

A Fair Quarrel

Thomas Middleton

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A Fair Quarrel

Thomas Middleton

[Dramatis Personae (in order of appearance)
Master RUSSELL, father of Jane
LADY AGER, his sister, and mother of Captain Ager
The FIRST FRIEND OF THE COLONEL
The FIRST FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER
The COLONEL
CAPTAIN AGER
FITZALLEN, kinsman of the Colonel
JANE
DICK, Russell's servant
Two SERGEANTS
The SECOND FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER
A PHYSICIAN
ANNE, his sister
CHOUGH, a foolish gentleman from Cornwall
TRIMTRAM, his servant
The SECOND FRIEND OF THE COLONEL
A Dutch NURSE
Two SERVANTS of Lady Ager
An USHER of the Roaring School
ROARERS
VAPOUR, a tobacco-man
The COLONEL'S SISTER
A SURGEON
MEG, a bawd
PRISS, a whore
CAPTAIN ALBO, an Irish pander
The scene: London]

To the nobly disposed, virtuous, and faithful-breasted ROBERT GREY Esquire, one of the grooms of his Highness' bed-chamber,
his poor well-willer wisheth
his best wishes, hic et supra.

Worthy Sir,

'Tis but a play, and a play is but a butt, against which many shoot many arrows of envy; 'tis the weaker part, and how much more noble shall it be in you to defend it. Yet if it be (as some philosophers have left behind 'em) that this megacosm, this great world, is no more than a stage, where every one must act his part, you shall of necessity have many part-takers, some long, some short, some indifferent, all some; whilst indeed the players themselves have the least part of it, for I know few that have lands (which are a part of the world), and therefore no grounded men; but howsoever they serve for mutes, happily they must wear good clothes for attendance. Yet all have exits, and must all be stripped in the tiring-house (viz. the grave), for none must carry anything out of the stock. You see, sir, I write as I speak, and I speak as I am, and that's excuse enough for me. I did not mean to write an epistle of praise to you; it looks so like a thing I know you love not, flattery, which you exceedingly hate actively, and unpleasingly accept passively: indeed, I meant to tell you your own, that is, that this child of the Muses is yours; whoever begat it, 'tis laid to your charge, and (for aught I know) you must father and keep it too. If it please you, I hope you shall not be ashamed of it neither, for it has been seen (though I say it) in good companies, and many have said it is a handsome pretty-spoken infant. Now be your own judge: at your leisure look on it, at your pleasure laugh at it; and if you be sorry it is no better, you may be glad it is no bigger.

Yours ever,

A Fair Quarrel

William Rowley

I.i. [Master Russell's house]

Enter Master Russell, solus.

RUSSELL

It must be all my care; there's all my love,
And that pulls on the tother. Had I been left
In a son behind me, while I had been here
He should have shifted as I did before him,
Lived on the freeborn portion of his wit;
But a daughter, and that an only one. Oh!
We cannot be too careful or too tender;
'Tis such a brittle niceness, a mere cupboard of glasses,
The least shake breaks or cracks 'em. All my aim is
To cast her upon riches: that's the thing
We rich men call perfection, for the world
Can perfect nought without it. 'Tis not neatness,
Either in handsome wit or handsome outside,
With which one gentleman, far in debt, has courted her,
Which boldness he shall rue. He thinks me blind
And ignorant: I have let him play a long time,
Seemed to believe his worth, which I know nothing;
He may perhaps laugh at my easy confidence
Which closely I requite upon his fondness,
For this hour snaps him; and before his mistress,
His saint, forsooth, which he inscribes my girl,
He shall be rudely taken and disgraced.
The trick will prove an everlasting scarecrow
To fright poor gallants from our rich men's daughters.

Enter the Lady Ager, with two servants.

Sister! I've such a joy to make you a welcome of,
Better you never tasted.

LADY AGER

Good sir, spare it not.

RUSSELL

Colonel's come, and your son, Captain Ager.

LADY AGER

My son!

She weeps.

RUSSELL

I know your eye would be first served;
That's the soul's taster still for grief or joy.

LADY AGER

Oh, if a mother's dear suit may prevail with him,
From England he shall never part again.

RUSSELL

No question he'll be ruled, and grant you that.

LADY AGER

I'll bring all my desires to that request.

Exeunt Lady [Ager] and her servants.

RUSSELL

Affectionate sister, she has no daughter now;
It follows all the love must come to him,
And he has a worth deserves it, were it dearer.

Enter a Friend of the Colonel's, and another of Captain Ager's.

FIRST FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

I must not give way to't.

RUSSELL

[Aside] What's here to question?

FIRST FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

Compare young Captain Ager with the colonel!

FIRST FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

Young?
Why, do you make youth stand for an imputation?
That which you now produce for his disgrace
Infers his nobleness, that being young
Should have an anger more inclined to wisdom
And moderation than the colonel:
A virtue as rare as chastity in youth;
And let the cause be good--conscience in him,
Which ever crowns his acts, and is indeed
Valour's prosperity--he dares then as much
As ever made him famous that you plead for.

FIRST FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

Then I forbear too long.

FIRST FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

His worth for me!

[They draw and fight.]

RUSSELL

i.i. [Master Russell's house]

A Fair Quarrel

Here's noble youths; belike some wench has crossed 'em,
And now they know not what to do with their blood.

Enter the Colonel and Captain Ager.

COLONEL

How now!

CAPTAIN AGER

Hold, hold! What's the incitement?

COLONEL

So serious at your game? Come, come, the quarrel.

FIRST FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

Nothing, good faith, sir.

COLONEL

Nothing, and you bleed?

FIRST FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

Bleed? Where? Pish, a little scratch by chance, sir.

COLONEL

What need this niceness, when you know so well
That I must know these things, and truly know 'em?
Your daintiness makes me but more impatient;
This strange concealment frets me.

FIRST FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

Words did pass
Which I was bound to answer as my opinion
And love instructed me;
And should I take in general fame into 'em,
I think I should commit no error in't.

COLONEL

What words, sir, and of whom?

FIRST FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

This gentleman
Paralleled Captain Ager's worth with yours.

COLONEL

With mine?

FIRST FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

It was a thing I could [not] listen to
With any patience.

CAPTAIN AGER

i.i. [Master Russell's house]

A Fair Quarrel

What should ail you, sir?
There was little wrong done to your friend i' that.

COLONEL

How! Little wrong to me?

CAPTAIN AGER

I said so, friend,
And I suppose that you'll esteem it so.

COLONEL

Comparisons!

CAPTAIN AGER

Why, sir, 'twixt friend and friend
There is so even and level a degree
It will admit of no superlative.

COLONEL

Not in terms of manhood?

RUSSELL

Nay, gentlemen--

COLONEL

Good sir, give me leave. [To Captain Ager] In terms of manhood
What can you dispute more questionable?
You are a captain, sir; I give you all your due.

CAPTAIN AGER

And you are a colonel, a title
Which may include within it many captains;
Yet, sir, but throwing by those titular shadows,
Which add no substance to the men themselves,
And take them uncompounded, man and man,
They may be so with fair equality.

COLONEL

Y're a boy, sir.

CAPTAIN AGER

And you have a beard, sir;
Virginity and marriage are both worthy,
And the positive purity there are some
Have made the nobler.

COLONEL

How now?

RUSSELL

Nay, good sir--

CAPTAIN AGER

I shrink not: he that goes the foremost
May be o'ertaken.

COLONEL

Death, how am I weighted?

CAPTAIN AGER

In an even balance, sir; a beard put in
Gives but a small advantage: man and man,
And lift the scales.

COLONEL

Patience shall be my curse
If it ride me further!

[They draw their swords.]

RUSSELL

How now, gallants!
Believe me, then, I must give aim no longer.
Can words beget swords and bring 'em forth, ha?
Come, they are abortive propagations;
Hide 'em, for shame. I had thought soldiers
Had been musical, would not strike out of time,
But to the consort of drum, trumps, and fife:
'Tis madman-like to dance without music,
And most unpleasing shows to the beholders;
A Lydian ditty to a Doric note.
Friends embrace with steel hands? Fie, it meets too hard:
I must have those encounters here debarred.

COLONEL

Shall I lose here what I have safe brought home
Through many dangers?

CAPTAIN AGER

What's that, sir?

COLONEL

My fame,
Life of the life, my reputation:
Death! I am squared and measured out; my heights,
Depths, breadth, all my dimensions taken!
Sure I have yet beyond your astrolabe
A spirit unbounded.

CAPTAIN AGER

Sir, you might weigh--

RUSSELL

Tush! All this is weighing fire, vain and fruitless:
The further it runs into argument,
The further plunged; beseech you, no more on't.
I have a little claim, sir, in your blood,
As near as the brother to your mother;
If that may serve for power to move your quiet,
The rest I shall make up with courtesy
And an uncle's love.

CAPTAIN AGER

I have done, sir, but—

RUSSELL

But! I'll have no more shooting at these butts.

COLONEL

We'll to pricks when he please.

RUSSELL

You rove all still.
Sir, I have no motive proof to disgust
Your raised choler back into temperate blood;
But if you'll make mine age a counsellor,
As all ages have hitherto allowed it—
Wisdom in men grows up as years increase—
You shall make me blessed in making peace,
And do your judgment right.

COLONEL

In peace at home
Gray hairs are senators, but to determine
Soldiers and their actions—

Enter Fitzallen and Jane.

RUSSELL

'Tis peace here, sir;
And see, here comes a happy interim:
Here enters now a scene of loving arms;
This couple will not quarrel so.

FIRST FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

[Aside to Colonel] Be advised, sir;
This gentleman, Fitzallen, is your kinsman:
You may o'erthrow his long—laboured fortunes
With one angry minute. 'Tis a rich churl,
And this his sole inheritrix: blast not
His hopes with this tempest.

A Fair Quarrel

COLONEL

[Aside to his Friend] It shall calm me;
All the town's conjurers and their demons
Could not have laid my spirit so.

FITZALLEN

Worthy coz,
I gratulate your fair return to peace;
Your swift fame was at home long before you.

COLONEL

It meets, I hope, your happy fortunes here,
And I am glad in't. I must salute your joys, coz,
With a soldier's encounter.

Kisses her.

FITZALLEN

Worthy Captain Ager,
I hope my kinsman shortly.

RUSSELL

[Aside] You must come short indeed,
Or the length of my device will be ill-shrunk.
[To Fitzallen] Why, now it shows finely! I'll tell you, sir.
Sir? Nay, son: I know i' th' end 'twill be so.

FITZALLEN

I hope so, sir.

RUSSELL

Hope? Nay, 'tis past all hope, son.
Here has been such a stormy encounter
Betwixt my cousin captain and this brave colonel,
About I know not what! Nothing indeed:
Competitions, degrees, and comparatives
Of soldiership; but this smooth passage
Of love has calmed it all. Come, I'll have 't sound;
Let me see your hearts combined in your hands,
And then I will believe the league is good:
It shall be the grape's if we drink any blood.

COLONEL

I have no anger, sir.

CAPTAIN AGER

I have had none;
My blood has not yet rose to a quarrel,
Nor have you had cause.

COLONEL

No cause of quarrel?
Death! If my father should tell me so—

RUSSELL

Again?

FITZALLEN

Good sir, for my sake.

COLONEL

Faith, I have done, coz;
You do too hastily believe mine anger;
And yet, to say dimiting valour
In a soldier is no cause of quarrel—

RUSSELL

Nay then, I'll remove the cause to kill th' effect.
Kinsman, I'll press you to't. If either love
Or consanguinity may move you to't,
I must disarm you: though ye're a soldier,
Pray grant me your weapon; it shall be safe
At your regress from my house.

[Ager gives him his sword.]

Now I know
No words can move this noble soldier's sword
To a man undefended so. We shall parle,
And safely make all perfect friends again.

COLONEL

To show my will, sir, accept mine to you:
As good not wear it as not dare to use it.

FIRST FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

Nay then, sir, we will be all exampled:
We'll have no arms here now but lovers' arms.

FIRST FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

No seconds must begin a quarrel: take mine, sir.

RUSSELL

Why, law, what a fine sun shines here! These clouds
My breath has blown into another climate.
I'll be your armourers: they are not pawned.
[Aside] These were the fish that I did angle for;
I have caught 'em finely. Now for my trick:
My project's lusty, and will hit the nick.

Exit with weapons.

COLONEL

What, is't a match, beauty? I would now have
Alliance with my worthy Captain Ager
To knit our loves the faster: here's witness
Enough if you confirm it now.

JANE

Sir, my voice
Was long since given, since that I gave my hand.

COLONEL

Would you had sealed too!

JANE

[Aside] That wish comes too late,
For I too soon fear my delivery.—
My father's hand sticks yet, sir; you may now
Challenge a lawful interest in his:
He took your hand from your enraged blood,
And gave it freely to your opposite,
My cousin Ager; methinks you should claim from him,
In the less quality of calmer blood,
To join the hands of two divided friends,
Even these two that would offer willingly
Their own embrace.

FIRST FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

Troth, she instructs you well,
Colonel, and you shall do a lover's part
Worth one brave act of valour.

COLONEL

Why, I did
Misdoubt no scruple. Is there doubt in it?

FITZALLEN

Faith, sir, delays, which at the least are doubts;
But here's a constant resolution fixed,
Which we wish willingly he would accord to.

COLONEL

Tush, he shall do't, I will not be denied;
He owes me so much in the recompense
Of my reconcilement. Captain Ager,
You will take our parts against your uncle
In this quarrel?

CAPTAIN AGER

I shall do my best, sir;
Two denials shall not repulse me: I love

A Fair Quarrel

Your worthy kinsman, and wish him mine; I know
He doubts it not.

COLONEL

See, he's returned.

Enter Russell and a Servant [Dick].

RUSSELL

[Aside to Dick] Your cue,
Be sure you keep it; 'twill be spoken quickly,
Therefore watch it.

[Exit Dick.]

COLONEL

Let's set on him all at once.

OMNES

Sir, we have a suit to you.

RUSSELL

What, all at once?

OMNES

All, all, i'faith, sir.

RUSSELL

One speaker may yet deliver: say, say;
I shall not dare to stand out against so many.

COLONEL

Faith, sir, here's a brabbling matter hangs on demur;
I make the motion for all without a fee;
Pray you, let it be ended this term.

RUSSELL

Ha, ha, ha!

[Aside] That's the rascal's cue, and he has missed it.--
What is it, what is it, sir?

COLONEL

Why, sir, here's a man
And here's a woman: y're scholar good enough;
Put 'em together and tell me what it spells.

RUSSELL

Ha, ha, ha!

[Aside] There's his cue once again!

Enter [Dick].

A Fair Quarrel

Oh, he's come!--Hum!

[DICK]

[Aside] My master laughs; that's his cue to mischief.

COLONEL

What say you, sir?

[DICK]

Sir?

RUSSELL

Ha! What say you, sir?

[DICK]

Sir, there's a couple desire speedily to speak with you.

RUSSELL

A couple, sir, of what? Hounds? Or horses?

[DICK]

Men, sir; gentlemen or yeomen, I know not which,
But the one, sure, they are.

RUSSELL

Hast thou no other description of them?

[DICK]

They come with commission, they say, sir, to taste of your earth; if they like it, they'll turn it into gunpowder.

RUSSELL

Oh, they are saltpetre-men; before me,
And they bring commission, the king's power indeed!
They must have entrance; but the knaves will be bribed:
There's all the hope we have in officers;
They were too dangerous in a commonwealth,
But that they will be very well corrupted.
Necessary varlets!

[DICK]

Shall I enter in, sir?

RUSSELL

By all fair means, sir,
And with all speed, sir; give 'em very good words
To save my ground unravished, unbroke up.

[Exit Dick.]

A Fair Quarrel

Mine's yet a virgin earth; the worm hath not been seen
To wriggle in her chaste bowels, and I'd be loath
A gunpowder fellow should deflower her now.

COLONEL

Our suit is yet delayed by this means, sir.

RUSSELL

Alas, I cannot help it; these fellows gone,
As I hope I shall dispatch 'em quickly,
A few articles shall conclude your suit.
Who, Master Fitzallen? The only man
That my adoption aims at.

COLONEL

There's good hope then.

Enter two Sergeants in disguise.

FIRST SERGEANT

Save you, sir.

RUSSELL

You are welcome, sir, for aught I know yet.

SECOND SERGEANT

We come to take a view and taste of your ground, sir.

RUSSELL

I had rather feed you with better meat,
Gentlemen, but do your pleasures, pray.

FIRST SERGEANT

This is our pleasures: we arrest you, sir,
In the king's name.

FITZALLEN

Ha! At whose suit?

RUSSELL

How's that?

COLONEL

Our weapons, good sir; furnish us!

JANE

Ay me!

RUSSELL

Stay, stay, gentlemen, let's inquire the cause;
It may be but a trifle: a small debt

A Fair Quarrel

Shall need no rescue here.

SECOND SERGEANT

Sir, betwixt three creditors, Master Leech, Master Swallow, and Master Bonesuck, the debts are a thousand pounds.

RUSSELL

A thousand pounds? Beshrew me, a good man's substance!

COLONEL

Good sir, our weapons! We'll teach these varlets
To walk in their own parti-coloured coats,
That they may be distinguished from honest men.

FIRST SERGEANT

Sir, attempt no rescue; he's our prisoner:
You'll make the danger worse by violence.

COLONEL

A plague upon your gunpowder-treason!
Ye quick-damned varlets,
Is this your saltpetre-proving, your tasting earth?
Would you might never feed better, nor none
Of your catchpole tribe! Our weapons, good sir,
We'll yet deliver him.

RUSSELL

Pardon me, sir,
I dare not suffer rescue here, at least
Not [be] so great an accessory
As to furnish you; had you had your weapons--
But to see the ill fate on't! [Aside] My fine trick, i'faith:
Let beggars beware to love rich men's daughters.
I'll teach 'em the new morris; I learnt it
Myself of another careful father.

FITZALLEN

May I not be bailed?

SECOND SERGEANT

Yes, but not with swords.

COLONEL

Slaves, here are sufficient men!

FIRST SERGEANT

Ay, i' th' field,
But not in the city. Sir, if this gentleman
Will be one, we'll easily admit the second.

RUSSELL

i.i. [Master Russell's house]

A Fair Quarrel

Who, I? Sir, pray pardon me: I am wronged,
Very much wronged in this; I must needs speak it.
[To Fitzallen] Sir, you have not dealt like an honest lover,
With me nor my child: here you boast to me
Of a great revenue, a large substance,
Wherein you would endow and state my daughter;
Had I missed this, my opinion yet
Thought you a frugal man, to understand
The sure wards against all necessities,
Boldly to defend your wife and family,
To walk unmuffled, dreadless of these flesh-hooks,
Even in the daring'st streets through all the city.
But now I find you a loose prodigal,
A large unthrift. A whole thousand pound!
Come from him, girl, his inside is not sound.

FITZALLEN

Sir, I am wronged: these are malicious plots
Of some obscure enemies that I have;
These debts are none of mine.

RUSSELL

Ay, all say so:
Perhaps you stand engaged for other men;
If so you do, you must then call 't your own.
The like arrearage do I run into
Should I bail you, but I have vowed against it,
And I will keep my vows; that's religious.

FITZALLEN

All this is nothing so, sir.

RUSSELL

Nothing so?
By my faith, it is, sir; my vows are firm.

FITZALLEN

I neither owe these debts, nor engaged for others.

RUSSELL

The easier is your liberty regained;
These appear proofs to me.

COLONEL

Liberty, sir?
I hope you'll not see him go to prison.

RUSSELL

I do not mean to bear him company
So far, but I'll see him out of my doors.
Oh, sir, let him go to prison; 'tis a school

A Fair Quarrel

To tame wild bloods, he'll be much better for't.

COLONEL

Better for lying in prison?

RUSSELL

In prison:

Believe it, many an honest man lies in prison,
Else all the keepers are knaves;
They told me so themselves.

COLONEL

Sir, I do now suspect you have betrayed him,
And us, to cause us to be weaponless;
If it be so, y'are a blood-sucking churl,
One that was born in a great frost, when charity
Could not stir a finger; and you shall die
In heat of a burning fever i' th' dog days
To begin your hell to you: I have said your grace for you,
Now get you to supper as soon as you can;
Pluto, the master of the house, is set already.

CAPTAIN AGER

Sir, you do wrong mine uncle.

COLONEL

Pox on your uncle
And all his kin, if my kinsman mingle
No blood with him!

CAPTAIN AGER

Y'are a foul-mouthed fellow.

COLONEL

Foul-mouthed I will be: th'art the son of a whore!

CAPTAIN AGER

Ha! Whore? Plagues and furies! I'll thrust that back,
Or pluck thy heart out after! Son of a whore?

COLONEL

On thy life I'll prove it.

CAPTAIN AGER

Death, I am naked!
Uncle, I'll give you my left hand for my sword
To arm my right with! Oh, this fire will flame me
Into present ashes!

COLONEL

Sir, give us weapons;

A Fair Quarrel

We ask our own. You will not rob us of them?

RUSSELL

No, sir, but still restrain your furies here:
At my door I'll give you them, nor at this time
My nephew's; a time will better suit you.
And I must tell you, sir, you have spoke swords,
And 'gainst the law of arms poisoned the blades,
And with them wounded the reputation
Of an unblemished woman. Would you were out of my doors!

COLONEL

Pox on your doors, and let it run all your house o'er!
Give me my sword!

CAPTAIN AGER

We shall meet, Colonel?

COLONEL

Yes, better provided; to spur thee more
I do repeat my words: son of a whore!

Exit with his Friend.

FIRST FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

Come, sir, 'tis no worse than 'twas; you can do nothing now.

Exit Captain and his Friend.

RUSSELL

No, I'll bar him now. Away with that beggar!

Exit.

JANE

[Giving him money] Good sir, let this persuade you for two minutes' stay;
At this price, I know, you can wait all day.

FIRST SERGEANT

You know the remora that stays our ship always.

JANE

Your ship sinks many when this hold lets go.
Oh, my Fitzallen, what is to be done?

FITZALLEN

To be still thine is all my part to be,
Whether in freedom or captivity.

JANE

i.i. [Master Russell's house]

A Fair Quarrel

But art thou so engaged as this pretends?

FITZALLEN

By heaven, sweet Jane, 'tis all a hellish plot:
Your cruel-smiling father all this while
Has candied o'er a bitter pill for me,
Thinking by my remove to plant some other
And then let go his fangs.

JANE

Plant some other?
Thou hast too firmly stamped me for thine own
Ever to be rased out: I am not current
In any other's hand; I fear too soon
I shall discover it.

FITZALLEN

Let come the worst;
Bind but this knot with an unloosed line,
I will be still thine own.

JANE

And I'll be thine.

FIRST SERGEANT

My watch has gone two minutes, [mistress].

FITZALLEN

It shall not be renewed; I go, sir. Farewell.

JANE

Farewell. We both are prisoned, though not together;
But here's the difference in our luckless chance:
I fear mine own, wish thy deliverance.

FITZALLEN

Our hearts shall hourly visit: I'll sent to thee,
Then 'tis no prison where the mind is free.

Exit Fitzallen with Officers. Enter Russell.

RUSSELL

So, let him go. Now, wench, bring thee joys,
A fair sunshine after this angry storm.
It was my policy to remove this beggar.
What, shall rich men wed their only daughters
To two fair suits of clothes, and perhaps yet
The poor tailor is unpaid? No, no, my girl,
I have a lad of thousands coming in.
Suppose he have more wealth than wit to guide it;
Why, there's thy gains: thou keep'st the keys of all,

A Fair Quarrel

Disposest all. And for generation,
Man does most seldom stamp 'em from the brain:
Wise men begets fools, and fools are the fathers
To many wise children. Histeron proteron,
A great scholar may beget an idiot,
And from the plough-tail may come a great scholar;
Nay, they are frequent propagations.

JANE

I am not well, sir.

RUSSELL

Ha! Not well, my girl?
Thou shalt have a physician then,
The best that gold can fetch upon his foot-cloth.
Thou knowest my tender pity to thee ever;
Want nothing that thy wishes can instruct thee
To call for. 'Fore me, and thou look'st half-ill indeed!
But I'll bring one within a day to thee
Shall rouse thee up, for he's come up already,
One Master Chough, a Cornish gentleman:
H'as as much land of his own fee-simple
As a crow can fly over in half a day;
And now I think on't, at the Crow at Aldgate
His lodging is. He shall so stir thee up!
Come, come, be cheered; think of thy preferment:
Honour and attendance, these will bring thee health;
And the way to 'em is to climb by wealth.

Exeunt.

II.i. [Lady Ager's house]

Enter Captain Ager.

CAPTAIN AGER

The son of a whore?
There is not such another murdering-piece
In all the stock of calumny; it kills
At one report two reputations,
A mother's and a son's. If it were possible
That souls could fight after the bodies fell,
This were a quarrel for 'em; he should be one, indeed,
That never heard of heaven's joys or hell's torments
To fight this out. I am too full of conscience,
Knowledge, and patience, to give justice to't;
So careful of my eternity, which consists
Of upright actions, that unless I knew
It were a truth I stood for, any coward
Might make my breast his footpace, and who lives
That can assure the truth of his conception
More than a mother's carriage makes it hopeful?
And is't not miserable valour then
That man should hazard all upon things doubtful?
Oh, there's the cruelty of my foe's advantage!
Could but my soul resolve my cause were just,
Earth's mountain nor sea's surge should hide him from me;
E'en to hell's threshold would I follow him,
And see the slanderer in before I left him:
But as it is, it fears me; and I never
Appeared too conscientiously just till now.
My good opinion of her life and virtues
Bids me go on, and fain would I be ruled by't;
But when my judgment tells me she's but woman,
Whose [frailty] let in death to all mankind,
My valour shrinks at that. Certain she's good;
There only wants but my assurance in't,
And all things then were perfect. How I thirst for't!
Here comes the only she that could resolve--
But 'tis too vild a question to demand indeed.

Enter the Lady Ager.

LADY AGER

Son, I've a suit to you.

CAPTAIN AGER

[Aside] That may do well.--
To me, good madam? You're most sure to speed in't,
Be't i' my power to grant it.

LADY AGER

'Tis my love
Makes the request: that you would never part
From England more.

CAPTAIN AGER

With all my heart 'tis granted.
[Aside] I'm sure I'm i' th' way never to part from 't.

LADY AGER

Where left you your dear friend the colonel?

CAPTAIN AGER

Oh, the dear colonel? I should meet him soon.

LADY AGER

Oh, fail him not then! He's a gentleman
The fame and reputation of your time
Is much engaged to.

CAPTAIN AGER

Yes, and you knew all, mother.

LADY AGER

I thought I'd known so much of his fair goodness,
More could not have been looked for.

CAPTAIN AGER

Oh, yes, yes, madam,
And this his last exceeded all the rest.

LADY AGER

For gratitude's sake, let me know this, I prithee.

CAPTAIN AGER

Then thus, and I desire your censure freely,
Whether it appeared not a strange noble kindness in him.

LADY AGER

Trust me, I long to hear 't.

CAPTAIN AGER

You know he's hasty:
That by the way.

LADY AGER

So are the best conditions;
Your father was the like.

CAPTAIN AGER

[Aside] I begin now
To doubt me more. Why am not I so too then?
Blood follows blood through forty generations,
And I've a slow-paced wrath? A shrewd dilemma!

LADY AGER

Well, as you were saying, sir.

CAPTAIN AGER

Marry, thus, good madam:
There was in company a foul-mouthed villain. Stay, stay,
Who should I liken him to that you have seen?
He comes so near one that I would not match him with.
Faith, just o' th' colonel's pitch. He's ne'er the worse man;
Usurers have been compared to magistrates,
Extortioners to lawyers, and the like,
But they all prove ne'er the worse men for that.

LADY AGER

That's bad enough; they need not.

CAPTAIN AGER

This rude fellow,
A shame to all humanity or manners,
Breathes from the rottenness of his gall and malice
The foulest stain that ever man's fame blemished;
Part of which fell upon your honour, madam,
Which heightened my affliction.

LADY AGER

Mine? My honour, sir?

CAPTAIN AGER

The colonel, soon enraged, as he's all touchwood,
Takes fire before me, makes the quarrel his,
Appoints the field; my wrath could not be heard,
His was so high-pitched, so gloriously mounted.
Now what's the friendly fear that fights within me,
Should his brave noble fury undertake
A cause that were unjust in our defence,
And so to lose him everlastingily
In that dark depth where all bad quarrels sink,
Never to rise again? What pity 'twere
First to die here, and never to die there!

A Fair Quarrel

LADY AGER

Why, what's the quarrel—speak, sir—that should raise
Such fearful doubt, my honour bearing part on't?
The words, whate'er they were.

CAPTAIN AGER

Son of a whore.

LADY AGER

Thou liest!

Strikes him.

And were my love ten thousand times more to thee,
Which is as much now as e'er mother's was,
So thou shouldst feel my anger. Dost thou call
That quarrel doubtful? Where are all my merits?
Not one stand up to tell this man his error?
Thou mightst as well bring the sun's truth in question
As thy birth or my honour!

CAPTAIN AGER

Now blessings crown you for't!
It is the joyfull'st blow that e'er flesh felt.

LADY AGER

Nay, stay, stay, sir, thou art not left so soon;
This is no question to be slighted off,
And at your pleasure closed up fair again,
As though you'd never touched it: no, honour doubted
Is honour deeply wounded, and it rages
More than a common smart, being of thy making.
For thee to fear my truth, it kills my comfort.
Where should fame seek for her reward, when he
That is her own by the great tie of blood
Is fardest off in bounty? Oh, poor goodness,
That only pay'st thyself with thy own works,
For nothing else looks towards thee! Tell me, pray,
Which of my loving cares dost thou requite
With this vild thought? Which of my prayers or wishes?
Many thou owest me for; this seven year hast thou known me
A widow, only married to my vow:
That's no small witness of my faith and love
To him that in life was thy honoured father;
And live I now to know that good mistrusted?

CAPTAIN AGER

No, 't shall appear that my belief is cheerful,
For never was a mother's reputation
Noblier defended; 'tis my joy and pride
I have a firm to bestow upon it.

LADY AGER

What's that you said, sir?

CAPTAIN AGER

'Twere too bold and soon yet
To crave forgiveness of you: I will earn it first;
Dead or alive, I know I shall enjoy it.

LADY AGER

What's all this, sir?

CAPTAIN AGER

My joy's beyond expression!
I do but think how wretched I had been
Were this another's quarrel, and not mine.

LADY AGER

Why, is it yours?

CAPTAIN AGER

Mine? Think me not so miserable,
Not to be mine; then were I worse than abject,
More to be loathed than vileness or sin's dunghill.
Nor did I fear your goodness, faithful madam,
But came with greedy joy to be confirmed in't,
To give the nobler onset: then shines valour,
And admiration from her fixed sphere draws,
When it comes burnished with a righteous cause;
Without which I'm ten fadoms under coward,
That now am ten degrees above a man,
Which is but one of virtue's easiest wonders.

LADY AGER

But pray, stay; all this while I understood you
The colonel was the man.

CAPTAIN AGER

Yes, he's the man;
The man of injury, reproach, and slander,
Which I must turn into his soul again.

LADY AGER

The colonel do't? That's strange.

CAPTAIN AGER

The villain did it:
That's not so strange. Your blessing and your leave.

LADY AGER

A Fair Quarrel

Come, come, you shall not go.

CAPTAIN AGER

Not go? Were death
Sent now to summon me to my eternity,
I'd put him off an hour! Why, the whole world
Has not chains strong enough to bind me from 't:
The strongest is my reverence to you,
Which if you force upon me in this case,
I must be forced to break it.

LADY AGER

Stay, I say!

CAPTAIN AGER

In anything command me but in this, madam.

LADY AGER

[Aside] 'Las, I shall lose him!--You'll hear me first.

CAPTAIN AGER

At my return I will.

LADY AGER

You'll never hear me more, then.

CAPTAIN AGER

How?

LADY AGER

Come back, I say!

You may well think there's cause I call so often.

CAPTAIN AGER

Ha, cause? What cause?

LADY AGER

So much, you must not go.

CAPTAIN AGER

How?

LADY AGER

You must not go.

CAPTAIN AGER

Must not? Why?

LADY AGER

I know a reason for't,

A Fair Quarrel

Which I could wish you'd yield to, and not know;
If not, it must come forth. Faith, do not know,
And yet obey my will.

CAPTAIN AGER

Why, I desire
To know no other than the cause I have,
Nor should you wish it, if you take your injury,
For one more great I know the world includes not.

LADY AGER

Yes, one that makes this nothing. Yet be ruled,
And if you understand not, seek no further.

CAPTAIN AGER

I must, for this is nothing.

LADY AGER

Then take all;
And if amongst it you receive that secret
That will offend you, though you condemn me,
Yet blame yourself a little, for perhaps
I would have made my reputation sound
Upon another's hazard with less pity,
But upon yours I dare not.

CAPTAIN AGER

How?

LADY AGER

I dare not.
'Twas your own seeking, this.

CAPTAIN AGER

If you mean evilly,
I cannot understand you; nor for all the riches
This life has, would I.

LADY AGER

Would you never might!

CAPTAIN AGER

Why, your goodness, that I joy to fight for.

LADY AGER

In that you neither right your joy nor me.

CAPTAIN AGER

What an ill orator has virtue got here!

A Fair Quarrel

Why, shall I dare to think it a thing possible
That you were ever false?

LADY AGER

Oh, fearfully!
As much as you come to.

CAPTAIN AGER

Oh, silence, cover me!
I've felt a deadlier wound than man can give me! False?

LADY AGER

I was betrayed to a most sinful hour
By a corrupted soul I put in trust once,
A kinswoman.

CAPTAIN AGER

Where is she? Let me pay her!

LADY AGER

Oh, dead long since.

CAPTAIN AGER

Nay then, sh'as all her wages.
False? Do not say 't, for honour's goodness, do not!
You never could be so. He I called father
Deserved you at your best, when youth and merit
Could boast at highest in you; y'ad no grace
Or virtue that he matched not, no delight
That you invented but he sent it crowned
To your full-wishing soul.

LADY AGER

That heaps my guiltiness.

CAPTAIN AGER

Oh, were you so unhappy to be false,
Both to yourself and me? But to me chiefly.
What a day's hope is here lost, and with it
The joys of a just cause! Had you but thought
On such a noble quarrel, you'd ha' died
Ere you'd ha' yielded, for the sin's hate first,
Next for the shame of this hour's cowardice.
Cursed be the heat that lost me such a cause,
A work that I was made for! Quench, my spirit,
And out with honour's flaming lights within thee!
Be dark and dead to all respects of manhood!
I never shall have use of valour more.

A Fair Quarrel

Put off your vow, for shame! Why should you hoard up
Such justice for a barren widowhood,
That was so injurious to the faith of wedlock?

Exit Lady [Ager].

I should be dead, for all my life's work's ended;
I dare not fight a stroke now, nor engage
The noble resolution of my friends;
That were more vild.

Enter two Friends of Captain Ager's.

[Aside] They're here; kill me, my shame!
I am not for the fellowship of honour.

FIRST FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

Captain! Fie, come, sir; we have been seeking for you
Very late today. This was not wont to be;
Your enemy's i' th' field.

CAPTAIN AGER

Truth enters cheerfully.

SECOND FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

Good faith, sir, y'ave a royal quarrel on't.

CAPTAIN AGER

Yes, in some other country, Spain or Italy,
It would be held so.

FIRST FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

How? And is't not here so?

CAPTAIN AGER

'Tis not so contumeliously received
In these parts, and you mark it.

FIRST FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

Not in these?
Why, prithee, what is more, or can be?

CAPTAIN AGER

Yes,
That ordinary commotioner, the lie,
Is father of most quarrels in this climate,
And held here capital, and you go to that.

SECOND FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

But, sir, I hope you will not go to that,
Or change your own for it. Son of a whore?
Why, there's the lie down to posterity,
The lie to birth, the lie to honesty.
Why would you cozen yourself so, and beguile
So brave a cause, manhood's best masterpiece?
Do you ever hope for one so brave again?

CAPTAIN AGER

Consider then the man, [the] colonel:
Exactly worthy, absolutely noble,
However spleen and rage abuses him,
And 'tis not well nor manly to pursue
A man's infirmity.

FIRST FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

Oh, miracle!
So hopeful, valiant, and complete a captain
Possessed with a tame devil? Come out! Thou spoilest
The most improved young soldier of seven kingdoms:
Made captain at nineteen, which was deserved
The year before, but honour comes behind still.
Come out, I say! This was not wont to be;
That spirit never stood in need of provocation,
Nor shall it now. Away, sir!

CAPTAIN AGER

Urge me not.

FIRST FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

By manhood's reverend honour, but we must!

CAPTAIN AGER

I will not fight a stroke.

FIRST FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

Oh, blasphemy
To sacred valour!

CAPTAIN AGER

Lead me where you list.

FIRST FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

Pardon this traitorous slumber, clogged with evils:
Give captains rather wives than such tame devils!

[Exeunt.]

[II.ii. Master Russell's house]

II.i. [Lady Ager's house]

A Fair Quarrel

Enter Physician and Jane.

PHYSICIAN

Nay, [mistress], you must not be covered to me;
The patient must ope to the physician
All her dearest sorrows; art is blinded else,
And cannot show her mystical effects.

JANE

Can art be so dim-sighted, learned sir?
I did not think her so incapacious.
You train me, as I guess, like a conjuror,
One of our [fine] oraculous wizards,
Who, from the help of his examinant,
By the near guess of his suspicion,
Appoints out the thief by the marks he tells him.
Have you no skill in physiognomy?
What colour, says your coat, is my disease?
I am unmarried, and it cannot be yellow;
If it be maiden green, you cannot miss it.

PHYSICIAN

I cannot see that vacuum in your blood,
But, gentlewoman, if you love yourself,
Love my advice; be free and plain with me:
Where lies your grief?

JANE

Where lies my grief indeed?
I cannot tell the truth where my grief lies,
But my joy's imprisoned.

PHYSICIAN

This is mystical.

JANE

Lord, what plain questions you make problems of!
Your art is such a regular highway
That, put you out of it, and you are lost.
My heart is imprisoned in my body, sir;
There's all my joy, and my sorrow too
Lies very near it.

PHYSICIAN

They are bad adjuncts;
Your joy and grief, lying so near together,
Can propagate no happy issue: remove
The one, and let it be the worst, your grief,
If you'll propose the best unto your joy.

JANE

A Fair Quarrel

Why, now comes your skill. What physic for it?

PHYSICIAN

Now I have found you out: you are in love.

JANE

I think I am: what['s] your appliance now?
Can all your Paracelsian mixtures cure it?
'T must be a surgeon of the civil law,
I fear, that must cure me.

PHYSICIAN

Gentlewoman,
If you knew well my heart, you would not be
So circular; the very common name
Of physician might reprove your niceness:
We are as secret as your confessors,
And as firm obliged; 'tis a fine like death
For us to blab.

JANE

I will trust you; yet, sir,
I had rather do it by attorney to you:
I else have blushes that will stop my tongue.
Have you no friend so friendly as yourself
Of mine own sex, to whom I might impart
My sorrows to you at the second hand?

PHYSICIAN

Why, law, there I hit you! And be confirmed,
I'll give you such a bosom counsellor,
That your own tongue shall be sooner false to you.
Make yourself unready, and be naked to her;
I'll fetch her presently.

Exit Physician.

JANE

I must reveal;
My shame will else take tongue, and speak before me;
'Tis a necessity impulsive drives me.
Oh, my hard fate! But my more hard father,
That father of my fate! A father, said I?
What a strange paradox I run into!
I must accuse two fathers of my fate
And fault, a reciprocal generation:
The father of my fault would have repaired
His faulty issue, but my fate's father hinders it;
Then fate and fault, wherever I begin,
I must blame both, and yet 'twas love did sin.

A Fair Quarrel

Enter Physician and Anne, his sister.

PHYSICIAN

Look you, mistress, here's your closet; put in
What you please, you ever keep the key of it.

JANE

Let me speak private, sir.

PHYSICIAN

With all my heart;
I will be more than mine ears' length from you.

[Withdraws.]

JANE

You hold some endeared place with this gentleman?

ANNE

He's my brother, forsooth, I his creature;
He does command me any lawful office,
Either in act or counsel.

JANE

I must not doubt you;
Your brother has protested secrecy,
And strengthened me in you. I must lay ope
A guilty sorrow to you: I am with child.
'Tis no black swan I show you; these spots stick
Upon the face of many go for maids.
I that had face enough to do the deed
Cannot want tongue to speak it; but 'tis to you,
Whom I accept my helper.

ANNE

Mistress, 'tis locked
Within a castle that's invincible:
It is too late to wish it were undone.

JANE

I have scarce a wish within myself so strong,
For, understand me, 'tis not all so ill
As you may yet conceit it: this deed was done
When heaven had witness to the jugal knot;
Only the barren ceremony wants,
Which by an adverse father is abridged.

ANNE

Would my pity could help you.

JANE

A Fair Quarrel

Your counsel may.
My father yet shoots widest from my sorrow,
And, with a care indulgent, seeing me changed
From what I was, sends for your good brother
To find my grief, and practise remedy.
You know it, give it him; but if a fourth
Be added to this counsel, I will say
Ye're worse than you can call me at the worst,
At this advantage of my reputation.

ANNE

I will revive a reputation
That women long has lost: I'll keep counsel.
I'll only now oblige my teeth to you,
And they shall bite the blabber, if it offer
To breathe on an offending syllable.

JANE

I trust you. Go, whisper; here comes my father.

Enter Russell, Chough, and Trimtram.

RUSSELL

Sir, you are welcome; more, and most welcome,
All the degrees of welcome: thrice welcome, sir.

CHOUGH

Is this your daughter, sir?

RUSSELL

Mine only joy, sir.

CHOUGH

I'll show her the Cornish hug, sir. [Kisses Jane.] I have kissed you now, sweetheart, and I never do any kindness to my friends but I use to hit 'em in the teeth with it presently.

TRIMTRAM

My name is Trimtram, forsooth: look, what my master does, I use to do the like. [Attempts to embrace Anne.]

ANNE

You are deceived, sir; I am not this gentlewoman's servant, to make your courtesy equal.

CHOUGH

You do not know me, mistress?

JANE

No indeed. [Aside] I doubt I shall learn too soon.

CHOUGH

My name is Chough, a Cornish gentleman; my man's mine own countryman too, i'faith. I warrant you took us for

A Fair Quarrel

some of the small islanders.

JANE

I did indeed, between the Scotch and Irish.

CHOUGH

Red-shanks? I thought so, by my truth. No, truly, we are right Cornish diamonds.

TRIMTRAM

Yes, we cut out quarrels, and break glasses, where we go.

PHYSICIAN

[Taking Anne aside] If it be hidden from her father, yet
His ignorance understands well his knowledge,
For this I guess to be some rich coxcomb
He'd put upon his daughter.

ANNE

That's plainly so.

PHYSICIAN

Then only she's beholding to our help
For the close delivery of her burden,
Else all's overthrown.

ANNE

And pray be faithful in that, sir.

PHYSICIAN

Tush, we physicians are the truest
Alchemists, that from the ore and dross of sin
Can new distill a maidenhead again.

RUSSELL

How do you like her, sir?

CHOUGH

Troth, I do like her, sir, in the way of comparison, to anything that a man would desire: I am as high as the Mount in love with her already, and that's as far as I can go by land; but I hope to go further by water with her one day.

RUSSELL

I tell you, sir, she has lost some colour
By wrestling with a peevish sickness now of late.

CHOUGH

Wrestle? Nay, and she love wrestling, I'll teach her a trick to overthrow any peevish sickness in London, whate'er it be.

RUSSELL

Well, she had a rich beauty, though I say't;
Nor is it lost: a little thing repairs it.

CHOUGH

She shall command the best thing that I have in Middlesex, i'faith.

RUSSELL

Well, sir, talk with her, give her a relish
Of your good liking to her; you shall have time
And free access to finish what you now begin.

JANE

[Aside] What means my father? My love's unjust restraint,
My shame, were it published, both together
Could not afflict me like this odious fool.
Now I see why he hated my Fitzallen.

CHOUGH

Sweet lady, your father says you are a wrestler: if you love that sport, I love you the better. I'faith, I love it as well as I love my meat after supper; 'tis indeed meat, drink, and cloth to me.

JANE

Methinks it should tear your clothes, sir.

CHOUGH

Not a rag, i'faith. Trimtram, hold my cloak. I'll wrestle a fall with you now; I'll show you a trick that you never saw in your life.

JANE

Oh, good sir, forbear! I am no wrestler.

PHYSICIAN

Good sir, take heed, you'll hurt the gentlewoman.

CHOUGH

I will not catch beneath the waist, believe it: I know fair play.

JANE

'Tis no woman's exercise in London, sir.

CHOUGH

I'll ne'er believe that: the hug and the lock between man and woman, with a fair fall, is as sweet an exercise for the body as you'll desire in a summer's evening.

PHYSICIAN

Sir, the gentlewoman is not well.

CHOUGH

It may be you are a physician, sir.

PHYSICIAN

'Tis so, sir.

A Fair Quarrel

CHOUGH

I say, then, and I'll stand to't, three ounces of wrestling with two hips, a yard of a green gown put together in the inturn is as good a medicine for the green-sickness as ever breathed.

TRIMTRAM

Come, sir, take your cloak again; I see here will be ne'er a match.

JANE

[Aside] A match? I'd rather be matched from a musket's mouth and shot unto my death.

CHOUGH

I'll wrestle with any man for a good supper.

TRIMTRAM

Ay, marry, sir, I'll take your part there, catch that catch may.

PHYSICIAN

[To Russell] Sir, she is willing to't: there at my house
She shall be private, and near to my attendance.
I know you['ll] not mistrust my faithful care;
I shall return her soon and perfectly.

RUSSELL

Take your charge, sir. Go with this gentleman, Jane,
[Taking her aside] But prithee, look well this way ere thou go'st:
'Tis a rich simplicity of great estate,
A thing that will be ruled, and thou shalt rule;
Consider of your sex's general aim,
That domination is a woman's heaven.

JANE

I'll think on't, sir.

RUSSELL

My daughter is retiring, sir.

CHOUGH

I will part at Dartmouth with her, sir. [Kisses Jane] Oh, that thou didst but love wrestling! I would give any man three foils on that condition.

TRIMTRAM

There's three sorts of men that would thank you for 'em, either cutlers, fencers, or players.

RUSSELL

Sir, as I began, I end: wondrous welcome!

Exit Russell, Jane, Physician, Anne.

TRIMTRAM

What, will you go to school today? You are entered, you know, and your quarterage runs on.

CHOUGH

What, to the roaring-school? Pox on't, 'tis such a damnable noise, I shall never attain it neither. I do wonder they have never a wrestling-school; that were worth twenty of your fencing- or dancing-schools.

TRIMTRAM

Well, you must learn to roar here in London; you'll never proceed in the reputation of gallantry else.

CHOUGH

How long has roaring been an exercise, thinkest thou, Trimtram?

TRIMTRAM

Ever since guns came up: the first was your Roaring Meg.

CHOUGH

Meg? Then 'twas a woman was the first roarer?

TRIMTRAM

Ay, a fire of her touch-hole, that cost many a proper man's life since that time; and then the lions, they learnt it from the guns, living so near 'em; then it was heard to the Bankside, and the bears they began to roar; then the boys got it, and so ever since there have been a company of roaring boys.

CHOUGH

And how long will it last, thinkest thou?

TRIMTRAM

As long as the water runs under London Bridge, or watermen at Westminster Stairs.

CHOUGH

Well, I will begin to roar too, since it is in fashion. Oh, Corineus, this was not in thy time! I should have heard on't by the tradition of mine ancestors--for I'm sure there were Choughs in thy days--if it had been so. When Hercules and thou wert on the Olympic Mount together, then was wrestling in request.

TRIMTRAM

Ay, and that mount is now the Mount in Cornwall: Corineus brought it thither under one of his arms, they say.

CHOUGH

Oh, Corineus, my predecessor, that I had but lived in those days to see thee wrestle! On that condition I had died seven year ago.

TRIMTRAM

Nay, it should have been a dozen at least, i'faith, on that condition.

Exeunt.

III.i. [A street]

Enter Captain Ager with his two Friends.

CAPTAIN AGER

Well, your wills now?

FIRST FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

Our wills? Our loves, our duties
To honoured fortitude: what wills have we
But our desires to nobleness and merit,
Valour's advancement, and the sacred rectitude
Due to a valorous cause?

CAPTAIN AGER

Oh, that's not mine!

SECOND FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

War has his court of justice, that's the field,
Where all cases of manhood are determined,
And your case is no mean one.

CAPTAIN AGER

True, then 'twere virtuous;
But mine is in extremes foul and unjust.
Well, now y'ave got me hither, y're as far
To seek in your desire as at first minute,
For by the strength and honour of a vow,
I will not lift a finger in this quarrel.

FIRST FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

How? Not in this? Be not so rash a sinner!
Why, sir, do you ever hope to fight again then?
Take heed on't, you must never look for that:
Why, the universal stock of the world's injury
Will be too poor to find a quarrel for you.
Give up your right and title to desert, sir:
If you fail virtue here, she needs you not
All your time after; let her take this wrong,
And never presume then to serve her more;
Bid farewell to the integrity of arms,
And let that honourable name of soldier
Fall from you like a shivered wreath of laurel
By thunder struck from a desertless forehead,
That wears another's right by usurpation.
Good Captain, do not willfully cast away
At one hour all the fame your life has won:
This is your native seat; here you should seek
Most to preserve it. Or if you will dote

So much on life—poor life, which in respect
Of life in honour is but death and darkness—
That you will prove neglectful of yourself,
Which is to me too fearful to imagine,
Yet for that virtuous lady's cause, your mother,
Her reputation, dear to nobleness
As grace to penitence, whose fair memory
E'en crowns fame in your issue, for that blessedness
Give not this ill place, but in spite of hell
And all her base fears, be exactly valiant.

CAPTAIN AGER

Oh, oh, oh!

SECOND FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

Why, well said, there's fair hope in that;
Another such a one.

CAPTAIN AGER

Came they in thousands,
'Tis all against you.

FIRST FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

Then, poor friendless merit,
Heaven be good to thee! Thy professor leaves thee.

Enter Colonel and his two Friends.

He's [come]: do but you draw, we'll fight it for you.

CAPTAIN AGER

I know too much to grant that.

FIRST FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

Oh, dead manhood!
Had ever such a cause so faint a servant?
Shame brand me if I do not suffer for him.

COLONEL

I've heard, sir, y'ave been guilty of much boasting
For your brave earliness at such a meeting:
Y'ave lost the glory of that way this morning;
I was the first today.

CAPTAIN AGER

So were you ever
In my respect, sir.

FIRST FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

Oh, most base praeludium!

CAPTAIN AGER

I never thought on victory, our mistress,
With greater reverence than I have your worth,
Nor ever loved her better.

FIRST FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

'Slight, I could knock
His brains about his heels, methinks!

SECOND FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

Peace, prithee, peace.

CAPTAIN AGER

Success in you has been my absolute joy,
And when I have wished content, I have wished your friendship.

FIRST FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

Stay, let me but run him through the tongue a little;
There's lawyer's blood in't, you shall see foul gear straight.

SECOND FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

Come, you are as mad now as he's cowardous.

COLONEL

I came not hither, sir, for an encomium.

FIRST FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

No, the more coxcomb he that claws the head
Of your vainglory with't!

COLONEL

I came provided
For storms and tempests, and the foulest season
That ever rage let forth, or blew in wildness
From the incensed prison of man's blood.

CAPTAIN AGER

'Tis otherwise with me; I come with mildness,
Peace, constant amity, and calm forgiveness:
The weather of a Christian and a friend.

FIRST FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

Give me a valiant Turk, though not worth tenpence, rather.

CAPTAIN AGER

Yet, sir, the world will judge the injury mine,
Insufferable mine, mine beyond injury:
Thousands have made a less wrong reach to hell,
Ay, and rejoiced in his most endless vengeance,

A miserable triumph, though a just one.
But when I call to memory our long friendship,
Methinks it cannot be too great a wrong
That then I should not pardon. Why should man,
For a poor hasty syllable or two,
And vented only in forgetful fury,
Chain all the hopes and riches of his soul
To the revenge of that, die, lost forever?
For he that makes his last peace with his Maker
In anger, anger is his peace eternally:
He must expect the same return again
Whose venture is deceitful, must he not, sir?

COLONEL

[Sheathing his sword] I see what I must do: fairly put up again,
For here'll be nothing done, I perceive that.

CAPTAIN AGER

What shall be done in such a worthless business,
But to be sorry, and to be forgiven,
You, sir, to bring repentance, and I pardon?

COLONEL

I bring repentance, sir?

CAPTAIN AGER

If it be too much
To say repentance, call it what you please, sir,
Choose your own word; I know you're sorry for't,
And that's as good.

COLONEL

[Drawing his sword] I sorry? By fame's honour, I am wronged!
Do you seek for peace and draw the quarrel larger?

CAPTAIN AGER

Then 'tis I'm sorry that I thought you so.

FIRST FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

A captain? I could gnaw his title off!

CAPTAIN AGER

Nor is it any misbecoming virtue, sir,
In the best manliness to repent a wrong,
Which made me bold with you.

FIRST FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

I could cuff his head off!

SECOND FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

Nay, pish!

FIRST FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

Pox on him, I could eat his buttock baked, methinks!

COLONEL

[Sheathing his sword] So, once again take thou thy peaceful rest, then;
But as I put thee up, I must proclaim
This captain here, both to his friends and mine,
That only came to see fair valour righted,
A base submissive coward. So, I leave him.

Offers to go away.

CAPTAIN AGER

Oh, heaven has pitied my excessive patience,
And sent me a cause! Now I have a cause:
A coward I was never. Come you back, sir!

COLONEL

How!

CAPTAIN AGER

You left a coward here?

COLONEL

Yes, sir, with you.

CAPTAIN AGER

'Tis such base metal, sir, 'twill not be taken;
It must home again with you.

SECOND FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

Should this be true now!

FIRST FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

Impossible! Coward do more than bastard?

COLONEL

I prithee, mock me not; take heed you do not,
For if I draw once more, I shall grow terrible,
And rage will force me do what will grieve honour.

CAPTAIN AGER

Ha, ha, ha!

COLONEL

He smiles! Dare it be he? What think you, gentlemen?
Your judgments: shall I not be cozened in him?
This cannot be the man. Why, he was bookish,
Made an invective lately against fighting--

A Fair Quarrel

A thing, in troth, that moved a little with me--
Put up a fouler contumely far
Than thousand 'cowards' came to, and grew thankful.

CAPTAIN AGER

Blessed remembrance in time of need!
I'd lost my honour else.

SECOND FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

Do you note his joy?

CAPTAIN AGER

I never felt a more severe necessity,
Then came thy excellent pity. Not yet ready?
Have you such confidence in my just manhood
That you dare so long trust me, and yet tempt me
Beyond the toleration of man's virtue?
Why, would you be more cruel than your injury?
Do you first take pride to wrong me, and then think me
Not worth your fury? Do not use me so;
I shall deceive you then. Sir, either draw,
And that not slightingly, but with the care
Of your best preservation, with that watchfulness
As you'd defend yourself from circular fire,
Your sin's rage, or her lord--this will require it--
Or you'll be too soon lost, for I've an anger
Has gathered mighty strength against you, mighty;
Yet you shall find it honest to the last,
Noble and fair.

COLONEL

I'll venture 't once again;
And if't be but as true as it is wondrous,
I shall have that I come for. Your leave, gentlemen.

[They draw their swords.]

FIRST FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

If he should do't indeed, and deceive 's all now!
Stay, by this hand he offers, fights, i'faith;
Fights, by this light he fights, sir!

SECOND FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

So methinks, sir.

FIRST FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

An absolute punto, hay!

SECOND FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

'Twas a passado, sir.

FIRST FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

Why, let it pass, and 'twas; I'm sure 'twas somewhat.
What's that now?

SECOND FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

That's a punto.

FIRST FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

Oh, go to, then;
I knew 'twas not far off. What a world's this!
Is coward a more stirring meat than bastard, my masters?
Put in more eggs, for shame, when you get children,
And make it true court-custard.

[The Colonel falls.]

Ho, I honour thee!

'Tis right and fair, and he that breathes against it,
He breathes against the justice of a man,
And man to cut him off 'tis no injustice.
Thanks, thanks, for this most unexpected nobleness!

CAPTAIN AGER

Truth never fails her servant, sir, nor leaves him
With the day's shame upon him.

FIRST FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

Th'ast redeemed
Thy worth to the same height 'twas first esteemed.

Exeunt Captain and his Friends.

FIRST FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

Alas, how is it, sir? Give us some hope
Of your stay with us; let your spirit be seen
Above your fortune: the best fortitude
Has been of fate ill-friended. Now force your empire,
And reign above your blood, spite of dejection;
Reduce the monarchy of your abler mind,
Let not flesh straiten it.

COLONEL

Oh, just heaven has found me,
And turned the stings of my too hasty injuries
Into my own blood! I pursued my ruin,
And urged him past the patience of an angel:
Could man's revenge extend beyond man's life,
This would ha' waked it. If this flame will light me
But till I see my sister, 'tis a kind one;
More I expect not from 't. Noble deserver!
Farewell, most valiant and most wronged of men;

A Fair Quarrel

Do but forgive me, and I am victor then.

Exeunt, led by them.

[III.ii. Master Russell's house]

Enter Physician, Jane, Anne, Dutch Nurse with the child.

PHYSICIAN

Sweet frow, to your most indulgent care
Take this my heart's joy. I must not tell you
The value of this jewel in my bosom.

NURSE

Dat you may vell, sir; der can niet forstoor you.

PHYSICIAN

Indeed I cannot tell you: you know, nurse,
These are above the quantity of price.
Where is the glory of the goodliest trees,
But in the fruit and branches? The old stock
Must decay, and sprigs, scions such as these,
Must become new stocks from us to glory
In their fruitful issue; so we are made
Immortal one by other.

NURSE

You spreek a most lieben fader, and ich sall do de best of tender nurses to dis infant, my pretty frokin.

PHYSICIAN

I know you will be loving.

Give money.

Here, sweet friend,
Here's earnest of a large sum of love and coin
To quit your tender care.

JANE

I have some reason too
To purchase your dear care unto this infant.

Gives her money.

NURSE

You be de witness of de baptim, dat is, as you spreken, de godimother; ich vell forstoor it so.

JANE aside

Yes, I am the bad mother if it be offence.

A Fair Quarrel

ANNE

I must be a little kind too.

Gives her money.

NURSE

Much tanks to you all. Dis child is much beloven, and ich sall see much care over it.

PHYSICIAN

Farewell. Good sister, show her the way forth.
I shall often visit you, kind nurse.

NURSE

You sall be velcome.

Exeunt Anne and Nurse.

JANE

Oh, sir, what a friend have I found in you!
Where my poor power shall stay in the requital,
Yourself must from your fair condition
Make up in mere acceptance of my will.

PHYSICIAN

Oh, pray you urge it not! We are not born
For ourselves only: self-love is a sin;
But in our loving donatives to others
Man's virtue best consists. Love all begets;
Without, all are adulterate and counterfeit.

JANE

Your boundless love I cannot satisfy,
But with a mental memory of your virtues;
Yet let me not engage your cost withal:
Beseech you then take restitution
Of pains and bounty which you have disbursed
For your poor debtor.

PHYSICIAN

You will not offer it:
Do not esteem my love so mercenary
To be the hire of coin! Sure, I shall think
You do not hold so worthily of me
As I wish to deserve.

JANE

Not recompense?
Then you will beggar me with too much credit.
[Is't] not sufficient you preserve my name,
Which I had forfeited to shame and scorn,

A Fair Quarrel

Cover my vices with a veil of love,
Defend and keep me from a father's rage,
Whose love, yet infinite, not knowing this,
Might, knowing, turn a hate as infinite:
Sure he would throw me ever from his blessings,
And cast his curses on me! Yes, further,
Your secrecy keeps me in the state of woman,
For else what husband would choose me his wife,
Knowing the honour of a bride were lost?
I cannot number half the good you do me
In the concealed retention of my sin;
Then make me not worse than I was before,
In my ingratitude, good sir.

PHYSICIAN

Again?

I shall repent my love, if you'll so call 't,
To be made such a hackney. Give me coin?
I had as lief you gave me poison, lady,
For I have art and antidotes 'gainst that;
I might take that, but this I will refuse.

JANE

[Will] you then teach me how I may requite you
In some small quantity?

PHYSICIAN aside

'Twas that I looked for.—
Yes, I will tell you, lady, a full quittance,
And how you may become my creditress.

JANE

I beseech you do, sir.

PHYSICIAN

Indeed I will, lady:
Not in coin, mistress, for silver, though white,
Yet it draws black lines; it shall not rule my palm,
There to mark forth his base corruption.
Pay me again in the same quality
That I to you tendered: that's love for love.
Can you love me, lady? You have confessed
My love to you.

JANE

Most amply.

PHYSICIAN

Why, faith, then,
Pay me back that way.

A Fair Quarrel

JANE

How do you mean, sir?

PHYSICIAN

Tush, our meanings are better understood
Than shifted to the tongue: it brings along
A little blabbing blood into our cheeks,
That shames us when we speak.

JANE

I understand you not.

PHYSICIAN

Fie, you do; make not yourself ignorant
In what you know: you have ta'en forth the lesson
That I would read to you.

JANE

Sure then I need not
Read it again, sir.

PHYSICIAN

Yes, it makes perfect:
You know the way unto Achilles' spear;
If that hurt you, I have the cure, you see.

JANE

Come, y're a good man; I do perceive you,
You put a trial to me: I thank you,
Y're my just confessor, and, believe me,
I'll have no further penance for this sin.
Convert a year unto a lasting ever,
And call 't Apollo's smile: 'twas once, then never.

PHYSICIAN

Pray you mistake me not; indeed I love you.

JANE

Indeed? What deed?

PHYSICIAN

The deed that you have done.

JANE

I cannot believe you.

PHYSICIAN

Believe the deed then.

[Attempts to kiss her.]

A Fair Quarrel

JANE

Away, y'are a blackamoor! You love me?
I hate you for your love! Are you the man
That in your painted outside seemed so white?
Oh, y'are a foul dissembling hypocrite!
You saved me from a thief that yourself might rob me,
Skinned o'er a green wound to breed an ulcer:
Is this the practice of your physic-college?

PHYSICIAN

Have you yet uttered all your niceness forth?
If you have more, vent it; certes I think
Your first grant was not yielded with less pain;
If 'twere, you have your price, yield it again.

JANE

Pray you tell me, sir, I asked it before,
Is it a practice 'mongst you physicians?

PHYSICIAN

Tush, that's a secret; we cast all waters.
Should I reveal, you would mistrust my counsel:
The lawyer and physician here agrees,
To women clients they give back their fees;
And is not that kindness?

JANE

This for thy love!

Spits.

Out, outside of a man: thou cinnamon-tree,
That but thy bark hast nothing good about thee!
The unicorn is hunted for his horn,
The rest is left for carrion. Thou false man,
Th'ast fished with silver hooks and golden baits;
But I'll avoid all thy deceiving sleights.

PHYSICIAN

Do what you list, I will do something too.
Remember yet what I have done for you:
Y'ave a good face now, but 'twill grow rugged;
Ere you grow old, old men will despise you.
Think on your grandam Helen, the fairest queen:
When in a new glass she spied her old face,
She, smiling, wept to think upon the change.
Take your time: y'are crazed, y'are an apple fall'n
From the tree; if you be kept long, you'll rot.
Study your answer well: yet I love you;
If you refuse, I have a hand above [you].

A Fair Quarrel

Exit Physician.

JANE

Poison thyself, thou foul empoisoner;
Of thine own practic drink the theory!
What, a white devil have I met withal?
What shall I do? What do? Is't a question?
Nor shame, nor hate, nor fear, nor lust, nor force,
Now being too bad, shall ever make me worse.

Enter Anne.

What have we here? A second spirit?

ANNE

Mistress,
I am sent to you.

JANE

Is your message good?

ANNE

As you receive it: my brother sent me,
And you know he loves you.

JANE

I heard say so,
But 'twas a false report.

ANNE

Pray pardon me, I must do my message;
Who lives commanded must obey his keeper.
I must persuade you to this act of woman.

JANE

Woman? Of strumpet!

ANNE

Indeed, of strumpet.
He takes you at advantage of your fall,
Seeing you down before.

JANE

Curse on his feigned smiles!

ANNE

He's my brother, mistress; and a curse on you,
If e'er you bless him with that cursed deed.

A Fair Quarrel

Hang him, poison him! He held out a rose
To draw the yielding sense, which, come to hand,
He shifts, and gives a canker.

JANE

You speak well yet.

ANNE

Ay, but mistress, now I consider it,
Your reputation lies at his mercy,
Your fault dwells in his breast; say he throw it out,
It will be known: how are you then undone!
Think on't, your good name; and they are not to be sold
In every market: a good name's dear,
And indeed more esteemed than our actions,
By which we should deserve it.

JANE

Ay me, most wretched!

ANNE

What, do you shrink at that?
Would you not wear one spot upon your face
To keep your whole body from a leprosy,
Though it were undiscovered ever? Hang him!
Fear him not. Horse-leeches suck out his corrupt blood;
Draw you none from him 'less it be pure and good.

JANE

Do you speak your soul?

ANNE

By my soul do I.

JANE

Then yet I have a friend: but thus exhort me,
And I have still a column to support me.

ANNE

One fault heaven soon forgives, and 'tis on earth forgot;
The moon herself is not without one spot.

Exeunt.

[III.iii. Lady Ager's house]
Enter the Lady Ager, meeting one of her Servants.

LADY AGER

Now, sir, where is he? Speak, why comes he not?
I sent you for him. [Aside] Bless this fellow's senses!

A Fair Quarrel

What has he seen? A soul nine hours entranced,
Hovering 'twixt hell and heaven, could not wake ghastlier.
Not yet return an answer?

Enter [Second] Servant

What say you, sir?
Where is he?

SECOND SERVANT
Gone!

LADY AGER
What say'st thou?

SECOND SERVANT
He is gone, madam;
But, as we heard, unwillingly he went
As ever blood enforced.

LADY AGER
Went? Whither went he?

SECOND SERVANT
Madam, I fear I ha' said too much already.

LADY AGER
These men are both agreed. Speak, whither went he?

SECOND SERVANT
Why, to-- I would you'd think the rest yourself, madam.

LADY AGER
Meek patience bless me!

SECOND SERVANT
To the field.

FIRST SERVANT
To fight, madam.

LADY AGER
To fight!

FIRST SERVANT

There came two urging gentlemen,
That called themselves his seconds; both so powerful,
As 'tis reported, they prevailed with him
With little labour.

LADY AGER

Oh, he's lost, he's gone!
For all my pains, he's gone! Two meeting torrents
Are not so merciless as their two rages:
He never comes again. [Aside] Wretched affection!
Have I belied my faith, injured my goodness,
Slandered my honour for his preservation,
Having but only him, and yet no happier?
'Tis then a judgment plain: truth's angry with me
In that I would abuse her sacred whiteness
For any worldly temporal respect.
Forgive me then, thou glorious woman's virtue,
Admired where'er thy habitation is,
Especially in us weak ones; oh, forgive me,
For 'tis thy vengeance this! To belie truth,
Which is so hardly ours, with such pain purchased,
Fastings and prayers, continence and care,
Misery must needs ensue. Let him not die
In that unchaste belief of his false birth
And my disgrace; whatever angel guides him,
May this request be with my tears obtained,
Let his soul know my honour is unstained.—
Run, seek, away! If there be any hope.
Let me not lose him yet.

Exeunt Servants.

When I think on him,
His dearness and his worth, it earns me more:
They that know riches tremble to be poor.
My passion is not every woman's sorrow:
She must be truly honest feels my grief,
And only known to one; if such there be,
They know the sorrow that oppresseth me.

Exit.

IV.i. [The Roaring School]

Enter the Second [Friend of the Colonel], Usher, etc. [Roarers] with Chough and Trimtram.

SECOND FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

Truth, sir, I must needs blame you for a truant, having but one lesson read to you, and neglect so soon; fie, I must see you once a day at least.

CHOUGH

Would I were whipped, tutor, if it were not long of my man Trimtram here.

TRIMTRAM

Who, of me?

CHOUGH

[Aside to Trimtram] Take't upon thee, Trim; I'll give three five shillings, as I am a gentleman.

TRIMTRAM

[Aside] I'll see you whipped first! [To Chough] Well, I will too.—Faith, sir, I saw he was not perfect, and I was loath he should come before to shame himself.

SECOND FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

How! Shame, sir? Is it a shame for scholars to learn? Sir, there are great scholars that are but slenderly read in our profession. Sir, first it must be economical, then ecumenical: shame not to practise in the house how to perform in the field. The nail that is driven takes a little hold at the first stroke, but more at the second, and more at the third, but when 'tis home to the head, then 'tis firm.

CHOUGH

Faith, I have been driving it home to the head this two days.

TRIMTRAM

I helped to hammer it in as well as I could too, sir.

SECOND FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

Well, sir, I will hear you rehearse anon; meantime peruse the exemplary of my bills, and tell me in what language I shall roar a lecture to you, or I'll read to you the mathematical science of roaring.

CHOUGH

Is it mathematical?

SECOND FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

Oh, sir, does not the winds roar? The sea roar? The welkin roar? Indeed, most things do roar by nature, and is not the knowledge of these things mathematical?

CHOUGH

Pray proceed, sir.

SECOND FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

reads his bill
'The names of the language, the Sclavonian, Parthamenian, Barneothian, Tyburnian, Wappinganian, or the

A Fair Quarrel

modern Londonian: any man or woman that is desirous to roar in any of these languages, in a week they shall be perfect if they will take pains; so let 'em repair into Holborn to the sign of the Cheat Loaf.'

CHOUGH

Now your bill speaks of that I was wondering a good while at, your sign: the loaf looks very like bread, i'faith, but why is it called the Cheat Loaf?

SECOND FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

This house was sometimes a baker's, sir, that served the court, where the bread is called cheat.

TRIMTRAM

Ay, ay, 'twas a baker that cheated the court with bread.

SECOND FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

Well, sir, choose your languages; and your lectures shall be read, between my usher and myself, for your better instruction, provided your conditions be performed in the premises beforesaid.

CHOUGH

Look you, sir, there's twenty pound in hand, and twenty more I am to pay when I am allowed a sufficient roarer.

SECOND FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

You speak in good earnest, sir?

CHOUGH

Yes, faith, do I; Trimtram shall be my witness.

TRIMTRAM

Yes indeed, sir, twenty pound is very good earnest.

USHER

Sir, one thing I must tell you belongs to my place: you are the youngest scholar, and till another comes under you, there is a certain garnish belongs to the school, for in our practice we grow to a quarrel, then there must be wine ready to make all friends, for that's the end of roaring--'tis valiant, but harmless--and this charge is yours.

CHOUGH

With all my heart, i'faith, and I like it the better because no blood comes on it. Who shall fetch?

ROARER

I'll be your spaniel, sir.

SECOND FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

Bid Vapour bring some tobacco too.

CHOUGH

Do, and here's money for't.

USHER

No, you shall not; let me see the money.

Exit Roarer.

A Fair Quarrel

So, I'll keep it, and discharge him after the combat. For your practice sake you and your man shall roar him out on't, for indeed you must pay your debts so, for that's one of the main ends of roaring, and when you have left him in a chafe, then I'll qualify the rascal.

CHOUGH

Content, i'faith. Trim, we'll roar the rusty rascal out of his tobacco.

TRIMTRAM

Ay, and he had the best craccus in London.

SECOND FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

Observe, sir, we could now roar in the Sclavonian language, but this practice hath been a little sublime, some hair's breadth or so above your caput; I take it, for your use and understanding both, it were fitter for you to taste the modern assault, only the Londonian roar.

CHOUGH

I'faith, sir, that's for my purpose, for I shall use all my roaring here in London: in Cornwall we are all for wrestling, and I do not mean to travel over sea to roar there.

SECOND FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

Observe then, sir. But it were necessary you took forth your tables, to note the most difficult points for the better assistance of your memory.

CHOUGH

Nay, sir, my man and I keep two tables.

TRIMTRAM

Ay, sir, and as many trenchers, cats' meat and dogs' meat enough.

SECOND FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

Note, sir. [To Usher] Dost thou confront my cyclops?

USHER

With a Briarean brousted.

CHOUGH

[Writing] Cyclops.

TRIMTRAM

[Writing] Briarean.

SECOND FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

I know thee and thy lineal pedigree.

USHER

It is collateral, as Brutus and Posthumus.

TRIMTRAM

[Writing] Brutus.

CHOUGH

[Writing] Posthumus.

SECOND FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

False as the face of Hecate! Thy sister is a--

USHER

What is my sister, centaur?

SECOND FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

I say thy sister is a bronstrops.

USHER

A bronstrops!

CHOUGH

Tutor, tutor, ere you go any further, tell me the English of that. What is a bronstrops, pray?

SECOND FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

A bronstrops is in English a hippocrene.

CHOUGH

A hippocrene; note it, Trim. I love to understand the English as I go.

TRIMTRAM

What's the English of hippocrene?

CHOUGH

Why, bronstrops!

USHER

Thou dost obtrect my flesh and blood.

SECOND FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

Again I denounce, thy sister is a fructifer.

CHOUGH

What's that, tutor?

SECOND FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

That is in English a fucus or a minotaur.

CHOUGH

[Writing] A minotaur.

[TRIMTRAM]

[Writing] A fucus.

USHER

I say thy mother is a calicut, a panagron, a duplar, and a sindicus.

SECOND FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

A Fair Quarrel

Dislocate thy [blade]!

USHER

Bladud shall conjure, if his demons once appear!

[They draw their swords.] Enter Roarer with wine, and Vapour with tobacco.

SECOND FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

Advance thy respondency!

CHOUGH

Nay, good [gentlemen], do not fall out. A cup of wine quickly,

USHER

See, my steel hath a glister!

CHOUGH

Pray wipe him and put him up again, good usher.

USHER

Sir, at your request I pull down the flag of defiance.

SECOND FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

Give me a bowl of wine, my fury shall be quenched. Here, usher.

USHER

I pledge thee in good friendship.

[They drink.]

CHOUGH

I like the conclusion of roaring very well, i'faith.

TRIMTRAM

It has an excellent conclusion indeed, if the wine be good, always provided.

SECOND FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

Oh, the wine must be always provided, be sure of that.

USHER

Else you spoil the conclusion, and that you know crowns all.

CHOUGH

'Tis much like wrestling, i'faith, for we shake hands ere we begin; now that's to avoid the law, for then if he throw him a furlong into the ground, he cannot recover himself upon him, because 'twas done in cold friendship.

SECOND FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

I believe you, sir.

CHOUGH

And then we drink afterwards, just in this fashion: wrestling and roaring are as like as can be, i'faith, even like

long sword and half-pike.

SECOND FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

Nay, they are reciprocal, if you mark it, for as there is a great roaring at wrestling, so there is a kind of wrestling and contention at roaring.

CHOUGH

True, i'faith, for I have heard 'em roar from the six windmills to Islington; those have been great falls then.

SECOND FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

Come, now a brief rehearsal of your other day's lesson, betwixt your man and you, and then for today we break up school.

CHOUGH

Come, Trimtram. If I be out, tutor, I'll be bold to look in my tables, because I doubt I am scarce perfect.

SECOND FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

Well, well, I will not see small faults.

CHOUGH

The wall!

TRIMTRAM

The wall of me? To thy kennel, spaniel!

CHOUGH

Wilt thou not yield precedence?

TRIMTRAM

To thee? I know thee and thy brood.

CHOUGH

Know'st thou my brood? I know thy brood too: thou art a rook.

TRIMTRAM

The nearer akin to the choughs!

CHOUGH

The rooks akin to the choughs?

SECOND FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

Very well maintained.

CHOUGH

[Dungcart], thou liest!

TRIMTRAM

Lie? Enucleate the kernel of thy scabbard!

CHOUGH

Now, if I durst draw my sword, 'twere valiant, i'faith.

SECOND FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

Draw, draw, howsoever.

CHOUGH

Have some wine ready to make us friends, I pray you.

TRIMTRAM

Chough, I will make thee fly and roar.

CHOUGH

I will roar if thou strik'st me.

SECOND FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

So, 'tis enough; now conclude in wine. I see you will prove an excellent practitioner: wondrous well performed on both sides!

CHOUGH

Here, Trimtram, I drink to thee.

TRIMTRAM

I'll pledge you in good friendship.

[They drink.] Enter a Servant [Dick].

[DICK]

Is there not one Master Chough here?

USHER

This is the gentleman, sir.

[DICK]

My master, sir, your elected father-in-law desires speedily to speak with you.

CHOUGH

Friend, I will follow thee. I would thou hadst come a little sooner; thou shouldst have seen roaring sport, i'faith.

[DICK]

Sir, I'll return that you are following.

CHOUGH

Do so.

Exit [Dick].

I'll tell thee, tutor, I am to marry shortly, but I will defer it a while till I can roar perfectly, that I may get the upper hand of my wife on the wedding-day; 't must be done at first or never.

SECOND FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

'Twill serve you to good use in that, sir.

CHOUGH

How lik'st thou this, whiffler?

VAPOUR

Very valiantly, i'faith, sir.

CHOUGH

Tush, thou shalt see more by and by.

VAPOUR

I can stay no longer indeed, air. Who pay me for my tobacco?

CHOUGH

How! Pay for tobacco? Away, ye sooty-mouthing piper! You rusty piece of Martlemas bacon, away!

TRIMTRAM

Let me give him a mark for't.

CHOUGH

No, Trimtram, do not strike him; we'll only roar out a curse upon him.

TRIMTRAM

Well, do you begin then.

CHOUGH

May thy roll rot, and thy pudding drop in pieces, being sophisticated with filthy urine!

TRIMTRAM

May sergeants dwell on either side of thee to fright away thy twopenny customers!

CHOUGH

And for thy penny ones, let them suck thee dry!

TRIMTRAM

When thou art dead, mayst thou have no other sheets to be buried in but mouldy tobacco-leaves!

CHOUGH

And no strawings to stick thy carcass but the bitter stalks!

TRIMTRAM

Thy mourners all greasy tapsters!

CHOUGH

With foul tobacco-pipes in their hats instead of rotten rosemary! And last of all, may my man and I live to see all this performed, and to piss reeking even upon thy grave!

TRIMTRAM

And last of all for me, let this epitaph be remembered over thee:

Here coldly now within is laid to rot

A man that yesterday was piping hot:

Some say he died by pudding, some by prick,

A Fair Quarrel

Others by roll and ball, some leaf; all stick
Fast in censure, yet think it strange and rare,
He lived by smoke, yet died for want of air:
But then the surgeon said, when he beheld him,
It was the burning of his PIPE that killed him.

CHOUGH

So, are you paid now, whiffler?

VAPOUR

All this is but smoke out of a stinking pipe.

CHOUGH

So, so, pay him now, usher.

SECOND FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

Do not henceforth neglect your schooling, Master Chough.

CHOUGH

Call me rook if I do, tutor.

TRIMTRAM

And me raven, though my name be Trimtram.

CHOUGH

Farewell, tutor.

TRIMTRAM

Farewell, usher.

[Exeunt Chough and Trimtram.]

SECOND FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

Thus, when the drum's unbraced and trumpet cease,
Soldiers must get pay for to live in peace.

Exeunt.

[IV.ii. The Colonel's bedchamber]

[The Colonel discovered lying in a bed, his two Friends attending him.] Enter the Colonel's Sister, meeting the Surgeon.

COLONEL'S SISTER

Oh, my most worthy brother, thy hard fate 'twas!
Come hither, honest surgeon, and deal faithfully
With a distressed virgin. What hope is there?

SURGEON

Hope? Chilis was 'scaped miraculously, lady.

COLONEL'S SISTER

What's that, sir?

SURGEON

Cava vena. I care but little for his wound i' th' [oesophag], not thus much [snaps his fingers], trust me, but when they come to diaphragma once, the small intestines, or the spinal medul, or i' th' roots of the emunctories of the noble parts, then straight I fear a [syncope]; the flanks retiring towards the back, the urine bloody, the excrements purulent, and the dolour pricking or pungent.

COLONEL'S SISTER

Alas, I'm ne'er the better for this answer!

SURGEON

Now I must tell you his principal dolour lies i' th' region of the liver, and there's both inflammation and [tumefaction] feared: marry, I made him a [quadrangular] plumation, where I used sanguis draconis, by my faith, with powders incarnative, which I tempered with oil of hypericon, and other liquors mundificative.

COLONEL'S SISTER

Pox o' your mundies figatives! I would they were all fired!

SURGEON

But I purpose, lady, to make another experiment at next dressing with a [sarcotic] medicament made of iris of Florence: thus, mastic, calaphena, opopanax, sacrocolla--

COLONEL'S SISTER

Sacro-halter! What comfort is i' this to a poor gentlewoman?

Pray tell me in plain terms what you think of him.

SURGEON

Marry, in plain terms I know not what to say to him. The wound, I can assure you, inclines to paralism, and I find his body cacochymic; being then in fear of fever and inflammation, I nourish him altogether with viands refrigerative, and give for potion the juice of [sanicula] dissolved with water cerefolium: I could do no more, lady, if his best [ginglymus] were dissevered.

Exit.

COLONEL'S SISTER

What thankless pains does the tongue often take
To make the whole man most ridiculous!
I come to him for comfort, and he tires me
Worse than my sorrow. What a precious good
May be delivered sweetly in few words,
And what a mount of nothing has he cast forth!
[Aside] Alas, his strength decays.--How cheer you, sir,
My honoured brother?

COLONEL

In soul, never better:
I feel an excellent health there, such a stoutness
My invisible enemy flies me; seeing me armed

A Fair Quarrel

With penitence and forgiveness, they fall backward,
Whether through admiration, not imagining
There were such armoury in a soldier's soul
As pardon and repentance, or through power
Of ghostly valour. But I have been lord
Of a more happy conquest in nine hours now
Than in nine years before. Oh, kind lieutenants,
This is the only war we should provide for,
Where he that forgives largest, and sighs strongest,
Is a tried soldier, a true man in deed,
And wins the best field, makes his own heart bleed!
Read the last part of that will, sir.

FIRST [FRIEND OF THE COLONEL] reads

'I also require at the hands of my most beloved sister, whom I make full executrix, the disposure of my body in burial at St. Martin's i' th' Field; and to cause to be distributed to the poor of the same parish forty mark, and to the hospital of maimed soldiers a hundred; lastly, I give and bequeath to my kind, dear, and virtuous sister the full possession of my present estate in riches, whether it be in lands, leases, money, goods, plate, jewels, or what kind soever, upon this condition following, that she forthwith tender both herself and all these infeoffments to that noble captain, my late enemy, Captain Ager.'

COLONEL'S SISTER

How, sir?

COLONEL

Read it again, sir; let her hear it plain.

COLONEL'S SISTER

Pray spare your pains, sir; 'tis too plain already.
Good sir, how do you? Is your memory perfect?
This will makes question of you. I bestowed
So much grief and compassion o' your wound,
I never looked into your sense's epilepsy:
The sickness and infirmity of your judgment
Is to be doubted now more than your body's.
Why, is your love no dearer to me, sir,
Than to dispose me so upon the man
Whose fury is your body's present torment,
The author of your danger, one I hate
Beyond the bounds of malice? Do you not feel
His wrath upon you? I beseech you, sir,
Alter that cruel article.

COLONEL

Cruel, sister?
Forgive me, natural love; I must offend thee,
Speaking to this woman. Am I content,
Having much kindred, yet to give thee all,
Because in thee I'd raise my means to goodness,
And canst thou prove so thankless to my bounty,
To grudge my soul her peace? Is my intent

To leave her rich, whose only desire is
To send me poorer into the next world
Than ever usurer went, or politic statist?
Is it so burdensome for thee to love
Where I forgive? Oh, wretched is the man
That builds the last hopes of his saving comforts
Upon a woman's charity! He's most miserable:
If it were possible, her obstinate will
Will pull him down in his midway to heaven.
I've wronged that worthy man past recompense,
And in my anger robbed him of fair fame;
And thou the fairest restitution art
My life could yield him: if I knew a fairer,
I'd set thee by and thy unwilling goodness,
And never make my sacred peace of thee.
But there's the cruelty of a fate debarred:
Thou art the last, and all, and thou art hard!

COLONEL'S SISTER

Let your grieved heart hold better thoughts of me:
I will not prove so, sir; but since you enforce it
With such a strength of passion, I'll perform
What by your will you have enjoined me to,
Though the world never show me joy again.

COLONEL

Oh, this may be fair cunning for the time,
To put me off, knowing I hold not long;
And when I look to have my joys accomplished,
I shall find no such things: that were vild cozenage,
And not to be repented.

COLONEL'S SISTER

By all the blessedness
Truth and a good life looks for, I will do't, sir.

COLONEL

Comforts reward you for't, whene'er you grieve!
I know if you dare swear, I may believe.

Exeunt.

[IV.iii. Lady Ager's house]

Enter Captain Ager.

CAPTAIN AGER

No sooner have I entrance i' this house now
But all my joy falls from me, which was wont
To be the sanctuary of my comforts:
Methought I loved it with a reverend gladness,

A Fair Quarrel

As holy men do consecrated temples,
For the saint's sake, which I believed my mother;
But proved a false faith since, a fearful heresy.
Oh, who'd erect th' assurance of his joys
Upon a woman's goodness, whose best virtue
Is to commit unseen, and highest secrecy
To hide but her own sin? There's their perfection.
And if she be so good, which many fail of too,
When these are bad, how wondrous ill are they!
What comfort is't to fight, win this day's fame,
When all my after-days are lamps of shame?

Enter Lady Ager.

[LADY AGER]

[Aside] Blessings be firm to me! He's come, 'tis he!--
A surgeon speedily!

CAPTAIN AGER

A surgeon? Why, madam?

LADY AGER

Perhaps you'll say 'tis but a little wound;
Good to prevent a danger. Quick, a surgeon!

CAPTAIN AGER

Why, madam?

LADY AGER

Ay, ay, that's all the fault of valiant men;
They'll not be known o' their hurts till they're past help,
And then too late they wish for't.

CAPTAIN AGER

Will you hear me?

LADY AGER

'Tis no disparagement to confess a wound;
I'm glad, sir, 'tis no worse. A surgeon, quickly!

CAPTAIN AGER

Madam--

LADY AGER

Come, come, sir, a wound's honourable,
And never shames the wearer.

CAPTAIN AGER

By the justice

A Fair Quarrel

I owe to honour, I came off untouched.

LADY AGER

I'd rather believe that.

CAPTAIN AGER

You believe truth so.

LADY AGER

My tears prevail then. Welcome, welcome, sir,
As peace and mercy to one new departed!
Why would you go though, and deceive me so,
When my abundant love took all the course
That might be to prevent it? I did that
For my affection's sake, goodness forgive me for't,
That were my own life's safety put upon't,
I'd rather die than do't. Think how you used me then,
And yet would you go, and hazard yourself too;
'Twas but unkindly done.

CAPTAIN AGER

What's all this, madam?

LADY AGER

See then how rash you were, and short in wisdom:
Why, wrong my faith I did, slandered my constancy,
Belied my truth; that which few mothers will,
Or fewer can, I did, out of true fear
And loving care, only to keep thee here.

CAPTAIN AGER

I doubt I am too quick of apprehension now,
And that's a general fault when we hear joyfully,
With the desire of longing for't. I ask it:
Why, were you never false?

LADY AGER

May death come to me
Before repentance then!

CAPTAIN AGER

I heard it plain, sure.
Not false at all?

LADY AGER

By the reward of truth,
I never knew that deed that claims the name on't.

CAPTAIN AGER

A Fair Quarrel

May then that glorious reward you swore by
Be never-failing to you! All the blessings
That you have given me, since obedient custom
Taught me to kneel and ask 'em, are not valuable
With this immaculate blessing of your truth:
This is the palm to victory,
The crown for all deserts past and to come;
Let 'em be numberless! They are rewarded,
Already they're rewarded. [Kneeling] Bless this frame,
I feel it much too weak to bear the joy on't.

LADY AGER

Rise, sir.

CAPTAIN AGER

Oh, pardon me!
I cannot honour you too much, too long:
I kneel not only to a mother now,
But to a woman that was never false.
Ye're dear, and ye're good too; ay, think o' that:
What reverence does she merit! 'Tis fit such
Should be distinguished from the prostrate sex;
And what distinction properer can be shown
Than honour done to her that keeps her own?

LADY AGER

Come, sir, I'll have you rise.

CAPTAIN AGER

To do a deed, then,
That shall forever raise me.

Rises.

Oh, my glory,
Why, this, this is the quarrel that I looked for!
The tother but a shift to hold time play.
You sacred ministers of preservation,
For heaven's sake send him life,
And with it mighty health, and such a strength
May equal but the cause! I wish no foul things:
If life but glow in him, he shall know instantly
That I'm resolved to call him to accompt for't.

LADY AGER

Why, hark you, sir--

CAPTAIN AGER

I bind you by your honour, madam,
You speak no hindrance to's; take heed, you ought not.

LADY AGER

What an unhappiness have I in goodness!
'Tis ever my desire to intend well,
But have no fortunate way in't. For all this
Deserve I yet no better of you
But to be grieved again? Are you not well
With honest gain of fame, with safety purchased?
Will you needs tempt a ruin that avoids you?

Exit Lady.

CAPTAIN AGER

No, y'ave prevailed: things of this nature sprung,
When they use action, must use little tongue.

Enter a Servant.

Now, sir, the news?

SERVANT

Sir, there's a gentlewoman
Desires some conference with you.

CAPTAIN AGER

How! With me?
A gentlewoman? What is she?

SERVANT

Her attendant
Delivered her to be the colonel's sister.

CAPTAIN AGER

Oh, for a storm then!
'Las, poor virtuous gentlewoman,
I will endure her violence with much pity;
She comes to ease her heart, good, noble soul.
'Tis e'en a charity to release the burden:
Were not that remedy ordained for women,
Their hearts would never hold three years together.

Enter the Colonel's Sister.

And here she comes. I never marked so much of her:
That face can be the mistress of no anger
But I might very well endure a month, methinks.
I am the man: speak, lady; I'll stand fair.

COLONEL'S SISTER

And I'm enjoined by vow to fall thus low,

She kneels.

And from the dying hand of a repentant
Offer for expiation of wrongs done you
Myself, and with myself all that was his,
Which upon that condition was made mine,
Being his soul's wish to depart absolute man,
In life a soldier, death a Christian.

CAPTAIN AGER

Oh, heaven has touched him nobly: how it shames
My virtue's slow perfection! Rise, dear brightness,
I forget manners too; up, matchless sweetness!

COLONEL'S SISTER

I must not, sir; there is not in my vow
That liberty. I must be received first,
Or all denied; if either, I am free.

CAPTAIN AGER

He must be without soul should deny thee;
And with that reverence I receive the gift
As it was sent me. Worthy colonel,
H'as such a conquering way i' th' blessed things!
Whoever overcomes, he only wins.

[Exeunt.]

[IV.iv. A street]

Hem, within. Enter Captain Albo, a bawd [Meg], and a whore [Priss].

MEG

Hark [off] these hard-hearted bloodhounds! These butchers are e'en as merciless as their dogs: they knock down a woman's fame e'en as it walks the streets by 'em.

PRISS

And the captain here, that should defend us, walks by like John of the apple-loft.

CAPTAIN ALBO

What for interjections, Priss? Hem, evax, vah! Let the carnifexes scour their throats! Thou knowest there is a curse hangs over their bloody heads: this year there shall be more butchers' pricks burnt than of all trades besides.

MEG

I do wonder how thou camest to be a captain.

CAPTAIN ALBO

As thou camest to be a bawd, Meg, and Priss to be a whore; every one by their deserts.

MEG

Bawd and whore? Out, you unprofitable rascal! Hast not thou been at the new play yet, to teach thee better manners? Truly they say they are the finest players, and good speakers of gentlewomen of our quality: bawd and

A Fair Quarrel

whore is not mentioned amongst 'em, but the handsomest narrow-mouthed names they have for us, that some of them may serve as well for a lady as for one of our occupation.

PRISS

Prithee, patroness, let's go see a piece of that play; if we shall have good words for our money, 'tis as much as we can deserve, i'faith.

MEG

I doubt 'tis too late now; but another time, servant.

CAPTAIN ALBO

Let's go now, sweet face; I am acquainted with one of the pantomimics. The bulchins will use the Irish captain with respect, and you two shall be boxed amongst the better sort.

PRISS

Sirrah Captain Albo, I doubt you are but white-livered: look that you defend us valiantly, you know your penance else. Patroness, you remember how you used him once?

MEG

Ay, servant, and I shall never forget it till I use him so again. Do you remember, Captain?

CAPTAIN ALBO

Mum, Meg; I will not hear on't now.

MEG

How I and my Amazons stripped you as naked as an Indian?

CAPTAIN ALBO

Why, Meg!

MEG

And then how I bound you to the good behaviour in the open fields?

PRISS

And then you strowed oats upon his hoppers.

CAPTAIN ALBO

Prithee, sweet face!

PRISS

And then brought your ducks to nibble upon him. You remember?

CAPTAIN ALBO

Oh, the remembrance tortures me again! No more, good sweet face.

MEG

Well, lead on, sir; but hark a little.

Enter Chough and Trimtram.

CHOUGH

A Fair Quarrel

Didst thou bargain for the bladders with the butcher, Trim?

TRIMTRAM

Ay, sir, I have 'em here. I'll practise to swim too, sir, and then I may roar with the water at London Bridge: he that roars by land and by water both is the perfect roarer.

CHOUGH

Well, I'll venture to swim too: if my father-in-law gives me a good dowry with his daughter, I shall hold up my head well enough.

TRIMTRAM

Peace, sir; here's practice for our roaring: here's a centaur and two hippocrenes.

CHOUGH

Offer the justle, Trim.

Justle.

CAPTAIN ALBO

Ha! What meanest thou by that?

TRIMTRAM

I mean to confront thee, cyclops.

CHOUGH

I'll tell thee what 'a means. Is this thy sister?

CAPTAIN ALBO

How then, sir?

CHOUGH

Why then, I say she is a bronstrops, and this is a fucus.

PRISS

No indeed, sir; we are both fucusses.

CAPTAIN ALBO

Art thou military? Art thou a soldier?

CHOUGH

A soldier? No, I scorn to be so poor; I am a roarer.

CAPTAIN ALBO

A roarer?

TRIMTRAM

Ay, sir, two roarers.

CAPTAIN ALBO

Know then, my freshwater friends, that I am a captain.

CHOUGH

What, and have but two to serve under you?

CAPTAIN ALBO

I am now retiring the field.

TRIMTRAM

You may see that by his bag and baggage.

CHOUGH

Deliver up thy panagron to me.

TRIMTRAM

And give me thy sindicus.

CAPTAIN ALBO

Deliver?

MEG

I pray you, Captain, be contented; the gentlemen seem to give us very good words.

CHOUGH

Good words? Ay, if you could understand 'em; the words cost twenty pound.

MEG

What is your pleasure, gentlemen?

CHOUGH

I would enucleate my fructifer.

PRISS

What says he, patroness?

MEG

He would inoculate: I understand the gentleman very pithily.

CAPTAIN ALBO

Speak, are you gentle or plebeian? Can you give arms?

CHOUGH

Arms? Ay, sir, you shall feel our arms presently.

TRIMTRAM

'Sault you the women, I'll pepper him till he stinks again. I perceive what countryman he is; let me alone with him.

CAPTAIN ALBO

Dar'st thou charge a captain?

TRIMTRAM

Yes, and discharge upon him too.

CAPTAIN ALBO

Foh, 'tis poison to my country; the slave has eaten pippins! Oh, shoot no more, turn both thy broadsides rather than thy poop! 'Tis foul play: my country breeds no poison. I yield; the great O'Toole shall yield on these conditions.

CHOUGH

I have given one of 'em a fair fall, Trim.

TRIMTRAM

Then thus far we bring home conquest. Follow me, Captain; the cyclops doth command.

CHOUGH

Follow me, tweaks; the centaur doth command.

MEG

Anything, sweet gentlemen. Will 't please you to lead to the tavern, where we'll make all friends?

TRIMTRAM

Why, now you come to the conclusion.

CHOUGH

Stay, Trim; I have heard your tweaks are like your mermaids, they have sweet voices to entice the passengers: let's have a song, and then we'll set 'em at liberty.

TRIMTRAM

In the commendation of roaring, not else, sir.

CHOUGH

Ay, in the commendation of roaring.

MEG

The best we can, gentlemen.

Sing bawd.

Then here thou shalt resign
Both captain and commander;
That name was never thine,
But apple-squire and pander:
And henceforth will we grant,
In pillage or in monies,
In clothing or provant,
Whate'er we get by conies.
With a hone, a hone, a hone,
No cheaters nor decoys
Shall have a share, but alone
The bravest roaring boys.
Whate'er we get by gulls,
Of country or of city,
Old flatcaps or young heirs,

A Fair Quarrel

Or lawyers' clerks so witty;
By sailors newly landed,
To put in for fresh waters;
By wand'ring gander-mooners,
Or muffled late night-walkers.
With a, etc.

Whate'er we get by strangers,
The Scotch, the Dutch, or Irish,
Or to come nearer home,
By masters of the parish,
It is concluded thus,
By all and every wench,
To take of all their coins,
And pay 'em back in French.
With a, etc.

CHOUGH
Melodious minotaur!

TRIMTRAM

Harmonious hippocrene!

CHOUGH

Sweet-breasted bronstrops!

TRIMTRAM

Most tunable tweak!

CHOUGH

Delicious duplar!

TRIMTRAM

Putrefactive panagron!

CHOUGH

Calumnious calicut!

TRIMTRAM

And most singular sindicus!

MEG

We shall never be able to deserve these good words at your hands, gentlemen.

CAPTAIN ALBO

Shake golls with the captain, he shall be thy valiant friend.

CHOUGH

Not yet, Captain; we must make an end of our roaring first.

TRIMTRAM

We'll serve 'em as we did the tobacco-man, lay a curse upon 'em; marry, we'll lay it on gently, because they have

A Fair Quarrel

used us so kindly, and then we'll shake golls together.

PRISS

As gently as you can, sweet gentlemen.

CHOUGH

For thee, oh, pander, mayst thou trudge till the damned soles of thy boots fleet into dirt, but never rise into air!

TRIMTRAM

Next, mayst thou fleet so long from place to place, till thou beest kicked out of Fleet Street!

CHOUGH

As thou hast lived by bad flesh, so rotten mutton be thy bane!

TRIMTRAM

When thou art dead, may twenty whores follow thee, that thou mayst go a squire to thy grave!

CAPTAIN ALBO

Enough for me, sweet faces, let me sleep in my grave.

CHOUGH

For thee, old sindicus, may I see thee ride in a caroche with two wheels, and drawn with one horse!

TRIMTRAM

Ten beadles running by, instead of footmen!

CHOUGH

With every one a whip, 'stead of an Irish dart!

TRIMTRAM

Forty barbers' basins sounding before, instead of trumpets!

MEG

This will be comely indeed, sweet gentlemen roarers.

TRIMTRAM

Thy ruff starched yellow with rotten eggs!

CHOUGH

And mayst thou then be drawn from Holborn to Hounslow Heath!

TRIMTRAM

And then be burnt to Colebrook, for destroying of Maidenhead!

MEG

I will study to deserve this kindness at your hands, gentlemen.

CHOUGH

Now for thee, little fucus: mayst thou first serve out thy time as a tweak, and then become a bronstrops, as she is!

TRIMTRAM

A Fair Quarrel

Mayst thou have a reasonable good spring, for thou art like to have many dangerous foul falls!

CHOUGH

Mayst thou have two ruffs torn in one week!

TRIMTRAM

May spiders only weave thy cobweb-lawn!

CHOUGH

Mayst thou set up in Rogue Lane!

TRIMTRAM

Live till thou stink'st in garden-alleys!

CHOUGH

And die sweetly in Tower Ditch!

PRISS

I thank you for that, good sir roarer.

CHOUGH

Come, shall we go now, Trim? My father-in-law stays for me all this while.

TRIMTRAM

Nay, I'll serve 'em as we did the tobacco-man: I'll bury 'em altogether, and give 'em an epitaph.

CHOUGH

All together, Trim? Why, then the epitaph will be accessory to the sin.

[TRIMTRAM]

Alas, he has kept the door all his lifetime; for pity let 'em lie together in their graves.

CAPTAIN ALBO

E'en as thou wilt, Trim, and I thank you too, sir.

TRIMTRAM

He that the reason would know, let him hark
Why these [three] were buried near Marybone Park:
These three were a pander, a bawd, and a whore
That sucked many dry to the bones before.
Will you know how they lived? Here 't may be read:
The Low Countries did ever find 'em bread;
They lived by Flushing, by Sluys, and the Groyne,
Sickened in France, and died under the Line.
Three letters at last commended 'em hither,
But the hangman broke one in putting together;
P was the first, who cries out for a pardon,
O craves his book, yet could not read such a hard one,
An X was the last, which in conjunction
Was broke by Brandon, and here's the conclusion:
By three trees, three letters, these three, pander, bawd, whore,

A Fair Quarrel

Now stink below ground, stunk long above before.

CHOUGH

So, now we have done with you, remember roaring boys.

TRIMTRAM

Farewell, centaur.

CHOUGH

Farewell, bronstrops.

TRIMTRAM

Farewell, fucus.

Exeunt Chough and Trimtram.

CAPTAIN ALBO

Well, Meg, I will learn to roar, and still maintain the name of captain over these lancepresadoes.

MEG

If thou dost not, mayst thou be buried under the roaring curse!

Exeunt.

V.i. [Master Russell's house]

Enter Physician, Jane as a bride.

PHYSICIAN

Will you be obstinate?

JANE

Torment me not,
Thou ling'ring executioner to death,
Greatest disease to nature, that striv'st by art
To make men long a-dying! Your practice is
Upon men's bodies; as men pull roses
For their own relish, but to kill the flower,
So you maintain your lives by others' deaths:
What eat you then [but] carrion?

PHYSICIAN

Fie, bitterness;
Y'ad need to candy o'er your tongue a little,
Your words will hardly be digested else.

JANE

You can give yourself a vomit to return 'em
If they offend your stomach.

PHYSICIAN

Hear my vow:
You are to be married today--

JANE

A second torment,
Worse than the first, 'cause unavoidable.
I would I could as soon annihilate
My father's will in that as forbid thy lust!

PHYSICIAN

If you then tender an unwilling hand
Meet it with revenge: marry a cuckold.

JANE

If thou wilt marry me, I'll make that vow,
And give my body for satisfaction
To him that should enjoy me for his wife.

PHYSICIAN

Go to, I'll mar your marriage.

JANE

A Fair Quarrel

Do, plague me so:
I'll rather bear the brand of all that's past
In capital characters upon my brow,
Than think to be thy whore or marry him.

PHYSICIAN

I will defame thee ever.

JANE

Spare me not.

PHYSICIAN

I will produce thy bastard,
Bring thee to public penance.

JANE

No matter, I care not:
I shall then have a clean sheet; I'll wear twenty
Rather than one defiled with thee.

PHYSICIAN

Look for revenge!

JANE

Pursue it fully then. [Aside] Out of his hate
I shall [escape], I hope, a loathed fate.

Exit Jane.

PHYSICIAN

Am I rejected, all my baits nibbled off,
And not the fish caught? I'll trouble the whole stream,
And choke it in the mud: since hooks not take,
I'll throw in nets that shall or kill or break.
This is the bridegroom's man.

Enter Trimtram with rosemary.

Hark, sir, a word.

TRIMTRAM

'Tis a busy day, sir, nor I need no physic;
You see I scour about my business.

PHYSICIAN

Pray you a word, sir. Your master is to be married today?

TRIMTRAM

Else all this rosemary's lost.

PHYSICIAN

V.i. [Master Russell's house]

A Fair Quarrel

I would speak with your master, sir.

TRIMTRAM

My master, sir, is to be married this morning, and cannot be within while soon at night.

PHYSICIAN

If you will do your master the best service
That e'er you did him, if he shall not curse
Your negligence hereafter slackening it,
If he shall bless me for the dearest friend
That ever his acquaintance met withal,
Let me speak with him ere he go to church.

TRIMTRAM

A right physician! You would have none go to the church nor churchyard till you send them thither: well, if death do not spare you yourselves he deals hardly with you, for you are better benefactors and send more to him than all diseases besides.

CHOUGH within

What, Trimtram, Trimtram!

TRIMTRAM

I come, sir. Hark you, you may hear him: he's upon the spur, and would fain mount the saddle of matrimony; but, if I can, I'll persuade him to come to you.

PHYSICIAN

Pray you do, sir.

Exit Trimtram.

I'll teach all peevish niceness
To beware the strong advantage of revenge.

Enter Chough.

CHOUGH

Who's that would speak with me?

PHYSICIAN

None but a friend, sir;
I would speak with you.

CHOUGH

Why, sir, and I dare speak with any man under the universe. Can you roar, sir?

PHYSICIAN

No, in faith, sir;
I come to tell you mildly for your good,
If you please to hear me. You are upon marriage?

CHOUGH

A Fair Quarrel

No, sir, I [am] towards it, but not upon it yet.

PHYSICIAN

Do you know what to do?

CHOUGH

Yes, sir, I have practised what to do before now; I would be ashamed to be married else: I have seen a bronstrops in my time, and a hippocrene, and a tweak too.

PHYSICIAN

Take fair heed, sir; the wife that you would marry
Is not fit for you.

CHOUGH

Why, sir, have you tried her?

PHYSICIAN

Not I, believe it, sir; but believe withal
She has been tried.

CHOUGH

Why, sir, is she a fructifer, or a fucus?

PHYSICIAN

All that I speak, sir, is in love to you:
Your bride that may be has not that portion
That a bride should have.

CHOUGH

Why, sir, she has a thousand and a better penny.

PHYSICIAN

I do not speak of rubbish, dross, and ore,
But the refined metal, honour, sir.

CHOUGH

What she wants in honour shall be made up in worship, sir; money will purchase both.

PHYSICIAN

To be plain with you, she's naught.

Draws his sword.

CHOUGH

If thou canst not roar, th'art a dead man! My bride naught?

PHYSICIAN

Sir, I do not fear you that way; what I speak
My life shall maintain: I say she's naught.

CHOUGH

Dost thou not fear me?

PHYSICIAN

Indeed I do not, sir.

CHOUGH

I'll never draw upon thee while I live for that trick. Put up and speak freely.

PHYSICIAN

Your intended bride is a whore; that's freely, sir.

CHOUGH

Yes, faith, a whore's free enough, and she hath a conscience. Is she a whore? Foot, I warrant she has the pox then!

PHYSICIAN

Worse, the plague; 'tis more incurable.

CHOUGH

A plaguy whore? A pox on her, I'll none of her!

PHYSICIAN

Mine accusation shall have firm evidence;
I will produce an unavoided witness,
A bastard of her bearing.

CHOUGH

A bastard? 'Snails, there's great suspicion she's a whore then! I'll wrestle a fall with her father for putting this trick upon me, as I am a gentleman.

PHYSICIAN

Good sir, mistake me not; I do not speak
To break the contract of united hearts:
I will not pull that curse upon my head,
To separate the husband and the wife;
But this, in love, I thought fit to reveal
As the due office betwixt man and man,
That you might not be ignorant of your ills.
Consider now of my premonishment
As yourself shall please.

CHOUGH

I'll burn all the rosemary to sweeten the house, for in my conscience 'tis infected. Has she drunk bastard? If she would piss me wine vinegar now nine times a day, I'd never have her, and I thank you too.

Enter Trimtram.

TRIMTRAM

Come, will you come away, sir? They have all rosemary, and stay for you to lead the way.

CHOUGH

I'll not be married today, Trimtram. Hast e'er an almanac about thee? This is the nineteenth of August: look what

day of the month 'tis.

TRIMTRAM looks in an almanac
'Tis tenty-nine indeed, sir.

CHOUGH

What's the word? What says Bretnor?

TRIMTRAM

The word is, sir, 'There's a hole in her coat'.

CHOUGH

I thought so: the physician agrees with him; I'll not marry today.

TRIMTRAM

I pray you, sir, there will be charges for new rosemary else; this will be withered by tomorrow.

CHOUGH

Make a bonfire on't to sweeten Rosemary Lane. Prithee, Trim, entreat my father-in-law that might have been to come and speak with me.

TRIMTRAM

The bride cries already and looks t'other way; and you be so backward too, we shall have a fine arseward wedding on't.

Exit Trimtram.

CHOUGH

You'll stand to your words, sir?

PHYSICIAN

I'll not fly the house, sir; when you have need, call me to evidence.

CHOUGH

If you'll prove she has borne a bastard, I'll stand to't she's a whore.

Exit Physician. Enter Russell and Trimtram.

RUSSELL

Why, how now, son? What causeth these delays?
All stay for your leading.

CHOUGH

Came I from the Mount to be confronted?

RUSSELL

How's that, sir?

CHOUGH

Canst thou roar, old man?

RUSSELL

Roar? How mean you, sir?

CHOUGH

Why then, I'll tell thee plainly, thy daughter [is] a bronstrop.

RUSSELL

A bronstrop? What's that, sir?

TRIMTRAM

Sir, if she be so, she is a hippocrene.

CHOUGH

Nay, worse, she is a fructifer.

TRIMTRAM

Nay then, she is a fucus, a minotaur, and a tweak.

RUSSELL

Pray you speak to my understanding, sir.

CHOUGH

If thou wilt have it in plain terms, she is a calicut and a panagron.

TRIMTRAM

Nay then, she is a duplar and a sindicus.

RUSSELL

Good sir, speak English to me.

CHOUGH

All this is Cornish to thee; I say thy daughter has drunk bastard in her time.

RUSSELL

Bastard? You do not mean to make her a whore?

CHOUGH

Yes, but I do; if she make a fool of me, I'll ne'er make her my wife till she have her maidenhead again.

RUSSELL

A whore? I do defy this calumny.

CHOUGH

Dost thou? I defy thee then.

TRIMTRAM

Do you, sir? Then I defy thee too: fight with us both at once in this quarrel, if thou darest!

CHOUGH

I could have had a whore at Plymouth.

TRIMTRAM

Ay, or at Pe'ryn.

CHOUGH

Ay, or under the Mount.

TRIMTRAM

Or as you came, at Evil.

CHOUGH

Or at Hockey Hole in Somersetshire.

TRIMTRAM

Or at the Hanging Stones in Wiltshire.

CHOUGH

Or at Maidenhead in Berkshire. And did I come in by Maidenhead to go out by Staines? Oh, that man, woman, or child would wrestle with me for a pound of patience!

RUSSELL

Some thief has put in poison at your ears
To steal the good name of my child from me;
Or if it be a malice of your own,
Be sure I will enforce a proof from you.

CHOUGH

He's a goose and a woodcock that says I will not prove any word that I speak.

TRIMTRAM

Ay, either goose or woodcock; he shall, sir, with any man.

CHOUGH

Phy-si-ci-an! Mauz avez, physician!

[Enter Physician.]

RUSSELL

Is he the author?

PHYSICIAN

Sir, with much sorrow for your sorrow's sake,
I must deliver this most certain truth:
Your daughter is an honour-stained bride,
Indeed she is the mother to a child
Before the lawful wife unto a husband.

CHOUGH

Law, that's worse than I told thee; I said she had borne a bastard, and he says she was the mother on't too.

RUSSELL

I'm yet an infidel against all this,

A Fair Quarrel

And will believe the sun is made of brass,
The stars of amber--

CHOUGH

And the moon of a Holland cheese.

RUSSELL

Rather than this impossibility.

Enter Jane and Anne.

Oh, here she comes.
Nay, come, daughter, stand at the bar of shame;
Either now quit thyself, or kill me ever:
Your marriage-day is spoiled if all be true.

JANE

A happy misery! Who's my accuser?

PHYSICIAN

I am, that knows it true I speak.

CHOUGH

Yes, and I'm his witness.

TRIMTRAM

And I.

CHOUGH

And I again.

TRIMTRAM

And I again too. There's four; that's enough, I hope.

RUSSELL

How can you witness, sir, that nothing know
But what you have received from his report?

CHOUGH

Must we not believe our physicians? Pray you, think I know as much as every fool does.

TRIMTRAM

Let me be Trimtram: I pray you too, sir.

JANE

Sir, if this bad man have laid a blemish
On my white name, he is a most false one,
Defaming me for the just denial
Of his foul lust. [To Physician] Nay, now you shall be known, sir.

ANNE

V.i. [Master Russell's house]

A Fair Quarrel

Sir, I'm his sister, and do better know him
Than all of you: give not too much belief
To his wild words; he's oftentimes mad, sir.

PHYSICIAN

I thank you, good sister.

ANNE

[Aside to Physician] Are you not mad to do this office?
Fie upon your malice!

PHYSICIAN

I'll presently produce both nurse and child,
Whose very eyes shall call her mother before it speaks.

[Exit.]

CHOUGH

Ha, ha, ha, ha! By my troth, I'd spend a shilling on that condition to hear that. I think in my conscience I shall take the physician in a lie: if the child call her mother before it can speak, I'll never wrestle while I live again.

TRIMTRAM

It must be a she child if it do, sir; and those speak the soonest of any living creatures, they say.

CHOUGH

Baw, waw! A dog will bark a month sooner; he's a very puppy else.

RUSSELL

[Aside to Jane] Come, tell truth 'twixt ourselves; here's none but friends.
One spot a father's love will soon wipe off;
The truth, and [thereby] try my love abundant:
I'll cover it with all the care I have,
And yet, perhaps, make up a marriage-day.

JANE

[Aside to Russell] Then it's true, sir, I have [a] child.

RUSSELL

Hast thou?
Well, wipe thine eyes, I'm a grandfather then;
If all bastards were banished, the city would be thin
In the thickest term-time. Well now, let me alone,
I'll try my wits for thee. Richard, Francis, Andrew!
None of my knaves within?

Enter his servant [Dick].

[DICK]

Here's one of 'em, sir: the guests come in apace.

RUSSELL

A Fair Quarrel

Do they, Dick? Let 'em have wine and sugar; we'll be for 'em presently. But hark, Dick. [Whispers to him.]

CHOUGH

I long to hear this child speak, i'faith, Trim; I would this foolish physician would come [at] once.

TRIMTRAM

If it calls her mother, I hope it shall never call you father.

CHOUGH

No; and it do, I'll whip it, i'faith, and give thee leave to whip me.

RUSSELL

Run on thy best legs, Dick.

[DICK]

I'll be here in a twinkling, sir.

Exit [Dick]. Enter Physician, Nurse with the child.

PHYSICIAN

Now, gentlemen, believe your eyes if not my tongue.

Do not you call this your child?

CHOUGH

Phew, that's not the point: you promised us the child should call her mother; if it does this month, I'll ne'er go to the roaring-school again.

RUSSELL

Whose child is this, nurse?

NURSE

Dis gentleman's, so he to me readen.

Points to the Physician.

CHOUGH

'Snails, she's the physician's bronstrops, Trim!

TRIMTRAM

His fucus, his very tweak, i'faith!

CHOUGH

A glister in his teeth! Let him take her with a purgation to him!

RUSSELL

'Tis as your sister said, you are stark mad, sir;
This much confirms it. You have defamed
Mine honest daughter; I'll have you punished for't,
Besides the civil penance of your sin
And keeping of your bastard.

A Fair Quarrel

PHYSICIAN

This is fine!

All your wit and wealth must not thus carry it.

RUSSELL

[Taking Chough and Trimtram aside] Sir Chough, a word with you.

CHOUGH

I'll not have her, i'faith, sir; if Trimtram will have her, and he will, let him.

TRIMTRAM

Who, I, sir? I scorn it. If you'll have her, I'll have her too; I'll do as you do, and no otherwise.

RUSSELL

I do not mean 't to either; this only, sir,
That whatsoe'er y'ave seen, you would be silent:
Hinder not my child of another husband,
Though you forsake her.

CHOUGH

I'll not speak a word, i'faith.

RUSSELL

As you are a gentleman?

CHOUGH

By these basket-hilts, as I am a youth,
A gentleman, a roarer.

RUSSELL

Charm your man, I beseech you, too.

CHOUGH

I warrant you, sir, he shall do nothing but what I do before him.

RUSSELL

I shall most dearly thank you.

Enter [Dick] with Fitzallen.

Oh, are you come?

Welcome, son-in-law! This was beyond your hope:
We old men have pretty conceits sometimes;
Your wedding-day's prepared, and this is it.
How think you of it?

FITZALLEN

As of the joyfull'st

That ever welcomed me! You show yourself now
A pattern to all kind fathers. My sweetest Jane!

A Fair Quarrel

RUSSELL

Your capacity I meant but as a sauce
Unto your wedding—dinner; now I'm sure
'Tis far more welcome in this short restraint
Than had it freely come.

FITZALLEN

A thousandfold.

JANE

I like this well.

CHOUGH

[Taking Trimtram aside] I have not the heart to see this gentleman gulled so; I will reveal. I make it mine own case: 'tis a foul case.

TRIMTRAM

Remember you have sworn by your hilts.

CHOUGH

I'll break my hilts rather than conceal. I have a trick: do thou follow me; I will reveal it, and yet not speak it neither.

TRIMTRAM

'Tis my duty to follow you, sir.

CHOUGH sings

Take heed in time, oh, man, unto thy head.

TRIMTRAM sings

All is not gold that glistereth in bed.

RUSSELL

Why, sir! Why, sir!

CHOUGH

[Singing] Look to't, I say, thy bride's a bronstrops.

TRIMTRAM

[Singing] And knows the thing that men wear in their slops.

FITZALLEN

How's this, sir?

CHOUGH

[Singing] A hippocrene, a tweak, for and a fucus.

TRIMTRAM

[Singing] Let not fond love with foretops so rebuke us.

RUSSELL

A Fair Quarrel

Good sir!

CHOUGH

[Singing] Behold a baby of this maid's begetting.

TRIMTRAM

[Singing] A deed of darkness after the sunsetting.

RUSSELL

Your oath, sir!

CHOUGH

[Singing] I swear and sing thy bride has taken physic.

TRIMTRAM

[Singing] This was the doctor cured her of that phthisic.

CHOUGH

[Singing] If you'll believe me, I will say no more.

TRIMTRAM

[Singing] Thy bride's a tweak, as we do say that roar.

CHOUGH

Bear witness, gentlemen, I have not spoke a word:

My hilts are whole still.

FITZALLEN

This is a sweet epithalamium
Unto the marriage-bed, a musical,
Harmonious Io! Sir, y'ave wronged me
And basely wronged me. Was this your cunning fetch,
To fetch me out of prison, forever
To marry me unto a strumpet?

RUSSELL

None of those words, good sir;
'Tis but a fault, and 'tis a sweet one too.
Come, sir, your means is short, lengthen your fortunes
With a fair proffer: I'll put a thousand pieces
Into the scale, to help her to weigh it up,
Above the first dowry.

FITZALLEN

Ha? You say well,
Shame may be bought out at a dear rate;
A thousand pieces added to her dowry!

RUSSELL

[Giving him money] There's five hundred of 'em to make the bargain.
I have worthy guests coming, and would not delude 'em;

A Fair Quarrel

Say: speak like a son to me.

FITZALLEN

Your blessing, sir,
We are both yours. Witness, gentlemen,
These must be made up a thousand pieces,
Added to a first thousand for her dowry,
To father that child.

PHYSICIAN

Oh, is it out now?

CHOUGH

For t'other thousand I'll do't myself yet.

TRIMTRAM

Or I, if my master will.

FITZALLEN

The bargain's made, sir, I have the tender
And possession both, and will keep my purchase.

CHOUGH

Take her e'en to you with all her moveables; I'll wear my bachelors' buttons still.

TRIMTRAM

So will I, i'faith; they are the best flowers in any man's garden, next to heart's-ease.

FITZALLEN

[Taking up the child] This is as welcome as the other, sir,
And both as the best bliss that e'er on earth
I shall enjoy. Sir, this is mine own child,
You could not have found out a fitter father;
Nor is it basely bred, as you imagine,
For we were wedded by the hand of heaven
Ere this work was begun.

CHOUGH

At Pancridge, I'll lay my life on't.

TRIMTRAM

I'll lay my life on't too, 'twas there.

FITZALLEN

Somewhere it was, sir.

RUSSELL

Was't so, i'faith, son?

JANE

And that I must have revealed to you, sir,

A Fair Quarrel

Ere I had gone to church with this fair groom;
But thank this gentleman, he prevented me.
[To Physician] I am much bound unto your malice, sir.

PHYSICIAN

I am ashamed.

JANE

Shame to amendment then.

RUSSELL

Now get you together for a couple of cunning ones!
But son, a word: the latter thousand pieces
Is now more than bargain.

FITZALLEN

No, by my faith, sir,
Here's witness enough on't: must serve to pay my fees;
Imprisonment is costly.

CHOUGH

By my troth, the old man has gulled himself finely! Well, sir, I'll bid myself a guest, though not a groom; I'll dine and dance, and roar at the wedding for all this.

TRIMTRAM

So will I, sir, if my master does.

RUSSELL

Well, sir, you are welcome; but now no more words on't
Till we be set at dinner, for there will mirth
Be the most useful for digestion.

Enter Captain Ager, Surgeon, Lady Ager, Colonel's Sister, [Captain Ager's] two Friends.

See, my best guests are coming.

CAPTAIN AGER

Recovered, say'st thou?

SURGEON

May I be excluded quite out of Surgeons' Hall else! Marry, I must tell you the wound was fain to be twice corroded; 'twas a plain [gastrorrhaphy], and a deep one; but I closed the lips on't with bandages and sutures, which is a kind conjunction of the parts separated against the course of nature.

CAPTAIN AGER

Well, sir, he is well.

SURGEON

I feared him, I assure you, Captain; before the suture in the belly, it grew almost to a convulsion, and there was like to be a bloody issue from the hollow vessels of the kidneys.

CAPTAIN AGER

There's that, to thank thy news and thy art together.

Gives him money.

SURGEON

And if your worship at any time stand in need of incision, if it be your fortune to light into my hands, I'll give you the best.

CAPTAIN AGER

Uncle, the noble colonel's recovered.

RUSSELL

Recovered?

Then honour is not dead in all parts, coz.

Enter Colonel with his two Friends.

FIRST FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

Behold him yonder, sir.

CAPTAIN AGER

My much unworthiness is now found out;
Th'ast not a face to fit it.

FIRST FRIEND OF THE COLONEL

Sir, yonder's Captain Ager.

COLONEL

Oh, lieutenant, the wrong I have done his fame
Puts me to silence; shame so confounds me
That I dare not see him.

CAPTAIN AGER

I never knew how poor my deserts were
Till he appeared. No way to give requital!
Here, shame me lastingly, do't with his own;
Return this to him, tell him I have riches
In that abundance in his sister's love:
These come but to oppress me and confound
All my deserving everlastingly;
I never shall requite my wealth in her, say.

[He gives the will to his First Friend, who takes it to the Colonel.]

How soon from virtue and an honoured spirit
May man receive what he may never merit!

COLONEL

This comes most happily to express me better,
For since this will was made there fell to me

A Fair Quarrel

The manor of Fitzdale; give ['em] that too.

[Returns the will with other papers.]

He's like to have charge:
There's fair hope of my sister's fruitfulness;
For me, I never mean to change my mistress,
And war is able to maintain her servant.

FIRST FRIEND OF CAPTAIN AGER

Read there, a fair increase, sir, by my faith;
He hath sent it back, sir, with new additions.

CAPTAIN AGER

How miserable he makes me! This enforces me
To break through all the passages of shame,
And headlong fall.

COLONEL

Into my arms, dear worthy!

CAPTAIN AGER

You have a goodness
Has put me past my answers; you may speak
What you please now, I must be silent ever.

COLONEL

This day has shown me joy's unvalued treasure;
I would not change this brotherhood with a monarch,
Into which blessed alliance sacred heaven
Has placed my kinsman, and given him his ends:
Fair be that quarrel makes such happy friends.

Exeunt omnes.

FINIS