perhaps may give offence,
The prince is treated like no common slave.
Phraortes strives to lessen his affliction,
Nor would he add a sigh to his distresses:
Astarbe too will talk to him whole hours,
With all the tender manners of her sex,

THE CAPTIVES

To shorten the long tedious days of bondage,
I'll be his guard. My life shall answer for him.

Ara. My life must answer for him. He's my charge,
And this is not a time for courtesy.
Are you still resolute and bent on death?

[*To the Conspirators.*]

Once more I offer mercy. When the torture
Cracks all your sinews and disjoints your bones,
And death grins on you, arm'd with all his terrors,
'Twill loose your stubborn tongue. Know ye this man?

Hyd. We know him not; nor why we wear these chains.
We ask no mercy, but appeal to justice.
Now you know all we know: lead to our dungeons.

[*Ex. Hyd. and Conspirators, guarded.*]

Orba. How have you wrong'd the prince! these shameful
irons

Should not disgrace the hands of innocence.
Let's set him free.

Ara. This is all artifice,
To let their leader 'scape. Guards, take him hence,
And let him be confin'd till further orders.

Soph. Who shall plead for me in a foreign land!
My words will find no faith; for I'm a stranger:
And who holds friendship with adversity?
So fate may do its worst. I'm tir'd of life.

[*Exit, guarded.*]

Ara. I've done my duty, and I've done no more.
Why wear you that concern upon your brow?
It misbecomes you in this time of joy.
Straight let us to the king, and learn his pleasure.
Justice is ours, but mercy's lodg'd in him.

Orba. I never can believe the prince so vile
To mix with common murderers and assassins.
I think him virtuous, and I share his suff'rings.
All generous souls must strong reluctance find,
In heaping sorrows on th' afflicted mind.

[*Exeunt.*]

THE CAPTIVES

ACT II.

SCENE, *The Queen's Apartment.*

ASTARBE.

HOW expectation can prolong an hour,
And make it seem a day! a tedious day!
What not yet come! the wonted hour is past:
In vain I turn my eye from walk to walk,
Sophernes is not there.—Here, every morn
I watch his pensive steps along the garden,
And gaze and wish till I am lost in love!
What not yet come! But hark! methinks I hear
The sound of feet! How my heart pants and flutters!
No. 'Twas the wind that shook yon cypress boughs.
Where are my views of wealth, of power, of state?

[*Rises.*

They're blotted from my mind. I've lost ambition.
O love, thou hast me all. My dreams, my thoughts,
My every wish is center'd in *Sophernes*.
Hence, Shame, thou rigid tyrant of our sex,
I throw thee off—and I'll avow my passion.
Doraspe. I can bear to think no longer. [Sits again.

Enter Doraspe.

Dor. Why sits the queen thus overcast with thought?
Is majesty all plac'd in outward pomp?
Is it a queen, to have superior cares?
And to excell in sorrows and distresses?
'Tis in your power to have superior pleasures,
And feel yourself a queen.

Ast. This mighty empire
I know I do command, and him that rules it.
That was a pleasure once, but now 'tis past!
To you alone I have disclos'd my heart.
I know you faithful.

Dor. What avails my service?
Can I redress you? can I calm your mind?

Ast. Thou know'st, *Doraspe*, amidst all this power,
That I'm a slave, the very worst of slaves.
The yoke of bondage, and the dungeon's horrors,
Are easy suff'rings, if compar'd with mine.
I am confin'd to dwell with one I hate,
Confin'd for life to suffer nauseous love,
Like a poor mercenary prostitute:
His fondness is my torture.

Dor. Love is a pleasure for inferior minds;
Your lot is rais'd above that vulgar passion.
Ambition is the pleasure of the great,
That fills the heart, and leaves no room for love.
Think you're a queen, enjoy your pomp, your power;
Love is the paradise of simple shepherds.
You hold a sceptre.

Ast. O insipid greatness!
She who has never lov'd, has never liv'd.
All other views are artificial pleasures
For sluggish minds, incapable of love.
My soul is form'd for this sublimer passion:
My heart is temper'd for the real joy;
I sigh, I pant, I burn, I'm sick of love!
Yes, *Media*, I renounce thy purple honours. [Rises.
Farewell the pomp, the pageantry of state,
Farewell ambition, and the lust of empire;
I've now no passion, no desire but love.
O may my eyes have power!—I ask no more.
Where stays *Sophernes*? Were he now before me,
My tongue should own what oft my eyes have spoke,
For love has humbled pride.—Why this intrusion?
Who call'd you here a witness to my frailties?
Away and leave me.

Dor. I obey my queen.

Ast. *Doraspe*, stay. Excuse this start of passion;
My mind is torn with wishes, doubts, and fears;
I had forgot myself.—Should fortune frown,
And tear the diadem from off my brow,

THE CAPTIVES

Couldst thou be follower of my adverse fortune?
I think thou couldst.

Dor. If I might give that proof,
Without your sufferings, I could wish the trial;
So firm I know my heart.

Ast. Life, like the seasons,
Is intermix'd with sun-shine days and tempests.
Prosperity has many thousand friends;
They swarm around us in our summer hours,
But vanish in the storm. ♯

Dor. What means my queen,
To wound her faithful servant with suspicion?

Ast. Whene'er my mind is vex'd and torn with troubles,
In thee I always find the balm of counsel:
And can I then mistrust thee? No, *Doraspe*,
Suspicion ne'er with-held a thought from thee,
Thou know'st the close recesses of my heart:
And now, ev'n now, I fly to thee for comfort.

Dor. How my soul longs to learn the queen's com-
mands!

Ast. When conquest over-power'd my father's legions,
We were made captives of the war together;
Phraortes saw me, rais'd me to his throne;
Heav'n knows with what reluctance I consented!
For my heart loath'd him. But, O curs'd ambition!
I gave myself a victim to his love,
To be a queen, the outside of a queen.
I then was, what I'm now, a wretch at heart!
Whene'er I was condemn'd to hours of dalliance,
All *Media*'s gems lay glitt'ring at my feet,
To buy a smile, and bribe me to compliance.
But what's ambition, glory, riches, empire?
The wish of misers, and old doating courtiers;
My heart is fill'd with love—Go, my *Doraspe*,
Enquire the cause that has detain'd *Sophernes*
From his accustom'd walk.—I'm fix'd, determin'd,
To give up all for love.—A life of love.
With what impatience shall I wait thy coming!

Dor. Happy *Sophernes*!

THE CAPTIVES

Ast. If you chance to meet him,
Talk of me to him, watch his words, his eyes;
Let all you say be turn'd to weak desire;
Prepare him for the happy interview,
For my heart bursts, and I must tell it all.
To what an abject state am I reduc'd?
To proffer love! Was beauty given for this?
Yes. 'Tis more gen'rous; and I'll freely give
What kneeling monarchs had implor'd in vain.

Dor. This well rewards him for an empire lost.

[*Exit.*

Ast. Have I not caught the eyes of wond'ring nations,
While warm desire has glow'd on ev'ry cheek,
Ev'n when I wore the pride of majesty?
When opportunity awakes desire,
Can he then gaze, insensible of beauty?
When ardent wishes speak in ev'ry glance,
When love and shame by turns in their full force,
Now pale, now red, possess my guilty cheek;
When heaving breasts, and sighs, and kindling blushes
Give the most strong assurance of consent,
In the convincing eloquence of love;
Will he then want a proof that's less sincere?
And must I speak?—O love, direct my lips,
And give me courage in that hour of shame!

Enter Doraspe.

Dor. May the queen never know a moment's sorrow;
Nor let my words offend!—the prince *Sophernes*,
Leagu'd with a crew of daring desperate men,
Had meditated to destroy *Phraortes*,
And let loose war and rapine o'er the land.
But Heav'n has made their machinations vain;
And they now groan in dungeons.

Ast. Then I'm wretched,
And ev'ry pleasing view of life is lost.
Was it confirm'd? or was it only rumour?

Dor. *Araxes* said *Sophernes* was his prisoner.

THE CAPTIVES

My haste would not allow me further question:
And this is all I learnt.

Ast. Have I not power?

I have. Why then, I'll give *Sophernes* freedom,
I'll give him life.—I think you nam'd *Araxes*;
That man to me owes all his growth of fortune;
And if I judge him right, he's very grateful.
Tell him the queen admits him to her presence.

[*Ex. Dor.*

O Heaven! I thank thee for this blest occasion.
Did ever proof of fondness equal mine?
And sure so strong a proof must find return.
With what excess of transport shall I go
To lead him forth from heavy chains and darkness,
To liberty and love!—But see, *Araxes*.

Enter Araxes.

Ara. All health attend the mighty queen of *Media*.

Ast. I'm told, *Araxes*, that the *Persian* prince
Hath join'd in horrid league, and hath conspir'd
The murder of my lord and king *Phraortes*.
Speak forth; say what thou know'st.

Ara. The hand of heaven
Protects the king; and all the black design
Is shewn in open daylight. The foul traitor
Is taken in the snares of death he laid.
Sophernes is my charge. O base ingratitude,
That he, whom the king honour'd next himself,
That he, whom the king's mercy spar'd in battle,
Should mix with vile assassins! Justice longs
To punish the vast crime.

Ast. Owns he the guilt?

Ara. No. With the calmest face of innocence,
With looks known only to hypocrisy,
He solemnly deny'd it.

Ast. Is he confin'd?

Ara. Yes, with the strictest guard and heaviest irons.
The prison joining to the queen's apartment

THE CAPTIVES

Lodges the horrid crew in sep'rate dungeons.
To-day the king will mount the judgment-seat,
And death shall be their portion.

Ast. Is *Sophernes*.

Stubborn and sullen? made he no confession?
I often have convers'd with that vile man,
That hypocrite, whose talk was always honest.
How have I been deceiv'd!—Yet, ere his sentence,
With secrecy I fain once more would see him.

Ara. I'm happy to obey my queen's commands.
His prison lies so close to these apartments,
That unobserv'd I can conduct him hither.

Ast. I know thee faithful, and such ready zeal
Shall always find reward.

[*Exit.*

Ara. The queen is gracious.

Ast. Now my design is ripe for execution.
Then let *Doraspe* well consult her heart,
If she will share with me all change of fortune.

Dor. Doubt not your faithful servant. I'm prepar'd.
I know, however heinous is his crime,
Your intercession always must prevail.
His gratitude will kindle into love,
And in possession every wish be lost.

Ast. How little thou hast div'd into my thoughts!
My purposes are otherways determin'd.

I'll shake off bondage, and abandon empire;
For him disrobe myself of majesty;
Then to my native *Parthia* will I fly,
With all my soul holds dear—my guide *Sophernes*.

Dor. Let me not find my gracious queen's displeasure
If I dissent, and offer other counsel.

Why will you quit your crown; why fly from *Media*?
Does jealousy restrain your liberty?

Your love, your empire, both are in your power.

Ast. Mine's not the common passion of our sex,
Which ev'ry day we can command at pleasure

And shift and vary as occasion offers.

My love is real and unchangeable,
Controuls my heart, and governs absolute.

THE CAPTIVES

My eyes, words, actions, are no more my own:
My ev'ry thought's *Sophernes*.—Other women,
Who have the power to practice little arts
To cheat a husband, and delude his fondness,
Ne'er knew the burning passion that I feel.
Those are the trifling wanton airs of women,
All vanity and only love in name.
No. She who loves, must give up all herself;
She ne'er can be content with a stol'n minute,
Then pass whole days and nights with him she hates.
Advise no further—for I am determin'd.

Dor. *Araxes*, with the *Persian* prince!

Ast. Retire.

[*Exit Doraspe.*]

Enter Araxes and Sophernes.

It is not meet, while in the royal presence,
That he should wear those irons: take them off.

[*Ara. takes off the chains.*]

Now leave me; and without attend my pleasure.

[*Exit Araxes.*]

Be not surpriz'd that I have call'd you hither,
Most noble prince, in this your hour of trouble;
For I ev'n bear a part in your misfortunes.
Who's your accuser?—whence those shameful chains?

Soph. I'm charg'd with crimes of the most heinous nature:

If 'tis Heaven's will to try me with afflictions,
I will not, like a dastard, sink beneath them,
But resolutely strive to stem the torrent.
Not the dark dungeon, nor the sharpest torture,
Can ruffle the sweet calm of innocence.
My chains are grievous, but my conscience free.

Ast. I long have mark'd your virtues, and admir'd them.

Against a resolute and steady mind
The tempest of affliction beats in vain.
When we behold the hero's manly patience,
We feel his suff'rings; and my tears have own'd,

That what you bore with courage, touch'd my heart.
 And when compassion once has reach'd the mind,
 It spurs us on to charity and kindness:
 Instruct me then which way to cure your sorrows.

Soph. The queen is gracious, and delights in mercy.

Ast. I speak with the sincerity of friendship.
 Friendship is free and open, and requires not
 Such distant homage and respectful duty.
 Forget that I'm a queen: I have forgot it;
 And all my thoughts are fix'd on thy relief.
 Draw near me then, and as from friend to friend,
 Let us discharge our hearts of all their cares.

Soph. How beautiful a virtue is compassion!
 It gives new grace to every charm of woman!
 When lovely features hide a tender soul,
 She looks, she speaks, all harmony divine.

Ast. Tell me, *Sophernes*, does not slav'ry's yoke
 Gall more and more through ev'ry pace of life?
 I am a slave like you. And though a queen,
 Possess of all the richest gems of *Media*,
 I know no pleasure; this distasteful thought
 Imbitters all my hours; the royal bed
 Is loathsome, and a stranger to delight.
 I'm made the drudge to serve another's pleasure.
 O when shall I be free! take, take your empire,
 And give me peace and liberty again.

Soph. The strokes of fortune must be born with
 patience.

Ast. But I have lost all patience.—Give me counsel,
 Give me thy friendship, and assist a wretch
 Who thirsts and pants for freedom.

Soph. Who seek succour
 From one whose hands are bound in double irons?
 I am a slave, and captive of the war,
 Accus'd of treason and ingratitude,
 And must from hence go back to chains and darkness.
 But had I power, such beauty might command it.

Ast. But I have power, and all my power is thine.
 If I had arm'd myself with resolution

THE CAPTIVES

To quit the pompous load of majesty,
To fly far off from this detested empire,
To seek repose within my native land,
Wouldst thou then be companion of my flight,
And share in my distresses and my fortune?

Soph. The queen intends to try a wretched man,
Whether he'd break all hospitable laws,
The strictest oaths and ties of gratitude,
To sacrifice his honour to such beauty
That can command all hearts.

Ast. Tell me directly,
Wouldst thou accept of freedom on these terms?

Soph. How shall I answer?

Ast. Is thy heart of ice?

Or are my features so contemptible,
That thou disdain'st to fix thy eyes upon me?
Can you receive this offer with such coldness?
I make it from my heart; my warm heart speaks:
Distrust me not. What, not a word! no answer!

Soph. O may the queen excuse her prostrate servant,
And urge no more a trial too severe.

Ast. What means *Sophernes*? Why this abject posture?
'Tis I should kneel; 'tis I that want compassion.

[Gives him her hand.]

Thou art unpractis'd in the ways of women,
To judge that I could trifle on this subject.
Think how severe a conflict I have conquer'd,
To over-rule ev'n nature and my sex;
Think what confusion rises in my face,
To ask what (to be ask'd) would kindle blushes
In ev'ry modest check!—where's shame? where's pride?
Sophernes has subdu'd them. Women, I own,
Are vers'd in little frauds, and sly dissemblings:
But we can rule the motions of the blood?
These eyes,—this pulse—these tremblings—this con-
fusion,

Make truth conspicuous, and disclose the soul.
Think not I fly with man for his protection;
For only you I could renounce a kingdom,

THE CAPTIVES

For you, ev'n in the wild and barren desert,
Forget I was a queen! ev'n then more happy
Than seated on a throne. Say, wilt thou chuse
Or liberty, and life, and poor *Astarbe*;
Or dungeons, chains, and ignominious death!

Soph. O how I struggle in the snares of beauty!
Those eyes could warm pale elders to desire;
I feel them in my heart; the fever rages,
And if I gaze again—how shall I answer!

Ast. How is my pride brought low! how vilely treated!
The worst of scorn is cold deliberation.

Soph. *Cylene* may be found. What takes me from her?
How can I go and leave my hopes for ever?
Can I renounce my love, my faith, my all?
Who can resist those eyes?—I go—I'm lost?
Cylene holds me back, and curbs desire. [*Aside.*

Ast. Resolve and answer me. For soon as night
Favours our flight I'll gather up my treasures:
Prepare thee then, lest death should intercept thee,
And murder all my quiet.

Soph. If in her sight
I've favour found, the queen will hear me speak.
How can my heart refuse her? how obey her?
Can I deny such generous clemency?
Join'd with all beauties ever found in woman?
Yet think on my unhappy circumstance.
I've giv'n my word, the strictest tye of honour,
Never to pass beyond my bounds prescrib'd;
And shall I break my faith? Who holds society
With one who's branded with that infamy?
Did not *Phraortes*, in the heat of battle,
Stay the keen sword that o'er me menac'd death?
Do not I share his palace, and his friendship?
Does he not strive, by daily curtesies,
To banish all the bitter cares of bondage?
And shall I seize and tear his tend'rest heart-string?
Shall I conspire to rob him of all peace?
For on the queen hangs ev'ry earthly joy,
His ev'ry pleasure is compriz'd in you!

THE CAPTIVES

What virtue can resist such strong temptation?
O raise not thus a tempest in my bosom!
What shall I do?—my soul abhors ingratitude.
Should I consent, you must detest and loath me
And I should well deserve those chains, and death.

Ast. Is this thy best return for proffer'd love?
Such coldness, such indifference, such contempt!
Rise, all ye Furies, from th' infernal regions,
And prompt me to some great, some glorious vengeance!
Vengeance is in my power, and I'll enjoy it.
But majesty perhaps might awe his passion,
And fear forbid him to reveal his wishes.
That could not be. I heard, I saw him scorn me;
All his disdainful words his eyes confirm'd.
Ungrateful man! Hence, traitor, from my sight.
Revenge be ready. Slighted love invokes thee.
Of all the injuries that rack the soul,
Mine is most exquisite! Hence, to thy dungeon.
Araxes!

Enter Araxes.

•
Take the villain from my presence;
His crimes are black as hell. I'll turn away,
Lest my heart melt and cool into compassion.
His sight offends me. Bind his irons fast.

[*Ara. puts on his irons.*

So: lead him hence; and let *Doraspe* know
The queen permits her entrance.

[*Exeunt Araxes and Sophernes.*

•
Enter Doraspe.

Dor. What's the queen's pleasure? See your servant
ready.

Why are your eyes thus fix'd upon the ground?
Why that deep sigh? and why these trembling lips?
This sudden paleness, and these starts of frenzy?
You're sick at heart.

Ast. Yes; I will be reveng'd.

THE CAPTIVES

Dor. Lift up your eyes, and know me. 'Tis *Doraspe*.

Ast. Look on me, tell me, is my beauty blighted?
And shrunk at once into deformity?

Slighted! despis'd! my charms all set at nought!

Yes. I will be reveng'd.—O my *Doraspe*,

I've met with foul contempt, and cold disdain:

And shall the wretch who gave me guilt and shame,

The wretch who's conscious of my infamy,

Out-live that crime? he must not, nay, he shall not.

Dor. Let reason mitigate and quell this fever;

The safest, surest, is the cool revenge.

Rash anger, like the hasty scorpion's fury,

Torments and wounds itself.

Ast. It is in vain.

The torrent rushes on; it swells, ferments,

And strongly bears away all opposition.

What means that hurry in the antichamber?

What are those crowds?

Dor. The king intends to mount the judgment-seat,

And the conspirators now wait their sentence.

Ast. Go, tell Araxes (if with privacy

He could conduct him) I would see their chief;

The desp'rate instrument of this bold scheme;

This instant; ere he stands before the presence.

[*Exit Doraspe.*]

Revenge, I thank thee for this ready thought:

Death now shall reach *Sophernes*, shameful death;

Thus will I satiate love. His death alone

Can raze him from my heart, and give me peace.

Araxes conducts in Hydarnes, and retires.

The king is gracious, and delights in mercy;

And know, that free confession merits life:

I'll intercede. Know you the prince *Sophernes*?

You are unhappy men betray'd to ruin:

And will ye suffer for another's crime?

Speak of him as ye ought; 'twas he betray'd you.

Hyd. If racks and tortures cannot tear confession

THE CAPTIVES

From innocence, shall woman's flattery do it?
No; my heart's firm, and I can smile on death.

Ast. Think not to hide what is already known.
'Tis to *Sophernes* that you owe those chains:
We've fathom'd his designs, they're all laid open;
We know him turbulent and enterprizing.
By the foul murder of my lord the king.
He meant to set his captive nation free.
Unfold this truth, and I'll insure thy pardon.

Hyd. What! lead a hateful life of ignominy!
And live the bane of all society!
Shun'd like a pestilence, a curst informer!
Yet since the fate of kingdoms may depend
On what I speak; truth shall direct my lips.
The queen has offer'd grace. I know the terms.

Ast. By the king's life, I swear.

Enter Araxes.

Ara. Excuse this entrance,
The pris'ner must attend.

Ast. I'm satisfy'd.
This man seems open, and may be of service.

[*Exeunt Araxes and Hydarnes.*

How my heart bleeds, thus to pursue revenge
Against the man I love! But me he scorns;
And from my beauty turns his head away
With saucy arrogance and proud contempt.
I could forgive him ev'ry other crime,
Ev'n the base murder of my dearest friend;
But slighted love, no woman can forgive:
For thro' our life we feel the bitter smart,
And guilt and shame lie fest'ring at the heart.

ACT III.

SCENE, *A Room of State with a Throne.*

HYDARNES, Conspirators, ORBASIUS, Guards.

1st Conspirator.

THE information of those two vile cowards,
Who mingled with us brave and active spirits,
Hath giv'n us death. Let those mean creatures live,
They're fitter for the world.

2d Consp. Lead us to death.

Hyd. Death is pronounc'd on you, on me, on all.
Would I could take your guilt upon myself,
So to preserve some virtue in the world:
But those informers have deny'd me that;
We all must perish, and fall unreveng'd.
But since I cannot take your crimes upon me;
I'll live, and execute our great design,
And thus revenge your deaths.

1st Consp. Could this be done!

Hyd. It can.

1st Consp. You flatter us.

Hyd. I say, I'll do it.

Soon as the king returns to sign our sentence,
Only confirm the words which I shall speak,
And I'll revenge you soon, and soon be with you.

[Talks to, them apart.]

Orba. The guilty perish; innocence is freed.
Suspicion has not cast the smallest stain
Upon the virtuous *Persian*. Those accusers,
Who have condemn'd their fellows, know him not.
Of all the pleasures that a monarch tastes,
Sure mercy is most sweet! 'Tis heavenly pleasure,
To take the galling chains from off the hands
Of injur'd innocence! That privilege
O'er-balances the cares that load a crown.

THE CAPTIVES

Enter Phraortes, who seats himself on the throne; Magi, Araxes, Sophernes, Guards, and Attendants.

Ara. Make room: The *Persian* prince attends his sentence.

Phra. Most noble prince, I grieve that you were injur'd.

When foul conspiracy molests a state,
The ear of kings is open to suspicion,
And we grow jealous of our bosom friends.
When calumny would blast a virtuous man,
And justice has made clear his innocence;
It only throws a brighter lustre on him,
And serves to make his virtues more conspicuous.
Approach the throne; and let the king's embrace
Make some atonement for your shameful bonds.
I feel your suff'rings, and my heart grows fonder.
Now bring the pris'ners to receive their sentence.
Justice cries loud for vengeance on your crimes:
Say, have you ought to plead to ward the blow,
Ere I enroll your names among the dead?

Hyd. That I design'd to bathe these hands in blood,
Even in thy blood, O king, I dare confess,
And glory in th' attempt. I know thy power;
I know that death, with all his dreadful tortures,
Stands ready at thy nod. Give then the signal,
For I unmov'd can face the ghastly terror.
How is thy wisdom foil'd! Prepare to follow.
Think not with us our enterprize is lost:
A king shall bleed to pacify our ghosts.
Come, lead to death. Spend all thy wrath on us.
The raging tyger bites the shaft that wounds him,
And spares the man who threw it. I have done.

Phra. These are the starts and ravings of despair.
Think'st thou by threats to force me into mercy?

Hyd. I grow impatient: lead me to my fate.

Phra. Know you that I have life within my power?

Hyd. I know the utmost of thy power is death.

Mag. Ye Gods avert his words, and save the king!

Phra. What said he? Speak again.

Hyd. Death is my choice.

Phra. I will be satisfy'd.

Hyd. I've said too much.

Phra. Say more, or torture shall extort it from you.

Hyd. Let torture do its worst. You dare not try it.

Mag. If memory can recal the solemn speech,

These were his very words:

'A king shall bleed to pacify our ghosts.

'The raging tyger bites the shaft that wounds him,

'But spares the man who threw it.' Was it thus?

Hyd. Now let your wisdom fathom this deep secret.

I answer no more questions.

Phra. Reverend fathers,

What may these words portend? Expound the mystery.

Mag. Thy sacred life, O king, is still in danger.

While justice pours down vengeance on these wretches,

These mean subservient instruments of mischief,

Their leader 'scapes, and lives for future crimes.

Hyd. Go on.

Mag. The words imply no more.

Hyd. 'Tis well.

All's safe.—I'm ready.—Why is death delay'd?

Phra. Thus speaks the voice of mercy from my lips.

Th' irrevocable sentence is not sign'd,

And still there's room for hope. Attend, and live:

By this bright sceptre, by the throne of *Media*,

By yon great light that rules the rolling year,

If you lay ope the depth of this foul treason,

And point me out that undetected villain,

I swear, to grant you life and liberty.

Speak now, or death shall seal your lips for ever.

Hyd. The royal word is giv'n, and I accept it.

The king shall live, and all his foes shall perish.

Danger stands near the throne. How blind is justice!

The *Persian* prince!

Phra. *Sophernes!*

Hyd. He's a traitor.

'Twas he that put the dagger in my hand.

THE CAPTIVES

So. Now I have betray'd. O love of life!
Where was my resolution? I'm a coward;
And cowards can endure a life of shame.

Phra. *Sophernes!*—Let strong proof confirm your charge;

I must have proof.

Hyd. Call in my fellow-prisoners.

Soph. What can set bounds to man's impiety,
And where is virtue safe? Accus'd thus falsely,
With all the strongest circumstance of guilt,
By one I know not! Heav'n has then determin'd
That I must fall. Shall man contest with *Jove*?
'Tis all in vain. The will of Fate be done.

Hyd. Those who accus'd us, brib'd with *Persian* gold,
Conceal'd the author of our enterprize.

Enter Conspirators.

Know ye that man?

1st Consp. Would he had been unknown.

Hyd. The king has trac'd our mischief to the source;
Who was it prompted you to this attempt?

Had ye not views to set a nation free?

And to restore him to his crown and kingdom?

1st Consp. By him we fell, 'tis just that he fall with us.

2d Consp. So, now one ruin has involv'd us all.

Phra. Death is the lot of those that thirst for blood.
Conduct them hence.—This hour prepare to suffer.

[*Exeunt* Conspirators.]

Ungrateful prince!

Soph. Since 'tis the will of heaven
To load me with calamities and shame,
Since the most searching eye cannot discern
The heart of man; O where shall I find justice!
I am a stranger, in adversity,
Bereft of wealth and power, without a friend.

Phra. Hence, base dissembler. Take him from my presence.

When hypocrites are stript of virtue's plumes,

THE CAPTIVES

Vice then appears more hideous and deform'd.
Back to thy dungeon, to remorse and death.

Soph. Vain are excuse and solemn protestation;
How shall my words prevail, and truth appear,
When there's a crowd of witnesses against me!
The guilty perish with remorse and horror,
But innocence ne'er feels the sting of death.
Death is a blessing to adversity;
Anxiety, calamity, and sorrow,
And all the daily fretting cares of life,
Are shook from off our shoulders, and we rest.

[*Exit Sophernes guarded.*

Hyd. Safety now guards the throne, and *Media's*
happy.

Phra. I ratify my word, and give you life,
I give you liberty; but on conditions.
Those I shall send you soon, and then you're free.
O Sun! I thank thee; thy all-seeing eye
Has trac'd the villain through his secret ways,
And now the hand of justice is upon him.

Ara. *Media* rejoice.

All. May the king live for ever!

Phra. Proclaim a festival for seven days space;
Let the court shine in all its pomp and lustre:
Let all our streets resound with shouts of joy;
Let musick's care-dispelling voice be heard;
The sumptuous banquet and the flowing goblet
Shall warm the cheek, and fill the heart with gladness:
For *Media's* foes are put to shame and death.
Astarbe shall sit sovereign of the feast,
That queen of beauty shall direct our pleasures.
I'll to her bower.—I would have no attendance.

[*Exeunt Phraortes, &c*

Enter Doraspe.

Dor. Inform me, what has past?

Ara. The queen's conjectures
The king has now confirm'd. The *Persian* prince,

THE CAPTIVES

That hypocrite, is known, and prov'd a traytor,
And leader of that crew of vile assassins.
But see the queen. The king is gone to seek her.
Excuse my haste; for duty calls me hence. [Exit.]

Enter Astarbe.

Ast. 'Twas downright arrogance. I saw his scorn.
A lover reads the thought of every look,
And needs no comment or interpreter.
What woman can forgive that worst of insults?
Not ev'n the most deform'd of all our sex
Can bear contempt. And shall I pardon it?
To pardon it, is to insult myself,
And own that I deserve it. [*aside.*] Know you ought
Of what the king in judgment has determin'd?

Dor. *Sophernes* was accus'd.

Ast. Was he found guilty?

Dor. Yes, prov'd a traytor.

Ast. Then I'm satisfy'd.

Dor. How one affliction crowds upon another,
To punish this ungrateful man!

Ast. What mean you?

Dor. It is confirm'd among the captive women
(Who now attend to pass before the presence)
His wife was slain in battle.

Ast. Would he were dead!

Yet were he dead, would he die in my thoughts?
Talk to me, speak; leave me not to reflection.

[To Doraspe.]

Yet what will talk avail?—I've lost attention.
Were her words soft and soothing as the lyre,
Or strong and sprightly as th' enlivening trumpet,
I could hear nought but conscience. Would he were
dead!

You shall not leave me.

Dor. See, the king returns.

[Exit.]

Enter Phraortes.

THE CAPTIVES

Phra. Welcome, my queen; how my heart springs
to meet thee!

Each day, each hour, thy beauty grows upon me,
Ev'n while I gaze, some undiscover'd charm
Opens itself, and wounds my heart anew.

Rejoice, *Astarbe*; *Media* is deliver'd:
The gathering storm that threaten'd desolation,
Is over-blown, and all is now serene.

Then let us give our future days to pleasure;
My ev'ry pleasure is compris'd in thee.

Ast. Be firm in justice, nor give way to mercy,
'Tis the mind's frailty, and the nurse of crimes.
Punish: and root out treason from the land.

Phra. *Sophernes* was their chief.

Ast. Ungrateful villain!

Phra. How he deceiv'd me!

Ast. Your too easy nature
Must always harbour mischief in your empire.
Does he still live?

Phra. His death is fix'd and sign'd.

Ast. Each hour he lives, your people doubt your
justice.

Would you deter the populace from crimes,
Let punishment be sudden. That's true mercy.

Phra. He never shall behold another sun.

But why should cares of state intrude upon us?

Ast. Why this reproof? In what have I deserv'd it?
All my concern was for the peace of *Media*,
And for your safety. I have said too much.

Phra. What has *Astarbe* ask'd, that I refus'd?
Thy beauty has all power. Who waits without?
Go; let the captives be dismiss'd the palace,

[*Speaks at the door.*

The king resigns his privilege of choice.
Should the selected beauties of the world [To *Astarbe*.
In full temptation stand before my presence,
Still would my heart and eye be fixt on thee.
Thy charms would (like the sun's all-powerful rays)
Make all those little stars of beauty fade.

THE CAPTIVES

Why that dejected look? that thoughtful sigh?
In what have I offended? If to love,
Be to offend, *Phraortes* is most wretched.

Enter Araxes.

Ara. I spoke the king's commands; when from the crowd
One of the captives rose, and humbly pray'd
Admission to the throne.

Phra. I hear no suits.

Ara. She wish'd to speak a matter of importance.

Phra. Dismiss them all. Let us retire, my queen.

Ast. *Araxes*, stay. [Araxes going out.]

Phra. What is *Astarbe's* pleasure?

Ast. This matter should be search'd. The fate of empires
Turns often on the slightest information;
And were my counsel worthy to be heard,
I would admit her.

Phra. Let her be admitted. [Exit Araxes.]

[*Phraortes* seats *Astarbe* on the throne, then places himself by her. The guards enter, and range themselves on each side.]

Enter Captive, *Doraspe*, and Attendants.

Phra. Arise, fair maid; and let thy suit be heard.

Cap. The King has done his prostrate servant justice. [Kneeling.]

Thus low I pay my thanks to heaven and you.

Phra. Rise from that humble posture, and speak forth.

Cap. The *Persian* prince, to whom we owe our bondage, [Rises.]

'Tis said, is doom'd to death for horrid treachery.

Phra. He well deserves it. If you fall before me,
To melt me into mercy with your tears,
Woman, your tears are frustrate. Take her hence.

Cap. I speak for mercy! No, I sue for tortures.

THE CAPTIVES

With rapture I could gaze upon his sufferings,
Enjoy his agonies and dying groans,
And then this hand could stab him to the heart.

Phra. Whence rose this furious spirit of revenge?

Cap. By brutal violence he slew my husband.
Excuse my tears; Love calls them from my eyes.
With him I lost all joy, all peace and comfort.

Phra. What mov'd *Sophernes* to the barbarous deed?

Cap. My husband was distinguish'd in his armies;
With him I always shar'd the toils of war,
The tedious marches, and the scorching suns,
For love makes all fatigues seem light and easy.
Sophernes saw me, sigh'd, and spoke his passion.
I spurn'd his offers, and despis'd his suit.
He still persisted, and my virtue strengthen'd:
'Till on a day inflam'd with loose desire,
He sent my lord upon some feign'd command;
I in his tent sat waiting his return,
Then suddenly the ravisher rush'd in. [Weeps.

Phra. Go on.

Cap. He seiz'd me, tore me, dragg'd me to his arms;
In vain I struggled; by resistance weaken'd
I lost all strength, and so—he spoil'd my honour.
O shame! O brutal force! [Weeps.

Phra. Unhappy woman!
Proceed.

Cap. Just in the moment of my shame
My husband enter'd. Strait the villain left me,
And, desperate by the stings of guilt and terror,
He stabb'd him to the heart. [Weeps.

Phra. Most monstrous villain!
His life's a series of the blackest crimes.

Cap. I in the hurry of the murder fled,
And 'scap'd the tyrant's power. Alone, disguis'd,
I've past away my restless hours in sorrow.
Revenge was all my wish, and all my comfort;
For that I've watch'd him through long weary marches,
And revenge gave me strength and resolution.
Why fell he not by me? His crime requir'd it.

THE CAPTIVES

Vengeance o'ertakes him for another guilt,
And I have lost revenge. O may he feel
The pain and horror due to both his crimes.

Phra. His death is sign'd.

Cap. That is his due for treachery.

Phra. What would revenge have more? Th' offender's
blood

Allays its strongest thirst.

Cap. Most gracious king, [Kneels.

Hear an unhappy woman's just petition,
And may my prayer find favour and acceptance!
Grant me to see him in his latest gasp;
Let my appearance strike him with confusion;
Let me awake fresh terrors in his conscience,
And bring my murder'd husband to his view.
Entrust the sword of justice in my hand;
The stroke shall then be sure.

Phra. What fortitude

Lies hid beneath that face of softest feature!
The death of his confederates is sign'd,
And he with privacy this very evening
Shall be dispatch'd in prison. Now you're satisfy'd.

Cap. O, were that office mine!

Ast. For such offence

He cannot feel too much; her suit is just.
Then let me intercede in her behalf;
Grant her request. Give her the fatal signet;
Give her the dagger.—Such revenge is virtue.

Phra. Take this: your boon is granted. Soon my
orders. [Gives her his dagger.

Shall send you to revenge a husband's murder.

Let her attend without. Draw near, *Araxes*.

[Exit Captive.

[Phraortes talks aside to Araxes.

Ast. What, sue to her! and when I sued disdain me!
How my disgrace grows on me! Let him perish,
And perish by that woman. My resentment
Kindles and burns, to take her charge upon me.
Yet still, would he relent, I could forgive him.

Dor. His wife is dead on whom his heart was fix'd:
That obstacle's remov'd.

Ast. And death hangs o'er him.
That sight perhaps may shake his resolution.
If I could hope, I would delay his sentence.
I dread his death. What is there to be done?
I'll see him ere he dies. O abject thought!
Yes, I will see him, and renew my offers
In his last moments; for whene'er he dies
My mind will ne'er know peace. I will defer it.
I'll sooth the king in his soft hours of love,
When all his strongest purposes are nothing.
When 'tis deferr'd—Would I could cease from thought!

Phra. Tell her, as soon as justice is perform'd,
The king requires her thanks—She's wond'rous fair!
You know my will; these are my last commands,
Let punctual care and diligence obey me. [*Ex. Araxes.*
Go, bid the priest prepare the sacrifice;
This ev'ning shall the fragrance of devotion
Smoak in our temples, and perfume the skies.
Phraortes shall attend the solemn rites,
To pay his grateful thanks in songs of joy.

[*Exeunt Doraspe and Attendants.*

Astarbe, come.—One glance of those bright eyes
Dispells all care, and empires are forgot.
In what is man superior to the brute?
Brutes eat, drink, sleep; like us, have all the senses.
The male and female meet, then coldly part,
Part with indifference, and desire is cloy'd:
In love alone we feel the immortal part,
And that celestial fire refines the hearts.

THE CAPTIVES

ACT IV.

SCENE, *a Prison.*

HYDARNES, Conspirators.

Hyd. I SHALL survive but for a little space;
Doubt not my plighted faith, and die in peace.
What is an hour of life! an hour of torment.

Think then what I shall suffer for your sake,
How I shall long and pant to be among you!
To him who fears not death revenge is sure;
To him who fears not death revenge is speedy.
Soon as the chains are struck from off these hands,
I'll dye them purple in the royal blood;
I'll watch all time. The throne shall not secure him;
The solemn temple, even that sacred ground,
Shall not protect him from my resolution.
Would it were done; that we might fall together!

1st Consp. May all success attend thy glorious purpose!
Thinking upon thy brave undaunted spirit,
I shall forget my pains, and smile in torture,
Ev'n when the sharpest pang of death is on me.

Hyd. Ere you are cold, my ghost shall overtake you,
And bring the welcome news.—Impatience racks me.

2d Consp. We thank our bold revenger, and will die
Like men that well deserv'd so great a chief.

3d Consp. Farewell. And when you lift the dagger
for the blow,
Think on my friendship.

4th Consp. And on mine.

5th Consp. And mine.

1st Consp. Think of us all, and give him death for each.

Hyd. Farewell, unhappy friends; you're brave and true,
And you entrust one who deserves such friendships.
Your prayers and wishes shall direct the dagger
Deep in his heart. And when this deed is done,
I've done my task of life, and I'll resign it.

THE CAPTIVES

Enter Araxes, and officers.

Ara. Time presses on us, and your hour is come.
We must obey our orders. Lead them hence.
Torture and death expect you.

1st Consp. Well. Lead on.

Ara. 'Tis your last moment.

1st Consp. We're impatient for it.

Ara. Stay here till my return. To you, my message
[*To Hyd.*

Is of a sweeter sound: 'tis life, 'tis freedom.

I'll see them to the scaffold; then discharge you.

[*Exeunt Araxes, Conspirators, and Officers.*

Hyd. What's death to that I feel within! 'Tis nothing.
Tortures but tear the flesh, and crush the bones;
But guilt and horror tear my restless soul,
And ev'ry thought's an arrow in my heart.
Sophernes is condemn'd, and I accus'd him.
For what?—For means to satiate my revenge,
And that's sufficient.—O revenge, support me!
What, am I grown a coward? Does repentance,
Does vile contrition sink my boasted courage?
Does resolution stagger! Hence, away,
I will not hear thee, dastard, meddling Conscience!
No. I'll go on, I feel my spirits rise;
My heart grows harder, and I scorn remorse;
That's the poor whining refuge of a coward.
My friends are now expiring. Hark, their groans
Start me from thought, and summon me to vengeance!
I come, my friends; in that great deed I'll fall.

Enter Araxes.

Ara. *Phraortes* sends you life and liberty.
Twelve days are granted you to pass the confines
Of his domains: to stay beyond that time
Annuls his pardon, and your life is forfeit.
You're now discharg'd. Be grateful for this mercy,
Pray for the peace of *Media*, and repent.

THE CAPTIVES

Hyd. Media, farewell. With all the wings of speed
I fly thy bounds. Let me forget thy name;
'Twill bring to my remembrance my lost friends.

[*Exit.*

Ara. Come forth, unhappy prince; excuse my words:
[*Unlocks the dungeon.*

'Tis with reluctance that I bring the message.
Your death's at hand.

Soph. Death is the only friend
That I have left; thy message is most welcome.
My friend's at hand; O how long I to meet him!
In him is all my hope, in him my refuge,
He shall disburthen me of all misfortune,
He shall wipe off calamity and sorrow,
And give me peace and everlasting rest.
I thank thee for the news.

Ara. Such unconcern,
Such steady fortitude amidst afflictions,
Was never seen till now.

Soph. My wife is dead!
And I have no attachment to the world.
What is't to live? And who counts life a blessing?
It is to see injustice hold the scale,
And weigh with partial hand the deeds of men;
It is to see a race of servile flatterers
Worship the author of all mischief, gold;
To see oppression rich, and virtue starving.
Death only closes this distasteful scene.

Ara. This scorn of death appears like innocence.

Soph. All mortal justice errs. Heaven knows the heart.
'Tis easy in my circumstance to dye,
For I have no possessions to forego:
My kingdom is another's; round my couch
No faithful servants stand with weeping eyes;
No darling children cling around my neck,
And with fond kisses warm my hollow cheek;
No wife, who (worn, and wearied out with grief)
Faints in my arms. These give the pangs of death;
These make us covet life. But I leave nothing.

THE CAPTIVES

Ara. What manly resolution! I grieve for you.

Soph. At death's approach the guilty conscience trembles,

But I have not those horrors.—Hark, he knocks.

[*Knocking heard.*]

With what impatient joy I come to meet thee!

Ara. Farewell, thou most unfortunate of men;

A mind so great, unshaken by distress,

Deserv'd a nobler end. Forgive my duty,

It seems severe, but 'tis the king's command;

The dungeon must confine you.

Soph. I submit. [Araxes locks him in the dungeon.]

Enter Captive.

Cap. This letter will instruct you in your duty.

Ara. The prisoner shall be given into your hands.

Cap. And he shall perish by an injur'd woman.

Thus has the king decreed; so shall he suffer,

Both for his treason, and my murder'd lord.

To see me arm'd with such just resolution,

My husband's ghost is pleas'd, and smiles upon me.

Phraortes gave this dagger: this shall end him.

Ara. Within that iron gate he mourns in darkness.

[*Gives the keys.*]

This will conduct you.—'Tis the king's command.

Soon as the bloody office is perform'd,

That you present yourself once more before him.

Cap. His will shall be obey'd.

Ara. He's now your charge.

Cap. And soon my charge shall end.—Leave me to justice.

How will my sight dismay his guilty soul!

Ev'n while that terror preys upon his heart,

I'll hurl him to the deepest shades below.

But I delay; and justice grows impatient.

I'd be alone. You now have done your duty.

[*Exit Araxes.*]

Cap. Come forth, *Sophernes.*

[*Unlocks the dungeon.*]

THE CAPTIVES

Soph. I will meet thee, death.

Cap. Draw near.

Soph. Hark! was it not a woman's voice?
That voice no more is sweet;—*Cylene's* dead.
Yes. 'Tis the queen. Here satiate thy revenge,
My bosom heaves, and longs to meet the dagger.
Why is thy hand so slow?

Cap. Look on this face, [Lifts up her veil.
Is not thy heart acquainted with these eyes?
And is thy ear a stranger to this voice?
What, not a word!

Soph. O dear delusion! [Faints.

Cyl. Wake.

'Tis thy *Cylene* calls, thy lost *Cylene*.
Cannot this bosom warm thee into life?
Cannot this voice recall thy sinking spirits?
Cannot these lips restore thee? O look up;
Thy voice, thy lips, could call me from the dead.
Look up, and give me comfort.

Soph. 'Tis *Cylene*.

'Tis no delusion. Do I live to see thee?
And must I be torn from thee? cruel thought!
O tyrant death, now thou hast made me fear thee!

Cyl. When will misfortunes leave us?

Soph. Death must end them.

'Twas said you fell in battle; from that time
I lost all pleasure, and desire of life.

Cyl. In that sad day of our adversity,
When *Persia* was made captive, every eye
Wept for the fall of my dear lord *Sophernes*,
For you they sorrow'd, and forgot their bondage.
I lost myself in heart-consuming grief,
And, lest a conqueror's arrogance and pride
Should tempt them to condemn a captive queen
To his loose hours, industriously I spread
The rumour of my death; and by those means
Have sigh'd away my days obscure, unknown.

Soph. How gain'd you this access? and why that
dagger?

THE CAPTIVES

Cyl. This is no time for talk; consult thy safety.
Catch at the present moment, for the next
May throw us back again into despair.

Soph. What means, my love? No innocence can stand
Against the voice of perjur'd calumny.

Cyl. This dagger was design'd to murder thee;
And I am sent upon that bloody errand:
This hand that now is thrown about thy neck,
Was to have done the deed. O horrid thought!
Unknown, among a train of captive women,
They brought me to the palace: there I learnt
The tale of thy unhappy sufferings,
And how the king had sign'd the fatal sentence.
I fell before the throne, extoll'd his justice;
Then, with feign'd tears, and well-dissembled speech,
Charg'd thee with violation of my honour,
And murder of a husband. He was mov'd;
Pleas'd with my bold request, he heard my prayer,
And for revenge and justice gave me this.

[*Shows the dagger.*]

But the time flies. I come, my lord, to save thee.
'Tis by that hope, I live.

Soph. That hope is past:
It is impossible. Resentment, power,
And perjury, all work against my life.
O how I fear to die! for thee, I fear;
To leave thee thus expos'd, a helpless captive,
In a strange land, and not one friend to cheer thee!

Cyl. I think thou lov'st me.

Soph. Sure thou long hast known it.

Cyl. Is there ought that I could deny *Sophernes*?
No. I have try'd my heart!

Soph. What mean these doubts?
I never gave you cause.

Cyl. Then promise, swear,
That you will not refuse me what I ask;
Thus on her knees *Cylene* begs it of you.

Soph. Does this appear like love? speak, and 'tis
granted.

THE CAPTIVES

Cyl. I thank thee. Thou hast given me all my wishes.
For now thy life is safe; and sav'd by me.
Here, take this veil; this shall secure thy flight,
With this thou shalt deceive the watchful guard.
O blest occasion! fly, my lord, with speed;
I never wish'd to part till now.

Soph. What, go and leave thee thus! my heart forbids it.
No. Death is all that I am doom'd to suffer,
But thy distress is more.

Cyl. Dispute it not.
Hast thou not sworn?

Soph. What never can be done.
Why wilt thou force severer torture on me?
No. Give me death; I chuse the slighter pain.
When I am dead, may the just Gods relieve thee.

Cyl. Was ever love thus obstinately cruel!
Only thy life can save me; think on that.

[*Sophernes fixes his eyes on the ground.*
Like the deaf rock he stands immoveable.
How my fears grow, and chill my shiv'ring heart!
Has then thy stubbornness resolv'd to kill me?

Soph. Shall I, that was her shield in every danger,
Abandon her to the rude hand of power?

Cyl. Hear me, my lord; embrace the happy moment:
This is, perhaps, the last that is allow'd us.

Soph. What! give her my distress!

Cyl. Look up, and answer.
Have my words lost all int'rest in thy heart?
Hear then my purpose; and I will perform it.
I'll never feel the pang of that sad hour
When thou shalt suffer. No: I'll die before thee.
How gracious was this present of the king.
'Tis kind, 'tis merciful, 'twill give me peace,
And show me more compassion than *Sophernes*.

Soph. O give me strength, ye powers, to break my
chains,
That I may force the lifted weapon from her!
Spare, spare thy dearer life! I grant thee all.
I will abandon thee to my distresses;

THE CAPTIVES

I'll fly this instant; by our loves, I will.

The Gods are kind. O may their mercy save her!

Cyl. From thy dear hands I take the galling chains,
Lest danger intercept thee: haste, be gone;
And as thou valu'st mine, secure thy life.
Thou hast no hope: who knows but my offence
May find forgiveness! 'tis a crime of love;
And love's a powerful advocate to mercy.

Soph. O how I struggle to unloose my heart-strings,
That are so closely knit and twin'd with thine!
Is't possible that we may meet again?
That thought has fill'd my soul with resolution.
Farewell: may heaven support thee, and redress us!

[*Exit.*]

Cyl. O blessed opportunity, I thank thee.
If for this pious act of love I perish,
Let not *Sophernes* rashly follow me.
Live to revenge me, and the world shall praise thee.
Though all my hours be doom'd to chains and darkness,
The pleasing thought that I have given thee safety,
Will cheer me more than liberty and day-light.
Though I'm condemned to suffer shameful death,
Ev'n in that hour I shall forget his terrors,
And knowing that preserv'd thee, die with pleasure.
But hark! what noise was that? New fears alarm me.
Is he detected?—Heaven has more compassion.
Be still, my heart. I go to take his place,
And wait th' event with steady resignation.

[*Enters the dungeon.*]

Enter Araxes and Astarbe.

Ast. I bring the royal mandate, read your order.
The sentence of *Sophernes* is suspended;
I'd question him in private. Guide me to him.

Ara. He's dead.

Ast. *Sophernes* dead! when? how? by whom?

Ara. The captive woman by whose hand he fell,
Is gone before the king; just now she parted.

THE CAPTIVES

Ast. My guilt, my hate, my love, all war within,
And conscience and distraction will betray me. [*Aside.*

Ara. Within that dungeon lies the breathless body.

Ast. Name him no more. Begone; I'd be alone.
You know my pleasure.

Ara. I'm all obedience. [*Exit.*

Ast. Who shall appease this tempest of my soul?
'Tis done. He's dead: now it will rage for ever!
Yet why? Hence, conscience. All I did was justice.
Am I the cause? I proffer'd life and love;
The murder was not mine. Why then this horror?
Could a queen bear such insolence and scorn?
Was I not injur'd? shall I not resent?
He well deserv'd his fate. Ungrateful man!
The bloody spectacle shall please revenge,
And fix eternal hatred in my heart. [*Cylene comes forth.*
Hah! speak: what art?—

It moves! it comes! where shall I hide me from it?
Nature shrinks back, and shivers at the sight.

[*Hides her face.*

* *Cyl.* See at your feet a poor unhappy captive.

[*Kneeling.*

O may the queen be gracious to her servant!

Ast. *Araxes* said that he had let you forth,
And by command you went before the king.
Why has he thus deceiv'd me?

Cyl. Turn not away;
Bestow one look of pity on a wretch,
Who lifts her eyes to you for grace and pardon.
Ast. Pardon! for what? you did it by command.
Is it a crime t'obey the voice of justice?
And did not thy own wrongs demand his blood?
What has detain'd thee in that horrid place?
Was it to hear him in the pangs of death,
And taste the pleasure of his dying groan?
Stretch forth thy hands: where are the crimson stains?
Where lies the reeking sword? Is he yet cold?
'Twas bravely done.—Go, haste, before the throne;
Phraortes shall reward thee for this service.

Cyl. When I shall stand before that awful presence,
How shall I stem the torrent of his wrath!
Then let the queen instill soft mercy in him,
And intercede to spare a wretched wife.

Ast. Make known thy crime.

Cyl. All my offence is love.

Sophernes is my husband.

Ast. Hast thou kill'd him?

Cyl. No. I dar'd disobey. My love has sav'd him.
With lying speeches I deceiv'd the king,
Accused *Sophernes* of imagined crimes,
And thus have given him life. My veil conceal'd him,
And brought him forth from death. 'This is my guilt.
If e'er your heart has felt the tender passion,
You will forgive this just, this pious fraud.
Who would not do the same for him she loves?
Consult thy heart; and pity will plead for me.

Ast. How dar'd you contradict the king's command?

Cyl. No power on earth commands the heart but
love; [Rises.

And I obey'd my heart.

Ast. Thy life is forfeit.

Dar'st thou avow thy crime?

Cyl. I glory in it.

If 'tis a crime, when innocence is wrong'd
To snatch it from the rage of credulous power;
If 'tis a crime to succour the distress;
If 'tis a crime to relieve injur'd virtue;
If 'tis a crime to be a faithful wife;
Those crimes are mine; for I have sav'd my husband.

Ast. Is this an answer turn'd to move compassion!
Such insolence is only match'd in him.
Thine is the most consummate pitch of treason.
Who gave thee power? Are traitors at thy mercy?
Let not hope flatter thee. Nor prayers nor tears
Shall turn away the sword of justice from thee.
Rash woman, know, thy life shall pay his ransom.

Cyl. Alas! my life is of too little price;
Such as it is, I freely give it for him.

THE CAPTIVES

May safety guard his days, and watch his nights!

[*Kneeling.*]

May ev'ry sun rise happier than the last,
'Till he shall re-ascend his native throne!

Then think upon *Cylene*. Heaven shall aid thee
To punish *Media* for thy murder'd wife.

Ast. *Araxes!* [*Enter Araxes.*] Seize this bold pre-
sumptuous woman.

Your charge, beneath her veil, is fled from justice,
And she dares own the crime. I fear your duty
Will be suspected. Lead her to the dungeon.

There wait thy fate.

Cyl. Ye gods, preserve *Sophernes*.

[*She is lock'd into the dungeon.*]

Ast. If I had power, this instant she should die.

Ara. I fear the king will soften into mercy.

Ast. Why that suspicion?

Ara. While she spoke before him,

I saw the king with the most fond attention
Hang on her words; and as she spoke, he languish'd,
And ev'ry look he gave was love or pity.

Ast. She shall not live an hour. Lest with each
moment

His passion strengthen, and my power diminish.

Did beauty strike all hearts as well as eyes,

For me the rival world would be in arms:

Beauty's admir'd and prais'd, not always lov'd.

Some eyes are dazzled with too strong a lustre,

That gaze with pleasure on a fainter object;

This homely captive then may steal his heart,

And bring disgrace upon me. I'll prevent her.

This hour I'll see her bleed, and thus remove

At once the rival of my throne and love.

THE CAPTIVES

ACT V.

SCENE, a Temple.

ASTARBE.

DORASPE knows,—and I am in her power.
Araxes was employ'd; he may suspect me.
One crime supports another—I must on.
I fear them both. How shall I lose my fear?
Their deaths must end it. But they may be honest.
I'll sift them—for my soul has lost all rest.
But see Doraspe.

Enter Doraspe.

Thou sometimes wert known
To miss devotion's hours. How comes it then
Thou'rt now so soon? hast thou ought that concerns me?
Think'st thou Araxes honest? I have doubts.
I fear the prisoner 'scap'd by his connivance.
Are my commands obey'd?

Dor. 'Tis not yet done.

He could not gain admission to the king.

Ast. Does he not know a frown of mine can crush
him?

Dor. I know his heart and hand are wholly your's.
He waits the king's commands.

Ast. Are mine then nothing?

And want I power to justify the deed?
Why was she not dispatch'd? He knew my pleasure.
My pleasure is his duty. 'Twas I rais'd him;
And dares he now dispute what I ordain?
Tell him, I'll have it done; that I command it.
Thou too art false. Then on herself alone
Astarbe shall depend. Away, thou flatterer.
Go hence, and tremble at the queen's displeasure.
She shall this instant die. For see Phraortes.

THE CAPTIVES

Astarbe now has all things at her nod.
Of this day's worship I'll appoint the victim.

Enter *Phraortes*; *A solemn procession of Priests.*

[*The queen talks apart to Phraortes.*

Phra. Bid them suspend a while the sacrifice;
The queen requires a private conference
On matters that concern the state. Withdraw.

[*Exeunt Priests.*

Now speak, my queen; I'm ready to obey.

Ast. All is not safe. Your state still harbours treason.
Ev'n now I tremble for my lord the king;
For through the dark the traitor's arrow flies;
And which way will you turn your shield against it?

Phra. What means my queen?

Ast. Cast off all clemency;
So shall your throne stand firm to latest time.

Phra. And has my danger given *Astarbe* fear?
Where shall I find reward for so much goodness?
I swear by *Jove*, and yon wide sapphire heaven,
Astarbe's will shall fix the king's decree.

Ast. What shall be done to him, whose lying lips
Mislead the king from the strait paths of justice?

Phra. *Media* decrees that death shall be his portion.

Ast. What is ordain'd for him, who (when the king
Entrusts the royal signet in his hands)
Dares contradict the sacred mandate?

Phra. Death.

Ast. What shall our laws inflict on that bold miscreant,
Who saves th' offender whom the king condemns?

Phra. The fatal sentence falls upon his head.

Ast. Let justice then support the throne of *Media*;
Let Justice then preserve thy sacred life!
All these offences are that captive woman's,
Who with feign'd tears beg'd pity and revenge.
With lying lips she fell before the throne,
She turn'd the king from the strait paths of justice,
The royal seal was trusted in her hands;

Presumptuously she broke the sacred mandate,
 She spar'd whom you condemn'd, and with vile treachery
 Hath set *Sophernes* free. So this assassin
 Shall kindle new rebellions in your empire.

Phra. These flagrant crimes demand immediatè death.

Ast. Let it be so. The king is wise and just.

Phra. She shall this instant bleed. Audacious woman!

Ast. Let her endure the shameful pomp of death,
 Expose her through the city's public street;
 So shall your people's shouts extol your justice;
 So shall you strike your enemies with fear,
 And awe them to subjection. Bring her forth;
 Here let her bleed, ev'n on this holy ground,
 Before the presence; *Jove* delights in justice,
 The righteous sacrifice shall please the gods.

Enter Orbadius, Magi, Attendants.

Phra. Come from the croud, *Orbadius*; hear and obey.
 Haste to the prison, and bring forth that woman
 (Who freed *Sophernes* from the hand of power)
 To public justice. She shall bleed before me.
 Let her be led a public spectacle.
 Dispatch. Remember that the king expects you.

[*Exit Orbadius.*

The shield of heaven has turn'd destruction from us;
 And gratitude requires our thanks and praise.
 Call up the priests. Begin the sacred rites.

1st Mag. Turn all your eyes to yon bright arch of
 heaven.

2d. Mag. When *Jove* in thunder threatens impious men,
 May the red lightnings scatter *Media's* foes,
 And lay their cities desolate and waste!

1st Mag. May the vast globe of inexhausted light,
 That rolls its living fires from east to west,
 Strow all his paths with fragrant herbs and flowers,
 And bless his people with perpetual spring!

2d Mag. May the bright lamp of night, the silver
 moon,

THE CAPTIVES

And all the starry myriad that attend her,
Guard and defend his midnight couch from dangers!

1st Mag. May ever living springs supply our fountains,
And wind in fertile rivers through the land!

2d Mag. Bless him, ye winds, with ever prosp'rous gales!

1st Mag. Pour not your wrath in tempests on his
people.

Let your sweet breath chase dearth and pestilence,
And cool our summers with eternal health!

Enter Orbadius, with Cylene, as led to execution.

[Orbadius talks apart to the king.]

Phra. Again we must defer the solemn worship.

Bid the procession move towards the temple:
And let th' offender stand before the presence. [To Orb.]

Ast. *Sophernes* has expos'd me to this woman;
And while she lives, I live in fear and shame.
Shall she then triumph in a queen's disgrace? [Aside.]

Cyl. Most gracious king, consider my transgression.
[Kneels.]

My life is forfeit; justice has condemn'd me.
I broke th' inviolable laws of *Media*.
Yet let *Phraortes* with impartial scale
Weigh my offence; he'll find my crime was virtue.
Sure heaven that tries the heart, will pardon me:
And kings, who imitate the gods in justice,
Should not forsake them in the paths of mercy.

Phra. Have not thy lying lips deceiv'd the king?
How shall thy words find faith! They're air, they're
nothing!

Cyl. O be not rash in judgment! Hear me speak.
What mov'd my tongue to practice this deceit?
Was it ambition and the lust of power?
Was it to vex your empire with rebellion?
Was it the meaner views of sordid gain?
Was it to hurt the lowest of your people?
All my offence is faithful love and duty:
Sophernes is my husband, and I sav'd him.

THE CAPTIVES

Phra. Thy husband!

Ast. Hear her not: woman, away.

Remember you have sworn.

Phra. Thy husband, say'st thou?

Ast. Think on your oath, and spurn dissimulation.

Phra. Am I debarr'd the chief delight of kings?

Have I the power to punish; not to pardon?

But I have sworn.

Cyl. If there's no room for mercy [Rises.

My life is well bestow'd. My death is glorious;

I chose it; and repine not at my fate.

Ast. Turn from her. Listen not to fraud and guile.

Cyl. Think not I shudder at th' approach of death;

That the keen sword, which glitters in my eyes,

Makes my heart fail, and sinks me to despair.

I fear not for myself; for him I fear.

How will he bear my death?—As I could his.

Phra. Why have I bound the tender hands of mercy?

[Musing.

Ast. You but delay. The royal oath is sacred.

Cyl. Well then. Lead on. His punishment is mine.

Live, live, *Sophernes*, and forget *Cylene*;

Lest grief destroy thy peace, and make thee wretched.

I'm ready.

Phra. How shall I pronounce the sentence!

Ast. For your oath's sake.

Phra. 'Tis granted. Let her die.

But let me first perform my due devotions,

To beg that mercy which I must refuse.

As soon as I have paid my solemn vows,

I'll make the sign: then let the blow be given.

See all be ready. Now renew the rites.

Enter Hydarnes, disguis'd.

Hyd. Thus far I'm undiscover'd.—Now's my time.

The king of *Media*'s given into my hands.

And when he leaves his guards to trust the gods,

Ev'n while he prostrate falls, and lifts his eyes

THE CAPTIVES

To the bright god of day, th' all-seeing sun,
This shall dispatch him first, and then *Hydarnes*.

1st Mag. Now let the king advance.

Phra. O glorious sun! [*Kneeling.*

[*Hydarnes attempting to stab Phraortes, is stab'd by*

Sophernes, disguis'd, who is seiz'd by the Magi.

What means this consternation in all eyes?

Whence this alarm, and all this wild disorder?

Hah! who lies here thus weltring in his blood,

Gasping for life? what means this horrid murder?

Strike not till I command, [*To the Executioner.*] Who
did this deed?

1st Mag. Behold the man. What bounty can reward
him?

What shall be done for him who sav'd the king?

Phra. Say who, and whence thou art?

Soph. A wretched man

Who comes to take his sentence on him, death.

Sophernes was condemn'd; 'tis he must suffer.

Spare then that pattern of heroic virtue.

The sentence is not her's; I claim my right.

Sophernes stands before you, and demands it.

[*Throws off his disguise.*

Cyl. O stay nor for the signal. Give the blow.

Save him, ye gods! Why is the stroke delay'd?

The king has sworn. O may my death preserve him!

Phra. Suspend her sentence till my further orders.

Who slew this man? what mov'd thee to the murder?

Why hast thou stain'd this holy place with blood?

Soph. That villain who lies groveling there before thee,

Had rais'd his arm to take thy life, O king;

And as the point descended, in the moment

I laid him low; and heaven has done me justice.

If favour shall reward me for this deed,

Spare my *Cylene*, grant her your protection.

I ask not life, for without her 'tis nothing.

Ast. Where will this end? How are my schemes
destroy'd!

Fear chills my heart, and guilt lies heavy on me.

THE CAPTIVES

Leave me not, hell! desert not now thy cause.
I've gone too far. O blind the eyes of justice!

And sink me not in ruin and perdition. [Aside.

Phra. Know you this bold assassin? View him well.

Hyd. Ay, gaze upon me.

Orba. Sure I've seen this man.

Soph. Among the crowd I mark'd this perjur'd wretch,
Who charg'd me with ingratitude and treason:
With fury in his looks, and hasty strides
He stept before me; straight he rais'd his dagger:
In justice to myself and thee, I smote him.

Ast. Where shall I hide me? how my fears distract me!
Who knows the torment of the guilty wretch,
When accusation stares him in the face?
'Then all our spirits sink into despair,

And when we want most strength, then most it fails us.

He speaks, and I'm betray'd. Why err'd the dagger!

To bring confusion, shame, and death upon me.

Where shall I fly?—for conscience will detect me,

'Twill faulter on my tongue, and stain my cheek.

O horror! O disgrace!—I fly from shame. [Exit.

Soph. 'Twas I that gave thee death.

Hyd. Thou hast done justice.

Phra. What sayst thou? speak again.

Hyd. He has done justice.

I barb'rously accus'd him of my crimes;

That guilt upbraids me; and I ask forgiveness. [To Soph.

Phra. Whence art thou?—why this zealous rage
against me?

Hyd. I grieve not that I perish'd by his hand;

But that he disappointed my revenge,

I can't forgive him. Had he stay'd 'till then,

Hydarnes had faln greatly. But that's past.

Still I shall wound thee in the tendrest part.

[To Phraortes.

I faint. O grant me strength to give it utterance!

Draw near, *Araxes*. Speak, inform the king;

Did not you guide me to the queen's apartment?

You know why I was call'd. Disclose the secret.

THE CAPTIVES

Ara. What past I know not.

Hyd. What you fear to own,
I dare reveal: hear then a dying man.
The queen, on promise of my life and pardon,
Prevail'd upon me to accuse this prince:
I knew him not; yet, to pursue thy life,
And gratify revenge, I undertook it.

Phra. It is impossible. Advance, my queen,
And let thy presence strike him with confusion.
Come forth, *Astarbe*. Hah! she's fled; she's guilty!
Haste, bring her back. I will extort confession.
What mov'd her to this perjur'd information?

[*Ex. Officers.*

Whence sprung this hate and malice to *Sophernes*?

[*To Hydarnes.*

Hyd. Ask her. I speak the truth, and know no further.
Look on me, tyrant, and observe my features;
Seest thou not here the lines of brave *Lysamnes*?
He by thy power was led to shameful death,
His son now dies, and never has reveng'd him. [Dies.

Enter Astarbe, brought in by Officers.

Ast. Bring me before the king.

Phra. Perfidious woman!

Look on that wretch, who there lies pale and cold;
Was he not brought in private to your chamber?
Who gave instructions to accuse *Sophernes*?
Who promis'd life and pardon to *Hydarnes*?

Ast. All then is lost. *Astarbe* is betray'd.
But shall I stoop to lead a life of shame?
No. • This shall close a scene of long remorse.

[*Stabs herself.*

Phra. *Astarbe!* hold!

Ast. Forgive me!

[Dies.

Phra. Her foul treachery
My soul detests. But love will force a tear.
What mov'd her hatred thus against your life?
Soph. She was unhappy. Let her be forgot.

THE CAPTIVES

Phra. Draw near, *Cylene*. May heav'n bless your loves!
[*Gives her to Sophernes.*

Cyl. Shall he then live? My heart o'erflows with joy.
Now life is worth accepting, worth desiring,
Worth ev'ry wish, and ev'ry daily prayer.

Phra. By you the royal vestment shall be worn,
And, next the king, all honour shall be paid
To you who sav'd him. [To *Sophernes.*

Soph. What I did was due;
I've only paid a debt of gratitude:
What would your bounty more?—you've given me all:
For in these arms I ev'ry wish possess.

Phra. Life is a voyage, and we with pain and labour
Must weather many a storm, to reach the port.

Soph. Since 'tis not given to mortals to discern
Their real good and ill; let men learn patience:
Let us the toils of adverse fate sustain,
For through that rugged road our hopes we gain.

EPILOGUE.

SPOKEN BY MRS. OLDFIELD.

SHALL authors tease the town with tragic passion,
When we've more modern moral things in fashion?
Let poets quite exhaust the Muse's treasure;
Sure masquerades must give more feeling pleasure,
Where we meet finer sense and better measure;
The marry'd dame, whose business must be done,
Puts on the holy vestments of a nun;
And brings her unprolific spouse a son.
Coquettes, with whom no lover could succeed,
Here pay off all arrears, and love in—deed:
Ev'n conscious prudes are so sincere and free,
They ask each man they meet—Do you know me?
Do not our Operas unbend the mind,
Where ev'ry soul's to ecstasy resign'd?
Entranc'd with sound sits each seraphic toast:

THE CAPTIVES

All ladies love the play that moves the most.
Ev'n in this house I've known some tender Fair,
Touch'd with meer sense alone, confess a tear.
But the soft voice of an Italian Wether,
Makes them all languish three whole hours together.
And where's the wonder? Plays, like Mass, are sung,
(Religious Drama!)—in an unknown tongue.

Will Poet's ne'er consider what they cost us?
What tragedy can take, like Doctor Faustus?
Two stages in this moral show excell,
To frighten vicious youth with scenes of hell;
Yet both these Faustuses can warn but few.
For what's a conj'rer's fate to me or—you?

Yet there are wives who think heav'n worth their care;
But first they kindly send their spouses there.
When you my lover's last distress behold,
Does not each husband's thrilling blood run cold?
Some heroes only die.—Ours finds a wife.
What's harder than captivity for life?
Yet Men, ne'er warn'd, still court their own undoing:
Who, for that circle, would but venture ruin?



THE
BEGGAR'S OPERA

—Nos hæc novissimus esse nihil.

Mart.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

Peachum.		Mr. <i>Hippesley</i> .	
Lockit.		Mr. <i>Hall</i> .	
Macheath.		Mr. <i>Walker</i> .	
Filch.		Mr. <i>Clark</i> .	
Jemmy Twitcher.	} <i>Mac-</i> <i>heath's</i> <i>Gang.</i>	{ Mr. <i>H. Bullock</i> .	
<i>Crook-finger'd</i> Jack.			Mr. <i>Houghton</i> .
Wat Dreary.			Mr. <i>Smith</i> .
Robin of Bagshot.			Mr. <i>Lacy</i> .
<i>Nimming</i> Ned.			Mr. <i>Pit</i> .
Harry Paddington.			Mr. <i>Eaton</i> .
Mat of the Mint.			Mr. <i>Spiller</i> .
Ben Budge.			Mr. <i>Morgan</i> .
<i>Beggar</i> .			Mr. <i>Chapman</i> .
<i>Player</i> .			Mr. <i>Milward</i> .

Constables, Drawer, Turnkey, &c.

W O M E N.

Mrs. Peachum.		Mrs. <i>Martin</i> .	
Polly Peachum.		Miss <i>Fenton</i> .	
Lucy Lockit.		Mrs. <i>Egleton</i> .	
Diana Trapes.		Mrs. <i>Martin</i> .	
Mrs. Coaxer.	} <i>Women</i> <i>of the</i> <i>Town.</i>	{ Mrs. <i>Holiday</i> .	
Dolly Trull.			Mrs. <i>Lacy</i> .
Mrs. Vixen.			Mrs. <i>Rice</i> .
Betty Doxy.			Mrs. <i>Rogers</i> .
Jenny Diver.			Mrs. <i>Clarke</i> .
Mrs. Slammekin.			Mrs. <i>Morgan</i> .
Suky Tawdry.			Mrs. <i>Palin</i> .
Molly Brazen.			Mrs. <i>Sallee</i> .

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ—Continued.

The Names of the Lilliputians.

<i>Mr. Peachum.</i>	} <i>Mac-</i>	<i>Mary Shaftoe.</i>
<i>Lockit.</i>		<i>James Bencraft.</i>
<i>Macheath.</i>		<i>Elizabeth Binks.</i>
<i>Filch.</i>		<i>James Weeks.</i>
<i>Jemmy Twitcher.</i>		<i>Henry Woodward.</i>
<i>Crook-finger'd Jack.</i>		<i>James Weeks.</i>
<i>Wat Dreary.</i>		<i>James Weeks.</i>
<i>Robin of Bagshot.</i>		<i>John Wilson.</i>
<i>Nimming Ned.</i>		<i>James Bencraft.</i>
<i>Harry Paddington.</i>		<i>Fisher Tench Charke</i>
<i>Mat of the Mint.</i>		<i>John Verhuyck.</i>
<i>Ben Budge.</i>		<i>Henry Woodward.</i>
<i>Beggar.</i>		<i>Henry Woodward.</i>
<i>Player.</i>		<i>Fisher Tench Charke.</i>

Constables, Drawer, Turnkey, &c.

<i>Mrs. Peachum.</i>	} <i>Women</i>	<i>Esther Wherrit.</i>
<i>Polly Peachum.</i>		<i>Elizabeth Rogers.</i>
<i>Lucy Lockit.</i>		<i>Susanna Rogers.</i>
<i>Diana Trapes.</i>		<i>Esther Wherrit.</i>
<i>Mrs. Coaxer.</i>		<i>Margaret Lowe.</i>
<i>Dolly Trull.</i>		<i>Sarah Foxwell.</i>
<i>Mrs. Vixen.</i>		<i>Mary Vincent.</i>
<i>Betty Doxy.</i>		<i>Mary Weyman.</i>
<i>Jenny Diver.</i>		<i>Margaret Gold.</i>
<i>Mrs. Slammekin.</i>		<i>Esther Wherrit.</i>
<i>Suky Tawdry.</i>		<i>Beatrice Boitar.</i>
<i>Molly Brazen.</i>		<i>Susanna Cann.</i>

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THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

INTRODUCTION.

BEGGAR, PLAYER.

Beggar. IF Poverty be a Title to Poetry, I am sure Nobody can dispute mine. I own my self of the Company of Beggars; and I make one at their Weekly Festivals at St. *Gile's*. I have a small Yearly Salary for my Catches, and am welcome to a Dinner there whenever I please, which is more than most Poets can say.

Player. As we live by the Muses, 'tis but Gratitude in us to encourage Poetical Merit where'er we find it. The Muses, contrary to all other Ladies, pay no Distinction, to Dress, and never partially mistake the Pertness of Embroidery for Wit, nor the Modesty of Want for Dullness. Be the Author who he will, we push his Play as far as it will go. So (though you are in Want) I wish you Success heartily.

Beggar. This Piece I own was originally writ for the celebrating the Marriage of *James Chanter* and *Moll Lay*, two most excellent Ballad-Singers. I have introduc'd

INTRODUCTION

the Similes that are in all your celebrated *Operas*: The *Swallow*, the *Moth*, the *Bee*, the *Ship*, the *Flower*, &c. Besides I have a Prison Scene, which the Ladies always reckon charmingly pathetick. As to the Parts, I have observ'd such a nice Impartiality to our two Ladies, that it is impossible for either of them to take Offence. I hope I may be forgiven, that I have not made my Opera throughout unnatural, like those in vogue; for I have no Recitative: Excepting this, as I have consented to have neither Prologue nor Epilogue, it must be allow'd an Opera in all its forms. The Piece indeed hath been heretofore frequently represented by ourselves in our great Room at St. *Giles's*, so that I cannot too often acknowledge your Charity in bringing it now on the Stage.

Player. But I see 'tis time for us to withdraw; the Actors are preparing to begin. Play away the Overture.
[*Exeunt.*]

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

ACT I. SCENE I.

SCENE Peachum's House.

Peachum sitting at a Table with a large Book of Accounts before him.

AIR I. An old Woman Cloathed in Gray, &c.



THROUGH all the Employments of Life
Each Neighbour abuses his Brother;
Whore and Rogue they call Husband and Wife:
All Professions be-rogue one another.
The Priest calls the Lawyer a Cheat,
The Lawyer be-knaves the Divine;
And the Statesman, because he's so great,
Thinks his Trade as honest as mine.

A Lawyer is an honest Employment, so is mine. ~ Like me too he acts in a double Capacity, both against Rogues and for 'em; for 'tis but fitting that we should protect and encourage Cheats, since we live by them.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

SCENE II.

Peachum, Filch.

Filch. Sir, Black *Moll* hath sent word her Tryal comes on in the Afternoon, and she hopes you will order Matters so as to bring her off.

Peach. Why, she may plead her Belly at worst; to my Knowledge she hath taken care of that Security. But as the Wench is very active and industrious, you may satisfy her that I'll soften the Evidence.

Filch. *Tom Gagg*, Sir, is found guilty.

Peach. A lazy Dog! When I took him the time before, I told him what he would come to if he did not mend his Hand. This is Death without Reprieve. I may venture to Book him. [*writes*] For *Tom Gagg*, forty Pounds. Let *Betty Sly* know that I'll save her from Transportation, for I can get more by her staying in *England*.

Filch. *Betty* hath brought more Goods into our Lock to-year than any five of the Gang; and in truth, 'tis a pity to lose so good a Customer.

Peach. If none of the Gang take her off, she may, in the common course of Business, live a Twelve-month longer. I love to let Women scape. A good Sportsman always lets the Hen Partridges fly, because the breed of the Game depends upon them. Besides, here the law allows us no Reward; there is nothing to be got by the Death of Women—except our Wives.

Filch. Without dispute, she is a fine Woman! 'Twas to her I was oblig'd for my Education, and (to say a bold Word) she hath train'd up more young Fellows to the Business than the Gaming-table.

Peach. Truly, *Filch*, thy Observation is right. We and the Surgeons are more beholden to Women than all the Professions besides.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

A I R II. The bonny gray-ey'd Morn, &c.



Filch. *'Tis Woman that seduces all Mankind,
By her we first were taught the wheedling Arts :
Her very eyes can cheat ; when most she's kind,
She tricks us of our Money with our Hearts.
For her, like Wolves by night we roam for Prey,
And practise ev'ry Fraud to bribe her Charms ;
For Suits of Love, like Law, are won by Pay,
And Beauty must be fee'd into our Arms.*

Peach. But make haste to Newgate, Boy, and let my Friends know what I intend ; for I love to make them easy one way or other.

Filch. When a Gentleman is long kept in suspence, Penitence may break his Spirit ever after. Besides, Certainty gives a Man a good Air upon his Tryal, and makes him risque another without Fear or Scruple. But I'll away, for 'tis a Pleasure to be the Messenger of Comfort to Friends in Affliction.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

SCENE III.

Peachum.

But 'tis now high time to look about me for a decent Execution against next Sessions. I hate a lazy Rogue, by whom one can get nothing 'till he is hang'd. A Register of the Gang, [*reading*] Crook-finger'd *Jack*. A Year and a half in the Service; Let me see how much the Stock owes to his Industry; one, two, three, four, five Gold Watches, and seven Silver ones. A mighty-clean-handed Fellow! Sixteen Snuff-boxes, five of them of true Gold. Six dozen of Handkerchiefs, four silver-hilted Swords, half a dozen of Shirts, three Tye-Perriwigs, and a Piece of Broad Cloth. Considering these are only the Fruits of his leisure Hours, I don't know a prettier Fellow, for no Man alive hath a more engaging Presence of Mind upon the Road. *Wat Dreary*, alias *Brown Will*, an irregular Dog, who hath an underhand way of disposing of his Goods. I'll try him only for a Session or two longer upon his good Behaviour. *Harry Paddington*, a poor petty-larceny Rascal, without the least Genius; that Fellow though he were to live these six Months, will never come to the Gallows with any Credit. Slippery *Sam*; he goes off the next Sessions, for the Villain hath the Impudence to have views of following his Trade as a Taylor, which he calls an honest Employment. *Mat* of the *Mint*; listed not above a Month ago, a promising sturdy Fellow, and diligent in his way; somewhat too bold and hasty, and may raise good Contributions on the Publick, if he does not cut himself short by Murder. *Tom Tipple*, a guzzling soaking Sot, who is always too drunk to stand himself, or to make others stand. A Cart is absolutely necessary for him. *Robin* of *Bagshot*, alias *Gorgon*, alias *Bluff Bob*, alias *Carbuncle*, alias *Bob Booty*.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

SCENE IV.

Peachum, *Mrs. Peachum.*

Mrs. Peach. What of *Bob Booty*, Husband? I hope nothing bad hath betided him. You know, my Dear, he's a favourite Customer of mine. 'Twas he made me a Present of this Ring.

Peach. I have set his name down in the Black-List, that's all, my Dear; he spends his Life among Women, and as soon as his Money is gone, one or other of the Ladies will hang him for the Reward, and there's forty Pound lost to us for-ever.

Mrs. Peach. You know, my Dear, I never meddle in matters of Death; I always leave those Affairs to you. Women indeed are bitter bad Judges in these cases, for they are so partial to the Brave that they think every Man handsome who is going to the Camp or the Gallows.

A I R III. Cold and Raw, &c.



*If any Wench Venus's Girdle wear,
Though she be never so ugly;
Lillies and Roses will quickly appear,
And her Face look wond'rous smuggly.
Beneath the left Ear so fit but a Cord,
(A Rope so charming a Zone is!)*

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

*The Youth in his Cart hath the Air of a Lord,
And we cry, There dies an Adonis!*

But really, Husband, you should not be too hard-hearted, for you never had a finer, braver set of Men than at present. We have not had a Murder among them all, these seven Months. And truly, my Dear, that is a great Blessing.

Peach. What a dickens is the Woman always a whimpering about Murder for? No Gentleman is ever look'd upon the worse for killing a Man in his own Defence; and if Business cannot be carried on without it, what would you have a Gentleman do?

Mrs. Peach. If I am in the wrong, my Dear, you must excuse me, for No-body can help the Frailty of an over-scrupulous Conscience.

Peach. Murder is as fashionable a Crime as a Man can be guilty of. How many fine Gentlemen have we in *Newgate* every Year, purely upon that Article! If they have wherewithal to persuade the Jury to bring it in Manslaughter, what are they the worse for it? So, my Dear, have done upon this Subject. Was Captain *Macheath* here this Morning, for the Bank-notes he left with you last Week?

Mrs. Peach. Yes, my Dear; and though the Bank hath stopt Payment, he was so cheerful and so agreeable! Sure there is not a finer Gentleman upon the Road than the Captain! If he comes from *Bagshot* at any reasonable Hour he hath promis'd to make one this Evening with *Polly* and me, and *Bob Booty*, at a Party of Quadrille. Pray, my Dear, is the Captain rich?

Peach. The Captain keeps too good Company ever to grow rich. *Mary-bone* and the Chocolate-houses are his undoing. The Man that proposes to get Money by Play should have the Education of a fine Gentleman, and be train'd up to it from his Youth.

Mrs. Peach. Really, I am sorry upon *Polly's* Account the Captain hath not more Discretion. What business hath he to keep Company with Lords and Gentlemen? he should leave them to prey upon one another.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

Peach. Upon *Polly's* Account! What, a Plague, does the Woman mean?—Upon *Polly's* Account!

Mrs. Peach. Captain *Macheath* is very fond of the Girl.

Peach. And what then?

Mrs. Peach. If I have any Skill in the Ways of Women, I am sure *Polly* thinks him a very pretty Man.

Peach. And what then? You would not be so mad to have the Wench marry him! Gamesters and Highway-men are generally very good to their Whores, but they are very Devils to their Wives.

Mrs. Peach. But if *Polly* should be in love, how should we help her, or how can she help herself? Poor Girl, I am in the utmost Concern about her.

A I R IV. Why is your faithful Slave disdain'd? &c.



*If Love the Virgin's Heart invade,
How, like a Moth, the simple Maid
Still plays about the Flame!*

*If soon she be not made a Wife,
Her Honour's sing'd, and then for Life,
She's—what I dare not name.*

Peach. Look ye, Wife. A handsome Wench in our way of Business is as profitable as at the Bar of a *Temple* Coffee-House, who looks upon it as her Livelihood to grant every Liberty but one. You see I would indulge the Girl as far as prudently we can. In any thing, but Mar-

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

riage! After that, my Dear, how shall we be safe? Are we not then in her Husband's Power? For a Husband hath the absolute Power over all a Wife's Secrets but her own. If the Girl had the Discretion of a Court Lady, who can have a dozen young Fellows at her Ear without complying with one, I should not matter it; but *Polly* is Tinder, and a Spark will at once set her on a Flame. Married! If the Wench does not know her own Profit, sure she knows her own Pleasure better than to make herself a Property! My Daughter to me should be, like a Court Lady to a Minister of State, a Key to the whole Gang. Married! If the Affair is not already done, I'll terrify her from it, by the Example of our Neighbours.

Mrs. Peach. May-hap, my Dear, you may injure the girl. She loves to imitate the fine Ladies, and she may only allow the Captain Liberties in the View of Interest.

Peach. But 'tis your Duty, my Dear, to warn the Girl against her Ruin, and to instruct her how to make the most of her Beauty. I'll go to her this moment, and sift her. In the mean time, Wife, rip out the Coronets and Marks of these dozen of Cambric Handkerchiefs, for I can dispose of them this Afternoon to a Chap in the City.

SCENE V.

Mrs. Peachum.

Never was a Man more out of the way in an Argument than my Husband! Why must our *Polly*, forsooth, differ from her Sex, and love only her Husband? And why must *Polly's* Marriage, contrary to all Observation, make her the less followed by other Men? All Men are Thieves in Love, and like a Woman the better for being another's Property.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

AIR V. Of all the simple Things we do, &c.



*A Maid is like the golden Oar,
Which hath Guineas intrinsical in't,
Whose Worth is never known, before
It is try'd and imprest in the Mint.
A Wife's like a Guinea in Gold,
Stamp't with the Name of her Spouse;
Now here, now there; is bought, or is sold;
And is current in every House.*

SCENE VI.

Mrs. Peachum, Filch.

Mrs. Peach. Come hither *Filch*. I am as fond of this Child, as though my Mind misgave me he were my own. He hath as fine a Hand at picking a Pocket as a Woman, and is as nimble-finger'd as a Juggler. If an unlucky Session does not cut the Rope of thy Life, I pronounce, Boy, thou wilt be a great Man in History. Where was your Post last night, my Boy?

Filch. I ply'd at the Opera, Madam; and considering 'twas neither dark nor rainy, so that there was no great Hurry in getting Chairs and Coaches, made a tolerable hand on't. These seven Handkerchiefs, Madam.

Mrs. Peach. Colour'd ones, I see. They are of sure

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

Sale from our Ware-house at *Redriff* among the Seamen.

Filch. And this Snuff-box.

Mrs. Peach. Set in Gold! A pretty Encouragement this to a young Beginner.

Filch. I had a fair tug at a charming Gold Watch. Pox take the Taylors for making the Fobs so deep and narrow! It stuck by the way, and I was forc'd to make my Escape under a Coach. Really, Madam, I fear I shall be cut off in the Flower of my Youth, so that every now and then (since I was pumpt) I have thoughts of taking up and going to Sea.

Mrs. Peach. You should go to *Hockley in the Hole*, and to *Marybone*, Child, to learn Valour. These are the Schools that have bred so many brave men. I thought, Boy, by this time, thou hadst lost Fear as well as Shame. Poor Lad! how little does he know as yet of the *Old-Baily*! For the first Fact I'll insure thee from being hang'd; and going to Sea, *Filch*, will come time enough upon a Sentence of Transportation. But now, since you have nothing better to do, ev'n go to your Book, and learn your Catechism; for really a Man makes but an ill Figure in the Ordinary's Paper, who cannot give a satisfactory Answer to his Questions. But, hark you, my Lad. Don't tell me a Lye; for you know I hate a Lyar. Do you know of any thing that hath past between Captain *Mac-heath* and our *Polly*?

Filch. I beg you, Madam, don't ask me; for I must either tell a Lye to you or to Miss *Polly*; for I promis'd her I would not tell.

Mrs. Peach. But when the Honour of our Family is concern'd—

Filch. I shall lead a sad Life with Miss *Polly*, if ever she comes to know that I told you. Besides, I would not willingly forfeit my own Honour by betraying any body.

Mrs. Peach. Yonder comes my Husband and *Polly*. Come, *Filch*, you shall go with me into my own Room and tell me the whole Story. I'll give t'ee a Glass of a most delicious Cordial that I keep for my own drinking.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

SCENE VII.

Peachum, Polly.

Polly. I know as well as any of the fine Ladies how to make the most of my self and of my Man too. A Woman knows how to be mercenary, though she hath never been in a Court or at an Assembly. We have it in our Natures, Papa. If I allow Captain *Macheath* some trifling Liberties, I have this Watch and other visible Marks of his Favour to show for it. A Girl who cannot grant some Things, and refuse what is most material, will make but a poor hand of her Beauty, and soon be thrown upon the Common.

A I R VI. What shall I do to show how much I love her, &c.



• *Virgins are like the fair Flower in its Lustre,
Which in the Garden enamels the Ground;
Near it the Bees in Play flutter and cluster,
And gaudy Butterflies frolick around.
But, when once pluck'd, 'tis no longer alluring,
To Covent-Garden 'tis sent, (as yet sweet,)
There fades, and shrinks, and grows past all enduring,
Rots, stinks, and dies, and is trod under feet.*

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

Peach. You know, *Polly*, I am not against your toying and trifling with a Customer in the way of Business, or to get out a Secret, or so. But if I find out that you have play'd the fool and are married, you *Jade* you, I'll cut your Throat, *Hussy*. Now you know my Mind.

SCENE VIII.

Peachum, Polly, Mrs. Peachum.

AIR VII. Oh *London* is a fine Town.



Mrs. Peachum, in a very great Passion.

*Our Polly is a sad Slut! nor heeds what we have taught her.
I wonder any Man alive will ever rear a Daughter!
For she must have both Hoods and Gowns, and Hoops to
swell her Pride,
With Scarfs and Stays, and Gloves and Lace; and she will
have men beside;
And when she's drest with Care and Cost, all-tempting, fine
and gay,
As Men should serve a Cowcumber, she flings herself away.
Our Polly is a sad Slut, &c.*

You *Baggage!* you *Hussy!* you inconsiderate *Jade!* had you been hang'd, it would not have vex'd me, for that might have been your Misfortune; but to do such a mad thing by Choice! The *Wench* is married, *Husband.*

Peach. Married! The *Captain* is a bold Man, and will risque any thing for Money; to be sure he believes her a

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

Fortune. Do you think your Mother and I should have liv'd comfortably so long together, if ever we had been married? Baggage!

Mrs. Peach. I knew she was always a proud Slut; and now the Wench hath play'd the Fool and married, because forsooth she would do like the Gentry. Can you support the Expense of a Husband, Hussy, in gaming, drinking and whoring? Have you Money enough to carry on the daily Quarrels of Man and Wife about who shall squander most? There are not many Husbands and Wives, who can bear the Charges of plaguing one another in a handsome way. If you must be married, could you introduce no-body into our Family but a Highwayman? Why, thou foolish Jade, thou wilt be as ill-us'd, and as much neglected, as if thou hadst married a Lord!

Peach. Let not your Anger, my Dear, break through the Rules of Decency, for the Captain looks upon himself in the Military Capacity, as a Gentleman by his Profession. Besides what he hath already, I know he is in a fair way of getting, or of dying; and both these ways, let me tell you, are most excellent Chances for a Wife. Tell me Hussy, are you ruin'd or no?

Mrs. Peach. With Polly's Fortune, she might very well have gone off to a Person of Distinction. Yes, that you might, you pouting Slut!

Peach. What, is the Wench dumb? Speak, or I'll make you plead by squeezing out an Answer from you. Are you really bound Wife to him, or are you only upon liking?

[Pinches her.

Polly. Oh!

[Screaming.

Mrs. Peach. How the Mother is to be pitied who hath handsome Daughters! Locks, Bolts, Bars, and Lectures of Morality are nothing to them: They break through them all. They have as much Pleasure in cheating a Father and Mother, as in cheating at Cards.

Peach. Why, Polly, I shall soon know if you are married, by Macheath's keeping from our House.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

AIR VIII. Grim King of the Ghosts, &c.



Polly. *Can Love be controul'd by Advice?
Will Cupid our Mothers obey?
Though my Heart were as frozen as Ice,
At his Flame 'twould have melted away.
When he kist me so closely he prest,
'Twas so sweet that I must have comply'd:
So I thought it both safest and best
To marry, for fear you should chide.*

Mrs. Peach. Then all the Hopes of our Family are gone for ever and ever!

Peach. And Macheath may hang his Father and Mother-in-Law, in hope to get into their Daughter's Fortune.

Polly. I did not marry him (as 'tis the Fashion) coolly and deliberately for Honour or Money. But, I love him.

Mrs. Peach. Love him! worse and worse! I thought the Girl had been better bred. Oh Husband, Husband! her Folly makes me mad! my Head swims! I'm distracted! I can't support myself—Oh! *[Faints.]*

Peach. See, Wench, to what a Condition you have reduc'd your poor Mother! a Glass of Cordial, this instant. How the poor Woman takes it to Heart! *[Polly goes out and returns with it.]*

Ah, Hussy, now this is the only Comfort your Mother has left!

Polly. Give her another Glass, Sir; my Mama drinks

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

double the Quantity whenever she is out of Order. This, you see, fetches her.

Mrs. *Peach*. The Girl shows such a Readiness, and so much Concern, that I could almost find in my Heart to forgive her.

A I R IX. *O Jenny, O Jenny, where hast thou been.*



*O Polly, you might have toy'd and kist.
By keeping Men off, you keep them on.*
Polly. *But he so teaz'd me,
And he so pleaz'd me,
What I did, you must have done.*

Mrs. *Peach*. Not with a Highwayman.—You sorry Slut!

Peach. A Word with you, Wife. 'Tis no new thing for a Wench to take Man without consent of Parents. You know 'tis the Frailty of Woman, my Dear.

Mrs. *Peach*. Yes, indeed, the Sex is frail. But the first time a Woman is frail, she should be somewhat nice methinks, for then or never is the time to make her Fortune. After that, she hath nothing to do but to guard herself from being found out, and she may do what she pleases.

Peach. Make yourself a little easy; I have a Thought shall soon set all Matters again to rights. Why so melancholy, *Polly*? since what is done cannot be undone, we must all endeavour to make the best of it.

Mrs. *Peach*. Well, *Polly*; as far as one Woman can forgive another, I forgive thee.—Your Father is too fond of you, Hussy.

Polly. Then all my Sorrows are at an end.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

Mrs. *Peach*. A mighty likely Speech in troth, for a Wench who is just married!

A I R X. *Thomas*, I cannot, &c.



Polly. *I, like a Ship in Storms, was tost;*
Yet afraid to put in to Land;
For seiz'd in the Port the Vessel's lost,
Whose Treasure is contreband.
The Waves are laid,
My Duty's paid.
O Joy beyond Expression!
Thus, safe a-shore,
I ask no more,
My All is in my Possession.

Peach. I hear Customers in t'other Room; Go, talk with 'em, *Polly*; but come to us again, as soon as they are gone.—But, heark ye, Child, if 'tis the Gentleman who was here Yesterday about the Repeating-Watch; say, you believe we can't get Intelligence of it, till to-morrow. For I lent it to *Suky Straddle*, to make a Figure with it to-night at a Tavern in *Drury-Lane*. If t'other Gentleman calls for the Silver-hilted Sword, you know Beetle-brow'd *Jemmy* hath it on, and he doth not come from *Tunbridge* till *Tuesday Night*; so that it cannot be had till then.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

SCENE IX.

Peachum, *Mrs. Peachum.*

Peach. Dear Wife, be a little pacified. Don't let your Passion run away with your Senses. *Polly*, I grant you, hath done a rash thing.

Mrs. Peach. If she had had only an Intrigue with the Fellow, why the very best Families have excus'd and huddled up a Frailty of that sort. 'Tis Marriage, Husband, that makes it a blemish.

Peach. But Money, Wife, is the true Fuller's Earth for Reputations, there is not a Spot or a Stain but what it can take out. A rich Rogue now-a-days is fit Company for any Gentleman; and the World, my Dear, hath not such a Contempt for Roguery as you imagine. I tell you, Wife, I can make this Match turn to our Advantage.

Mrs. Peach. I'm very sensible, Husband, that Captain *Macheath* is worth Money, but I am in doubt whether he hath not two or three Wives already, and then if he should dye in a Session or two, *Polly's* Dower would come into Dispute.

Peach. That, indeed, is a Point which ought to be consider'd.

A I R XI. A Soldier and a Sailor.



THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

*A Fox may steal your Hens, Sir,
A Whore your Health and Pence, Sir,
Your Daughter rob your Chest, Sir,
Your wife may steal your Rest, Sir,
A Thief your Goods and Plate.
But this is all but picking,
With Rest, Pence, Chest and Chicken;
It ever was decreed, Sir,
If Lawyer's Hand is fee'd, Sir,
He steals your whole Estate.*

The Lawyers are bitter Enemies to those in our Way. They don't care that any Body should get a Clandestine Livelihood but themselves.

SCENE X.

Mrs. Peachum, Peachum, Polly.

Polly. 'Twas only Nimming *Ned*. He brought in a Damask Window-Curtain, a Hoop-Petticoat, a Pair of Silver Candlesticks, a Perriwig, and one Silk Stocking, from the Fire that happen'd last Night.

Peach. There is not a Fellow that is cleverer in his way, and saves more Goods out of the Fire than *Ned*. But now, *Polly*, to your Affair; for Matters must not be left as they are. You are married then, it seems?

Polly. Yes, Sir.

Peach. And how do you propose to live, Child?

Polly. Like other Women, Sir, upon the Industry of my Husband.

Mrs. Peach. What, is the Wench turn'd Fool? A Highwayman's Wife, like a Soldier's, hath as little of his Pay, as of his Company.

Peach. And had not you the common Views of a Gentlewoman in your Marriage, *Polly*?

Polly. I don't know what you mean, Sir.

Peach. Of a Jointure, and of being a Widow.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

Polly. But I love him, Sir: how then could I have Thoughts of parting with him?

Peach. Parting with him. Why, that is the whole Scheme and Intention of all Marriage Articles. The comfortable Estate of Widowhood, is the only Hope that keeps up a Wife's Spirits. Where is the Woman who would scruple to be a Wife, if she had it in her Power to be a Widow whenever she pleas'd? If you have any Views of this sort, *Polly*, I shall think the Match not so very unreasonable.

Polly. How I dread to hear your Advice! Yet I must beg you to explain yourself.

Peach. Secure what he hath got, have him peach'd the next Sessions, and then at once you are made a rich Widow.

Polly. What, murder the Man I love! The Blood runs cold at my Heart with the very Thought of it.

Peach. Fye, *Polly*! What hath Murder to do in the Affair? Since the thing sooner or later must happen, I dare say, the Captain himself would like that we should get the Reward for his Death sooner than a Stranger. Why, *Polly*, the Captain knows, that as 'tis his Employment to rob, so 'tis ours to take Robbers; every Man in his Business. So that there is no Malice in the Case.

Mrs. Peach. Ay, Husband, now you have nick'd the Matter. To have him peach'd is the only thing could ever make me forgive her.

A I R XII. Now ponder well, ye Parents dear.



THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

Polly. *Oh, ponder well! be not severe;
So save a wretched Wife!
For on the Rope that hangs my Dear
Depends poor Polly's Life.*

Mrs. Peach. But your Duty to your Parents, Hussy, obliges you to hang him. What would many a Wife give for such an Opportunity!

Polly. What is a Jointure, what is Widow-hood to me? I know my Heart. I cannot survive him.

A I R XIII. Le printemps rappelle aux armes.



*The Turtle thus with plaintive crying,
Her Lover dying,
The Turtle thus with plaintive crying,
Laments her Dove.
Down she drops quite spent with sighing,
Pair'd in Death, as pair'd in Love.*

Thus, Sir, it will happen to your poor Polly.

Mrs. Peach. What, is the Fool in Love in earnest then? I hate thee for being particular: Why, Wench, thou art a Shame to thy very Sex.

Polly. But hear me, Mother.—If you ever lov'd—

Mrs. Peach. Those cursed Play-books she reads have been her Ruin. One Word more, Hussy, and I shall knock your Brains out, if you have any.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

Peach. Keep out of the way, *Polly*, for fear of Mischief, and consider of what is propos'd to you.

Mrs. Peach. Away, Hussy. Hang your Husband, and be dutiful.

SCENE XI.

Mrs. Peachum, Peachum.

[*Polly* *listning.*

Mrs. Peach. The Thing, Husband, must and shall be done. For the sake of Intelligence we must take other Measures, and have him peach'd the next Session without her Consent. If she will not know her Duty, we know ours.

Peach. But really, my Dear, it grieves one's Heart to take off a great Man. When I consider his Personal Bravery, his fine Stratagem, how much we have already got by him, and how much more we may get, methinks I can't find in my Heart to have a Hand in his Death. I wish you could have made *Polly* undertake it.

Mrs. Peach. But in a Case of Necessity—our own lives are in danger.

Peach. Then, indeed, we must comply with the Customs of the World, and make Gratitude give way to Interest.—He shall be taken off.

Mrs. Peach. I'll undertake to manage *Polly*.

Peach. And I'll prepare Matters for the *Old-Baily*.

SCENE XII.

Polly.

Now I'm a Wretch, indeed.—Methinks I see him already in the Cart, sweeter and more lovely than the Nōsegay in his Hand!—I hear the Crowd extolling his Resolution and Intrepidity!—What VOLLIES of Sighs are sent from the Windows of *Holborn*, that so comely a Youth should be brought to disgrace!—I see him at the Tree! The whole Circle are in Tears!—even Butchers

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

weep!—*Jack Ketch* himself hesitates to perform his Duty, and would be glad to lose his Fee, by a Reprieve. What then will become of *Polly*!—As yet I may inform him of their Design, and aid him in his Escape.—It shall be so.—But then he flies, absents himself, and I bar myself from his dear dear Conversation! That too will distract me.—If he keep out of the way, my Papa and Mama may in time relent, and we may be happy.—If he stays, he is hang'd, and then he is lost for ever!—He intended to lye conceal'd in my Room, 'till the Dusk of the Evening: If they are abroad I'll this Instant let him out, lest some Accident should prevent him.

[Exit and returns.]

SCENE XIII.

Polly, Macheath.

A I R XIV. Pretty Parrot, say—



Mach.

*Pretty Polly, say,
When I was away,
Did your Fancy never stray
To some newer Lover?*

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

Polly. *Without Disguise,
Heaving Sighs,
Doating Eyes,
• My constant Heart discover.
Fondly let me loll!*

Mach. *O pretty, pretty Poll.*

Polly. And are you as fond as ever, my Dear?

Mach. Suspect my Honour, my Courage, suspect any thing but my Love.—May my Pistols miss Fire, and my Mare slip her Shoulder while I am pursu'd, if I ever forsake thee!

Polly. Nay, my Dear, I have no Reason to doubt you, for I find in the Romance you lent me, none of the great Heroes were ever false in Love.

A I R XV. Pray, Fair One, be kind—



Mach. • *My Heart was so free,
It rov'd like the Bee,
• 'Till Polly my Passion requited;
I sipt each Flower,
I chang'd ev'ry Hour,
But here ev'ry Flower is united.*

Polly. Were you sentenc'd to Transportation, sure, my Dear, you could not leave me behind you—could you?

Mach. Is there any Power, any Force that could tear

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

me from thee? You might sooner tear a Pension out of the Hands of a Courtier, a Fee from a Lawyer, a pretty Woman from a Looking-glass, or any Woman from *Quadrille*.—But to tear me from thee is impossible! *

A I R XVI. Over the Hills and far away.



*Were I laid on Greenland's Coast,
And in my Arms embrac'd my Lass;
Warm amidst eternal Frost,
Too soon the Half Year's Night would pass.*

Polly. *Were I sold on Indian Soil,
Soon as the burning Day was clos'd,
I could mock the sultry Toil,
When on my Charmer's Breast repos'd.*

Mach. *And I would love you all the Day,*

Polly. *Every Night would kiss and play,*

Mach. *If with me you'd fondly stray*

Polly. *Over the Hills and far away.*

Polly. Yes, I would go with thee. But oh!—how shall I speak it? I must be torn from thee. We must part.

Mach. How! Part!

Polly. We must, we must.—My Papa and Mama are set against thy Life. They now, even now are in Search after thee. They are preparing Evidence against thee. Thy Life depends upon a Moment.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

AIR XVII. Gin thou wert mine awn thing—



*O what Pain it is to part!
Can I leave thee, can I leave thee?
O what Pain it is to part!
Can thy Polly ever leave thee?
But lest Death my Love should thwart,
And bring thee to the fatal Cart,
Thus I tear thee from my bleeding Heart!
Fly hence, and let me leave thee.*

One Kiss and then—one Kiss—begone—farewell.

Mach. My Hand, my Heart, my Dear, is so rivited to thine, that I cannot unloose my Hold.

Polly. But my Papa may intercept thee, and then I should lose the very glimmering of Hope. A few Weeks, perhaps, may reconcile us all. Shall thy *Polly* hear from thee?

Mach. Must I then go?

Polly. And will not Absence change your Love?

Mach. If you doubt it, let me stay—and be hang'd.

Polly. O how I fear! how I tremble!—Go—but when Safety will give you leave, you will be sure to see me again; for 'till then *Polly* is wretched.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

AIR XVIII. O the Broom, &c.



Mach. *The Miser thus a Shilling sees,* [Parting, and looking
Which he's oblig'd to pay, back at each
With sighs resigns it by degrees, other with fond-
And fears 'tis gone for aye. ness; he at one
Door, she at the
other.

Polly. *The Boy, thus, when his Sparrow's flown,*
The Bird in Silence eyes;
But soon as out of Sight 'tis gone,
Whines, whimpers, sobs and cries.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

ACT II. SCENE I.

A Tavern near Newgate.

Jemmy Twitcher, *Crook-finger'd* Jack, Wat Dreary, Robin of Bagshot, Nimming Ned, Henry Paddington, Matt of the Mint, Ben Budge, and the rest of the Gang, at the Table, with Wine, Brandy and Tobacco.

Ben. **B**UT pr'thee,^s *Matt*, what is become of thy Brother *Tom*? I have not seen him since my Return from Transportation.

Matt. Poor Brother *Tom* had an Accident this time Twelvemonth, and so clever a made Fellow he was, that I could not save him from those fleaing Rascals the Surgeons; and now, poor Man, he is among the Otamys at *Surgeon's* Hall.

Ben. So it seems, his Time was come.

Jem. But the present Time is ours, and no Body alive hath more. Why are the Laws levell'd at us? are we more dishonest than the rest of Mankind? What we win, Gentlemen, is our own by the Law of Arms, and the Right of Conquest.

Crook. Where shall we find such another Set of practical Philosophers, who to a Man are above the Fear of Death?

Wat. Sound men, and true!

Robin. Of try'd Courage, and indefatigable Industry!

Ned. Who is there here that would not dye for his Friend?

Harry. Who is there here that would betray him for his Interest?

Matt. Show me a Gang of Courtiers that can say as much.

Ben. We are for a just Partition of the World, for every Man hath a Right to enjoy Life.

Mat. We retrench the Superfluities of Mankind. The World is avaritious, and I hate Avarice. A covetous fel-

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

low, like a Jack-daw, steals what he was never made to enjoy, for the sake of hiding it. These are the Robbers of Mankind, for Money was made for the Free-hearted and Generous, and where is the Injury of taking from another, what he hath not the Heart to make use of?

Jem. Our several Stations for the Day are fixt. Good luck attend us all. Fill the Glasses.

AIR XIX. Fill ev'ry Glass, &c.



Matt. Fill ev'ry Glass, for Wine inspires us,
And fires us
With Courage, Love and Joy.
Women and Wine should Life employ.
Is there ought else on Earth desirous?

Chorus. Fill ev'ry Glass, &c.

SCENE II.

To them enter Macheath.

Mach. Gentlemen, well met. My Heart hath been with you this Hour; but an unexpected Affair hath detain'd me. No Ceremony, I beg you.

Matt. We were just breaking up to go upon Duty. Am I to have the Honour of taking the Air with you, Sir, this Evening upon the Heath? I drink a dram now

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

and then with the Stage-Coachmen in the way of Friendship and Intelligence; and I know that about this Time there will be Passengers upon the Western Road, who are worth speaking with.

Mach. I was to have been of that Party—but——

Matt. But what, Sir?

Mach. Is there any man who suspects my Courage?

Matt. We have all been witnesses of it.

Mach. My Honour and Truth to the Gang?

Matt. I'll be answerable for it.

Mach. In the Division of our Booty, have I ever shown the least Marks of Avarice or Injustice?

Matt. By these Questions something seems to have ruffled you. Are any of us suspected?

Mach. I have a fixt Confidence, Gentlemen, in you all, as Men of Honour, and as such I value and respect you. *Peachum* is a Man that is useful to us.

Matt. Is he about to play us any foul Play? I'll shoot him through the Head.

Mach. I beg you, Gentlemen, act with Conduct and Discretion. A Pistol is your last resort.

Matt. He knows nothing of this Meeting.

Mach. Business cannot go on without him. He is a Man who knows the World, and is a necessary Agent to us. We have had a slight Difference, and till it is accommodated I shall be oblig'd to keep out of his way. Any private Dispute of mine shall be of no ill consequence to my Friends. You must continue to act under his Direction, for the moment we break loose from him, our Gang is ruin'd.

Matt. As a Bawd to a Whore, I grant you, he is to us of great Convenience.

Mach. Make him believe I have quitted the Gang, which I can never do but with Life. At our private Quarters I will continue to meet you. A Week or so will probably reconcile us.

Matt. Your instructions shall be observ'd. 'Tis now high time for us to repair to our several Duties; so till the Evening at our Quarters in *Moor-fields* we bid you farewell.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

Mach. I shall wish my self with you. Success attend you.
[*Sits down melancholy at the Table.*]

AIR XX. March in *Rinaldo*, with Drums and Trumpets.



Matt. Let us take the Road.
Hark! I hear the sound of Coaches!
The hour of Attack approaches,
To your Arms, brave Boys, and load,
See the Ball I hold!
Let the Chymists toil like Asses,
Our Fire their Fire surpasses,
And turns all our Lead to Gold.

[The Gang, rang'd in the Front of the Stage, load their Pistols, and stick them under their Girdles; then go off singing the first Part in Chorus.]

SCENE III.

Macheath, Drawer.

Mach. What a Fool is a fond Wench! *Polly* is most confoundedly bit.—I love the Sex. And a Man who loves Money, might as well be contented with one Guinea, as I with one Woman. The Town perhaps hath been as

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

much oblig'd to me, for recruiting it with free-hearted Ladies, as to any Recruiting Officer in the Army. If it were not for us and the other Gentlemen of the Sword, *Drury-Lane* would be uninhabited.

A I R XXI. Would you have a Young Virgin, &c.



*If the Heart of a Man is deprest with Cares,
The Mist is dispell'd when a Woman appears;
Like the Notes of a Fiddle, she sweetly, sweetly
Raises the Spirits, and charms our Ears,
Roses and Lillies her Cheeks disclose,
But her ripe Lips are more sweet than those.*

*Press her,
Caress her
With Blissess,
Her kisses*

Dissolve us in Pleasure, and soft Repose.

I must have Women. There is nothing unbends the Mind like them. Money is not so strong a Cordial for the Time. Drawer—[*Enter Drawer.*] Is the Porter gone for all the Ladies according to my directions?

Draw. I expect him back every Minute. But you

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

know, Sir, you sent him as far as *Hockley in the Hole*, for three of the Ladies, for one in *Vinegar Yard*, and for the rest of them somewhere about *Lewkner's Lane*. Sure some of them are below, for I hear the Barr Bell. As they come I will show them up. Coming, Coming.

SCENE IV.

Macheath, *Mrs. Coaxer*, *Dolly Trull*, *Mrs. Vixen*, *Betty Doxy*, *Jenny Diver*, *Mrs. Slammekin*, *Suky Tawdry*, and *Molly Brazen*.

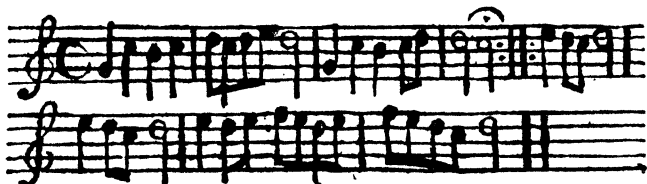
Mach. Dear *Mrs. Coaxer*, you are welcome. You look charmingly to-day. I hope you don't want the Repairs of Quality, and lay on Paint.—*Dolly Trull!* kiss me, you Slut; are you as amorous as ever, Hussy? You are always so taken up with stealing Hearts, that you don't allow your self Time to steal any thing else.—Ah *Dolly*, thou wilt ever be a Coquette!—*Mrs. Vixen*, I'm yours, I always lov'd a Woman of Wit and Spirit; they make charming Mistresses, but plaguy Wives.—*Betty Doxy!* Come hither, Hussy. Do you drink as hard as ever? You had better stick to good wholesome Beer; for in troth, *Betty*, Strong-Waters will in time ruin your Constitution. You should leave those to your Betters.—What! and my pretty *Jenny Diver* too! As prim and demure as ever! There is not any Prude, though ever so high bred, hath a more sanctify'd Look, with a more mischievous Heart. Ah! thou art a dear artful Hypocrite.—*Mrs. Slammekin!* as careless and genteel as ever! all you fine Ladies, who know your own Beauty, affect an Undress.—But see, here's *Suky Tawdry* come to contradict what I was saying. Every thing she gets one way she lays out upon her Back. Why, *Suky*, you must keep at least a dozen Tallymen. *Molly Brazen!* [*She kisses him.*] That's well done. I love a free-hearted Wench. Thou hast a most agreeable Assurance, Girl, and art as willing as a Turtle.—But hark!

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

I hear musick. The Harper is at the Door. *If Musick be the Food of Love, play on.* E'er you seat your selves, Ladies, what think you of a Dance? Come in. [*Enter Harper.*] Play the *French Tune*, that Mrs. *Slammekin* was so fond of.

[*A Dance a la ronde in the French Manner; near the end of it this Song and Chorus.*]

A I R XXII. Cotillon.



*Youth's the Season made for Joys,
Love is then our Duty,
She alone who that employs,
Well deserves her Beauty.
Let's be gay,
While we may,
Beauty's a Flower, despised in decay.
Youth's the Season, &c.*

*Let us drink and sport to-day,
Ours is not to-morrow.
Love with Youth flies swift away,
Age is nought but Sorrow.
Dance and sing,
Time's on the Wing,
Life never knows the return of Spring.*

CHORUS. *Let us drink &c.*

Mach. Now, pray Ladies, take your Places. Here Fellow. [*Pays the Harper.*] Bid the Drawer bring us more Wine. [*Ex. Harper.*] If any of the Ladies chuse Ginn, I hope they will be so free to call for it.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

Jenny. You look as if you meant me. Wine is strong enough for me. Indeed, Sir, I never drink Strong Waters, but when I have the Cholic.

Mach. Just the Excuse of the fine Ladies! Why, a Lady of Quality is never without the Cholic. I hope, Mrs. *Coaxer*, you have had good Success of late in your Visits among the Mercers.

Coax. We have so many interlopers—Yet with Industry one may still have a little Picking. I carried a silver flower'd Lutestring, and a Piece of black Padesoy to Mr. *Peachum's* Lock but last Week.

Vix. There's *Molly Brazen* hath the Ogle of a Rattle-Snake. She rivetted a Linnen-drapeer's Eye so fast upon her, that he was nick'd of three Pieces of Cambric before he could look off.

Braz. Oh dear Madam!—But sure nothing can come up to your handling of Laces! And then you have such a sweet deluding Tongue! To cheat a Man is nothing; But the Woman must have fine Parts indeed who cheats a Woman!

Vix. Lace, Madam, lyes in a small Compass, and is of easy Conveyance. But you are apt, Madam, to think too well of your Friends.

Coax. If any Woman hath more Art than another, to be sure, 'tis *Jenny Diver*. Though her Fellow be never so agreeable, she can pick his Pocket as coolly, as if Money were her only Pleasure. Now that is a Command of the Passions uncommon in a Woman!

Jenny. I never go to the Tavern with a Man, but in the View of Business. I have other Hours, and other sort of Men for my Pleasure. But had I your Address, Madam—

Mach. Have done with your Compliments, Ladies; and drink about: You are not so fond of me, *Jenny*, as you use to be.

Jenny. 'Tis not convenient, Sir, to show my Fondness among so many Rivals. 'Tis your own Choice, and not the warmth of my Inclination that will determine you.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

AIR XXIII. All in a misty Morning, &c.



*Before the Barn-door crowing,
The Cock by Hens attended,
His Eyes around him throwing,
Stands for a while suspended,
Then One he singles from the Crew,
And cheers the happy Hen ;
With how do you do, and how do you do,
And how do you do again.*

Mach. Ah *Jenny!* thou art a dear Slut.

Trull. Pray, Madam, were you ever in keeping?

Tawd. I hope, Madam, I ha'nt been so long upon the Town, but I have met with some good Fortune as well as my Neighbours.

Trull. Pardon me, Madam, I meant no harm by the Question; 'twas only in the way of Conversation.

Tawd. Indeed, Madam, if I had not been a Fool, I might have lived very handsomely with my last Friend. But upon his missing five Guineas, he turn'd me off. Now I never suspected he had counted them.

Slam. Who do you look upon, Madam, as your best sort of Keepers?

Trull. That, Madam, is thereafter as they be.

Slam. I, Madam, was once kept by a *Jew*; and bating their Religion, to Women they are a good sort of People.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

Tawd. Now for my part, I own I like an old Fellow: for we always make them pay for what they can't do.

Vix. A spruce Prentice, let me tell you, Ladies, is no ill thing, they bleed freely. I have sent at least two or three dozen of them in my time to the Plantations.

Jen. But to be sure, Sir, with so much good Fortune as you have had upon the Road, you must be grown immensely rich.

Mach. The Road, indeed, hath done me justice, but the Gaming-Table hath been my ruin.

A I R XXIV. When once I lay with another Man's Wife, &c.



Jen. *The Gamesters and Lawyers are Jugglers alike, .*
If they meddle your All is in danger.
Like Gypsies, if once they can finger a Souse,
Your Pockets they pick, and they pilfer your House,
And give your Estate to a Stranger.

A Man of Courage should never put any Thing to the Risque but his Life. These are the Tools of a Man of Honour. Cards and Dice are only fit for cowardly Cheats, who prey upon their Friends.

[*She takes up his Pistol. Tawdry takes up the other.*

Tawd. This, Sir, is fitter for your Hand. Besides your Loss of Money, 'tis a Loss to the Ladies. Gaming takes you off from Women. How fond could I be of you! but before Company, 'tis ill bred.

Mach. Wanton Hussies!

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

Jen. I must and will have a Kiss to give my Wine a zest.

[*They take him about the Neck, and make Signs to*
• *Peachum and Constables, who rush in upon him.*

SCENE V.

To them, Peachum and Constables.

Peach. I seize you, Sir, as my Prisoner.

Mach. Was this well done, *Jenny*?—Women are Decoy Ducks; who can trust them! Beasts, Jades, Jilts, Harpies, Furies, Whores!

Peach. Your Case, Mr. *Macheath*, is not particular. The greatest Heroes have been ruin'd by Women. But, to do them justice, I must own they are a pretty sort of Creatures, if we could trust them. You must now, Sir, take your leave of the Ladies, and if they have a Mind to make you a Visit, they will be sure to find you at home. The Gentleman, Ladies, lodges in *Newgate*. Constables, wait upon the Captain to his Lodgings.

A I R XXV. When first I laid Siege to my *Chloris*, &c.



Mac. At the Tree I shall suffer with pleasure,
At the Tree I shall suffer with pleasure,
Let me go where I will,
In all kinds of Ill,
I shall find no such Furies as these are.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

Peach. Ladies, I'll take care the Reckoning shall be discharg'd. [*Ex. Macheath, guarded with Peachum and Constables.*]

SCENE VI.

The Women Remain.

Vix. Look ye, Mrs. *Jenny*, though Mr. *Peachum* may have made a private Bargain with you and *Suky Tawdry* for betraying the Captain, as we were all assisting, we ought all to share alike.

Coax. I think Mr. *Peachum*, after so long an acquaintance, might have trusted me as well as *Jenny Diver*.

Slam. I am sure at least three Men of his hanging, and in a Year's time too, (if he did me justice) should be set down to my account.

Trull. Mrs. *Slammekin*, that is not fair. For you know one of them was taken in Bed with me.

Jenny. As far as a Bowl of Punch or a Treat, I believe Mrs. *Suky* will join with me.—As for any thing else, Ladies, you cannot in conscience expect it.

Slam. Dear Madam——

Trull. I would not for the World——

Slam. 'Tis impossible for me——

Trull. As I hope to be sav'd, Madam——

Slam. Nay, then I must stay here all Night——

Trull. Since you command me. [*Exe. with great Ceremony.*]

SCENE VII. *Newgate.*

Lockit, Turnkeys, Macheath, Constables.

Lock. Noble Captain, you are welcome. You have not been a Lodger of mine this Year and half. You know the custom, Sir. Garnish, Captain, Garnish. Hand me down those Fetters there.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

Mach. Those, Mr. *Lockit*, seem to be the heaviest of the whole sett. With your leave, I should like the further pair better.

Lock. Look ye, Captain, we know what is fittest for our Prisoners. When a Gentleman uses me with Civility, I always do the best I can to please him.—Hand them down I say.—We have them of all Prices, from one Guinea to ten, and 'tis fitting every Gentleman should please himself.

Mach. I understand you, Sir. [*Gives Money.*] The Fees here are so many, and so exorbitant, that few Fortunes can bear the Expence of getting off handsomely, or of dying like a Gentleman.

Lock. Those, I see, will fit the Captain better.—Take down the further Pair. Do but examine them, Sir.—Never was better work.—How genteely they are made!—They will fit as easy as a Glove, and the nicest Man in *England* might not be asham'd to wear them. [*He puts on the Chains.*] If I had the best Gentleman in the Land in my Custody I could not equip him more handsomely. And so, Sir—I now leave you to your private Meditations.

SCENE VIII.

Macheath.

A I R XXVI. Courtiers, Courtiers think it no harm, &c.



*Man may escape from Rope and Gun;
Nay, some have out-liv'd the Doctor's Pill;*

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

*Who takes a Woman must be undone,
That Basilisk is sure to kill.
The Fly that sips Treacle is lost in the Sweets,
So he that tastes Woman, Woman, Woman,
He that tastes Woman, Ruin meets.*

To what a woful plight have I brought my self! Here must I (all day long, 'till I am hang'd) be confin'd to hear the Reproaches of a Wench who lays her Ruin at my Door.—I am in the Custody of her Father, and to be sure if he knows of the matter, I shall have a fine time on't betwixt this and my Execution.—But I promis'd the Wench Marriage.—What signifies a Promise to a Woman? Does not Man in Marriage itself promise a hundred things that he never means to perform? Do all we can, Women will believe us; for they look upon a Promise as an Excuse for following their own Inclinations.—But here comes *Lucy*, and I cannot get from her.—Wou'd I were deaf!

SCENE IX.

Macheath, Lucy.

Lucy. You base Man you,—how can you look me in the Face after what hath past between us?—See here, perfidious Wretch, how I am forc'd to bear about the load of Infamy you have laid upon me—O *Macheath!* thou hast robb'd me of my Quiet—to see thee tortur'd would give me pleasure.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

AIR XXVII. A lovely Lass to a Friar came, &c



*Thus when a good Huswife sees a Rat
In her Trap in the Morning taken,
With pleasure her Heart goes pit a pat,
In Revenge for her loss of Bacon.
Then she throws him
To the Dog or Cat,
To be worried, crushed and shaken.*

Mac. Have you no Bowels, no Tenderness, my dear *Lucy*, to see a Husband in these Circumstances?

Lucy. A Husband!

Mac. In ev'ry respect but the Form, and that, my Dear, may be said over us at any time.—Friends should not insist upon Ceremonies. From a Man of Honour, his Word is as good as his Bond.

Lucy. 'Tis the Pleasure of all you fine Men to insult the Women you have ruin'd.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

AIR XXVIII. 'Twas when the Sea was roaring, &c.



*How cruel are the Traytors,
Who lye and swear in jest,
To cheat unguarded Creatures
Of Virtue, Fame, and Rest!
Whoever steals a Shilling,
Through Shame the Guilt conceals:
In Love the perjur'd Villain
With Boasts the Theft reveals.*

Mac. The very first Opportunity, my Dear, (have but Patience) you shall be my Wife in whatever manner you please.

Lucy. Insinuating Monster! And so you think I know nothing of the Affairs of Miss Polly Peachum—I could tear thy Eyes out!

Mac. Sure *Lucy*, you can't be such a Fool' as to be jealous of *Polly*!

Lucy. Are you not married to her, you Brute you?

Mac. Married! Very good. The Wench gives it out only to vex thee, and to ruin me in thy good Opinion. 'Tis true, I go to the House; I chat with the Girl, I kiss her, I say a thousand things to her (as all Gentlemen do) that mean nothing, to divert my self; and now the silly Jade hath set it about that I am married to her, to let me know what she would be at. Indeed, my dear *Lucy*,

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

these violent Passions may be of ill consequence to a Woman in your condition.

Lucy. Come, come, Captain, for all your Assurance, you know that Miss *Polly* hath put it out of your power to do me the Justice you promis'd me.

Mac. A jealous Woman believes ev'ry thing her Passion suggests. To convince you of my Sincerity, if we can find the Ordinary, I shall have no Scruples of making you my Wife; and I know the consequence of having two at a time.

Lucy. That you are only to be hang'd, and so get rid of them both.

Mac. I am ready, my dear *Lucy*, to give you satisfaction——if you think there is any in Marriage.——What can a Man of Honour say more?

Lucy. So then it seems, you are not married to Miss *Polly*.

Mac. You know, *Lucy*, the Girl is prodigiously conceited. No Man can say a civil thing to her, but (like other fine Ladies) her Vanity makes her think he's her own for ever and ever.

A I R XXIX. The Sun had loos'd his weary Teams, &c.



• *The first time at the Looking-glass
The Mother sets her Daughter,
The Image strikes the smiling Lass
With Self-love ever after.
Each time she looks, she, fonder grown,
Thinks ev'ry Charm grows stronger.
But alas, vain Maid, all Eyes but your own
Can see you are not younger.*

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

When Women consider their own Beauties, they are all alike unreasonable in their demands; for they expect their Lovers should like them as long as they like themselves.

Lucy. Yonder is my Father—perhaps this way we may light upon the Ordinary, who shall try if you will be as good as your Word.—For I long to be made an honest Woman.

SCENE X

Peachum, Lockit *with an Account-Book.*

Lock. In this last Affair, Brother *Peachum*, we are agreed. You have consented to go halves in *Macheath*.

Peach. We shall never fall out about an Execution.—But as to that Article, pray how stands our last Year's account?

Lock. If you will run your Eye over it, you'll find 'tis fair and clearly stated.

Peach. This long Arrear of the Government is very hard upon us! Can it be expected that we should hang our Acquaintance for nothing, when our Betters will hardly save theirs without being paid for it. Unless the People in employment pay better, I promise them for the future, I shall let other Rogues live besides their own.

Lock. Perhaps, Brother, they are afraid these matters may be carried too far. We are treated too by them with Contempt, as if our Profession were not reputable.

Peach. In one respect indeed, our Employment may be reckon'd dishonest, because, like Great Statesmen, we encourage those who betray their Friends.

Lock. Such Language, Brother, any where else, might turn to your prejudice. Learn to be more guarded, I beg you.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

AIR XXX. How happy are we, &c.



*When you censure the Age,
Be cautious and sage,
Lest the Courtiers offended should be:
If you mention Vice or Bribe,
'Tis so pat to all the Tribe;
Each crys—That was levell'd at me.*

Peach. Here's poor *Ned Clincher's* Name, I see. Sure, Brother *Lockit*, there was a little unfair proceeding in *Ned's* case: for he told me in the *Condemn'd Hold*, that for Value receiv'd, you had promis'd him a Session or two longer without Molestation.

Lock. Mr. *Peachum*,—This is the first time my Honour was ever call'd in Question.

Peach. Business is at an end—if once we act dishonourably.

Lock. Who accuses me?

Peach. You are warm, Brother.

Lock. He that attacks my Honour, attacks my Livelyhood.—And this Usage—Sir—is not to be both.

Peach. Since you provoke me to speak—I must tell you too, that Mrs. *Coaxer* charges you with defrauding her of her Information-Money for the apprehending of curl-pated *Hugh*. Indeed, indeed, Brother, we must punctually pay our Spies, or we shall have no Information.

Lock. Is this Language to me, Sirrah—who have sav'd you from the Gallows, Sirrah! [*Collaring each other.*]

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

Peach. If I am hang'd, it shall be for ridding the World of an arrant Rascal.

Lock. This Hand shall do the office of the Halter you deserve, and throttle you—you Dog!—

Peach. Brother, Brother,—We are both in the Wrong—We shall be both Losers in the Dispute—for you know we have it in our Power to hang each other. You should not be so passionate.

Lock. Nor you so provoking.

Peach. 'Tis our mutual Interest; 'tis for the Interest of the World we should agree. If I said any thing, Brother, to the Prejudice of your Character, I ask pardon.

Lock. Brother *Peachum*—I can forgive as well as resent.—Give me your Hand. Suspicion does not become a Friend.

Peach. I only meant to give you occasion to justify yourself. But I must now step home, for I expect the Gentleman about this Snuff-box, that Filch nimm'd two Nights ago in the Park. I appointed him at this hour.

SCENE XI.

Lockit, Lucy.

Lock. Whence come you, Hussy?

Lucy. My Tears might answer that Question.

Lock. You have then been whimpering and fondling, like a Spaniel, over the Fellow that hath abus'd you.

Lucy. One can't help love; one can't cure it. 'Tis not in my Power to obey you, and hate him.

Lock. Learn to bear your Husband's Death like a reasonable Woman. 'Tis not the fashion, now-a-days, so much as to affect Sorrow upon these Occasions. No Woman would ever marry, if she had not the Chance of Mortality for a Release. Act like a Woman of Spirit, Hussy, and thank your Father for what he 's doing.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

A I R XXXI. Of a noble Race was *Shenkin*.



Lucy. Is then his Fate decreed, Sir?
Such a Man can I think of quitting?
When first we met, so moves me yet,
O see how my Heart is splitting!

Lock. Look ye, *Lucy*—There is no saving him.—
So, I think, you must ev'n do like other Widows—
Buy your self Weeds, and be cheerful.

A I R XXXII.



You'll think e'er many Days ensue
This Sentence not severe;
I hang your Husband, Child, 'tis true,
But with him hang your Care.
Twang dang dillo dee.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

Like a good Wife, go moan over your dying Husband. That, Child, is your Duty—Consider, Girl, you can't have the Man and the Money too—so make yourself as easy as you can, by getting all you can from him. *

SCENE XII.

Lucy, Macheath.

Lucy. Though the Ordinary was out of the way to-day, I hope, my Dear, you will, upon the first opportunity, quiet my Scruples—Oh Sir!—my Father's hard Heart is not to be soften'd, and I am in the utmost Despair.

Mac. But if I could raise a small Sum—Would not twenty Guineas, think you, move him?—Of all the Arguments in the way of Business, the Perquisite is the most prevailing.—Your Father's Perquisites for the Escape of Prisoners must amount to a considerable Sum in the Year. Money well tim'd, and properly apply'd, will do any thing.

AIR XXXIII. *London Ladies.*



THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

*If you at an Office solicit your Due,
And would not have Matters neglected;
You must quicken the Clerk with the Perquisite too,
To do what his Duty directed.
Or would you the Frowns of a Lady prevent,
She too has this palpable Failing,
The Perquisite softens her into Consent;
That Reason with all is prevailing.*

Lucy. What Love or Money can do shall be done:
for all my Comfort depends upon your Safety.

SCENE XIII.

Lucy, Macheath, Polly.

Polly. Where is my dear Husband?—Was a Rope ever intended for this Neck!—O let me throw my Arms about it, and throttle thee with Love!—Why dost thou turn away from me?—'Tis thy *Polly*—'Tis thy Wife.

Mac. Was ever such an unfortunate Rascal as I am!

Lucy. Was there ever such another Villain!

Polly. O *Macheath!* was it for this we parted? Taken! Imprison'd! Try'd! Hang'd—cruel Reflection! I'll stay with thee 'till Death—no Force shall tear thy dear Wife from thee now.—What means my Love?—Not one kind Word! not one kind Look! think what thy *Polly* suffers to see thee in this Condition.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

A I R XXXIV. All in the Downs, &c.



*Thus when the Swallow, seeking Prey,
Within the Sash is closely pent,
His Consort, with bemoaning Lay,
Without sits pining for th' Event.
Her chatt'ring Lovers all around her skim;
She heeds them not (poor Bird!) her Soul's with him.*

Mac. I must disown her. [*Aside.*] The Wench is distracted.

Lucy. Am I then bilk'd of my Virtue? Can I have no Reparation? Sure Men were born to lye, and Women to believe them! O Villain! Villain!

Polly. Am I not thy Wife?—Thy Neglect of me, thy Aversion to me too severely proves it.—Look on me.—Tell me, am I not thy Wife?

Lucy. Perfidious Wretch!

Polly. Barbarous Husband!

Lucy. Hadst thou been hang'd five Months ago, I had been happy.

Polly. And I too—If you had been kind to me 'till Death, it would not have vex'd me—And that's no very unreasonable Request, (though from a Wife) to a Man who hath not above seven or eight Days to live.

Lucy. Art thou then married to another? Hast thou two Wives, Monster?

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

Mac. If Women's Tongues can cease for an Answer
—hear me.

Lucy. I won't.—Flesh and Blood can't bear my
Usage.

Polly. Shall I not claim my own? Justice bids me
speak.

A I R XXXV. Have you heard of a frolicksome Ditty,
&c.



Mac. *How happy could I be with either,
Were t'other dear Charmer away!
But while you thus teaze me together,
To neither a Word will I say;
But tol de rol, &c.*

Polly. Sure, my Dear, there ought to be some Preference shown to a Wife! At least she may claim the appearance of it. He must be distracted with his Misfortunes, or he could not use me thus!

Lucy. O Villain, Villain! thou hast deceiv'd me—I could even inform against thee with Pleasure. Not a Prude wishes more heartily to have Facts against her intimate Acquaintance, than I now wish to have Facts against thee. I would have her Satisfaction, and they should all out.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

AIR XXXVI. Irish Trot.



Polly. *I'm bubbled.*

Lucy. —————*I'm bubbled.*

Polly. *Oh how I am troubled!*

Lucy. *Bambouzed, and bit!*

Polly. —————*My Distresses are doubled.*

Lucy. *When you come to the Tree, should the Hangman
refuse,
These Fingers, with Pleasure, could fasten the
Noose.*

Polly. *I'm bubbled, &c.*

- *Mac.* Be pacified, my dear *Lucy*—This is all a Fetch of *Polly's*, to make me desperate with you in case I get off. If I am hang'd, she would fain have the Credit of being thought my Widow—Really, *Polly*, this is no time for a Dispute of this sort; for whenever you are talking of Marriage, I am thinking of Hanging.

Polly. And hast thou the Heart to persist in disowning me?

Mac. And hast thou the Heart to persist in persuading me that I am married? Why, *Polly*, dost thou seek to aggravate my Misfortunes?

Lucy. Really, Miss *Peachum*, you but expose your self. Besides, 'tis barbarous in you to worry a Gentleman in his Circumstances.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

AIR XXXVI



Polly. *Cease your Funning ;
Force or Cunning
Never shall my Heart trapan.
All these Sallies
Are but Malice
To seduce my constant Man.
'Tis most certain,
By their flirting
Women oft' have Envy shown :
Pleas'd, to ruin
Others wooing ;
Never happy in their own !*

Polly. Decency, Madam, methinks might teach you to behave yourself with some Reserve with the Husband, while his Wife is present.

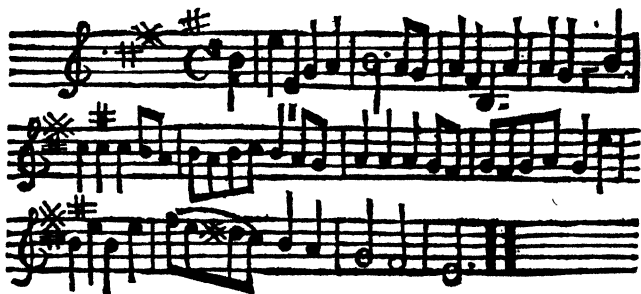
Mac. But seriously, *Polly*, this is carrying the Joke a little too far.

Lucy. If you are determin'd, Madam, to raise a Disturbance in the Prison, I shall be oblig'd to send for the Turnkey to show you the Door. I am sorry, Madam, you force me to be so ill-bred.

Polly. Give me leave to tell you, Madam; These forward Airs don't become you in the least, Madam. And my Duty, Madam, obliges me to stay with my Husband, Madam.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

AIR XXXVIII. Good-morrow, Gossip Joan.



Lucy. *Why how now, Madam Flirt?
If you thus must chatter;
And are for flinging Dirt,
Let's try who best can spatter;*

Madam Flirt!

Polly. *Why how now, saucy Jade;
Sure the Wench is Topsy;
How can you see me made
The Scoff of such a Gipsy?*

[To him.]

Saucy Jade! [To her.]

SCENE XIV.

Lucy, Macheath, Polly, Peachum.

Peach. Where's my Wench? Ah Hussy! Hussy!—
Come you home, you Slut; and when your Fellow is hang'd,
hang yourself, to make your Family some amends.

Polly. Dear, dear Father, do not tear me from him—
I must speak: I have more to say to him—Oh! twist thy
Fetters about me, that he may not haul me from thee!

Peach. Sure all Women are alike! If ever they com-
mit the Folly, they are sure to commit another by exposing
themselves—Away—Not a Word more—You are
my Prisoner now, Hussy.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

AIR XXXIX. *Irish Howl.*



Polly. *No Power on Earth can e'er divide
The Knot that Sacred Love hath ty'd.
When Parents draw against our Mind,
The True-love's Knot they faster bind.
Oh, ray, oh Amborah—oh, oh, &c.*
[Holding Macheath, Peachum pulling her.]

SCENE XV.

Lucy, Macheath.

Mac. I am naturally compassionate, Wife; so that I could not use the Wench as she deserv'd; which made you at first suspect there was something in what she said.

Lucy. Indeed, my Dear, I was strangely puzzled.

Mac. If that had been the Case, her Father would never have brought me into this Circumstance—No, *Lucy,*—I had rather dye than be false to thee.

Lucy. How happy am I, if you say this from your Heart! For I love thee so, that I could sooner bear to see thee hang'd than in the Arms of another.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

Mac. But couldst thou bear to see me hang'd?

Lucy. O *Macheath*, I can never live to see that Day.

Mac. You see, *Lucy*; in the Account of Love you are in my debt, and you must now be convinced, that I rather chuse to die than be another's.—Make me, if possible, love thee more, and let me owe my Life to thee—If you refuse to assist me, *Peachum* and your Father will immediately put me beyond all means of Escape.

Lucy. My Father, I know, hath been drinking hard with the Prisoners: and I fancy he is now taking his Nap in his own Room—If I can procure the Keys, shall I go off with thee, my Dear?

Mac. If we are together, 'twill be impossible to lye conceal'd. As soon as the Search begins to be a little cool, I will send to thee—'Till then my Heart is thy Prisoner.

Lucy. Come then, my dear Husband—owe thy Life to me—and though you love me not—be grateful—But that *Polly* runs in my Head strangely.

Mac. A Moment of time may make us unhappy forever.

A I R XL. The Lass of *Patie's Mill*, &c.



THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

Lucy. *I like the Fox shall grieve,
Whose Mate hath left her side,
Whom Hounds, from Morn to Eve,
Chase o'er the Country wide.
Where can my Lover hide?
Where cheat the weary Pack?
If Love be not his Guide,
He never will come back!*

ACT III. SCENE I.

SCENE *Newgate.*

Lockit, Lucy.

Lock. **T**O be sure, Wench, you must have been aiding and abetting to help him to this Escape.

Lucy. Sir, here hath been *Peachum* and his Daughter *Polly*, and to be sure they know the Ways of *Newgate* as well as if they had been born and bred in the Place all their Lives. Why must all your Suspicion light upon me?

Lock. *Lucy, Lucy*, I will have none of these shuffling Answers.

Lucy. Well then—If I know any Thing of him I wish I may be burnt!

Lock. Keep your Temper, *Lucy*, or I shall pronounce you guilty.

Lucy. Keep yours, Sir,—I do wish I may be burnt. I do—And what can I say more to convince you?

Lock. Did he tip handsomely?—How much did he come down with? Come, Hussy, don't cheat your Father; and I shall not be angry with you—Perhaps, you have made a better Bargain with him than I could have done—How much, my good Girl?

Lucy. You know, Sir, I am fond of him, and would have given Money to have kept him with me.

Lock. Ah *Lucy!* thy Education might have put thee more •

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

upon thy Guard; for a Girl in the Bar of an Ale-house is always besieg'd.

Lucy. Dear Sir, mention not my Education—for 'twas to that I owe my Ruin.

A I R XLI. If Love's a sweet Passion, &c.



*When young at the Bar you first taught me to score,
And bid me be free of my Lips, and no more;
I was kiss'd by the Parson, the Squire, and the Sot,
When the Guest was departed, the Kiss was forgot.
But his Kiss was so sweet, and so closely he prest,
That I languish'd and pin'd 'till I granted the rest.*

If you can forgive me, Sir, I will make a fair Confession, for to be sure he hath been a most barbarous Villain to me.

Lock. And so you have let him escape, Hussy—Have you?

Lucy. When a Woman loves; a kind Look, a tender Word can persuade her to any thing—And I could ask no other Bribe.

Lock. Thou wilt always be a vulgar Slut, *Lucy.*—If you would not be look'd upon as a Fool, you should never

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

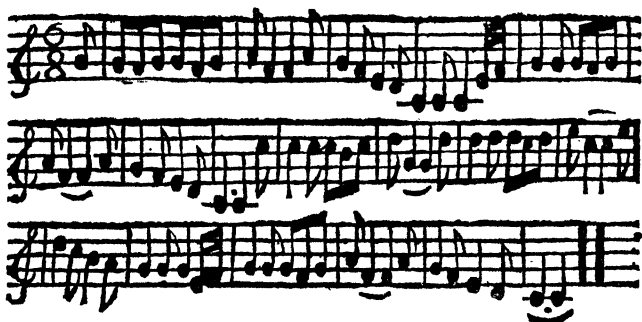
do any thing but upon the Foot of Interest. Those that act otherwise are their own Bubbles.

Lucy. But Love, Sir, is a Misfortune that may happen to the most discreet Woman, and in Love we are all Fools alike—Notwithstanding all he swore, I am now fully convinc'd that *Polly Peachum* is actually his Wife.—Did I let him escape, (Fool that I was!) to go to her?—*Polly* will wheedle herself into his Money, and then *Peachum* will hang him, and cheat us both.

Lock. So I am to be ruin'd, because, forsooth, you must be in Love!—a very pretty Excuse!

Lucy. I could murder that impudent happy Strumpet: I gave him his life, and that Creature enjoys the Sweets of it.—Ungrateful *Macheath*!

A I R XLII. *South-Sea* Ballad.



*My Love is all Madness and Folly,
Alone I lye,
Toss, tumble, and cry,
What a happy Creature is Polly
Was e'er such a Wretch as I
With Rage I redden like Scarlet,
That my dear inconstant Varlet,
Stark blind to my Charms,
Is lost in the Arms
Of that Jilt, that inveigling Harlot!*

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

*Stark blind to my Charms,
Is lost in the Arms
Of that Jilt, that inveigling Harlot!
This, this my Resentment alarms.*

Lock. And so, after all this Mischief, I must stay here to be entertain'd with your catterwauling, Mistress Puss! —Out of my sight, wanton Strumpet! you shall fast and mortify yourself into Reason, with now and then a little handsome Discipline to bring you to your Senses. —Go.

SCENE II.

Lockit.

Peachum then intends to outwit me in this Affair; but I'll be even with him.—The Dog is leaky in his Liquor, so I'll ply him that way, get the Secret from him, and turn this Affair to my own Advantage.—Lions, Wolves, and Vulturs don't live together in Herds, Drovers or Flocks.—Of all Animals of Prey, Man is the only sociable one. Every one of us preys upon his Neighbour, and yet we herd together.—*Peachum* is my Companion, my Friend —According to the Custom of the World, indeed he may quote thousands of Precedents for cheating me— And shall not I make use of the Privilege of Friendship to make him a Return?

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

AIR XLIII. *Packington's Pound.*



*Thus Gamesters united in Friendship are found,
Though they know that their Industry all is a Cheat;
They flock to their Prey at the Dice-Box's Sound,
And join to promote one another's Deceit.*

*But if by mishap
They fail of a Chap,*

*To keep in their Hands, they each other entrap.
Like Pikes, lank with Hunger, who miss of their Ends,
They bite their Companions, and prey on their Friends.*

Now, *Peachum*, you and I, like honest Tradesmen, are to have a fair Tryal which of us two can over-reach the other.—*Lucy*.—[*Enter Lucy*.] Are there any of *Peachum's* People now in the House?

Lucy. *Filch*, Sir, is drinking a Quartern of Strong-Waters in the next Room with *Black Moll*.

Lock. Bid him come to me.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

SCENE III.

Lockit, Filch.

Lock. Why, Boy, thou lookest as if thou wert half starved; like a shotten Herring.

Filch. One had need have the Constitution of a Horse to go through the Business.—Since the favourite Child-getter was disabled by a Mis-hap, I have pick'd up a little Money by helping the Ladies to a Pregnancy against their being called down to Sentence.—But if a Man cannot get an honest Livelyhood any easier way, I am sure, 'tis what I can't undertake for another Session.

Lock. Truly, if that great Man should tip off, 'twould be an irreparable Loss. The Vigor and Prowess of a Knight-Errant never sav'd half the Ladies in Distress that he hath done.—But, Boy, can'st thou tell me where thy Master is to be found?

Filch. At his *Lock, Sir, at the *Crooked Billet*.

Lock. Very well.—I have nothing more with you. [*Ex. Filch*]. I'll go to him there, for I have many important Affairs to settle with him; and in the way of those Transactions, I'll artfully get into his Secret.—So that *Macheath* shall not remain a Day longer out of my *Clutches.

SCENE IV. *A Gaming-House.*

Macheath in a fine tarnish'd Coat, Ben Budge, Matt of the Mint.

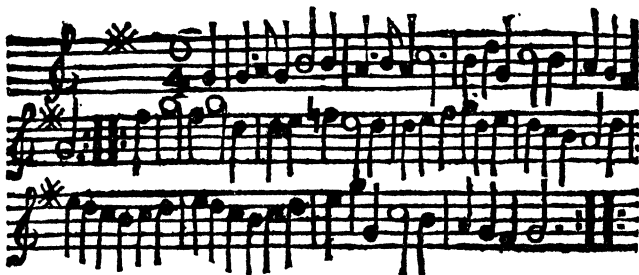
Mac. I am sorry, Gentlemen, the Road was so barren of Money. When my Friends are in Difficulties, I am always glad that my Fortune can be serviceable to them.

* A Cant Word, signifying, a Warehouse where stolen goods are deposited.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

[Gives them Money.] You see, Gentlemen, I am not a meer Court Friend, who professes every thing and will do nothing.

A I R XLIV. Lillibullero.



*The Modes of the Court so common are grown,
That a true Friend can hardly be met ;
Friendship for Interest is but a Loan,
Which they let out for what they can get.
'Tis true, you find
Some Friends so kind,
Who will give you good Counsel themselves to defend,
In sorrowful Ditty,
They promise, they pity,
But shift you for Money, from Friend to Friend.*

But we, Gentlemen, have still Honour enough to break through the Corruptions of the World.—And while I can serve you, you may command me.

Ben. It grieves my Heart that so generous a Man should be involv'd in such Difficulties as oblige him to live with such ill Company, and herd with Gamesters.

Matt. See the Partiality of Mankind!—One Man may steal a Horse, better than another look over a Hedge—Of all Mechanics, of all servile Handycrafts-men, a Gamester is the vilest. But yet, as many of the Quality are of the Profession, he is admitted amongst the politest Company. I wonder we are not more respected.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

Mach. There will be deep Play to-night at *Marybone*, and consequently Money may be pick'd up upon the Road. Meet me there, and I'll give you the Hint who is worth Setting.

Matt. The Fellow with a brown Coat with a narrow Gold Binding, I am told, is never without Money.

Mach. What do you mean, *Matt*?—Sure you will not think of meddling with him!—He's a good honest kind of Fellow, and one of us.

Ben. To be sure, Sir, we will put our selves under your Direction.

Mach. Have an Eye upon the Money-Lenders.—A *Rouveau* or two, would prove a pretty sort of an Expedition. I hate Extortion.

Matt. Those *Roulevaus* are very pretty Things.—I hate your Bank Bills.—There is such a Hazard in putting them off.

Mach. There is a certain Man of Distinction, who in his Time hath pick'd me out of a great deal of the Ready. He is in my Cash, *Ben.*—I'll point him out to you this Evening, and you shall draw upon him for the Debt.—The Company are met ; I hear the Dice-box in the other Room. So, Gentlemen, your Servant. You'll meet me at *Marybone*.

SCENE V. *Peachum's Lock.*

A Table with Wine, Brandy, Pipes, and Tobacco.

Peachum, Lockit.

Lock. The Coronation Account, Brother *Peachum*, is of so intricate a Nature, that I believe it will never be settled.

Peach. It consists in deed of a great Variety of Articles.—It was worth to our People, in Fees of different Kinds, above ten Instalments.—This is part of the Account, Brother, that lies open before us.

Lock. A Lady's Tail of rich Brocade—that, I see, is dispos'd of.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

Peach. To Mrs. *Diana Trapes*, the Tally-woman, and she will make a good Hand on't in Shoes and Slippers, to tick out young Ladies, upon their going into Keeping.—

Lock. But I don't see any Article of the Jewels.

Peach. Those are so well known, that they must be sent abroad.—You'll find them enter'd under the Article of Exportation.—As for the Snuff-Boxes, Watches, Swords, &c.—I thought it best to enter them under their several Heads.

Lock. Seven and twenty Women's Pockets compleat; with the several things therein contain'd; all Seal'd, Number'd, and enter'd.

Peach. But, Brother, it is impossible for us now to enter upon this Affair.—We should have the whole Day before us.—Besides, the Account of the last Half Year's Plate is in a Book by it self, which lies at the other Office.

Lock. Bring us then more Liquor.—To-day shall be for Pleasure.—To-morrow for Business.—Ah, Brother, those Daughters of ours are two slippery Hussies—Keep a watchful Eye upon *Polly*, and *Macheath* in a Day or two shall be our own again.

AIR XLV. Down in the North Country, &c.



Lock. *What Gudgeons are we Men!*
Ev'ry Woman's easy Prey.
Though we have felt the Hook, agen
We bite and they betray.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

*The Bird that hath been trapt,
When he hears his calling Mate,
To her he flies, again he's clapt
Within the wiry Grate.*

Peach. But what signifies catching the Bird, if your Daughter *Lucy* will set open the Door of the Cage?

Lock. If Men were answerable for the Follies and Frailties of their Wives and Daughters, no Friends could keep a good Correspondence together for two Days.— This is unkind of you, Brother; for among good Friends, what they say or do goes for nothing.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, here's Mrs. *Diana Trapes* wants to speak with you.

Peach. Shall we admit her, Brother *Lockit*?

Lock. By all means—She's a good Customer, and a fine-spoken Woman—And a Woman who drinks and talks so freely, will enliven the Conversation.

Peach. Desire her to walk in. [Exit Servant.]

SCENE VI.

Peachum, Lockit, Mrs. Trapes.

Peach. Dear Mrs. *Dye*, your Servant—One may know by your Kiss, that your Ginn is excellent.

Trapes. I was always very curious in my Liquors.

Lock. There's no perfum'd Breath like it—I have been long acquainted with the Flavour of those Lips—Han't I, Mrs. *Dye*?

Trapes. Fill it up.—I take as large Draughts of Liquor, as I did of Love.—I hate a Flincher in either.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

AIR XLVI. A Shepherd kept Sheep, &c.



*In the Days of my Youth I could bill like a Dove, fa, la, la, &c.
Like a Sparrow at all times was ready for Love, fa, la, la, &c.
The Life of all Mortals in Kissing should pass,
Lip to Lip while we're young—then the Lip to the Glass, fa,
&c.*

But now, Mr. *Peachum*, to our Business.—If you have Blacks of any kind, brought in of late; Mantoes—Velvet Scarfs—Petticoats—Let it be what it will—I am your Chap—for all my Ladies are very fond of Mourning.

Peach. Why, look ye, Mrs. *Dye*—you deal so hard with us, that we can afford to give the Gentlemen, who venture their Lives for the Goods, little or nothing.

Trapes. The hard Times oblige me to go very near in my Dealing.—To be sure, of late Years I have been a great sufferer by the Parliament.—Three thousand Pounds would hardly make me amends.—The Act for destroying the Mint, was a severe Cut upon our Business—'Till then, if a Customer stept out of the way—we knew where to have her—No doubt you know Mrs. *Coaxer*—there's a Wench now ('till to-day) with a good Suit of Cloaths of mine upon her Back, and I could never set Eyes upon her for three Months together.—Since the Act too against Imprisonment for small Sums, my Loss there hath too been very considerable, and it must

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

be so, when a Lady can borrow a handsome Petticoat, or a clean Gown, and I not have the least Hank upon her! And, o' my Conscience, now-a-days most Ladies take a Delight in cheating, when they can do it with Safety.

Peach. Madam, you had a handsome Gold Watch of us t'other Day for seven Guineas.—Considering we must have our Profit——To a Gentleman upon the Road, a Gold Watch will be scarce worth the taking.

Trap. Consider, Mr. *Peachum*, that Watch was remarkable, and not of very safe Sale.—If you have any black Velvet Scarfs—they are a handsome Winter-wear; and take with most Gentlemen who deal with my Customers.—'Tis I that put the Ladies upon a good Foot. 'Tis not Youth or Beauty that fixes their Price. The Gentlemen always pay according to their Dress, from half a Crown to two Guineas; and yet those Hussies make nothing of bilking of me.—Then too, allowing for Accidents.—I have eleven fine Customers now down under the Surgeon's Hands,—what with Fees and other Expences, there are great Goings-out, and no Comings-in, and not a Farthing to pay for at least a Month's cloathing.—We run great Risques—great Risques indeed.

Peach. As I remember, you said something just now of Mrs. *Coaxer*.

Trap. Yes, Sir.—To be sure I stript her of a Suit of my own Cloaths about two hours ago; and have left her as she should be, in her Shift, with a Lover of hers at my House. She call'd him up Stairs, as he was going to *Marybone* in a Hackney Coach.—And I hope, for her own sake and mine, she will perswade the Captain to redeem her, for the Captain is very generous to the Ladies.

Lock. What Captain?

Trap. He thought I did not know him—An intimate Acquaintance of yours, Mr. *Peachum*—Only Captain *Macheath*—as fine as a Lord.

Peach. To-morrow, dear Mrs. *Dye*, you shall set your own Price upon any of the Goods you like—We have at least half a dozen Velvet Scarfs, and all at your Service.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

Will you give me leave to make you a Present of this Suit of Night-cloaths for your own wearing?—But are you sure it is Captain *Macheath*?

Trap. Though he thinks I have forgot him; no Body knows him better. I have taken a great deal of the Captain's Money in my Time at second-hand, for he always lov'd to have his Ladies well drest.

Peach. Mr. *Lockit* and I have a little business with the Captain;—You understand me—and we will satisfy you for Mrs. *Coaxer*'s Debt.

Lock. Depend upon it—we will deal like Men of Honour.

Trap. I don't enquire after your Affairs—so whatever happens, I wash my Hands on't.—It hath always been my Maxim, that one Friend should assist another.—But if you please—I'll take one of the Scarfs home with me. 'Tis always good to have something in Hand.

SCENE VII. *Newgate*.

Lucy.

Jealousy, Rage, Love and Fear are at once tearing me to pieces. How I am weather-beaten, and shattered with distresses!

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

AIR XLVII. One Evening, having lost my Way, &c.



*I'm like a Skiff on the Ocean tost,
Now high, now low, with each Billow born,
With her Rudder broke, and her Anchor lost,
Deserted and all forlorn.
While thus I lye rolling and tossing all Night,
That Polly lyes sporting on Seas of Delight!
Revenge, Revenge, Revenge,
Shall appease my restless Sprite.*

I have the Rats-bane ready.—I run no Risque; for I can lay her Death upon the Ginn, and so many dye of that naturally that I shall never be call'd in Question.—But say, I were to be hang'd—F never could be hang'd for any thing that would give me greater Comfort, than the poysoning that Slut.

Enter Filch.

Filch. Madam, here's our Miss Polly come to wait upon you.

Lucy. Show her in.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

SCENE VIII.

Lucy, Polly.

Lucy. Dear Madam, your Servant.—I hope you will pardon my Passion, when I was so happy to see you last.—I was so over-run with the Spleen, that I was perfectly out of my self. And really when one hath the Spleen, every thing is to be excus'd by a Friend.

AIR XLVIII. Now, *Roger*, I'll tell thee, because thou'rt my Son.



*When a Wife's in her Pout,
(As she's sometimes, no doubt;)
The good Husband as meek as a Lamb,
Her Vapours to still,
First grants her her Will,
And the quieting Draught is a Dram.
Poor Man! And the quieting Draught is a Dram.*

—I wish all our Quarrels might have so comfortable a Reconciliation.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

Polly. I have no Excuse for my own Behaviour, Madam, but my Misfortunes.—And really, Madam, I suffer too upon your Account.

Lucy. But, Miss *Polly*—in the way of Friendship, will you give me leave to propose a Glass of Cordial to you?

Polly. Strong-Waters are apt to give me the Head-ache—I hope, Madam, you will excuse me.

Lucy. Not the greatest Lady in the Land could have better in her Closet, for her own private drinking.—You seem mighty low in Spirits, my Dear.

Polly. I am sorry, Madam, my Health will not allow me to accept of your Offer.—I should not have left you in the rude Manner I did when we met last, Madam, had not my Papa haul'd me away so unexpectedly.—I was indeed somewhat provoked, and perhaps might use some Expressions that were disrespectful.—But really, Madam, the Captain treated me with so much Contempt and Cruelty, that I deserv'd your Pity, rather than your Resentment.

Lucy. But since his Escape, no doubt all Matters are made up again.—Ah *Polly! Polly!* 'tis I am the unhappy Wife; and he loves you as if you were only his Mistress.

Polly. Sure, Madam, you cannot think me so happy as to be the Object of your Jealousy.—A Man is always afraid of a Woman who loves him too well—so that I must expect to be neglected and avoided.

Lucy. Then our Cases, my dear *Polly*, are exactly alike. Both of us indeed have been too fond.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

AIR XLIX. O Bessy Bell.



Polly. *A Curse attends that Woman's Love,
Who always would be pleasing.*

Lucy. *The Pertness of the billing Dove,
Like tickling, is but teasing.*

Polly. *What then in Love can Woman do?*

Lucy. *If we grow fond they shun us.*

Polly. *And when we fly them, they pursue :*

Lucy. *But leave us when they've won us.*

Lucy. Love is so very whimsical in both Sexes, that it is impossible to be lasting.—But my Heart is particular, and contradicts my own Observation.

Polly. But really, Mistress *Lucy*, by his last Behaviour, I think I ought to envy you.—When I was forc'd from him, he did not shew the least tenderness.—But perhaps, he hath a Heart not capable of it.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

AIR L. Would Fate to me *Belinda* give.

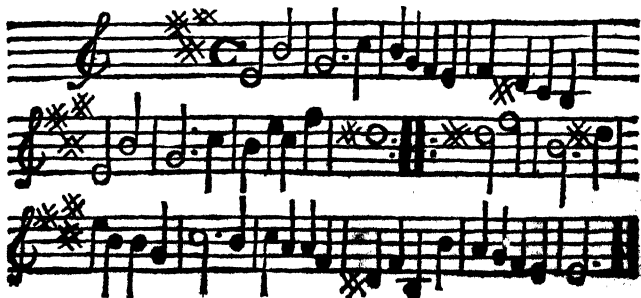


*Among the Men, Coquets we find,
Who Court by turns all Woman-kind;
And we grant all their Hearts desir'd,
When they are flatter'd, and admir'd.*

The Coquets of both Sexes are Self-lovers; and that is a Love no other whatever can dispossess. I fear, my dear *Lucy*, our Husband is one of those.

Lucy. Away with these melancholy reflections,—indeed, my dear *Polly*, we are both of us a Cup too low. —Let me prevail upon you, to accept of my offer.

AIR LI. Come, sweet Lass.



THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

*Come, sweet Lass,
Let's banish Sorrow
'Till To-morrow;
Come, sweet Lass,
Let's take a chirping Glass,
Wine can clear
The Vapours of Despair;
And make us light as Air;
Then drink, and banish Care.*

I can't bear, Child, to see you in such low Spirits.—
And I must persuade you to what I know will do you
good.—I shall now soon be even with the hypocritical
Strumpet. [*Aside.*]

SCENE IX.

Polly.

Polly. All this wheedling of *Lucy* cannot be for nothing.
—At this time too! when I know she hates me!—The
Dissembling of a Woman is always the Fore-runner of
Mischief.—By pouring Strong-Waters down my throat,
she thinks to pump some Secrets out of me.—I'll be
upon my Guard, and won't taste a Drop of her Liquor,
I'm resolv'd.

SCENE X.

Lucy, With Strong Waters. Polly.

Lucy. Come, Miss *Polly*.

Polly. Indeed, Child, you have given yourself
trouble to no purpose.—You must, my Dear, excuse
me.

Lucy. Really, Miss *Polly*, you are so squeamishly
affected about taking a Cup of Strong-Waters as a Lady
before Company. I vow, *Polly*, I shall take it monstrously
ill if you refuse me.—Brandy and Men (though Women

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

love them never so well) are always taken by us with some Reluctance—unless 'tis in private.

Polly. I protest, Madam, it goes against me.—What do I see! *Macheath* again in Custody!—Now every glimmer of Happiness is lost.

[*Drops the Glass of Liquor on the Ground.*]

Lucy. Since things are thus, I'm glad the Wench hath escap'd: for by this Event, 'tis plain, she was not happy enough to deserve to be poison'd.

SCENE XI.

Lockit, Macheath, Peachum, Lucy, Polly.

Lock. Set your Heart to rest, Captain.—You have neither the Chance of Love or Money for another Escape.—for you are order'd to be call'd down upon your Tryal immediately.

Peach. Away, Hussies!—This is not a time for a Man to be hamper'd with his Wives.—You see, the Gentleman is in Chains already.

Lucy. O Husband, Husband, my Heart long'd to see thee; but to see thee thus distracts me!

Polly. Will not my dear Husband look upon his *Polly*? Why hadst thou not flown to me for Protection? with me thou hadst been safe.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

AIR LII. The last time I went o'er the Moor.



Polly. *Hither, dear Husband, turn your Eyes.*

Lucy. *Bestow one glance to cheer me.*

Polly. *Think with that Look, thy Polly dyes.*

Lucy. *O shun me not—but hear me.*

Polly. *'Tis Polly sues.*

Lucy. *—————'Tis Lucy speaks.*

Polly. *Is thus true Love requited?*

Lucy. *My Heart is bursting.*

Polly. *—————Mine too breaks.*

Lucy. *Must I*

Polly. *—————Must I be slighted?*

Mach. What would you have me say, Ladies?—You see, this Affair will soon be at an end, without my dis-obliging either of you.

Peach. But the settling this Point, Captain, might prevent a Law-suit between your two Widows.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

A I R LIII. *Tom Tinker's my true Love.*



Mach. *Which way shall I turn me—How can I decide!
Wives, the Day of our Death, are as fond as a Bride.
One Wife is too much for most Husbands to hear,
But two at a time there's no Mortal can bear.
This way, and that way, and which way I will,
What would comfort the one, t'other Wife would
take ill.*

Polly. But if his own Misfortunes have made him insensible to mine—A Father sure will be more compassionate—Dear, dear Sir, sink the material Evidence, and bring him off at his Tryal—Polly upon her Knees begs it of you.

A I R LIV. *I am a poor Shepherd undone.*



THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

When my Hero in Court appears,
And stands arraign'd for his Life;
Then think of poor Polly's Tears;
For Ah! Poor Polly's his Wife.
Like the Sailor he holds up his Hand,
Distrest on the dashing Wave.
To die a dry Death at Land,
Is as bad as a watry Grave.
And alas, poor Polly!
Alack, and wœl-a-day!
Before I was in Love,
Oh! every Month was May.

Lucy. If Peachum's Heart is harden'd; sure you, Sir, will have more Compassion on a Daughter.—I know the Evidence is in your Power.—How then can you be a Tyrant to me? [Kneeling.]

A I R LV. *Ianthe* the lovely, &c.



When he holds up his Hand arraign'd for his Life,
O think of your Daughter, and think I'm his Wife!
What are Canons, or Bombs, or clashing of Swords?
For Death is more certain by Witnesses Words.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

*Then nail up their Lips ; that dread Thunder allay ;
And each Month of my Life will hereafter be May.*

Lock. *Macheath's* time is come, *Lucy*.—We know our own Affairs, therefore let us have no more Whimpering or Whining.

A I R LVI. A Cobbler there was, &c.



*Our selves, like the Great, to secure a Retreat,
When Matters require it, must give up our Gang ;
And good reason why.
Or, instead of the Fry,
Ev'n Peachum and I,*

- *Like poor petty Rascals, might hang, hang ;
Like poor petty Rascals, might hang.*

Peach. Set your Heart at rest, *Polly*.—Your Husband is to dye to-day.—Therefore, if you are not already provided it's high time to look about for another. There's Comfort for you, you Slut.

Lock. We are ready, Sir, to conduct you to the *Old Baily*.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

AIR LVII. *Bonny Dundee.*



Mach. *The Charge is prepar'd; the Lawyers are met,
The Judges all rang'd (a terrible Show!)
I go, undismay'd.—For Death is a Debt,
A Debt on demand.—So, take what I owe.
Then farewell, my Love—Dear Charmers, adieu.
Contented I die—'Tis the better for you.
Here ends all Dispute the rest of our Lives,
For this way at once I please all my Wives.*

Now, Gentlemen, I am ready to attend you.

SCENE XII.

Lucy, Polly, Filch.

Polly. Follow them, *Filch*, to the Court. And when the Tryal is over, bring me a particular Account of his Behaviour, and of every thing that happen'd.—You'll find me here with Miss *Lucy*. [*Ex. Filch.*] But why is all this Musick?

Lucy. The Prisoners, whose Tryals are put off till next Session, are diverting themselves.

Polly. Sure there is nothing so charming as Musick! I'm fond of it to distraction!—But alas!—now, all Mirth seems an Insult upon my Affliction.—Let us

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

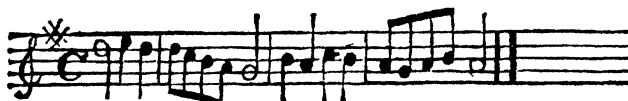
retire, my dear *Lucy*, and indulge our Sorrows.—The noisy Crew, you see, are coming upon us. [*Exeunt.*
A Dance of Prisoners in Chains, &c.]

SCENE XIII.

The Condemn'd Hold.

Macheath, *in a Melancholy Posture.*

AIR LVIII. Happy Groves.



*O cruel, cruel, cruel Case!
Must I suffer this Disgrace?*

AIR LIX. Of all the Girls that are so smart.



*Of all the Friends in time of Grief,
When threatening Death looks grimmer,
Not one so sure can bring Relief,
As this best Friend, a Brimmer.*

[Drinks.]

AIR LX. Britons strike home.



Since I must swing, — I scorn, I scorn to wince or whine.
[Rises.]

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

AIR LXI. Chevy Chase.



*But now again my Spirits sink :
I'll raise them high with Wine.* [Drinks a Glass of Wine.

AIR LXII. To old Sir Simon the King.



*But Valour the stronger grows,
The stronger Liquor we're drinking.
And how can we feel our Woes,
When we've lost the Trouble of Thinking?* [Drinks.

AIR LXIII. Joy to great Cæsar.



*If thus———A Man can die
Much bolder with Brandy.* [Pours out a Bumper of Brandy.

AIR LXIV. There was an old Woman.



THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

*So I drink off this Bumper.——And now I can stand the Test.
And my Comrades shall see, that I die as brave as the Best.*

[Drinks.]

AIR LXV. Did you ever hear of a gallant Sailor.



*But can I leave my pretty Hussies,
Without one Tear, or tender Sigh?*

AIR LXVI. Why are mine Eyes still flowing.



*Their Eyes, their Lips, their Busses
Recall my Love.——Ah must I die!*

AIR LXVII. Green Sleeves.



*Since Laws were made for ev'ry Degree,
To curb Vice in others, as well as me,
I wonder we han't better Company,
Upon Tyburn Tree!*

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

*But Gold from Law can take out the Sting;
And if rich Men like us were to swing,
'Twou'd thin the Land, such Numbers to string
Upon Tyburn Tree!*

Jailor. Some Friends of yours, Captain, desire to be admitted.—I leave you together.

SCENE XIV.

Macheath, Ben Budge, Matt of the Mint.

Mach. For my having broke Prison, you see, Gentlemen, I am order'd immediate Execution.—The Sheriffs Officers, I believe, are now at the Door.—That *emmy Twitcher* should peach me, I own surpriz'd me! —'Tis a plain Proof that the World is all alike, and that even our Gang can no more trust one another than other People. Therefore, I beg you, Gentlemen, look well to yourselves, for in all probability you may live some Months longer.

Matt. We are heartily sorry, Captain, for your Misfortune.—But 'tis what we must all come to.

Mach. *Peachum* and *Lockit*, you know, are infamous Scoundrels. Their Lives are as much in your Power, as yours are in theirs.—Remember your dying Friend! —'Tis my last Request.—Bring those Villains to the Gallows before you, and I am satisfied.

Matt. We'll do't.

Jailor. Miss *Polly* and Miss *Lucy* intreat a Word with you.

Mach. Gentlemen, adieu.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

SCENE XV.

Lucy, Macheath, Polly.

Mach. My dear *Lucy*—My dear *Polly*—Whatsoever hath past between us is now at an end.—If you are fond of marrying again, the best Advice I can give you, is to Ship yourselves off for the *West-Indies*, where you'll have a fair chance of getting a Husband a-piece; or by good Luck, two or three, as you like best.

Polly. How can I support this Sight!

Lucy. There is nothing moves one so much as a great Man in Distress.

A I R LXVIII. All you that must take a Leap, &c.



Lucy. *Would I might be hang'd!*

Polly. - - - - - *And I would so too!*

Lucy. *To be hang'd with you.*

Polly. - - - - - *My Dear, with you.*

Mach. *O Leave me to Thought! I fear! I doubt!*
I tremble! I droop!—See, my Courage is out,

[Turns up the empty Bottle.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

Polly. *No token of Love?*

Mach. - - - - - *See, my Courage is out.*

[Turns up the empty Pot.

Lucy. *No token of Love?*

Polly. - - - - - *Adieu.*

Lucy. - - - - - *Farewell.*

Mach. *But hark! I hear the Toll of the Bell.*

Chorus. *Tol de rol lol, &c.*

Jailor. Four Women more, Captain, with a Child a-piece! See, here they come. [*Enter Women and Children.*

Mach. What—four Wives more!—This is too much.—Here—tell the Sheriffs Officers I am ready. [*Exit Macheath guarded.*

SCENE XVI.

To them, Enter Player and Beggar.

Play. But, honest Friend, I hope you don't intend that *Macheath* shall be really executed.

Beg. Most certainly, Sir—To make the Piece perfect, I was for doing strict poetical Justice.—*Macheath* is to be hang'd; and for the other Personages of the Drama, the Audience must have suppos'd they were all either hang'd or transported.

Play. Why then, Friend, this is a down-right deep Tragedy. The Catastrophe is manifestly wrong, for an Opera must end happily.

Beg. Your Objection, Sir, is very just; and is easily remov'd. For you must allow, that in this kind of Drama, 'tis no matter how absurdly things are brought about—So—you Rabble there—run and cry a Reprieve—let the Prisoner be brought back to his wives in Triumph.

Play. All this we must do, to comply with the Taste of the Town.

Beg. Through the whole Piece you may observe such a similitude of Manners in high and low Life, that it is

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

difficult to determine whether (in the fashionable Vices) the fine Gentlemen imitate the Gentlemen of the Road, or the Gentlemen of the Road the fine Gentlemen.—Had the Play remain'd, as I at first intended, it would have carried a most excellent Moral. 'Twould have shown that the lower Sort of People have their Vices in a degree as well as the Rich: And that they are punish'd for them.

SCENE XVII.

To them, Macheath, with Rabble, &c.

Mach. So, it seems, I am not left to my Choice, but must have a Wife at last.—Look ye, my Dears, we will have no Controversie now. Let us give this Day to Mirth, and I am sure she who thinks herself my Wife will testify her Joy by a Dance.

All. Come, a Dance—a Dance.

Mach. Ladies, I hope you will give me leave to present a Partner to each of you. And (if I may without Offence) for this time, I take *Polly* for mine.—And for Life, you Slut,—for we were really marry'd.—As for the rest.—But at present keep your own Secret. [*To Polly.*]

A DANCE.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

AIR LXIX. Lumps of Pudding, &c.

A musical score for an air, consisting of ten staves of music. The notation is in a single system with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The music is written in a style characteristic of 18th-century opera. There are two instances of the word 'Song' written above the staves, and a 'Vivo' marking above the second staff. The score includes various rhythmic values, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests.

Chorus.

*Thus I stand like the Turk, with his Doxies around,
From all Sides their Glances his Passion confound;
Egr black, brown, and fair, his Inconstancy burns,
And the different Beauties subdue him by turns;
Each calls forth her Charms, to provoke his Desires:
Though willing to all; with but one he retires.*

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

*But think of this Maxim, and put off your Sorrow,
The Wretch of To-day, may be happy To-morrow.*

Chorus. *But think of this Maxim, &c.*



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