

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

Mary Roberts Rinehart

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Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

Mary Roberts Rinehart

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

by

Ben Jonson

Prologue

U

Truth sayes, of old, the art of making plaies
Was to content the people; and their praise
Was to the Poet money, wine, and bayes.
But in this age, a sect of writers are,
That, onely, for particular likings care,
And will taste nothing that is populare.
With such we mingle neither braines, nor brests;
our wishes, like to those make publique feasts,
Are not to please the cookes tastes, but the gwestes.
Yet, if those cunning palates hether come,
They shall find guests entreaty, and good roome;
And though all relish not, sure, there will be some,
That, when they leaue their seates, shall make them say,
Who wrot that piece, could so have wrote a play:
But that, he knew, this was the better way.
For, to present all custard, or all tart,
And have no other meats, to beare a part.
Or to want bread, and salt, were but course art.
The Poet prayes you then, with better thought.
To sit; and, when his cates are all in brought,
Though there be none far set, there will deare-bought
Be fit for ladies: some for lords, knights, squires,
Some for your waiting wench, and citie-wires,
Some for your men, and daughters of white-Friars.
Nor is it, onely, while you keepe your seate
Here, that his feasts will last; but you shall eate
A weeke at ordinaries, on his broken meat:
If his Muse be true,
Who commends her to you.

Prologue

U

The endes of all, who for the Scene do write,
Are, or should be, to profit, and delight.
And still it hath beene the praise of all best times,
So persons were not touch'd, to taxe the crimes.
Then, in this play, which we present tonight,
And make the obiect of your eare, and sight,
On forfeit of yourselues, thinke nothing true:
Least so you make the maker to iudge you,
For he knowes, Poet neuer credit gain'd
By writing truths, but things (like truthes) well fayn'd.
If any, yet, will (with particular slight
Of application) wrest what he doth write;
And that he meant or him, or her, will say:
They make a libell, which he made a play.

Act 1

Scene 1.1

He comes out making himselfe ready.

C

Have you got the song yet perfect I ga' you, boy?

B

Yes, sir.

C

Let me heare it.

W

You shall, sir, but infaith let nobody else.

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C

Why, I pray?

W

It will get you the dangerous name of a Poet in towne, sir, besides me a perfect deale of ill will at the mansion you wot of, whose lady is the argument of it, where now I am the welcom'st thing vnder a man that comes there.

C

I thinke, and aboue a man too, if the truth were rack'd out of you.

W

No faith, I will confesse before, sir. The gentlewomen play with me, and throw me on the bed; and carry me in to my lady; and she kisses me with her oyld face; and puts a perruke on my head; and askes me if I will weare her gowne; and I say, no: and then she hits me a blow on the eare, and calls me innocent, and lets me go.

C

No maruell, if the dore be kept shut against your master, when the entrance is so easie to you — well sir, you shall go there no more, lest I be faine to seeke your voyce in my ladies rushes, a fortnight hence. Sing, sir. Boy sings.

D

Why, here is the man that can melt away his time, and neuer feeles it! what, betweene his mistris abroad, and his engle at home, high fare, soft lodging, fine clothes, and his fiddle; he thinkes the houres have no wings, or the day no post-horse. Well, sir Gallant, were you strooke with the plague this minute, or condemn'd to any capitall punishment tomorrow, you would beginne then to thinke, and value euery article of your time, esteeme it at the true rate, and giue all for it.

C

Why, what should a man do?

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D

Why, nothing: or that, which when it is done, is as idle. Harken after the next horse–race or hunting–match; lay wagers, praise Puppy, or Pepper–corne, White–foot, Franklin; sweare upon White–maynes party; spend aloud, that my lords may heare you; visite my ladies at night, and be able to giue them the character of euery bowler, or better of the greene. These be the things, wherein your fashionable men exercise themselues, and I for company.

C

Nay, if I have thy authoritie, I will not leaue yet. Come, the other are considerations, when we come to have gray heads, and weake hammes, moyst eyes, and shrunke members. We will thinke on them then; then we will pray, and fast.

D

Aye, and destine onely that time of age to goodnesse, which our want of abilitie will not let us employ in euill?

C

Why, then it is time enough.

D

Yes; as if a man should sleepe all the terme, and thinke to effect his businesse the last day. O, CLERIMONT, this time, because it is an incorporeall thing, and not subiect to sense, we mocke ourselues the fineliest out of it, with vanitie, and miserie indeed: not seeking an end of wretchednesse, but only changing the matter still.

C

Nay, thou wilt not leaue now --

D

See but our common disease! with what iustice can we complaine, that great men will not looke upon us, nor be at leisure to giue our affaires such dispatch, as we expect, when we will neuer do it to ourselues: not heare, nor regard ourselues.

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C

Foh, thou hast read PLVTARCHS moralls, now, or some such tedious fellow; and it shoves so vilely with thee: 'Fore god, it will spoile thy wit vtterly. Talke me of pinnes, and feathers, and ladies, and rushes, and such things: and leaue this Stoicitie alone, till thou mak'st sermons.

D

Well, sir. If it will not take, I have learn'd to loose a little of my kindnesse, as I can. I will do good to no man against his will, certainly. When were you at the colledge?

C

What colledge?

D

As if you knew not!

C

No faith, I came but from court, yesterday.

D

Why, is it not arriu'd there yet, the newes? A new foundation, sir, here in the towne, of ladies, that call themselues the Collegiates, an order betweene courtiers, and countrey–madames, that liue from their husbands; and giue entertainment to all the Wits, and Braueries of the time, as they call them: cry downe, or up, what they like, or dislike in a braine, or a fashion, with most masculine, or rather hermaphroditical authoritie: and, euery day, gaine to their college some new probationer.

C

Who is the president?

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D

The graue, and youthfull matron, the lady HAUGHTIE.

C

A poxe on her autumnall face, her peec'd beauty: there is no man can be admitted till she be ready, now adaies, till she has painted, and perfum'd, and wash'd, and sour'd, but the boy here; and him she wipes her oyld lippes upon, like a sponge. I have made a song, I pray thee heare it, on the subiect.

SONG.

U

Still to be neat, still to be drest,
As, you were going to a feast;
Still to be pou'dred, still perfum'd:
Lady, it is to be presum'd,
Though arts hid causes are not found,
All is not sweet, all is not sound.
Giue me a looke, giue me a face,
That makes simplicity a grace;
Robes loosely flowing, haire as free:
Such sweet neglect more taketh me,
Then all the adulteries of art.
They strike mine eyes, but not my heart.

D

And I am, clearely, on the other side: I loue a good dressing, before any beauty of the world. O, a woman is, then, like a delicate garden; nor, is there one kind of it: she may varie, euery houre; take often counsell of her glasse, and chuse the best. If she have good eares, show them; good haire, lay it out; good legges, weare short cloathes; a good hand, discover it often; practise any art, to mend breath, clense teeth, repaire eye-browes, paint, and professe it.

C

How? publiquely?

D

The doing of it, not the manner: that must be priuate. Many things, that seeme foule, in the doing, do please, done. A lady should, indeede, study her face, when we thinke she sleepes: nor, when the dores are shut, should men be inquiring; all is sacred within, then. Is it for us to see their perrukes put on, their false teeth, their complexion,

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their eye-browes, their nayles? you see guilders will not worke, but inclos'd. They must not discover, how little serues, with the helpe of art, to adorne a great deale. How long did the canuas hang before Ald-gate? were the people suffer'd, to see the Cities Loue and Charitie, while they were rude stone, before they were painted, and burnish'd? no: No more should Seruants approach their Mistrisses, but when they are compleat, and finish'd.

C

Well said, my TRVE-WIT.

D

And a wise lady will keepe a guard alwaies upon the place, that she may do things securely. I once followed a rude fellow into a chamber, where the poore madame, for haste, and troubled, snatch'd at her perruke, to couer her baldnesse: and put it on, the wrong way.

C

O prodigie!

D

And the vn-conscionable knaue helde her in complement an houre with that reuerst face, when I still look'd when she should talke from the the other side.

C

Why? thou shouldst have releiu'd her.

D

No faith, I let her alone, as we will let this argument, if you please, and passe to another. When saw you DAVPHINE EVGENIE?

C

Not these three daies. Shall we go to him this morning? he is very melancholique, I heare.

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D

Sicke of the vnckle? is he? I met that stiffe peece of formality, his vnckle, yesterday, with a huge turbant of night-caps on his head, buckled ouer his eares.

C

O, that is his custome when he walkes abroad. He can endure no noise, man.

D

So I have heard. But is the disease so ridiculous in him as it is made? they say, he has beene upon diuers treaties with the Fish-wiues, and Orenge-women; and articles propounded betweene them: mary the Chimney-sweepers will not be drawne in.

C

No, nor the Broome-men: they stand out stiffely. He can not endure a Costard-monger, he swounes if he heare one.

D

Methinkes, a Smith should be ominous.

C

Or any Hammer-man. A Brasier is not suffer'd to dwell in the parish, nor an Armorer. He would have hang'd a Pewterers 'prentice once on a shroue-tuesdayes riot, for being of that trade, when the rest were quit.

D

A Trumpet should fright him terribly, or the Hau'boyes.

C

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Out of his senses. The Waights of the citie have a pension of him not to come nere that ward. This youth practis'd on him, one night, like the Bell-man; and neuer left till he had brought him downe to the doore, with a long-sword: and there left him flourishing with the ayre.

W

Why, sir? he hath chosen a street to lie in, so narrow at both ends, that it will receive no coaches, nor carts, nor any of these common noyses: and therefore, we that loue him, devise to bring him such as we may, now and then, for his exercise, to breath him. He would growe restly else in his ease: his vertue would rust without action. I entreated a Beareward, one day, to come downe with the dogges of some foure parishes that way, and I thanke him he did; and cried his games vnder master MOROSES'S windore: till he was sent crying away, with his head made a most bleeding spectacle to the multitude. And, another time, a Fencer, going to his prize, had his drum most tragically run through, for taking that street in his way, at my request.

D

A good wag. How do's he for the bells?

C

O, in the Queenes time, he was wont to go out of towne euery satterday at ten aclocke, or on holyday eues. But now, by reason of the sickenesse, the perpetuitie of ringing has made him devise a roome, with double walles, and treble seelings; the windores close shut, and calk'd: and there he liues by candlelight. He turn'd away a man, last weeke, for hauing a paire of new shooes that creak'd. And his fellow waites on him, now, in tennis-court sockes, or slippers sol'd with wooll: and they talke each to other, in a trunke. See, who comes here.

Scene 1.2

B

How now! what ayle you sirs? dumbe?

D

Stroke into stone, almost, I am here, with talkes of thine vncke! There was neuer such a prodigie heard of,

B

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I would you would once loose this subject, my masters, for my sake. They are such as you are, that have brought me into that predicament, I am, with him.

D

How is that?

B

Mary, that he will dis-inherit me, no more. He thinkes, I, and my company are authors of all the ridiculous acts and mon'ments are told of him.

D

S'lid, I would be the author of more, to vexe him, that purpose deserues it: it giues thee law of plaguing him. I will tell thee what I would do. I would make a false almanacke; get it printed: and then have him drawne out on a coronation day to the tower wharfe, and kill him with the noise of the ordinance. Dis-inherit thee! he can not, man. Art not thou next of blood, and his sisters sonne?

B

Aye, but he will thrust me out of it, he vowes, and marry.

D

How! that is a more portent. Can he endure no noise, and will venter on a wife?

C

Yes, why thou art a stranger, it seemes, to his best tricke, yet. He has imploid a fellow this halfe yeare, all ouer England, to hearken him out a dumbe woman; be she of any forme, or any quallitie, so she be able to beare children: her silence is dowrie enough, he sayes.

D

But, I trust to god, he has found none.

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C

No, but he has heard of one that is lodg'd in the next street to him, who is exceedingly soft spoken; thrifty of her speech; that spends but six words a day. And her he is about now, and shall have her.

D

Is it possible! who is his agent in the businesse?

C

Mary a Barber; an honest fellow, one that tells DAVPHINE all here.

D

Why, you oppresse me with wonder! A woman, and a barber, and loue no noyse!

C

Yes faith. The fellow trimes him silently, and has not the knacke with his sheeres, or his fingers: and that continence in a barber he thinkes so eminent a vertue, as it has made him chiefe of his councill.

D

Is the barber to be seene? or the wench?

C

Yes, that they are.

D

I pray thee, DAVPHINE, let us go thether.

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B

I have some businesse now: I can not infaith.

D

You shall have no businesse shall make you neglect this, sir, we will make her talke, beleue it; or if she will not, we can giue out, at least so much as shall interrupt the treaty: we will breake it. Thou art bound in conscience, when he suspects thee without cause, to torment him.

B

Not I, by any meanes. I will giue no suffrage to it. He shall neuer have that plea against me, that I oppos'd the least phant'sie of his. Let it lye upon my starres to be guilty, I will be innocent.

D

Yes, and be poore, and beg; do, innocent: when some groome of his has got him an heire, or this barber, if he himselfe can not. Innocent. I pray thee, NED, where lies she? let him be Innocent, still.

C

Why right ouer against the barbers; in the house, where sir IOHN DAW lies.

D

You do not meane to confound me!

C

Why?

D

Dos he, that would marry her, know so much?

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C

I can not tell.

D

It were inough of imputation to her, with him.

C

Why?

D

The onely talking sir in the towne! IACK DAW! if he teach her not to speake, God be with you. I have some businesse too.

C

Will you not go thether then?

D

Not with the danger to meet DAW, for mine eares.

C

Why? I thought you two had beene upon very good termes.

D

Yes, of keeping distance.

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C

They say he is a very good scholler.

D

Aye, and he sayes it first. A poxe on him, a fellow that pretends onely to learning, buyes titles, and nothing else of bookes in him.

C

The world reports him to be very learned.

D

I am sorry, the world should so conspire to belye him.

C

Good faith, I have heard very good things come from him.

D

You may. There is none so desperately ignorant to deny that. would they were his owne. god be with you, gentleman.

C

This is very abrupt!

Scene 1.3

B

Come, you are a strange open man, to tell euerything, thus.

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C

Why, beleue it DAVPHINE, TRVE–WIT is a very honest fellow.

B

I thinke no other: but this franke nature of his is not for secrets.]]

C

Nay then, you are mistaken DAVPHINE: I know where he has beene well trusted, and discharg'd the trust very truely, and heartily.

B

I contend not, NED, but, with the fewer a businesse is carried, it is euer the safer. Now we are alone, if you will go thether, I am for you.

C

When were you there?

B

Last night: and such a decameron of sport fallen out, BOCCACE neuer thought of the like. DAW dos nothing but court her; and the wrong way. He would lie with her, and prayses her modestie; desires that she would talke, and be free, and commends her silence in verses: which he reades, and swears, are the best that euer man made. Then railes at his fortunes, stampe, and mutines, why he is not made a counsellor, and call'd to affaires of state.

C

I pray thee let us go. I would faine partake this. Some water, BOY.

B

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We are invited to dinner together, he and I, by one that came thither to him, sir LA FOOLE.

C

O, that is a precious mannikin.

B

Do you know him?

C

Aye, and he will know you too, if ere he saw you but once, though you should meet him at church in the midst of prayers. He is one of the Braueries, though he be none of the Wits. He will salute a iudge upon the bench, and bishop in the pulpit, a lawyer when he is pleading at the barre, and a lady when she is dauncing in a masque, and put her out. He do's giue playes, and suppers, and inuites his gwestes to them, aloud, out of his windore, as they ride by in coaches. He has a lodging in the strand for the purpose: or to watch when ladies are gone to the China houses, or the Exchange, that he may meete them by chance, and giue them persents, some two or three hundred pounds worth of toyes, to be laught at. He is neuer without a spare banquet, or sweet-meats in his chamber, their women to alight at, and come up to, for a bayt.

B

Excellent! He was a fine youth last night, but now he is much finer! what is his christen name? I have forgot.

C

SIR AMOROVS LA FOOLE.

W

The gentleman is here that owes that name.

C

Hart, he is come, to inuite me to dinner, I hold my life.

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B

Like enough: pray thee, let us have him up.

C

BOY, marshall him.

W

With a truncheon, sir?

C

Away, I beseech you. I will make him tell us his pedigree, now; and what meat he has to dinner; and, who are his gueses; and, the whole course of his fortunes: with a breath.

Scene 1.4

G

S'auè, deare, sir DAVPHUINE, honor'd master CLERIMONT.

C

Sir AMOROVVS! you have very much honored my lodging, with your presence.

G

Good faith, it is a fine lodging! almost, as delicate a lodging, as mine.

C

Not so, sir.

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G

Excuse me, sir, if it were in the Strand, I assure you. I am come, master CLERIMONT, to entreat you wait upon two or three ladies, to dinner, today.

C

How, sir! wait upon them? did you euer see me carry dishes?

G

No, sir, dispence with me; I meant, to beare them company.

C

O, that I will, sir: the doubtfulnesse of your phrase, beleeeue it, sir, would breed you a quarrell, once an houre, with the terrible boyes, if you should keepe them fellowship a day.

G

It should be extreamely against my will, sir, if I contested with any man.

C

I beleeeue it, sir; where hold you your feast?

G

At TOM OTTERS, sir.

B

TOM OTTER? what is he?

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G

Captaine OTTER, sir; he is a kind of gamster, but he has had command, both by sea, and by land.

B

O, then he is animal amphibium?

G

Aye, sir: his wife was the rich China-woman, that the courtiers visited so often; that gaue the rare entertainment. She commands all at home.

C

Then, she is captaine OTTER?

G

You say very well, sir: she is my kinswoman, a LA-FOOLE by the mother side, and will inuite, any great ladies, for my sake.

B

Not of the LA-FOOLES of Essex?

G

No, sir, the LA-FOOLES of London.

C

Now, he is in.

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G

They all come out of our house, the LA-FOOLES of the north, the LA-FOOLES of the west, the LA-FOOLES of the east, and south — we are as ancient a family, as any is in Europe — but I myself am descended lineally of the French LA-FOOLES — and, we do beare our coat yellow, or #Or, checker'd Azure, and Gules, and some three or foure coulors more, which is a very noted coat, and has, sometimes, beene solemnly worne by diuers nobility of our house — but let that go, antiquity is not respected now — I had a brace of fat does sent me, gentlemen, and halfe a dosen of phesants, a dosen or two of godwits, and some other foule, which I would have eaten, while they are good, and in good company — there will be a great lady, or two, my lady HAVGHTY, my lady CENTAVRE, mistris DOL MAVIS — and they come on purpose, to see the silent gentle-woman, mistris EPICOENE, that honest sir IOHN DAW has promis'd to bring thether — and then mistris TRVSTY, my ladies woman, will be there too, and this honorable knight, sir DAVPHINE, with yourselfe, master CLERIMONT — and we will be very merry, and have fiders, and daunce — I have bene a mad wag, in my time, and have spent some crownes since I was a page in court, to my lord LOFTY, and after, my ladies gentleman vsher, who got me knighted in Ireland, since it pleas'd my elder brother to die — I had a faire a gold Ierkin on that day, as any was worne in the Iland-voyage, or at Caliz, none disprais'd, and I came ouer in it hither, show'd myselfe to my friends, in court, and after went downe to my tenants, in the countrey, and suruai'd my lands, let new leases, tooke their money, spent it in the eye of the land here, upon ladies — and now I can take up at my pleasure.

B

Can you take up ladies, sir?

C

O, let him breath, he has not recouer'd.

B

Would I were your halfe, in that commodity.

C

No, sir, excuse me: I meant money, which can take up anything. I have another guest, or two, to inuite, and say as much to, Gentlemen. I will take my leaue abruptly, in hope you will not faile — Your seruant.

B

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We will not faile you, sir precious LAFOOLE; but she shall, that your ladies come to see: if I have credit, afore sir DAW.

C

Did you euer heare such a wind-sucker, as this?

B

Or, such a rooke, as the other! that will betray his mistris, to be seene. Come, it is time, we preuented it.

C

Go.

Act 2

Scene 2.1

A

Can not I, yet, finde out a more compendious method, then by this trunke, to saue my seruants the labour of speech, and mine eares, the discord of sounds? Let me see: all discourses, but mine owne, afflict me, they seeme harshe, impertinent, and irkesome. Is it not possible, that thou should'st answer me, by signes, and, I apprehend thee, fellow? speake not, though I question you. You have taken the ring, off from the street dore, as I bad you? answere me not, by speech, but by silence; vnlesse, it be otherwise (—) At the breaches, still the fellow makes legs: or signes.

very good. And, you have fastened on a thicke quilt, or flockbed, on the out-side of the dore; that if they knocke with their daggers, or with brickbats, they can make no noise? but with your legge, your answer, vnlesse it be otherwise, (—) very good. This is not, onley, fit modestie in a seruant, but good state, and discretion in a master. And you have been with CVTBERD, the barber, to have him come to me? (—) good. And, he will come presently? answere me not but with your legge, vnlesse it be otherwise: if it be otherwise, shake your head, or shrug. (—) So. Your Italian, and Spaniard, are wise in these! and it is, a frugall, and comely grauity. How long will it be, ere CVTBERD come? stay, if an houre, hold up you whole hand; if halfe an houre, two fingers; if a quarter, one; (—) good: halfe a quarter? it is well. And have you giuen him a key, to come in without knocking? (—) good. And, is the lock oyld, and the hinges, today? (—) good. And the quilting of the staires nowhere worne out, and bare? (—) very good. I see, by much doctrine, and impulsion, it may be effected: stand by. The Turke, in this diuine discipline, is admirable, exceeding all the potentates of the earth; still waited on by mutes; and all his commands so executed; yea, euen in the warre, (as I have heard) and in his marches, most of his chardges, and directions, giuen by signes, and with silence: and exquisite art! and I am heartely asham'd, and angry oftentimes, that the Princes of Christendome, should suffer a Barbarian, to transcend them in so high a point of felicity. I will

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practise it, hereafter. One windes a horne without.

How now? o! o! what villaine? what prodigie of mankinde is that? looke. Againe.

O! cut his throate, cut his throat: what murderer, hell-hound, diuell can this be?

W

It is a post from the court --

A

Out rogue, and must thou blow thy horne, too?

W

Alasse, it is a post from the court, sir, that sayes, he must speake you, paine of death --

A

Payne of thy life, be silent.

Scene 2.2

D

By your leaue, sir, I am a stranger here: is your name, master MOROSE? is your name, master MOROSE? fishes! Pythagoreans all? this is strange. What say you, sir, nothing? Has HARPOCRATES beene here, with his club, among you? well sir, I will beleeeue you to be the man, at this time: I will venter upon you, sir. Your friends at court commend them to you, sir --

A

(O men! O manners! was there euer such an impudence?)

D

And are extremely sollicitous for you, sir.

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A

Whose knaue are you!

D

Mine owne knaue, and your compere, sir.

A

Fetch me my sword —

D

You shall taste, the one halfe of my dagger, if you do (groome) and you, the other, if you stirre, sir: be patient, I charge you, in the kings name, and heare me without insurrection. They say, you are to marry? to marry! do you marke, sir?

A

How then, rude companion!

D

Marry, your friends do wonder, sir, the Thames being so neere, wherein you may drowne, so handsomely; or London-bridge, at a low fall, with a fine leape, to hurry you downe the streame; or, such a delicate steeple, in the towne, as Bow, to vault from; or, a brauer height, as Pauls; or, if you affected to do it nearer home, and a shorter way, an excellent garret window, into the street; or, a beame, in the said garret, with this halter, He shewes him a halter.

which they have sent, and desire, that you would sooner commit your graue head to this knot, then to the wedlocke nooze; or, take a little sublimate, and go out of the world, like a rat; or, a flye (as one said) with a straw in your arse: any way, rather, then to follow this goblin matrimony. Alasse, sir, do you euer thinke to finde a chaste wife, in these times? now? when there are so many masques, playes, puritane parlee's, madfolkes, and other strange sights to be seene, dayly, priuate and publique? if you had liu'd, in king ETHELRED's time, or EDWARD the Confessor's, you might, perhaps, have found in some cold countrey hamlet, then, a dull, frostie wench, would have beene contented with one man: now, they will as soone be pleas'd with one leg, or one eye. I will tell you, sir, the monstrous hazards you shall runne with a wife.

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A

Good sir, have I euer cosen'd, any friends of yours, of their land? bought their possessions? taken forfeit of their morgage? beg'd a reuersion from them? bastarded their issue? what have I done, that may deserue this?

D

Nothing, sir, that I know, but your itch of marriage.

A

Why? if I had made an assassinate upon your father; vitiated your mother: rauished your sisters --

D

I would kill you, sir, I would kill you, if you had.

A

Why? you do more in this, sir: it were a vengeance centuple, for all facinorous acts, that could be nam'd, to do that you do --

D

Alasse, sir, I am but a messenger: I but tell you, what you must heare. It seemes, your friends are carefull after your soules health, sir, and would have you know the danger (but you may do your pleasure, for all them, I perswade not, sir) if, after you are married, your wife do run away with a vaulter, or the Frenchman, that walkes upon ropes, or him that daunces the jig, or a fencer, for his skill at his weapon, why it is not their fault; they have discharged their consciences: when you know what may happen. Nay, suffer valiantly, sir, for I must tell you, all the perills that you are obnoxious to. If she be faire, yong, and vegetous, no sweet meats euer drew more flies; all the yellow doublets, and great roses in the towne will be there. If foule, and crooked, she will be with them, and buy those doublets and roses, sir. If rich, and that you marry her dowry, not her; she will raigne in your house, as imperious as a widow. If noble, all her kindred will be your tyrannes. If fruitfull, as proud as May, and humorous as April; she must have her doctors, her midwiues, her nurses, her longings euery houre: though it be for the dearest morsell of man. If learned, there was neuer such a parrat; all your patrimony will be too little for the guests, that must be inuited, to heare her speake Latine and Greeke: and you must lie with her in those languages too, if you will please her. If precise, you must feast all the silenc'd brethren, once in three daies; salute the sisters; entertaine the whole family, or wood of them; and heare long-winded exercises, singings, and catechisings, which you are not giuen to, and yet must giue for: to please the zealous matron your wife, who, for the holy cause, will

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cosen you, ouer and aboue. You beginne to sweat, sir? but this is not halfe, infaith: you may do your pleasure notwithstanding, as I said before, I come not to perswade you. The Mute is stealing away. upon my faith, master seruingman, if you do stirre, I will beat you.

A

O, what is my sinne! what is my sinne?

D

Then, if you loue your wife, or rather, dote on her, sir: o, how she will torture you! and take pleasure in your torments! you shall lye with her but when she lists; she will not hurt her beauty, her complexion; or it must be for the iewell, or that pearle, when she do's; euery halfe houres pleasure must be bought anew: and with the same paine, and charge, you woo'd her at first. Then, you must keepe what seruants she please; what company she will; that friend must not visit you without her licence; and him she loues most she will seeme to hate eagerliest, to decline your ielousie; or, faigne to be ielous of you first; and for that cause go liue with her she–friend, or cosen at the colledge, that can instruct her in all the mysteries, of writing letters, corrupting seruants, taming spies; where she must have that rich gounne for such a great day; a new one for the next; a richer for the third; be seru'd in siluer; have the chamber fill'd with a succession of groomes, foot–men, vshers, and other messengers; besides embroyderers, iewellers, tyre–women, sempsters, fether–men, perfumers; while she feeles not how the land drops away; nor the acres melt; nor forsees the change, when the mercer has your woods for her veluets; neuer weighes what her pride costs, sir: so she may kisse a page, or a smoth chinne, that has the despaire of a beard; be a states–woman, know all the newes, what was done at Salisbury, what at the Bath, what at court, what in progresse; or, so she may censure poets, and authors, and stiles, and compare them, DANIEL with SPENSER, IONSON with the tother youth, and so foorth; or, be thought cunning in controuersies, or the very knots of diuinitie; and have, often in her mouth, the state of the question: and then skip to the Mathematiques, and demonstration and answer, in religion to one; in state, to another, in baud'ry to a third.

A

O, O!

D

All this is very true, sir. And then her going in disguise to that coniuurer, and this cunning woman: where the first question is, how soone you shall die? next, if her present seruant loue her? next that, if she shall have a new seruant? and how many? which of her family would make the best baud, male, or female? what precedence she shall have by her next match? and sets downe the answers, and beleeueth them about the scriptures. Nay, perhaps she will study the art.

A

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Gentle sir, have you done? have you had your pleasure of me? I will thinke of these things.

D

Yes sir: and then comes reeking home of vapor and sweat, with going afoot, and lies in, a moneth, of a new face, all oyle, and birdlime; and rises in asses milke, and is clens'd with a new fucus: god be with you, sir. One thing more (which I had almost forgot.) This too, with whom you are to marry, may have made a conuayance of her virginity afore hand, as your wife widdowes do of their states, before they marry, in trust to some friend, sir: who can tell? or if she have not done it yet, she may do, upon the wedding day, or the night before, and antidate you cuckold. The like has beene heard of, in nature. It is no deuis'd impossible thing, sir. God be with you: I will be bold to leaue this rope with you, sir, for a remembrance. Farewell MVTE.

A

Come, have me to my chamber: but first shut the dore. The horne againe.
O, shut the dore, shut the dore: Is he come againe?

I

It is I, sir, your barber.

A

O CVTBERD, CVTBERD, CVTBERD! here has bin a cut-throate with me: helpe me in to my bed, and giue me physicke with thy counsell.

Scene 2.3

F

Nay, if she will, let her refuse, at her owne charges: it is nothing to me, gentlemen. But she will not be invited to the like feats, or guests, euery day.

C

O, by no meanes, she may not refuse — They dissuade her, priuately.
to stay at home, if you loue your reputation: 'Slight, you are invited thither on purpose to be seene, and laught at by the lady of the colledge, and her shadowes. This trumpeter hath proclaim'd you.

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B

You shall not go; let him be laught at in your steade, for not bringing you: and put him to his extemporall faculty of fooling, and talking loud to satisfie the company.

C

He will suspect us, talke aloud. 'Pray' mistris EPICOENE, let us see your verses; we have sir IOHN DAW's leaue: do not conceale your seruants merit, and your owne glories.

E

They will proue my seruants glories, if you have his leaue so soone.

B

His vaine glories, lady!

F

Shew them, shew them, mistris, I dare owne them.

E

Iudge you, what glories?

F

Nay, I will read them myselfe, too: an author must recite his owne workes. It is a madrigall of modestie. Modest, and faire, for faire and good are neere Neighbours, how ere. --

B

Very good.

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C

Aye, Is it not?

F

No noble vertue euer was alone, But two in one.

B

Excellent!

C

That againe, I pray sir IOHN.

B

#It has something in it like rare wit, and sense.

C

Peace.

F

No noble vertue euer was alone,
But two in one.
Then, when I praise sweet modestie, I praise
Bright beauties raies:
And hauing prais'd both beauty and modestee,
I have prais'd thee.

B

Admirable!

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C

How it chimes, and cries tinke in the close, diuinely!

B

Aye, it is SENECA.

C

No, I thinke it is PLVTARCH.

F

The dor on PLVTARCH, and SENECA, I hate it: they are mine owne imaginations, by that light. I wonder those fellowes have such credit with gentlemen!

C

They are very graue authors.

F

Graue asses! meere Essaists! a few loose sentences, and that is all. A man would talke so, his whole age, I do vtter as good things euery houre, if they were collected, and obseru'd, as either of them.

B

Indeede! sir IOHN?

C

He must needs, liuing among the Wits, and Braueries too.

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B

Aye, and being president of them, as he is.

F

There is ARISTOTLE, a mere common place-fellow; PLATO, a discourser; THVCIDIDES, and LIVIE, tedious and drie; TACITVS, an entire knot: sometimes worth the vntying very seldome.

C

What do you think of the Poets, sir IOHN?

F

Not worthy to be nam'd for authors. HOMER, an old tedious prolix ass, talks of curriers, and chines of beefe. VIRGIL, of dunging of land, and bees. HORACE, of I know not what.

C

I thinke so.

F

And so PINDARVS, LYCOPHRON, ANACREON, CATVLLVS, SENECA the tragdian, LVCAN, PROPERTIVS, TIBVLLVS, MARTIAL, IUVENAL, AVSONIVS, STATIVS, POLITIAN, VALERIVS FLACCVS, and the rest --

C

What a sacke full of their names he has got!

B

And how he poures them out! POLITIAN, and VALERIVS FLACCVS!

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C

Was not the character right, of him?

B

As could be made, infaith.

F

And PERSIVS, a crabbed cockescombe, not to be endur'd.

B

Why? whom do you account for authors, sir IOHN DAW?

F

Syntagma Iuris ciuilis, Corpus Iuris ciuilis, Corpus Iuris canonici, the King of Spaines bible.

B

Is the King of Spaines bible an author?

C

Yes, and Syntagma.

B

What was that Syntagma, sir?

F

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A ciuill lawer, a Spaniard.

B

Sure, Corpus was a Dutch–man.

C

Aye, both the Corpusses, I knew them: they were very corpulent authors.

F

And, then there is VATABLVS, POMPONATIVS, SYMANCHA, the other are not to be receiu'd, within the thought of a scholler.

B

Fore god, you have a simple learn'd seruant, lady, in titles.

C

I wonder that he is not called to the helme, and made a councellor!]]

B

He is one extraordinary.

C

Nay, but in ordinarie! to say truth, the state wants such.

B

Why, that will follow.

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C

I muse, a mistress can be so silent to the dotes of such a seruant.

F

It is her vertue, sir. I have written somewhat of her silence too.

B

In verse, sir IOHN?

C

What else?

B

Why? how can you iustifie your owne being of a Poet, that so slight all the old Poets?

F

Why? euery man, that writes in verse, is not a Poet; you have of the Wits, that write verses, and yet are no Poets: they are Poets that liue by it, the poore fellowes that liue by it.

B

Why? would not you liue by your verses, sir IOHN.

C

No, it were pittie he should. A knight liue by his verses? he did not make them to that ende, I hope.

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B

And yet the noble SIDNEY liues by his, and the noble family not asham'd.

C

Aye, he profest himselfe; but sir IOHN DAW has more caution: he will not hinder his owne rising in the state so much! do you thinke he will? Your verses, good sir IOHN, and no poems.

F

Silence in woman, is like speech in man,
Deny it who can.

B

Not I, beleuee it: your reason, sir.

F

Nor, is it a tale,
That female vice should be a vertue male,
Or masculine vice, a female vertue be:
You shall it see
Prou'd with increase,
I know to speake, and she to hold her peace.
Do you conceiue me, gentlemen?

B

No faith, how meane you with increase, sir IOHN?

F

Why, with increase is, when I court her for the common cause of mankind; and she sayes nothing, but consentire videtur: and in time is grauida.

B

Then, this is a ballad of procreation?

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C

A madrigall of procreation, you mistake.

E

'Pray giue me my verses againe, seruant.

F

If you you will aske them aloud, you shall.

C

See, here is TRVE–WIT againe!

Scene 2.4

C

Where hast thou beene, in the name of madnesse! thus accoutred with thy horne?

D

Where the sound of it might have pierc'd your sense, with gladness, had you beene in eare–reach of it.
DAVPHINE, fall downe and worship me: I have forbid the banes, lad. I have been with thy vertuous vncler, and have broke the match.

B

You have not, I hope.

D

Yes faith; if thou shouldst hope otherwise, I should repent me: this horne got me entrance, kisse it. I had no other way to get in, but by faining to be a post; but when I got in once, I prou'd none, but rather the contrary, turn'd him

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into a post, or a stone, or what is stiffer, with thundring into him the incommodities of a wife, and the miseries of marriage. If euer GORGON were seene in the shape of a woman, he hath seene her in my description. I have put him off of that sent, foreuer. Why do you not applaud, and adore me, sirs? why stand you mute? Are you stupid? you are not worthy of the benefit.

B

Did not I tell you? mischiefe! --

C

I would you had plac'd this benefit somewhere else.

D

Why so?

C

Slight, you have done the most inconsiderate, rash, weake thing, that euer man did to his friend.

B

Friend! if the most malicious enemy I have, had studied to inflict an iniury upon me, it could not be a greater.

D

Wherein? for gods--sake! Gent: come to yourselues againe.

B

But I presag'd thus much afore, to you.

C

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Would my lips had beene soldred, when I spak on it. Slight, what mou'd you to be thus impertinent?

D

My masters, do not put on this strange face to pay my courtesie: off with this visor. Have good turnes done you, and thanke them this way?

B

Fore heau'n, you have vndone me. That, which I have plotted for, and beene maturing now these foure moneths, you have blasted in a minute: now I am lost, I may speake. This gentlewoman was lodg'd here by me on purpose, and, to be put upon my vncler, hath profest this obstinate silence for my sake, being my entire friend; and one, that for the requitall of such a fortune, as to marry him, would have made me very ample conditions: where now, all my hopes are vtterly miscaried by this vnlucky accident.

C

Thus it is, when a man will be ignorantly officious; do seruices, and not know his why: I wonder what curteous itch possess'd you! you neuer did absurder part in your life, nor a greater trespasse to friendship, to humanity.

B

Faith, you may forgiue it, best: it was your cause principally.

C

I know it, would it had not.

B

How not CVTBERD? what newes?

I

The best, the happiest that euer was, sir. There has beene a mad gentleman with your vncler, this morning (I thinke this be the gentleman) that has almost talk'd him out of his wits, with threatenng him from marriage --

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B

On, I pray thee.

I

And your vnkle, sir, he thinks it was done by your procurement; therefore he will see the party, you wot of, presently: and if he like her, he sayes, and that she be so inclining to dombe, as I have told him, he sweares he will marry her, today, instantly, and not deferre it a minute longer.

B

Excellent! beyond our expectation!

D

Beyond your expectation? by this light, I knewe it would be thus.

B

Nay, sweet TRVE–WIT, forgiue me.

D

No, I was ignorantly officious, impertinent: this was the absurd, weake part.

C

Wilt thou ascribe that to merit, now, was meere fortune?

D

Fortune? mere prouidence. Fortune had not a finger in it. I saw it must necessarily in nature fall out so: my genius is neuer false to me in these things. Shew me, how it could be otherwise.

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B

Nay, gentlemen, contend not, it is well now.

D

Alasse, I let him go on with inconsiderate, and rash, and what he pleas'd.

C

Away thou strange iustifier of thyselfe, to be wiser then thou wert, by the euent.

D

Euent! By this light, thou shalt neuer perswade me, but I foresaw it, as well as the starres themselues.

B

Nay, gentlemen, it is well now: do you two entertaine sir IOHN DAW, with discourse, while I send her away with instructions.

D

I will be acquainted with her, first, by your fauour.

C

Master TRVE–Wit, lady, a freind of ours.

D

I am sorry, I have not knowne you sooner, lady, to celebrate this rare vertue of your silence.

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C

Faith, if you had come sooner, you should have seene, and heard her well celebrated in sir IOHN DAW's madrigalls.

D

IACK DAW, god saue you, when saw you LA-FOOLE?

F

Not since last night, master TRVE-WIT.

D

That is miracle! I thought you two had beene inseparable.

F

He is gone to inuite his guests.

D

Gods #so it is true! what a false memory have I towards that man! I am one: I met him e'ne now, upon that he calls his delicate fine blacke horse, rid into a foame, with poasting from place to place, and person to person, to giue them the cue --

C

Lest they should forget?

D

Yes: there was neuer poore captaine tooke more paines at a muster to show men, then he, at this meale, to shew friends.

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F

It is his quarter-feast, sir.

C

What! do you say so, sir IOHN?

D

Nay, IACK DAW will not be out, at the best friends he has, to the talent of his wit: where is his mistris, to heare and applaud him? is she gone!

F

Is mistris EPICOENE gone?

C

Gone afore, with sir DAVPHINE, I warrant, to the place.

D

Gone afore! that were a manifest iniurie; a disgrace and a halfe: to refuse him at such a festiuall time, as this, being a Braury, and a Wit too.

C

Tut, he will swallow it like creame: he is better read in Iure ciuili, then to esteeme anything a disgrace is offer'd him from a mistris.

F

Nay, let her eene go; she shall sit alone, and be dumbe in her chamber, a weeke together, for IOHN DAW, I warrant her: do's she refuse me?

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C

No, sir, do not take it so to heart: she do's not refuse you, but a little neglect you. Good faith, TRVE-WIT, you were to blame to put it into his head, that she do's refuse him.

D

She do's refuse him, sir, palpably: howeuer you mince it. If I were as he, I would sweare to speake ne're a word to her, today, for it.

F

By this light, no more I will not.

D

Nor to anybody else, sir.

F

Nay, I will not say so, gentlemen.

C

It had beene an excellent happy condition for the company, if you could have drawne him to it.

F

I will be very melancholique, infaith.

C

As a dog, if I were as you, sir IOHN.

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D

Or a snaile, or a hog–louse: I would roule myselfe up for this day, introth, they should not vnwinde me.

F

By this pick–tooth, so I will.

C

It is well done: he beginnes already to be angry with his teeth.

F

Will you go, gentlemen?

C

Nay, you must walke alone, if you be right melancholique, sir IOHN.

D

Yes sir, we will dog you, we will follow you afarre off.

C

Was there euer such a two yards of knighthood, measur'd out by Time, to be sold to laughter?

D

A meere talking mole! hang him: no mushrome was euer so fresh. A fellow so vtterly nothing, as he knowes not what he would be.

C

Let us follow him: but first, let us go to DAVPHINE, he is houering about the house, to heare what newes.

D

Content.

Scene 2.5

A

Welcome CVTBERD; draw neere with you faire chardge: and, in her eare, softly intreat her to vnmasque (—) So. Is the dore shut? (—) inough. Now CVTBERD, with the same discipline I vse to my family, I will question you. As I conceiue, CVTBERD, this gentlewoman is she, you have prouided, and brought, in hope she will fit me in the place and person of a wife? Answer me not, but with your leg, vnlesse it be otherwise: (—) very well done CVTBERD. I conceiue, besides, CVTBERD, you have beene pre-acquainted with her birth, education, and quallities, or else you would not preferre her to my acceptance, in the waighy consequence of marriage. (—) this I conceiue, CVTBERD. Answer me not but with your leg, vnlesse it be otherwise. (—) Very well done CVTBERD. Giue aside now a little, and leaue me to examine her condition, and aptitude to my affection. He goes about her, and viewes her.

She is exceeding faire, and of a speciall good fauour; a sweet composition, or harmony of limmes: her temper of beauty has the true height of my blood. The knaue hath exceedingly wel fitted me without: I will now trie her within. Come neere, faire gentlewoman: let not my behaiour seeme rude, though vnto you, being rare, it may happely appeare strange. (—) She curtsies.

Nay, lady, you may speake, though CVTBERD, and my man, might not: for, of all sounds, onely, the sweet voice of a faire lady has the iust length of mine eares. I beseech you, say lady, out of the first fire of meeting eyes, (they say) loue is stricken: do you feele any such motion, sodenly shot into you, from any part you see in me? ha, lady? (—) Curtsie.

Alasse, lady, these answers by silent curt'sies, from you, are too courtlesse, and simple. I have euer had my breeding in court: and she that shall be my wife, must be accomplished with courtly, and audacious ornaments. Can you speake lady? She speakes softly.

E

Iudge you, forsooth.

A

What say you, lady? speake out, I beseech you.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

E

Iudge you, forsooth.

A

On my iudgement, a diuine softnes! but can you naturally lady, as I enioyne these by doctrine and industry, referre yourself to the search of my iudgement, and (not taking pleasure in your tougue, which is a womans chiefest pleasure) thinke it plausible, to answer me by silent gestures, so long as my speeches iumpe right, with what you conceiue? (--) Curtsie.

Excellent! diuine! if it were possible she should hold out thus! Peace CVTBRD, thou art made foreuer, as thou hast made me, if this felicitie have lasting: but I will trie her further. Deare lady, I am courtly, I tell you, and I must have mine eares banqueted with pleasant, and wittie conferences, pretty girds, scoffes, and daliance in her, that I meane to choose for my bedpheere. The ladies in court, thinke it a most desperate impaire to their quicknesse of wit, and good carriage, if they can not giue occasion for a man to court them; and, when an amorous discourse is set on foot, minister as good matter to continue it, as himselfe: and do you alone so much differ from all them, that, what they (with so much circumstance) affect, and toile for, to seeme learn'd, to seeme iudicious, to seeme sharpe, and conceited, you can bury in yourselfe, with silence? and rather trust your graces to the faire conscience of vertue, then to the worlds, or your owne proclamation?

E

I should be sorry else.

A

What say you ladie? good ladie, speake out.

E

I should be sorrie, else

A

That sorrow doth fill me with gladnesse! O MOROSE! thou art happie aboue mankinde! pray that thou maiest containe thyselfe. I will onely put her to it once more, and it shall be with the vtmost touch, and test of their sexe. But heare me, faire lady, I do also loue to see her, whom I shall choose for my heicfar, to be the first and principall in all fashions; præcede all the dames at court, by a fortnight; have her counsell of taylors, linneners, lace-women, embroyderers, and sit with them sometimes twise a day, upon French intelligences; and then come forth, varied like Nature, or oftner then she, and better, by the helpe of Art, her æmulous seruant. This do I

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affect. And how will you be able, lady, with this frugalitie of speech, to giue the manifold (but necessarie) instructions, for that bodies, these sleeues, those skirts, this cut, that stitch, this embroyderie, that lace, this wire, those knots, that ruffe, those roses, this girdle, that fanne, the tother skarfe, these gloues? ha! what say you, ladie.

E

I will leaue it to you, sir.

A

How lady! pray you, rise a note.

E

I leaue it to wisdom, and you sir.

A

Admirable creature! I will trouble you no more: I will not sinne against so sweet a simplicity. Let me now be bold to print, on those diuine lips, the seale of being mine. CVTBERD, I giue thee the lease of thy house free: thanke me not, but with thy leg (—) I know what thou wouldst say, she is poore, and her friends deceased; she has brought a wealthy dowrie in her silence, CVTBERD: and in respect of her pouerty, CVTBERD, I shall have her more louing, and obedient, CVTBERD. Go thy waies, and get me a minister presently, with a soft, low voice to marry us, and pray him he will not be impertinent, but briefe as he can; away: softly, CVTBERD. Sirrah, conduct your mistris into the dining roome, your now—mistris. O my felicity! how I shall be reueng'd on mine insolent kinsman, and his plots, to fright me from marrying! This night I will get an heire, and thrust him out of my bloud like a stranger; he would be knighted, forsooth, and though by that meanes to raigne ouer me, his title must do it: no kinsman, I will now make you bring me the tenth lords, and the sixteenth ladies letter, kinsman; and it shall do you no good kinsman. Your knighthood itselfe shall come on its knees, and it shall be reiected; it shall be sued for its fees to execution, and not be redeem'd; it shall cheat at the tweluepeny ordinary, it knighthood, for its diet all the terme time, and tell tales for it in the vacation, to the hostesse: or it knighthood shall do worse; take sanctuary in Coleharbor, and fast. It shall fright all its friends, with borrowing letters; and when one of the foure—score hath brought it knighthood ten shillings, it knighthood shall go to the Cranes, or the Beare at the Bridge—foot, and be drunk in feare: it shall not have money to discharge one tauerne reckoning, to inuite the old creditors, to forbear it knighthood; or the new, that should be, to trust it knighthood. It shall be the tenth name in the bond, to take up the commoditie of pipkins, and stone jugs; and the part thereof shall not furnish it knighthood forth, for the attempting of a bakers widdow, a browne bakers widdow. It shall giue it knighthoods name, for a stallion, to all gamesome citizens wiues, and be refus'd; when the master of a dancing schoole, or (How do you call him) the worst reueller in the towne is taken: it shall want clothes, and by reason of that, wit, to foole to lawyers. it shall not have hope to reaire itselfe by Constantinople, Ireland, or Virginia; but the best, and last fortune to it knighthood shall be, to make DOL TEARE—SHEET, or KATE COMMON, a lady: and so, it knighthood may eate.

Scene 2.6

D

Are you sure he is not gone by?

B

No, I staid in the shope euer since.

C

But, he may take the other end of the lane.

B

No, I told him I would be here at this end: I appointed him hether.

D

What a barbarian it is to stay then!

B

Yonder he comes.

C

And his charge left behinde him, which is a very good signe, DAVPHINE.

B

How now CVTBERD, succedes it, or no?

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I

Past imagination, sir, omnia secunda; you could not have pray'd, to have had it so wel: Saltat senex, as it is in the prouerbe, he do's triumph in his felicity; admires the party! he has giuen me the lease of my house too! and, I am now going for a silent minister to marry them, and away.

D

Slight, get one of the silenc'd ministers, a zealous brother would torment him purely.

I

cum priuilegio, sir.

B

O, by no meanes, let us do nothing to hinder it now when it is done and finished, I am for you: for any deuisse of vexation.

I

And that shall be, within this halfe houre, upon my dexterity, gentlemen. Contriue what you can, in the meantime, bonis auibus.

C

How the slaue doth latine it!

D

It would be made a iest to posterity, sirs, this daies mirth, if ye will.

C

Beshrew his heart that will not, I pronounce.

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B

And, for my part. What is it?

D

To translate all LA-FOOLES company, and his feast hether, today to celebrate this bride-ale.

B

Aye mary, but how will it be done?

D

I will vndertake the directing of all the ladie-guests thether, and then the meat must follow.

C

For gods sake, let us effect it: it will be an excellent comdy of affliction, so many seuerall noyses.

B

But are they not at the other place already, thinke you?

D

I will warrant you for the colledge-honors: one of their faces has not the priming color laid on yet, nor the other her smocke sleek'd.

C

O, but they will rise earlier then ordinary, to a feast.

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D

Best go see, and assure ourselues.

C

Who knowes the house?

D

I will lead you, were you neuer there yet?

B

Not I.

C

Nor I.

D

Where have you liu'd then? not know TOM OTTER!

C

No: for gods sake, what is he?

D

An excellent animal, equall with your DAW, or LA-FOOLE, if not transcendent; and do's latine it as much as your barber: he is his wifes Subiect, he calls her Princesse, and at such times as these, followes her up and downe the house like a page, with his hat off, partly for heate, partly for reuerence. At this instant, he is marshalling of his bull, beare, and horse.

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B

What be those, in the name of Sphinx?

D

Why sir? he has beene a great man at the beare-garden in his time: and from that subtle sport, has tane the witty denomination of his chiefe carousing cups. One he calls his bull, another his beare, another his horse. And then he has his lesser glasses, that he calls his deere, and his ape; and seuerall degrees of them too: and neuer is well, nor thinkes any intertainment perfect, till these be brought out, and set on the cupbord.

C

For gods loue! we should misse this, if we should not go.

D

Nay, he has a thousand things as good, that will speake him all day. He will raile on his wife, with certaine common places, behinde her backe; and to her face --

B

No more of him. Let us go see him, I petition you.

Act 3

Scene 3.1

H

Nay, good Princesse, heare me pauca verba.

J

By that light, I will have you chain'd up, with your bul-dogs, and beare-dogges, if you be not ciuill the sooner. I will send you to kennell, infaith. You were best baite me with your bull, beare, and horse! Neuer a time, that the courtiers, or collegiates come to the house, but you make it a shrouetuesday! I would have you get your

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whitsontide–veluet–cap, and your staffe in your hand, to intertaine them: yes introth, do.

H

Not so, Princesse, neither, but vnder correction, sweete Princesse, give me leaue — these things I am knowne to the courtiers by. It is reported to them for my humor, and they receiue it so, and do expect it. TOM OTTERS bull, beare, and horse is knowne all ouer England, in verum natura.

J

Fore me, I will na–ture them ouer to Paris–garden, and na–ture you thether too, if you pronounce them againe. Is a beare a fit beast, or a bull, to mixe in society with great ladies? thinke in your discretion, in any good politie.

H

The horse then, good Princesse.

J

Well, I am contented for the horse: they loue to be well hors'd, I know. I loue it myselfe.

H

And it is a delicate fine horse this. Poetarum Pegasus. Vnder correction, Princesse, IVPITER did turne himselfe into a — Taurus, or Bull, vnder correction, good Princesse.

J

By my integritie, I will send you ouer to the banke–side, I will commit you to the Master of the garden, if I heare but a syllable more. Must my house, or my roofe, be polluted with the sent of beares, and bulls, when it is perfum'd for great ladies? Is this according to the instrument, when I married you? That I would be Princesse, and raigne in mine owne house: and you would be my subiect, and obay me? What did you bring me, should make you thus peremptory? Do I allow you your halfe–crowne a day, to spend, where you will, among your gamsters, to vexe and torment me, at such times as these? Who giues you your maintenance, I pray you? who allowes you your horse–meat, and mans–meat? your three sutes of apparell a yeere? your foure paire of stockings, one silke, three worsted? your cleane linnen, your bands, and cuffes, when I can get you to weare them? It is mar'l you have them on now. Who graces you with courtiers, or great personages, to speake to you out of their coaches, and come home to your house? Were you euer so much as look'd upon by a lord, or a lady, before I married you: but on the Easter, or Whitsonholy–daies? and then out at the banquetting–house windore, when NED WHITING, or

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GEORGE STONE, were at the stake?

D

(For gods sake, let us go staue her off him.)

J

Answer me to that. And did not I take you up from thence, in an old greasie buffe–doublet, with points; and greene vellet sleeues, out at the elbowes? you forget this.

D

(She will worry him, if we helpe not in time.)

J

O, here are some of the gallants! Go to, behaue yourselfe distinctly, and with good moralitie: Or, I protest, I will take away your exhibition.

Scene 3.2

D

By your leaue, faire mistris OTTER, I will be bold to enter these gentlemen in your acquaintance.

J

It shall not be obnoxious, or difficill, sir.

D

How do's my noble Captaine? Is the bull, beare, and horse, in rerum natura still?

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H

Sir, Sic visum superis.

J

I would you would but intimate them, do. Go your waies in, and get tosts, and butter, made for the wood-cocks. That is a fit prouince for you.

C

Alas, what a tyrannie, is this poore fellow married to.

D

O, but the sport will be anon, when we get him loose.

B

Dares he euer speake?

D

No Anabaptist euer rail'd with the like licence: but marke her language in the meantime, I beseech you.

J

Gentlemen, you are very aptly come. My cosin, sir AMOROVVS, will be here briefly.

D

In good time lady. Was not sir IOHN DAW here, to aske for him, and the companie?

J

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I can not assure you, Mr TRVE–WIT. Here was a very melancholy knight in a ruffe, that demanded my subject for somebody, a gentleman, I thinke.

C

Aye, that was he, lady.

J

But he departed straight, I can resolue you.

B

What an excellent choice phrase, this lady expresses in!

D

O, sir! she is the onely authentick courtier, that is not naturally bred one, in the citie.

J

You have taken that report upon trust, gentlemen.

D

No, I assure you, the court gouernes it so, lady, in your behalfe.

J

I am the seruant of the court, and courtiers, sir.

D

They are rather your idolaters.

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J

Not so, sir.

B

How now, CVTBERD? Any crosse?

I

O, no, sir: Omnia bene. It was neuer better on the hinges, all is sure. I have so pleas'd him with a curate, that he is gone to it almost with the delight he hopes for soone.

B

What is he, for a vicar?

I

One that has catch'd a cold, sir, and can scarce be heard sixe inches off; as if he spoke out of a bull-rush, that were not pickt, or his throat were full of pith: a fine quick fellow, and an excellent barber of prayers. I came to tell you, sir, that you might omnem mouere lapidem (as they say) be readie with your vexation.

B

Gramercy, honest CVTBERD, be thereabouts with thy key to let us in.

I

I will not faile you, sir: Ad manum.

D

Well, I will go watch my coaches.

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C

Do; and we will send DAW to you, if you meet him not.

J

Is master TRVE–WIT gone?

B

Yes, lady, there is some vnfortunate businesse fallen out.

J

So I iudg'd by the phisiognomy of the fellow, that came in; and I had a dreame last night too of a new pageant, and my lady Maioresse, which is alwaies very ominous to me. I told it my lady HAVGHTY the other day; when her honour came hether to see some China stuffles: and she expounded it, out of ARTEMIDORVS, and I have found it since very true. It has done me many affronts.

C

Your dreame, lady?

J

Yes, sir, anything I do but dreame of the city. It staynd me a damasque table–cloth, cost me eighteen pound at one time; and burnt me a blacke satten gowne, as I stood by the fire, at my ladie CENTAVRES chamber in the colledge, another time. A third time, at the Lords masque, it dropt all my wire, and my ruffe with waxe–candle, that I could not go up to the banquet. A fourth time, as I was taking coach to go to Ware, to meet a friend, it dash'd me a new sute all ouer (a crimson sattin doublet, and blacke veluet skirts) with a brewers horse, that I was faine to go in and shift me, and kept my chamber a leash of daies for the anguish of it.

B

These were dire mischances, lady.

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C

I would not dwell in the citie, if it were so fatall to me.

J

Yes sir, but I do take aduise of my doctor, to dreame of it as little, as I can.

B

You do well, mistris OTTER.

J

Will it please you to enter the house farther, gentlemen?

B

And your fauour, lady: but we stay to speake with a knight, sir IOHN DAW, who is here come. We shall follow you, lady.

J

At your owne time, sir. It is my cosen sir AMOROVVS his feast —

B

I know it lady.

J

And mine together. But it is for his honour; and therefore I take no name of it, more then of the place.

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B

You are a bounteous kinswoman.

J

Your seruant, sir.

Scene 3.3

C

Why do not you know it, sir IOHN DAW?

F

No, I am a rooke if I do.

C

I will tell you then, she is married by this time! And whereas you were put in the head, that she was gone with sir DAVPHINE, I assure you, sir DAVPHINE has beene the noblest, honestest friend to you, that euer gentleman of your quality could boast off. He has discouer'd the whole plot, and made your mistris so acknowledging, and indeed, so ashamed of her iniurie to you, that she desires you to forgiue her, and but grace her wedding with your presence today — She is to be married to a very good fortune, she saies, his vnkle, old MOROSE: and she will'd me in priuate to tell you, that she shall be able to do you more fauours, and with more securitie now, then before.

F

Did she say so, infaith?

C

Why, what do you thinke of me, sir IOHN! aske sir DAVPHINE.

B

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Nay, I beleue you. Good sir DAVPHINE, did she desire me to forgiue her?

C

I assure you, sir IOHN, she did.

F

Nay then, I do with all my heart, and I will be iouiall.

C

Yes, for looke you sir, this was the iniury to you. LA-FOOLE intended this feast to honour her bridale day, and make you the propertie to inuite the colledge ladies, and promise to bring her: and then at the time, she should have appear'd (as his friend) to have giuen you the dor. Whereas now, Sir DAVPHINE has brought her to a feeling of it, with this kinde of satisfaction, that you shall bring all the ladies to the place where she is, and be verie iouiall; and there, she will have a dinner, which shall be in your name: and so dis-appoint LA-FOOLE, to make you good againe, and (as it were) a sauer in the man.

F

As I am a knight, I honour her, and forgiue her hartily.

C

About it then presently, TRUE-WIT is gone before to confront the coaches, and to acquaint you with so much, if he meet you. Ioyne with him, and it is well. See, here come your Antagonist, but take you no notice, but be verie iouiall.

G

Are the ladies come, sir IOHN DAW, and your mistris? sir DAVPHINE! you are exceeding welcome, and honest master CLERIMONT. Where is my cossen? did you see no collegiats, gentlemen?

B

Collegiats! Do you not heare, sir AMOROVVS, how you are abus'd?

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G

How sir!

C

Will you speake so kindly to sir IOHN DAW, that has done you such an affront?

G

Wherein, gentlemen? let me be a sutor to you to know, I beseech you!

C

Why sir, his mistris is married today, to sir DAVPHINES vncler, your cosens neighbour, and he has diuerted all the ladies, and all your company thether, to frustrate your provision, and sticke a disgrace upon you. He was here, now, to have intic'd us away from you too: but we told him his owne, I thinke.

G

Has sir IOHN DAW wrong'd me so in-humanely?

B

He has done it, sir AMOROVVS, most maliciously, and trecherously: but if you will be rul'd by us, you shall quit him infaith.

G

Good gentlemen! I will make one, beleeeue it. How I pray?

B

Mary sir, get me your phesants, and your godwits, and your best meat, and dish it in siluer dishes of your cosens presently, and say nothing, but clap me a cleane towell about you, like a sewer; and bare-headed, march afore it

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with a good confidence (it is but ouer the way, hard by) and we will second you, where you shall set it on the boord, and bid them welcome to it, which shall show it is yours, and disgrace his preparation vtterly: and, for your cosen, whereas she should be troubled here at home with care of making and giuing welcome, she shall transerre all that labour thether, and be a principall guest herselfe, sit rank'd with the colledge–Honors, and be honor'd, and have her health drunke as often, as bare, and as lowd as the best of them.

G

I will go tell her presently. It shall be done, that is resolu'd.

C

I thought he would not heare it out, but it would take him.

B

Well, there be guests, and meat now; how shall we do for musique?

C

The smell of the venison, going through the street, will inuite one noyse of fidders, or other.

B

I would it would call the trumpeters thether.

C

Faith, there is hope, they have intelligence of all feasts. There is good correspondence betwixt them, and the London cookes. It is twenty to one but we have them.

B

It will be a most solemne day for my vncke, and an excellent fit of mirth for us.

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C

Aye, if we can hold up the æmulation betwixt FOOLE, and DAW, and neuer bring them to expostulate.

B

Tut, flatter them both (as TRVE–WIT sayes) and you may take their vnderstandings in a purse net. They will beleeeue themselues to be iust such men as we make them, neither more nor lesse. They have nothing, not the use of their senses, but by tradition. He enters like a sewer.

C

See! Sir AMOROVVS has his towell on already. Have you perswaded your cossen?

G

Yes, it is very fæsible: she will do anything she sayes, rather then the LA–FOOLES shall be disgrac'd.

B

She is a noble kinswoman. It will be such a pest'ling device, sir AMOROVVS! It will pound all your enemies practises to poulder, and blow him up with his owne mine, his owne traine.

G

Nay, we will giue fire, I warrant you.

C

But you must carry it priuatly, without any noyse, and take no notice by any meanes --

H

Gentlemen, my Princesse sayes, you shall have all her siluer dishes, festinate: and she is gone to alter her tyre a little, and go with you --

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C

And yourselfe too, captaine OTTER.

B

By any meanes, sir.

H

Yes sir, I do meane it: but I would entreate my cosen sir AMOROVVS, and you gentlemen, to be sutors to my Princesse, that I may carry my bull, and my beare, as well as my horse.

C

That you shall do, captaine OTTER.

G

My cosen will neuer consent, gentlemen.

B

She must consent, sir AMOROVVS, to reason.

G

Why, she sayes they are no decorum among ladies.

H

But they are decora, and that is better, sir.

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C

Aye, she must heare argument. Did not PASIPHAE, who was a queene, loue a bull? and was not CALISTO, the mother of ARCAS, turn'd into a beare, and made a starre, mistris VRSVLA, in the heauens?

H

O God! that I could have said as much! I will have these stories painted in the beare-garden, ex ouidij metamorphosi.

B

Where is your Princesse, Captaine? pray' be our leader.

H

That I shall, sir.

C

Make haste, good sir AMOROVVS.

Scene 3.4

A

Sir, there is an angel for yourselfe, and a brace of angels for your cold. Muse not at this mannage of my bounty. It is fit we should thanke fortune, double to nature, for any benefit she conferres upon us; besides, it is your imperfection, but my solace. The parson speakes, as hauing a cold.

W

I thanke your worship, so is it mine, now.

A

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What sayes he, CVTBERD?

I

He saies, Præsto, sir, whensoever your worship needes him, he can be ready with the like. He got this cold with sitting up late, and singing catches with cloth-workers.

A

No more. I thanke him.

W

God keepe your worship, and giue you much ioy with your faire spouse. He coughes.
(Vmh, vmh.)

A

O, O stay CVTBERD! let him giue me fiue shillings of my money backe. As it is bounty to reward benefits, so is it equity to mulct iniuries. I will have it. What sayes he?

I

He can not change it, sir.

A

It must be chang'd.

I

Cough againe.

A

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What sayes he?

I

He will cough out the rest, sir. Againe.

W

(Vmh, vmh, vmh.)

A

Away, away with him, stop his mouth, away, I forgiue it. --

E

Fye, master MOROSE, that you will vse this violence to a man of the church.

A

How!

E

It do's not become your grauity, or breeding, (as you pretend in court) to have offer'd this outrage on a water-man, or any more boystrous creature, much lesse on a man of his ciuill coat.

A

You can speake then!

E

Yes, sir.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

A

Speake, out I meane.

E

I sir. Why, did you thinke you had married a statue? or a motion, onely? one of the French puppets, with the eyes turn'd with a wire? or some innocent out of the hospitall, that would stand with her hands thus, and a playse mouth, and looke upon you.

A

O immodestie! a manifest woman! what CVTBERD?

E

Nay, neuer quarrell with CVTBERD, sir, it is too late now. I confesse, it doth bate somewhat of the modestie I had, when I writ simply maide: but I hope, I shall make it a stocke still competent, to the estate, and dignity of your wife.

A

She can talke!

E

Yes indeed, sir.

A

What, sirrah. None of my knaues, there? where is this impostor, CVTBERD?

E

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

Speake to him, fellow, speake to him. I will have none of this coacted, vnnaturall dumbnesse in my house, in a family where I gouerne.

A

She is my Regent already! I have married a PENTHESILEA, a SEMIRAMIS, sold my liberty to a distaffe!

Scene 3.5

D

Where is master MOROSE?

A

Is he come againe! lord have mercy upon me.

D

I wish you all ioy, mistris EPICOENE, with your graue and honourable match.

E

I returne you the thanks, master TRVE–WIT, so friendly a wish deserues.

A

She has acquaintance, too!

D

God saue you, sir, and giue you all contentment in your faire choise, here. Before I was the bird of night to you, the owle but now I am the messenger of peace, a doue, and bring you the glad wishes of many friends, to the celebration of this good houre.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

A

What houre, sir?

D

Your marriage houre sir. I commend your resolution, that (notwithstanding all the dangers I laid afore you, in the voice of a night-crow) would yet go on, and be yourselfe. It shewes you are a man constant to your own ends, and vpright to your purposes, that would not be put off with left-handed cries.

A

How should you arriue at the knowledge of so much!

D

Why, did you euer hope, sir, committing the secrecie of it to a barber, that lesse then the whole towne should know it? you might as well have told it the conduit, or the bake-house, or the infant'ry that follow the court, and with more securitie. Could your grautie forget so olde and noted a remnant, as lippis & tonsoribus notum. Well sir, forgiue it yourselfe now, the fault, and be communicable with your friends. Here will be three or foure fashionable ladies, from the colledge, to visit you presently, and their traine of minions, and followers.

A

Barre my dores! barre my dores! where are all my eaters? my mouthes now? barre up my dores, you varlets.

E

He is a varlet, that stirres to such an office. Let them stand open. I would see him that dares mooue his eyes toward it. Shall I have a barricado made against my friends, to be barr'd of any pleasure they can bring in to me with honorable visitations.

A

O Amazonian impudence!

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

D

Nay faith, in this, sir, she speakes but reason: and methinkes is more continent then you. Would you go to bed so presently, sir, afore noone? a man of your head, and haire, should owe more to that reueuerend ceremony, and not mount the marriage-bed, like a towne-bul, or a mountaine-goate; but stay the due season; and ascend it then with religion, and feare. Those delights are to be steep'd in the humor, and silence of the night; and giue the day to other open pleasures, and jollities of feast, of musique, of reuells, of discourse: we will have all, sir, that may make your Hymen high, and happy.

A

O, my torment, my torment!

D

Nay, if you indure the first halfe houre, sir, so tediously, and with this irksomnesse; what comfort, or hope, can this faire gentlewoman make to herselfe hereafter, in the consideration of so many yeeres as are to come —

A

Of my affliction. Good sir, depart, and let her do it alone.

D

I have done, sir.

A

That cursed barber!

D

(Yes faith, a cursed wretch indeed, sir.)

A

I have married his citterne, that is common to all men. Some plague, about the plague —

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

D

(All Egypts ten plagues)

A

Reuenge me on him.

D

It is very well, sir. If you laid on a curse or two, more, I will assure you he will beare them. As, that he may get the poxe with seeking to cure it, sir? Or, that while he is curling another mans haire, his owne may drop off? Or, for burning some male-baudes lock, he may have his braine beat out with the curling-iron?

A

No, let the wretch liue wretched. May he get the itch, and his shop so lousie, as no man dare come at him, nor he come at no man.

D

(Aye, and if he would swallow all his balles for pills, let not them purge him)

A

Let his warming pan be euer cold.

D

(A perpetuall frost vnderneath it, sir)

A

Let him neuer hope to see fire againe.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

D

(But in hell, sir)

A

His chaires be alwaies empty, his scissors rust, and his combes mould in their cases.

D

Very dreadfull that! (And may he loose the inuention, sir, of caruing lanternes in paper)

A

Let there be no baud carted that yeare, to employ a bason of his: but let him be glad to eate his sponge, for bread.

D

And drinke lotium to it, and much good do him.

A

Or, for want of bread --

D

Eat eare-waxe, sir. I will helpe you. Or, draw his owne teeth, and adde them to the lute-string.

A

No, beate the old ones to poulder, and make bread of them.

D

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

(Yes, make meale of the millstones.)

A

May all the botches, and burnes, that he has cur'd on others, breake out upon him.

D

And he now forget the cure of them in himselfe, sir: or, if he do remember it, let him have scrap'd all his linnen into lint for it, and have not a rag left him, to set up with.

A

Let him neuer set up againe, but have the gout in his hands foreuer. Now, no more, sir.

D

O that last was too high set! you might go lesse with him infaith, and be reueng'd enough: as, that he be neuer able to new-paint his pole --

A

Good sir, no more. I forgot myselfe.

D

Or, want credit to take up with a combe-maker --

A

No more, sir.

D

Or, hauing broken his glasse in a former despaire, fall now into a much greater, of euer getting another --

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

A

I beseech you, no more.

D

Or, that he neuer be trusted with trimming of any but chimney-sweepers —

A

Sir —

D

Or, may he cut a colliers throat with his razor, by chance-medlee, and yet hang for it.

A

I will forgiue him, rather then heare any more. I beseech you, sir.

Scene 3.6

F

This way, madame.

A

O, the sea breakes in upon me! another floud! an inundation! I shall be orewhelm'd with noise. It beates already at my shores. I feele an earthquake in myselfe, for it.

F

'Giue you ioy, mistresse.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

A

Has she seruants too!

F

I have brought some ladies here to see, and know you. She kisses them seuerally as he presents them. My ladie HAUGHTY, this my lady CENTAVRE, mistress DOL MAVIS, mistresse TRVSTIE my ladie HAUGHTIES woman. Where is your husband? let us see him: can he endure no noise? let me come to him.

A

What nomenclator is this!

D

Sir IOHN DAW, sir, your wifes seruant, this.

A

A DAW, and her seruant! O, it is decreed, it is decreed of me, if she have such seruants.

D

Nay sir, you must kisse the ladies, you must not go away, now; they come toward you, to seeke you out.

V

Infaith, master MOROSE, would you steale a marriage thus, in the midst of so many friends, and not acquaint us? Well, I will kisse you, notwithstanding the iustice of my quarrell: you shall giue me leaue, mistresse, to vse a becomming familiarity with your husband.

E

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

Your ladship do's me an honour in it, to let me know he is so worthy your fauour: as, you have done both him and me grace, to visit so vnprepar'd a paire to entertaine you.

A

Complement! complement!

E

But I must lay the burden of that, upon my seruant, here.

V

It shall not need, mistresse MOROSE, we will all beare, rather then one shall be opprest.

A

I know it: and you will teach her the faculty, if she be to learne it.

V

Is this the silent woman? Nay, she has found her tongue since she was married, master TRVE-WIT sayes. O, master TRVE-WIT! 'sauē you. What kinde of creature is your bride here? she speakes, methinkes!

D

Yes madame, beleue it, she is a gentlewoman of very absolute behaiour, and of a good race.

V

And IACK DAW told us, she could not speake.

D

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

So it was carried in plot, madam, to put her upon this old fellow, by sir DAVPHINE, his nephew, and one or two more of us: but she is a woman of an excellent assurance, and an extraordinary happie wit, and tongue. You shall see her make rare sport with DAW, ere night.

V

And he brought us to laugh at her!

D

That falls out often, madame, that he that thinkes himselfe the master-wit, is the master-foole. I assure your lady-ship, ye can not laugh at her.

V

No, we will have her to the colledge: if she have wit, she shall be one of us! shall she not CENTAVRE? we will make her a collegiate. Yes faith, madame, and MAVIS, if she will set up a side.

D

Beleeue it madame, and mistris MAVIS, she will sustaine her part.

V

I will tell you that, when I have talk'd with her, and try'd her. Vse her very ciuilly, MAVIS. So I will, madame.

A

Blessed minute, that they would whisper thus euer.

D

In the meantime, madame, would but your lady-ship helpe to vexe him a little: you know his disease, talke to him about the wedding ceremonies, or call for your gloues, or --

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

V

Let me alone. CENTAVRE, helpe me. Mr% bride-groome, where are you?

A

O, it was too miraculously good to last!

V

We see no ensignes of a wedding, here; no character of a brideale: where be our skarfes, and our gloues? I pray you giue them us. Let us know your brides colours, and yours, at least. Alas, madame, he has prouided none.

A

Had I knowne your ladiships painter, I would.

V

He has giuen it you, CENTAVRE, infaith. But, do you heare, M% MOROSE, a iest will not absolue you in this manner. You that have suck'd the milke of the court, and from thence have beene brought up to the very strong meates, and wine, of it; beene a courtier from the biggen, to the night-cap: (as we may say) and you, to offend in such a high point of ceremonie, as this! and let your nuptialls want all markes of solemnitie! How much plate have you lost today (if you had but regarded your profit) what gifts, what friends, through your meere rusticitie?
||

A

Madame --

V

Pardon me, sir, I must insinuate your errours to you. No gloues? no garters? no skarfes? no epithalamium? no masque?

F

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

Yes, madame, I will make an epithalamium, I promis'd my mistress, I have begunne it already: will you ladieship heare it?

V

Aye, good IACK DAW.

A

Will it please your ladieship command a chamber, and be private with your friend? you shall have your choice of rooms, to retire to after: my whole house is yours. I know, it hath beene your ladieship's errand, into the city, at other times, howeuer now you have beene vnhappyly diuerted upon me: but I shall be loth to breake any honorable custome of your ladieships. And therefore, good madame —

E

Come, you are a rude bride—groomer, to entertayne ladies of honour in this fashion.

V

He is a rude groomer, indeed.

D

By that light, you deserue to be grafted, and have your hornes reach from one side of the Iland, to the other. Do not mistake me, sir, I but speake this, to giue the ladies some heart againe, not for any malice to you.

A

Is this your Brauo, ladies?

D

As god helpe me, if you vtter such another word, I will take mistress's bride in, and beginne to you, in a very sad cup, do you see? Go to, know your friends, and such, as loue you.

Scene 3.7

C

By your leaue, ladies. Do you want any musique? I have brought you varietie of noyses. Play, sirs, all of you. Musique of all sorts.

A

O, a plot, a plot, a plot, a plot upon me! This day, I shall be their anvile to worke on, they will grate me asunder. It is worse then the noyse of a saw.

C

No, they are haire, rosin, and guts. I can giue you the receipt.

D

Peace, boyes.

C

Play, I say.

D

Peace, rascalls. You see who is your friend now, sir? Take courage, put on a martyrs resolution. Mocke downe all their attemptings, with patience. It is but a day, and I would suffer heroically. Should an asse exceed me in fortitude? No. You betray your infirmitie with your hanging dull eares, and make them insult: beare up brauely, and constantly. La-Foole passes ouer sewing the meate.

Looke you here, sir, what honour is done you vnexpected, by your nephew; a wedding dinner come, and a Knight sewer before it, for the more reputation: and fine Mrs OTTER, your neighbour, in the rump, or tayle of it.

A

Is that Gorgon, that Medusa come? Hide me, hide me.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

D

I warrant you, sir, she will not transforme you. Looke upon her with a good courage. Pray you entertayne her, and conduct your guests in. No? Mistris bride, will you entreat in the ladies? your bride-groome is so shame-fac'd, here --

E

Will it please your ladiship, madame?

V

With the benefit of your companie, mistris.

E

Seruant, pray you performe your duties.

F

And glad to be commanded, mistris.

V

How like you her wit, MAVIS. Very prettily, absolutely well.

J

It is my place.

V

You shall pardon me, mistris OTTER.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

J

Why I am a collegiate.

V

But not in ordinary.

J

But I am.

V

We will dispute that within.

C

Would this had lasted a little longer.

D

And that they had sent for the Heralds. Captayne OTTER, what newes?

H

I have brought my bull, beare, and horse, in priuate, and yonder are the trumpeters without, and the drum, gentlemen. The Drum, and Trumpets sound.

A

O, O, O.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

H

And we will have a rouse in each of them, anon, for bold Britons, infaith.

A

O, O, O.

X

Follow, follow, follow.

Act 4

Scene 4.1

D

Was there euer poore bride-groome so tormented? or man indeed?

C

I have not read of the life, in the chronicles of the land.

D

Sure, he can not but go to a place of rest, after all this purgatorie.

C

He may presume it, I thinke.

D

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

The spitting, the coughing, the laughter, the neeing, the farting, dauncing, noise of the musique, and her masculine, and lowd commanding, and vrging the whole family, makes him thinke he has married a furie.

C

And she carries it up brauely.

D

Aye, she takes any occasion to speake: that is the height of it.

C

And how soberly DAVPHINE labours to satisfie him, that it was none of his plot!

D

And has almost brought him to the faith, in the article. Here he comes. Where is he now? what is become of him, DAVPHINE?

B

O, hold me up a little, I shall go away in the iest else. He has got on his whole nest of night-caps, and lock'd himselfe up, in the top of the house, as high, as euer he can climbe from the noise. I peep'd in at a crany, and saw him sitting ouer a cross-beame of the roofe, like him on the sadlers horse in Fleetstreet, vp-right: and he will sleepe there.

C

But where are your collegiates?

B

With-drawne with the bride in priuate.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

D

O, they are instructing her in the colledge—Grammar. If she have grace with them, she knowes all their secrets instantly.

C

Methinks, the lady HAVGHTY lookes well today, for all my dispraise of her in the morning. I thinke, I shall come about to thee againe, TRVE—WIT.

D

Beleeue it, I told you right. Women ought to repaire the losses, time and yeeres have made in their features, with dressings. And an intelligent woman, if she know by herselfe the least defect, will be most curious, to hide it: and it becomes her. If she be short, let her sit much, lest when she stands, she be thought to sit. If she have an ill foot, let her weare her gowne the longer, and her shoo the thinner. If a fat hand, and scald nailes, let her carue the lesse, and act in gloues. If a sowre breath, let her neuer discourse fasting: and alwaies talke at her distance. If she have black and rugged teeth, let her offer the lesse at laughter, especially if she laugh wide, and open.

C

O, you shall have some women, when they laugh, you would thinke they bray'd, it is so rude, and —

D

Aye, and others, that will stalke in their gait like an Estrich, and take huge strides. I can not endure such a sight. I loue measure in the feet, and number in the voice: they are gentlenesses, that oft—times draw no lesse then the face.

B

How cam'st thou to studie these creatures so exactly? I would thou would'st make me a proficient.

D

Yes, but you must leaue to liue in your chamber then a month together upon AMADIS de Gaule, or Don QVIXOTE, as you are wont; and come abroad where the matter is frequent, to court, to tiltings, publique showes, and feasts, to playes, and church sometimes: thither they come to shew their new tyres too, to see, and to be seene. In these places a man shall find whom to loue, whom to play with, whom to touch once, whom to hold euer. The

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

variety arrests his iudgement. A wench to please a man comes not downe dropping from the seeling, as he lyes on his backe droning a tobacco pipe. He must go where she is.

B

Yes, and be neuer the neere.

D

Out heretique. That dissidence makes thee worthy it should be so.

C

He sayes true to you, DAVPHINE.

B

Why?

D

A man should not doubt to ouer-come any woman. Thinke he can vanquish them, and he shall: for though they denie, their desire is to be tempted. PENELOPE herselfe can not hold out long, Ostend, you saw, was taken at last. You must perseuer, and hold to your purpose. They would sollicite us, but that they are afraid. Howsoever, they wish in their hearts we should sollicite them. Praise them, flatter them, you shall neuer want eloquence, or trust: euen the chastest delight to feele themselues that way rub'd. With praises you must mixe kisses too. If they take them, they will take more. Though they striue, they would be ouer-come.]]

C

O, but a man must beware of force.

D

It is to them an acceptable violence, and has oft-times the place of the greatest courtesie. She that might have beene forc'd, if you let her go free without touching, though she then seeme to thanke you, will euer hate you after: and glad in the face, is assuredly sad at the heart.

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C

But all women are not to be taken alwaies.

D

It is true. No more then all birds, or all fishes. If you appeare learned to an ignorant wench, or iocund to a sad, or witty to a foolish, why she presently begins to mistrust herselfe. You must approch them in their owne height, their owne line: for the contrary makes many that feare to commit themselues to noble and worthy fellowes, run into the imbraces of a rascall. If she loue wit, giue verses, though you borrow them of a friend, or buy them, to have good. If valour, talke of your sword, and be frequent in the mention of quarrels, though you be staunch in fighting. If actiuitie, be seene on your barbary often, or leaping ouer stooles, for the credit of your back. If she loue good clothes or dressing, have your learned counsell about you euery morning, your french taylor, barber, linnener, &c. Let your poulder, your glasse, and your combe, be your dearest acquaintance. Take more care for the ornament of your head, then the safetie: and wish the common-wealth rather troubled, then a haire about you. That will take her. Then if she be couetous and crauing, do you promise anything, and performe sparingly: so shall you keepe her in appetite still. Seeme as you would giue, but be like a barren field that yeelds little, or vn lucky dice, to foolish, and hoping gamesters. Let your gifts be slight, and daintie, rather then pretious. Let cunning be aboue cost. Giue cherries at time of yeere, or apricots; and say they were sent you out of the countrey, though you bought them in Cheap-side. Admire her tyres; like her in all fashions; compare her in euery habit to some deitie; inuent excellent dreames to flatter her, and riddles, or, if she be a great one, performe alwaies the second parts to her: like what she likes, praise whom she praises, and faile not to make the houshold and seruants yours, yea the whole family, and salute them by their names: (it is but light cost if you can purchase them so) and make her physitian your pensioner, and her chiefe woman. Nor will it be out of your gaine to make loue to her too, so she follow, not vs her, her ladies pleasure. All blabbing is taken away, when she comes to be a part of the crime.

B

On what courtly lap hast thou late slept, to come forth so sudden and absolute a courtling?

D

Good faith, I should rather question you, that are so harkning after these mysteries. I begin to suspect your diligence, DAVPHINE. Speake, art thou in loue in earnest?

B

Yes by my troth am I: it were ill dissembling before thee.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

D

With which of them, I pray thee?

B

With all the collegiates.

C

Out on thee. We will keepe you at home, beleue it, in the stable, if you be such a stallion.

D

No. I like him well. Men should loue wisely, and all women; some one for the face, and let her please the eye; another for the skin, and let her please the touch; a third for the voice, and let her please the eare; and where the objects mixe, let the senses so too. Thou wouldst thinke it strange, if I should make them all in loue with thee afore night!

B

I would say thou had'st the best philtre in the world, and couldst do more then madame MEDEA, or Doctor FOREMAN.

D

If I do not, let me play the mounte-banke for my meate while I liue, and the bawd for my drinke.

B

So be it, I say.

Scene 4.2

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

H

O Lord, gentlemen, how my knights and I have mist you here!

C

Why, Captaine, what seruice? what seruice?

H

To see me bring up my bull, beare, and horse to fight.

F

Yes faith, the Captaine saies we shall be his dogs to baite them.

B

A good imployment.

D

Come on, let us see a course then.

G

I am afraid my cousin will be offended if she come.

H

Be afraid of nothing. Gentlemen, I have plac'd the drum and the trumpets, and one to giue them the signe when you are ready. Here is my bull for myselfe, and my beare for sir IOHN DAW, and my horse for sir AMOROVVS. Now set your foot to mine, and yours to his, and —

G

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

Pray god my cousin come not.

H

Saint GEORGE, and saint ANDREW, feare no cousins. Come, sound, sound. Et rauco strepuerunt cornua cantu.

D

Well said, Captaine, infaith: well fought at the bull.

C

Well held at the beare.

D

Low, low, Captayne.

B

O, the horse has kickt off his dog alreadie.

G

I can not drinke it, as I am a Knight.

D

Gods #so off with his spurres, some-body.

G

It goes againe my conscience. My cousin will be angrie with it.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

F

I have done mine.

D

You fought high and faire, sir IOHN.

C

At the head.

B

Like an excellent beare–dog.

C

You take no notice of the businesse, I hope.

F

Not a word, sir, you see we are iouiall.

H

Sir AMOROVVS, you must not æquiucate. It must be pull'd downe, for all my cousin.

C

Sfoot, if you take not your drinke, they will thinke you are discontented with something: you will betray all, if you take the least notice.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

G

Not I, I will both drinke, and talke then.

H

You must pull the horse on his knees, sir AMOROVVS: feare no cousins. Iacta est alea.

D

O, now he is in his vaine, and bold. The least hint giuen him of his wife now, will make him raile desperately.

C

Speake to him of her.

D

Do you, and I will fetch her to the hearing of it.

B

Captaine hee–OTTER, your shee–OTTER is comming, your wife.

H

Wife! Buz. Titiuilium. There is no such thing in nature. I confesse, gentlemen, I have a cook, a laundresse, a house–drudge, that serues my necessary turnes, and goes vnder that title: But he is an asse that will be so vxorious, to tie his affections to one circle. Come, the name dulls appetite. Here, replenish againe: another bout. Wiues are nasty sluttish animalls.

B

O, Captaine.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

H

As euer the earth bare, tribus verbis. Where is master TRVE–WIT?]]

F

He is slipt aside, sir.

C

But you must drinke, and be iouiall.

F

Yes, giue it me.

G

And me, too.

F

Let us be iouiall.

G

As iouiall as you will.

H

Agreed. Now you shall have the beare, cousin, and sir IOHN DAW the horse, and I will have the bull still. Sound Tritons of the Thames. Nunc est bibendum, nunc pede libero — Morose speakes from aboue: the trumpets sounding.

A

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

Villaines, murderers, sonnes of the earth, and traitors, what do you there?

C

O, now the trumpets have wak'd him, we shall have his companie.]]

H

A wife is a sciruy clogdogdo; an vn lucky thing, a very foresaid beare–whelpe, without any good fashion or breeding: mala bestia.

B

Why did you marry one then, Captaine? His wife is brought out to heare him.

H

A poxe — I married with sixe thousand pound, I. I was in loue with that. I have not kist my furie, these fortie weekes.

C

The more to blame you, Captaine.

D

Nay, mistris OTTER, heare him a little first.

H

She has a breath worse then my grand–mothers, profecto.

J

O treacherous lyar. Kisse me, sweet master TRVE–WIT, and proue him a slaundering knaue.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

D

I will rather beleeeue you, lady.

H

And she has a perruke, that is like a pound of hempe, made up in shoo–thrids.

J

O viper, mandrake!

H

A most vile face! and yet she spends me fortie pound a yeere in mercurie, and hogs–bones. All her teeth were made in the Blacke–Friars: both her eye–browes in the Strand, and her haire is Siluer–street. Euery part of the towne ownes a peece of her.

J

I can not hold.

H

She takes herselfe asunder still when she goes to bed, into some twentie boxes; and about next day noone is put together againe, like a great Germane clocke: and so comes forth and rings a tedious larum to the whole house, and then is quiet againe for an houre, but for her quarters. Have you done me right, gentlemen? She falls upon him and beates him.

J

No, sir, I will do you right with my quarters, with my quarters.

H

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

O, hold, good Princesse.

D

Sound, sound.

C

A battell, a battell.

J

You notorious stinkardly beareward, do's my breath smell?

H

Vnder correction, deare Princesse: looke to my beare, and my horse, gentlemen.

J

Do I want teeth, and eye-browes, thou bull-dog?

D

Sound, sound still.

H

No, I protest, vnder correction --

J

Aye, now you are vnder correction, you protest: but you did not protest before correction, sir. Thou IVDAS, to offer to betray thy Princesse! I will make thee an example -- Morose descends with a long sword.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

A

I will have no such examples in my house, lady OTTER.

J

Ah --

H

Mrs MARY AMBREE, your examples are dangerous. Rogues, Hell-hounds, Stentors, out of my dores, you sonnes of noise and tumult, begot on an ill May-day, or when the Gally-foist is a-floate to Westminster! A trumpetter could not be conceiu'd, but then!

B

What ailes you, sir?

A

They have rent my roofe, walls, and all my windores asunder, with their brazen throates.

D

Best follow him, DAVPHINE.

B

So I will.

C

Where is DAW, and LA-FOOLE?

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

H

They are both run away, sir. Good gentlemen, helpe to pacify my Princesse, and speake to the great ladies for me. Now must I go lie with the beares this fortnight, and keepe out of the way, till my peace be made, for this scandale she has taken. Did you not see my bull-head, gentlemen?

C

Is it not on, Captayne?

D

No: but he may make a new one, by that, is on.

H

O, here it is. If you come ouer, gentlemen, and aske for TOM OTTER, we will go downe to Ratcliffe, and have a course infaith: for all these disasters. There is bona spes left.

D

Away, Captaine, get off while you are well.

C

I am glad we are rid of him.

D

You had neuer beene, vnlesse we had put his wife upon him. His humour is as tedious at last, as it was ridiculous at first.

Scene 4.3

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

V

We wondred why you shreek'd so, Mrs% OTTER.

J

O god, madame, he came downe with a huge long naked weapon in both his hands, and look'd so dreadfully! Sure, he is beside himselfe.

V

Why what made you there, mistris OTTER?

J

Alas, mistris MAVIS, I was chastising my subiect, and thought nothing of him.

F

Faith, mistris, you must do so too. Learne to chastise. Mistris OTTER corrects her husband so, he dares not speake, but vnder correction.

G

And with his hat off to her: it would do you good to see.

V

In sadnesse it is good, and mature counsell: practise it, MOROSE. I will call you MOROSE still now, as I call CENTAVRE, and MAVIS: we foure will be all one. And you will come to the colledge, and liue with us? Make him giue milke, and hony. Looke how you manage him at first, you shall have him euer after. Let him allow you your coach, and foure horses, your woman, your chamber-maid, your page, your gentleman-vsher, your french cooke, and foure grooms. And go with us, to Bed'lem, to the China houses, and to the Exchange. It will open the gate to your fame. Here is CENTAVRE has immortaliz'd herselfe, with taming of her wilde male. Aye, she has done the miracle of the kingdome.

E

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

But ladies, do you count it lawfull to have such pluralitie of seruants, and do them all graces?

V

Why not? why should women denie their fauours to men? Are they the poorer, or the worse?

F

Is the Thames the lesse for the dyers water, mistris?

G

Or a torch, for lighting many torches?

D

Well said, LA-FOOLE; what a new one he has got!

V

They are emptie losses, women feare, in this kind. Besides, ladies should be mindfull of the approach of age, and let no time want his due vse. The best of our daies passe first. We are riuers, that can not be call'd backe, madame: she that now excludes her louers, may liue to lie a forsaken beldame, in a frozen bed. It is true, MAVIS: and who will wait on us to coach then? or write, or tell us the newes then? Made anagrammes of our names, and inuite us to the cock-pit, and kisse our hands all the play-time, and draw their weapons for our honors? Not one.

F

Nay, my mistris is not altogether vn-intelligent of these things, here be in presence have tasted of her fauours.

C

What a neighing hobby-horse is this!

E

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

But not with intent to boast them againe, seruant. And have you those excellent receipts, madame, to keepe yourselues from bearing of children?

V

O yes, MOROSE. How should we maintayne our youth and beautie, else? Many births of a woman make her old, as many crops make the earth barren.

Scene 4.4

A

O my cursed angell, that instructed me to this fate!

B

Why, sir?

A

That I should be seduc'd by so foolish a deuill, as a barber will make!

B

I would I had beene worthy, sir, to have partaken your counsell, you should neuer have trusted it to such a minister.

A

Would I could redeeme it with the losse of an eye (nephew) a hand, or any other member.

B

Mary, god forbid, sir, that you should geld yourselfe, to anger your wife.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

A

So it would rid me of her! and, that I did supererogatorie penance, in a bellfry, at Westminster–hall, in the cock–pit, at the fall of a stagge; the tower–wharfe (what place is there else?) London–bridge, Paris–garden, Belins–gate, when the noises are at their height and lowdest. Nay, I would sit out a play, that we nothing but fights at sea, drum, trumpet, and target!

B

I hope there shall be no such need, sir. Take patience, good vncler. This is but a day, and it is well worne too now.

A

O, it will be so foreuer, nephew, I foresee it, foreuer. Strife and tumult are the dowrie that comes with a wife.

D

I told you so, sir, and you would not beleeeue me.

A

Alas, do not rub those wounds, master TRVE–WIT, to bloud againe: it was my negligence. Adde not affliction to affliction. I have perceiu'd the effect of it, too late, in madame OTTER.

E

How do you, sir?

A

Did you euer heare a more vnecessary question? as if she did not see! Why, I do as you see, Empresse, Empresse.

E

You are not well, sir! you looke very ill! something has distempered you.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

A

O horrible, monstrous impertinencies! would not one of these have seru'd? do you thinke, sir? would not one of these have seru'd?

D

Yes, sir, but these are but notes of female kindnesse, sir: certaine tokens that she has a voice, sir.

A

O, is it so? come, if it be no otherwise -- what say you?

E

How do you feele yourselfe, sir?

A

Againe, that!

D

Nay, looke you, sir: you would be freinds with your wife upon vn-conscionable termes, her silence --

E

They say you are run mad, sir.

A

Not for loue, I assure you, of you; do you see?

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

E

O lord, gentlemen! Lay hold on him for gods sake: what shall I do? who is his physitian (can you tel) that knowes the state of his body best, that I might send for him? Good sir, speake. I will send for one of my doctors else.

A

What, to poyson me, that I might die intestate, and leaue you possest of all?

E

Lord, how idly he talkes, and how his eyes sparkle! He lookes greene about the temples! Do you see what blue spots he has?

D

Aye, it is melancholy.

E

Gentlemen, for heauens sake counsell me. Ladies! Seruant, you have read *PLINY*, and *PARACELSVS*: Ne're a word now to comfort a poore gentlewoman? Ay me! what fortune had I to marry a distracted man?

F

I will tell you, mistris —

D

How rarely she holds it up!

A

What meane you, gentlemen?

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

E

What will you tell me, seruant?

F

The disease in Greeke is called Mania, in Latine, Insania, Furor, vel Ecstasis melancholica, that is, Egressio, when a man ex melancholico, euaditfanaticus.

A

Shall I have a lecture read upon me aliue?

F

But he may be but Phreneticus, yet, mistris? and Phrenetis is only delirium, or so —

E

Aye, that is for the disease, seruant: but what is this to the cure? we are sure inough of the disease.

A

Let me go.

D

Why, we will intreat her to hold her peace, sir.

A

O no. Labour not to stop her. She is like a conduit–pipe, that will gush out with more force, when she opens againe.

V

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

I will tell you, MOROSE, you must talke diuinitie to him altogether, or morall philosophie.

G

Aye, and there is an excellent booke of morall philosophie, madame, of RAYNARD the foxe, and all the beasts, call'd, DONES philosophie.

V

There is, indeed, sir AMOROVS LA-FOOLE.

A

O miserie!

G

I have read it, my lady CENTAVRE, all ouer to my cousin, here.

J

Aye, and it is a very good booke as any is, of the Modernes.

F

Tut, he must haue SENECA read to him, and PLVTARCH, and the Ancients; the Modernes are not for this disease.

C

Why, you discommended them too, today, sir IOHN.

F

Aye, in some cases: but in these they are best, and ARISTOTLES Ethicks.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

V

Say you so sir IOHN? I thinke you are deciu'd: you tooke it upon trust. Where is TRVSTY, my woman? I will end this difference. I pr'ythee, OTTER, call her. Her father and mother were both mad, when they put her to me.

A

I thinke so. Nay, gentlemen, I am tame. This is but an exercise, I know, a marriage ceremonie, which I must endure.

V

And one of them (I know not which) was cur'd with the Sickmans salue; and the other with GREENES groates-worth of wit.

D

A very cheape cure, madame.

V

Aye, it is very fæsible.

J

My lady call'd for you, mistris TRVSTY: you must decide a controuersie.

V

O TRVSTY, which was it you said, your father, or your mother, that was cur'd with the Sicke-mans salue? My mother, madame, with the salue.

D

Then it was the Sicke-womans salue.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

V

And my father with the Groates–worth of wit. But there was other means vs'd: we had a Preacher that would preach folke asleepe still; and so they were prescrib'd to go to church, by an old woman that was their physitian, thrise a weeke —

E

To sleepe?

V

Yes forsooth: and euery night they read themselues asleepe on those bookes.

E

Good faith, it stands with great reason. I would I knew where to procure those bookes.

A

O.

G

I can helpe you with one of them, mistris MOROSE, the groats–worth of wit.

E

But I shall disfurnish you, sir AMOROVVS: can you spare it?

G

O, yes, for a weeke, or so; I will reade it myselfe to him.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

E

No, I must do that, sir: that must be my office.

A

O, o!

E

Sure, he would do well enough, if he could sleepe.

A

No, I should do well enough, if you could sleepe. Have I no friend that will make her drunke? or giue her a little ladanum? or opium?

D

Why, sir, she talkes ten times worse in her sleepe.

A

How!

C

Do you not know that, sir? neuer ceases all night.

D

And snores like a porcpisce.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

A

O, redeeme me, fate, redeeme me, fate. For how many causes may a man be diuorc'd, nephew?

B

I know not truely, sir.

D

Some Diuine must resolue you in that, sir, or canon-Lawyer.

A

I will not rest, I will not thinke of any other hope or comfort, till I know.

C

Alas, poore man.

D

You will make him mad indeed, ladies, if you pursue this.

V

No, we will let him breathe, now, a quarter of an houre, or so.

C

By my faith, a large truce.

V

Is that his keeper, that is gone with him?

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

F

It is his nephew, madame.

G

Sir DAVPHINE EVGENIE.

V

He lookes like a very pittifull knight --

F

As can be. This marriage, has put him out of all.

G

He has not a penny in his purse, madame --

F

He is readie to crie all this day.

G

A very sharke, he set me in the nicke the other night at primero.

D

How these swabbers talke!

C

Scene 4.4

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

Aye, OTTERS wine has swell'd their humours aboue a spring-tide.]]

V

Good MOROSE, let us go in againe. I like your couches exceeding well: we will go lie, and talke there.

E

I wait on you, madame.

D

'Slight, I will have them as silent as Signes, and their posts too, e're I have done. Do you heare, lady-bride? I pray thee now, as thou art a noble wench, continue this discourse of DAVPHINE within: but praise him exceedingly. Magnifie him with all the height of affection thou canst. (I have some purpose in it) and but beate off these two rookes, IACK DAW, and his fellow, with any discontentment hither, and I will honour thee foreuer.

E

I was about it, here. It angred me to the soule, to heare them beginne to talke so malepert.

D

Pray thee performe it, and thou win'st me an idolater to thee, euerlasting.

E

Will you go in, and heare me do it?

D

No, I will stay here. Driue them out of your companie, it is all I aske: which can not been any way better done, then by extolling DAVPHINE, whom they have so slighted.

E

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

I warrant you: you shall expect one of them presently.

C

What a cast of kastrils are these, to hawke after ladies, thus?

D

Aye, and strike at such an eagle as DAVPHINE.

C

He will be mad, when we tell him. Here he comes.

Scene 4.5

C

O sir, you are welcome.

D

Where is thine vncler?

B

Run out of doores in his night-caps, to talke with a Casuist about his diuorce. It workes admirably.

D

Thou would'st have said so, if thou had'st beene here! The ladies have laught at thee, most comically, since thou went'st, DAVPHINE.

C

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

And askt, if thou wert thine vncler keeper?

D

And the brace of Babouns answer'd, yes; and said, thou wert a pittifull poore fellow, and did'st liue upon posts: and had'st nothing but three sutes of apparell, and some few beneuolences that lords ga' thee to foole to them, and swagger.

B

Let me not liue, I will beate them. I will binde them both to grand Madames bed-postes, and have them bayted with monkeyes.

D

Thou shalt not need, they shall be beaten to thy hand, DAVPHINE. I have an execution to serue upon them, I warrant thee shall serue: trust my plot.

B

Aye, you have many plots! So you had one, to make all the wenches in loue with me.

D

Why, if I do not yet afore night, as neere as it is; and that they do not euery one inuite thee, and be ready to scratch for thee: take the morgage of my wit.

C

'Fore god, I will be his witsse; thou shalt have it, DAVPHINE: thou shalt be his foole foreuer, if thou doest not.

D

Agreed. Perhaps it will be the better estate. Do you obserue this gallerie? or rather lobby, indeed? Here are a couple of studies, at each end one: here will I act such a tragi-comdy betweene the Guelphes, and the Ghibellines, DAW and LA-FOOLE -- which of them comes out first, will I seize on: (you two shall be the chorus behind the arras, and whip out betweene the actes, and speake.) If I do not make them keepe the peace, for this remnant of

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

the day, if not of the yeere, I have faild once — I heare DAW comming: Hide, and do not laugh, for gods sake.

F

Which is the way into the garden trow?

D

O, IACK DAW! I am glad I have met with you. In good faith, I must have this matter go no furder betweene you. I must have it taken up.

F

What matter, sir? Betweene whom?

D

Come, you disguise it — SIR AMOROVVS and you. If you loue me, IACK, you shall make vse of your philosophy now, for this once, and deliuer me your sword. This is not the wedding the CENTAVRES were at, though there be a shee—one here. The bride has entreated me I will see no bloud shed at her bridall, you saw her whisper me ere—while.

F

As I hope to finish TACITVS, I intend no murder.

D

Do you not wait for Sir AMOROVVS?

F

Not I, by my knight—hood.

D

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

And your schollership too?

F

And my schollership too.

D

Go to, then I returne you your sword, and aske you mercy; but put it not up, for you will be assaulted. I vnderstood that you had apprehended it, and walkt here to braue him: and that you had held your life contemptible, in regard of your honor.

F

No, no, no such thing I assure you. He and I parted now, as good friends as could be.

D

Trust not you to that visor. I saw him since dinner with another face: I have knowne many men in my time vex'd with losses, with deaths, and with abuses, but so offended a wight as sir AMOROVVS, did I neuer see, or read of. For taking away his guests, sir, today, that is the cause: and he declares it behind your backe, with such threatnings and contempts -- He said to DAVPHINE, you were the errandst asse --

F

Aye, he may say his pleasure.

D

And swears, you are so protested a coward, that he knowes you will neuer do him any manly or single right, and therefore he will take his course.

F

I will giue him any satisfaction, sir -- but fighting.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

D

Aye, sir, but who knowes what satisfaction he will take? bloud he thirsts for, and bloud he will have: and where—abouts on you he will have it, who knowes, but himselfe?

F

I pray you, master TRVE—WIT, be you a mediator.

D

Well, sir, conceale yourselfe then in this studie, till I returne. He puts him up.
Nay, you must be content to be lock'd in: for, for mine owne reputation I would not have you seene to receiue a publique disgrace, while I have the matter in managing. Gods #so here he comes: keepe your breath close, that he do not heare you sigh. In good faith, sir AMOROVVS, he is not this way, I pray you be mercifull, do not murder him; he is a christian as good as you: you are arm'd as if you sought a reuenge on all his race. Good DAVPHINE, get him away from this place. I neuer knew a mans choller so high, but he would speake to his friends, he would heare reason. IACK DAW, IACK DAW! a—sleepe?

F

Is he gone, master TRVE—WIT?

D

Aye, did you heare him?

F

O god, yes.

D

What a quick eare feare has?

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

F

But is he so arm'd, as you say?

D

Arm'd? did you euer see a fellow, set out to take possession?

F

Aye, sir.

D

That may giue you some light, to conceiue of him: but it is nothing to the principall. Some false brother in the house has furnish'd him strangely. Or, if it were out of the house, it was TOM OTTER.

F

Indeed, he is a Captayne, and his wife is his kinswoman.

D

He has got some-bodies old two-hand-sword, to mow you off at the knees. And that sword hath spawn'd such a dagger! — but then he is so hung with pikes, halberds, peitronells, calliuers, and muskets, that he lookes like a Iustice of peace's hall: a man of two thousand a yeere, is not sess'd at so many weapons, as he has on. There was neuer fencer challeng'd at so many seuerall foiles. You would thinke he meant to murder all Saint PVLCHRES parish. If he could but victuall himselfe for halfe a yeere, in his breeches, he is sufficiently arm'd to ouer-runne a countrie.

F

Good lord, what meanes he, sir! I pray you, master TRVE-WIT, be you a mediator.

D

Well, I will trie if he will be appeas'd with a leg or an arme, if not, you must die once.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

F

I would be loth to loose my right arme, for writing madrigalls.

D

Why, if he will be satisfied with a thumb, or a little finger, all is one to me. You must thinke, I will do my best.

F

Good sir, do. He puts him up againe, and then came forth

C

What hast thou done?

D

He will let me do nothing, man, he do's all afore me, he offers his left arme.

C

His left wing, for a IACK DAW.

B

Take it, by all meanes.

D

How! Maime a man foreuer, for a iest? what a conscience hast thou?

B

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

It is no losse to him: he has no employment for his armes, but to eate spoone-meate. Beside, as good maime his body as his reputation.]]

D

He is a scholler, and a Wit, and yet he do's not thinke so. But he looses no reputation with us, for we all resolu'd him an asse before. To your places againe.

C

I pray thee, let me be in at the other a little.

D

Looke, you will spoile all: these be euer your tricks.

C

No, but I could hit of some things that thou wilt misse, and thou wilt say are good ones.

D

I warrant you. I pray forbear, I will leaue it off, else.

B

Come away, CLERIMONT.

D

Sir AMOROVVS!

G

Master TRVE-WIT.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

D

Whether were you going?

G

Downe into the court, to make water.

D

By no meanes, sir, you shall rather tempt your breeches.

G

Why, sir?

D

Enter here, if you loue your life.

G

Why! why!

D

Question till you throat be cut, do: dally till the enraged soule find you.

G

Who is that?

D

Scene 4.5

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

DAW it is: will you in?

G

Aye, aye, I will in: what is the matter?

D

Nay, if he had beene coole inough to tell us that, there had beene some hope to attone you, but he seemes so implacably enrag'd.

G

'Slight, let him rage. I will hide myselfe.

D

Do, good sir. But what have you done to him within, that should prouoke him thus? you have broke some iest upon him, afore the ladies ---

G

Not I, neuer in my life, broke iest upon any man. The bride was praising sir DAVPHINE, and he went away in snuffe, and I followed him, vnlesse he took offence at me, in his drinke ere while, that I would not pledge all the horse full.

D

By my faith, and that may be, you remember well: but he walkes the round up and downe, through euery roome of the house, with a towell in his hand, crying, where is LA-FOOLE? who saw LA-FOOLE? and when DAVPHINE, and I, demanded the cause, we can force no answeere from him, but (O reuenge, how sweet art thou! I will strangle him in this towell) which leads us to coniecture, that the maine cause of his furie is for bringing you meate today, with a towell about you, to his discredit.

G

Like inough. Why, if he be angrie for that, I will stay here, till his anger be blowne ouer.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

D

A good becoming resolution, sir. If you can put it on on the sudden.

G

Yes, I can put it on. Or, I will away into the country presently.

D

How will you get out of the house, sir? He knowes you are in the house, and he will watch you this se'n-night but he will have you. He will out-wait a sargeant for you.

G

Why, then I will stay here.

D

You must thinke, how to victuall yourselfe in time, then.

G

Why, sweet master TRVE-WIT, will you entreat my cousin OTTER, to send me a cold venison pasty, a bottle or two of wine, and a chamberpot.

D

A stoole were better, sir, of sir A-IAX his inuention.

G

Aye, that will be better indeed: and a pallat to lie on.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

D

O, I would not advise you to sleepe by any meanes.

G

Would you not, sir? why, then I will not.

D

Yet, there is another feare --

G

Is there, sir? What is it?

D

No, he can not breake open this dore with his foot, sure.

G

I will set my backe against it, sir. I have a good backe.

D

But, then if he should batter.

G

Batter! if he dare, I will have an action of batt'ry, against him.

D

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

Cast you the worst. He has sent for poulder alreadie, and what he will do with it, no man knowes: perhaps blow up the corner of the house, where he suspects you are. Here he comes, in quickly. He faines, as if one were present, to fright the other, who is run in to hide himselfe.

I protest, sir IOHN DAW, he is not this way: what will you do? before god, you shall hang no petarde here. I will die rather. Will you not take my word? I neuer knew one but would be satisfied. Sir AMOROVVS, there is no standing out. He has made a petarde of an old brasse pot, to force your dore. Thinke upon some satisfaction, or termes, to offer him.

G

Sir, I will giue him any satisfaction. I dare giue any termes.

D

You will leaue it to me, then?

G

Aye, sir. I will stand to any conditions. He calls forth Clerimont, and Dauphine.

D

How now, what thinke you, sirs? were it not a difficult thing to determine, which of these two fear'd most.

C

Yes, but this feares the brauest: the other a whiniling dastard, IACK DAW! But LA-FOOLE, a braue heroique coward! and is afraid in a great looke, and a stout accent. I like him rarely.

D

Had it not beene pittie, these two should have beene conceal'd?

C

Shall I make a motion?

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

D

Briefly. For I must strike while it is hot.

C

Shall I go fetch the ladies to the catastrophe?

D

Vmh? Aye, by my troth.

B

By no mortall meanes. Let them continue in the state of ignorance, and erre still: thinke them wits, and fine fellowes, as they have done. It were sinne to reforme them.

D

Well, I will have them fetch'd, now I thinke on it, for a priuate purpose of mine: do, CLERIMONT, fetch them, and discourse to them all that is past, and bring them into the gallery here.

B

This is thy extreme vanitie, now: thou think'st thou wert vndone, if euery iest thou mak'st were not publish'd.

D

Thou shalt see, how vniust thou art, presently. CLERIMONT, say it was DAVPHINE'S plot. Trust me not, if the whole drift be not for thy good. There is a carpet in the next roome, put it on, with this scarfe ouer thy face, and a cushion on thy head, and be ready when I call AMOROV'S. Away — IOHN DAW.

F

What good newes, sir.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

D

Faith, I have followed, and argued with him hard for you. I told him, you were a knight, and a scholler; and that you knew fortitude did consist magis patiendo quam faciendo, magis ferendo quam feriendo.

F

It doth so indeed, sir.

D

And that you would suffer, I told him: so, at first he demanded, by my troth, in my conceipt, too much.

F

What was it, sir.

D

Your vpper lip, and sixe of your fore-teeth.

F

It was vnreasonable.

D

Nay, I told him plainely, you could not spare them all. So after long argument (pro & con, as you know) I brought him downe to your two butter-teeth, and them he would have.

F

O, did you so? why, he shall have them.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

D

But he shall not, sir, by your leaue. The conclusion is this, sir, because you shall be very good friends hereafter, and this neuer to be remembered, or vp-braided; besides, that he may not boast, he has done any such thing to you in his owne person: he is to come here in disguise, giue you fiue kicks in priuate, sir, take your sword from you, and lock you up in that studie, during pleasure. Which will be but a little while, we will get it releas'd presently.

F

Fiue kicks? he shall have sixe, sir, to be friends.

D

Beleeue me, you shall not ouer-shoot yourselfe, to send him that word by me.

F

Deliuier it, sir. He shall have it with all my heart, to be friends.

D

Friends? Nay, if he should not be so, and heartily too, upon the termes, he shall have me to enemie while I liue. Come, sir, beare it brauely.

F

O god, sir, it is nothing.

D

True. What is sixe kicks to a man, that reads SENECA?

F

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

I have had a hundred, sir.

D

Sir AMOROVVS. No speaking one to another, or rehearsing old matters. Dauphine comes forth, and kicks him.

F

One, two, three, foure, fiue. I protest, sir AMOROVVS, you shall have sixe.

D

Nay, I told you should not talke. Come, giue him sixe, and he will needs. Your sword. Now returne to your safe custody: you shall presently meet afore the ladies, and be the dearest friends one to another -- Giue me the scarfe, now, thou shalt beat the other bare-fac'd. Stand by, sir AMOROVVS.]]

G

What is here? A sword.

D

I can not helpe it, without I should take the quarrell upon myselfe: here he has sent you his sword --

G

I will receiue none of it.

D

And he wills you to fasten it against a wall, and breake your head in some few seuerall places against the hilts.

G

I will not: tell him roundly. I can not endure to shed my owne bloud.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

D

Will you not?

G

No. I will beat it against a faire flat wall, if that will satisfie him: If not, he shall beat it himself, for AMOROVVS.

D

Why, this is strange starting off, when a man vnder-takes for you! I offered him another condition: Will you stand to that?

G

Aye, what is it.

D

That you will be beaten, in priuate.

G

Yes. I am content, at the blunt.

D

Then you must submit yourselfe to be hood-wink'd in this skarfe, and be led to him, where he will take your sword from you, and make you beare a blow, ouer the mouth, gules, and tweakes by the nose, sans numbre.

G

I am content. But why must I be blinded?

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

D

That is for your good, sir: because, if he should grow insolent upon this, and publish it hereafter to your disgrace (which I hope he will not do) you might sweare safely and protest, he neuer beat you, to your knowledge.

G

O, I conceiue.

D

I do not doubt, but you will be perfect good friends upon it, and not dare to vtter an ill thought one of another, in future.

G

Not I, as god helpe me, of him.

D

Nor he of you, sir. If he should — Come, sir. All hid, sir IOHN.]| Dauphine enters to tweake him.

G

O, sir IOHN, sir IOHN. O, o — o — o — o — o — O —

D

Good, sir IOHN, leaue tweeking, you will blow his nose off. It is sir IOHN's pleasure, you should retire into the studie. Why, now you are friends. All bitterness betweene you, I hope, is buried; you shall come forth by and by, DAMON and PYTHIAS upon it: and embrace with all the ranknesse of friendship that can be. I trust, we shall have them tamer in their language hereafter. DAVPHINE, I worship thee. Gods will the ladies have surpris'd us!

Scene 4.6

Hauing discouered part of the past scene aboue.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

V

CENTAVRE, how our iudgements were impos'd on by these adulterate knights! Nay, madame, MAVIS was more deceiu'd then we, it was her commendation vtter'd them in the colledge. I commended but their wits, madame, and their braueries. I neuer look'd toward their valours. Sir DAVPHINE is valiant, and a wit too, it seemes? And a brauerie too. Was this his proiect?

J

So master CLERIMONT intimates, madame.

V

Good MOROSE, when you come to the colledge, will you bring him with you? He seemes a very perfect gentleman.

E

He is so, madame, beleeeue it.

V

But when will you come, MOROSE?

E

Three or foure dayes hence, madame, when I have got me a coach, and horses.

V

No, tomorrow, good MOROSE, CENTAVRE shall send you her coach. Yes faith, do, and bring sir DAVPHINE with you. She has promis'd that, MAVIS. He is a very worthy gentleman, in his exteriors, madame. Aye, he showes he is iudiciall in his clothes. And yet not so superlatiuey neat as some, madame, that have their faces set in a brake! Aye, and have euey haire in forme! That weare purer linnen then ourselues, and professe more neatnesse, then the french hermaphrodite!

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

E

Aye ladies, they, what they tell one of us, have told a thousand, and are the only theeues of our fame: that thinke to take us with that perfume, or with that lace, and laugh at us vn-conscionably when they have done.

V

But, sir DAVPHINES carelesnesse becomes him. I could loue a man, for such a nose! Or such a leg! He has an exceeding good eye, madame! And a very good lock! Good MOROSE, bring him to my chamber first.

J

Please your honors, to meet at my house, madame?

D

See, how they eye thee, man! they are taken, I warrant thee.

V

You have vnbrac'd our brace of knights, here, master TRVE-WIT.]]

D

Not I, madame, it was sir DAVPHINES ingine: who, if he have disfurnish'd your ladship of any guard, or seruice by it, is able to make the place good againe, in himselfe.

V

There is no suspition of that, sir. God so, MAVIS, HAVGHTY is kissing. Let us go too, and take part. But I am glad of the fortune (beside the discoverie of two such emptie caskets) to gaine the knowledge of so rich a mine of wertue, as sir DAVPHINE.]] We would be all glad to stile him of our friendship, and see him at the colledge. He can not mixe with a sweeter societie, I will prophesie, and I hope he himselfe will thinke so.

B

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

I should be rude to imagine otherwise, lady.

D

Did not I tell thee, DAVPHINE? Why, all their actions are governed by crude opinion, without reason or cause; they know not why they do anything: but as they are inform'd, beleev'd, iudge, praise, condemne, loue, hate, and in æmulation one of another, do all these things alike. Onely, they have a naturall inclination swayes them generally to the worst, when they are left to themselves. But, pursue it, now thou hast them.

V

Shall we go in againe, MOROSE?

E

Yes, madame.

V

We will entreat sir DAVPHINES companie.

D

Stay, good madame, the inter-view of the two friends, PYLADES and ORESTES: I will fetch them out to you straight.

V

Will you, master TRVE-WIT?

B

Aye, but noble ladies, do not confesse in your countenance, or outward bearing to them any discoverie of the follies, that we may see, how they will beare up againe, with what assurance, and erection.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

V

We will not, sir DAVPHINE.

X

upon our honors, sir DAVPHINE.

D

Sir AMOROVVS, sir AMOROVVS. The ladies are here.

G

Are they?

D

Yes, but slip out by and by, as their backs are turn'd, and meet sir IOHN here, as by chance, when I call you.
IACK DAW.

F

What say you, sir?

D

Whip out behind me suddenly: and no anger in your lookes to your aduersarie. Now, now.

G

Noble sir IOHN DAW! where have you beene?

F

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

To seeke you, sir AMOROVVS.

G

Me! I honor you.

F

I preuent you, sir.

C

They have forgot their rapiers!

D

O, they meet in peace, man.

B

Where is your sword, sir IOHN?

C

And yours, sir AMOROVVS?

F

Mine! my boy had it forth, to mend the handle, eene now.

G

And my gold handle was broke too, and my boy had it forth.

B

Indeed, sir? How their excuses meet!

C

What a consent there is, in the handles?

D

Nay, there is so in the points too, I warrant you.

J

O me! madame, he comes againe, the mad man, away.

Scene 4.7

He had found the two swords drawne within.

A

What make these naked weapons here, gentlemen?

D

O, sir! here hath like to been murder since you went! A couple of knights fallen out about the brides favours: we were faine to take away their weapons, your house had beene beg'd by this time else —

A

For what?

C

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

For man–slaughter, sir, as being accessory.

A

And, for her fauours?

D

Aye, sir, heretofore, not present. CLERIMONT, carry them their swords, now. They have done all the hurt they will do.

B

Have you spoke with a lawyer, sir?

A

O, no! there is such a noyse in the court, that they have frighted me home, with more violence then I went! such speaking; and counter–speaking, with their seuerall voyces of citations, appellations, allegations, certificates, attachments, intergatories, references, conuictions, and afflictions indeed, among the Doctors and Proctors! that the noise here is silence to it! a kind of calme mid–night!

D

Why, sir, if you would be resolu'd indeed, I can bring you hether a very sufficient Lawyer, and a learned Diuine, that shall inquire into euery least scruple for you.

A

Can you, master TRVE–WIT?

D

Yes, and are very sober graue persons, that will dispatch it in a chamber, with a whisper, or two.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

A

Good sir, shall I hope this benefit from you, and trust myselfe into your hands?

D

Alas, sir! your nephew, and I, have beene asham'd, and oft-times mad since you went, to thinke how you are abus'd. Go in, good sir, and lock yourselfe up till we call you, we will tell you more anon, sir.

A

Do your pleasure with me, gentlemen; I beleeeue in you: and that deserues no delusion —

D

You shall find none, sir: but heapt, heapt plentie of vexation.

B

What wilt thou do now, WIT?

D

Recouer me hether OTTER, and the Barber, if you can, by any meanes, presently.

B

Why? to what purpose?

D

O, I will make the deepest Diuine, and grauest Lawyer, out of them two, for him —

B

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

Thou canst not man, these are waking dreames.

D

Do not feare me. Clap but a ciuill gowne with a welt, on the one; and a canonical cloake with sleeues, on the other: and giue them a few termes in their mouthes, if there come not forth as able a Doctor, and compleat a Parson, for this turne, as may be wish'd, trust not my election. And, I hope, without wronging the dignitie of either profession, since they are but persons put on, and for mirths sake, to torment him. The Barber smatters latin, I remember.

B

Yes, and OTTER too.

D

Well then, if I make them not wrangle out this case, to his no comfort, let me be thought a IACK DAW, or LA-FOOLE, or anything worse. Go you to your ladies, but first send for them.

B

I will.

Act 5

Scene 5.1

G

Where had you our swords, master CLERIMONT?

C

Why, DAVPHINE tooke them from the mad-man.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

G

And he tooke them from our boyes, I warrant you?

C

Very like, sir.

G

Thanke you, good master CLERIMONT. Sir IOHN DAW, and I are both beholden to you.

C

Would I knew how to make you so, gentlemen.

F

Sir AMOROVVS, and I are your seruants, sir.

V

Gentlemen, have any of you a pen-and-inke. I would faine write out a riddle in Italian, for sir DAVPHINE, to translate.

C

Not I, in troth lady, I am no scriuener.

F

I can furnish you, I thinke, lady.

C

Epicoeue, or the Silent Woman

He has it in the haft of a knife, I beleue!

G

No, he has his boxe of instruments.

C

Like a surgeon!

G

For the mathematiques: his squire, his compasses, his brasse pens, and black–lead, to draw maps of euery place, and person, where he comes.

C

How, maps of persons!

G

Yes, sir, of NOMENTACK, when he was here, and of the Prince of Moldauia, and of his mistris, mistris EPICOENE.

C

Away! he has not found out her latitude, I hope.

G

You are a pleasant gentleman, sir.

C

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

Faith, now we are in priuate, let us wanton it a little, and talke waggishly. Sir IOHN, I am telling sir AMOROVS here, that you two gouerne the ladies, wheree're you come, you carry the feminine gender afore you.

F

They shall rather carry us afore them, if they will, sir.

C

Nay, I beleeeue that they do, withall -- But, that you are the prime-men in their affections, and direct all their actions --

F

Not I: sir AMOROVS is.

G

I protest, sir IOHN is.

F

As I hope to rise in the state, sir AMOROVS, you haue the person.

G

Sir IOHN, you haue the person, and the discourse too.

F

Not I, sir. I haue no discourse -- and then you haue actiuitie beside.

G

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

I protest, sir IOHN, you come as high from Tripoly, as I do euery whit: and lift as many ioyn'd stooles, and leape ouer them, if you would vse it —

C

Well, agree on it together knights; for betweene you, you diuide the kingdome, or common-wealth of ladies affections: I see it, and can perceiue a little how they obserue you, and feare you, indeed. You could tell strange stories, my masters, if you would, I know.

F

Faith, we have seene somewhat, sir.

G

That we have — vellet petti-coates, and wrought smocks, or so.

F

Aye, and —

C

Nay, out with it, sir IOHN: do not enuie your friend the pleasure of hearing, when you have had the delight of tasting.

F

Why — a — do you speake, sir AMOROVVS.

G

No, do you, sir IOHN DAW.

F

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

Infaith, you shall.

G

Infaith, you shall.

F

Why, we have beene --

G

In the great bed at Ware together in our time. On, sir IOHN.

F

Nay, do you, sir AMOROVVS.

C

And these ladies with you, Knights?

G

No, excuse us, sir.

F

We must not wound reputation.

G

No matter -- they were these, or others. our bath cost us fifteene pound, when we came home.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

C

Do you heare, sir IOHN, you shall tell me but one thing truly, as you loue me.

F

If I can, I will, sir.

C

You lay in the same house with the bride, here?

F

Yes, and conuerst with her houely, sir.

C

And what humour is she of? is she comming, and open, free?

F

O, exceeding open, sir. I was her seruant, and sir AMOROVVS was to be.

C

Come, you have both had fauours from her? I know, and have heard so much.

F

O, no, sir.

G

Act 5

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

You shall excuse us, sir: we must not wound reputation.

C

Tut, she is married, now; and you can not hurt her with any report, and therefore speake plainly: how many times, infaith? which of you lead first? Ha?

G

Sir IOHN had her mayden-head, indeed.

F

O, it pleases him to say so, sir, but sir AMOROVVS knowes what is what, as well.

C

Do'st thou infaith, AMOROVVS?

G

In a manner, sir.

C

Why, I commend you lads. Little knowes Don Bride-groome of this. Nor shall he, for me.

F

Hang him, mad oxe.

C

Speake softly: here comes his nephew, with the lady HAVGHTY. He will get the ladies from you, sirs, if you looke not to him in time.

G

Why, if he do, we will fetch them home againe, I warrant you.

Scene 5.2

V

I assure you, sir DAVPHINE, it is the price and estimation of your vertue onely, that hath embarqu'd me to this aduention, and I could not but make out to tell you so; nor can I repent me of the act, since it is alwayes an argument of some vertue in ourselues, that we loue and affect it so in others.

B

Your ladyship sets too high a price, on my weakenesse.

V

Sir, I can distinguish gemmes from peebles --

B

(Are you so skilfull in stones?)

V

And, howsoever I may suffer in such a iudgement as yours, by admitting equality of ranke, or societie, with CENTAVRE, or MAVIS --

B

You do not, madame, I perceiue they are your mere foiles.

V

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

Then are you a friend to truth, sir. It makes me loue you the more. It is not the outward, but the inward man that I affect. They are not apprehensiu of an eminent perfection, but loue flat, and dully. Where are you, my lady HAUGHTY? I come presently, CENTAVRE. My chamber, sir, my Page shall show you; and TRVSTY, my woman, shall be euer awake for you: you need not feare to communicate anything with her, for she is a FIDELIA. I pray you weare this iewell for my sake, sir DAVPHINE. Where is MAVIS, CENTAVRE? Within, madame, awriting. I will follow you presently. I will but speake a word with sir DAVPHINE.

B

With me, madame?

V

Good sir DAVPHINE, do not trust HAUGHTY, nor make any credit to her, whateuer you do besides, Sir DAVPHINE, I giue you this caution, he is a perfect courtier, and loues nobody, but for her vses: and for her vses, she loues all. Besides, her physitians giue her out to be none of the clearest, whether she pay them or no, heau'n knowes: and she is aboue fiftie too, and pargets! See her in a fore-noone. Here comes MAVIS, a worse face then she! you would not like this, by candle-light. If you will come to my chamber one of these mornings early, or late in an euening, I will tell you more. Where is HAUGHTY, MAVIS? Within, CENTAVRE. What have you, there? An Italian riddle for sir DAVPHINE, (you shall not see it infaith, CENTAVRE.) Good sir DAVPHINE, solue it for me. I will call for it anon.

C

How now, DAVPHINE? how do'st thou quit thyselفة of these females?

B

'Slight, they haunt me like fayries, and giue me iewells here, I can not be rid of them.

C

O, you must not tell, though.

B

Masse, I forgot that: I was neuer so assaulted. One loues for vertue, and bribes me with this. Another loues me with caution, and so would possesse me. A third brings me a riddle here, and all are ieaalous: and raile each at other.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

C

A riddle? pray' let me see it? He reades the paper.

V

Sir DAVPHINE, I chose this way of intimation for priuacie. The ladies here, I know, have both hope, and purpose, to make a collegiate and seruant of you. If I might be so honor'd, as to appeare at any end of so noble a worke, I would enter into a fame of taking physique tomorrow, and continue it foure or fiue dayes, or longer, for your visitation. MAVIS.

C

By my faith, a subtle one! Call you this a riddle? What is their plaine dealing, trow?

B

We lack TRVE–WIT, to tell us that.

C

We lack him for somewhat else too: his Knights reformados are wound up as high, and insolent, as euer they were.

B

You iest.

C

No drunkards, either with wine or vanitie, euer confess'd such stories of themselues. I would not giue a flies leg, in ballance against all the womens reputations here, if they could be but thought to speake truth: and, for the bride, they have made their affidauit against her directly —

B

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

What, that they have lyen with her?

C

Yes, and tell times, and circumstances, with the cause why, and the place where. I had almost brought them to affirme that they had done it, today.

B

Not both of them.

C

Yes faith: with a sooth or two more I had effected it. They would have set it downe vnder their hands.

B

Why, they will be our sport, I see, still! whether we will, or no.

Scene 5.3

D

O, Are you here? Come DAVPHINE. Go, call your vncler presently. I have fitted my Diuine, and my Canonist, died their beards and all: the knaues do not know themselues they are so exalted, and alter'd. Preferment changes any man. Thou shalt keepe one dore, and I another, and then CLERIMONT in the midst, that he may have no meanes of escape from their cauilling, when they grow hot once. And then the women (as I have giuen the bride her instructions) to breake in upon him, in the l'enuoy. O, it will be full and twanging! Away, fetch him. Come, master Doctor, and master Parson, looke to your parts now, and discharge them brauely: you are well set forth, performe it as well. If you chance to be out, do not confesse it with standing still, or humming, or gaping one at another: but go on, and talke aloud, and eagerly, vse vehement action, and onely remember your termes, and you are safe. Let the matter go where it will: you have many will do so. But at first, be very solemne, and graue like your garments, though you loose yourselues after, and skip out like a brace of iugglers on a table. Here he comes! set your faces, and looke superciliously, while I present you.

A

Are these the two learned men?

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

D

Yes, sir, please you salute them?

A

Salute them? I had rather do anything, then weare out time so vnfruitfully, sir. I wonder, how these common formes, as god saue you, and you are well-come, are come to be a habit in our liues! or, I am glad to see you! when I can not see, what the profit can be of these words, so long as it is no whit better with him, whose affaires are sad, and grieuous, that he heares this salutation.

D

It is true, sir, we will go to the matter then. Gentlemen, master Doctor, and master Parson, I have acquainted you sufficiently with the busines, for which you are come hether. And you are not now to enforme yourselues in the state of the question, I know. This is the gentleman, who expects your resolution, and therefore, when you please, beginne.

H

Please you, master Doctor.

I

Please you, good master Parson.

H

I would heare the Canon-law speake first.

I

It must giue place to positie Diuinitie, sir.

A

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

Nay, good gentlemen, do not throw me into circumstances. Let your comforts arrive quickly at me, those that are. Be swift in affording me my peace, if so I shall hope any. I love not your disputations, or your court-tumults. And that it be not strange to you, I will tell you. My father, in my education, was wont to advise me, that I should always collect, and containe my mind, not suffering it to flow loosely; that I should looke to what things were necessary to the carriage of my life, and what not: embracing the one and eschewing the other. In short, that I should endear myselfe to rest, and avoid turmoile: which now is growne to be another nature to me. So that I come not to your publike pleadings, or your places of noise; not that I neglect those things, that make for the dignitie of the common-wealth: but for the meere avoiding of clamors, and impertinencies of Orators, that know not how to be silent. And for the cause of noise, am I now a sutor to you. You do not know in what a miserie I have been exercis'd this day, what a torrent of euill! My very house turnes round with the tumult! I dwell in a wind-mill! The perpetuall motion is here, and not at Eltham.

D

Well, good master Doctor, will you breake the ice? master Parson will wade after.

I

Sir, though vnworthy, and the weaker, I will presume.

H

It is no presumption, domine Doctor.

A

Yet againe!

I

Your question is, for how many causes a man may have diuortiumlegitimum, a lawfull diuorce. First, you must vnderstand the nature of the word diuorce, a diuertendo —

A

No excursions upon words, good Doctor, to the question briefly.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

I

I answer then, the Canon-law affords diuorce but in a few cases, and the principall is in the common case, the adulterous case. But there are duodecim impedimenta, twelue impediments (as we call them) all which do not dirimere contractum, but irritum readere matrimonium, as we say in the Canon-law, not take away the bond, but cause a nullitie therein.

A

I vnderstood you, before: good sir, auoid your impertinencie of translation.

H

He can not open this too much, sir, by your fauour.

A

Yet more!

D

O, you must giue the learned men leaue, sir. To your impediments, master Doctor.

I

The first is impedimentum erroris.

H

Of which there are seuerall species.

I

Aye, as error persona.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

H

If you contract yourselfe to one person, thinking her another.

I

Then, error fortuna.

H

If she be a begger, and you thought her rich.

I

Then, error qualitatis.

H

If she proue stubborne, or head-strong, that you thought obedient.]]

A

How? is that, sir, a lawfull impediment? One at once, I pray you gentlemen.

H

Aye, ante copulam, but not post copulam, sir.

I

Mr% Parson saies right. Nec post nuptiarum benedictionem. It doth indeed but irrita reddere sponsalia, annull the contract: after marriage it is of no obstancy.

D

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

Alas, sir, what a hope are we fall'n from, by this time!

I

The next is conditio: if you thought her free borne, and she proue a bond-woman, there is impediment of estate and condition.

H

Aye, but Mr% Doctor, those seruitudes are sublata, now, among us christians.

I

By your fauour, master Parson --

H

You shall giue me leaue, master Doctor.

A

Nay, gentlemen, quarrell not in that question; it concernes not my case: passe to the third.

I

Well then, the third is votum. If either partie have made a vow of chastitie. But that practice, as master Parson said of the other, is taken away among us, thanks be to discipline. The fourth is cognatio: if the persons be of kinne, within the degrees.

H

I: do you know, what the degrees are, sir?

A

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

No, nor I care not, sir: they offer me no comfort in the question, I am sure.

I

But, there is a branch of this impediment may, which is cognatiospiritualis. If you were her god–father, sir, then the marriage is incestuous.

H

That comment is absurd, and superstitious, master Doctor. I can not endure it. Are we not all brothers and sisters, and as much a kinne in that, as god–fathers, and god–daughters?

A

O me! to end the controuersie, I neuer was a god–father, I neuer was a god–father in my life, sir. Passe to the next.

I

The fift is crimen adulterij: the knowne case. The sixt, cultusdisparitas, difference of religion: have you euer examin'd her what religion she is of?

A

No, I would rather she were of none, then be put to the trouble of it!

H

You may have it done for you, sir.

A

By no meanes, good sir, on, to the rest: shall you euer come to an end, thinke you?

D

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

Yes, he has done halfe, sir (On, to the rest) be patient, and expect, sir.

I

The seuenth is, vis: if it were upon compulsion, or force.

A

O no, it was too voluntarie, mine: too voluntarie.

I

The eight is, ordo: if euer she have taken holy orders.

H

That is supersitious, too.

A

No matter, master Parson: would she would go into a nunnerie yet.

I

The ninth is, ligamen: if you were bound, sir, to any other before.

A

I thrust myselfe too soone into these fetters.

I

The tenth is, publica honestas: which is inchoata quadam affinitas.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

H

Aye, or affinitas orta ex sponsalibus': and is but leue impedimentum.

A

I feele no aire of comfort blowing to me, in all this.

I

The eleuenth is, affinitas ex fornicatione.

H

Which is no lesse vera affinitas, then the other, master Doctor.

I

True, quæ oritur ex legitimo matrimonio.

H

You say right, venerable Doctor. And, nascitur ex eo, quod per coniugium duæ personæ efficiuntur vna caro —

A

Hey-day, now they beginne.

I

I conceiue you, master Parson. Ita per fornicationem aque estverus pater, qui sic generat —

H

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

Et vere filius qui sit generatur --

A

What is all this to me?

C

Now it growes warme.

I

The twelfth, and last is, si forte coire nequibis.

H

Aye, that is impedimentum grauissimum. It doth vtterly annull, and annihilate, that. If you have manifestam frigiditatem, you are well, sir.

D

Why, there is comfort come at length, sir. Confesse yourselfe but a man vnable, and she will sue to be diuorc'd first.

H

Aye, or if there be morbus perpetuus, & insanabilis, as Paralysis, Elephantiasis, or so --

B

O, but frigiditas is the fairer way, gentlemen.

H

You say troth, sir, and as it is in the canon, master Doctor.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

I

I conceiue you, sir.

C

Before he speakes.

H

That a boy, or child, vnder yeeres, is not fit for marriage, because he can not reddere debitum. So your omnipotentes --

D

Your impotentes, you whorson Lobster.

H

Your impotentes, I should say, are minime apti ad contrahendam matrimonium.

D

Matrimonium? We shall have most vn-matrimoniall latin, with you: matrimonia, and be hang'd.

B

You put them out, man.

I

But then there will arise a doubt, master Parson, in our case. post matrimonium: that frigiditate præditus (do you conceiue me, sir?)

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

H

Very well, sir.

I

Who can not vti vxore pro vxore, may habere eam pro sorore.

H

Absurd, absurd, absurd, and merely apostaticall.

I

You shall pardon me, master Parson, I can proue it.

H

You can proue a Will, master Doctor, you can proue nothing else. Do's not the verse of your owne canon say.
Hæc socianda vetant conubie, facta retractant —

I

I grant you, but how do they retractare, master Parson?

A

(O, this was it, I fear'd.)

H

In 7æternum, sir.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

I

That is false in diuinitie, by your fauour.

H

It is false in humanitie, to say so. Is he not profus inutilis ad thorum? Can he præstare fidem datam? I would faine know.

I

Yes: how if he do conualere?

H

He can not conualere, it is impossible.

D

Nay, good sir, attend the learned men, they will thinke you neglect them else.

I

Or, if he do simulare himselfe frigidum, odio vxoris, or so?

H

I say, he is adulter manifestus, then.

B

(They dispute it very learnedly, infaith.)

H

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

And prostitutur vxoris, and this is positue.

A

Good sir, let me escape.

D

You will not do me that wrong, sir.?

H

And therefore, if he be manifeste frigidus, sir --

I

Aye, if he be manifeste frigidus, I grant you --

H

Why, that was my conclusion.

I

And mine too.

D

Nay, heare the conclusion, sir.

H

Then, frigiditatis causa --

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

I

Yes, causa frigiditatis ---

A

O, mine eares!

H

She may have libellum diuortij, against you.

I

Aye, diuortij libellum she will sure have.

A

Good eccho's, forbear.

H

If you confesse it.

I

Which I would do, sir ---

A

I will do anything ---

H

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

And cleere myselfe in foro conscientiaë --

I

Because you want indeed --

A

Yet more?

H

Exercendi potestate.

Scene 5.4

E

I will not endure it any longer. Ladies, I beseech you helpe me. This is such a wrong, as neuer was offer'd to poore bride before. Upon her marriage day, to have her husband conspire against her, and a couple of mercinarie companions, to be brought in for formes sake, to perswade a separation! If you had bloud, or vertue in you, gentlemen, you would not suffer such eare-wigs about a husband, or scorpions, to creep between man and wife --

A

O, the varietie and changes of my torment!

V

Let them be cudgell'd out of dores, by our groomes. I will lend you my foot-man. We will have our men blanket them in the hall.

J

As there was one, at our house, madame, for peeping in at the dore.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

F

Content, infaith.

D

Stay, ladies, and gentlemen, you will heare, before you proceed?

V

I would have the bride–groom blanketed, too. Beginne with him first. Yes, by my troth.

A

O, mankind generation!

B

Ladies, for my sake forebeare.

V

Yes, for sir DAVPHINES sake. He shall command us.

G

He is as fine a gentleman of his inches, madame, as any is about the towne, and weares as good colours when he list.

D

Be briefe, sir, and confesse your infirmitie, she will be a–fire to be quit of you, if she but heare that nam'd once, you shall not entreat her to stay. She will flie you, like one that had the marks upon him.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

A

Ladies, I must craue all your pardons --

D

Silence, ladies.

A

For a wrong I have done to your whole sexe, in marrying this faire, and vertuous gentlewoman --

C

Heare him, good ladies.

A

Being guiltie of an infirmitie, which before I confer'd with these learned men, I thought I might have conceal'd --

D

But now being better inform'd in his conscience by them, he is to declare it, and giue satisfaction, by asking your publique forgiuenesse.

A

I am no man, ladies.

X

How!

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

A

Vtterly vn–abled in nature, by reason of frigidity, to performe the duties, or any the least office of a husband.

V

Now, out upon him, prodigious creature! Bride–groom vncarnate. And would you offer it, to a young gentlewoman?

J

A lady of her longings?

E

Tut, a deuce, a deuce, this, it smells rankly, ladies. A mere comment of his owne.

D

Why, if you suspect that, ladies, you may have him search'd.

F

As the custome is, by a iurie of physitians.

G

Yes faith, it will be braue.

A

O me, must I vnder–goe that!

J

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

No, let women search him, madame: we can do it ourselves.

A

Out on me, worse!

E

No, ladies, you shall not need, I will take him with all his faults.

A

Worst of all!

C

Why, then it is no divorce, Doctor, if she consent not?

I

No, if the man be frigidus, it is de parte vxoris, that we grant libellum diuortij, in the law.

H

Aye, it is the same in theologie.

A

Worse, worse then worst!

D

Nay, sir, be not vtterly dis-heartned, we have yet a small relique of hope left, as neere as our comfort is blowne out. CLERIMONT, produce your brace of Knights. What was that, master Parson, you told me in errore qualitatatis, e'ne now? DAVPHINE, whisper the bride, that she carry it as if she were guiltie, and asham'd.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

H

Mary sir, in errore qualitatis (which master Doctor did forbear to vrge) if she be found corrupta, that is, vitiated or broken up, that was pro virgine desponsa, espous'd for a maid —

A

What then, sir?

H

It doth dirimere contractum, and irritum reddere too.

D

If this be true, we are happy againe, sir, once more. Here are an honorable brace of Knights, that shall affirme so much.

F

Pardon us, good master CLERIMONT.

G

You shall excuse us, master CLERIMONT.

C

Nay, you must make it good now, Knights, there is no remedie, I will eate no words for you, nor no men: you know you spoke it to me?

F

Is this gentleman-like, sir?

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

D

IACK DAW, he is worse then sir AMOROVS: fiercer a great deale. Sir AMOROVS, beware, there be ten DAWES in this CLERIMONT.

G

I will confesse it, sir.

F

Will you, sir AMOROVS? will you wound reputation?

G

I am resolu'd.

D

So should you be too, IACK DAW: what should keepe you off? she is but a woman, and in disgrace. He will be glad on it.

F

Will he? I thought he would have beene angrie.

C

You will dispatch, Knights, it must be done, infaith.

D

Why, if it must it shall, sir, they say. They will ne're go backe. Do not tempt his patience.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

F

It is true indeed, sir.

G

Yes, I assure you, sir.

A

What is true gentlemen? what do you assure me?

F

That we have knowne your bride, sir --

G

In good fashion. She was our mistris, or so --

C

Nay, you must be plaine, Knights, as you were to me.

H

Aye, the question is, if you have carnaliter, or no.

G

Carnaliter? what else, sir?

H

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

It is inough: a plaine nullitie.

E

I am vn-done, I am vn-done!

A

O, let me whorship and adore you, gentlemen!

E

I am vn-done!

A

Yes, to my hand, I thanke these Knights: master Parson, let me thanke you otherwise.

V

And, have they confess'd? Now out upon them, informers!

D

You see, what creatures you may bestow your faouours on, madames.

V

I would except against them as beaten Knights, wench, and not good witnesses in law.

J

Poore gentlewoman, how she takes it!

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

V

Be comforted, MOROSE, I loue you the better for it. so do I, I protest.

I

But gentlemen, you have not knowne her, since matrimonium?

F

Not today, master Doctor.

G

No, sir, not today.

I

Why, then I say, for any act before, the matrimonium is good and perfect: vnlesse, the worshipfull Bride–groome did precisely, before witnesse demand, if she were virgo ante nuptias.

E

No, that he did not, I assure you, master Doctor.

I

If he can not proue that, it is ratum coniugium, notwithstanding the premises. And they do no way impedire. And this is my sentence, this I pronounce.

H

I am of master Doctors resolution too, sir: if you made not that demand, ante nuptias.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

A

O my heart! wilt thou breake? wilt thou breake? this is worst of all worst worsts! that hell could have devis'd!
Marry a whore! and so much noise!

B

Come, I see now plaine confederacie in this Doctor, and this Parson, to abuse a gentleman. You studie his affliction. I pray' be gone companions. And gentlemen, I begin to suspect you for hauing parts with them. Sir, will it please you heare me?

A

O, do not talke to me, take not from me the pleasure of dying in silence, nephew.

B

Sir, I must speake to you. I have beene long your poore despis'd kins-man, and many a hard thought has strength'ned you against me: but now it shall appeare if either I loue you or your peace, and preferre them to all the world beside. I will not be long or grieuous to you, sir. If I free you of this vnhappy match absolutely, and instantly after all this trouble, and almost in your despaire, now —

A

(It can not be.)

B

Sir, that you be neuer troubled with a murmure of it more, what shall I hope for, or deserue of you?

A

O, what thou wilt, nephew! thou shalt deserue me, and have me.

B

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

Shall I have your fauour perfect to me, and loue hereafter?

A

That, and anything beside. Make thine owne conditions. My whole estate is thine. Manage it, I will become thy Ward.

B

Nay, sir, I will not be so vn-reasonable.

E

Will sir DAVPHINE be mine enemie too?

B

You know, I have beene long a suter to you, vncke, that out of your estate, which is fifteen hundred a yeere, you would allow me but fiue hundred during life, and assure the rest upon me after: to which I have often, by myselfe and freinds tendred you a writing to signe, which you would neuer consent, or incline to. If you please but to effect it now --

A

Thou shalt have it, nephew. I will do it, and more.

B

If I quit you not presently? and for-euer of this cumber, you shall have power instantly, afore all these, to reuoke your act, and I will become, whose slaue you will giue me to, for-euer.

A

Where is the writing? I will seale to it, that, or to a blanke, and write thine owne conditions.

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

E

O me, most vnfortunate wretched gentlewoman!

V

Will sir DAVPHINE do this?

E

Good sir, have some compassion on me.

A

O, my nephew knowes you belike: away crocodile.

V

He do's it not sure, without good ground.

B

Here, sir.

A

Come, nephew: giue me the pen. I will subscribe to anything, and seale to what thou wilt, for my deliuerance. Thou art my restorer. Here, I deliuer it thee as my deed. If there be a word in it lacking, or writ with false orthographie, I protest before — I will not take the aduantage. He takes off Epicnes perruke.

B

Then here is your release, sir; you have married a boy: a gentlemans son, that I have brought up this halfe yeere, at my great charges, and for this composition, which I have now made with you. What say you, master Doctor? this is iustum impedimentum, I hope, error personæ?

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

H

Yes sir, in primo gradu.

I

In primo gradu.

B

I thanke you, good Doctor CVTBERD, and Parson OTTER. He pulls off their beardes, and disguise. You are beholden to them, sir, that have taken this paines for you: and my friend, master TRVE–WIT, who enabled them for the businesse. Now you may go in and rest, be as priuate as you will, sir. I will not trouble you, till you trouble me with your funerall, which I care not how soone it come. CVTBERD, I will make your lease good. Thanke me not, but with your leg, CVTBERD. And TOM OTTER, your Princesse shall be reconcil'd to you. How now, gentlemen! do you looke at me?

C

A boy.

B

Yes, mistris EPICOENE.

D

Well, DAVPHINE, you have lurch'd your friends of the better halfe of the garland, by concealing this part of the plot! but much good do it thee, thou deseru'st it, lad. And CLERIMONT, for thy vnexpected bringing in these two to confession, weare my part of it freely. Nay, sir DAW, and sir LA–FOOLE, you see the gentlewoman that has done you the favours! we are all thankefull to you, and so should the woman–kind here, specially for lying on her, though not with her! You meant so, I am sure? But, that we have stuck it upon you today, in your own imagin'd persons, and so lately; this Amazon, the champion of the sexe, should beate you now thriftily, for the common slanders, which ladies receiue from such cuckowes, as you are. You are they, that when no merit or fortune can make you hope to enjoy their bodies, will yet lie with their reputations, and make their fame suffer. Away you common moths of these, and all ladies honors. Go, trauaile to make legs and faces, and come home with some new matter to be laught at: you deserue to liue in an aire as corrupted, as that wherewith you feed rumor. Madames, you are mute, upon this new metamorphosis! but here stands she, that has vindicated your fames. Take heed of such insectæ hereafter. And let it not trouble you that you have discover'd any mysteries to this yong

Epicoene, or the Silent Woman

gentleman. He is (a'most) of yeeres, and will make a good visitant within this twelue-month. In the meantime, we will all vndertake for this secrecie, that can speake so well of his silence. Spectators, if you like this comdie, rise cheerefully, and now MOROSE is gone in, clap your hands. It may be, that noyse will cure him, at least please him.