

GEORGE FARQUHAR

THE CONSTANT
COUPLE; OR, A TRIP TO
THE JUBILEE: A COMEDY,
IN FIVE ACTS

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Farquhar G.

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George Farquhar

The Constant Couple; Or, A Trip to the Jubilee: A Comedy, in Five Acts

REMARKS

George Farquhar, the author of this comedy, was the son of a clergyman in the north of Ireland. He was born in the year 1678, discovered an early taste for literature, and wrote poetic stanzas at ten years of age.

In 1694 he was sent to Trinity College, Dublin, and there made such progress in his studies as to acquire considerable reputation. But he was volatile and poor – the first misfortune led him to expense; the second, to devise means how to support his extravagance.

The theatre has peculiar charms for men of letters. Whether as a subject of admiration or animadversion, it is still a source of high amusement; and here Farquhar fixed his choice of a profession, in the united expectations of pleasure and of profit – he appeared on the stage as an actor, and was disappointed of both.

The author of this licentious comedy is said to have possessed the advantages of person, manners, and elocution, to qualify him for an actor; but that he could never overcome his natural timidity. Courage is a whimsical virtue. It acts upon one man so as to make him expose his whole body to danger, whilst he dares not venture into the slightest peril one sentiment of his mind. Such is often the soldier's valour. – Another trembles to expose his person either to a wound or to the eye of criticism, and yet will dare to publish every thought that ever found entrance into his imagination. Such is often the valour of a poet.

Farquhar, abashed on exhibiting his person upon the stage, sent boldly thither his most indecorous thoughts, and was rewarded for his audacity.

In the year 1700 he brought out this comedy of "The Constant Couple; or, A Trip to the Jubilee." It was then the Jubilee year at Rome, and the author took advantage of that occurrence to render the title of his drama popular; for which cause alone it must be supposed he made any thing in his play refer to that festival, as no one material point is in any shape connected with it.

At the time Farquhar was a performer, a sincere friendship was formed between him and Wilks, the celebrated fine gentleman of the stage – for him, Farquhar wrote the character of Sir Harry Wildair; and Wilks, by the very admirable manner in which he supported the part, divided with the author those honours which the first appearance of the work obtained him.

As a proof that this famed actor's abilities, in the representation of the fine gentlemen of his day, were not over-rated, no actor, since he quitted the stage, has been wholly successful in the performance of this character; and, from Wilks down to the present time, the part has only been supported, with celebrity, by women.

The noted Mrs. Woffington was highly extolled in Sir Harry; and Mrs. Jordan has been no less admired and attractive.

But it must be considered as a disgrace to the memory of the men of fashion, of the period in which Wildair was brought on the stage, that he has ever since been justly personated, by no other than the female sex. In this particular, at least, the present race of fashionable beaux cannot be said to have degenerated; for, happily, they can be represented by men.

The love story of Standard and Lurewell, in this play, is interesting to the reader, though, in action, an audience scarcely think of either of them; or of any one in the drama, with whom the hero is not positively concerned. Yet these two lovers, it would seem, love with all the usual ardour and

constancy of gallants and mistresses in plays and novels – unfortunately, with the same short memories too! Authors, and some who do not generally deal in wonders, often make persons, the most tenderly attached to each other, so easily forget the shape, the air, the every feature of the dear beloved, as to pass, after a few years separation, whole days together, without the least conjecture that each is the very object of the other's search! Whilst all this surprising forgetfulness possesses them, as to the figure, face, and mind of him or her whom they still adore, show either of them but a ring, a bracelet, a mole, a scar, and here remembrance instantly occupies its place, and both are immediately inspired with every sensation which first testified their mutual passion. Still the sober critic must arraign the strength of this love with the shortness of its recollection; and charge the renewal of affection for objects that no longer appear the same, to fickleness rather than to constancy.

The biographers of Farquhar, who differ in some articles concerning him, all agree that he was married, in the year 1704, to a lady, who was so violently in love with him, that, despairing to win him by her own attractions, she contrived a vast scheme of imposition, by which she allured him into wedlock, with the full conviction that he had married a woman of immense fortune.

The same biographers all bestow the highest praise upon poor Farquhar for having treated this wife with kindness; humanely forgiving the fault which had deprived him of that liberty he was known peculiarly to prize, and reduced him to the utmost poverty, in order to support her and her children.

This woman, whose pretended love was of such fatal import to its object, not long enjoyed her selfish happiness – her husband's health gradually declined, and he died four years after his marriage. It is related that he met death with fortitude and cheerfulness. He could scarcely do otherwise, when life had become a burden to him. He had, however, some objects of affection to leave behind, as appears by the following letter, which he wrote a few days before his decease, and directed to his friend Wilks: —

"Dear Bob,

"I have not any thing to leave you to perpetuate my memory, except two helpless girls; look upon them sometimes, and think of him that was, to the last moment of his life, thine,

"George Farquhar."

Wilks protected the children – their mother died in extreme indigence.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

	DRURY LANE.	COVENT GARDEN.
Sir Harry Wildair	<i>Mr. Elliston.</i>	<i>Mr. Lewis.</i>
Aldern Smuggler	<i>Mr. Downton.</i>	<i>Mr. Quick.</i>
Colonel Standard	<i>Mr. Barrymore.</i>	<i>Mr. Farren.</i>
Clincher, Jun	<i>Mr. Collins.</i>	<i>Mr. Blanchard.</i>
Beau Clincher	<i>Mr. Bannister.</i>	<i>Mr. Cubitt.</i>
Vizard	<i>Mr. Holland.</i>	<i>Mr. Macready.</i>
Tom Errand	<i>Mr. Wewitzer.</i>	<i>Mr. Powell.</i>
Dicky	<i>Mr. Purser.</i>	<i>Mr. Simmons.</i>
Constable	<i>Mr. Maddocks.</i>	<i>Mr. Thompson.</i>
Servants	<i>Mr. Fisher, &c.</i>	
Lady Lurewell	<i>Mrs. Powell.</i>	<i>Miss Chapman.</i>
Lady Darling	<i>Miss Tidswell.</i>	<i>Miss Platt.</i>
Angelica	<i>Miss Mellon.</i>	<i>Mrs. Mountain.</i>
Parly	<i>Mrs. Scott.</i>	<i>Miss Stuart.</i>
Tom Errand's Wife	<i>Mrs. Maddocks.</i>	
<i>SCENE — London.</i>		

ACT THE FIRST

SCENE I

The Park

Enter Vizard with a Letter, his Servant following

Vizard. Angelica send it back unopened! say you?

Serv. As you see, sir?

Vizard. The pride of these virtuous women is more insufferable than the immodesty of prostitutes – After all my encouragement, to slight me thus!

Serv. She said, sir, that imagining your morals sincere, she gave you access to her conversation; but that your late behaviour in her company has convinced her that your love and religion are both hypocrisy, and that she believes your letter, like yourself, fair on the outside, and foul within; so sent it back unopened.

Vizard. May obstinacy guard her beauty till wrinkles bury it. – I'll be revenged the very first opportunity. – Saw you the old Lady Darling, her mother?

Serv. Yes, sir, and she was pleased to say much in your commendation.

Vizard. That's my cue – An esteem grafted in old age is hardly rooted out; years stiffen their opinions with their bodies, and old zeal is only to be cozened by young hypocrisy. [*Aside.*] Run to the Lady Lurewell's, and know of her maid whether her ladyship will be at home this evening. Her beauty is sufficient cure for Angelica's scorn.

[Exit Servant. Vizard pulls out a Book, reads, and walks about.

Enter Smuggler

Smug. Ay, there's a pattern for the young men o' th' times; at his meditation so early; some book of pious ejaculations, I'm sure.

Vizard. This Hobbes is an excellent fellow! [*Aside.*] Oh, uncle Smuggler! To find you at this end o' th' town is a miracle.

Smug. I have seen a miracle this morning indeed, cousin Vizard.

Vizard. What is it, pray, sir?

Smug. A man at his devotion so near the court – I'm very glad, boy, that you keep your sanctity untainted in this infectious place; the very air of this park is heathenish, and every man's breath I meet scents of atheism.

Vizard. Surely, sir, some great concern must bring you to this unsanctified end of the town.

Smug. A very unsanctified concern, truly, cousin.

Vizard. What is it?

Smug. A lawsuit, boy – Shall I tell you? – My ship, the Swan, is newly arrived from St. Sebastian, laden with Portugal wines: now the impudent rogue of a tide-waiter has the face to affirm it is French wines in Spanish casks, and has indicted me upon the statute – Oh, conscience! conscience! these tide-waiters and surveyors plague us more than the war – Ay, there's another plague of the nation —

Enter Colonel Standard

A red coat and cockade.

Vizard. Colonel Standard, I'm your humble servant.

Colonel S. May be not, sir.

Vizard. Why so?

Colonel S. Because – I'm disbanded.

Vizard. How! Broke?

Colonel S. This very morning, in Hyde-Park, my brave regiment, a thousand men, that looked like lions yesterday, were scattered, and looked as poor and simple as the herd of deer that grazed beside them.

Smug. Tal, al deral. [*Singing.*] I'll have a bonfire this night as high as the monument.

Colonel S. A bonfire! Thou dry, withered, ill-nature; had not those brave fellows' swords defended you, your house had been a bonfire ere this, about your ears. – Did we not venture our lives, sir?

Smug. And did we not pay for your lives, sir? – Venture your lives! I'm sure we ventured our money, and that's life and soul to me. – Sir, we'll maintain you no longer.

Colonel S. Then your wives shall, old Actæon. There are five and thirty strapping officers gone this morning to live upon free quarter in the city.

Smug. Oh, lord! oh, lord! I shall have a son within these nine months, born with a leading staff in his hand. – Sir, you are —

Colonel S. What, sir?

Smug. Sir, I say that you are —

Colonel S. What, sir?

Smug. Disbanded, sir, that's all – I see my lawyer yonder. [*Exit.*]

Vizard. Sir, I'm very sorry for your misfortune.

Colonel S. Why so? I don't come to borrow money of you; if you're my friend, meet me this evening at the Rummer; I'll pay my foy, drink a health to my king, prosperity to my country, and away for Hungary to-morrow morning.

Vizard. What! you won't leave us?

Colonel S. What! a soldier stay here, to look like an old pair of colours in Westminster Hall, ragged and rusty! No, no – I met yesterday a broken lieutenant, he was ashamed to own that he wanted a dinner, but wanted to borrow eighteen pence of me to buy a new scabbard for his sword.

Vizard. Oh, but you have good friends, colonel!

Colonel S. Oh, very good friends! My father's a lord, and my elder brother, a beau; mighty good indeed!

Vizard. But your country may, perhaps, want your sword again.

Colonel S. Nay, for that matter, let but a single drum beat up for volunteers between Ludgate and Charing Cross, and I shall undoubtedly hear it at the walls of Buda.

Vizard. Come, come, colonel, there are ways of making your fortune at home – Make your addresses to the fair; you're a man of honour and courage.

Colonel S. Ay, my courage is like to do me wondrous service with the fair. This pretty cross cut over my eye will attract a duchess – I warrant 'twill be a mighty grace to my ogling – Had I used the stratagem of a certain brother colonel of mine, I might succeed.

Vizard. What was it, pray?

Colonel S. Why, to save his pretty face for the women, he always turned his back upon the enemy. – He was a man of honour for the ladies.

Vizard. Come, come, the loves of Mars and Venus will never fail; you must get a mistress.

Colonel S. Pr'ythee, no more on't – You have awakened a thought, from which, and the kingdom, I would have stolen away at once. – To be plain, I have a mistress.

Vizard. And she's cruel?

Colonel S. No.

Vizard. Her parents prevent your happiness?

Colonel S. Not that.

Vizard. Then she has no fortune?

Colonel S. A large one. Beauty to tempt all mankind, and virtue to beat off their assaults. Oh, Vizard! such a creature!

Enter Sir Harry Wildair, crosses the Stage singing, with Footmen after him

Heyday! who the devil have we here?

Vizard. The joy of the playhouse, and life of the park; Sir Harry Wildair, newly come from Paris.

Colonel S. Sir Harry Wildair! Did not he go a volunteer some three or four years ago?

Vizard. The same.

Colonel S. Why, he behaved himself very bravely.

Vizard. Why not? Dost think bravery and gaiety are inconsistent? He's a gentleman of most happy circumstances, born to a plentiful estate; has had a genteel and easy education, free from the rigidness of teachers, and pedantry of schools. His florid constitution being never ruffled by misfortune, nor stinted in its pleasures, has rendered him entertaining to others, and easy to himself. Turning all passion into gaiety of humour, by which he chuses rather to rejoice with his friends, than be hated by any; as you shall see.

Enter Sir Harry Wildair

Sir H. Ha, Vizard!

Vizard. Sir Harry!

Sir H. Who thought to find you out of the Rubric so long? I thought thy hypocrisy had been wedded to a pulpit-cushion long ago. – Sir, if I mistake not your face, your name is Standard?

Colonel S. Sir Harry, I'm your humble servant.

Sir H. Come, gentlemen, the news, the news o' th' town, for I'm just arrived.

Vizard. Why, in the city end o' th' town we're playing the knave, to get estates.

Colonel S. And in the court end playing the fool, in spending them.

Sir H. Just so in Paris. I'm glad we're grown so modish.

Vizard. We are so reformed, that gallantry is taken for vice.

Colonel S. And hypocrisy for religion.

Sir H. A-la-mode de Paris again.

Vizard. Nothing like an oath in the city.

Colonel S. That's a mistake; for my major swore a hundred and fifty last night to a merchant's wife in her bed-chamber.

Sir H. Pshaw! this is trifling; tell me news, gentlemen. What lord has lately broke his fortune at the clubs, or his heart at Newmarket, for the loss of a race? What wife has been lately suing in Doctor's-Commons for alimony: or what daughter run away with her father's valet? What beau gave the noblest ball at Bath, or had the gayest equipage in town? I want news, gentlemen.

Colonel S. 'Faith, sir, these are no news at all.

Vizard. But, pray, Sir Harry, tell us some news of your travels.

Sir H. With all my heart. – You must know, then, I went over to Amsterdam in a Dutch ship. I went from thence to Landen, where I was heartily drubbed in battle, with the butt end of a Swiss musket. I thence went to Paris, where I had half a dozen intrigues, bought half a dozen new suits, fought a couple of duels, and here I am again *in statu quo*.

Vizard. But we heard that you designed to make the tour of Italy: what brought you back so soon?

Sir H. That which brought you into the world, and may perhaps carry you out of it; – a woman.

Colonel S. What! quit the pleasures of travel for a woman?

Sir H. Ay, colonel, for such a woman! I had rather see her *ruelle* than the palace of Louis le Grand. There's more glory in her smile, than in the jubilee at Rome! and I would rather kiss her hand than the Pope's toe.

Vizard. You, colonel, have been very lavish in the beauty and virtue of your mistress; and Sir Harry here has been no less eloquent in the praise of his. Now will I lay you both ten guineas a-piece, that neither of them is so pretty, so witty, or so virtuous, as mine.

Colonel S. 'Tis done.

Sir H. I'll double the stakes – But, gentlemen, now I think on't, how shall we be resolved? For I know not where my mistress may be found; she left Paris about a month before me, and I had an account —

Colonel S. How, sir! left Paris about a month before you?

Sir H. Yes, sir, and I had an account that she lodged somewhere in St. James's.

Vizard. How! somewhere in St. James's say you?

Sir H. Ay, sir, but I know not where, and perhaps may'nt find her this fortnight.

Colonel S. Her name, pray, Sir Harry?

Vizard. Ay, ay, her name; perhaps we know her.

Sir H. Her name! Ay, she has the softest, whitest hand that ever was made of flesh and blood; her lips so balmy sweet —

Colonel S. But her name, sir?

Sir H. Then her neck and —

Vizard. But her name, sir? her quality?

Sir H. Then her shape, colonel?

Colonel S. But her name I want, sir.

Sir H. Then her eyes, Vizard!

Colonel S. Pshaw, Sir Harry! her name, or nothing!

Sir H. Then if you must have it, she's called the Lady – But then her foot, gentlemen! she dances to a miracle. Vizard, you have certainly lost your wager.

Vizard. Why, you have certainly lost your senses; we shall never discover the picture, unless you subscribe the name.

Sir H. Then her name is Lurewell.

Colonel S. 'Sdeath! my mistress! [*Aside*].

Vizard. My mistress, by Jupiter! [*Aside*].

Sir H. Do you know her, gentlemen?

Colonel S. I have seen her, sir.

Sir H. Canst tell where she lodges? Tell me, dear colonel.

Colonel S. Your humble servant, sir. [*Exit*].

Sir H. Nay, hold, colonel; I'll follow you, and will know. [*Runs out*].

Vizard. The Lady Lurewell his mistress! He loves her: but she loves me. – But he's a baronet, and I plain Vizard; he has a coach, and I walk on foot; I was bred in London, and he in Paris. – That very circumstance has murdered me – Then some stratagem must be laid to divert his pretensions.

Enter Wildair

Sir H. Pr'ythee, Dick, what makes the colonel so out of humour?

Vizard. Because he's out of pay, I suppose.

Sir H. 'Slife, that's true! I was beginning to mistrust some rivalship in the case.

Vizard. And suppose there were, you know the colonel can fight, Sir Harry.

Sir H. Fight! Pshaw – but he cannot dance, ha! – We contend for a woman, Vizard. 'Slife, man, if ladies were to be gained by sword and pistol only, what the devil should all we beaux do?

Vizard. I'll try him farther. [*Aside.*] But would not you, Sir Harry, fight for this woman you so much admire?

Sir H. Fight! Let me consider. I love her – that's true; – but then I love honest Sir Harry Wildair better. The Lady Lurewell is divinely charming – right – but then a thrust i' the guts, or a Middlesex jury, is as ugly as the devil.

Vizard. Ay, Sir Harry, 'twere a dangerous cast for a beau baronet to be tried by a parcel of greasy, grumbling, bartering boobies, who would hang you, purely because you're a gentleman.

Sir H. Ay, but on t'other hand, I have money enough to bribe the rogues with: so, upon mature deliberation, I would fight for her. But no more of her. Pr'ythee, Vizard, cannot you recommend a friend to a pretty mistress by the bye, till I can find my own? You have store, I'm sure; you cunning poaching dogs make surer game, than we that hunt open and fair. Pr'ythee now, good Vizard.

Vizard. Let me consider a little. – Now love and revenge inspire my politics! [*Aside.*]

[*Pauses whilst Sir Harry walks, singing.*]

Sir H. Pshaw! thou'rt longer studying for a new mistress, than a waiter would be in drawing fifty corks.

Vizard. I design you good wine; you'll therefore bear a little expectation.

Sir H. Ha! say'st thou, dear Vizard?

Vizard. A girl of nineteen, Sir Harry.

Sir H. Now nineteen thousand blessings light on thee.

Vizard. Pretty and witty.

Sir H. Ay, ay, but her name, Vizard!

Vizard. Her name! yes – she has the softest, whitest hand that e'er was made of flesh and blood; her lips so balmy sweet —

Sir H. Well, well, but where shall I find her, man?

Vizard. Find her! – but then her foot, Sir Harry! she dances to a miracle.

Sir H. Pr'ythee, don't distract me.

Vizard. Well then, you must know, that this lady is the greatest beauty in town; her name's Angelica: she that passes for her mother is a private bawd, and called the Lady Darling: she goes for a baronet's lady, (no disparagement to your honour, Sir Harry) I assure you.

Sir H. Pshaw, hang my honour! but what street, what house?

Vizard. Not so fast, Sir Harry; you must have my passport for your admittance, and you'll find my recommendation in a line or two will procure you very civil entertainment; I suppose twenty or thirty pieces handsomely placed, will gain the point.

Sir H. Thou dearest friend to a man in necessity! Here, sirrah, order my carriage about to St. James's; I'll walk across the park. [*To his Servant.*]

Enter Clincher Senior

Clinch. Here, sirrah, order my coach about to St. James's, I'll walk across the park too – Mr. Vizard, your most devoted – Sir, [*To Wildair.*] I admire the mode of your shoulder-knot; methinks it hangs very emphatically, and carries an air of travel in it: your sword-knot too is most ornamentally modish, and bears a foreign mien. Gentlemen, my brother is just arrived in town; so that, being upon the wing to kiss his hands, I hope you'll pardon this abrupt departure of, gentlemen, your most devoted, and most faithful humble servant. [*Exit.*]

Sir H. Pr'ythee, dost know him?

Vizard. Know him! why, it is Clincher, who was apprentice to my uncle Smuggler, the merchant in the city.

Sir H. What makes him so gay?

Vizard. Why, he's in mourning.

Sir H. In mourning?

Vizard. Yes, for his father. The kind old man in Hertfordshire t'other day broke his neck a fox-hunting; the son, upon the news, has broke his indentures; whipped from behind the counter into the side-box. He keeps his coach and liveries, brace of geldings, leash of mistresses, talks of nothing but wines, intrigues, plays, fashions, and going to the jubilee.

Sir H. Ha! ha! ha! how many pounds of pulvil must the fellow use in sweetening himself from the smell of hops and tobacco? Faugh! – I' my conscience methought, like Olivia's lover, he stunk of Thames-Street. But now for Angelica, that's her name: we'll to the prince's chocolate-house, where you shall write my passport. *Allons.* [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II

Lady Lurewell's Lodgings

Enter Lady Lurewell, and her Maid Parly

Lady L. Parly, my pocket-book – let me see – Madrid, Paris, Venice, London! – Ay, London! They may talk what they will of the hot countries, but I find love most fruitful under this climate – In a month's space have I gained – let me see, imprimis, Colonel Standard.

Parly. And how will your ladyship manage him?

Lady L. As all soldiers should be managed; he shall serve me till I gain my ends, then I'll disband him.

Parly. But he loves you, madam.

Lady L. Therefore I scorn him;
I hate all that don't love me, and slight all that do;
'Would his whole deluding sex admir'd me,
Thus would I slight them all.
My virgin and unwary innocence
Was wrong'd by faithless man;
But now, glance eyes, plot brain, dissemble face,
Lie tongue, and

Plague the treacherous kind. —
Let me survey my captives. —
The colonel leads the van; next, Mr. Vizard,
He courts me out of the "Practice of Piety,"
Therefore is a hypocrite;
Then Clincher, he adores me with orangerie,
And is consequently a fool;
Then my old merchant, Alderman Smuggler,
He's a compound of both; – out of which medley of lovers, if I don't
make good diversion – What d'ye think, Parly?

Parly. I think, madam, I'm like to be very virtuous in your service, if you teach me all those tricks that you use to your lovers.

Lady L. You're a fool, child; observe this, that though a woman swear, forswear, lie, dissemble, backbite, be proud, vain, malicious, any thing, if she secures the main chance, she's still virtuous; that's a maxim.

Parly. I can't be persuaded, though, madam, but that you really loved Sir Harry Wildair in Paris.

Lady L. Of all the lovers I ever had, he was my greatest plague, for I could never make him uneasy: I left him involved in a duel upon my account: I long to know whether the fop be killed or not.

Enter Colonel Standard

Oh lord! no sooner talk of killing, but the soldier is conjured up. You're upon hard duty, colonel, to serve your king, your country, and a mistress too.

Colonel S. The latter, I must confess, is the hardest; for in war, madam, we can be relieved in our duty; but in love, he, who would take our post, is our enemy; emulation in glory is transporting, but rivals here intolerable.

Lady L. Those that bear away the prize in arms, should boast the same success in love; and, I think, considering the weakness of our sex, we should make those our companions who can be our champions.

Colonel S. I once, madam, hoped the honour of defending you from all injuries, through a title to your lovely person; but now my love must attend my fortune. My commission, madam, was my passport to the fair; adding a nobleness to my passion, it stamped a value on my love; 'twas once the life of honour, but now its winding sheet; and with it must my love be buried.

Parly. What? disbanded, Colonel?

Colonel S. Yes, Mrs. Parly.

Parly. Faugh, the nauseous fellow! he stinks of poverty already. [*Aside.*]

Lady L. His misfortune troubles me, because it may prevent my designs. [*Aside.*]

Colonel S. I'll chuse, madam, rather to destroy my passion by absence abroad, than have it starved at home.

Lady L. I'm sorry, sir, you have so mean an opinion of my affection, as to imagine it founded upon your fortune. And, to convince you of your mistake, here I vow, by all that's sacred, I own the same affection now as before. Let it suffice, my fortune is considerable.

Colonel S. No, madam, no; I'll never be a charge to her I love! The man, that sells himself for gold, is the worst of prostitutes.

Lady L. Now, were he any other creature but a man, I could love him. [*Aside.*]

Colonel S. This only last request I make, that no title recommend a fool, no office introduce a knave, nor red coat a coward, to my place in your affections; so farewell my country, and adieu my love. [*Exit.*]

Lady L. Now the devil take thee for being so honourable: here, Parly, call him back, I shall lose half my diversion else. Now for a trial of skill.

Enter Colonel Standard

Sir, I hope you'll pardon my curiosity. When do you take your journey?

Colonel S. To-morrow morning, early, madam.

Lady L. So suddenly! which way are you designed to travel?

Colonel S. That I can't yet resolve on.

Lady L. Pray, sir, tell me; pray, sir; I entreat you; why are you so obstinate?

Colonel S. Why are you so curious, madam?

Lady L. Because —

Colonel S. What?

Lady L. Because, I, I —

Colonel S. Because, what, madam? – Pray tell me.

Lady L. Because I design to follow you. [*Crying.*]

Colonel S. Follow me! By all that's great, I ne'er was proud before. Follow me! By Heavens thou shalt not. What! expose thee to the hazards of a camp! – Rather I'll stay, and here bear the contempt of fools, and worst of fortune.

Lady L. You need not, shall not; my estate for both is sufficient.

Colonel S. Thy estate! No, I'll turn a knave, and purchase one myself; I'll cringe to the proud man I undermine; I'll tip my tongue with flattery, and smooth my face with smiles; I'll turn informer, office-broker, nay, coward, to be great; and sacrifice it all to thee, my generous fair.

Lady L. And I'll dissemble, lie, swear, jilt, any thing, but I'll reward thy love, and recompense thy noble passion.

Colonel S. Sir Harry, ha! ha! ha! poor Sir Harry, ha! ha! ha! Rather kiss her hand than the Pope's toe; ha! ha! ha!

Lady L. What Sir Harry, Colonel? What Sir Harry?

Colonel S. Sir Harry Wildair, madam.

Lady L. What! is he come over?

Colonel S. Ay, and he told me – but I don't believe a syllable on't —

Lady L. What did he tell you?

Colonel S. Only called you his mistress; and pretending to be extravagant in your commendation, would vainly insinuate the praise of his own judgment and good fortune in a choice.

Lady L. How easily is the vanity of fops tickled by our sex!

Colonel S. Why, your sex is the vanity of fops.

Lady L. On my conscience, I believe so. This gentleman, because he danced well, I pitched on for a partner at a ball in Paris, and ever since he has so persecuted me with letters, songs, dances, serenading, flattery, foppery, and noise, that I was forced to fly the kingdom. – And I warrant you he made you jealous?

Colonel S. 'Faith, madam, I was a little uneasy.

Lady L. You shall have a plentiful revenge; I'll send him back all his foolish letters, songs, and verses, and you yourself shall carry them: 'twill afford you opportunity of triumphing, and free me from his further impertinence; for of all men he's my aversion. I'll run and fetch them instantly. [*Exit.*]

Colonel S. Dear madam, a rare project! Now shall I bait him, like Actæon, with his own dogs. – Well, Mrs. Parly, it is ordered by act of parliament, that you receive no more pieces, Mrs. Parly.

Parly. 'Tis provided by the same act, that you send no more messages by me, good Colonel; you must not presume to send any more letters, unless you can pay the postage.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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