

The Fair Jilt: Or, Tarquin and Miranda

Aphra Behn

Table of Contents

<u>The Fair Jilt: Or, Tarquin and Miranda</u>	1
<u>Aphra Behn</u>	1

The Fair Jilt: Or, Tarquin and Miranda

Aphra Behn

This page copyright © 2002 Blackmask Online.

<http://www.blackmask.com>

TO HENRY PAIN, Esq;

SIR,

Dedications are like Love, and no Man of Wit or Eminence escapes them; early or late, the Affliction of the Poet's Complement falls upon him; and Men are oblig'd to receive 'em as they do their Wives; For better, for worse; at lest, with a feign'd Civility.

It was not Want of Respect, but Fear, that has hitherto made us keep clear of your Judgment, too piercing to be favourable to what is not nicely valuable. We durst not awaken your Criticism; and by begging your Protection in the Front of a Book, give you an Occasion to find nothing to deserve it. Nor can this little History lay a better Claim to that Honour, than those that have not pretended to it; which has but this Merit to recommend it, That it is Truth: Truth, which you so much admire. But 'tis a Truth that entertains you with so many Accidents diverting and mouing, that they will need both a Patron, and an Assertor in this incredulous World. For however it may be imagin'd that Poetry (my Talent) has so greatly the Ascendant over me, that all I write must pass for Fiction, I now desire to have it understood, that this is Reality, and Matter of Fact, and acted in this our latter Age: And that, in the Person of Tarquin, I bring a Prince to kiss your Hands, who own'd himself, and was receiv'd, as the last of the Race of the Roman Kings; whom I have often seen, and you have heard of; and whose Story is so well known to your self, and many Hundreds more: Part of which I had from the Mouth of this unhappy great Man, and was an Eye-Witness to the rest.

'Tis true, Sir, I present you with a Prince unfortunate, but still the more noble Object for your Goodness and Pity; who never valu'd a brave Man the less for being unhappy. And whither shou'd the Afflicted flee for Refuge, but to the Generous? Amongst all the Race, he cannot find a better Man, or more certain Friend: Nor amongst all his Ancestors, match your greater Soul, and Magnificence of Mind. He will behold in one English Subject, a Spirit as illustrious, a Heart as fearless, a Wit and Eloquence as excellent, as Rome it self cou'd produce. Its Senate scarce boasted of a better States-man, nor Augustus of a more faithful Subject; as your Imprisonment and Sufferings, through all the Course of our late National Distractions, have sufficiently manifested: But nothing cou'd press or deject your great Heart; you were the same Man still, unmov'd in all Turns, easie and innocent; no Persecution being able to abate your constant good Humour, or wonted Gallantry.

If, Sir, you find here a Prince of less Fortitude and Vertue than your self, charge his Miscarriages on Love; a Weakness of that Nature you will easily excuse, (being so great a Friend to the Fair;) though possibly, he gave a Proof of it too fatal to his Honour. Had I been to have form'd his Character, perhaps I had made him something mortue than your self, charge his Miscarriages on Love; a Weakness of that Nature you will easily excuse, (being so great a Friend to the Fair;) though possibly, he gave a Proof of it too fatal to his Honour. Had I been to have form'd his Character, perhaps I had made him something more worthy of the Honour of your Protection: But I was oblig'd to pursue the Matter of Fact, and give a just Relation of that part of his Life which, possibly, was the only reproachful part of it. If he be so happy, as to entertain a Man of Wit and Business, I shall not fear his Welcome to the rest of the World: And 'tis only with your Passport he can hope to be so.

The Fair Jilt: Or, Tarquin and Miranda

The particular Obligations I have to your Bounty and Goodness, O noble Friend, and Patron of the Muses! I do not so much as pretend to acknowledge in this little Present; those being above the Poets Pay, which is a sort of Coin, not current in this Age; though perhaps may be esteem'd as Medals in the Cabinets of Men of Wit. If this be so happy to be of that Number, I desire no more lasting a Fame, than that it may bear this Inscription, that I am,

SIR,
Your most Obliged, and Most Humble Servant,
A. Behn.

THE Fair Hypocrite;
OR THE AMOURS OF Prince Tarquin AND MIRANDA.
As Love is the most noble and divine Passion of the Soul, so is it that to which we may justly attribute all the real Satisfactions of Life; and without it, Man is unfinish'd, and unhappy.

There are a thousand things to be said of the Advantages this generous Passion brings to those, whose Hearts are capable of receiving its soft Impressions; for 'tis not every one that can be sensible of its tender Touches. How many Examples, from History and Observation, cou'd I give of its wondrous power; nay, even to a degree of Transmigration? How many Ideots has it made wise? How many Fools, eloquent? How many home-bread Squires, accomplish'd? How many Cowards, brave? And there is no sort or Species of Mankind, on whom it cannot work some Change and Miracle, if it be a noble, well-grounded Passion, except on the Fop in fashion, the harden'd, incorrigible Fop; so often wounded, but never reclaim'd: For still, by a dire Mistake, conducted by vast Opinionatreism, and a greater portion of Self-Love, than the rest of the Race of Man, he believes that Affectation, 3 in his Mein and Dress, that Mathematical Movement, that Formality in every Action, that Face managed with Care, and softned into Ridicule, the languishing Turn, the Toss, and the Back shake of the Periwigg, is the direct Way to the Heart of the fine Person he adores; and instead of curing *Love* in his Soul, serves only to advance his Folly; and the more he is enamour'd, the more industriously he assumes (every Hour) the Coxcomb. These are *Love's* Play-things, a sort of Animals with whom he sports; and whom he never wounds, but when he is in good humour, and always shoots laughing. 'Tis the Diversion of the *little God*, to see what a fluttering and bustle one of these Sparks, new-wounded, makes; to what fantastick Fooleries he has recourse: The Glass is every moment call'd to Counsel, the *Vallet* consulted and plagu'd for new Invention of Dress, the Foot-man and Scrutore perpetually employ'd; *Billet-doux* and *Madrigals* take up all his Mornings, till Play-time in Dressing, till Night in Gazing; still, like a Sun-flower, turn'd towards the Beams of the fair Eyes of his *Celia*, adjusting himself in the most *Amorous Posture* he can assume, his Hat under his Arm, while the other Hand is put carelessly into his Bosom, as if laid upon his panting Heart; his Head a little bent to one side, supported with a world of Crevat-string, which he takes mighty care not to put into Disorder; as one may guess by a never-failing, and horrid Stiffness in his Neck; and if he have an occasion to look aside, his whole Body turns at the same time, for fear the motion of the Head alone shou'd incommode the Crevat or Periwigg: And sometimes the Glove is well manag'd, and the white Hand displayed. Thus, with a thousand other little Motions and Formalities, all in the common Place or Rode of Foppery, he takes infinite pains to, 5 shew himself to the Pit and Boxes, a most accomplish'd Ass. This is he, of all Humane Kind, on whom Love can do no Miracles; and who can no where, and upon no Occasion, quit one Grain of his refin'd Foppery, unless in a Duel, or a Battle, if ever his Stars shou'd be so severe and ill-manner'd, to reduce him to the necessity of either: Fear then wou'd ruffle that fine Form he had so long preserved in nicest Order, with grief considering, that an unlucky, Chance-Wound in his Face, if such a dire Misfortune shou'd befall him, wou'd spoil the Sale of it for ever.

Perhaps it will be urg'd, that since no Metamorphosis can be made in a Fop by *Love*, you must consider him one of those that only talks of *Love*, and thinks himself that happy thing, a *Lover*; and wanting fine Sence enough for the real Passion, believes what he feels to be it. There are in the Quiver of the God a great many different Darts; some that wound for a Day, and others for a Year; they are all fine, painted, glittering Darts, and shew as well as those made of the *noblest Metal*; but the Wounds they make, reach the Desire only, and are cur'd by

The Fair Jilt: Or, Tarquin and Miranda

possessing, while the short-liv'd Passion betrays the Cheats: But 'tis that refin'd and illustrious Passion of the Soul, whose Aim is *Vertue*, and whose End is *Honour*, that has the power of changing Nature, and is capable of performing all those *heroick* things, of which History is full.

How far distant Passions may be from one another, I shall be able to make appear in these following Rules. I'll prove to you the strong Effects of *Love* in some unguarded and ungovern'd Hearts; where it rages beyond the Inspirations of *a God all soft and gentle*, and reigns more like *a Fury from Hell*. , 7

I do not pretend here to entertain you with a feign'd Story, or any thing piec'd together with *Romantick Accidents*; but every Circumstance, to a Tittle, is Truth. To a great part of the Main, I my self was an Eye-witness; and what I did not see, I was confirm'd of by Actors in the Intrigue, holy Men, of the Order of St. *Francis*: But for the sake of some of her Relations, I shall give my fair *Jilt* a feign'd Name, that of *Miranda*; but my *Hero* must retain his own, it being too illustrious to be conceal'd.

You are to understand, that in all the *Catholick* Countries where *Holy Orders* are establish'd, there are abundance of differing kinds of *Religious*, both of Men and Women: Amongst the Women there are those we call *Nuns*, that make solemn Vows of perpetual *Chastity*: There are others who make but a simple *Vow* ; as, for five or ten Years, or more or less; and that time expir'd, they may contract anew for longer time, or marry, or dispose of themselves as they shall see good; and these are ordinarily call'd *Gallopping Nuns*: Of these there are several *Orders*; as, *Chanonesses*, *Begines*, *Quest's*, *Swart-Sisters*, and *Jesuitesses* , with several others I have forgot: Of those of the *Begines* was our *fair Votress*.

These *Orders* are taken up by the best Persons of the Town, young Maids of Fortune, who live together, not *inclos'd*, but in Palaces that will hold about fifteen hundred or two thousand of these *Fille-Devotes*, where they have a regulated Government, under a sort of *Abbess*, or *Prioress*; or rather, a *Governante*. They are oblig'd to a Method of Devotion, and are under a sort of *Obedience*. They wear an Habit much like our Widows of Quality in *England*, only without a *Bando*; and their Veil is of a thicker Crape than what we have here, through which one cannot see the Face; for when they go abroad, they cover themselves all over with it, but they put 'em up in the Churches, and lay 'em by in the Houses. Every one of these have a *Confessor*, who is to 'em a sort of Steward: For, you must know, they that go into these places, have the Management of their own Fortunes, and what their Parents design 'em. Without the Advice of this Confessor, they act nothing, nor admit of a Lover that he shall not approve of; at least, this Method ought to be taken, and is by almost all of 'em; though *Miranda* thought her Wit above it, as her Spirit was.

But as these Women are, as I said, of the best Quality, and live with the Reputation of being retir'd from the World a little more than ordinary, and because there is a sort of difficulty to approach 'em, they are the People the most courted, and liable to the greatest Temptations; for as difficult as it seems to be, they receive Visits from all the Men of the best Quality, especially Strangers. All the Men of Wit and Conversation meet at the Apartments of these fair *Fille Devotes*, where all manner of Gallantries are perform'd, while all the Study of these Maids is to accomplish themselves for these noble Conversations. They receive *Presents*, *Balls*, *Serinades* and *Billets*: All the News, Wit, Verses, Songs, Novels, Musick, Gaming, and all fine Diversion, is in their *Apartments*, they themselves being of the best Quality and Fortune. So that to manage these *Gallantries*, there is no sort of Female Arts they are not practis'd in, no Intrigues they are ignorant of, and no Management of which they are not capable.

Of this happy number was the fair *Miranda*, whose Parents being dead, and a vast Estate divided between her self, and a young Sister (who liv'd with an unmarry'd old Uncle, whose Estate afterwards was all divided between 'em) put her self into this *uninclos'd Religious House*; but her Beauty, which had all the Charms that ever Nature gave, became the Envy of the whole *Sisterhood*. She was tall, and admirably shap'd; she had a bright Hair, and Hazle-Eyes, all full of Love and Sweetness: No Art cou'd make a Face so fair as hers by Nature, which every Feature adorn'd with a Grace that Imagination cannot reach: Every Look, every Motion charm'd, and her black Dress shew'd the Lustre of her Face and Neck. She had an Air, though gay as so much Youth cou'd inspire, yet so modest, so nobly reserv'd, without Formality, or Stiffness, that one who look'd on her wou'd have imagin'd her Soul the Twin-Angel of her Body; and both together, made her appear something *Divine*. To this she had a great deal of Wit, read much, and retain'd all that serv'd her purpose. She sung delicately, and danc'd well, and play'd on the *Lute* to a Miracle. She spoke several Languages naturally; for being Co-heiress to so great a Fortune, she was bred with nicest Care, in all the finest manners of Education; and was now arriv'd to her Eighteenth Year.

'Twere needless to tell you how great a noise the Fame of this young Beauty, with so considerable a Fortune,

The Fair Jilt: Or, Tarquin and Miranda

made in the World; I may say, the World, rather than confine her Fame to the scanty Limits of a Town; it reach'd to many others: And there was not a Man of any Quality that came to *Antwerp*, or pass'd through the City, but made it his Business to see the lovely *Miranda*, who was universally ador'd: Her Youth and Beauty, her Shape and Majesty of Mein, and Air of Greatness, charm'd all her Beholders; and thousands of People were dying by her Eyes, while she was vain enough to glory in her Conquest, and make it her Business to wound. She lov'd nothing so much as to behold sighing Slaves at her Feet, of the greatest Quality; and treated 'em all with an Affability that gave 'em Hope. Continual Musick as soon as it was dark, and Songs of *dying Lovers*, were sung under her Windows; and she might well have made her self a great Fortune (if she had not been so already) by the rich Presents that were hourly made her; and every Body daily expected when she wou'd make some one happy, by suffering her self to be conquer'd by *Love* and *Honour*, by the Assiduities and Vows of some one of her Adorers: But *Miranda* accepted their Presents, heard their Vows with pleasure, and willingly admitted all their soft Addresses; but wou'd not yield her Heart, or give away that lovely Person to the Possession of one, who cou'd please it self with so many. She was naturally Amorous, but extremely Inconstant: She lov'd one for his Wit, another for his Face, a third for his Mein; but above all, she admir'd *Quality*: *Quality* alone had the power to attack her entirely; yet not to one Man, but that Vertue was still admir'd by her in all; where ever she found that, she lov'd, or at least acted the *Lover* with such Art, that (deceiving well) she fail'd not to compleat her Conquest; and yet she never durst trust her fickle Humour with Marriage: She knew the strength of her own Heart, and that it cou'd not suffer it self to be confin'd to one Man, and wisely avoided those Inquietudes, and that Uneasiness of Life she was sure to find in that married Life, which wou'd, against her Nature, oblige her to the Embraces of one, whose Humour was, to love all the Young, and the Gay. But *Love*, who had hitherto but play'd with her Heart, and given it naught but pleasing, wanton Wounds, such as afforded only soft Joys, and not Pains, resolv'd, either out of Revenge to those Numbers she had abandon'd, and who had sigh'd so long in vain; or to try what power he had upon so fickle a Heart, sent an Arrow dipp'd in the most tormenting Flames that rage in Hearts most sensible. He struck it home and deep, with all the Malice of an angry *God*.

There was a Church belonging to the *Cordeliers*, whither *Miranda* often repair'd to her Devotion; and being there one Day, accompany'd with a young Sister of the *Order*, after the *Mass* was ended, as 'tis the Custom, some one of the *Fathers* goes about the Church with a Box, for Contribution, or Charity—Money; it happen'd that Day, that a young Father, newly initiated, carry'd the Box about, which, in his turn, he brought to *Miranda*. She had no sooner cast her Eyes on this young *Friar*, but her Face was overspread with Blushes of *Surprize*: She beheld him stedfastly, and saw in his Face all the Charms of Youth, Wit and Beauty; he wanted no one Grace that cou'd form him for Love, he appear'd all that is adorable to the fair Sex, nor cou'd the mis-shapen Habit hide from her the lovely Shape it endeavour'd to cover, nor those delicate Hands that approach'd her too near with the Box. Besides the Beauty of his Face and Shape, he had an Air altogether great; in spight of his profess'd Poverty, it betray'd the Man of Quality; and that Thought weigh'd greatly with *Miranda*. But *Love*, who did not design she shou'd now feel any sort of those easie Flames with which she had heretofore burnt, made her soon lay all those Considerations aside which us'd to invite her to love, and now lov'd she knew not why.

She gaz'd upon him, while he bow'd before her, and waited for her Charity, till she perceiv'd the lovely *Friar* to blush, and cast his Eyes to the Ground. This awaken'd her Shame, and she put her Hand into her Pocket, and was a good while in searching for her Purse, as if she thought of nothing less, than what she was about; at last she drew it out, and gave him a Pistole; but that with so much Deliberation and Leisure, as easily betray'd the Satisfaction she took in looking on him; while the good Man, having receiv'd her Bounty, after a very low Obeisance, proceeded to the rest; and *Miranda* casting after him a Look all languishing, as long as he remain'd in the Church, departed with a Sigh as soon as she saw him go out, and return'd to her Apartment, without speaking one Word all the Way to the young *Fille Devote* who attended her; so absolutely was her Soul employ'd with this young *holy Man*. *Cornelia* (so was this Maid call'd who was with her) perceiving she was so silent, who us'd to be all Wit and good Humour, and observing her little Disorder at the Sight of the young Father, though she was far from imagining it to be *Love*, took an Occasion, when she was come home, to speak of him. *Madam*, said she, *did you not observe that fine young Cordelier, who brought the Box?* At a Question that nam'd that Object of her Thoughts, *Miranda* blush'd; and the finding she did so, re-doubl'd her Confusion, and she had scarce Courage enough to say, — *Yes, I did observe him*: And then, forcing her self to smile a little, continu'd; *And I wonder'd to see so jolly a young Friar of an Order so severe, and mortify'd*. *Madam* (reply'd *Cornelia*) *when you know his*

The Fair Jilt: Or, Tarquin and Miranda

Story, you will not wonder. Miranda, who was impatient to know all that concern'd her new Conqueror, oblig'd her to tell his Story; and Cornelia obey'd, and proceeded. , 19

The Story of Prince Henrick.

'You must know, Madam, that this young *holy Man* is a Prince of *Germany*, of the House of — whose Fate it was, to fall most passionately in Love with a fair young Lady, who lov'd him with an Ardour equal to what he vow'd her. Sure of her Heart, and wanting only the Approbation of her Parents, and his own, which her Quality did not suffer him to despair of, he boasted of his Happiness to a young Prince, his elder Brother, a Youth amorous and fierce, impatient of Joys, and sensible of Beauty, taking Fire with all fair Eyes: He was his Father's Darling, and Delight of his fond Mother; and by an Ascendant over both their Hearts, rul'd their Wills.

'This young Prince no sooner saw, but lov'd the fair Mistress of his Brother, and with an Authority of a Sovereign, rather than the Advice of a Friend, warn'd his Brother *Henrick* (this now young Friar) to approach no more this Lady, whom he had seen; and seeing, lov'd.

'In vain the poor surpriz'd Prince pleads his Right of Love, his Exchange of Vows, and Assurance of an Heart that cou'd never be but for himself. In vain he urges his Nearness of Blood, his Friendship, his Passion, or his Life, which so entirely depended on the Possession of the charming Maid. All his Pleading serv'd but to blow his Brother's Flame; and the more he implores, the more the other burns; and while *Henrick* follows him on his Knees, with humble Submissions, the other flies from him in Rages of transported Love; , 21 nor cou'd his Tears, that pursu'd his Brother's Steps, move him to Pity: Hot-headed, vain-conceited of his Beauty, and greater Quality, as elder Brother, he doubts not his Success, and resolv'd to sacrifice all to the Violence of his new-born Passion.

'In short, he speaks of his Design to his Mother, who promis'd him her Assistance; and accordingly, proposing it first to the Prince, her Husband, urging the Languishment of her Son, she soon wrought so on him, that a Match being concluded between the Parents of this young Beauty, and *Henrick's* Brother, the Hour was appointed before she knew of the Sacrifice she was to be made. And while this was in Agitation, *Henrick* was sent on some great Affairs, up into *Germany*, far out of the way; not but his boading Heart, with perpetual Sighs and Throbs, eternally foretold him his Fate.

'All the Letters he writ were intercepted, as well as those she writ to him. She finds her self every Day perplex'd with the Addresses of the Prince she hated; he was ever sighing at her Feet. In vain were all her Reproaches, and all her Coldness, he was on the surer side; for what he found Love wou'd not do, Force of Parents wou'd.

'She complains in her Heart on young *Henrick*, from whom she cou'd never receive one Letter; and at last, cou'd not forbear bursting into Tears, in spight of all her Force, and seign'd Courage; when on a Day the Prince told her, that *Henrick* was withdrawn, to give him time to court her, to whom, he said, He confess'd he had made some Vows, but did repent of 'em, knowing himself too young to make 'em good: That it was for that Reason he brought him first to see her; and for that Reason , 23 that after that, he never saw her more, nor so much as took leave of her; (when, indeed, his Death lay upon the next Visit, his Brother having sworn to murder him; and to that End, put a Guard upon him, till he was sent into *Germany*.)

'All this he utter'd with so many passionate Asseverations, Vows and seeming Pity for her being so inhumanely abandon'd, that she almost gave Credit to all he had said, and had much a-do to keep her self within the Bounds of Moderation, and silent Grief. Her Heart was breaking, her Eyes languish'd, and her Cheeks grew pale, and she had like to have fallen dead into the treacherous Arms of him that had reduc'd her to this Discovery; but she did what she cou'd to assume her Courage, and to shew as little Resentment as possible for a Heart, like hers, oppress'd with Love, and now abandon'd by the dear Subject of its Joys and Pains.

'But, Madam, not to tire you with this Adventure, the Day arriv'd wherein our still weeping fair Unfortunate was to be sacrific'd to the Capriciousness of Love; and she was carry'd to Court by her Parents, without knowing to what End, where she was almost compell'd to marry the Prince.

'*Henrick*, who, all this while, knew no more of his Unhappiness, than what his Fears suggested, returns, and passes even to the Presence of his Father, before he knew any thing of his Fortune; where he beheld his Mistress

The Fair Jilt: Or, Tarquin and Miranda

and his Brother, with his Father, in such a Familiarity, as he no longer doubted his Destiny. 'Tis hard to judge whether the Lady or himself was most surpriz'd; she was all pale and unmoveable in her Chair, and *Henrick* fix'd like a Statue; at last Grief and Rage took place of Amazement, and he cou'd not forbear crying out, *Ah, Traytor! Is it thus you have treated a Friend, and Brother? And you, O perjurd Charmer! Is it thus you have rewarded all my Vows?* He cou'd say no more; but reeling against the Door, had fall'n in a Swown upon the Floor, had not his Page caught him in his Arms, who was entring with him. The good old Prince, the Father, who knew not what all this meant, was soon inform'd by the young, weeping Princess; who, in relating the Story of her Amour with *Henrick*, told her Tale in so moving a manner, as brought Tears to the old Man's Eyes, and Rage to those of her Husband; he immediately grew jealous to the last Degree: He finds himself in Possession ('tis true) of the Beauty he ador'd, but the Beauty adoring another; a Prince, young, and Charming as the Light; soft, witty, and raging with an equal Passion. He finds this dreaded Rival in the same House with him, with an Authority equal to his own; and fansies, where two Hearts are so entirely agreed, and have so good an Understanding, it wou'd not be impossible to find Opportunities to satisfie and ease that mutual Flame that burnt so equally in both; he therefore resolv'd to send him out of the World, and to establish his own Repose by a Deed, wicked, cruel and unnatural, to have him assassinated the first Opportunity he cou'd find. This Resolution set him a little at ease, and he strove to dissemble Kindness to *Henrick*, with all the Art he was capable of, suffering him to come often to the Apartment of the Princess, and to entertain her oftentimes with Discourse, when he was not near enough to hear what he spoke; but still watching their Eyes, he found those of *Henrick* full of Tears, ready to flow, but restrain'd, looking all dying, and yet reproaching, while those of the Princess were ever bent to the Earth, and she, as much as possible, shunning his Conversation. Yet this did not satisfie the jealous Husband; 'twas not her Complaisance that cou'd appease him; he found her Heart was panting within when—ever *Henrick* approach'd her, and every Visit more and more confirm'd his Death.

'The Father often found the Disorders of the Sons; the Softness and Address of the one gave him as much Fear, as the angry Blushings, the fierce Looks, and broken Replies of the other, when—ever he beheld *Henrick* approach his Wife: So that the Father fearing some ill Consequence of this, besought *Henrick* to withdraw to some other Country, or travel into *Italy*, he being now of an Age that requir'd a View of the World. He told his Father, that he wou'd obey his Commands, though he was certain, that Moment he was to be separated from the sight of the fair Princess, his Sister, wou'd be the last of his Life; and, in fine, made so pitiful a Story of his suffering Love, as almost mov'd the old Prince to compassionate him so far, as to permit him to stay; but he saw inevitable Danger in that, and therefore bid him prepare for his Journey.

'That which pass'd between the Father and *Henrick* being a Secret, none talk'd of his departing from Court; so that the Design the Brother had, went on; and making an Hunting—match one Day, where most young People of Quality were, he order'd some whom he had hir'd to follow his Brother, so as if he chanc'd to go out of the Way, to dispatch him; and accordingly, Fortune gave 'em an Opportunity; for he lagg'd behind the Company, and turn'd aside into a pleasant Thicket of Hazles; where alighting, he walk'd on foot in the most pleasant part of it, full of Thought how to divide his Soul between Love and Obedience. He was sensible that he ought not to stay, that he was but an Affliction to the young Princess, whose Honour cou'd never permit her to ease any part of his Flame; nor was he so vitious, to entertain a Thought that shou'd stain her Vertue. He beheld her now as his Brother's Wife, and that secur'd his Flame from all loose Desires, if her native Modesty had not been sufficient of it self to have done it, and that profound Respect he pay'd her: And he consider'd, in obeying his Father, he left her at ease, and his Brother freed of a thousand Fears; he went to seek a Cure, which if he cou'd not find, at last he cou'd but die; and so he must, even at her Feet: However, that 'twas more noble to seek a Remedy for his Disease, than expect a certain Death by staying. After a thousand Reflections on his hard Fate, and bemoaning himself, and blaming his cruel Stars, that had doom'd him to die so young; after an infinity of Sighs and Tears, Resolvings and Unresolvings, he on the suddain was interrupted by the Trampling of some Horses he heard, and their rushing through the Boughs, and saw four Men make towards him: He had not time to mount, being walk'd some Paces from his Horse. One of the Men advanc'd, and cry'd, *Prince, you must die — I do believe thee* (reply'd *Henrick*) *but not by a Hand so base as thine:* And at the same time, drawing his Sword, run him into the Groin. When the Fellow found himself so wounded, he wheel'd off, and cry'd, *Thou art a Prophet, and hast rewarded my Treachery with Death.* The rest came up, and one shot at the Prince, and shot him into the Shoulder; the other two hastily laying hold (but too late) on the Hand of the Murtherer, cry'd, *Hold, Traytor; we relent, and he shall not*

The Fair Jilt: Or, Tarquin and Miranda

die. He reply'd, *'Tis too late, he is shot; and see, he lies dead: Let us provide for our selves, and tell the Prince, we have done the Work; for you are as guilty as I am.* At that they all fled, and left the Prince lying under a Tree, weltering in his Blood.

'About the Evening, the Forester going his Walks, saw the Horse richly caparison'd, without a Rider, at the Entrance of the Wood; and going farther, to see if he cou'd find its Owner, found there the Prince almost dead: He immediately mounts him on the Horse, and himself behind, bore him up, and carry'd him to the Lodge; where he had only one old Man, his Father, well skill'd in Surgery, and a Boy. They put him to Bed, and the old Forester, with what Art he had, dress'd his Wound, and in the Morning sent for an abler Surgeon, to whom the Prince enjoin'd Secrecy, because he knew him. The Man was faithful, and the Prince, in time, was recover'd of his Wound; and as soon as he was well, he came for *Flanders*, in the Habit of a *Pilgrim*, and after some time, took the Order of St. *Francis*, none knowing what became of him, till he was profess'd; and then he writ his own Story to the Prince his Father, to his Mistress, and his ungrateful Brother. The young Princess did not long survive his Loss, she languish'd from the Moment of his Departure; and he had this to confirm his devout Life, to know she dy'd for him.

'My Brother, Madam, was an Officer under the Prince, his Father, and knew his Story perfectly well; from whose Mouth I had it.'

What! (reply'd *Miranda* then) *is Father Henrick a Man of Quality? Yes, Madam,* (said *Cornelia,*) *and has chang'd his Name to Francisco.* But *Miranda*, fearing to betray the Sentiments of her Heart, by asking any more Questions about him, turn'd the Discourse; and some Persons of Quality came in to visit her (for her Apartment was, about Six a-Clock, like the Presence-Chamber of a Queen, always fill'd with the greatest People.) There meet all the *Beaux Espreets*, and all the Beauties. But it was visible *Miranda* was not so gay as she us'd to be; but pensive, and answering *Mal a propo*, to all that was said to her. She was a thousand times going to speak, against her Will, something of the *charming Friar*, who was never from her Thoughts; and she imagin'd, if he cou'd inspire Love in a course, gray, ill-made Habit, a shorn Crown, a Hair-Cord about his Waste, bare leg'd, in Sandals instead of Shoes, what must he do, when looking back on Time, she beholds him in a prospect of Glory, with all that Youth and Illustrious Beauty set off by the Advantage of Dress and Equipage. She frames an *Idea* of him all gay and splendid, and looks on his present Habit as some Disguise proper for the Stealths of Love; some feign'd put-on Shape, with the more Security to approach a Mistress, and make himself happy; and that, the Robe laid by, she has the Lover in his proper Beauty, the same he wou'd have been if any other Habit (though never so rich) were put off: In the Bed, the silent, gloomy Night, and the soft Embraces of her Arms, he loses all the *Friar*, and assumes all the Prince; and that awful Reverence, due alone to his holy Habit, he exchanges for a thousand Dalliances for which his Youth was made; for Love, for tender Embraces, and all the Happiness of Life. Some Moments she fancies, 35 him a Lover, and that the fair Object that takes up all his Heart has left no room for her there; but that was a Thought that did not long perplex her, and which, almost as soon as born, she turn'd to her Advantage: She beholds him a Lover, and therefore finds he has a Heart sensible and tender; he had Youth to be fir'd, as well as to inspire; he was far from the lov'd Object, and totally without Hope; and she reasonably consider'd, that Flame wou'd of it self soon die, that had only Despair to feed on. She beheld her own Charms; and Experience, as well as her Glass, told her, they never fail'd of Conquest; especially, where they design'd it: And she believ'd *Henrick* wou'd be glad, at least, to quench that Flame in himself, by an Amour with her, which was kindl'd by the young Princess of — his Sister.

These, and a thousand other Self-flatteries, all vain and indiscreet, took up her waking Nights, and now more retir'd Days; while *Love*, to make her truly wretched, suffer'd her to sooth her self with fond Imaginations; not so much as permitting her Reason to plead one Moment, to save her from Undoing: She wou'd not suffer it to tell her, he had taken holy Orders, made sacred and solemn Vows of everlasting Chastity, that 'twas impossible he cou'd marry her, or lay before her any Argument that might prevent her Ruin; but *Love*, mad, malicious *Love* was always call'd to Counsel, and, like easie Monarchs, she had no Ears, but for Flatterers.

Well then, she is resolv'd to love, without considering to what End, and what must be the Consequence of such an Amour. She now miss'd no Day of being at that little Church, where she had the Happiness, or rather, the Misfortune (so *Love* ordain'd) to see this Ravisher of her Heart and Soul; and every, 37 Day she took new Fire from his lovely Eyes: Unawares, unknown and unwillingly he gave her Wounds, and the difficulty of her Cure made her rage the more: She burnt, she languish'd, and dy'd for the young Innocent, who knew not he was the

The Fair Jilt: Or, Tarquin and Miranda

Author of so much Mischief.

Now she revolves a thousand Ways in her tortur'd Mind, to let him know her Anguish, and at last pitch'd upon that of writing to him soft Billets, which she had learnt the Art of doing; or if she had not, she had now Fire enough to inspire her with all that cou'd charm and move. These she deliver'd to a young Wench who waited on her, and whom she had entirely subdu'd to her Interest, to give to a certain Lay-Brother of the Order, who was a very simple, harmless Wretch, and who serv'd in the Kitchin in the nature of a Cook in the Monastery of *Cordeliers*: She gave him Gold to secure his Faith and Service; and not knowing from whence they came (with so good Credentials) he undertook to deliver the Letters to Father *Francisco*; which Letters were all afterwards, as you shall hear, produc'd in open Court. These Letters fail'd not to come every Day; and the Sence of the first was, to tell him that a very beautiful young Lady, of a great Fortune, was in love with him, without naming her; but it came as from a third Person, to let him know the Secret, that she desir'd he wou'd let her know whether she might hope any Return from him; assuring him, he needed but only see the fair Languisher, to confess himself her Slave.

This Letter, being deliver'd him, he read by himself, and was surpriz'd to receive Words of this nature, being so great a Stranger in that place; and cou'd not imagine, or wou'd not give himself the trouble of guessing who this shou'd be, , 39 because he never design'd to make Returns.

The next Day *Miranda*, finding no Advantage from her Messenger of Love, in the Evening sends another (impatient of Delay) confessing that she who suffer'd the Shame of Writing and Imploring, was the Person her self who ador'd him. 'Twas there her raging Love made her say all things that discover'd the nature of its Flame, and propose to flee with him to any part of the World, if he wou'd quit the Convent; that she had a Fortune considerable enough to make him happy, and that his Youth and Quality were not given him to so unprofitable an End as to lose themselves in a Convent, where Poverty and Ease was all their Business. In fine, she leaves nothing unurg'd that might debauch and invite him; not forgetting to send him her own Character of Beauty, and left him to judge of her Wit and Spirit by her Writing, and her Love by the Extremity of Passion she profess'd. To all which the lovely *Friar* made no Return, as believing a gentle Capitulation or Exhortation to her wou'd but inflame her the more, and give new Occasions for her continuing to write. All her Reasonings, false and vitious, he despis'd, pities the Error of her Love, and was Proof against all she cou'd plead. Yet notwithstanding his Silence, which left her in doubt, and more tormented her, she ceas'd not to pursue him with her Letters, varying her Style; sometimes all wanton, loofe and raving; sometimes feigning a Virgin-Modesty all over, accusing her self, blaming her Conduct, and sighing her Destiny, as one compell'd to the shameful Discovery by the Austerity of his Vow and Habit, asking his Pity and Forgiveness; urging him in Charity to use his fatherly Care to perswade and reason with her wild Desires, and by his Counsel drive the God from her Heart, whose Tyranny was worse than that of a Fiend; and he did not know what his pious Advice might do. But still she writes in vain, in vain she varies her Style, by a Cunning, peculiar to a Maid possess'd with such a sort of Passion.

This cold Neglect was still Oil to the burning Lamp, and she tries yet more Arts, which, for want of right Thinking, were as fruitless. She has recourse to Presents; her Letters came loaded with Rings of great price, and Jewels, which Fops of Quality had given her. Many of this sort he receiv'd, before he knew where to return 'em, or how; and on this Occasion alone he sent her a Letter, and restor'd her Trifles, as he call'd em: But his Habit having not made him forget his Quality and Education, he writ to her with all the profound Respect imaginable; believing by her Presents, and the Liberality with which she parted with 'em, that she was of Quality. But the whole Letter, as he told me afterwards, was to perswade her from the Honour she did him, by loving him; urging a thousand Reasons, solid and pious, and assuring her, he had wholly devoted the rest of his Days to Heaven, and had no need of those gay Trifles she had sent him, which were only fit to adorn Ladies so fair as her self, and who had business with this glittering World, which he disdain'd, and had for ever abandon'd. He sent her a thousand Blessings, and told her, she shou'd be ever in his Prayers, though not in his Heart, as she desir'd: And abundance of Goodness more he express'd, and Counsel he gave her, which had the same Effect with his Silence; it made her Love but the more, and the more impatient she grew: She now had a new Occasion to write, she now is charm'd with his Wit; this was the new Subject. She rallies his Resolution, and endeavours to re-call him to the World, by all the Arguments that Humane Invention is capable of.

But when she had above four Months languish'd thus in vain, not missing one Day, wherein she went not to see him, without discovering her self to him; she resolv'd, as her last Effort, to shew her Person, and see what that, assisted by her Tears, and soft Words from her Mouth, cou'd do, to prevail upon him.

The Fair Jilt: Or, Tarquin and Miranda

It happen'd to be on the Eye of that Day when she was to receive the Sacrament, that she, covering her self with her Veil, came to *Vespers*, purposing to make choice of the conquering *Friar* for her Confessor.

She approach'd him; and as she did so, she trembl'd with Love: At last she cry'd, *Father, my Confessor is gone for some time from the Town, and I am oblig'd to morrow to receive, and beg you will be pleas'd to take my Confession.*

He cou'd not refuse her; and led her into the *Sacriste*, where there is a Confession–Chair, in which he seated himself; and on one side of him she kneel'd down, over against a little Altar, where the Priests Robes lie, on which was plac'd some lighted Wax–Candles, that made the little place very light and splendid, which shone full upon *Miranda*.

After the little Preparation usual in Confession, she turn'd up her Veil, and discover'd to his View the most wond'rous Object of Beauty he had ever seen, dress'd in all the Glory of a young Bride; her Hair and Stomacher full of Diamonds, that gave a Lustre all dazling to her brighter Face and Eyes. He was surpriz'd at her amazing Beauty, and question'd whether he saw a Woman or an Angel at his Feet. Her Hands, which were elevated, as if in Prayer, seem'd to be form'd of polish'd Alabaster; and he confess'd, he had never seen any thing in Nature so perfect, and so admirable.

He had some pain to compose himself to hear her Confession, and was oblig'd to turn away his Eyes, that his Mind might not be perplex'd with an Object so diverting; when *Miranda*, opening the finest Mouth in the World, and discovering new Charms, began her Confession.

Holy Father (said she;) amongst the number of my vile Offences, that which afflicts me to the greatest Degree is, that I am in Love: Not (continu'd she) that I believe simple, and vertuous Love a Sin, when 'tis plac'd on an Object proper and suitable; but, my dear Father, (said she, and wept,) I love with a Violence which cannot be contain'd within the Bounds of Reason, Moderation, or Vertue. I love a Man whom I cannot possess without a Crime, and a Man who cannot make me happy without becoming perjur'd. Is he marry'd? (reply'd the Father.) No; (answer'd Miranda.) Are you so? (continu'd he.) Neither; (said she.) Is he too near ally'd to you? (said Francisco:) a Brother, or Relation? Neither of these, (said she:) He is unenjoy'd, unpromis'd; and so am I: Nothing opposes our Happiness, or makes my Love a Vice, but you: — 'Tis you deny me Life: 'Tis you that forbids my Flame: 'Tis you will have me die, and seek my Remedy in my Grave, when I complain of Tortures, Wounds and Flames. O cruel Charmer, 'tis for you I languish; and here, at your Feet, implore that Pity which all my Addresses have fail'd of procuring me. —

With that, perceiving he was about to rise from his Seat, she held him by his Habit, and vow'd she wou'd in that posture follow him, where–ever he flew from her. She elevated her Voice so loud, he was afraid she might be heard, and therefore suffer'd her to force him into his Chair again; where being seated, he began, in the most passionate Terms imaginable, to dissuade her; but finding she but the more persisted in Eagerness of Passion, he us'd all the tender Assurance that he cou'd force from himself, that he wou'd have for her all the Respect, Esteem and Friendship that he was capable of paying; that he had a real Compassion for her; and at last, she prevail'd so far with him by her Sighs and Tears, as to own he had a Tenderness for her, and that he cou'd not behold so many Charms, without being sensibly touch'd by 'em, and finding all those Effects that a Maid so young and fair causes in the Souls of Men of Youth and Sense: But that, as he was assur'd he cou'd never be so happy to marry her, and as certain he cou'd not grant any thing but honourable Passion, he humbly besought her not to expect more from him than such; and then began to tell her how short Life was, and transitory its Joys; how soon she wou'd grow weary of Vice, and how often change to find real Repose in it, but never arrive to it. He made an End by new Assurance of his eternal Friendship, but utterly forbad her to hope.

Behold her now deny'd, refus'd and defeated, with all her pleading Youth, Beauty, Tears and Knees, imploring, as she lay, holding fast his *Scapular*, and embracing his Feet. What shall she do? She swells with Pride, Love, Indignation and Desire; her burning Heart is bursting with Despair, her Eyes grow fierce, and from Grief, she rises to a Storm; and in her Agony of Passion, which looks all disdainful, haughty, and full of Rage, she began to revile him, as the poorest of Animals: Tells him, his Soul was dwindl'd to the Meanness of his Habit, and his Vows of Poverty were suited to his degenerate Mind. *And (said she) since all my nobler Ways have fail'd me; and that, for a little hypocritical Devotion, you resolve to lose the greatest Blessings of Life, and to sacrifice me to your religious Pride and Vanity, I will either force you to abandon that dull Dissimulation; or you shall die, to prove your Sanctity real. Therefore answer me immediately, answer my Flame, my raging Fire, which your Eyes*

The Fair Jilt: Or, Tarquin and Miranda

have kindl'd; or here, in this very Moment, I will ruin thee; and make no Scruple of revenging the Pains I suffer, by that which shall take away your Life and Honour.

The trembling young Man, who, all this while, with extream Anguish of Mind, and Fear of the dire Result, had listen'd to her Ravings, full of Dread, demanded what she wou'd have him do. When she reply'd, — *Do that which thy Youth and Beauty were ordain'd to do: — This place is private, a sacred Silence reigns here, and no one dares to pry into the Secrets of this holy place: We are as secure from Fears of Interruption, as in Desarts uninhabited, or Caves forsaken by wild Beasts. The Tapers too shall veil their Lights, and only that glimmering Lamp shall be Witness of our dear Stealths of Love.—Come to my Arms, my trembling, longing Arms; and curse the Folly of thy Bigottry, that has made thee so long lose a Blessing, for which so many Princes sigh in vain.*

At these Words she rose from his Feet, and snatching him in her Arms, he cou'd not defend himself from receiving a thousand Kisses from the lovely Mouth of the charming Wanton; after which, she ran her self, and in an instant put out the Candles. But he cry'd to her, *In vain, O too indiscreet fair One; in vain you put out the Light; for, 51 Heaven still has Eyes, and will look down upon my broken Vows. I own your Power, I own I have all the Sense in the World of your charming Touches; I am frail Flesh and Blood, but yet—yet—yet I can resist; and I prefer my Vows to all your powerful Temptations.—I will be deaf and blind, and guard my Heart with Walls of Ice, and make you know, that when the Flames of true Devotion are kindled in a Heart, it puts out all other Fires; which are as ineffectual, as Candles lighted in the Face of the Sun.—Go, vain Wanton, and repent, and mortifie that Blood which has so shamefully betray'd thee, and which will one Day ruin both thy Soul and Body.—*

At these Words *Miranda*, more enrag'd, the nearer she imagin'd her self to Happiness, made no Reply; but throwing her self, in that instant, into the Confessing—Chair, and violently pulling the young Friar into her Lap, she elevated her Voice to such a degree, in crying out, *Help, help: A Rape: Help, help*, that she was heard all over the Church, which was full of People at the Evening's Devotion; who flock'd about the Door of the Sacristy, which was shut with a Spring—lock on the in—side, but they durst not open the Door.

'Tis easily to be imagin'd, in what Condition our young *Friar* was, at this last devilish Stratagem of his wicked Mistress. He strove to break from those Arms that held him so fast; and his bustling to get away, and hers to retain him, disorder'd her Hair and her Habit to such a degree, as gave the more Credit to her false Accusation.

The Fathers had a Door on the other side, by which they usually enter'd, to dress in this little Room; and at the Report that was in an instant made 'em, they hasted thither, and found *Miranda* and the good Father, 53 very indecently struggling; which they mis—interpreted, as *Miranda* desir'd; who, all in Tears, immediately threw her self at the Feet of the Provincial, who was one of those that enter'd; and cry'd, *O holy Father, revenge an innocent Maid, undone and lost to Fame and Honour, by that vile Monster, born of Goats, nurs'd by Tygers, and bred up on savage Mountains, where Humanity and Religion are Strangers. For, O holy Father, cou'd it have enter'd into the Heart of Man, to have done so barbarous and horrid a Deed, as to attempt the Virgin—Honour of an unspotted Maid, and one of my Degree, even in the Moment of my Confession, in that holy time, when I was prostrate before him and Heaven, confessing those Sins that press'd my tender Conscience; even then to load my Soul with the blackest of Infamies, to add to my Number a Weight that must sink me to Hell? Alas, under the Security of his innocent Looks, his holy Habit, and his awful Function, I was lead into this Room, to make my Confession; where, he locking the Door, I had no sooner began, but he gazing on me, took Fire at my fatal Beauty; and starting up, put out the Candles, and caught me in his Arms; and raising me from the Pavement, set me in the Confession—Chair; and then—Oh, spare me the rest.*

With that a Shower of Tears burst from her fair dissembling Eyes, and Sobs so naturally acted, and so well manag'd, as lest no Doubt upon the good Men, but all she had spoken was Truth.

—*At first, (proceeded she,) I was unwilling to bring so great a Scandal on his Order, as to cry out; but struggl'd as long as I had Breath, pleaded the heinousness of the Crime; urging my Quality, and the danger of the Attempt. But he, deaf as the Winds, and ruffling as a Storm, pursu'd his wild Design with so much, 55 Force and Insolence, as I at last, unable to resist, was wholly vanquish'd, robb'd of my native Purity: With what Life and Breath I had, I call'd for Assistance, both from Men and Heaven; but Oh, alas! your Succours come too late:—You find me here a wretched, undone and ravish'd Maid. Revenge me, Fathers; revenge me on the perfidious Hypocrite, or else give me a Death that may secure your Cruelty and Injustice from ever being proclaim'd o'er the World; or my Tongue will be eternally reproaching you, and cursing the wicked Author of my Infamy.*

The Fair Jilt: Or, Tarquin and Miranda

She ended as she began, with a thousand Sighs and Tears; and receiv'd from the Provincial all Assurances of Revenge.

The innocent betray'd Victim, all this while she was speaking, heard her with an Astonishment that may easily be imagin'd; yet shew'd no extravagant Signs of it, as those wou'd do, who feign it to be thought innocent; but being really so, he bore, with an humble, modest, and blushing Countenance, all her Accusations: Which silent Shame they mistook for evident Signs of his Guilt.

When the Provincial demanded, with an unwonted Severity in his Eyes and Voice, what he cou'd answer for himself; calling him Prophaner of his sacred Vows, and Infamy to the holy *Order*; the Injur'd, but the innocently Accus'd, only reply'd, *May Heaven forgive that bad Woman, and bring her to Repentance: For his part, he was not so much in love with Life, as to use many Arguments to justifie his Innocence; unless it were to free that Order from a Scandal, of which he had the Honour to be profess'd: But as for himself, Life or Death were things indifferent to him, who heartily despis'd the World.*

He said no more, and suffer'd himself to be led before the Magistrate; who committed him to Prison, upon the Accusation of this implacable Beauty; who, with so much feign'd Sorrow, prosecuted the Matter, even to his Trial and Condemnation; where he refus'd to make any great Defence for himself. But being daily visited by all the *Religious*, both of his own, and other *Orders*, they oblig'd him (some of 'em knowing the Austerity of his Life, others his Cause of Grievs that first brought him into *Orders*, and others pretending a nearer Knowledge even of his Soul it self) to stand upon his Justification, and discover what he knew of that wicked Woman; whose Life had not been so exemplary for Vertue, not to have given the World a thousand Suspicions of her Lewdness and Prostitution.

The daily Importunities of these Fathers made him produce her Letters: But as he had all the Gown–Men on his side, she had all the Hatts and Feathers on hers; all the Men of Quality taking her Part, and all the Church–men his. They heard his daily Protestations and Vows, but not a Word of what passed at Confession was yet discover'd: He held that as a Secret sacred on his part; and what was said in nature of a Confession, was not to be reveal'd, though his Life depended on the Discovery. But as to the Letters, they were forc'd from him, and expos'd; however, Matters were carry'd with so high a Hand against him, that they serv'd for no Proof at all of his Innocence, and he was at last condemn'd to be burned at the Market–place.

After his Sentence was pass'd, the whole Body of Priests made their Addresses to Marquis *Casteil Roderigo*, the then Governor of *Flanders*, for a Reprieve; which, after much a–do, was granted him for some Weeks, but with an absolute Denial of Pardon; so prevailing were the young Cavaliers of his Court, who were all Adorers of this fair *Jilt*.

About this time, while the poor, innocent young *Henrick* was thus languishing in Prison, in a dark and dismal Dungeon; and *Miranda*, cured of her Love, was triumphing in her Revenge, expecting, and daily gaining new Conquests; and who, by this time, had re–assum'd all her wonted Gaity, there was a great Noise about the Town, That a Prince of mighty Name, and fam'd for all the Excellencies of his Sex, was arriv'd; a Prince young, and gloriously attended, call'd Prince *Tarquin*.

We had often heard of this great Man, and that he was making his Travels in *France* and *Germany*: And we had also heard, that some Years before, he being about Eighteen Years of Age, in the time when our King *Charles* of blessed Memory was in *Bruxels*, in the last Year of his Banishment, that all on a suddain, this young Man rose up upon 'em like the Sun, all glorious and dazzling, demanding Place of all the Princes in that Court. And when his Pretence was demanded, he own'd himself Prince *Tarquin*, of the Race of the last Kings of *Rome*, made good his Title, and took his Place accordingly. After that, he travell'd for about six Years up and down the World, and then arriv'd at *Antwerp*, about the time of my being sent thither by His Late Majesty.

Perhaps there cou'd be nothing seen so magnificent as this Prince: He was, as I said, extremely handsome, from Head to Foot exactly form'd, and he wanted nothing that might adorn that native Beauty to the best Advantage. His Parts were suitable to the rest: He had an Accomplishment fit for a Prince, an Air haughty, but a Carriage affable, easie in Conversation, and very Entertaining, Liberal and Good–natur'd, Brave and Inoffensive. I have seen him pass the Streets with twelve Foot–men, and four Pages; the Pages all in green Velvet Coats, lac'd with Gold, and white Velvet Trunks; the Men in Cloth, richly lac'd with Gold; his Coaches, and all other Officers, suitable to a great Man.

He was all the Discourse of the Town; some laughing at his Title, others reverencing it: Some cry'd, that he

The Fair Jilt: Or, Tarquin and Miranda

was an Imposture; others, that he had made his Title as plain, as if *Tarquin* had reign'd but a Year a-go. Some made Friendships with him, others wou'd have nothing to say to him; but all wonder'd where this Revenue was that supported this Grandure; and believ'd, though he cou'd make his Descent from the *Roman* Kings very well out, that he cou'd not lay so good a Claim to the *Roman* Land. Thus every Body medled with what they had nothing to do; and, as in other places, thought themselves on the surer side, if, in these doubtful Cases, they imagin'd the worst.

But the Men might be of what Opinion they pleas'd concerning him, the Ladies were all agreed that he was a Prince, and a young, handsome Prince, and a Prince not to be resisted: He had all their Wishes, all their Eyes, and all their Hearts: They now dress'd only for him; and what Church he grac'd, was sure, that Day, to have the Beauties, and all that thought themselves so.

You may believe, our amorous *Miranda* was not the last Conquest he made. She no sooner heard of him, which was as soon as he arriv'd, but she fell in love with his very Name. *Jesu!*—A young King of *Rome!* Oh, 'twas so novel, that she doated on the Title; and had not car'd whether the rest had been Man or Monkey almost: She was resolv'd to be the *Lucretia*, that this young *Tarquin* shou'd ravish.

To this End, she was no sooner up the next Day, but she sent him a *Billet-Deaux*, assuring him how much she admir'd his Fame; and that being a Stranger in the Town, she begg'd the Honour of introducing him to all the *Belle-Conversations*, &c. Which he took for the Invitation of some *Coquet*, who had Interest in fair Ladies; and civilly return'd her an Answer, that he wou'd wait on her. She had him that Day watch'd to Church; and impatient to see what she heard so many People flock to see, she went also to the same Church; those sanctified Abodes being too often prophan'd by such *Devotee's*, whose Business is to ogle and ensnare.

But what a Noise and Humming was heard all over the Church when *Tarquin* enter'd; his Grace, his Mein, his Fashion, his Beauty, his Dress, and his Equipage surpriz'd all that were present: And by the good Management and Care of *Miranda*, she got to kneel at the Side of the Altar, just over against the Prince; so that, if he wou'd, he cou'd not avoid looking full upon her. She had turn'd up her Veil, and all her Face and Shape appear'd such, and so enchanting as I have describ'd: And her Beauty heighten'd with Blushes, and her Eyes full of Spirit and Fire, with Joy to find the young *Roman* Monarch so charming, she appear'd like something more than mortal, and compell'd his Eyes to a six'd Gazing on her Face: She never glanc'd that way, but she met 'em; and then wou'd feign so modest a Shame, and cast her Eyes downward with such inviting Art, that he was wholly ravish'd and charm'd, and she over-joy'd to find he was so.

The Ceremony being ended, he sent a Page to follow that Lady home, himself pursuing her to the Door of the Church; where he took some *Holy Water*, and threw upon her, and made her a profound Reverence. She forc'd an innocent Look, and a modest Gratitude in her Face, and bow'd, and pass'd forward, half assur'd of her Conquest; leaving him to go home to his Lodging, and impatiently wait the Return of his Page. And all the Ladies who saw this first Beginning between the Prince and *Miranda*, began to curse and envy her Charms, who had depriv'd 'em of half their Hopes.

After this, I need not tell you, he made *Miranda* a Visit; and from that Day, never left her Apartment, but when he went home at Nights, or unless he had Business; so entirely was he conquer'd by this fair One. But the Bishop, and several Men of Quality in Orders, that profess'd Friendship to him, advis'd him from her Company; and spoke several things to him, that might (if Love had not made him blind) have reclaim'd him from the Pursuit of his Ruin. But whatever they trusted him with, she had the Art to wind her self about his Heart, and make him unravel all his Secrets; and then knew as well, by feign'd Sighs and Tears, to make him dis-believe all. So that he had no Faith, but for her; and was wholly enchanted and bewitch'd by her, at last, in spite of all that wou'd have oppos'd it, he marry'd this famous Woman, possess'd by so many great Men and Strangers before, while all the World was pitying his Shame and Misfortunes.

Being marry'd, they took a great House; and as she was indeed a great Fortune, and now a great Princess, there was nothing wanting that was agreeable to their Quality; all was splendid and magnificent. But all this wou'd not acquire 'em the World's Esteem; they had an Abhorrence for her former Life, despis'd her; and for his espousing a Woman so infamous, they despis'd him. So that though they admir'd, and gaz'd upon their Equipage, and glorious Dress, they fore-saw the Ruin that attended it; and pay'd her Quality very little Respect.

She was no sooner marry'd, but her Uncle dy'd; and dividing his Fortune between *Miranda* and her Sister, and leaves the young Heiress, and all her Fortune, entirely in the Hands of the Princess.

The Fair Jilt: Or, Tarquin and Miranda

We will call this Sister *Alcidiana*; she was about Fourteen Years of Age, and now had chosen her Brother, the Prince, for her Guardian.

If *Alcidiana* were not altogether so great a Beauty as her Sister, she had Charms sufficient to procure her a great many Lovers, though her Fortune had not been so considerable as it was; but with that Addition, you may believe, she wanted no Courtships from those of the best Quality; though every Body deplor'd her being under the Tutorage of a Lady so expert in all the Vices of her Sex, and so cunning a Manager of Sin, as was the Princess; who, on her part, saild not, by all the Caresses, and obliging Endearments, to engage the Mind of this young Maid, and to subdue her wholly to her Government. All her Sences were eternally regal'd with the most bewitching Pleasures they were capable of: She saw nothing but Glory and Magnificence, heard nothing but Musick of the sweetest Sounds; the richest Perfumes employ'd her Smelling, and all she eat and touch'd was delicate and inviting; , 69 and being too young to consider how this State and Grandure was to be continu'd, little imagin'd her vast Fortune was every Day diminishing, towards its needless Support.

When the Princess went to Church, she had her Gentleman bare before her, carrying a great Velvet Cushion, with great golden Tassels, for her to kneel on, and her Train born up a most prodigious length; led by a Gentleman-Usher, bare; follow'd by innumerable Footmen, Pages and Women. And in this State she wou'd walk in the Streets, as in those Countries 'tis the Fashion for the great Ladies to do, who are well; and in her Train, two or three Coaches, and perhaps a rich Velvet Chair embroider'd, wou'd follow in State.

'Twas thus for some time they liv'd, and the Princess was daily press'd by young sighing Lovers, for her Consent so marry *Alcidiana* ; but she had still one Art or other to put 'em off, and so continually broke all the great Matches that were propos'd to her, notwithstanding their Kindred, and other Friends, had industriously endeavour'd to make several great Matches for her; but the Princess was still positive in her Denial, and one way or other broke all. At last it happen'd, there was one propos'd yet more advantageous; a young Count, with whom the young Maid grew passionately in Love, and besought her Sister to consent that she might have him, and got the Prince to speak in her Behalf; but he had no sooner heard the secret Reasons *Miranda* gave him, but (entirely her Slave) he chang'd his Mind, and suited it to hers, and she, as before, broke off that Amour; which so extremly incens'd *Alcidiana*, that she, taking an Opportunity, got from her Guard, and ran away, putting her self into the Hands of a wealthy , 71 Merchant, her Kins-man, and one who bore the greatest Authority in the City; him she chuses for her Guardian, resolving to be no longer a Slave to the Tyranny of her Sister. And so well she order'd Matters, that she writ to this young Cavalier, her last Lover, and retriev'd him; who came back to *Antwerp* again, to renew his Courtship.

Both Parties being agreed, it was no hard matter to perswade all but the Princess: But though she oppos'd it, it was resolv'd on, and the Day appointed for Marriage, and the Portion demanded; demanded only, but never to be pay'd, the best part of it being spent. However, she put 'em off from Day to Day, by a thousand frivolous Delays: And when she saw they wou'd have recourse to Force, and that all her Magnificence wou'd be at an End, if the Law shou'd prevail against her; and that, without this Sister's Fortune, she cou'd not long support her Grandure, she bethought her self of a Means to make it all her own, by getting her Sister made away; but she being out of her Tuition, she was not able to accomplish so great a Deed of Darkness: But since 'twas resolv'd it must be done, she revolves on a thousand Stratagems; and at last, pitches upon an effectual one.

She had a Page, call'd *Van Brune*; a Youth of great Address and Wit, and one she had long manag'd for her purpose. This Youth was about Seventeen Years of Age, and extremly beautiful; and in the time when *Alcidiana* liv'd with the Princess, she was a little in love with this handsome Boy; but 'twas check'd in its Infancy, and never grew up to a Flame: Nevertheless, *Alcidiana* retain'd still a sort of Tenderness for him, while he burn'd in good earnest with Love for the Princess.

The Princess one Day ordering this Page to wait on her in her Closet, she shut the Door; and after a thousand Questions of what he wou'd undertake to serve her, the amorous Boy, finding himself alone, and caress'd by the fair Person he ador'd, with joyful Blushes, that beautify'd his Face, told her, *There was nothing upon Earth, he wou'd not do, to obey her least Commands*. She grew more familiar with him, to oblige him; and seeing Love dance in his Eyes, of which she was so good a Judge, she treated him more like a Lover, than a Servant; till at last the ravish'd Youth, wholly transported out of himself, fell at her Feet, and impatiently implor'd to receive her Commands quickly, that he might fly to execute 'em; for he was not able to bear her charming Words, Looks and Touches, and retain his Duty. At this she smil'd, and told him, the Work was of such a nature, as wou'd mortifie

The Fair Jilt: Or, Tarquin and Miranda

all Flames about him; and he wou'd have more need of Rage, Envy and Malice, than the Aids of a Passion so soft as what she now found him capable of. He assur'd her, he wou'd stick at nothing, though even against his Nature, to recompence for the Boldness he now, through Indiscretion, had discover'd. She smiling, told him, he had committed no Fault; and that possibly, the Pay he shou'd receive for the Service she requir'd at his Hands, shou'd be — what he most wish'd for in the World. To this he bow'd to the Earth; and kissing her Feet, bad her command. And then she boldly told him, *'Twas to kill her Sister Alcidiana*. The Youth, without so much as starting, or pawing upon the Matter, told her, *It shou'd be done*; and bowing low, immediately went out of the Closet. She call'd him back, and wou'd have given him some Instruction; but he refus'd it, and said, *The Action, and the Contrivance shou'd be all his own*. And offering to go again, she — again re-call'd him; putting into his Hand a Purse of a hundred Pistols, which he took; and with a low Bow, departed.

He no sooner left her Presence, but he goes directly and buys a Dose of Poyson, and went immediately to the House where *Alcidiana* liv'd; where, desiring to be brought to her Presence, he fell a-weeping; and told her, his Lady had fallen out with him, and dismiss'd him her Service; and since, from a Child, he had been brought up in the Family, he humbly besought *Alcidiana* to receive him into hers, she being in a few Days to be marry'd. There needed not much Intreaty to a thing that pleas'd her so well, and she immediately receiv'd him to Pension. And he waited some Days on her, before he cou'd get an Opportunity to administer his Devilish Potion: But one Night, when she drunk Wine with roasted Apples, which was usual with her; instead of Sugar, or with the Sugar, the baneful Drug was mix'd, and she drank it down.

About this time there was a great Talk of this Page's coming from one Sister, to go to the other. And Prince *Tarquin*, who was ignorant of the Design, from the Beginning to the End, hearing some Men of Quality at his Table speaking of *Van Brune's* Change of Place (the Princess then keeping her Chamber upon some trifling Indisposition) he answer'd, *That surely they were mistaken, that he was not dismiss'd from the Princess's Service*. And calling some of his Servants, he ask'd for *Van Brune*; and whether any thing had happen'd between Her Highness and him, that had occasion'd his being turn'd off. They all seem'd ignorant of this Matter; and those who had spoke of it, began to fancy there was some Juggle in the Case, which Time wou'd bring to Light.

The ensuing Day 'twas all about the Town, that *Alcidiana* was poyson'd; and though not dead, yet very near it; and that the Doctors said, she had taken *Mercury*. So that there was never so formidable a Sight as this fair young Creature; her Head and Body swell'd, her Eyes starting out, her Face black, and all deform'd: So that diligent Search was made, who it shou'd be that did this; who gave her Drink and Meat. The Cook and Butler were examin'd, the Foot-men call'd to an Account; but all concluded, she receiv'd nothing, but from the Hand of her new Page, since he came into her Service. He was examin'd, and shew'd a thousand guilty Looks: And the Apothecary, then attending among the Doctors, prov'd he had bought *Mercury* of him three or four Days before; which he cou'd not deny; and making Excuses for his buying it, betray'd him the more; so ill he chanc'd to dissemble. He was immediately sent to be examin'd by the Margrave or Justice, who made his *Mittimas*, and sent him to Prison.

'Tis easie to imagine in what Fears and Confusion the Princess was at this News: She took her Chamber upon it, more to hide her guilty Face, than for any Indisposition. And the Doctors apply'd such Remedies to *Alcidiana*, such Antidotes against the Poyson, that in a short time she recover'd; but lost the finest Hair in the World, and the Complexion of her Face ever after.

It was not long before the Trials for Criminals came on; and the Day being arriv'd, *Van Brune* was try'd the first of all; every Body having already read his Destiny, according as they wish'd it; and none wou'd believe, but just indeed as it was: So that for the Revenge they hop'd to see fall upon the Princess, every one wish'd he might find no Mercy, that she might share of his Shame and Misery.

The Sessions-house was fill'd that Day with all the Ladies, and Chief of the Town, to hear the Result of his Trial; and the sad Youth was brought loaded with Chains, and pale as Death; where every Circumstance being sufficiently prov'd against him, and he making but a weak Defence for himself, he was convicted, and sent back to Prison, to receive his Sentence of Death on the Morrow; where he own'd all, and who set him on to do it. He own'd 'twas not Reward of Gain he did it for, but Hope he shou'd command at his pleasure, the Possession of his Mistress, the Princess; who shou'd deny him nothing, after having intrusted him with so great a Secret; and that besides, she had elevated him with the Promise of that glorious Reward, and had dazl'd his young Heart with so charming a Prospect, that blind and mad with Joy, he rush'd forward, to gain the desir'd Prize; and thought on

The Fair Jilt: Or, Tarquin and Miranda

nothing but his coming Happiness: That he saw too late the Follies of his presumptuous Flame, and curs'd the deluding Flatteries of the fair Hypocrite, who had sooth'd him to his Undoing: That he was a miserable Victim to her Wickedness, and hop'd he shou'd warn all young Men, by his Fall, to avoid the Dissimulation of the deceiving Fair: That he hop'd they wou'd have Pity on his Youth, and attribute his Crime to the subtile Perswasions alone of his Mistress, the Princess: And that since *Alcidiana* was not dead, they wou'd grant him Mercy, and permit him to live to repent of his grievous Crime, in some part of the World, whither they might banish him.

He ended with Tears, that fell in abundance from his Eyes; and immediately the Princess was apprehended, and brought to Prison, to the same Prison where yet the poor young Father *Francisco* was languishing, he having been from Week to Week repriev'd, by the Intercession of the Fathers; and possibly, she there had time to make some Reflections.

You may imagine *Tarquin* left no Means unessay'd, to prevent the Imprisonment of the Princess, and the publick Shame and Infamy she was likely to undergo in this Affair: But the whole City being over-joy'd that she shou'd be punish'd, as an Author of all this Mischieff, were so generally bent against her, both Priests, Magistrates and People; the whole Force of the Stream running that way, she found no more Favour than the meanest Criminal. The Prince therefore, when he saw 'twas impossible to rescue her from the Hands of Justice, suffer'd with Grief unspeakable what he cou'd not prevent; and led her himself to the Prison, follow'd by all his People, in as much State, as if he had been going to his Marriage; where, when she came, she was as well attended and serv'd as before, he never stirring one Moment from her.

The next Day she was try'd in open and common Court; where she appear'd in Glory, led by *Tarquin*, and attended according to her Quality: And she cou'd not deny all the Page had alledg'd against her, who was brought thither also in Chains; and after a great many Circumstances, she was found guilty, and both receiv'd Sentence; the Page to be hang'd, till he was dead, on a Gibbet in the Market-place; and the Princess to stand under the Gibbet, with a Rope about her Neck, the other End of which was to be fasten'd to the Gibbet where the Page was hanging; and to have an Inscription in large Characters upon her Back and Breast, of the , 83 Cause why: Where she was to stand from Ten in the Morning, to Twelve.

This Sentence, the People, with one Accord, believ'd too favourable for so ill a Woman, whose Crimes deserv'd Death, equal to that of *Van Brune*: Nevertheless, there were some who said, It was infinitely more severe than the Death it self.

The following *Friday* was the Day of Execution, and one need not tell of the abundance of People, who were flock'd together in the Market-place: All the Windows were taken down, and fill'd with Spectators, and the Tops of Houses; when, at the Hour appointed, the fatal Beauty appear'd. She was dress'd in a black Velvet Gown, with a rich Row of Diamonds all down the fore-part of the Breast, and a great Knot of Diamonds at the Peak behind; and a Petty-coat of flower'd Gold, very rich, and lac'd; with all things else suitable: A Gentleman carry'd her great Velvet Cushion before her, on which her Prayer-Book, embroider'd, was laid; her Train was born up by a Page, and the Prince led her, bare; follow'd by his Foot-men, Pages, and other Officers of his House.

When they arriv'd to the Place of Execution, the Cushion was laid on the Ground, upon a *Portugal*-Matt, spread there for that purpose; and the Princess stood on the Cushion, with her Prayer-Book in her Hand, and a Priest by her Side; and was accordingly ty'd up to the Gibbet.

She had not stood there ten Minutes, but she had the Mortification (at least, one wou'd think it so to her) to see her sad Page *Van Brune* approach; fair as an Angel, but languishing and pale. That Sight moved all the Beholders with as much , 85 Pity, as that of the Princess did Disdain and Pleasure.

He was dress'd all in Mourning, and very fine Linen; bare-headed, with his own Hair, the fairest that cou'd be seen, hanging all in Curls on his Back and Shoulders, very long. He had a Prayer-Book of black Velvet in his Hand, and behav'd himself with much Penitence and Devotion.

When he was brought under the Gibbet, he seeing his Mistress in that Condition, shew'd an infinite Concern, and his fair Face was cover'd over with Blushes; and falling at her Feet, he humbly ask'd her Pardon for having been the Occasion of so great an Infamy to her, by a weak Confession, which the Fears of Youth, and Hopes of Life, had oblig'd him to make, so greatly to her Dis-honour; for, indeed, he had wanted that manly Strength, to bear the Efforts of dying as he ought, in silence, rather than of committing so great a Crime against his Duty, and Honour it self; and that he cou'd not die in Peace, unless she wou'd forgive him. The Princess only nodded her Head, and cry'd, *I do* .—

The Fair Jilt: Or, Tarquin and Miranda

And after having spoken a little to his Father Confessor, who was with him, he cheerfully mounted the Ladder; and in the sight of the Princess, he was turn'd off, while a loud Cry was heard through all the Market-place, especially from the fair Sex; he hanging there till the time the Princess was to depart: And when she was put into a rich embroider'd Chair, and carry'd away; *Tarquin* going into his; for he had all that time stood supporting the Princess under the Gallows, and was very weary, she was sent back, till her Releasment came; which was that Night, about Seven of the Clock; and then she was conducted to her own House in great State, , 87 with a dozen white Wax-Flambeau's about her Chair.

If the Affairs of *Alcidiana* and her Friends before were impatient of having the Portion out of the Hands of these Extravagants, 'tis not to be imagin'd, but they were now much more so; and the next Day they sent an Officer, according to Law, to demand it; or to summon the Prince to give Reasons, why he wou'd not. And the Officer receiv'd for Answer, That the Money shou'd be call'd in, and paid in such a time; setting a certain Time, which I have not been so curious as to retain, or put in my Journal Observations; but I am sure it was not long, as may be easily imagin'd; for they every Moment suspected the Prince wou'd pack up, and be gone some time or other on the suddain; and for that Reason they wou'd not trust him without Bail, or two Officers to remain in his House, to watch that nothing shou'd be remov'd or touch'd. As for Bail, or Security, he cou'd give none; every one slunk their Heads out of the Collar when it came to that: So that he was oblig'd, at his own Expence, to maintain Officers in his House.

The Princess finding her self reduc'd to the last Extremity, and that she must either produce the Value of a hundred thousand Crowns, or see the Prince, her Husband, lodg'd for ever in a Prison, and all their Glory vanish; and that it was impossible to fly, since guarded; she had recourse to an Extremity, worse than the Affair of *Van Brune*. And in order to this, she first puts on a World of Sorrow and Concern, for what she fear'd might arrive to the Prince: And indeed, if ever she shed Tears which she did not dissemble, it was upon this Occasion. But here she almost over-acted: She stirr'd not from her Bed, and refus'd to eat, or sleep, or see the Light; so that the Day being shut out of her Chamber, she liv'd by Wax-Lights, and refus'd all Comfort and Consolation.

The Prince, all raving with Love, tender Compassion and Grief, never stirr'd from her Bed-side, nor ceas'd to implore, that she wou'd suffer her self to live. But she, who was not now so passionately in love with *Tarquin*, as she was with the Prince; not so fond of the Man, as his Titles, and of Glory, fore-saw the total Ruin of the last, if not prevented, by avoiding the Payment of this great Sum; which cou'd no otherwise be, than by the Death of *Alcidiana*: And therefore, without ceasing, she wept, and cry'd out, *She cou'd not live, unless Alcidiana dy'd. This Alcidiana, (continu'd she,) who has been the Author of my Shame; who has expos'd me under a Gibbet, in the publick Market-place.— Oh! — I am deaf to all Reason, blind to Natural Affection. I renounce her: I hate her as my mortal Foe, my Stop to Glory, and the Finisher of my Days, e'er half my Race of Life be run.*

Then throwing her false, but snowy, charming Arms about the Neck of her Heart-breaking Lord, and Lover, who lay sighing and list'ning by her Side, he was charm'd and bewitch'd into saying all things that pleas'd her: And lastly, told her, *Alcidiana shou'd be no longer an Obstacle to her Repose; but that, if she wou'd look up, and cast her Eyes of Sweetness and Love upon him, as heretofore; forget her Sorrows, and redeem her lost Health, he wou'd take what Measures she shou'd propose, to dispatch this fatal Stop to her Happiness out of the way.*

These Words fail'd not to make her caress him in the most endearing manner that Love and flattery cou'd invent; and she kiss'd him to an Oath, a solemn Oath, to perform what he had promis'd; and he vow'd liberally: And she assum'd in an Instant her good Humour, and suffer'd a Supper to be prepar'd, and did eat; which in many Days before she had not done; so obstinate and powerful was she in dissembling well.

The next thing to be consider'd was, which Way this Deed was to be done; for they doubted not, but when 'twas done, all the World wou'd lay it upon the Princess, as done by her Command: But she urg'd, Suspicion was no Proof; and that they never put to death any one, but when they had great and certain Evidences, who were the Offenders. She was sure of her own Constancy, that Racks and Tortures shou'd never get the Secret from her Breast; and if he were as confident on his part, there was no Danger. Yet this Preparation she made, towards the laying the Fact on others, that she caus'd several Letters to be written from *Germany*, as from the Relations of *Van Brune*, who threaten'd *Alcidiana* with Death, for depriving their Kins-man (who was a Gentleman) of his Life, though he had not taken away hers. And it was the Report of the Town, how this young Maid was threaten'd. And indeed, the Death of the Page had so afflicted a great many, that *Alcidiana* had procur'd her self abundance of Enemies upon that Account, because she might have sav'd him if she had pleas'd; but on the contrary, she was a

The Fair Jilt: Or, Tarquin and Miranda

Spectator, and in full Health and Vigour, at his Execution: And People were not so much concern'd for her at this Report, as they wou'd have been.

The Prince, who now had, by reasoning the Matter soberly with *Miranda*, found it absolutely necessary to dispatch *Alcidiana*; he resolv'd himself, and with his own Hand, to execute it; not daring to trust to any of his most Favourite-Servants, though he had many who, possibly, wou'd have obey'd him; for they lov'd him, as he deserv'd; and so wou'd all the World, had he not been so poorly deluded by this fair Enchantress. He therefore, as I said, resolv'd to keep this great Secret to himself; and taking a Pistol, charg'd well with two Bullets, he watch'd an Opportunity to shoot her as she shou'd go out, or into her House or Coach some Evening.

To this End he waited several Nights, near her Lodgings; but still, either she went not out; or when she return'd, she was so guarded with Friends, or her Lover, and Flambeau's, that he cou'd not aim at her, without endangering the Life of some other. But one Night, above the rest, upon a *Sunday*, when he knew she wou'd be at the Theatre; for she never miss'd that Day, seeing the Play; he waited at the Corner of the Statt-house, near the Theatre, with his Cloak cast over his Face, and a black Periwigg, all alone, with his Pistol ready cock'd; and remain'd not very long, but he saw her Kinsman's Coach come along. 'Twas almost dark; Day was just shutting up her Beauties, and left such a Light to govern the World, as serv'd only just to distinguish one Object from another, and a convenient help to Mischief. He saw a-light out of the Coach, only one young Lady, the Lover, and then the destin'd Victim; which he (drawing near) knew rather by her Tongue, than Shape. The Lady ran into the Play-house, and left *Alcidiana* to be conducted by her Lover into it; who led her to the Door, and went to give some Order to the Coach-man; so that the Lover was about twenty Yards from *Alcidiana*; when she stood the fairest Mark in the World, on the Threshold of the Entrance of the Theatre; there being many Coaches about the Door, so that hers cou'd not come so near. *Tarquin* was resolv'd not to lose so fair an Opportunity; and advanc'd, but went behind the Coaches; and when he came over against the Door, through a great Booted, Velvet Coach, that stood between him and her, he shot; and she having her Train of her Gown and Petty-coat on her Arm, in great quantity, he miss'd her Body, and shot through her Cloaths, between her Arm, and her Body. She frighten'd to find something hit her, and to see the Smoak, and hear the Report of the Pistol; running in, cry'd, *I am shot: I am dead*.

This Noise quickly alarm'd her Lover; and all the Coach-men and Foot-men immediately ran, some one Way, and some another. One of 'em seeing a Man haste away in a Cloak, he being a lusty, bold *German*, stopp'd him; and drawing upon him, bad him stand, and deliver his Pistol, or he wou'd run him through.

Tarquin, being surpriz'd at the Boldness of this Fellow to demand his Pistol, as if he positively knew him to be the Murtherer, (for so he thought himself, since he believ'd *Alcidiana* dead,) had so much Presence of Mind, as to consider, if he suffer'd himself to be taken, he shou'd poorly die a publick Death; and therefore resolv'd upon one Mischief more, to secure himself from the first: And in the Moment that the *German* bad him deliver his Pistol, he cry'd, *Though I have no Pistol to deliver, I have a Sword to chastise thy Insolence*. And throwing off his Cloak, and flinging his Pistol from him, he drew, and wounded and dis-arm'd the Fellow.

This Noise of Swords brought every Body to the place; and immediately the Bruit ran, *The Murtherer was taken, the Murtherer was taken*; though none knew which was he, nor the Cause of the Quarrel between the two fighting Men, which none yet knew, for it now was darker than before. But at the Noise of the Murderer being taken, the Lover of *Alcidiana*, who by this time found his Lady unhurt, all but the Trains of her Gown and Petty-coat, came running to the place, just as *Tarquin* had dis-arm'd the *German*, and was ready to have kill'd him; when laying hold of his Arm, they arrested the Stroak, and redeem'd the Foot-man.

They then demanded who this Stranger was, at whose Mercy the Fellow lay; but the Prince, who now found himself venturing for his last Stake, made no Reply; but with two Swords in his Hands, went to fight his Way through the Rabble: And though there were above a hundred Persons, some with Swords, others with long Whips, (as Coach-men,) so invincible was the Courage of this poor, unfortunate Gentleman at that time, that all these were not able to sieze him; but he made his Way through the Ring that encompass'd him, and ran away; but was however so closely pursu'd, the Company still gathering as they ran, that toil'd with fighting, oppress'd with Guilt, and Fear of being taken, he grew fainter and fainter, and suffer'd himself, at last, to yield to his Pursuers, who soon found him to be Prince *Tarquin* in Disguise: And they carry'd him directly to Prison, being *Sunday*, to wait the coming Day, to go before a Magistrate.

In an Hour's time the whole fatal Adventure was carry'd all over the City, and every one knew that Prince

The Fair Jilt: Or, Tarquin and Miranda

Tarquin was the intended Murderer of *Alcidiana*; and not one but had a real Sorrow and Compassion for him. They heard how bravely he had defended himself, how many he had wounded before he cou'd be taken, and what Numbers he had fought through: And, 99 even those that saw his Valour and Bravery, and who had assisted at his being siez'd, now repented from the Bottom of their Hearts, their having any hand in the Ruin of so gallant a Man; especially, since they knew the Lady was not hurt. A thousand Addresses were made to her, not to prosecute him; but her Lover, a hot-headed Fellow, more fierce than brave, wou'd by no means be pacify'd; but vow'd to pursue him to the Scaffold.

The *Monday* came, and the Prince being examin'd, confess'd the Matter of Fact, since there was no harm done; believing a generous Confession the best of his Game; but he was sent back to closer Imprisonment, loaded with Irons, to expect the next Sessions. All his Houshold-Goods were siez'd, and all they cou'd find, for the Use of *Alcidiana*. And the Princess, all in Rage, tearing her Hair, was carry'd to the same Prison, to behold the cruel Effects of her Hellish Designs.

One need not tell here how sad and horrid this Meeting appear'd between her Lord and she; let it suffice it was the most melancholy and mortifying Object that ever Eyes beheld. On *Miranda's* part, 'twas sometimes all Rage and Fire, and sometimes all Tears and Groans; but still 'twas sad Love, and mournful Tenderness on his: Nor cou'd all his Sufferings, and the Prospect of Death it self, drive from his Soul one Spark of that Fire the obstinate God had fatally kindl'd there: And in the midst of all his Sighs, he wou'd re-call himself, and cry,— *I have Miranda still.*

He was eternally visited by his Friends and Acquaintance; and this last Action of Bravery had got him more, than all his former Conduct had lost. The Fathers were perpetually with him; and all join'd with one common Voice in this, That he ought to abandon a Woman so wicked as the Princess; and that however Fate dealt with him, he cou'd not shew himself a true Penitent, while he laid the Author of so much Evil in his Bosom: That Heaven wou'd never bless him, till he had renounc'd her: And on such Conditions, he wou'd find those that wou'd employ their utmost Interest to save his Life; who else wou'd not stir in his Affair. But he was so deaf to all, that he cou'd not so much as dissemble a Repentance for having marry'd her.

He lay a long time in Prison, and all that time the poor Father *Francisco* remain'd there also: And the good Fathers, who daily visited these two amorous Prisoners, the Prince and Princess; and who found, by the Management of Matters, it wou'd go very hard with *Tarquin*, entertain'd 'em often with holy Matters relating to the Life to come; from which, before his Trial, he gather'd what his Stars had appointed, and that he was destin'd to die.

This gave an unspeakable Torment to the now-repenting Beauty, who had reduc'd him to it; and she began to appear with a more solid Grief. Which being perceiv'd by the good Fathers, they resolv'd to attack her on the yielding Side: and after some Discourse upon the Judgment for Sin, they came to reflect on the Business of Father *Francisco*; and told her, she had never thriv'd since her Accusing of that Father, and laid it very home to her Conscience; assuring her, that they wou'd do their utmost in her Service, if she wou'd confess that secret Sin to all the World; so that she might atone for the Crime, by the saving that good Man. At first she seem'd inclin'd to yield; but Shame of being her own Detector in so vile a Matter, re-call'd her Goodness, and she faintly persisted in it.

At the End of six Months, Prince *Tarquin* was call'd to his Trial; where I will pass over the Circumstances, which are only what is usual in such Criminal Cases, and tell you, that he, being found guilty of the Intent of killing *Alcidiana*, was condemn'd to lose his Head in the Market-place, and the Princess to be banish'd her Country.

After Sentence pronounc'd, to the real Grief of all the Spectators, he was carry'd back to Prison. And now the Fathers attack her a-new: And she whose Grievs daily increas'd, with a Languishment that brought her very near her Grave, at last confess'd all her Life, all the Lewdness of her Practices with several Princes and great Men; besides her Lusts with People that serv'd her, and others in mean Capacity: And lastly, the whole Truth of the young *Friar*; and how she had drawn the Page, and the Prince, her Husband, to this design'd Murder of her Sister. This she sign'd with her Hand, in the Presence of the Prince, her Husband, and several holy Men who were present. Which being signify'd to the Magistrates, the *Friar* was immediately deliver'd from his Irons (where he had languish'd more than two whole Years) in great Triumph, and with much Honour, and lives a most exemplary pious Life, and as he did before; for he is yet living in *Antwerp*.

The Fair Jilt: Or, Tarquin and Miranda

After the Condemnation of these two unfortunate Persons, who begot such different Sentiments in the Minds of the People, (the Prince, all the Compassion and Pity imaginable; and the Princess, all the Contempt and Despight;) they languish'd almost six Months longer in Prison; so great an Interest there was made, in order to the saving his Life, by all the Men of the Robe. On the other side, the Princes, and great Men of all Nations, who were at the Court of *Bruxels*, who bore a secret Revenge in their Hearts against a Man who had, as they pretended, set up a false Title, only to take Place of them; who, indeed, was but a Merchant's Son of *Holland*, as they said, so incens'd them against him, that they were too hard at Court for the Church-men. However, this Dispute gave the Prince his Life some Months longer than was expected; which gave him also some Hope, that a Reprieve for Ninety Years wou'd have been granted, as was desir'd. Nay, Father *Francisco* so interested himself in this Concern, that he writ to his Father, and several Princes of *Germany*, with whom Marquis *Castiel de Roderigo* was well acquainted, to intercede with him for the saving of *Tarquin*; since 'twas more by his Perswasions, than those of all who attack'd her, that made *Miranda*, confess the Truth of her Affair with him. But at the End of six Months, when all Applications were found fruitless and vain, the Prince receiv'd News, that in two Days he was to die, as his Sentence had been before pronounc'd; and for which he prepar'd himself with all Cheerfulness.

On the following *Friday*, as soon as it was light, all People of any Condition came to take their Leaves of him; and none departed with dry Eyes, or Hearts unconcern'd to the last Degree: For *Tarquin*, when he found his Fate inevitable, bore it with a Fortitude that shew'd no Signs of Regret; but address'd himself to all about him with the same cheerful, modest and great Air, he was wont to do in his most flourishing Fortune. his *Vallet* was dressing him all the Morning, so many Interruptions they had by Visiters; and he was all in Mourning, and so were all his Followers; for even to the last, he kept up his Grandure, to the Amazement of all People: And indeed, he was so passionately belov'd by them, that those he had dismiss'd serv'd him voluntarily, and wou'd not be perswaded to abandon him while he liv'd.

The Princess was also dress'd in Mourning, and her two Women; and notwithstanding the unheard of Lewdness and Villanies she had confess'd of her self, the Prince still ador'd her; for she had still those Charms that made him first do so: Nor, to his last Moment, cou'd he be brought to wish that he had never seen her. But on the contrary, as a Man yet vainly proud of his Fetters, he said, *All the Satisfaction this short Moment of Life cou'd afford him was, that he dy'd in endeavouring to serve Miranda, his adorable Princess.*

After he had taken leave of all who thought it necessary to leave him to himself for some time, he retir'd with his Confessor: where they were about an Hour in Prayer, all the Ceremonies of Devotions that were fit to be done being already past. At last the Bell toll'd, and he was to take leave of the Princess, as his last Work of Life, and the most hard he had to accomplish. He threw himself at her Feet; and gazing on her, as she sate more dead than alive, o'erwhelm'd with silent Grief, they both remain'd some Moments speechless; and then, as if one rising Tide of Tears had supply'd both their Eyes, it burst out in Streams at the same Instant; and when his Sighs gave way, he utter'd a thousand *Farewel's*, so soft, so passionate and moving, that all who were by were extreamly touch'd with it, and said, *That nothing cou'd be seen more deplorable and melancholy.* A thousand times they bad *Farewel*, and still some tender Look or Word wou'd prevent his going: Then embrace, and bid *Farewel* again. A thousand times she ask'd his Pardon for being the Occasion of that fatal Separation; a thousand times assuring him, she wou'd follow him, for she cou'd not live without him. And Heaven knows when their soft and sad Caresses wou'd have ended, had not the Officers assur'd him, 'twas time to mount the Scaffold. At which Words the Princess fell fainting in the Arms of her Women, and they led *Tarquin* out of the Prison.

When he came to the Market-place, whither he walk'd on foot, follow'd by his own Domesticks, and some bearing a black Velvet Coffin, with Silver Hinges; the Heads-man before him, with his fatal Scimitre drawn; his Confessor by his Side, and many Gentlemen and Church-men, with Father *Francisco*, attending him; the People showering Millions of Blessings on him, and beholding with weeping Eyes, he mounted the Scaffold; which was strow'd with some Sawdust about the place where he was to kneel, to receive the Blood: For they be-head People kneeling, and with the Back-stroke of a Scimitre; and not lying on a Block, and with an Ax, as we in *England*. The Scaffold had a low Rail about it, that every Body might more conveniently see: This was hung with Black; and all that State that such a Death cou'd have, was here in most decent Order.

He did not say much upon the Scaffold: The Sum of what he said to his Friends was, to be kind, and take care of the poor Penitent, his Wife: To others, recommending his honest and generous Servants; whose Fidelity was so

The Fair Jilt: Or, Tarquin and Miranda

well known and commended, that they were soon promis'd all Preferment. He was some time in Prayer, and a very short time speaking to his Confessor; then he turn'd to the Heads-man, and desir'd him to do his Office well, and gave him twenty *Leue d'Or's*; and undressing himself with the help of his *Vallet* and Page, he pull'd off his Coat, and had underneath a white Satten Waste-coat: He took off his Periwigg, and put on a white Satten-cap, with a Holland one, done with Poynt, under it, which he pull'd a little over his Eyes; then took a chearful Leave of all, and kneel'd down, and said, *When he lifted up his Hands the third time, the Heads-man shou'd do his Office:* Which accordingly was done, and the Heads-man gave him his last stroak, and the Prince fell on the Scaffold. The People, with one common Voice, as if it had been but one entire one, pray'd for his Soul; and Murmurs of Sighs were heard from the whole Multitude, who scrambl'd for some of the bloody Saw-dust, to keep for his Memory.

The Heads-man going to take up the Head, as the manner is, to shew to the People, he found he had not struck it off, and that the Body stirr'd. With that he stepp'd to an Engine which they always carry with 'em, to force those who may be refractory; thinking, as he said, to have twisted the Head from the Shoulders, conceiving it to hang but by a small matter of Flesh. Though 'twas an odd Shift of the Fellow's, yet 'twas done, and the best Shift he cou'd suddainly propose. The Margrave and another Officer, old Men, were on the Scaffold, with some of the Prince's Friends and Servants; who seeing the Heads-man put the Engine about the Neck of the Prince, began to call out, and the People made a great Noise. The Prince, who found himself yet alive; or rather, who was past Thinking, but had some Sense of Feeling left, when the Heads-man took him up, and set his Back against the Rail, and clap'd the Engine about his Neck, got his two Thumbs between the Rope and his Neck, feeling himself press'd there; and struggling between Life and Death, and bending himself over the Rail backward, while the Heads-man, 113, sig. I] pull'd forward, he threw himself quite over the Rail by Chance, and not Design, and fell upon the Heads and Shoulders of the People, who were crying out with amazing Shouts of Joy. The Heads-man leap'd after him, but the Rabble had like to have pull'd him to pieces: All the City was in an Uproar, but none knew what the matter was, but those who bore the Body of the Prince, whom they found yet living; but how, or by what strange Miracle preserv'd, they knew not, nor did examine; but with one Accord, as if the whole Croud had been one Body, and had had but one Motion, they bore the Prince on their Heads, about a hundred Yards from the Scaffold, where there is a Monastery of *Jesuits*; and there they secur'd him. All this was done; his Beheading, his Falling, and his being secur'd, almost in a Moments time; the People rejoicing, as at some extraordinary Victory won. One of the Officers being, as I said, an old, timorous Man, was so frighten'd at the Accident, the Bustle, the Noise, and the Confusion, of which he was wholly ignorant, that he dy'd with Amazement and Fear; and the other was fain to be let blood.

The Officers of Justice went to demand the Prisoner, but they demanded in vain; they had now a Right to protect him, and wou'd do so. All his over-joy'd Friends went to see in what Condition he was, and all of Quality found Admittance: They saw him in Bed, going to be dress'd by the most skilful Surgeons, who yet cou'd not assure him of Life. They desir'd no Body shou'd speak to him, or ask him any Questions. They found that the Heads-man had struck him too low, and had cut him into the Shoulder-bone. A very great Wound, you may be sure; for the Sword, in such Executions, carries an extream Force. However, so good Care was taken on all sides, and so greatly the Fathers were concern'd for him, that they found an Amendment, and Hopes of a good Effect of their incomparable Charity and Goodness.

At last, when he was permitted to speak, the first News he ask'd was after the Princess. And his Friends were very much afflicted to find, that all his Loss of Blood had not quench'd that Flame, nor let out that which made him still love that bad Woman. He was sollicit'd daily to think no more of her: And all her Crimes were laid so open to him, and so shamefully represented; and on the other side, his Vertues so admir'd; and which, they said, wou'd have been eternally celebrated, but for his Folly with this infamous Creature; that at last, by assuring him of all their Assistance, if he abandon'd her; and to renounce him, and deliver him up, if he did not; they wrought so far upon him, as to promise, he wou'd suffer her to go alone into Banishment, and wou'd not follow her, or live with her any more. But, alas! this was but his Gratitude that compell'd this Complaisance, for in his Heart he resolv'd never to abandon her; nor was he able to live, and think of doing it: However, his Reason assur'd him, he cou'd not do a Deed more justifiable, and one that wou'd re-gain his Fame sooner.

His Friends ask'd him some Questions concerning his Escape; and that since he was not beheaded, but only wounded, why he did not immediately rise up. But he reply'd, he was so absolutely pre-possess'd, that at the third

The Fair Jilt: Or, Tarquin and Miranda

Lifting up his Hands, he shou'd receive the Stroak of Death, that at the same Instant the Sword touch'd him, he had no Sense; nay, not even of Pain, so absolutely dead he was with Imagination; and knew not that he stirr'd, as the Heads-man found he did; nor did he remember any thing, from the Lifting up of his Hands, to his Fall; and then awaken'd, as out of a Dream; or rather, a Moment's Sleep, without Dream, he found he liv'd; and wonder'd what was arriv'd to him, or how he came to live; having not, as yet, any Sense of his Wound, though so terrible an one.

After this, *Alcidiana*, who was extreemly afflicted for having been the Prosecutor of this great Man; who, bating his last Design against her, which she knew was the Instigation of her Sister, had oblig'd her with all the Civility imaginable; now sought all Means possible of getting his Pardon, and that of her Sister; though of a hundred thousand Crowns, which she shou'd have pay'd her she cou'd get but ten thousand; which was from the Sale of her rich Beds, and some other Furniture: So that the young Count, who before shou'd have marry'd her, now went off for want of Fortune; and a young Merchant (perhaps the best of the two) was the Man to whom she was destin'd.

At last, by great Intercession, both their Pardons were obtain'd; and the Prince, who wou'd be no more seen in a place that had prov'd every way so fatal to him, left *Flanders*, promising never to live with the fair Hypocrite more; but e'er he departed, he writ her a Letter, wherein he order'd her, in a little time, to follow him into *Holland*; and left a Bill of Exchange with one of his trusty Servants, whom he had left to wait upon her, for Money for her Accommodations: So that she was now reduc'd to one Woman, one Page, and this Gentleman. The Prince, in this time of his Imprisonment, had several Bills of great Sums from his Father, who was exceeding rich, and this all the Children he had in the World, and whom he tenderly lov'd.

As soon as *Miranda* was come into *Holland*, she was welcom'd with all imaginable Respect and Endearment by the old Father; who was impos'd upon so, as that he knew not she was the fatal Occasion of all these Disasters to his Son; but rather look'd on her as a Woman who had brought him a hundred and fifty thousand Crowns, which his Misfortunes had consum'd. But, above all, she was receiv'd by *Tarquin* with a Joy unspeakable; who, after some time, to redeem his Credit, and gain himself a new Fame, put himself into the *French* Army, where he did Wonders; and after three Campaigns, his Father dying, he return'd home, and retir'd to a Country-House; where, with his Princess, he lives as a private Gentleman, in all the Tranquility of a Man of a good Fortune. They say *Miranda* has been very penitent for her Life past, and gives Heaven the Glory for having given her these Afflictions, that have reclaim'd her, and brought her to as perfect a State of Happiness as this troublesome World can afford.

Since I began this Relation, I heard that Prince *Tarquin* dy'd about three quarters of a Year ago.

FINIS.
