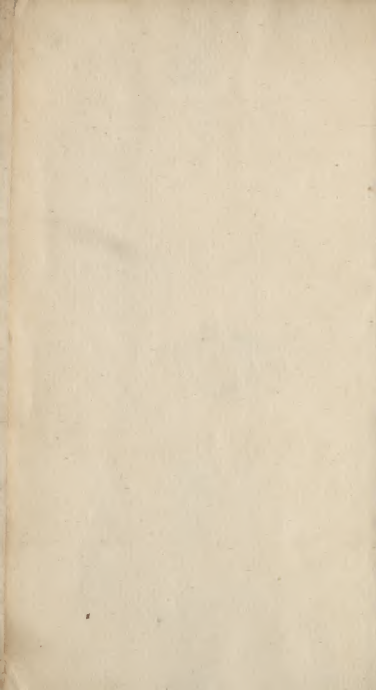




ABS. 1.79.13(1-5)





A M P H I T R Y O N ;

O R,

T H E T W O S O S I A S.

A

C O M E D Y.

As it is acted at the

T H E A T R E R O Y A L.

Written by Mr DRYDEN.

*Egregiam vero laudem, & spolia ampla referis;
Una, dola, divum, si Fœmina victa duorum est.*
Virg.

E D I N B U R G H:

Printed by JOHN WOOD and Company.
MDCCLIX.

A. M. H. T. R. O. N.

T. H. W. O. S. A. S.

O. M. E. D. Y.

Q. U. A. L. I. F. I. C. A. T. I. O. N.

W. O. R. K. I. N. G.

A. D. V. E. R. T. I. S. E. M. E. N. T.

Printed by J. W. Wood and Company.
M. D. C. C. L. X. X. I.

P R O L O G U E.

Spoken by Mrs Bracegirdle.

THE lab'ring bee, when his sharp sting is gone,
 Forgets his golden work, and turns a drone:
 Such is a satyr, when you take away
 That rage in which his noble vigour lay.
 What gain you, by not suffering him to tieze ye?
 He neither can offend you, now, nor please ye.
 The honey-bag, and venom, lay so near,
 That both, together, you resolv'd to tear;
 And lost your pleasure, to secure your fear. }
 How can he show his manhood, if you bind him
 To box, like boys, with one hand ty'd behind him?
 This is plain levelling of wit; in which
 The poor has all th' advantage, not the rich.
 The blockhead stands excus'd for want of sense;
 And wits turn blockheads in their own defence.
 Yet though the stages traffic is undone,
 Still Julian's interloping trade goes on:
 Though satyr on the theatre you smother,
 Yet in lampoons, you libel one another.
 The first produces still a second jig;
 You whip 'em out, like school boys, till they gig:
 And, with the same success, we readers guess;
 For, ev'ry one, still dwindles to a less.
 And much good malice, is so meanly drest,
 That we would laugh, but cannot find the jest.
 If no advice your rhyming rage can stay,
 Let not the ladies suffer in the fray.
 Their tender sex is privileg'd from war;
 'Tis not like knights to draw upon the fair.
 What fame expect you from so mean a prize?
 We wear no murd'ring weapons, but our eyes.

*Our sex, you know, was after yours design'd ;
The last perfection of the Maker's mind :
Heav'n drew out all the gold for us, and left your
dross behind.*

*Beauty, for valours best reward, he chose ;
Peace, after war ; and after toil, repose.*

*Hence, ye prophane ; excluded from our sights ;
And charm'd by day, with honour's vain delights,
Go, make your best of solitary nights.*

Recant betimes, 'tis prudence to submit :

Our sex, is still your overmatch in wit :

We never fail, with new, successful arts,

To make fine fools of you ; and all your parts.

Dramatis Personæ.

Jupiter.	Mr Betterton.
Mercury.	Mr Lee.
Phoebus.	Mr Bowman.
Amphitryon.	Mr Williams.
Sofia.	Mr Nokes.
Griplus.	Mr Sandford.
Polydas.	Mr Bright.
Tranio.	Mr Bowen.
Alcmena.	Mrs Barry.
Phædra.	Mrs Mountford.
Bromia.	Mrs Corey.
Night.	Mrs Butler.

A M P H I T R Y O N ;

O R,

The Two S O S I A S.

A C T I.

Scene, *T H E B E S.*

Mercury and Phœbus descend in several machines.

Phœb. **K** Now you the reason of this present summons?

'Tis neither council-day, nor is this heaven ;

What business has our *Jupiter* on earth ?

Why more at *Thebes* than any other place ?

And why we two of all the herd of gods

Are chosen out to meet him in consult ?

They call me god of wisdom,

But *Mars* and *Vulcan*, the two fools of heaven,

Whose wit lies in their anvil and their sword,

Know full as much as I.

Merc. And *Venus* may know more than both of us,
For 'tis some petticoat affair I guess,

I have discharged my duty ; which was to summon you, *Phœbus* : we shall know more anon, when the thunderer comes down. 'Tis our part to obey our father ; for, to confess the truth, we two are little better than sons of harlots : and if *Jupiter* had not been pleas'd to take a little pains with our mothers, instead of being gods, we might have been a couple of link-boys.

Phœb. But know you nothing farther, *Hermes*? What news in court?

Merc. There has been a devilish quarrel, I can tell you, betwixt *Jupiter* and *Juno*: She threatened to sue him in the spiritual court, for some matrimonial omissions; and he stood upon his prerogative. Then she hit him on the teeth of all his bastards; and your name and mine were us'd with less reverence than became our godships. They were both in their cups; and at the last the matter grew so high, that they were ready to throw stars at one another's heads.

Phœb. 'Twas happy for me that I was at my vocation, driving day-light about the world; but I had rather stand my father's thunder-bolts than my step-mothers railing.

Merc. When the tongue-battle was over, and the championess had harness'd her peacocks, to go for *Samos*, and hear the prayers that were made to her——

Phœb. By the way, her worshippers had a bad time on't; she was in a damnable humour for receiving petitions——

Merc. *Jupiter* immediately beckons me aside; and charges me, that as soon as ever you had set up your horses, you and I should meet him here at *Thebes*; now, putting the premises together, as dark as it is, methinks I begin to see day-light.

Phœb. As plain as one of my own beams; she has made him uneasy at home, and he is going to seek his diversion abroad: I see heaven itself is no privileg'd place for happiness, if a man must carry his wife along with him.

Merc. 'Tis neither better nor worse, upon my conscience: he is weary of hunting in the spacious forest of a wife, and is following his game *incognito*, in some little purlieu here at *Thebes*;
that's

that's many an honest man's case on earth too, *Jove* help 'em; as indeed he does to make 'em cuckolds.

Phæb. But if so, *Mercury*, then I, who am a poet, must indite his love-letter; and you, who are by trade a porter, must convey it.

Merc. No more, he's coming down sowse upon us, and hears as far as he can see too; he's plaguy hot upon the business, I know it by his hard driving.

[*Jupiter descends.*]

Jup. What! you are descanting upon my actions? Much good may do you with your politics: All subjects will be censuring their kings. Well, I confess I am in love; what then?

Phæb. Some mortal, we presume, of *Cadmus's* Some *Theban* beauty; some new *Semele*, (blood: Or some *Europa*.

Merc. I'll say that for my father, he's constant to an handsome family; he knows when they have a good smack with 'em; and snuffs up incense so favourly, when 'tis offered him by a fair hand.

Jup. Well, my familiar sons, this saucy carriage I have deserv'd; for he who trusts a secret. Makes his own man his master.

I read your thoughts; Therefore you may as safely speak as think.

Merc. Mine was a very homely thought; I was considering into what form your almighty-ship would be pleas'd to transform yourself to night. Whether you would fornicate in the shape of a bull, or a ram, or an eagle, or a swan: What bird or beast you would please to honour, by transgressing your own laws, in his likeness; or in short, whether you would recreate yourself in feathers, or in leather?

Phæb. Any disguise to hide the king of gods.

Jup. I know your malice, *Phæbus*, you would say
That

That when a monarch sins it shou'd be secret;
 To keep exterior show of sanctity,
 Maintain respect, and cover bad example:
 For kings and priests are in a manner bound,
 For reverence sake, to be close hypocrites.

Phœb. But what necessitates you to this love,
 Which you confess a crime, and yet commit?
 For to be secret makes not sin the less:
 'Tis only hidden from the vulgar view:
 Maintains, indeed, the reverence due to princes,
 But not absolves the conscience from the crime.

Jup. I love, because 'twas in the fates I shou'd.

Phœb. With reverence be it spoke, a bad excuse:
 Thus every wicked act in heav'n or earth,
 May make the same defence; but what is fate?
 Is it a blind contingence of events?
 Or sure necessity of causes link'd,
 That must produce effects? Or is't a power
 That orders all things by superior will,
 Foresees his work, and works in that foresight?

Jup. Fate is, what I

By virtue of omnipotence have made it:
 And pow'r omnipotent can do no wrong:
 Not to myself, because I will'd it so:
 Nor yet to men, for what they are is mine.
 'This night I will enjoy *Amphitryon's* wife:
 For, when I made her, I decreed her such
 As I should please to love. I wrong not him
 Whose wife she is; for I reserv'd my right,
 To have her while she pleas'd me; that once past,
 She shall be his again.

Merc. Here's omnipotence with a vengeance, to
 make a man a cuckold, and yet not to do him
 wrong. Then I find, father *Jupiter*, that when
 you made fate, you had the wit to contrive a holy-
 day for yourself now and then. For you kings
 never

never enact a law, but you have a kind of an eye to your own prerogative.

Phæb. If there be no such thing as right and Of an Eternal Being, I have done—— (wrong, But if there be.——

Jup. Peace, thou disputing fool:
Learn this; if thou couldst comprehend my ways,
Then thou wert *Jove*, not I: yet, thus far know,
That for the good of human-kind; this night
I shall beget a future *Hercules*;

Who shall redress the wrongs of injur'd mortals,
Shall conquer monsters, and reform the world.

Merc. Ay, brother *Phæbus*; and our father made all those monsters for *Hercules* to conquer, and contriv'd all those vices on purpose for him to reform too, there's the jest on't.

Phæb. Since arbitrary power will hear no reason, 'tis wisdom to be silent.——

Merc. Why that's the point; this same arbitrary power is a knock-down argument; 'tis but a word and a blow; now methinks our father speaks out like an honest bare-fac'd god, as he is; he lays the stress in the right place, upon absolute dominion: he confesses if he had been a man, he might have been a tyrant, if his subjects durst have call'd him to account: But you, brother *Phæbus*, are but a mere country gentleman, that never comes to court; that is abroad all day on horse-back, making visits about the world; are drinking all night, and in your cups are still railing at the government: O these patriots, these bumpkin patriots, are a very silly sort of animals.

Jup. My present purpose and design you heard;
Enjoy *Amphitryon's* wife, the fair *Alcmæna*:
Two must be subservient to my love.

Merc. to *Phæb.* No more of your grumbletonian
morals

morals, brother; there's preferment coming, be advis'd and pimp dutifully.

Jup. *Amphitryon*, the brave *Theban* general,
Has overcome his country's foes in fight;
And in a single duel slain their king;
His conquering troops are eager on their march
Returning home; while their young general
More eager to review his beauteous wife,
Posts on before, wing'd with impetuous love,
And, by to-morrow's dawn, will reach this town.

Merc. That's but short warning, father *Jupiter*
having made no former advances of courtship to
her, you have need of your omnipotence, and all
your godship, if you mean to be before-hand with
him.

Phæb. Then how are we to be employ'd this e-
vening; times precious, and these summer nights
are short; I must be early up to light the world.

Jup. You shall not rise, there shall be no to-
morrow.

Merc. Then the world's to be at an end, I find.

Phæb. Or else a gap in nature, of a day.

Jup. A day, will well be lost to busy man:
Night shall continue sleep, and care shall cease.
So, many men shall live, and live in peace,
Whom sun-shine had betrayed to envious fight,
And fight to sudden rage, and rage to death.
Now, I will have a night for love and me;
A long luxurious night, fit for a god
To queach and empty his immortal heat.

Merc. I'll lay on the woman's side for all that
that she shall love longest to night, in spite of your
omnipotence.

Phæb. I shall be curs'd by all the lab'ring trades
That early rise, but you must be obey'd.

Jup. No matter for the cheating part of men
They have a day's sin less to answer for.

Phœb. When wou'd you have me wake?

Jup. Why, when *Jove* goes to sleep: when I have finish'd,

Your brother *Mercury* shall bring you word.

[*Exit Phœbus on his chariot.*

To *Merc.* Now, *Hermes*, I must take *Amphitryon's* form;
I'll enjoy his wife;

Thou must be *Sofia*, this *Amphitryon's* slave;

Who, all this night, is travelling to *Thebes*,

To tell *Alcmena* of her lord's approach;

And bring her joyful news of victory.

Merc. But why must I be *Sofia*?

Jup. Dull god of wit, thou statue of thyself!

Thou must be *Sofia*, to keep out *Sofia*:

Who, by his entrance, might discover *Jove*,

Disturb my pleasures, raise unruly noise,

And so distract *Alcmena's* tender soul,

She wou'd not meet my warmth, when I dissolve

Into her lap, nor give down half her love.

Merc. Let me alone; I'll cudgel him away:

But I abhor so villainous a shape.

Jup. Take it; I charge thee on thy duty, take it:

Nor dare to lay it down, till I command.

I cannot bear a moment's loss of joy.

[*Night appears above in her chariot.*

Look up, the *Night* is in her silent chariot;

And rolling just o'er *Thebes*: bid her drive slowly,

Or make a double turn about the world;

While I drop *Jove*, and take *Amphitryon's* dress,

To be the greater, while I seem the less.

Exit Jupiter.

Merc. to *Night.* Madam *Night*, a good even to

you: fair and softly, I beseech you, madam: I have

word or two to you, from no less a god than *Ju-*

upiter.

Night. O, my nimble finger'd god of theft, what

take you here on earth, at this unseasonable hour?

what

what banker's shop is to be broken open to night? or what clippers, and coiners, and conspirators, have been invoking your deity for their assistance.

Merc. Faith none of those enormities; and yet I am still in my vocation: for you know I am a kind of Jack of all trades: in a word, *Jupiter* is indulging his genius to night, with a certain noble sort of recreation, call'd wenching: the truth on't is, adultery is its proper name.

Night. *Jupiter* wou'd do well to stick to his wife
Juno.

Merc. He has been married to her above these hundred years; and that's long enough in conscience to stick to one woman.

Night. She's his sister too, as well as his wife; that's a double tye of affection to her.

Merc. Nay, if he make bold with his own flesh and blood, 'tis likely he will not spare his neighbours.

Night. If I were his wife, I would raise a rebellion against him, for the violation of my bed.

Merc. Thou art mistaken, *Old Night*: his wife could raise no faction: for all the deities in heaven would take the part of the cuckold-making god; for they are all given to the flesh most damnablely. Nay, the very goddesses would stickle in the cause of love; 'tis the way to be popular to whore and love. For what dost thou think old *Saturn* was depos'd, but that he was cold and impotent; and made no court to the fair ladies. *Pallas* and *Juno* themselves, as chaste as they are, cried shame on him. I say unto thee, *Old Night*, Wo be to the monarch that has not the women on his side.

Night. Then by your rule, *Mercury*, a king who would live happily, must debauch his whole nation of women.

Merc. As far as his ready money will go, I mean; for

for *Jupiter* himself can't please all of 'em. But this is beside my present commission; He has sent me to will and require you to make a swinging long night for him: for he hates to be stinted in his pleasures.

Night. Tell him plainly, I'll rather lay down my commission: What would he make a bawd of me?

Merc. Poor ignorant! why he meant thee for a bawd when he first made thee. What art thou good for, but to be a bawd? Is not day-light better for mankind, I mean as to any other use, but only for love and fornication? Thou hast been a bawd too, a reverend, primitive, original bawd, from the first hour of thy creation! and all the laudable actions of love, have been committed under thy mantle. Prithee for what dost thou think that thou art worshipp'd?

Night. Why for my stars and moonshine.

Merc. That is, for holding a candle to iniquity: but if they were put out, thou wouldst be double worshipp'd, by the willing bashful virgins.

Night. Then for my quiet, and the sweetness of my sleep.

Merc. No, for thy sweet waking all the night: for sleep comes not upon lovers till thou art vanish'd.

Night. But it will be against nature, to make a long winter's night at midsummer.

Merc. Trouble not yourself with that: *Phæbus* is order'd to make a short summer's day to-morrow; so in four and twenty hours all will be at rights again.

Night. Well, I am edified by your discourse; and my comfort is, that whatever work is made, I see nothing.

Merc. About your business then: put a spoke into your chariot wheels, and order the seven stars to halt, while I put myself into the habit of a serv-

ing man; and drefs up a false *Sofia*, to wait upon a false *Amphitryon*. Good night, *Night*.

Night. My service to *Jupiter*. Farewel *Mercury*.
[*Night goes backward. Exit. Mercury.*]

S C E N E II.

Amphitryon's Palace.

Enter Alcmena alone.

Alc. WHY was I married to the man I love!
For, had he been indifferent to my
choice,

Or had been hated, absence had been pleasure:

But now I fear for my *Amphitryon's* life:

At home, in private, and secure from war,

I am amidst an host of armed foes:

Sustaining all his cares, pierc'd with his wounds,

And if he falls (which, O ye gods avert!)

Am, in *Amphitryon* slain! wou'd I were there,

And be were here; so might we change our fates;

That he might grieve for me, and I might die for

him! [Enter *Phædra*, running.]

Phæd. Good news, good news, madam, O such
admirable news, that if I keep it in a moment, I
should burst with it!

Alc. Is it from the army?

Phæd. No matter.

Alc. From *Amphitryon*?

Phæd. No matter, neither.

Alc. Answer me, I charge thee, if thy good news
be any thing relating to my lord: if it be assure thy-
self of a reward.

Phæd. Ay, madam, now you say something to
the matter: you know the business of a poor wait-
ing-woman, here upon earth, is to be scraping up
something

something against a rainy day, call'd the day of marriage: every one in our own vocation: but what matter is it to me if my lord has routed the enemies, if I get nothing of their spoils?

Alc. Say, is my lord victorious?

Phæd. Why he is victorious; indeed I prayed devoutly to *Jupiter* for a victory; by the same token, that you should give me ten pieces of gold, if I brought you news of it.

Alc. They are thine; supposing he be safe too.

Phæd. Nay, that's a new bargain; for I vow'd to *Jupiter*, that then you should give me ten pieces more; but I do undertake for my lord's safety: if you will please to discharge his godship *Jupiter* of the debt, and take it upon you to pay.

Alc. When he returns in safety, *Jupiter* and I will pay your vow.

Phæd. And I am sure I articled with *Jupiter*, that if I brought you news, that my lord was upon return, that you should grant me one small favour more, that will cost you nothing.

Alc. Make haste, thou torturer; is my *Amphytrion* upon return?

Phæd. Promise me that I shall be your bedfellow to night, as I have been ever since my lord's absence, — unless I shall be pleas'd to release you of your word.

Alc. That's a small request, 'tis granted.

Phæd. But swear by *Jupiter*.

Alc. But why by *Jupiter*?

Phæd. Because he's the greatest: I hate to deal with one of your little trifling god's that can do nothing, but by permission: but *Jupiter* can swinge you off; if you swear by him, and are forsworn.

Alc. I swear by *Jupiter*.

Phæd. Then I believe he is victorious, and I know he is safe: for I look'd through the key-hole,

and saw him knocking at the gate; and I had the conscience to let him cool his heels there.

Alc. And wou'dst thou not open to him! Oh thou traitress!

Phæd. No, I was a little wiser: I left *Sofia's* wife to let him in: for I was resolv'd to bring the news, and make my penny-worths out of him; as time shall show.

Enter Jupiter, in the shape of Amphitryon, with Sofia's wife, Bromia. He kisses and embraces Alcmena.

Jup. O let me live for ever on those lips!—
The nectar of the gods, to these is tasteless.

I swear, that were I *Jupiter*, this night
I would renounce my heaven, to be *Amphitryon*.

Alc. Then, not to swear beneath *Amphitryon's*
(Forgive me *Juno* if I am profane) (oath,
I swear, I would be what I am this night;
And be *Alcmena*, rather than be *Juno*.)

Brom. Good my lord, what's become of my poor bedfellow, your man *Sofia*: you keep such a billing and colling here, to set one's mouth a watering: what, I say, though I am a poor woman, I have a husband as well as my lady; and should be as glad as she, of a little honest recreation.

Phæd. And what have you done with your old friend, and my old sweet-heart, judge *Gripius*? has he brought me home a cram'd purse, that swells with bribes: if he be rich, I'll make him welcome, like an honourable magistrate; but if he has not had the wit to sell justice, he judges no causes in my court, I warrant him.

Alc. My lord, you tell me nothing of the battle? Is *Thebes* victorious, are our foes destroy'd? For now I find you safe, I should be glad To hear you were in danger?

Jup. aside. A man had need be a god, to stand
the

the fury of three talking-women! I think in my conscience I made their tongues of thunder.

Bromia pulling him on one side. I ask'd the first question: answer me, my lord.

Phædra pulling him on t'other side. Peace, mine's a lover, and your's is but a husband; and my judge is my lord too; the title shall take place, and I will be answer'd.

Jup. *Sofia* is safe: *Gripius* is rich: both coming; I rode before 'em, with a lover's haste.—[*Aside.* Was ere poor god so worried! but for my love, I wish I were in heav'n again with *Juno*.

Alc. Then I, it seems, am last to be regarded?

Jup. Not so, my love, but these obstreperous tongues

Have snatcht their answers first: they will be heard;
And surely *Jove* would never answer pray'r
That women made, but only to be freed
From their eternal noise. Make haste to bed:
There let me tell my story, in thy arms;
There in the gentle pauses of our love,
Betwixt our dyings, ere we live again,
Thou shalt be told the battle, and success:
Which I shall oft begin, and then break off;
For love will often interrupt my tale,
And make so sweet confusion in our talk,
That thou shalt ask, and I shall answer things
That are not of a piece: but patcht with kisses,
And sighs, and murmurs, and imperfect speech;
And nonsense shall be eloquent, in love.

Brom. to Phæd. My lord is very hot upon't: this absence is a great friend to us poor neglected wives; it makes us new again.

Alc. I am the fool of love; and find within me
The fondness of a bride, without the fear.
My whole desires and wishes are in you.

Phæd. aside. My lady's eyes are pinking to bed-ward

ward too; now she is to look very sleepy, counterfeiting yawning, but she shall ask me leave first.

Alc. Great *Juno*, thou whose holy care presides
Over the nuptial bed, pour all thy blessings
On this auspicious night.

Jup. *Juno* might grudge: for she may fear a rival,
In those bright eyes; but *Jupiter* will grant,
And doubly bless this night.

Phæd. aside. But *Jupiter* should ask my leave first,
were he here in person.

Alc. *Bromia*, prepare the bed:
The tedious journey has dispos'd my lord
To seek his needful rest. [Exit *Bromia*.

Phæd. 'Tis very true, madam; the poor gentleman must needs be weary; and therefore, 'twas not ill contriv'd that he must lie alone to-night, to recruit himself with sleep, and lay in enough for to-morrow night, when you may keep him waking.

Alc. to *Jup.* I must confess I made a kind of promise.—

Phædra almost crying. A kind of promise do you call it? I see you would fain be coming off: I am sure you swore to me, by *Jupiter*, that I should be your bedfellow, and I'll accuse you to him too, the first prayers I make: and I'll pray a purpose too, that I will, though I have not pray'd to him this seven years.

Jup. O, the malicious hilding!

Alc. I did swear indeed, my lord.

Jup. Forswear thyself; for *Jupiter* but laughs
At lovers perjuries.

Phæd. The more shame for him if he does: there would be a fine god indeed for us women to worship, if he laughs when our sweet-hearts cheat us of our maiden-heads: No, no, *Jupiter* is an honest gentleman than you make of him.

Jup. I'm all on fire; and would not lose this night
To be the master of the universe. *Phæd.*

Phæd. Ay, my lord, I see you are on fire; but the devil a bucket shall be brought to quench it, without my leave: you *may* go to bed, madam; but you shall see how heav'n will bless your night's work, if you forswear yourself:——Some fool, some meer elder brother, or some blockheadly hero, *Jove*, I beseech thee, send her.

Jup. aside. Now I could call my thunder to re- But that were to confess myself a god, [venge me. And then I lost my love!——*Alcmena*, come, By heav'n I have a bridegroom's fervour for thee, As I had ne'er enjoy'd.

Alc. sighing. She has my oath; And sure she may release it if she please.——

Phæd. Why truly, madam, I am not cruel in my nature, to poor distressed lovers; for it may be my own case another day: And therefore, if my lord pleases to consider me.——

Jup. Any thing, any thing, but name thy wish, and have it.——

Phæd. Ay, now you say, any thing, any thing; but you would tell me another story to-morrow morning. Look you, my lord, here's a hand open to receive; you know the meaning of it; I am for nothing but the ready.——

Jup. Thou shalt have all the treasury of heaven.

Phæd. Yes, when you are *Jupiter* to dispose of it.

Jup. aside. I had forgot, and show'd myself a god; This love can make a fool of *Jupiter*.

Phæd. You have got some part of the enemies spoil, I warrant you; I see a little trifling diamond upon your finger; and I am proud enough to think it would become mine too.

Jupiter, taking a ring off his finger and giving it,
Here, take it; this is a very woman:
Her sex is avarice, and she, in one,
Is all her sex.

Phæd. Ay, ay, 'tis no matter what you say of us. What would you have your money out of the treasury, without paying the officers their fees? Go, get you together, you naughty couple, till you are both weary of worrying one another, and then to-morrow morning, I shall have another fee for parting you. [*Phædra goes out before Alcmena with a light.*]

Jup. solus. Why, now I am, indeed, the lord of For, what's to be a god, but to enjoy? [all:] Let human-kind their sovereign's leisure wait; Love is, this night, my great affair of state: Let this one night, of providence be void: All *Jove*, for once, is on himself employed. Let unregarded altars smoke in vain; And let my subjects praise me, or complain. Yet, if betwixt my intervals of bless, Some amorous youth his orisons address, His prayer is in a happy hour prefer'd; And when *Jove* loves, a lover should be heard.

A C T II.

Night-scene of a palace.

Sofia, with a dark-lantern: Mercury, in Sofia's shape, with a dark-lantern also.

Sofia. WAS not the devil in my master, to send me out in this dreadful dark night, to bring the news of his victory to my lady? and was not I possess'd with ten devils, for going on his errand, without a convoy for the safeguard of my person? Lord, how am I melted into sweat with fear! I am diminished of my natural weight above two stone: I shall not bring half my self home again,
to

to my poor wife and family: I have been in an ague fit, ever since shut of evening; what with the fright of trees by the high-way; which look'd maliciously like thieves by moon-shine: and what with bulrushes by the river-side, that shak'd like spears, and lances at me. Well! the greatest plague of a serving man, is to be hir'd to some great lord! they care not what drudgery they put upon us, while they ly lolling at their ease a-bed, and stretch their lazy limbs, in expectation of the whore which we are fetching for them.

Merc. aside. He is but a poor mortal, that suffers this! but I, who am a god, am degraded to a foot pimp; a waiter without doors; a very civil employment for a deity!

Sof. The better sort of 'em will say, Upon my honour, at every word; yet ask 'em for our wages, and they plead the privilege of their honour, and will not pay us; nor let us take our privilege of the law upon them. These are a very hopeful sort of patriots, to stand up as they do for liberty and property of the subject: there's conscience for you!

Merc. aside. This fellow has something of the republican spirit in him.

Sofia looking about him. Stay; this, methinks, should be our house: and I should thank the gods, now, for bringing me safe home: but I think I had as good let my devotions alone, till I have got the reward for my good news, and then thank 'em once for all: for if I praise 'em, before I am safe within doors, some damn'd mastiff dog may come out, and worry me; and then my thanks are thrown away upon 'em.

Merc. aside. Thou art a wicked rogue, and wilt have thy bargain before hand: therefore thou
get't

get'st not into the house this night; and thank me accordingly as I use thee.

Sof. Now am I to give my lady an account of my lord's victory; 'tis good to exercise my parts before hand, and file my tongue into eloquent expressions, to tickle her ladyship's imagination.

Merc. aside. Good! here's the god of eloquence to judge of thy oration.

Sofia, setting down his dark lanthorn. This lanthorn, for once, shall be my lady, because she is the lamp of all beauty and perfection.

Merc. No, rogue, 'tis thy lord is the lanthorn by this time, or *Jupiter* is turn'd fumbler.

Sof. Then thus I make my addressees to her: (*bows.*) Madam, my lord has chosen me out, as the most faithful, though the most unworthy of his followers; to bring your ladyship this following account of our glorious expedition. Then she,—— O my poor *Sofia*, (*in a shrill tone*) how am I overjoy'd to see thee! She can say no less:——Madam, you do me too much honour, and the world will envy me this glory:——well answer'd on my side.——And how does my lord *Amphitryon*?——Madam, he always does like a man of courage, when he is call'd by honour.——There I think I nick'd it.——But when will he return?——As soon as possibly he can: but not so soon as his impatient heart could wish him with your ladyship.

Merc. aside. When *Thebes* is an university, thou deservest to be their orator.

Sofia. But what does he do, and what does he say? Prithce tell me something more of him.——He always says less than he does, madam: and his enemies have found it to their cost.——Where the devil did I learn these elegancies and gallantries?

Merc. So; he has all the natural endowments of a fop; and only wants the education!

Sofia,

Sofia, *staring up to the sky.* What is the devil in the night! she's as long as two nights: the seven stars are just where they were seven hours ago! high day — high night, I mean, by my favour. What, has *Phœbus* been playing the good-fellow, and overslept himself, that he forgets his duty to us mortals?

Merc. aside. How familiarly the rascal treats us gods! but I shall make him alter his tone immediately. [*Mercury comes nearer, and stands just before him.*]

Sofia, *seeing him, and starting back, aside.* How now! what, do my eyes dazle, or is my dark lantern false to me! is not that a giant before our door! or a ghost of somebody slain in the late battle? if he be, 'tis unconscionably done, to fright an honest man thus, who never drew weapon wrathfully in all my life! — Whatever wigh the be, I am devilishly afraid, that's certain: but 'tis discretion to keep my own counsel: I'll sing, that I may seem valiant. [*Sofia sings; and as Mercury speaks, by little and little drops his voice.*]

Merc. What saucy companion is this, that deafens us with his hoarse voice? what midnight balad-finger have we here! I shall teach the villain to leave off catterwawling.

Sof. I would I had courage, for his sake; that I might teach him to call my singing catterwawling, an illiterate rogue; an enemy to the muses and to musick.

Merc. There is an ill favour that offends my nostrils; and it wasteth this way?

Sof. He has smelt me out: my fear has betray'd me into this favour. — I am a dead man: the bloody villain is at his fee, fa, fum, already.

Merc. Stand, who goes there?

Sof. A friend.

Mer. What friend?

Sof. Why, a friend to all the world that will give me leave to live peaceably.

Sof. I defy peace and all its works; my arms are out of exercise, they have maul'd no body this three days; I long for an honourable occasion to pound a man, and lay him asleep at the first buffet.

Sofia aside. That would almost do me a kindness; for I have been kept waking, without tipping one wink of sleep this three nights.

Merc. Of what quality are you, fellow?

Sof. Why, I am a man, fellow.———*Courage, Sofia.*

Merc. What kind of man?

Sof. Why, a two-leg'd man, what man should I be?———*(aside)*———I must bear up to him, he may prove as errant a milkop as myself.

Merc. Thou art a coward, I warrant thee, do not I hear thy teeth chatter in thy head?

Sof. Ay, ay, that's only a sign they would be snapping at thy nose.—*(Aside.)*———Bless me! what an arm and fist he has, with great thumbs too; and gols and knuckle-bones of a very butcher.

Merc. Sirrah, from whence come you, and whither go you? answer me directly, upon pain of assassination.

Sof. I am coming from whence I came, and am going whither I go: that's directly home———tho' this is somewhat an uncivil manner of proceeding, at the first sight of a man, let me tell you.

Merc. Then to begin our better acquaintance, let me first make you a small present of this box o' the ear. [*Strikes him.*]

Sof. If I were as cholerick a fool as you now, here would be a fine work betwixt us two; but I am a little better bred, than to disturb the sleeping neighbour-

neighbourhood, and so good night friend.—

[*Is going.*

Merc. stopping him. Hold, Sir; you and I must not part so easily; once more, whither are you going?

Sof. Why, I am going as fast as I can, to get out of the reach of your clutches: let me but only knock at that door there.

Merc. What business have you at that door, firrah?

Sof. This is our house; and when I am got in, I'll tell you more.

Merc. Whose house is this, sauciness, that you are so familiar with, to call it ours?

Sof. 'Tis mine, in the first place; and next, my masters; for I lie in the garret, and he lies under me.

Merc. Have your master and you no names, firrah?

Sof. His name is *Amphitryon*, hear that and tremble?

Merc. What, my lord general?

Sof. O, has his name mollify'd you! I have brought you down a peg lower already, friend.

Merc. And your name is—

Sof. Lord, friend, you are so very troublesome—What should my name be but *Sofia*?

Merc. How, *Sofia*, say you? how long have you taken up that name, firrah?

Sof. Here's a fine question: why, I never took it up, friend, it was born with me.

Merc. What, was your name born, *Sofia*? take this remembrance for that lye. [*Beats him.*

Sof. Hold friend, you are so very flippan't with your hands, you won't hear reason: What offence has my name done you, that you should beat me

for it? *S. O. S. I. A.* They are as civil, honest, harmless letters as any are in the whole alphabet.

Merc. I have no quarrel to the name, but that 'tis e'en too good for you, and 'tis none of your's.

Sof. What, am not I *Sofia*, say you?

Merc. No.

Sof. I should think you are somewhat merrily dispos'd, if you had not beaten me, in such sober sadness. You would persuade me out of my heathen name, would you?

Merc. Say you are *Sofia* again at your peril, firrah.

Sof. I dare say nothing, but thought is free; but whatever I am call'd, I am *Amphitryon's* man, and the first letter of my name is *S* too. You had best tell me that my master did not send me home to my lady, with news of his victory?

Merc. I say he did not.

Sof. Lord, Lord, friend, one of us two is horribly giv'n to lying—but I do not say which of us, to avoid contention.

Merc. I say my name is *Sofia*, and your's is not.

Sof. I would you could make good your words, for then I should not be beaten, and you should.

Merc. I find you would be *Sofia* if you durst—but if I catch you thinking so—

Sof. I hope I may think I was *Sofia*; and I can find no difference between my former self, and my present self; but that I was plain *Sofia* before; and now I am lac'd *Sofia*.

Merc. Take this, for being so impudent to think so. [Beats him.]

Sof. kneeling. Truce a little, I beseech thee! I would be a stock or a stone now by my good will, and would not think at all, for self preservation. But will you give me leave to argue the matter fairly with you? and promise me to depose that cudgel,

cudgel, if I can prove myself to be that man that I was before I was beaten?

Merc. Well, proceed in safety; I promise you I will not beat you.

Sof. In the first place then, is not this town call'd *Thebes*?

Merc. Undoubtedly.

Sof. And is not this house *Amphitryon's*?

Merc. Who denies it?

Sof. I thought you would have denied that too; for all hangs upon a string. Remember then, that those two preliminary articles are already granted. In the next place, did not the forefaid *Amphitryon* beat the *Teleboans*, kill their king *Pterelas*, and send a certain servant, meaning some body, that for sake-sake shall be nameless, to bring a present to his wife, with news of his victory, and of his resolution to return to-morrow?

Merc. This is all true, to a very tittle; but who is that certain servant, there's all the question?

Sof. Is it peace or war betwixt us?

Merc. Peace.

Sof. I dare not wholly trust that abominable cudgel; but 'tis a certain friend of your's and mine; that had a certain name before he was beaten out of it; but if you are a man that depend not altogether upon force and brutality, but somewhat also upon reason, now do you bring better proofs that you are that same certain man; and in order to it, answer me to certain questions.

Merc. I say I am *Sofia*, *Amphitryon's* man; what reason have you to urge against it?

Sof. What was your father's name?

Merc. *Davus*; who was an honest husbandman, whose sister's name was *Harpage*, that was married, and died in a foreign country.

Sof. So far you are right, I must confess; and
 C 2 your

your wife's name is.—

Merc. *Bromia*, a devilish shrew of her tongue, and a vixion of her hands; that leads me a miserable life; keeps me to hard duty a bed; and beats me every morning when I have risen from her side, without having first—

Sof. I understand you: by many a sorrowful token, this must be.—[*Aside.*]

Merc. I was once taken upon suspicion of a burglary, and was whipt through *Thebes*, and branded for my pains.

Sof. Right me again; but if you are I, as I begin to suspect; that whipping and branding might have been past over in silence, for both our credits.—And yet now I think on't, if I am I, (as I am I) he cannot be I. All these circumstances he might have heard; but I will now interrogate him upon some private passages—What was the present that *Amphitryon* sent by you or me, no matter which of us, to his wife *Alcmena*?

Merc. A buckle of diamonds, consisting of five large stones.

Sof. And where are they now?

Merc. In a case, sealed with my master's coat of arms.

Sof. This is prodigious, I confess; but yet 'tis nothing now I think on't, for some false brother may have reveal'd it to him. (*Aside.*) But I have another question to ask you, of somewhat that pass'd only betwixt myself and me; if you are *Sofia*, what were you doing in the heat of battle?

Merc. What a wise man should, that has a respect for his own person. I ran into our tent, and hid myself amongst the baggage.

Sof. aside. Such another cutting answer, and I must provide myself of another name. (*To him.*) And how did you pass your time in that same tent?

You

You need not answer to every circumstance so exactly now; you must lie a little, that I may think you the more me.

Merc. That cunning shall not serve your turn, to circumvent me out of my name: I am for plain, naked truth:—There stood a hog'shead of old wine, which my lord reserv'd for his own drinking.——

Sof. aside. Oh the devil! as sure as death, he must have hid himself in that hog'shead, or he could never have known that!

Merc. And by that hog'shead, upon the ground, there lay the kind inviter and provoker of good drinking.——

Sof. Nay, now I have caught you; there was neither inviter nor provoker, for I was all alone.

Merc. A lusty gammon of——

Sof. sighing. Bacon——that word has quite made an end of me:——let me see,——this must be I, in spite of me.——but let me view him nearer.

[*Walks about Mercury with his dark lanthorn.*]

Merc. What are you walking about me for, with your dark lanthorn?

Sof. No harm, friend; I am only surveying a parcel of earth here, that I find we two are about to bargain for:——He's damnable like me, that's certain. *Imprimis*, there's the patch upon my nose, with a pox to him.——*Item*, a very foolish face with a long chin at end on't: *Item*, one pair of shambling legs with two splay feet belonging to them. And——*summa totalis*, from head to foot all my bodily apparel——(*To Mercury*) Well, you are *Sofia*; there's no denying it; but what am I then? For my mind gives me, I am some body still, if I knew but who I were.

Merc. When I have a mind to be *Sofia* no more, then thou may'st be *Sofia* again.

Sof. I have but one request more to make to thee, that, though not as *Sofia*, yet as a stranger, I may go into that house, and carry a civil message to my lady.

Merc. No sirrah; not being *Sofia*, you have no message to deliver, nor no lady in this house.

Sof. Thou can'st not be so barbarous, to let me lie in the streets all night, after such a journey, and such a beating——and therefore I am resolv'd to knock at the door in my own defence.

Mer. If you come near the door, I recal my word, and break off the truce:——and then expect——

[*Holds up his cudgel.*]

Sof. No; The devil take me if I do expect: I have felt too well what sour fruit that crab-tree bears: I'll rather beat it back upon the hoof to my lord *Amphitryon*; to see if he will acknowledge me for *Sofia*; if he does not, then I am no longer his slave; there's my freedom dearly purchas'd with a sore drubbing; if he does acknowledge me, then I am *Sofia* again; so far 'tis tolerably well; but then I shall have a second drubbing, for an unfortunate ambassador as I am; and that intolerable.

[*Exit Sofia.*]

Mercury alone.

I have fobb'd off his excellency pretty well. Now let him return, and make the best of his credentials. I think too I have given *Jupiter* sufficient time for his consummation. Oh, he has taken his cue; and here he comes as leisurely and as lank as if he had emptied himself of the best part of his almightyship.

SCENE

SCENE II.

Enter Jupiter leading Alcmena, followed by Phædra. Pages with torches before them. Jupiter to the pages.

THose torches are offensive: stand aloof:
 For, though they bless me with thy heav'nly
 sight, [To her.
 They may disclose the secret I would hide:
 The *Thebans* must not know I have been here;
 Detracting crouds would blame me that I robb'd
 These happy moments from my publick charge,
 To consecrate to thy desir'd embrace:
 And I could wish no witnesses but thyself;
 For thou thyself art all I wish to please.

Alc. So long an absence, and so short a stay!
 What, but one night! one night of joy and love,
 Could only pay one night of cares and fears!
 And all the rest are an uncancell'd sum!
 Curse on this honour and this publick fame!
 Would you had less of both, and more of love!

Jup. *Alcmena* I must go.

Alc. Not yet my lord.

Jup. Indeed I must.

Alc. Indeed you shall not go.

Jup. Behold the ruddy streaks o'er yonder hill,
 Those are the blushes of the breaking morn,
 That kindle day-light to this nether world:

Alc. No matter for the day, it was but made
 To number out the hours of busy men.

Let 'em be busy still, and still be wretched;
 And take their fill of anxious drudging day:
 But you and I will draw our curtains close,
 Extinguish day-light, and put out the sun:
 Come back, my lord, in faith you shall retire.

You

You have not yet lain long enough in bed,
To warm your widow'd side.

Phædra aside. I find my lord is an excellent schoolmaster, my lady is so willing to repeat her lesson.

Merc. aside. That's a plaguy little devil; what a roguish eye she has! I begin to like her strangely; she's the perquisite of my place too; for my ladies waiting-woman is the proper fees of my lord's chief gentleman. I have the privilege of a god too; I can view her naked through all her clothes:—Let me see; I have discover'd something that pleases me already.

Jup. Let me not live, but thou art all enjoy-
So charming and so sweet, (ment!
That not one night, but whole eternity,
Were well employ'd,
To love thy each perfection as it ought.

Alc. kissing him. I'll bribe you with this kifs to
stay a while.

Jup. kissing her. A bribe indeed that soon will
bring me back.

But, to be just, I must restore your bribe.
How I could dwell for ever on those lips!
O I could kifs 'em pale with eagerness!
So soft, by heaven, and such a juicy sweet,
That ripen'd peaches have not half the flavour.

Alc. Ye niggard gods! ye make our lives too
long:

You fill them with diseases, wants and woes,
And only dash them with a little love;
Sprinkled by fits, and with a sparing hand:
Count all our joys, from childhood even to age,
They would but make a day of every year:
Take back your seventy years, (the stint of life)
Or else be kind, and cram the quintessence

Of seventy years, into sweet seventy days :
For all the rest is flat, insipid being.

Jup. But yet one scruple pains me at our part-
I love so nicely, that I cannot bear (ing ;
To owe the sweets of love which I have tasted,
To the submissive duty of a wife :
Tell me, and sooth my passion ere I go,
That in the kindest moment of the night,
When you gave up yourself to love and me,
You thought not of a husband, but a lover.

Alc. But tell me first, why you would raise a
blush upon my cheeks, by asking such a question?

Jup. I would owe nothing to a name so dull
As husband is, but to a lover all.

Alc. You should have ask'd me then, when love
and night,
And privacy, had favour'd your demand.

Jup. I ask it now, because my tenderness
Surpasses that of husbands for their wives.
O that you lov'd like me ! then you would find
A thousand thousand niceties in love ;
The common love of sex to sex is brutal :
But love refin'd will fancy to itself
Millions of gentle cares, and sweet disquiets :
The being happy is not half the joy ;
The manner of the happiness is all !
In me (my charming mistress) you behold
A lover that disdains a lawful title ;
Such as a monarch to successive thrones.
The generous lover holds by force of arms ;
And claims his crown by conquest.

Alc. Methinks you should be pleas'd, I give you
A vertuous and a modest wife can give. (all

Jup. No, no, that very name of wife and mar-
Is poison to the dearest sweets of love : (riage,
To please my niceness you must separate
The lover from his mortal foe, the husband.

Give

Give to the yawning husband your cold vertue,
But all your vigorous warmth, your melting sighs,
Your amorous murmurs, be your lover's part.

Alc. I comprehend not what you mean, my lord,
But only love me still, and love me thus,
And think me such as best may please your thought.

Jup. There's mystery of love in all I say:
Farewel; and when you see your husband next
Think of your lover then.

*Exeunt Jupiter and Alcmena severally:
Phædra follows her.*

Merc. alone. Now I should follow him: but love
has laid a lime-twig for me, and made a lame god
of me. Yet why should I love this *Phædra*? She's
interested, and a jilt into the bargain. Three thou-
sand years hence, there will be a whole nation of
such women in a certain country that will be call'd
France; and there's a neighbour island too, where
the men of that country will be all interest. Oh
what a precious generation will that be, which the
men of the island shall propogate out of the wo-
men of the continent! (*Phædra re-enters*)——
And so much for prophecy: for she's here again,
and I must love her in spite of me. And since I
must, I have this comfort, that the greatest wits
are commonly the greatest cullies; because nei-
ther of the sexes can be wiser than some certain
parts about them will give them leave.

Phæd. Well *Sofia*, how go matters?

Merc. Our army is victorious.

Phæd. And my servant judge *Gripus*?

Merc. A voluptuous gourmand.

Phæd. But has he gotten wherewithal to be vo-
luptuous, is he wealthy?

Merc. He sells justice as he uses, fleeces the rich
rebels, and hangs up the poor.

Phæd. Then while he has money he may make
love

love to me. Has he sent me no token?

Merc. Yes, a kiss; and by the same token, I am to give it you, as a remembrance from him.

Phæd. How now, impudence! a beggarly serving-man presume to kiss me?

Merc. Suppose I were a god, and should make love to you?

Phæd. I would first be satisfied, whether you were a poor god or a rich god.

Merc. Suppose I were *Mercury*, the god of merchandise?

Phæd. What, the god of small wares, and fripperies; of pedlars and pilferers.

Merc. aside. How the gipsy despises me?

Phæd. I had rather you were *Plutus* the god of money, or *Jupiter* in a golden shower: there was a god for us women! he had the art of making love: Dost thou think that kings or gods either, get mistresses by their good faces? No, 'tis the gold and the presents they can make: there's the prerogative they have over their fair subjects.

Merc. All this notwithstanding, I must tell you pretty *Phædra*, I am desperately in love with you.

Phæd. And I must tell thee, ugly *Sofia*, thou hast not wherewithal to be in love.

Merc. Yes, a poor man may be in love I hope?

Phæd. I grant a poor rogue may be in love, but he can never make love: Alas *Sofia*, thou hast neither face to invite me, nor youth to please me, nor gold to bribe me: And besides all this, thou hast a wife, poor miserable *Sofia*. What? ho *Bromia*!

Merc. O thou mercilefs creature, why dost thou conjure up that spright of a wife?

Phæd. To rid myself of that devil of a poor lover: since you are so lovingly dispos'd, I'll put you together, to exercise your fury upon your own wedlock:

wedlock; What *Bromia*, I say, make haste: here's a vessel of yours, full freighted, that's going off, without paying duties.

Merc. Since thou wilt not let me steal custom: She shall have all the cargo I have gotten in the wars: but thou might'st have lent me a little creak to smuggle in.

Phaed. Why, what have you gotten, good gentleman soldier, besides a legion of——

[*Knaps her fingers.*]

Merc. When the enemy was routed, I had the plundering of a tent.

Phaed. That's to say, a house of canvas, with moveables of straw; make haste *Bromia*——

Merc. But it was the general's own tent.

Phaed. You durst not fight I'm certain; and therefore came last in, when the rich plunder was gone before-hand.——Will you come, *Bromia*?

Merc. Prithee do not call so loud:——A great goblet that holds a gallon.

Phaed. Of what was that goblet made? Answer quickly, for I am just calling very loud——

Bro——

Merc. Of beaten gold. Now call aloud if thou dost not like the metal.

Phaed. *Bromia.*

[*Very softly.*]

Merc. That struts in this fashion, with his arms a kimbo, like a city magistrate: and a great bouncing belly, like an hostess with child of a kilderkin of wine. Now what say you to that present *Phaedra*?

Phaed. Why I am considering——

Merc. What, I prithee?

Phaed. How to divide the business equally; to take the gift, and refuse the giver, thou art so damnably ugly and so old.

Merc.

Merc. aside. Now the devil take *Jupiter*, for confining me to this ungodly shape to day!

But *Gripus* is as old and as ugly too. [*To her.*

Phæd. But *Gripus* is a person of quality, and my lady's uncle, and if he marries me I shall take place of my lady. Hark, your wife! she has sent her tongue before her. I hear the thunderclap already: there's a storm approaching.

Merc. Yes, of thy brewing, I thank thee for it: O how I shou'd hate thee now if I cou'd leave loving thee!

Phæd. Not a word of the dear golden goblet, as you hope for—you know what, *Sofia*.

Merc. You give me hope then——

Phæd. Not absolutely hope neither: but gold is a great cordial, in love matters; and the more you apply of it, the better.—[*Aside.*] I am honest, that's certain; but when I weigh my honesty against the goblet, I am not quite resolv'd on which side the scale will turn. [*Exit Phædra.*

Merc. aloud. Farewel *Phædra*; remember me to my wife, and tell her——

Enter Bromia.

Brom. Tell her, what traitor! that you are going away without seeing her.

Merc. That I am doing my duty, and following my master.

Brom. Umph—so brisk too! your master did his duty to my lady before he parted: He could leave his army in the lurch, and come galloping home at mid-night, to have a lick at the honey-pot; and steal to bed as quietly as any mouse, I warrant you: My master knew what belonged to a married life; but you, firrah.——You trencher-carrying rascal, you worse than dunghill-cock; that stood clapping your wings and crowing without doors,

D

when

when you should have been at roost, you villain.——

Merc. Hold your peace, dame *Pratlet*, and leave your cackling: My master charged me to stand centry without doors.

Bro. My master! I dare swear thou bely'st him, my master's more a gentleman than to lay such an unreasonable command upon a poor distressed married couple, and after such an absence too. No, there's no comparison between my master and thee, thou Sneakby.

Merc. No more than there is betwixt my lady and you, *Bromia*. You and I have had our time in a civil way, spouse, and much good love has been betwixt us: but we have been married fifteen years, I take it: and that hoighty toighty business ought, in conscience, to be over.

Bro. Marry come up, my sawcy companion! I am neither old, nor ugly enough to have that said to me.

Merc. But will you hear reason, *Bromia*? My lord and my lady are yet in a manner bride and bridegroom; they are in honey moon still: do but think in decency what a jest it would be to the family, to see two venerable old married people, lying snug in a bed together, and sighing out fine tender things to one another!

Bro. How now, traitor, dar'st thou maintain that I am past the age of having fine things said to me?

Merc. Not so, my dear: but certainly I am past the age of saying 'em.

Bro. Thou deserv'st not to be yoked with a woman of honour, as I am, thou perjured villain.

Merc. Ay, you are too much a woman of honour, to my sorrow: many a poor husband would be glad to compound for less honour in his wife,
and

and more quiet. Prithee be but honest and continent in thy tongue, and do thy worst with every thing else about thee.

Brom. Thou wouldst have me a woman of the town, wouldst thou! to be always speaking my husband fair, to make him digest his Cuckoldom more easily: wouldst thou be a wittol, with a vengeance to thee? I am resolved I'll scour thy hide, for that word.

[*Holds up her ladle at him.*]

Merc. Thou wilt not strike thy lord and husband, wilt thou?

Brom. Since thou wilt none of the meat, 'tis but justice to give thee the bastings of the ladle.

[*She courses him about.*]

Mercury running about. aside. Was ever poor deity so henpecked as I am! nay, then 'tis time to charm her asleep with my enchanted rod—before I am disgraced or ravaged.—

[*Plucks out his caduceus and strikes her upon the shoulder with it.*]

Brom. What, art thou rebelling against thy anointed wife? I'll make thee—how now—What, has the rogue betwitched me! I grow dull and stupid on the sudden—I can neither stir hand nor foot—I am just like him; I have lost the use of all my—members— [yawning.]—I can't so much as wag my tongue—neither, and that's the last live—ing part about a—woman—

[*falls down.*]

Mercury alone.

Lord what have I suffered, for being but a counterfeit married man one day! If ever I come to this house, as a husband again—then—and yet that then, was a lye too—For while I am in love with this young gipsie, *Phædra*, I must return—But lie thou there, thou type of *Juno*: thou that

want'st nothing of her tongue, but the immortality. If *Jupiter* ever let thee set foot in heaven, *Juno* will have a rattling second of thee; and there will never be a fair day in heaven or earth after it.

For two such tongues, will break the poles a-funder;

And, hourly scolding, make perpetual thunder.
[*Exit Mercury.*]

A C T III.

Scene, before AMPHITRYON'S Palace.

Amphitryon and Sosia.

Amp. NOW, firrah, follow me into the house, thou shalt be convinc'd at thy own cost, villain! What horrible lies hast thou told me! such improbabilities, such stuff, such nonsense! —that the monster with two long horns, that frighted the great king, and the devil at the stone-cutters, are truths to these!

Sof. I am but a slave, and you are master; and a poor man is always to lie, when a rich man is pleased to contradict him: but as sure as this is our house—

Amp. So sure 'tis thy place of execution. Thou art not made for lyeing neither.

Sof. That's certain: for all my neighbours say I have an honest face; or else they would never call me cuckold, as they do.

Amp. I mean thou hast not wit enough to make a lie, that will hang together: thou hast set up a trade,

trade, that thou hast not stock enough to manage :
O that I had but a crab-tree cudgel for thy sake!

Sof. How, a cudgel, said you! the devil take
Jupiter for inventing that hard-hearted, merciless,
knobby wood.

Amp. The bitterness is yet to come : thou hast
had but a half dose of it.

Sof. I was never good at swallowing physic : and
my stomach wambles at the very thought of it ;
but, if I must have a second beating, in conscience
let me strip first, that I may show you the black
and blue streaks upon my sides and shoulders. I
am sure I suffered them in your service.

Amp. To what purpose wouldst thou show them?

Sof. Why to the purpose that you may not strike
me upon the fore places : and that as he beat me
last night cross-ways, so you would please to beat
me long-ways, to make clean work on't, that at
least my skin may look like checquer-work.

Amp. This request is too reasonable to be refus-
ed ; but, that all things may be done in order,
tell me over again the same story, with all the
circumstances of thy commission : that a blow may
follow in due form for every lye. To repetition
rogue, to repetition.

Sof. No, it shall be all a lye if you please, and
I'll eat my words to save my shoulders.

Amp. Ay, firrah, now you find you are to be
disproved : but 'tis too late : to repetition, rogue,
to repetition.

Sof. With all my heart, to any repetition but
the cudgel : but, would you be pleased to answer
me one civil question? Am I to use complaisance
to you, as to a great person, that will have all
things said his own way ; or am I to tell you the
naked truth alone, without the ceremony of a far-
ther beating?

Amp. Nothing but the truth, and the whole truth: so help thee cudgel—

Sof. That's a damn'd conclusion of a sentence: but since it must be so—Back and sides, at your own peril—I set out from the port in an unlucky hour: the dusky canopy of night enveloping the hemisphere.—

Amph. strikes him. *Imprimis* for Fustian:—
Now proceed.

Sof. I stand corrected: in plain prose then, I went darkling, and whistling, to keep myself from being afraid; mumbling curses betwixt my teeth, for being sent at such an unnatural time of night.

Amp. How firrah, cursing and swearing against your lord and master! take— [Going to strike.

Sof. Hold, sir—pray consider, if this be not unreasonable, to strike me for telling the whole truth, when you commanded me: I'll fall into my old dog-trot of lyeing again, if this must come of plain dealing.

Amp. To avoid impertinences, make an end of your journey; and come to the house: what found you there a god's name?

Sof. I came thither in no god's name at all; but in the devil's name, I found before the door a swinging fellow, with all my shapes and features; and accoutred also in my habit.

Amp. Who was that fellow?

Sof. Who should it be, but another *Sofia*! a certain kind of other me: who knew all my unfortunate commission, precisely to a word, as well as I *Sofia*; as being sent by yourself from the port, upon the same errand to *Alcmena*.

Amp. What gross absurdities are these!

Sof. O Lord, O Lord, what absurdities! as plain as any pikestaff. That other me, had posted himself there before me, me. You won't give a man
leave

leave to speak poetically now; or else I would say, That I was arrived at the door, before I came thither.

Amp. This must either be a dream, or drunkenness, or madness in thee. Leave your buffooning and lyeing, I am not in humour to bear it, firrah.

Sof. I would you should know I scorn a lye, and am a man of honour in every thing, but just fighting. I tell you once again in plain sincerity, and simplicity of heart, that before last night I never took myself but for one single individual *Sofia*; but, coming to our door, I found myself I know not how divided, and as it were split into two *Sofia*'s.

Amp. Leave buffooning: I see you would make me laugh, but you play the fool scurvily.

Sof. That may be: but if I am a fool, I am not the only fool in this company.

Amp. How now impudence! I shall——

Sof. Be not in wrath, sir: I meant not you: I cannot possibly be the only fool; for if I am one fool, I must certainly be two fools; because, as I told you, I am double.

Amp. That one should be two, is very probable!

Sof. Have not you seen a six-pence split in two halves, by some ingenious school-boy; which bore on either side the impression of the monarch's face: now as those moieties were two three-pences, and yet in effect but one six-pence.—

Amp. No more of your villanous tropes and figures.

Sof. Nay, if an orator must be disarmed of his similitudes.—

Amp. A man had need of patience, to endure this gibberish: be brief, and come to a conclusion.

Sof.

Sof. What would you have, fir? I came thither, but the t'other I was there before me: for that there was two I's, is as certain, as that I have two eyes in this head of mine. This I, that am here, was weary: the t'other I was fresh: this I was peaceable, and t'other I was a hectoring bully I.

Amp. And thou expect'st I should believe thee?

Sof. No, I am not so unreasonable: for I could never have believed it myself, if I had not been well beaten into it: but a cudgel you know is a convincing argument in a brawny fist: What shall I say, but that I was compelled at last to acknowledge myself! I found that he was very I, without fraud, cozen, or deceit. Besides, I viewed myself, as in a mirror, from head to foot: He was handsome, of a noble presence, a charming air, loose and free in all his motions. And I saw he was so much I, that I should have reason to be better satisfied with my own person, if his hands had not been a little of the heaviest.

Amp. Once again to a conclusion: Say you passed by him, and entered into the house.

Sof. I am a friend to truth, and say no such thing: He defended the door, and I could not enter.

Amp. How, not enter!

Sof. Why, how should I enter, unless I were a spright to glide by him, and shoot myself through locks, and bolts, and two inch boards?

Amp. O coward! Didst thou not attempt to pass?

Sof. Yes, and was repulsed and beaten for my pains.

Amp. Who beat thee?

Sof. I beat me.

Amp. Didst thou beat thyself?

Sof. I don't mean *I*, here: but the absent *Me*, beat me here present.

Amp.

Amp. There's no end of this intricate piece of nonsense.

Sof. 'Tis only nonsense because I speak it who am a poor fellow: but it would be sense, and substantial sense, if a great man said it, that was backed with a title, and the eloquence of ten thousand pounds a year.

Amp. No more; but let us enter: hold; my *Alcmena* is coming out, and has prevented me! How strangely will she be surpris'd to see me here, so unexpectedly!

Enter Alcmena and Phædra.

Alcm. to *Phædra*. Make haste after me to the temple; that we may thank the gods for this glorious success, which *Amphitryon* had against the rebels.

Oh heavens! [Seeing him.]

Amp. Those heavens, and all their blest inhabitants, [Saluting her.]

Grant, that the sweet rewarder of my pains
May still be kind, as on our nuptial night.

Alcm. So soon returned!

Amp. So soon returned! Is this my welcome home? [Stepping back.]

So soon returned, says I am come unwish'd.

This is no language of desiring love:

Love reckons hours for months, and days for years:

And every little absence is an age.

Alcm. What says my Lord?

Amp. No, my *Alcmena*, no:

True love, by its impatience measures time,
And the dear object never comes too soon.

Alcm. Nor ever came you so, nor ever shall:
But you, yourself are chang'd from what you were,

Pall'd in desires, and forfeited of bliss;

Not

Not so I met you at your last return ;
 When, yesternight, I flew into your arms,
 And melted in your warm embrace.

Amp. How's this ?

Alcm. Did not my soul ev'n sparkle at my eyes,
 And shoot itself into your much lov'd bosom ?
 Did I not tremble with excess of joy ?
 Nay agonize with pleasure at your sight,
 With such inimitable proofs of passion,
 As no false love could feign !

Amp. What's this you tell me ?

Alcm. Far short of truth, by heav'n !
 And you return'd those proofs with usury ;
 And left me, with a sigh, at break of day.
 Have you forgot ?

Amp. Or have you dream't, *Alcmena* ?
 Perhaps some kind, revealing deity,
 Has whisper'd in your sleep, the pleasing news
 Of my return ; and you believ'd it real !
 Perhaps too, in your dream, you us'd me kindly ?
 And my preventing image, reap'd the joys
 You meant awake to me.

Alcm. Some melancholy vapour, sure, has seiz'd
 Your brain, *Amphitryon*, and disturb'd your sense :
 Or yesternight is not so long a time,
 But you might yet remember ; and not force
 An honest blush into my glowing cheeks,
 For that which lawful marriage makes no crime.

Amp. I thank you for my melancholy vapour.

Alcm. 'Tis but a just requital for my dream.

Phædra. I find my master took too much of
 the creature last night, and now is angling for a
 quarrel, that no more may be expected from him
 to light, when he has no affets. [*Aside.*

[*In the mean time Amph. and Alcm. walk by
 themselves, and frown at each other as they
 meet.*]

Amp.

Amp. You dare not justify it to my face.

Alcm. Not what?

Amp. That I return'd before this hour?

Alcm. You dare not, sure, deny you came last night,

And staid till break of day?

Amp. O impudence!——Why *Sofia*!

Sof. Nay, I say nothing; for all things here, may go by enchantment (as they did with me) for ought I know.

Alcm. Speak, *Phædra*; Was he here?

Phædra. You know, madam, I am but a chamber-maid; and by my place, I am to forget all that was done over-night in love-matters,—unless my master please to rub up my memory with another diamond.

Amp. Now in the name of all the gods, *Alcmæna*.

A little recollect your scatter'd thoughts;
And weigh what you have said.

Alcm. I weigh'd it well, *Amphitryon*, ere I spoke:
And she, and *Bromia*, all the slaves, and servants,
Can witness they beheld you, when you came.
If other proof were wanting, tell me how
I came to know your fight, your victory,
The death of *Pterelas*, in single combat?
And, farther, from whose hands I had a jewel:
The spoils of him you slew.

Amp. This is amazing!
Have I already given you those diamonds,
The present I reserv'd?

Almc. 'Tis an odd question:
You see I wear 'em; look.

Amp. Now answer, *Sofia*.

Sof. Yes, now I can answer with a safe conscience,
as to that point, all the rest may be art magic;

gic; but, as for the diamonds, here they are, under safe custody.

Alcm. Then what are these upon my arm?

[*To Sofia.*

Sof. Flints, or pebbles, or some such trumpery of enchanted stones.

Phædra. They say the proof of a true diamond is to glitter in the dark; I think my master had best take my lady into some by-corner, and try whose diamond will sparkle best.

Sof. Yet now I think on't, madam, did not a certain friend of mine present 'em to you?

Alcm. What friend?

Sof. Why another *Sofia*; one that made himself *Sofia* in my despight, and also unfociated me.

Amp. Sirrah, leave your nauseous nonsense: break open the seal, and take out the diamonds.

Sof. More words than one to a bargain, fir; I thank you: That's no part of prudence for me to commit burglary upon the seals: Do you look first upon the signet, and tell me in your conscience, whether the seals be not as firm as when you clapt the wax upon them.

Amp. The signature is firm. [Looking.

Sof. Then take the signature into your own custody, and open it; for I will have nothing done at my proper peril.

[*Giving him the casket.*

Amp. Breaking open the seal. O heav'ns! Here's nothing, but an empty space; the nest where they were laid.

Sof. Then if the birds are flown, the fault's not mine; here has been fine conjuring work; or else the jewel, knowing to whom it should be given, took occasion to steal out, by a natural instinct, and ty'd itself upon that pretty arm.

Amp. Can this be possible!

Sof.

Sof. Yes, very possible : you, my lord *Amphitryon*, may have brought forth another you my lord *Amphitryon*, as well as I *Sofia* have brought forth another *Me Sofia*, and our diamonds may have procreated these diamonds ; and so we are all three double.

Phædra. If this be true, I hope my goblet has gigg'd another golden goblet : and then they may carry double upon all four. [*Aside.*

Alc. My lord, I have stood silent out of wonder what you could wonder at.

Amp. A chilling sweat, a damp of jealousy, Hangs on my brows, and clams upon my limbs. I fear ; and yet I must be satisfied : And, to be satisfy'd, I must dissemble. [*Aside.*

Alcm. Why muse you so, and murmur to yourself ?

If you repent your bounty, take it back.

Amp. Not so ; but, if you please, relate what past,

At our last enterview.

Alcm. That question would infer you were not here.

Amp. I say not so ;

I only would refresh my memory ;

And have my reasons to desire the story.

Phædra. So : This is as good sport for me as an examination of a great belly before a magistrate.

Alcm. The story is not long : you know I met you,

Kiss'd you, and prest you close within my arms, With all the tenderness of wisely love.

Amp. I could have spar'd that kindness.

And what did I ? [*Aside.*
[*To her.*

Alcm. You strain'd me with a masculine embrace ;

As you would squeeze my soul out.

Amp. Did I so?

Alcm. You did.

Amp. Confound those arms that were so kind—

Proceed, proceed.— [*Aside.*
[*To her.*

Alcm. You would not stay to sup; but, much complaining of your drowsiness, and want of natural rest—

Amp. Made haste to bed: Ha, was't not so?

Go on— [*Aside.*

And stab me with each syllable thou speak'st.

Phædra. So, now 'tis coming.

Alcm. I have more to say.

Amp. Why, went we not to bed?

Alcm. Why not?

Is it a crime for husband and for wife
To go to bed, my lord?

Amp. Perfidious woman!

Alcm. Ungrateful man!

Amp. She justifies it too!

Alcm. I need not justify: Of what am I accus'd?

Amp. Of all that prodigality of kindness,
Giv'n to another, and usurp'd from me:
So bless me heav'n, if since my first departure,
I ever set my foot upon this threshold.
So am I innocent of all those joys,
And dry of those embraces.

Alcm. Then I, it seems, am false?

Amp. As surely false, as what thou say'st is true.

Alc. I have betrayed my honour, and my love?
And am a foul adulteress?

Amp. What thou art,
Thou stand'st condemn'd to be, by thy relation.

Alc. Go, thou unworthy man; for ever go:
No more my husband; go thou base impostor;

Who

Who tak'st a vile pretence to taint my fame;
 And, not content to leave, wouldst ruin me.
 Enjoy thy wish'd divorce: I will not plead
 My innocence, of this pretended crime:
 I need not; spit thy venom; do thy worst:
 But know, the more thou wouldst expose my virtue,
 Like purest linen laid in open air,
 'Twill bleach the more, and whiten to the view.

Amph. 'Tis well thou art prepar'd for thy divorce:
 For, know thou too, that after this affront,
 This foul indignity, done to my honour,
 Divorcement is but petty reparation:
 But, since thou hast, with impudence affirm'd
 My false return, and brib'd my slaves to vouch it,
 The truth shall, in the face of *Thebes* be clear'd;
 Thy uncle, the companion of my voyage,
 And all the crew of sea-men, shall be brought,
 Who were embark'd, and came with me to land;
 Nor parted, till I reach'd this cursed door:
 So shall this vision of my late return,
 Stand a detected lie; and wo to those
 Who thus betray'd my honour.

Sof. Sir, shall I wait on you?

Amph. No, I will go alone: Expect me here.

[Exit Amphitryon.]

Phaed. Please you——that I—— [To Alc.]

Alc. Oh! nothing now can please me:
 Darkness, and solitude, and sighs, and tears,
 And all th' inseparable train of grief,
 Attend my steps for ever.—— [Exit Alc.]

Sof. What if I should lye now, and say we have
 been here before? I never saw any good that came
 of telling truth. [Aside.]

Phaed. He makes no more advances to me: I
 begin a little to suspect, that my gold goblet will
 prove but copper. [Aside.]

Sof. Yes, 'tis resolv'd, I will lye abominably, a-
 gainst

gainst the light of my own conscience. For suppose the other *Sofia* has been here: perhaps that strong dog has not only beaten me, but also has been predominant upon my wife, and most carnally misus'd her! Now, by asking certain questions of her, with a side-wind, I may come to understand how squares go; and whether my nuptial bed be violated. [Aside.

Phæd. Most certainly he has learn'd impudence of his master: and will deny his being here; but that shall not serve his turn, to cheat me of my present! — [Aside.

Why, *Sofia*! what, in a brown study?

Sofia. A little cogitabund, or so; concerning this dismal revolution in our family.

Phæd. But that should not make you neglect your duty to me, your mistress.

Sof. Pretty soul; I would thou wert: upon condition that old *Bromia* were six foot under ground.

Phæd. What! is all your hot courtship to me dwindled into a poor unprofitable wish? You may remember, I did not bid you absolutely despair.

Sof. No; for all things yet may be accommodated, in an amicable manner, betwixt my master and my lady.

Phæd. I mean to the business, betwixt you and me —

Sof. Why, I hope we two never quarrel'd?

Phæd. Must I remember you of a certain promise that you made me at our last parting?

Sof. Oh, when I went to the army: that I should still be praising thy beauty to judge *Gripus*, and keep up his affections to thee.

Phæd. No, I mean the business betwixt you and me this morning, — That you promis'd me —

Sof. That I promis'd thee. — I find it now: That

That

That strong dog, my brother *Sofia*, has been here before me, and made love to her. [*Aside.*]

Phæd. You are considering, whether or no, you should keep your promise.—

Sof. That I should keep my promise.—The truth on't is, she's anotherghes morsel than old *Bromia*. [*Aside.*]

Phæd. And I had rather you should break it, in a manner, and, as it were, and in some sense.

Sof. In a manner, and, as it were, and in some sense, thou say'st?—I find, the strong dog has only tickl'd up her imagination, and not enjoy'd her: so that with my own limbs, I may perform the sweetness of his function with her. [*Aside.* No, sweet creature, the promise shall not be broken; but what I have undertaken, I will perform like a man of honour. [*To her.*]

Phæd. Then, you remember the preliminaries of the present.—

Sof. Yes, yes, in gross I do remember something; but this disturbance of the family has somewhat stupified my memory: Some pretty kickshaw, I warrant thee; some acceptable toy, of small value.

Phæd. You may call a gold goblet, a toy: but I put a greater value upon your presents.

Sof. A gold goblet, say'st thou! Yes, now I think on't, it was a kind of gold goblet; as a gratuity after consummation.

Phæd. No, no; I had rather make sure of one bribe before-hand, than be promis'd ten gratuities.

Sof. Yes, now I remember, it was, in some sense, a gold goblet, by way of earnest; and it contained—

Phæd. One large—

Sof. How, one large—

Phæd. Gallon.

Sof. No; that was somewhat too large, in con-

science: It was not a whole gallon; but it may contain, reasonably speaking, one large—thimble-full: But gallons and thimble-fulls are so like, that in speaking, I might easily mistake them.

Phaed. Is it come to this? Out traitor!

Sof. I had been a traitor indeed, to have betrayed thee to the swallowing of a gallon: but a thimble-full of cordial water, is easily sipt off: and then, this same goblet, is so very light too, that it will be no burthen, to carry it about with thee, in thy pocket.

Phaed. O apostate to thy love! O perjured villain!

Enter Bromia.

What, are you here, *Bromia*! I was telling him his own: I was giving him a rattle for his treacheries to you, his love: You see I can be a friend, upon occasion.

Brom. Ay, chicken, I never doubted of thy kindness: but, for this fugitive,—this rebel,—this miscreant.—

Sof. A kind welcome, to an absent lover, as I have been.

Brom. Ay, and a kind greeting you gave me, at your return; when you us'd me so barbarously, this morning.

Sof. The t'other *Sofia* has been with her too: and has us'd her barbarously: barbarously, that is to say, uncivilly: and uncivilly; I am afraid that means too civilly. [*Aside.*

Phaed. You had best deny you were here this morning! and by the same token—

Sof. Nay, no more tokens, for heaven's sake, dear *Phaedra*. Now must I ponder with myself a little, whether it be better for me, to have been here this morning, or not to have been here this morning. [*Aside.*

Enter

Enter a Servant.

Serv. *Phædra*, my lord's without; and will not enter till he has first spoken with you.

[Exit Servant.

Phæd. Oh that I could stay to help worry thee for this abuse:

[To him in private.

But the best on't is, I leave thee in good hands: —Farewel thimble—To him, *Bromia*.

[Exit Phædra.

Brom. No; you did not beat me, and put me into a swoond, and deprive me of the natural use of my tongue for a long half hour: you did not beat me down, with your little wand: but I shall teach you to use your rod another time—I shall.

Sof. Put her into a swoond, with my little wand, and so forth: That's more than ever I could do. These are terrible circumstances that some *Sofia* or another has been here: Now, if he has literally beaten her, grammercy, brother *Sofia*; he has but done, what I would have done, if I had durst: But I am afraid, it was only some damn'd love-figure; and that the wand that laid her asleep, might signify the peace-maker.

[Aside.

Brom. Now you are snuffing upon a cold scent, for some pitiful excuse: I know you. Twenty to one, but you will plead drunkenness: you are us'd to be pot-valiant.

Sof. I was pumping, and I thank her, she has invented for me.—Yes, *Bromia*, I must confess I was exalted: and, possibly, I might scour upon thee, or perhaps be a little more familiar with thy person, by the way of kindness, than if I had been sober; but, prithee, inform me what I did; that I may consider what satisfaction I am to make thee.

Brom. Are you there at your dog-tricks! You would be forgetting, would you? like a drunken bully

bully that affronts over-night, and, when he call'd to account the next morning, remembers nothing of the quarrel; and asks pardon, to avoid fighting.

Sof. By *Bacchus*, I was overtaken; but I should be loth that I committed any folly with thee,

Brom. I am sure, I kept myself awake all night that I did, in expectation of your coming.

[*Crying*]

Sof. But what amends did I make thee, when I came!

Brom. You know well enough, to my sorrow but that you play the hypocrite.

Sof. I warrant, I was monstrous kind to thee.—

Brom. Yes, monstrous kind indeed: You never said a truer word: for, when I came to kiss you, you pull'd away your mouth, and turn'd your cheek to me.

Sof. Good.

Brom. How, good! Here's fine impudence: He justifies.—

Sof. Yes, I do justify, that I turn'd my cheek like a prudent person, that my breath might not offend thee; for, now I remember, I had eaten garlick.

Brom. Ay, you remember and forget, just as it makes for you, or against you: but, to mend the matter, you never spoke one civil word to me but stood like a stock, without sense or motion.

Sof. Yet better.

[*Aside*]

Brom. After which, I lovingly invited you to take your place in your nuptial bed, as the laws of matrimony oblige you: and you inhumanly refus'd me.

Sof. Ay, there's the main point of the business: art thou morally certain, that I refus'd thee? Look

me

me now in the face, and say I did not commit matrimony with thee!

Brom. I wonder how thou canst look me in the face, after that refusal!

Sof. Say it once again, that I did not felonously come to bed to thee.

Brom. No, thou cold traitor, thou know'st thou didst not.

Sof. Best of all; 'twas discreetly done of me to abstain.

Brom. What, do you insult upon me too!

Sof. No, I do not insult upon you;—but—

Brom. But what; How was it discreetly done then? Ha?

Sof. Because it is the receiv'd opinion of physicians, that nothing but pulling chitts, and booby-tools, are procreated in drunkenness.

Brom. A receiv'd opinion, snivel-guts! I'll be judg'd by all the married women of this town, if any one of 'em has receiv'd it: The devil take the physicians, for meddling in our matters: If a husband will be rul'd by them, there are five weeks of abstinence in *dog-days* too; for fear a child that was got in *August*, should be born just nine months after, and be blear-ey'd, like a *May-kitten*.

Sof. Let the physicians alone; they are honest men, whatever the world says of them. But, for a certain reason, that I best know, I am glad that matter ended so fairly and peaceably betwixt us.

Brom. Yes 'twas very fair and peaceable; to strike a woman down, and beat her most outrageously.

Sof. Is it possible that I drubb'd thee!

Brom. I find your drift: You would fain be provoking me to a new trial now: but, i'faith, you shall bring me to no more handy-blows: I shall make bold to trust my tongue hereafter: you never durst
have

have offer'd to hold up a finger against me, till you went a trooping.

Sof. Then I am a conqueror; and laud my own courage: This renown I have achiev'd by fo-diership and stratagem. Know your duty, spouse henceforward to your supream commander.

[Strutting]

Enter Jupiter and Phædra, attended by musicians and dancers.

Phæd. Indeed I wondred at your quick return.

Jup. Ev'n so almighty love will have it, *Phædra* And the stern goddess of sweet-bitter cares, Who bows our necks beneath our brazen yoke. I would have mann'd my heart, and held it out But, when I thought of what I had possess'd; Those joys, that never end, but to begin, O, I am all on fire to make my peace: And die, *Jove* knows, as much as I can die, Till I am reconcil'd.

Phæd. I fear 'twill be in vain.

Jup. 'Tis difficult:

But nothing is impossible to love: To love like mine; for I prov'd his force, And my *Alcmena* too his felt his dart. If I submit, there's hope.

Phæd. 'Tis possible I may solicit for you.

Jup. But wilt thou promise me to do thy best.

Phæd. Nay, I promise nothing—unless you begin to promise first.— [Curt'sying]

Jup. I will not be ungrateful.

Phæd. Well; I'll try to bring her to the window: you shall have a fair shoot at her: if you can bring her down, you are a good marks-man.

Jup. That's all I ask:

And I will so reward thee, gentle *Phædra*.—

Phæd.

Phæd. What, with cat-guts and rosin! This *Sol*;
is but a lamentable, empty, sound.

Jup. Then there's a sound will please thee better.
[*Throwing her a purse.*]

Phæd. Ay, there's something of melody in this
sound. I could dance all day, to the musick, of
chink, chink. [Exit *Phædra.*]

Jup. Go, *Sofia*, round our *Thebes*,
To *Polydas*, to *Tranio*, and to *Gripus*,
Companions of our war; invite 'em all,
To join their pray'rs to smooth *Alcmena's* brow;
And, with a solemn feast, to crown the day.

Sof. [Taking *Jupiter* about the knees.]
Let me embrace you, sir.—

[*Jupiter* pushes him away.]

Jay, you must give me leave to express my gra-
titude; I have not eaten, to say eating, nor drunk,
to say drinking, never since our villainous encamp-
ing so near the enemy: 'Tis true, I 'scap'd the
bloody-flux, because I had so little in my belly to
come out; and I durst let nothing go, in con-
science, because I had nothing to swallow in the
room on't.

Jup. You, *Bromia*, see that all things be prepar'd,
With that magnificence, as if some god
Were guest, or master here.

Sof. Or rather, as much as if twenty gods were
to be guests, or masters here.

Brom. That you may eat for to-day, and to-
morrow.

Sof. Or, rather again, for to-day and yesterday;
and as many months backwards, as I am indebted
to my own belly:

Jup. Away both of you. [Exeunt *Sofia* and
Bromia severally.]

Now I have pack'd him hence; thou other *Sofia*,
Who, tho' thou art not present, hear'st my voice,)
Be

Be ready to attend me at my call;
 And to supply his place. [Enter Merc. to Jup.
 [Alcmena and Phædra appear above.]

[Jupiter seeing Alcmena.

Jup. See, she appears:

This is my bribe to Phædra; when I made
 This gold, I made a greater god than Jove,
 And gave my own omnipotence away.

Jupiter sings to the Musicians. Song and Dance:
 after which, Alcmena withdraws, frowning.

S O N G.

I.

Celia, that I once was blest
 Is now the torment of my breast;
 Since to curse me, you bereave me
 Of the pleasures I possess:
 Cruel creature, to deceive me!
 First to love, and then to leave me!

II.

Had you the bliss refus'd to grant.
 Then I had never known the want:
 But possessing once the blessing,
 Is the cause of my complaint:
 Once possessing is but tasting;
 'Tis no bliss that is not lasting.

III.

Celia now is mine no more;
 But I am hers, and must adore:
 Nor to leave her will endeavour;
 Charms, that captiv'd me before,
 No unkindness can dissever;
 Love that's true, is love for ever.

Jup.

Jup. O stay.

Merc. She's gone; and seem'd to frown at parting.

Jup. Follow, and thou shalt see her soon appear'd:
 For I, who made her, know her inward state;
 No woman once, well pleas'd, can thoroughly hate.
 I gave 'em beauty, to subdue the strong:
 A mighty empire, but it lasts not long:
 I gave 'm pride, to make mankind their slave;
 But, in exchange, to men I flattery gave:
 Th' offending lover, when he lowest lies,
 Submits, to conquer, and but kneels, to rise.

A C T IV.

Jupiter following Alcmena; Mercury and Phædra.

J U P I T E R.

O Stay, my dear *Alcmena*, hear me speak,

Alc. No, I would fly thee, to the ridge of
 earth,

And leap the precipice, to 'scape thy sight.

Jup. For pity.—

Alc. Leave me, thou ungrateful man.

Jup. I cannot leave you: No; but like a ghost
 Whom your unkindness murder'd, will I haunt you.

Alc. Once more, be gone: I'm odious to myself
 For having lov'd thee once.

Jup. Hate not, thou best and fairest of your kind:
 Nor can you hate your lover, though you would:
 Your tears, that fall so gently, are but grief:
 There may be anger; but there must be love.
 The dove, that murmurs at her mate's neglect,
 But counterfeits a coyness, to be courted.

Alc. Courtship from thee, and after such affronts!

Jup. Is this that everlasting love you vow'd

Last night, when I was circled in your arms?
Remember what you swore.—

Alc. Think what thou wert, and who could swear
too much?

Think what thou art, and that unswears it all.

Jup. Can you forsake me, for so small a fault?

'Twas but a jest, perhaps too far pursu'd :

'Twas but at most, a trial of your faith,

How you could bear unkindness :

'Twas but to get a reconciling kiss,

A wanton stratagem of love.

Alc. See how he doubles, like a hunted hare,

A jest, and then a trial, and a bait ;

All stuff, and daubing !

Jup. Think me jealous, then.

Alc. O that I could ; for that's a noble crime ;

And which a lover can, with ease, forgive :

'Tis the high pulse of passion in a fever ;

A sickly draught, but shews a burning thirst :

Thine was a surfeit, not a jealousy :

And in that loathing of thy full gorg'd love,

Thou saw'st the nauseous object, with disdain.

Jup. O think not that : for you are ever new :

Your fruits of love, are like eternal spring

In happy climes, where some are in the bud,

Some green, and ripening some, while others fall.

Alc. Ay, now you tell me this,

When rous'd desires, and fresh recruits of force,

Enable languish'd love to take the field.

But never hope to be receiv'd again :

You would again deny you were receiv'd ;

And brand my spotless fame.

Jup. I will not dare to justify my crime,

But only point you where to lay the blame :

Impute it to the husband, not the lover.

Alc. How vainly would the sophister divide,

And make the husband and the lover, two !

Jup.

Jup. Yes 'tis the husband is the guilty wretch:
His insolence forgot the sweets of love,
And, deeming them his due, despis'd the feast.
Not so the famish'd lover could forget:
He knew he had been there, and had been blest,
With all that hope can wish, or sense can bear.

Alc. Husband, and lover, both alike I hate.

Jup. And I confess I have deserv'd that hate:

[*Kneeling.*]

Too charming fair, I kneel for your forgiveness:
I beg by those fair eyes,
Which gave me wounds, that time can never
cure;

Receive my sorrows, and restore my joys.

Alc. Unkind, and cruel! I can speak no more.

Jup. O give it vent *Alcmena*, give it vent;

I merit your reproach, I would be curs'd:

Let your tongue curse me, while your heart for-
gives.

Alc. Can I forget such usage!

Jup. Can you hate me?

Alc. I'll do my best: for sure I ought to hate
you.

Jup. That word was only hatch'd upon your
tongue,

It came not from your heart. But try again,
And if, once more, you can but say, I hate you,
My sword shall do you justice.

Alc. Then, I hate you.—

Jup. Then you pronounce the sentence of my
death?

Alc. I hate you much; but yet I love you
more.

Jup. To prove that love, then say, that you
forgive me:

For there remains but this alternative:
Resolve to pardon, or to punish me.

Alc. Alas, what I resolve appears too plain :
In saying that I cannot hate, I pardon.

Jup. But what's a pardon worth, without a seal?
Permit me, in this transport of my joy——

[*Kisses her hand.*]

Alc. Forbear ; I am offended with myself,
[*Putting him gently away with her hand.*]
That I have shewn this weakness.—Let me go,
Where I may blush, alone.——

[*Going ; and looking back on him.*]

But come not you :

Lest I should spoil you, with excess of fondness,
And let you love again.— [Exit *Alcmena.*]

Jup. Forbidding me to follow, she invites me :
[*Aside.*]

This is the mould of which I made the sex :
I give 'em but one tongue, to say us nay ;
And two kind eyes, to grant. Be sure that none
[*To Mercury.*]

Approach, to interrupt our privacy

[*Exit Jupiter after Alcmena.*]

Mercury and Phædra remain.

Merc. Your lady has made the challenge of
reconciliation to my lord : here's a fair example
for us two, *Phædra.*

Phæd. No example at all, *Sofia* : for my lady
had the diamonds aforehand, and I have none of
the gold goblet.

Merc. The goblet shall be forth-coming ; if
thou wilt give me weight for weight.

Phæd. Yes, and measure for measure too, *Sofia* :
that is, for a thimbleful of gold, a thimbleful of
love.

Merc. What think you now, *Phædra*? Here's
a weighty argument of love for you.

[*Pulling out the goblet in a case, from
under his cloak.*]

Phæd.

Phæd. Now *Jupiter*, of his mercy, let me kiss thee, O thou dear metal!

[*Taking it in both hands.*

Merc. And *Venus*, of her mercy, let me kiss thee, dear, dear *Phædra*.

Phæd. Not so fast, *Sofia*! there's a damn'd proverb in your way: *Many things happen betwixt the cup and the lips*, you know.

Merc. Why, thou wilt not cheat me of my goblet?

Phæd. Yes; as sure as you would cheat me of my maiden-head: I am yet, but just even with you, for the last trick you play'd me. And, besides; this is but a bare retaining fee; you must give me another, before the cause is open'd.

Merc. Shall I not come to your bed-side, to-night?

Phæd. No, nor to-morrow night, neither: but this shall be my sweet-heart in your place: 'tis a better bed-fellow, and will keep me warmer, in cold weather.

Mercury alone.

Merc. Now, what's the god of wit in a woman's hand? This very goblet I stole from *Gripius*; and he got it out of bribes too. But this is the common fate of ill gotten goods, that as they came in by covetousness, they go out by whoring.— Oh, here's *Amphitryon* again, but I'll manage him above, in the balcony. [Exit Mercury.

Enter Amphitryon.

Amp. Not one of those I look'd for, to be found!

As some enchantment hid 'em from my sight!
Perhaps, as *Sofia* says, 'tis witchcraft all:
Seals may be open'd, diamonds may be stol'n;
But how I came, in person, yesterday,
And gave that present to *Alcmena's* hands,

That which I never gave, nor ever came,
 O there's the rock, on which my reason splits:
 Would that were all! I fear my honour, too!
 I'll try her once again: She may be mad:
 A wretched remedy; but all I have,
 To keep me from despair.

Merc. [*From the balcony, Aside.*] This is no very charitable action of a god, to use him ill, who has never offended me; but my planet disposes me to malice: and when we great persons do but a little mischief, the world has a good bargain of us.

Amp. How now! what means the locking up of my doors, at this time of day? [*Knocks.*]

Merc. Softly, friend, softly: You knock as loud, and as sawcily, as a lord's footman, that was sent before him, to warn the family of his honour's visit. Sure you think the doors have no feeling! What the devil are you, that rap with such authority?

Amp. Look out, and see: 'tis I.

Merc. You: What you?

Amp. No more, I say, but open.

Merc. I'll know to whom first?

Amp. I am one that can command the doors open.

Merc. Then you had best command 'em, and try whether they will obey you.

Amp. Dost thou not know me!

Merc. Prithee, how should I know thee? Dost thou take me for a conjurer?

Amp. What, is this midsummer-moon? Is all the world gone a madding? Why *Sofia*!

Merc. That's my name indeed: Didst thou think I had forgot it!

Amp. Dost thou see me?

Merc. Why, dost thou pretend to go invisible?

If thou hast any business here, dispatch it quickly; I have no leisure to throw away upon such prating companions.

Amp. Thy companion, slave? How dar'st thou use this insolent language to thy master!

Merc. How! Thou my master? By what title? I never had any other master but *Amphitryon*.

Amp. Well: and for whom dost thou take me?

Merc. For some rogue or other; but what rogue I know not.

Amp. Dost thou not know me for *Amphitryon*, slave!

Merc. How should I know thee, when I see thou dost not know thyself! thou *Amphitryon*? In what tavern hast thou been? And how many bottles did thy business, to metamorphose thee into my lord?

Amp. I will so drub thee, for this insolence.

Merc. How now, impudence! are you threatening your betters! I should bring you to condign punishment, but that I have a great respect for the good wine, though I find it in a fool's noddle.

Amp. What, none to let me in? Why *Phædra*!
Bromia!

Merc. Peace, fellow; if my wife hears thee, we are both undone. At a word, *Phædra* and *Bromia* are very busie; one in making a cawdle for my lady; and the other in heating napkins, to rub down my lord, when he rises from bed.

Amp. Amazement seizes me.

Merc. At what art thou amaz'd? My master and my lady had a falling out, and are retir'd, without seconds, to decide the quarrel. If thou wert not a meddling fool, thou would'st not be thrusting thy nose into other peoples matters. Get thee about thy business, if thou hast any; for I'll hear no more of thee.

[Exit Mercury from above.

Amp.

Amp. Brav'd by my slave, dishonour'd by my wife,

To what a desp'rate plunge am I reduc'd,
 If this be true the villain says? But why
 That feeble if? It must be true; she owns it.
 Now, whether to conceal, or blaze th' affront?
 One way, I spread my infamy abroad;
 And, t'other, hide a burning coal, within;
 That preys upon my vitals: I can fix
 On nothing, but on vengeance.

Enter to him Sofia, Polydas, Gripus, Tranio.

Grip. Yonder he is; walking hastily to and fro,
 before his door; like a citizen, clapping his sides
 before his shop, in a frosty morning: 'tis to catch
 a stomach, I believe.

Sof. I begin to be afraid, that he has more sto-
 mach to my sides, and shoulders, than to his own
 victuals. How he shakes his head! and stamps,
 and what strides he fetches! He's in one of his
 damn'd moods again; I don't like the looks of
 him.

Amp. Oh, my mannerly, fair-spoken, obedient
 slave, are you there! I can reach you now, with-
 out climbing: now we shall try who's drunk, and
 who's sober.

Sof. Why this is as it should be: I was some-
 what suspicious that you were in a pestilent hu-
 mour; yes, we will have a crash at the bottle,
 when your lordship pleases: I have summon'd 'em,
 you see; and they are notable toppers; especially
 judge *Gripus*.

Grip. Yes, faith; I never refuse my glass, in a
 good quarrel.

Amp. Why, thou insolent villain; I'll teach a
 slave how to use his master thus.

[*To Sofia.*

Sof. Here's a fine business towards! I am sure I
 ran

ran as fast as ever my legs could carry me, to call em : nay you may trust my diligence, in all affairs belonging to the belly.

Grip. He has been very faithful to his commission, I'll bear him witness.

Amp. How can you be witness, where you were not present? The balcony! Sirrah, the balcony!

Sof. Why, to my best remembrance, you never invited the balcony.

Amp. What nonsense dost thou plead for an excuse, of thy foul language, and thy base replies!

Sof. You fright a man out of his senses, first; and blame him afterwards, for talking nonsense:—but 'tis better for me to talk nonsense, than for some to do nonsense: I will say that, what e'er comes on't. Pray sir, let all things be done decently: what, I hope, when a man is to be hang'd, he is not truss'd upon the gallows, like a dumb dog, without telling him wherefore.

Amp. By your pardon, gentlemen: I have no longer patience to forbear him.

Sof. Justice, justice, my Lord *Gripus*: as you are a true magistrate, protect me. Here's a process of beating going forward without sentence given.

Grip. My lord *Amphitryon*, this must not be: let me first understand the demerits of the criminal.

Sof. Hold you to that point, I beseech your honour, as you commiserate the case of a poor, innocent malefactor.

Amp. To shut the door against me, in my very face, to deny me entrance, to brave me from the balcony, to laugh at me, to threaten me: what proofs of innocence call you these? but if I punish not this insolence—

I beg you let me go——

[*Is going to beat him, and is held by
Polydas and Tranio.*

Sof. I charge you in the king's name, hold him fast; for you see he's bloodily dispos'd.

Grip. Now, what hast thou to say for thyself,
Sofia?

Sof. I say, in the first place, be sure you hold him, gentlemen; for I shall never plead worth one farthing, while I am bodily affraid.

Polyd. Speak boldly; I warrant thee.

Sof. Then, if I may speak boldly, under my lord's favour, I do not say he lyes neither: no, I am too well bred for that: but his lordship fibbs most abominably.

Amp. Do you hear his impudence? yet will you not let me go?

Sof. No impudence at all, my lord: for how could I, naturally speaking, be in the balcony, and affronting you; when at the same time I was in every street of *Thebes*, inviting these gentlemen to dinner?

Grip. Hold a little: how long since was it that he spoke to you, from the said balcony?

Amp. Just now; not a minute before he brought you hither.

Sof. Now speak my witnesses.

Grip. I can answer for him, for this last half hour.

Polyd. And I.

Tran. And I.

Sof. Now judge equitably, gentlemen; whether I was not a civil well-bred person, to tell my lord he fibbs only.

Amp. Who gave you that order, to invite 'em?

Sof. He that best might; yourself: by the same token, you bid old *Bromia* provide and 'twere for

a god; and I put in for a brace, or a lease; no, now I think on't, it was for ten couple of gods, to make sure of plenty.

Amp. When did I give thee this pretended commission?

Sof. Why you gave me this pretended commission, when you were just ready to give my lady the fiddles and a dance; in order, as I suppose, to your second bedding.

Amp. Where, in what place, did I give this order?

Sof. Here, in this place; in the presence of this very door, and of that balcony: and if they could speak, they would both justify it.

Amp. O heaven! these accidents are so surprizing, that the more I think of 'em, the more I am lost in my imagination.

Grip. Nay, he has told us some passages, as he came along, that seem to surpass the power of nature.

Sof. What think you now, my lord, of a certain twin brother of mine, called *Sofia*? 'Tis a sly youth: pray heaven you have not just such another relation, within doors, called *Amphitryon*. It may be it was he, that put upon me, in your likeness: and perhaps he may have put something upon your lordship too, that may weigh very heavy upon the forehead.

Amp. to those who hold him. Let me go:—*Sofia* may be innocent, and I will not hurt him:—Open the door; I'll resolve my doubts immediately.

Sof. The door is peremptory, that it will not be opened without keys: and my brother, on the inside, is in possession; and will not part with 'em.

Amp. Then 'tis manifest that I am affronted; break open the door there.

Grip.

Grip. Stir not a man of you to his assistance.

Amp. Dost thou take part with my adulteress too, because she is thy neice?

Grip. I take part with nothing, but the law; and, to break the doors open, is to break the law.

Amp. Do thou command 'em, then.

Grip. I command nothing without my warrant; and my clerk is not here to take his fees for drawing it.

Amp. (*aside.*) The devil take all justice-brokers: —I curse him too when I have been hunting him all over the town, to be my witness! —But I'll bring soldiers to force open the doors, by my own commission.

[*Exit Amphitryon.*]

Sof. Pox o' these forms of law, to defeat a man of a dinner, when he's sharp set: 'tis against the priviledge of a free-born stomach; and is no less than subversion of fundamentals.

[*Jupiter above in the balcony.*]

Jup. Oh, my friends, I am sorry I have made you wait so long: you are welcome; and the door shall be opened to you, immediately.

[*Exit Jupiter.*]

Grip. Was not that *Amphitryon*?

Sof. Why, who should it be else?

Grip. In all appearance it was he: but how got he thither?

Polyd. In such a trice too!

Tran. And after he had just left us?

Grip. And so much altered for the better, in his humour!

Sof. Here's such a company of foolish questions, when a man's hungry: You had best stay dinner till he has prov'd himself to be *Amphitryon* in form of law: But I'll make short work of that business: for I'll take mine oath 'tis he.

Grip.

Grip. I should be glad it were.

Sof. How glad it were? with your damn'd interrogatories, when you ought to be thankful that so it is.

Grip. [*Aside.*] That I may see my mistress *Phaedra*, and present her with my great gold goblet.

Sof. If this be not the true *Amphitryon*, I wish I may be kept without doors, fasting, and biting my own fingers for want of victuals; and that's a dreadful imprecation! I am for the inviting, and eating, and treating *Amphitryon*: I am sure 'tis he that is my lawfully begotten lord: and if you had an ounce of true justice in you, you ought to have laid hold on t'other *Amphitryon*, and committed him for a rogue, and an impostor, and a vagabond.

[*The door is opened; Mercury from within.*]

Merc. Enter quickly, masters: The passage on the right-hand leads to the gallery, where my lord expects you:—for I am call'd another way.

[*Gripus, Tranio, and Polydas go into the house.*]

Sof. I should know that voice, by a secret instinct: 'tis a tongue of my family; and belongs to my brother *Sofia*: it must be so; for it carries a cudgling kind of a sound in it.—But put the worst: let me weigh this matter wisely: Here's a beating and a belly-full: against no beating, and no belly-full. The beating is bad; but the dinner is good; now, not to be beaten, is but negatively good; but, not to fill my belly is positively bad.

—Upon the whole matter, my final resolution is, to take the good and the bad as they come together. [*In entering: Mercury meets him at the door.*]

Merc. Whither now, you kitchen-skumm? From whence this impudence, to enter here without permission?

Sof. Most illustrious sir: my ticket is my hunger: shew the full bowels of your compassion, to the empty bowels of my famine.

Merc. Were you not charg'd to return no more? I'll cut you into quarters, and hang you upon the shambles.

Sof. You'll get but little credit by me: Alas, sir, I am but mere carrion! Brave *Sofia*, compassionate coward *Sofia*: and beat not thyself, in beating me.

Merc. Who gave you that privilege, firrah, to assume my name? have you not been sufficiently warn'd of it? and received part of punishment already?

Sof. May it please you, sir, the name is big enough for both of us: and we may use it in common like a strumpet: witness heaven, that I would have obey'd you, and quitted my title to the name; but, where-ever I come, the malicious world will call me *Sofia*, in spite of me: I am sensible there are two *Amphitryons*, and why may not there be two *Sofias*? Let those two cut one another's throats at their own pleasure: but you and I will be wiser, by my consent, and hold good intelligence together.

Merc. No, no: two *Sofias* would but make two fools.

Sof. Then let me be the fool; and be you the prudent person: and chuse for yourself some wiser name: or you shall be the elder brother; and I'll be content to be the younger; though I lose my inheritance.

Merc. I tell thee, I am the only son of our family.

Sof. Then let me be your bastard brother, and the son of a whore; I hope that's but reasonable.

Merc. No, thou shalt not disgrace my father: for there are few bastards now-a-days worth owning.

Sof. Ah, poor *Sofia*! what will become of thee?

Merc.

Merc. Yet again profanely using my proper name?

Sof. I did not mean myself: I was thinking of another *Sofia*, a poor fellow, that was once of my acquaintance, unfortunately banish'd out of doors, when dinner was just coming upon the table.

Enter Phædra.

Phæd. *Sofia*, you and I must—Bless me! What have we here, a couple of you, or do I see double?

Sof. I would fain bring it about, that I might make one of them: But he's unreasonable and will needs incorporate me, and swallow me whole into himself. If he would be content to be but one and a half, 'twould never grieve me.

Merc. 'Tis a perverse raical: I kick him, and cudgel him to no purpose: for still he's obstinate to stick to me: and I can never beat him out of my resemblance.

Phæd. Which of you two is *Sofia*? For t'other must be the devil.

Sof. You had best ask him that has play'd the devil with my back and sides.

Merc. You had best ask him who gave you the gold goblet?

Phæd. No, that's already given: but he shall be my *Sofia*, that will give me such another.

Merc. I find you have been interlopping, sirrah.

Sof. No, indeed, sir; I only promised her a gold thimble: which was as much as comes to my proportion of being *Sofia*.

Phæd. This is no *Sofia* for my money: beat him away t'other *Sofia*: he grows insufferable.

Sof. (*aside.*) Would I were valiant, that I might beat him away; and succeed him at the dinner; for a pragmatrical son of a whore, as he is.—

Merc. What's that you are muttering betwixt your teeth, of a son of a whore, sirrah?

Sof. I am sure I meant you no offence; for, if I am not *Sofia*, I am the son of a whore, for ought I know: and, if you are *Sofia*, you may be the son of a whore for ought you know.

Merc. What ever I am, I will be *Sofia*, as long as I please: and whenever you visit me, you shall be sure of the civility of the cudgel.

Sof. If you will promise to beat me into the house, you may begin when you please with me: but, to be beaten out of the house, at dinner time, flesh and blood can never bear it.

[*Mercury beats him about, and Sofia is still making towards the door: but Mercury gets betwixt; and at length drives him off the stage.*

Phæd. In the name of wonder, what are you, that are *Sofia*, and are not *Sofia*?

Merc. If thou would'st know more of me, my person is freely at thy disposing.

Phæd. Then I dispose of it to you again: for 'tis so ugly, 'tis not for my use.

Merc. I can be ugly or handsome, as I please: go to bed old, and rise young. I have so many suits of persons by me, that I can shift them when I will.

Phæd. You are a fool then, to put on your worst cloaths, when you come a wooing.

Merc. Go to: Ask no more questions; I am for thy turn; for I know thy heart: and see all thou hast about thee.

Phæd. Then you can see my back-side too; there's a bargain for you.—

Merc. In thy right pocket:—let me see:—three love letters from judge *Gripus*, written to the bottom, on three sides; full of suttian passion and hearty nonsense: as also in the same pocket, a letter of thine intended to him; consisting of nine lines and a half: scrawl'd and false spell'd.

spell'd, to show thou art a woman; and full of fraudulence, and equivocations, and shoeing-horns of love to him; to promise much, and mean nothing; to show, over and above, that thou art a mere woman.

Phaed. Is the devil in you, to see all this? Now, for heaven's sake, do not look into t'other pocket.—

Merc. Nay, there's nothing there, but a little godly prayer book, and—a bawdy lampoon, and—

Phaed. (*Giving a great frisk.*)

Look no farther, I beseech you.—

Merc. And a silver spoon.—

Phaed. (*Shrieking.*)—Ah!

Merc. Which you purloin'd last night from *Bromia*.

Phaed. Keep my counsel, or I am undone for ever.

[*Holding up her hands to him.*]

Merc. No: I'll mortify thee, now I have a handle to thy iniquity, if thou wilt not love me.—

Phaed. Well, if you'll promise me to be secret, I will love you, because indeed I dare do no other.

Merc. 'Tis a good girl; I will be secret; and further, I will be assisting to thee in thy filching: for thou and I were born under the same planet.

Phaed. And we shall come both to the same end too, I'm afraid.

Merc. No, no; since thou hast wit enough already to cozen a judge, thou needst never fear hanging.

Phaed. And will you make yourself a younger man; and be handsome too: and rich? for you that know hearts, must needs know, that I shall never be constant to such an ugly old *Sofia*.

Merc. Thou shalt know more of that another time: in the mean while, here's a cast of my office for thee.

[He stamps upon the ground: some dancers come from under ground: and others from the sides of the stage: a song and a fantastick dance.]

Mercury's S O N G to Phædra.

I.

FAIR Iris I love, and hourly I dye,
But not for a lip, nor a languishing eye:
She's fickle and false, and there we agree;
For I am as false, and as fickle as she:
We neither believe what either can say;
And, neither believing, we neither betray.

II.

'Tis civil to swear, and say things of course;
We mean not the taking for better for worse.
When present, we love; when absent, agree:
I think not of Iris, nor Iris of me:
The legend of love no couple can find
So easy to part, or so equally join'd.

After, the dance.

Phæd. This power of your's makes me suspect you for little better than a god; but if you are one, for more certainty, tell me what I am just now thinking.

Merc. Why, thou art thinking, let me see; for thou art a woman, and your minds are so variable, that 'tis very hard even for a god to know them. But, to satisfy thee, thou art willing, now, for the same power I have exercis'd; that thou might'st stamp, like me; and have more fingers come up for another song.

Phæd.

Phaed. Gad, I think the devil's in you. Then I do stamp in some body's name, but I know not whose; (*stamps.*) Come up, gentlefolks, from below; and sing me a pastoral dialogue, where the woman may have the better of the man; as we always have in love matters.

[*New singers come up and sing a song.*]

A pastoral Dialogue betwixt THYRSIS and IRIS.

I.

Thyrsis. **F**AIR Iris and her swain
Were in a shady bow'r.

Where Thyrsis long in vain

Had sought the shepherd's hour.

At length his hand advancing upon her snowy breast;

He said, O kiss me longer,

And longer yet, and longer,

If you will make me blest.

II.

Iris. An easy yielding maid,

By trusting is undone;

Our sex is oft betray'd,

By granting love too soon.

If you desire to gain me, your sufferings to redress;

Prepare to love me longer,

And longer yet, and longer,

Before you shall possess.

III.

Thyrsis. The little care you show,

Of all my sorrows past;

Makes death appear too slow,

And life too long to last.

Fair Iris kiss me kindly, in pity of my fate;

And kindly still, and kindly,

Before it be too late.

Iris.

IV.

Iris. You fondly court your blifs,
 And no advances make;
 'Tis not for maids to kiss,
 But 'tis for men to take.
 So you may kiss me kindly, and I will not rebel;
 And kindly still, and kindly,
 But kiss me not and tell.

V.

A R O N D E A U.

Chorus. Thus at the height we love and live,
 And fear not to be poor:
 We give, and give, and give, and give,
 Till we can give no more:
 But what to-day will take away,
 To-morrow will restore.
 Thus at the height we love and live,
 And fear not to be poor.

Phaed. Adieu, I leave you to pay the musick:
 Hope well, Mr Planet; there's a better heaven in
 store for you; I say no more, but you can guess.

Mercury alone.

Such bargain-loves, as I with *Phaedra* treat,
 Are all the leagues and friendships of the great:
 All seek their ends, and each would others cheat. }
 They only seem to hate, and seem to love;
 But interest is the point on which they move.
 Their friends are foes; and foes are friends agen;
 And in their turns, are knaves, and honest men.
 Our iron age is grown an age of gold.
 'Tis who bids most; for all men would be sold.

[Exit Mercury.]

A C T V.

*Gripus, Phaedra.**Gripus has the goblet in his hand.*

Phaed. **Y**OU will not be so base to take it from me?

Grip. 'Tis my proper chattel: and I'll seize my own, in whatever hands I find it.

Phaed. You know I only show'd it you to provoke your generosity, that you might out bid your rival with a better present.

Grip. My rival is a thief; and I'll indite you for a receiver of stolen goods.

Phaed. Thou hide-bound lover!

Grip. Thou very mercenary mistress!

Phaed. Thou most mercenary magistrate!

Grip. Thou seller of thyself!

Phaed. Thou seller of other people: thou weather-cock of government: that when the wind blows for the subject, point'st to privilege; and when it changes for the sovereign, veers to prerogative.

Grip. Will you compound, and take it as my present!

Phaed. No: but I'll send thy rival to force it from thee.

Grip. When a thief is rival to his judge, the hangman will soon decide the difference.

[*Exit Phaedra.*

Enter Mercury, with two swords.

Merc. Bowing.] Save your good lordship.

Grip. From an impertinent coxcomb: I am out of humour, and am in haste: leave me.

Merc.

Merc. 'Tis my duty to attend on your lordship, and to ease you of that undecent burden.

Grip. Gold was never any burden to one of my profession.

Merc. By your lordship's permission, *Phaedra* has sent me to take it from you.

Grip. What, by violence!

Merc. *still bowing.*] No; but by your honour's permission, I am to restore it to her, and persuade your lordship to renounce your pretensions to her.

Grip. Tell her flatly, I will neither do one, nor t'other.

Merc. O my good lord, I dare pass my word for your free consent to both.—Will your honour be pleas'd to take your choice of one of these?

Grip. Why these are swords: What have I to do with them?

Merc. Only to take your choice of one of them; which your lordship pleases; and leave the other to your most obedient servant.

Grip. What, one of these ungodly weapons? take notice, I'll lay you by the heels, sirrah: this has the appearance of an unlawful bloody challenge.

Merc. You magistrates are pleas'd to call it so, my lord; but with us sword-men, 'tis an honourable invitation to the cutting one another's throats.

Grip. Be answer'd; I have no throat to cut. The law shall decide our controversy.

Merc. By your permission, my lord; it must be dispatch'd this way.

Grip. I'll see thee hang'd before I give thee any such permission, to dispatch me into another world.

Merc. At the least, my lord, you have no occasion to complain of my want of respect to you: you will neither restore the goblet, nor renounce

Phaedra:

Phaedra: I offer you the combat; you refuse it: all this is done in the forms of honour: it follows, that I am to affront, cudgel you, or kick you, at my own arbitrement; and I suppose, you are too honourable not to approve of my proceeding.

Grip. Here's a new sort of process, that was never heard of in any of our courts.

Merc. This, my good lord, is law in short-hand, without your long preambles, and tedious repetitions, that signify nothing, but to squeeze the subject: therefore, with your lordship's favour, I begin. [*Phillips him under the chin.*]

Grip. What's that for?

Merc. To give you an occasion of returning me a box o'th'ear: that so all things may proceed methodically.

Grip. I put in no answer, but suffer a non-suit.

Merc. No, my lord; for the costs and charges are to be paid: Will you please to restore the cup?

Grip. I have told thee, no.

Merc. Then from your chin, I must ascend to your lordship's ears.

Grip. Oh, oh. Oh, oh——Wilt thou never leave lugging me by the ears?

Merc. Not till your lordship will be pleas'd to hear reason. [*Pulling again.*]

Grip. Take the cup, and the devil give thee joy ont't.

Merc. *still holding him.*] And your lordship will farther be graciously pleas'd, to release all claims, titles, and actions whatsoever to *Phaedra*: You must give me leave to add one small *memento*, for that too. [*Pulling him again.*]

Grip. I renounce her, I release her.

Enter Phædra.

Merc. to her.] *Phædra*; My lord has been pleas'd

to be very gracious; without pushing matters to extremity.

Phaed. I over-heard it all: But give me livery and scisin of the goblet, in the first place.

Merc. There's an act of oblivion should be pass'd too.

Phaed. Let him begin to remember quarrels, when he dares; now I have him under my girdle, I'll cap verses with him to the end of the chapter.

Enter Amphitryon and guards.

Amph. (to *Gripus.*) At the last I have got possession without your lordships warrant: *Phaedra*, tell *Alcmena* I am here.

Phaed. I'll carry no such lying message: you are not here, and you cannot be here: for, to my knowledge, you are above with my lady, in the chamber!

Amph. All of a piece, and all witchcraft! Answer me precisely; dost thou not know me for *Amphitryon*?

Phaed. Answer me first: did you give me a diamond, and a purse of gold?

Amph. Thou know'st I did not.

Phaed. Then, by the same token, I know you are not the true *Amphitryon*: if you are he, I am sure I left you in bed with your own wife: now you had best stretch out a leg, and feel about for a fair lady.

Amph. I'll undo this enchantment with my sword; and kill the forcerer: Come up, gentlemen, and follow me. [To the guards.]

Phaed. I'll save you the labour, and call him down to confront you, if you dare attend him.

[Exit *Phaedra*.]

Merc. Aside.] Now the spell is ended, and *Jupiter* can enchant no more; or else *Amphitryon* had

had not enter'd so easily. [*Gripius is stealing off.*

—Whither now, *Gripius*? I have business for you: if you offer to stir, you know what follows.

Enter Jupiter followed by Tranio and Polydas.

Jup. Who dares to play the master in my house? What noise is this, that calls me from above, Invades my soft recess, and privacy, And, like a tide, breaks in upon my love?

Amph. O heav'ns, what's this I see!

Tran. What prodigy!

Polyd. How, two *Amphitryons*!

Grip. I have beheld the appearance of two suns; But still the false was dimmer than the true; Here both shine out alike.

Amph. This is a sight, that like the Gorgon's head,

Runs through my limbs, and stiffens me to stone. I need no more enquire into my fate: For what I see, resolves my doubts too plain.

Tran. Two drops of water cannot be more like.

Polyd. They are two very fames.

Merc. Aside.] Our *Jupiter* is a great comedian; he counterfeits most admirably: sure his priests have copied their hypocrisy from their master.

Amph. Now I am gather'd back into myself, My heart beats high, and pushes out the blood

[*Drawing his sword.*

To give me just revenge on this impostor.

[*To the guards.*

If you are brave, assist me.—Not one stirs.

What, are all brib'd to take th'enchanters part?

'Tis true, the work is mine; and thus.—

[*Going to rush upon Jupiter; and is held by Tranio and Polydas.*

Polyd. It must not be.

Jup. Give him his way; I dare the madman's worst:

But still take notice, that it looks not like.
The true *Amphitryon*, to fly out, at first
To brutal force: it shows he doubts his cause,
Who dares not trust his reason to defend it.

Amphitryon struggling.

Thou base usurper of my name, and bed;
No less than thy heart's-blood can wash away
Th' affronts I have sustain'd.

Tran. We must not suffer
So strange a duel as *Amphitryon*
To fight against himself.

Polyd. Nor think we wrong you, when we hold
your hands:

We know our duty to our general:
We know the ties of friendship to our friend:
But who that friend, or who that general is,
Without more certain proofs betwixt you two,
Is hard to be distinguish'd by our reason:
Impossible by fight.

Amph. I know it; and have satisfied myself:
I am the true *Amphitryon*.

Jup. See again.

He shuns the certain proofs, and dares not stand
Impartial judgment, and award of right.
But since *Alcmena's* honour is concern'd,
Whom more than heav'n, and all the world I love;
This I propose, as equal to us both.

Tranio, and *Polydas*, be you assistants,
'The guards be ready to secure th' impostor,
When once so prov'd, for publick punishment;
And *Gripus*, be thou umpire of the cause.

Amph. I am content: let him proceed to examination.

Grip. *Aside to Mercury.*] On whose side would
you please that I should give the sentence?

Merc. *Aside to him.*] Follow thy conscience for
once; but not to make a custom of it neither;

nor

nor to leave an evil precedent of uprightneſs to future judges. (*Aſide*) 'Tis a good thing to have a magiſtrate under correction: your old fornicating judge, dare never give ſentence againſt him that knows his haunts.

Polyd. Your lordſhip knows I was maſter of *Amphitryon's* ſhip; and I deſire to know of him, what paſſ'd in private betwixt us two, at his landing, when he was juſt ready to engage the enemy?

Grip. Let the true *Amphitryon* answer firſt.—

Jup. and Amph. together.] My lord I told him.—

Grip. Peace both of you:—'Tis a plain caſe they are both true; for they both ſpeak together: but for more certainty, let the falſe *Amphitryon* ſpeak firſt.

Merc. Now they are both ſilent.—

Grip. Then 'tis as plain on t'other ſide, that they are both falſe *Amphitryons*.

Merc. Which *Amphitryon* ſhall ſpeak firſt?

Grip. Let the choleric *Amphitryon* ſpeak; and let the peaceable hold his peace.

Amph. to Polydas.] You may remember that I whiſper'd you, not to part from the ſtern, one ſingle moment.

Polyd. You did ſo.

Grip. No more words then; I proceed to ſentence.

Jup. 'Twas I that whiſper'd him; and he may remember I gave him this reaſon for it; that if our men were beaten, I might ſecure my own retreat.

Polyd. You did ſo.

Grip. Now again he's as true as t'other.

Tranio. You know I was pay-maſter. What directions did you give me the night before the battle?

Grip. To which of the you's art thou ſpeaking?

Merc. (aſide) I ſhould be a double U; but they

have no such letter in their tongue.

Amph. I order'd you to take particular care of the great bag.

Grip. Why this is demonstration.

Jup. The bag that I commended to you, was of tyger's skin; and mark'd *Beta*.

Grip. In sadness I think they are both jugglers: here's nothing, and here's nothing: and then *hic-cius doccius*, and they are both here again.

Tran. You peaceable *Amphitryon*, what money was there in that bag?

Jup. The sum in gross, amounted just to fifty Attick talents.

Tran. To a farthing?

Grip. Paugh: obvious, obvious.

Amph. Two thousand pieces of gold were ty'd up in a handkerchief by themselves.

Tran. I remember it.

Grip. Then 'tis dubious again.

Jup. But the rest was not all silver; for there were just four thousand brass half-pence.

Grip. Being but brass, the proof is inconsiderable: if they had been silver, it had gone on your side.

Amph. to Jup.] Death and hell, you will not persuade me, that I did not kill *Pterelas*?

Jup. Nor you me, that I did not enjoy *Alcmena*?

Amph. That last was poison to me.— [*Aside.* Yet there's one proof thou canst not counterfeit: In killing *Pterelas*, I had a wound Full in the brawny part of my right arm: Where still the scar remains: now blush, impostor; For this thou canst not show.

[*Bare's his arm; and shows the scar, which they all look on.*

Omnes. This is the true *Amphitryon*.

Jup. May your lordship please.—

Grip. No, firrah, it does not please me: hold your

your tongue, I charge you; for the case is manifest.

Jup. By your favour then, this shall speak for me. [*Bares his arm; and shows it.*]

Tran. 'Tis just in the same muscle.

Polyd. Of the same length and breadth; and the scar of the same blewish colour.

Grip. to Jupiter.] Did not I charge you not to speak? 'twas plain enough before: and now you have puzzled it again.

Amp. Good gods, how can this be!

Grip. For certain there was but one *Pterelas*; and he must have been in the plot against himself too: for he was killed first by one of them; and then rise again out of respect to t'other *Amphitryon*, to be killed twice over,

Enter Alcmena, Phædra, and Bromio.

Alc. turning to Phædra and Bromia, No more of this; it sounds impossible

That two should be so like, no difference found.

Phæd. You'll find it true.

Alc. Then where's *Alcmena's* honour and her fame?

Farewel my needless fear; it cannot be:

This is a case too nice for vulgar sight:

But let me come; my heart will guide my eyes

To point and tremble to its proper choice.

[*Seeing Amphitryon, goes to him.*]

There neither was, nor is, but one *Amphitryon*;

And I am only his.——

[*Goes to take him by the hand.*]

Amph. Away, adulteress!

[*pushing her away from him.*]

Jup. My gentle love: my treasure and my joy;

Follow no more, that false and foolish fire,

That would mislead thy fame to sure destruction!

Look on thy better husband, and thy friend,

Who will not leave thee liable to scorn,

But vindicate thy honour from that wretch
Who would by base aspersions blot thy vertue.

Alc. I was indeed mistaken; thou art he!

[*Going to him, who embraces her.*]

Thy words, thy thoughts, thy soul is all *Amphi-*
tryon.

Th' impostor has thy features, not thy mind;
The face might have deceived me in my choice;
Thy kindness is a guide that cannot err.

Amph. What in my presence to prefer the vil-
lain!

O execrable cheat! I break the truce;
And will no more attend your vain decisions;
To this—and to the gods I'll trust my cause.

[*Is rushing upon Jupiter, and is held again.*]

Jup. Poor man; how I contemn those idle threats!
Were I dispos'd, thou might'st as safely meet
The thunder lanch'd from the red arm of *Jove*:
(Nor *Jove* need blush to be *Alcmena's* champion)
But in the face of *Thebes*, she shall be clear'd:
And what I am, and what thou art, be known.
Attend, and I will bring convincing proof.

Amph. Thou wouldst elude my justice, and
escape;

But I will follow thee, through earth, and seas;
Nor hell shall hide thee, from my just revenge.

Jup. I'll spare thy pains: It shall be quickly seen,
Betwixt us two, who seeks, and who avoids.—
Come in my friends: and thou who seem'st *Am-*
phitryon;

That all who are in doubt, may know the true.
Jupiter re-enters the house: with him Amphitryon,
Alcmena, Polydas, Tranio, and guards.

Merc. to Grip. and Brom. who are following.
Thou *Gripus*, and you *Bromia*; stay with *Phædra*:
Let their affairs alone, and mind we ours:
Amphitryon's rival shall appear a god:

But

But know before-hand, I am *Mercury* ;
 Who want not heav'n, while *Phædra* is on earth.

Brom. But, and't please your lordship, is my
 fellow *Phædra* to be exalted into the heav'ns, and
 made a star?

Phaed. When that comes to pass, if you look
 up a-nights, I shall remember old kindness, and
 vouchsafe to twinkle on you.

*Enter Sofia, peeping about him: and seeing Mer-
 cury, is starting back.*

Sof. Here he is again ; and there's no passing by
 him into the house, unless I were a spright, to
 glide in through the key-hole.—I am to be a
 vagabond I find.

Merc. *Sofia*, come back.

Sof. No I thank you ; you may whistle me long
 enough ; a beaten dog has always the wit to avoid
 his master.

Merc. I permit thee to be *Sofia* again.

Sof. 'Tis an unfortunate name, and I abandon
 it: he that has an itch to be beaten, let him take
 it up for *Sofia* ;—What have I said now ! I mean
 for me ; for I neither am nor will be *Sofia*.

Merc. But thou may'st be so in safety : for I have
 acknowledged myself to be god *Mercury*.

Sof. You may be a god, for ought I know ; but
 the devil take me if ever I worship you ; for an un-
 merciful deity, as you are.

Merc. You ought to take it for an honour to be
 drubbed by the hand of a divinity.

Sof. I am your most humble servant, good Mr.
 god ; but by the faith of a mortal, I could well
 have spar'd the honour that you did me. But how
 shall I be sure that you will never assume my shape
 again ?

Merc. Because I am weary of wearing so villain-
 ous an outside.

Sof.

Sof. Well, well; as villainous as it is, here's old *Bromio* will be contented with it.

Brom. Yes, now I am sure that I may chastise you safely: and that there's no god, lurking under your appearance.

Sof. Ay; but you had best take heed how you attempt it: for as *Mercury* has turn'd himself into me, so I may take the toy into my head, to turn myself into *Mercury*, that I may swinge you off, condingly.

Merc. In the mean time, be all my witnesses, that I take *Phædra* for my wife of the left hand; that is, in the nature of a lawful concubine.

Phaed. You shall pardon me for believing you, for all you are a god: for you have a terrible ill name below: and I am affraid you'll get a footman, instead of a priest, to marry us.

Merc. But here's *Gripus* shall draw up articles betwixt us.

Phaed. But he's damnably us'd to false conveyancing:—Well be it so: for my counsel shall overlook 'em before I sign: Come on, *Gripus*; that I may have him under black and white

[*Here Gripus gets ready pen, ink, and paper.*]

Merc. With all my heart; that I may have thee under black and white hereafter.

Phaed. to Gripus.] Begin, begin; heads of articles to be made, &c. betwixt *Mercury*, god of thieves——

Merc. And *Phaed.* queen of gypsies.—*Imprimis*, I promise to buy and settle upon her an estate, containing nine thousand acres of land, in any part of *Bæotia*, to her own liking.

Phaed. Provided always, that no part of the said nine thousand acres shall be upon, or adjoining to mount *Parnassus*: for I will not be sobbed off with a poetical estate.

Merc.

Merc. Memorandum, that she be always constant to me; and admit no other lover.

Phaed. Memorandum, unless it be a lover that offers more: and that the constancy shall not exceed the settlement.

Merc. Item, That she shall keep no male servants in her house: *Item*, no rival lap dog for a bedfellow: *Item*, that she shall never pray to any of the gods.

Phaed. What, would you have me an Atheist?

Merc. No devotion to any he-deity, good *Phaedra*.

Brom. Here's no provision made for children yet.

Phaed. Well remembred, *Bromia*: I bargain that my eldest son shall be a hero, and my eldest daughter a king's mistress.

Merc. That is to say, a blockhead, and a harlot, *Phaedra*.

Phaed. That's true; but who dares call 'em so? Then for the younger children:——but now I think on't, we'll have no more, but mafs and mifs; for the rest would be but chargeable, and a burden to the nation.

Merc. Yes, yes; the second shall be a false prophet: he shall have wit enough to set up a new religion: and too much wit to die a martyr for it.

Phaed. O what had I forgot? there's pin-money, and ali-money, and separate maintenance, and a thousand things more to be considered; that are all to be tack'd to this act of settlement.

Sof. I am a fool, I must confess; but yet I can see as far into a mill-stone as the best of you: I have observed that you women-wits are commonly so quick upon the scent, that you often over-run it: Now I would ask of madam *Phædra*, that in case Mr. Heaven there, should be pleased to break these articles, in what court of judicature she intends to sue him?

Phaed.

Phæd. The fool has hit upon't:—gods, and great men, are never to be sued; for they can always plead privilege of peerage: and therefore for once, monsieur, I'll take your word; for as long as you love me you'll be sure to keep it: and in the mean time I shall be gaining experience how to manage some rich cully; for no woman ever made her fortune by a wit.

It thunders; and the company within doors, Amphitryon, Alcmena, Polydas, and Tranio, all come running out, and join with the rest, who were on the theatre before.

Amph. Sure 'tis some god: he vanish'd from our sight,

And told us we should see him soon return.

Alc. I know not what to hope, nor what to fear
A simple error, is a real crime;

And unconsenting innocence is lost.

A second peal of thunder. After which, Jupiter appears in a machine.

Jup. Look up, *Amphitryon*, and behold above,
Th' impostor god, the rival of thy love:

In thy own shape, see *Jupiter* appear,

And let that sight, secure thy jealous fear.

Disgrace, and infamy, are turn'd to boast:

No fame, in *Jove's* concurrence can be lost:

What he enjoys, he sanctifies from vice;

And by partaking, stamps into a price.

'Tis I, who ought to murmur at my fate;

Fore'd by my love, my godhead to translate;

When on no other terms I could possess,

But by thy form, thy features, and thy dress;

To thee were giv'n, the blessings that I sought,

Which else, not all the bribes of heav'n had bought.

Then take into thy arms thy envy'd love;

And, in his own despight, triumph o'er *Jove*.

Merc. [*aside.*] *Amphitryon* and *Alcmena*, both stand mute, and know not how to take it. *Sof.*

Sof. (*aside*) Our sovereign Lord *Jupiter* is a sly companion; he knows how to gild a bitter pill.

Jup. From this auspicious night, shall rise an heir,
Great, like his sire, and like his mother fair:
Wrongs to redress, and tyrants to disseize;
Born for a world, that wants a *Hercules*.
Monsters, and monster-men he shall engage,
And toil, and struggle through an impious age.
Peace to his labours, shall at length succeed;
And murm'ring men, unwilling to be freed,
Shall be compell'd to happiness, by need.

[*Jupiter is carried back to heaven.*

Omnes. We all congratulate *Amphitryon*.

Merc. Keep your congratulations to yourselves, gentlemen: 'Tis a nice point, let me tell you that; and the less that is said of it, the better. Upon the whole matter, if *Amphitryon* takes the favour of *Jupiter* in patience, as from a god, he's a good heathen.

Sof. I must take a little extraordinary pains to night, that my spouse may come even with her lady, and produce a squire to attend on young *Hercules*, when he goes out to seek adventures; that when his master kills a man, he may stand ready to pick his pockets; and piously relieve his aged parents. Ah, *Bromia*, *Bromia*; if thou hadst been as handsome and as young as *Phædra*; I say no more, but some-body might have made his fortune as well as his master, and never the worse man neither.

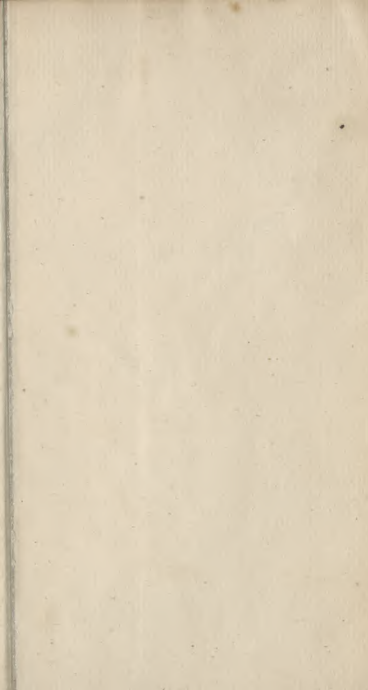
For, let the wicked world say what they please,
The fair wife makes her husband live at ease:
The lover keeps him too; and but receives,
Like *Jove*, the remnants that *Amphitryon* leaves:
'Tis true, the lady has enough in store,
To satisfy those two, and eke, two more:
In fine, the man, who weighs the matter fully,
Would rather be the cuckold, than the cully.

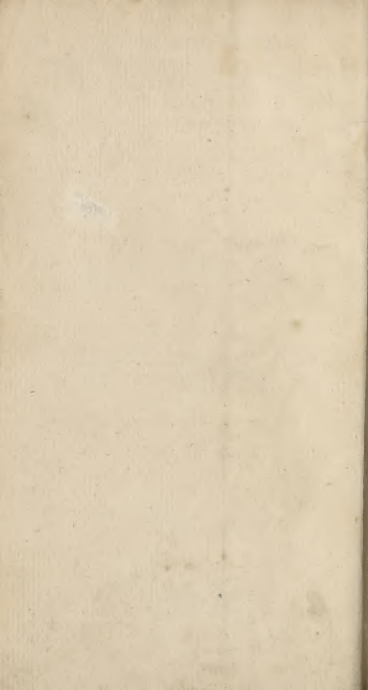
E P I L O G U E.

Spoken by PHAEDRA.

I'M thinking, (and it almost makes me mad,)
 How sweet a time, those beathen ladies had,
 Idolatry, was ev'n their gods own trade;
 They worship'd the fine creatures they had made,
 Cupid, was chief of all the deities;
 And love was all the fashion, in the skies,
 When the sweet nymph, held up the lily hand,
 Jove, was her humble servant, at command.
 The treasury of heaven was ne'er so bare,
 But still there was a pension for the fair.
 In all his reign, adultery was no sin;
 For Jove, the good example did begin.
 Mark, too, when he usurp'd the husband's name,
 How civilly he sav'd the ladies fame,
 The secret joys of love, he wisely bid;
 But you, sirs, boast of more, than e'er you did.
 You teize your cuckolds; to their face torment 'em;
 But Jove gave his, new honours to content 'em,
 And, in the kind remembrance of the fair,
 On each exalted sun, bestow'd a star.
 For those good deeds, as by the date appears,
 His godship, flourish'd full two thousand years.
 At last, when he and all his priests grew old,
 The ladies grew in their devotion cold;
 And, that false worship would no longer hold.
 Severity of life did next begin;
 (And always does, when we no more can sin.)
 That doctrine, too, so hard, in practice lyes,
 That the next age may see another rise.
 Then, Pagan gods, may once again, succeed;
 And Jove, or Mars, be ready, at our need,
 To get young godlings; and so mend our breed.

F I N I S.





20-3-89

