

THE PICTURE, OR, THE Cuckold in Conceit

James Miller

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SCENE I.

A Room in Mr. Dotterel's House.

Mr. Dotterel alone.

What a poor Devil is a Man that is managed by his Wife! I thought I had been as positive a Person as any that ever walk'd the *Royal-Exchange*. But I am muzzled, and hand-cuff'd, led about by a fine Wife, forsooth, like a Monster for a Show. I had a flourishing Trade in the City, that must be left off to come to the St. *James*'s End of the Town; where, in the Room of it, I may be supply'd with a flourishing Pair of Branches to nod upon my Brows. In the City I had a pretty snug House, fit for my Use; and here I am brought to a Castle, where every Room is too good to be made any Use of at all.—O *Timothy Dotterel, Timothy Dotterel!* what a Dupe hast thou been made to the Vanity of a Wife!—— O! here her Ladyship comes.

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SCENE II.

Mr. Dotterel, Mrs. Dotterel.

Mrs. Dot.

I wonder what Pleasure you can take, *Mr. Dotterel*, in disturbing one's Rest so early in a Morning.—Because you used to rise at break o' Day, when you sold Sugar and Plumbs in the City, you can't help doing the same now you have left off Business, and are come to the Court End o' the Town.

Mr. Dot.

Break o' Day, Woman! why 'tis almost Noon.

Mrs. Dot.

Why, Noon is break o' Day at this End o' the Town.

Mr. Dot.

This End of the Town! That's the worst Bargain, Mistress, I ever struck in my Life. An honest Citizen can no sooner get a little beforehand in the World, by his Drudgery and Parsimony, but his Wife must hurry him away hither, to spend it all in Trinkets and Raree-shows.

Mrs. Dot.

Would you lead all your Life, *Mr. Dotterel*, in Dirt and Ignorance?

Mr. Dot.

If it had not been for that Dirt, Mistress, you cou'dn't go so clean: Had not I a neat wholsom Habitation in *Watling-street*, and a pretty Country-Lodging at *Islington*? but this would not do, forsooth! Your Ladyship must have a House as big as the Custom-house, with your *Fresco*, and your *Stucco*, and your Pillars, and your Carving, and the Duce knows what, that are not half so good a Sight to me as my Raisin-Jars, and Sugar-Casks. Then you must live in a Square too, amongst a Parcel of idle Lords and Fops, and Women of Quality; not one of whom ever take any Notice of me, unless they want to borrow Money of me; so that I might as well live in a Forest. When I stir out o' my Doors here, I am stared at as the Ghost of a departed Citizen, and am forced every Day to go as far as *Change-Alley* to find any Body that will speak to me.

Mrs. Dot.

I don't know, *Mr. Dotterel*; I'm sure they pay me a great deal of Respect, both Gentlemen and Ladies.

Mr. Dot.

Yes, Madam, but I'd rather 'twas something less; the Respect the Gentlemen pay you may make me never the more respectful.

Mrs. Dot.

What, at your jealous Fits again? I think I have more Reason. It is not for nothing that you can't live a Day out o' the City, it is'nt. I fancy, *Mr. Dotterel*, if all was known, you are qualified in that Respect for this End o' the Town.

Mr. Dot.

And I fancy, Madam, if all were to be known, you'd soon qualify me in that Respect here for the City again: Therefore let a Bill be put on the Door, Mistress, immediately; for I'll return from whence I came. Let your Quality and Parliament-men, who pay their Debts with their Protections, live in your Squares, if they please, I

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don't want to be in a privileged Place. And so in, in, Mistress, and prepare to remove; I've a little Business, and will be back again presently.

Mrs. Dot.

You may remove when you please, Mr. *Dotterel*, but I shall stay where I am, I assure you.

[Exit.

Mr. Dot.

You shall, Mrs. *Sprite!* you shall, shall you!—Matrimony, what art thou? Why, an excellent Receipt to make Cuckolds—and that's a Dish I'm afraid I shall soon be serv'd up for.

[Exit.

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SCENE III.

the Street.

Mr. Per-Cent, Celia, Phillis. Celia enters in Tears followed by Per-Cent.

Celia.

Dear Sir, I never can consent to't while I live.

Per-Cent.

You impertinent Hussy, who asks your Consent? A Daughter's Consent, quotha? that's pretty stuff, indeed——Have not I, as your Lord and Father, an absolute Power over my own Goods, my Chattels, my Household-stuff, my Cats, my Dogs, my Daughter? And may not I dispose of 'em to the best Advantage? Consent! I am older and wiser, and know what belongs to consenting better than you; if you don't know what Value to set upon yourself, I do——I tell you again and again, Mr. *Counter* is worth twenty thousand Pounds; and a Man that is worth twenty thousand Pounds must be a very honest Man.

Celia.

Dear Sir, he must be as old again as I am.

Per-Cent.

And as wise again, Madam.

Phil.

The Wretch is almost as old as you, Sir.

Per-Cent.

And he is almost as Rich; you may find ten thousand Faults, but I find twenty thousand Beauties in him.

Celia.

And can you be so sordid?

Per-Cent.

Prudent, prudent, Child.

Celia.

After you have given your Word.

Per-Cent.

Air, Air, mere Breath.

Celia.

Poor *Heartly!*

Per-Cent.

Ay, *poor* indeed.

Celia.

Is absent, and forgotten.

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Per-Cent.

And shou'd be forgotten by you too, if you had any Sense of Morality in you.

Celia.

Forget him! Never. Sure, Sir, you have forgot that you yourself engaged me to him.

Per-Cent.

Conditional, all Conditional——He engag'd that his old Uncle shou'd die, and no body then expected his Life, for he had four Doctors attended him; but he recover'd his Health, and I shall recover my Daughter.

Celia.

Sir, he has a Gentleman's Fortune.

Per-Cent.

Yes, a poor Gentleman.

Celia.

Has had a Gentleman's Education.

Per-Cent.

Yes, he speaks *French*, and plays upon the Fiddle. I tell you, I'll be obey'd, Mrs. Baggage.

Celia.

'Tis true, I owe Obedience to a Father, but not where Honour, Love, and Life's at stake.

Per-Cent. [Mimicking her.]

And Life's at stake!——very pretty and heroical that——and Life's at stake!——These confounded Romances have been the Ruin of thee; I warrant thou say more of *Pamela*, or *Joseph Andrews*, than thy Catechism——Your Mother's good Books, that I gave you, have not a Soil upon 'em——*Baxter*, upon unlawful Dreams; Crums of Comfort for Christian Chicken; *Whitfield's* pious Journals——Read these, read these, and learn Obedience better. I know the Man will make a good Husband, for he has always been a good Husband.

Celia. and Phil.

How, Sir!

Per-Cent.

Of his Money——In short, this very Afternoon he intends to wait on you, and I desire you to put on your best Looks to receive him; and so, Madam, your Servant.

Celia.

Will you not hear me, Sir?

SONG.

*What Pleasure can in Wealth be found
By one, who, 'gainst her Will, is bound
In Wedlock's lasting Chain?
That State, which does so happy prove
To those whose Hearts are join'd in Love,
Will be to me but Pain.*

SCENE III.

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Per-Cent.

I'm deaf to any thing of *Heartly*.

Phil.

Have you no Pity? Sir: sweet Mr. *Per-Cent.* [*Bursts out a crying, kneels and lays hold of his Coat. Per-Cent breaks from her, and Exit.*] An ugly, old, ill-natur'd covetous Hunks!

Celia.

Shall I be rich, or happy? Is not that the Question, Girl?

Phil.

Happy, happy, Madam, with Mr. *Heartly*: Content and a Cottage.

Celia.

O *Heartly*! thou shalt ever be in my Mind, thy Name still in my Mouth, thy Image next my Heart. [*Takes a Picture out of her Bosom, and fixes her Eyes upon it 'till she faints away.*] Look on it, *Phillis*; does it not smile upon us! I often think so, when I look long upon it: Thus, thus smil'd he when he took his Leave, and gave into my Hand this dear Remembrance, with a Thousand Vows of Constancy and Truth; You'll think of me, he cry'd, and then we parted; I cannot bear this Tenderness that breaks upon me——O *Heartly*, leave thy Attendance on an Uncle's Orders, and claim your Part in me; or else——O my sad Heart. This Afternoon——I sink beneath my Fears——I may be forc'd——Oh! *Heartly*——

[She faints, and lets the Picture fall.

Phil.

Hey day! what's the matter now, Madam: Hey! upon my Life she swoons——Help, help! who's there?

SCENE IV.

Mr. Dotterel, Celia, Phillis.

Mr. Dot.

Why, I'm here; what's the matter?

Phil.

My poor Mistress is dead, Sir.

Mr. Dot.

Pho! is that all? I thought the World had been at an End.

Phil.

For Heav'n's sake, Sir, help.

Mr. Dot.

Why, if the Woman's gone, how can I help it! Let's see, let's see. Dead, dead! Are you dead, Sweet-heart? Um——why, she does not speak truly, so that I doubt she's dead, indeed.

Phil.

O Lord! what shall I do? Dear, good Sir, do but hold her for me one Moment, while I step for something to fetch her.

[While Mr. Dotterel has Celia in his Arms, and stoops to know if she breathes, his Wife sees him out of the Window.]

Mr. Dot.

To fetch her! come! let's see her. 'Tis a pretty Wench——Pity, she shou'd die in her Prime. *[Puts his Hand to her Bosom.]* Adad! I don't know, what to say to't; it's as cold as a Stone, poor Thing. Let's see if the pretty Rogue breathes, or not. *[Stoops and kisses her.]* Adad! I begin to doubt whether——Once more——Adad I don't know, but she shou'd have Signs of Life in her, by those I feel in my self.

SCENE V.

Mrs. Dotterel at the Window.

Mr. Dotterel, Celia, Phillis.

Mrs. Dot.

What do I see! may I believe my Eyes? my Rogue of a Husband in the Arms of another Woman!——Very fine, Mr. *Dotterel!* but I'll be with you presently, Sir; see, see, if he does not kiss her; he'll cuckold me before my Face, if I don't prevent it.

[She goes from the Window.]

Mr. Dot.

Adad! I wish this Wench wou'd come; what did she leave her Mistress to die upon me for? Adad! I don't like a dead Woman so well. 'Tis foolish, mighty foolish, to sneak so pitifully out of the World, when one's just, as one may say, coming into it: Hem, hem, she begins to recover, I'll lead her in and cherish her, as well as I can.

[Leads her off.]

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SCENE VI.

Mrs. Dotterel alone.

Eh! what, is he gone! a Rogue! he has convey'd away his Gillian too, I see; I have now no Doubt of his Falshood to me: Eh! I don't wonder now, not in the least, at the strange Coldness with which he returns my chaste conjugal Endearments; I see where my Dues are paid. A Brute! to starve his poor lawful Wife at home, the better to cram his unnatural Minx in private: But 'tis the way of 'em all. Husbands soon surfeit upon their lawful Pleasures. At first they are all sweet, and Sugar, and Honey, and do Wonders, to be sure. But that false Fire soon vanishes in Smoke, and then they get to squandering abroad, and we poor Wives don't know how to come by our own. Well, I think it very hard, that Custom does not allow us to change as oft as our Husbands do. [*Seeing the Picture, takes it up.*] Ha! what have we here? 'Tis finely enamel'd; lets see what's within the Case.

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SCENE VII.

Mr. Dotterel, Mrs. Dotterel.

Mr. Dot.

So, so, I've dispatch'd my dead Woman pretty well alive again: it was nothing but a Qualm, poor Thing! But here's my Wife; what is she at, tro?

Mrs. Dot.

O Lud! 'tis a Picture, and a charming Fellow, let me tell ye.

Mr. Dot.

What, is it she has got that takes up her dear pretty Thoughts so! Eh! adad, *Timothy*, that Picture bodes thee no Good. [*Looking on the Picture over her Shoulder.*] He looks like a strong-back'd Dog, adad! I begin to suspect something shrewdly.

Mrs. Dot.

I never saw any thing so handsome: Lud! how sweet it smells too.

Mr. Dot.

What! what! does the Jade kiss it? Ay, ay, I understand you, Madam.

Mrs. Dot.

Well, such a Gallant as this; so handsome, so well made, so genteel, I vow it would be a ravishing Temptation: 'Tis well for poor *Timothy* we have none such in the City. Eh! if I had but such a Husband as this, instead of my poor Skeleton, my rusty musty—[*He snatches the Picture out of her Hand.*] O Lud! my Husband!

Mr. Dot.

Traitress! have I caught you rebelling against me, and blaspheming the Honour of your own dear Spouse? What! I warrant, my thrice worthy Lady, by your Reckoning now, *Timothy Dotterel*, Grocer, and Common-Council-Man, is not deserving of your sweet Person. Now in the Devil's Name, (forgive me for swearing) where cou'd you have found out a more accomplish'd Husband? My Shape! Good—— my Gait! the whole Town admires it——my Face has done more Mischief at the Court-end of the Town than——there are some Countesses that shall be nameless, that have sigh'd, I can tell you——and you must surfeit forsooth! you are so dainty, that a good substantial Dish of a Husband can't satisfy you, but you must have a fine Ragout of a Coxcomb Gallant too, must ye?

Mrs. Dot.

Oh! ho! I see, through this Artifice of yours, Sir, you think by this means to——

Mr. Dot.

None of your Tricks to me, pray Madam; the Thing is prov'd upon you: Here's my Witness, here's my Assurance in my Hand.

[*Shewing the Picture.*]

Mrs. Dot.

I'm sure you have a good Assurance somewhere else: Had I not Provocation enough before, but your Impudence must add this fine Fetch to it; your Minx, your Gipsy, Sir—— Lud! I cou'd tear your Eyes out: But

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hark ye, Mr. *Dotterel*, don't think you shall keep my Picture——Consider, my Dear.

Mr. Dot.

I shall consider, and break your Neck; my Soul——Adad, I wish I had the Original as safe as I have the Copy here, I'd copy him; it shou'd not be very like him, by that time I had done with him; adad! shou'd it not.

Mrs. Dot.

And for what Reason, pray, Sir?

Mr. Dot.

Oh, no Reason in the World, my Life! sweet Object of my Vows, I do thee great Wrong, to be sure, to abuse thee thus, when I ought to thank thee for the honourable Branches on my Brows. Here, Madam, is your Beau, your fine Gallant, your pretty Fellow, your Spark, that sets you all in a Flame; your Mignon, with whom you——

Mrs. Dot.

With whom, what! why don't you speak out——what——

Mr. Dot.

With whom you——you——you—— I——I——I can't speak for Rage.

Mrs. Dot.

I can't bear this Usage. Have you wrong'd me in the tenderest Point, Mr. *Dotterel*? Have you offer'd me the most sensible Affront that can Spirit up a Woman to Revenge, and then come about with your hypocritical Passions to cheat me out of my Resentment? Let me die, but your Impudence is quite new and astonishing.

Mr. Dot. [Lifts up his Hands and Eyes.]

O! the Impudence of the Jade! the Impudence of her; why, to hear her flat Assertions, an indifferent Body wou'd think her quite a good Creature now.

Mrs. Dot.

Go, go, Sir, take your Way; go, cajole your kept Creatures, do——I'm not to be fool'd——So, pray, Mr. *Dotterel*, give me my Picture again, for I will have it. [*Snatches the Picture from him, and runs out.*] And so your Servant, Mr. *Timothy*.

[Exit.

Mr. Dot.

Oh, that shall not serve your Turn, Madam; you think to escape me, but I'll have my Revenge! cuckold such a desirable, agreeable Person as me! No, neither Man, Woman, nor Child, shall make a Cuckold of me, without hearing of it.

[Exit.

SCENE VIII.

Heartly, John Broad.

Heartly.

Well, at last we are got safe to *London*.

Broad.

Ay, at last, Sir; I wou'd we were as sound: Pray, Sir, now, with Submission, may I ask you one Question?

Heartly.

As many as you please, Sir.

Broad.

Is the Devil in you, Sir?

Heartly.

That's a civil one, however.

Broad.

Here have we been six Days upon the Road, and, what with the cursed long Stages, your Honour was pleased to make, bad Weather over us, bad Roads, and exceeding bad Horses under us, for my part, I have been so well shaken, that I don't believe I have a whole Bone in my Skin; I'm sure I have not a whole Skin to cover my Bones.

Heartly.

The Report of *Celia's* Marriage made our Haste necessary, Sirrah: Nor will I eat, drink, or sleep, till I am satisfy'd of her Conduct.

Broad.

Lud! Sir, don't talk so prophanelly; nor eat, drink, nor sleep! why, they are your only Restoratives; they will corroborate your noble Heart against all the Attacks of Fortune: *John Broad* speaks from Experience. Dear Sir, if you wou'd but enter into a Course of Eating, Drinking and Sleeping, we'd quickly gain our Ends, or else drive the blind Bastard out of you, and let Madam *Celia* and her Cuckold go to the Devil.

Heartly.

Hold your base Tongue, you hungry Rascal. I cannot eat till I am satisfied——

Broad.

And I cannot be satisfied till I eat.

Heartly.

Dog! be dumb.

Broad.

Eh! you know how to stop my Mouth; I'll go and bespeak a Dinner immediately.

Heartly.

Stir not from my side: Grief, Rage, and Jealousy, sharper than Hunger's Tooth, distract my Heart; I cannot bear

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these Doubts.

Broad.

Alas, Sir, what have I to bear then? I am griev'd and enrag'd as much as you, and devilish hungry into the Bargain.

Heartly.

Trouble me no more with your Impertinence, Go, eat, Sot, eat.

Broad.

Sir, there's no disputing a Master's Commands. Your humble Servant, Sir.

[Exit.

[Heartly.]

SONG.

*Behold the sweet Flowers around,
With all the bright Beauties they wear;
Yet none on the Plain can be found
So lovely as Celia is fair:
Ye Warb'lers, come raise your sweet Throats,
Nor longer in Silence remain;
O lend a fond Lover your Notes,
To soften my Celia's Disdain.*

Heartly. [Alone.]

This dear, faithless Woman! Yet I cannot think it true. Perhaps my Fears may yet be false——And that's but perhaps, neither.

SCENE IX.

Mr. Dotterel, with the Picture, Heartly.

Mr. Dot.

I have got it from her at last, and now I may contemplate my Gentleman's Phiz at leisure.—Thou cursed, abominable Author of my Shame.—I don't remember ever to have seen thee before, Mr. *Goat* .

Heartly.

Good Heaven! What do I see? If it be the same, what am I to think?

Mr. Dot.

Ah, poor Mr. *Dotterel!* How is thy precious Reputation arraign'd, condemn'd, and executed! Must——Eh!——
[Perceives Heartly looking hard at him, and shifts his Place.

Heartly.

To see that Pledge of mutual Truth in other Hands!——Oh! I cannot but justly be alarm'd.

Mr. Dot.

Must thou be forked at, as thou passest along the Streets? Must thou be the Subject of all the Ballad-makers of *Grub-street*, and hang dangling upon a String against *Bedlam-Wall*? Must thou be portraited with all thy honourable Branches about thee, like a Tree in a great Pedigree, and then be pasted up in Coblers Stalls?

Heartly.

Sure, I am not deceiv'd.
[Still trying to look at the Picture.

Mr. Dot.

Oh thou abominable Trairess! where hadst thou Courage to make me a Cuckold, now in the Flower of my Age?——Me, me, that pass for a handsome Fellow——And shall a nasty, Monkey-fac'd, Pig-tail'd Puppy dare——

Heartly. [Looks on the Picture over his Shoulder.]

It is my very Picture, I cannot but believe my Eyes.

Mr. Dot.

This Fellow's very curious, sure!

Heartly.

I shall sink under my Surprise.

Mr. Dot.

What the Devil can he want?
[Going.

Heartly.

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I'll speak to him.—May I beg,—Sir, Sir, a Word with you, by your leave.

Mr. Dot.

What can he have to say to me now?

Heartly.

I beg the Favour, of you Sir, to tell me (and tell me truly) by what means that Picture came into your Hands.

Mr. Dot. [Examines the Picture and Heartly's Face by turns.]

Eh! no, it cannot be—but adad! it may—no—yes—yes, it is—the very same.—It's all as clear as Noon-day. I don't wonder at the Man's Curiosity now; this is my very Man; or rather my Wife's Man, adad.

Heartly.

For Heaven's sake! good Sir, free me from my Pain, and tell me whence—

Mr. Dot.

Thank Providence, I now see the Cause of all your Uneasiness; this Picture, Sir, is your Picture, it seems.—It was once in other Hands, Sir, that you are not unacquainted with; and I can tell you, Gentleman, that that Affair—you understand me—between that Lady and you, is no sort of Secret to me. I don't know whether I have the Honour to be known to your Worship. Whether, in the Hours of your mutual Dalliance, she may have told you who I am. But I would have you consider, Sir, that the sacred Bonds of Matrimony are not to be—

Heartly.

What! how! she! Pray, Sir, tell me—What, she, of whom you had that—

Mr. Dot.

Ay, ay, she; she is my Wife, and I am her Husband.

Heartly.

How! her Husband! (Oh, Devil!)

Mr. Dot.

Ay, her Husband, I tell you; dost not understand the Word? Husband, is as much as to say, [*Making Horns with his Fingers and butting.*] Boo—you understand me. She has husbanded me with a Pox, and I now go to let her Father and Mother into the whole Affair: Ah, poor *Dotterel!*

[Exit.]

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SCENE X.

Heartly alone.

Ha! what have I heard? By Heav'n! 'tis all a Truth. The Suddenness of her Marriage; the ill-looking Fellow her Husband; all, all the whole Report is true: Ah, perjur'd *Celia*.

SONG.

I.

Yield, yield to Love, ye cruel Fair,
And Sigh for Sigh return;
How can you joy to give Despair?
How scorn to gently burn?

II.

If with Disdain those Eyes you arm,
You'll hold no Lover fast;
Beauty, 'tis true, begins the Charm,
But Kindness makes it last.

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SCENE XI.

Mrs. Dotterel, Heartly.

Mrs. Dot.

What charming Voice did I hear? Was it you, Sir, sung that desponding Air?

Heartly.

Too surely, Madam.

Mrs. Dot. [Aside.]

A pretty Fellow, faith! and the very Picture of my Picture that the Churl my Husband ravished from me to Day: I should but serve him right to take up with this, since he deprives me of that. Troth, I'll e'en speak to him, and see if our Inclinations agree with one another. If they should, Heav'n ha' Mercy, *Timothy.* [*Going towards him.*] You seem very pensive, Sir, and the Subject of your Song was Cruelty I found: 'Tis pity you should despair——Can't you sing something of a merrier Cast?

Heartly.

To please you, I'll endeavour it, Lady.

SONG.

[*During the Song, Dotterel enters, and stands amazed till it's over.*]

Is it wise

In blooming Eyes,

Is it wise

To frown on Love?

No, the Blessing

Is redressing,

Smiles alone our Joys improve;

Youth, thy Wisdom lies in this,

Taste in time thy fleeting Bliss.

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SCENE XII.

Mrs. Dotterel, Heartly, Mr. Dotterel.

Mrs. Dot. [After the Song.]

Horns! Horns! Horns! the cold Sweat's come upon my Brows. I shall drop, I shall sink.

Mrs. Dot. [Aside.]

S'life! that impertinent Booby here! then I must quit the Field.— *[To Heartly.]* Well, Sir, I must take my Leave, and hope you'll be in better Spirits when I see you again.

Mr. Dot.

O, you do! I don't doubt but you have lower'd 'em enough now indeed.

Heartly.

I return you my Thanks, Madam, for your Kindness.

[Exit Mrs. Dot.]

Mr. Dot.

Kindness, with a Murrain—— Yes, here's Proof, I think, sufficient——Impudent, abominable Harlot! to be catterwauling with him in the very Streets; to be tweedle–dumdeeing it with him at my very Threshold!

Heartly.

O happy Wretch, to have so fair a Wife.

[Passes off by him, looking at him all the while. As he goes off at one Door Celia enters at the other, and sees him. She looks after him.]

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SCENE XIII.

Celia, Mr. Dotterel.

Mr. Dot.

Oh! no doubt on't; why, that's very fairly and honestly done of him, to put me out of all Doubt. Adad? I—I—I should not be surpris'd now, if I were to feel my Antlers shooting upon my Brows, or to see the Shadow of 'em against the Wall; I'm desperate afraid to put my Hand to my Head.

Celia.

Cou'd it be *Heartly!* or are my Eyes deceiv'd? Why is his Return a Secret to me!

Mr. Dot.

But here stand I with my Arms across, like a poor sneaking cuckoldly Fool as I am, and let the Rascal pass after all. I—I—I shou'd have rais'd the Neighbourhood upon him, and had him laid by the Heels, for a Pick-pocket as he is, of a married Man's Honour.

Celia.

Pray, Sir, how did you come acquainted with that Gentleman, he that left you just now?

Mr. Dot.

Alas! he's no Acquaintance of mine, Madam; but mighty well known to my Wife.

Celia.

What is it disturbs you thus?

Mr. Dot.

Ah! Madam, I'm a miserable Man; these Tears, Madam, if you knew all, are not unreasonable, nor these Sighs unseasonable. You see before your Eyes, Madam, a Model of all those miserable Dogs, call'd Husbands. The true Picture of a married Man, am I. They have stripp'd poor *Timothy* of his Honour, and left him stark naked. Yet Honour's little, Madam; my Reputation, my Reputation; I've lost my Reputation.

Celia.

Indeed!

Mr. Dot.

That very Rascal you saw, Madam, that very Spark, saving your Reverence, cuckolds me, cuckolds me immoderately; these Eyes were witness to their secret Meetings, Madam, just now.

Celia.

How! he that but now——

Mr. Dot.

He, he, he, Madam——He lies with my Wife, and I'm afraid——I'm afraid—— my Wife lies with him.

Celia.

Yes, I suspected his conceal'd Return; something, I knew, was to be hid from me.—— I trembled when I saw him, but to think on what might happen.

THE PICTURE, OR, THE Cuckold in Conceit

Mr. Dot.

Madam, you take too kind a Part in my Sufferings. Would all the World were so charitably dispos'd! But there are many wicked People, I fear, that, upon hearing what a Martyr I am to a bad Wife, instead of pitying me, wou'd—wou'd—wou'd go near to laugh at me.

Celia.

Heav'ns! is it possible that he——

Mr. Dot.

I find it but too true, Madam.

Celia.

Ah, Traitor! Wretch!——perfidious, faithless——

Mr. Dot.

What a good Soul it is, to lament so for my Misfortune!

Celia.

Oh! to betray so innocent a Soul, so good, so true——

Mr. Dot.

Ay, very true.

[Sighs very deeply.]

Celia.

An Heart, that never knew to give Offence, merited sure a tenderer Return.

Mr. Dot.

Ay, sure; I never offended him.

Celia.

I can't think on his Crime, and live.

Mr. Dot.

Dear, dear Madam, don't talk of dying; I don't desire it of you; it is too much, I don't design that myself.

Celia.

But flatter not yourself, perfidious Man, that fruitless Tears shall satisfy my Rage; no, I'll revenge. I am resolv'd, and nothing shall prevent me.

[Exit Celia.]

SCENE XIV.

Mr. Dotterel, alone.

Ah, Heav'n preserve thee! thou'rt a good Soul; not only to take part in my Sufferings, but to revenge them too. I protest, she makes me ashamed of myself; and I could almost find in my Heart to follow her example. In short, no man can sit down with patience under such Affronts, without being a mere Sot, a Post. [*Is going, but returns again.*] Yet hold thee, a little, *Timothy*—— Softly, softly, methought he look'd like a bloody-minded Fellow, and adad! who knows but he may lay me on worse upon my Back, than he has upon my Brow? I own I cannot abide your choleric people. I am not altogether for Beating, for fear of being beat. My Honour tells me I ought to revenge.——But let my Honour say what it pleases, it is no small Praise to bear Affronts well. Where lies the great Mischief of it? Can my Wife's Gambols put a Leg or an Arm out of joint? Or can my Horns spoil my Periwig? A Pox on the Doctor, I say, that first invented this imaginary Disease! That ever it should enter into People's Heads that the Honour of the wisest Man shou'd stand upon so frail a Bottom as that of a Wife! If they are led into any Mischief, it all falls upon our Heads. They play the Fool, and we wear the Cap and Bells. Have we not a thousand accidents that happen to us in spite of our Teeth? Quarrels, Law-suits, Losses, Poverty, and Diseases; are not these Plagues enough, without our creating imaginary Evils? I am now my own Man again, and laugh at all my Wife can do. 'Tis many an honest Man's Fortune, now-a-days, to see his Wife——and be forc'd to wink and say nothing. And yet, Shame is a damn'd thing. Shame! Shame! [*Beats his Head.*] Now, for all my Philosophy, my Passion is rising again. ——I feel it, I feel it, and some brave Action will ensue.——It is too much to bear.——to be such a Rascal as I am——it is too much.—— I'll find him out, and tell him what a Cuckold he has made me; and perhaps he may beat me into Valour enough to kill him. I wish he may. Mean while the World may see what a Villain he is.

And all Mankind shall know his shameful Life,
How free he makes with me, and with my Wife.

[Exit.

THE PICTURE, OR, THE Cuckold in Conceit

SCENE XV.

Mr. Per-Cent, Celia, Phillis.

Celia.

Yes, I am ready to obey you, Sir; my Heart and Hand are now at your Disposal. I see it is my Duty, and forego my own Opinion for your just Commands.

Per-Cent.

My dear Girl, why, this is as it shou'd be now. This is some Comfort to your old Dad; to see thee so well-inclin'd will make me ten Years younger. I cou'd cut a Caper for Joy, if I was not afraid the Boys wou'd laugh at me.

[Exit Per-Cent.]

Celia.

Since *Heartly* is so base to wound my Heart with his mean Perfidy, then poorly hide him from my Sight.—

Phil.

He's here, Madam.

Celia.

'Tis very well.

SCENE XVI.

Heartly, Celia, Phillis.

Heartly.

Before I take my Leave of you for ever, Madam, I come to upbraid you——

Celia.

And dare you to approach me? to speak to me? Astonishing Assurance!

Heartly.

Very true, my Assurance may be astonishing; yet, not to reproach you with your Choice, wou'd be a Crime I never cou'd forgive myself. Go, live in his Arms, and forget your Reputation, and your *Heartly* .

Celia.

Yes, faithless, Man, there will I live; and happy that I can stab thy Heart.

Heartly.

But how have I deserv'd your Rage?

Celia.

How deserv'd it? What, you put on Surprise! 'Tis very well——

SCENE XVII.

Mr. Dotterel arm'd, Heartly, Celia, Phillis.

Mr. Dot. [Not seeing any body.]

War, mortal War, against this Robber of my Honour.

Celia.

Thither, Sir, turn your Eyes on that wrong'd Gentleman, and then, Sir, stay.

Heartly.

Ay, there I see your Shame.

Celia.

That Object, surely, will confound you.

Heartly.

Much sooner you, Madam,

Mr. Dot.

My Anger is up now, and wants Action. My Choler is upon the grand Paw, and if I shou'd meet him now, Blood, Blood must be the Consequence. His Death——nothing shall hinder me——it is resolv'd——wherever I find the Dog, I'll dispatch him that Moment——this Sword shall pierce his Heart, and——

[Not seeing Heartly.]

Heartly.

Who is it you will dispatch, Sir?

Mr. Dot.

Dispatch! I'll dispatch no body at all, Sir; some Business, I said, wanted Dispatch.—— Um!

Heartly.

Why thus arm'd, then?

Mr. Dot.

Arm'd, Sir! O Lud! nothing at all, Sir; 'tis a Dress I wear against rainy Weather—— Wou'd I dared to kill him! Take Heart, *Timothy* .

[Lays his Hand on his Sword, and Heartly sees him.]

Heartly.

Sir!

Mr. Dot.

I did not speak a Word, Sir.——O, *Timothy*! what a poor, sneaking, cuckoldly, chicken-hearted Puppy thou art, to bear all this, and not kill him!

Celia.

THE PICTURE, OR, THE Cuckold in Conceit

That Object speaks for me. I see you cannot bear the Sight.—Be gone, perjur'd Wretch, be gone.

Mr. Dot.

Thou seest, *Timothy*, how this good Woman takes up thy Cudgels for thee—Courage, my Boy—bristle up thy Valour.—Adad! I'll do a great Thing, and run him thro' the Back while he's talking to her.—Um!

[Heartly steps back without Design, and Dotterel sneaks back again, as he's going to make his Thrust.]

Celia.

You can't now blame my Choice, Sir, after what has pass'd.

Heartly.

Oh! you do well to defend it, Madam.

Mr. Dot.

Doubtless, Sir, the Lady is in the right to defend my Cause. It is a downright unlawful Action, this of yours.

Heartly.

From whence are your Complaints, your brutish Rage? Speak, old Morose.

Mr. Dot.

Let me tell you plainly, Sir, that if you had any Conscience, or any Regard to your Soul, you ought to know that—my Wife—is my Wife—and to come, and take Seisin of her as your own Goods and Chattels—it is not the Part of a good Christian—it is not indeed—nor can you answer it to Law or Gospel.

Heartly.

Sir, these base and ridiculous Suspicions wrong me.

SCENE XVIII.

Mrs. Dotterel, Mr. Dotterel, Heartly, Celia, Phillis.

Mrs. Dot. [To Celia.]

I am not one of those, Madam, that are apt to be outrageous, Madam, or to shew much Jealousy upon these Occasions, Madam; but I cannot look tamely on, and see myself made a Fool of neither, Madam; no, Madam, I have too much Spirit for that, as you shall find, Madam. Methinks you might be better employ'd than in decaying a Husband's Heart from his poor Wife, who has the only Right to it, Madam.

Celia.

I perfectly agree with you, Madam.

Mr. Dot.

Get you in, Mistress, no body call'd for you. I see your Ends, Cockatrice. Here you come and quarrel with this good young Woman, because she takes my Part; and all for fear of losing your Gallant, your Stallion there.

Celia.

No more, good Madam, think me not capable of such an Action. *[To Heartly.]* You see, Sir, my Suspicions are not all Illusion.

Heartly.

What would she say? I'm all Amazement!

Phil.

Hey! why, there's no End of this Stuff! I have endeavour'd to comprehend it a good while, and the more I listen, the more I'm confounded! I must e'en make one amongst them, I find. *[Puts herself between Heartly and Celia.]* Good Gentlefolks all, pray answer me a few Questions in order. And first, you, Mr. *Heartly*; pray, what can your jealous Pate find out to accuse that Lady of?

Heartly.

That she hath broke her Faith, and left me for another.—Nay more; when in the Transport of unequal'd Love,—has it deserv'd so soon to be forgotten? I flew on the Report of her Design, scarce having laid my Uncle in his Grave, my first Arrival finds her worse than dead, already married.

Phil.

Married! to whom, pray?

Heartly.

To him; that Wretch.

Phil.

How! to him! him!

Heartly.

To him.—Thou art not deaf.

Phil.

Who told you so, pray?

THE PICTURE, OR, THE Cuckold in Conceit

Heartly.

Himself.

Phil.

Is this true, Friend?

Mr. Dot.

Who, I! As I am a living Soul, it was to my Wife I said I was married.

Heartly.

you may remember, Sir, when seeing my Picture in your Hands——

Mr. Dot.

Very true, here it is.

Heartly.

You told me then, that she from whom you had taken that curst Token, was your Wife.

Mr. Dot.

Very true, Sir; and here she stands from whom I took it——and took it by main Force——I had not else discovered her Jade's Tricks.

Mrs. Dot.

Is this then the Foundation of all your ridiculous Nonsense, Husband? That Picture I found this very Morning.

Celia.

'Tis I then have been the Occasion of all these Mistakes of that Picture; I dropt it in my Swoon, when you so kindly took me in; I did not recollect you, Sir, or I had sooner own'd my Obligations: But what have I done! and what have I not to apprehend from my too hasty Passion! Thinking you false, I had recourse for my Revenge to my Obedience. Not half an Hour is past, since I have consented to a hateful Match, till then despis'd——How miserable shou'd I have been, if, after that, your Love had been found true.

Heartly.

I can't reproach you, since your Jealousy was founded on your Love.

DUET.

Heartly.

*Whilst I was grateful in thy Eyes,
Earth cou'd not boast such rapt'rous Joys:
No Monarch's Fortune rival'd mine,
Nor envy'd I the Powers divine.*

Celia.

*When slighting ev'ry other Fair,
My Passion was thy only Care;
I look'd on Scepters with Disdain,
O'er thy fond Heart content to reign.*

SCENE XVIII.

THE PICTURE, OR, THE Cuckold in Conceit

Heartly.

*Another now has caught the Flame
My Bosom felt for thee.*

Celia.

*Another has reveng'd the Shame,
Of thy Inconstancy.*

Heartly.

*But should returning Love once more
Make me thy matchless Charms adore;
That other from my Bosom chase,
And give thee there thy wonted Place?*

Celia.

*Why tho' this other love-sick Youth,
Displays such Tenderness and Truth;
Yet I must own, cou'd that e'er be,
I'd choose to live and die with thee.*

[Celia.]

My Father's here——

Heartly.

And he shall keep his Word.

THE PICTURE, OR, THE Cuckold in Conceit

SCENE XIX.

Mr. Per-Cent, Mr. Dotterel, Mrs. Dotterel, Heartly, Celia, Phillis.

Per-Cent.

Where's my Daughter? *Celia*, my Girl, where art thou? There's poor Mr. *Counter* waits for thee at home, as impatient as any young Lover of five and twenty—Come, you must go immediately and receive him. Put on all your Charms, and strike him thro' the Heart, Wench.

Celia.

Now I'm undone indeed!

Per-Cent.

Come, come along, Hussy—Don't ye be so modest now—what, you must be forc'd to what you like, must you?

[Takes her under his Arm, and is going off with her, Heartly stops him.]

Heartly.

Stay, Sir; let me put in a prior and a stronger Claim—

Per-Cent.

Hey, why, who are you? what! poor *Heartly* come again.

Heartly.

The very Man, Sir.

Per-Cent.

Ah goor *Heartly*! my Girl has done thy Business for thee—Come along, *Celia*.

Heartly.

Is your Word, your Honour nothing, Sir?

Per-Cent.

That's just as it happens, Man— all Conditional.

Celia.

Nay, then I must declare for Mr. *Heartly*, in spite of all Commands.

Per-Cent.

How! where are all your Morning Resolutions, Mistress!—But you shall starve with him, if you take him.—So much Money sav'd, is so much Money got—So, Madam, your Servant. *[Is running out, and Heartly stops him.]* What! am I to be assaulted, and assassinated among you? Hey! Mr. *Heartly*, come hither a little. *[Takes Heartly aside.]* Prithee, whom art thou in Mourning for? Not thy Uncle!

Heartly.

Even he, Sir; his Fever returned upon him, and in less than three Days—

Per-Cent.

THE PICTURE, OR, THE Cuckold in Conceit

No matter how——no matter how! so he be but buried——But what the Devil shall I do with *Counter*? I must send him a packing, for this has more Money than he has now.

[Exit.

Celia.

O *Heartly*! how happy for us is this sordid Temper of my Father——I cou'd wish I ow'd my Happiness in you, to some more honest Cause——

Heartly.

No matter how, as Mr. *Per-Cent* says. For your sake I cou'd wish it otherwise, but else——I look no farther for my Happiness, than this faithful Breast.

[Embraces her.

Mr. Dot.

Sure never did honest Citizen *conceit* himself a Cuckold upon more apparent Evidences than I did.
You see how strong Appearances can blind,
And spread with false Opinions all the Mind.
I thought I saw the Devil and all, but now:
But 'tis all smooth——No Bud upon my Brow——
Then let my Tale be of some Use in Life;
And whatsoe'er you see, never suspect your Wife.