

# **The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse**

Mary Roberts Rinehart



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# The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

**Mary Roberts Rinehart**

"My case is alter'd, I must work for my living."

Dramatis Personae

SIR ALEXANDER Wengrave, and NEATFOOT his man

SIR ADAM Appleton

SIR DAVY Dapper

SIR BEAUTEOUS Ganymede

[SIR THOMAS Long]

LORD NOLAND

Young [SEBASTIAN] Wengrave

JACK Dapper, [son to Sir Davy,] and GULL his page

GOSHAWK

GREENWIT

LAXTON

TILTYARD [a feather-seller]

[MISTRESS TILTYARD]

OPENWORK [a sempster]

[MISTRESS Rosamond OPENWORK]

[Hippocrates] GALLIPOT [an apothecary]

[MISTRESS Prudence GALLIPOT]

MOLL, the Roaring Girl

[Ralph] TRAPDOOR

[TEARCAT]

SIR GUY Fitzallard

MARY Fitzallard, his daughter

CURTILAX, a sergeant, and

HANGER, his yeoman

MINISTRI

[COACHMAN]

[PORTER]

[TAILOR]

[Gentlemen]

[CUTPURSES]

[FELLOW]

To the Comic Play-Readers, Venerary and Laughter

The fashion of play-making I can properly compare to nothing so naturally as the alteration in apparel: for in the time of the great crop-doublet, your huge bombasted plays, quilted with mighty words to lean purposes, was only then in fashion. And as the doublet fell, neater inventions began to set up. Now in the time of spruceness, our plays follow the niceness of our garments: single plots, quaint conceits, lecherous jests, dressed up in hanging sleeves, and those are fit for the times and the termers. Such a kind of light-colour summer stuff, mingled with diverse colours, you shall find this published comedy, good to keep you in an afternoon from dice, at home in your chambers; and for venerary you shall find enough for sixpence, but well couched and you mark it, for Venus being a woman passes through the play in doublet in breeches, a brave disguise and a safe one if the statute untie not her codpiece point. The book I make no question but is fit for many of your companies, as well as the person itself, and may be allowed both galley room at the playhouse, and chamber room at your lodging. Worse things I must needs confess the world has taxed her for than has been written of her; but 'tis the excellency of a writer to leave things better than he finds 'em; though some obscene fellow (that cares not what he writes against others, yet keeps a mystical bawdy-house himself, and entertains drunkards to make use of their pockets and vent his private bottle-ale at midnight), though such a one would have ripped up the most nasty vice

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that ever hell belched forth and presented it to a modest assembly, yet we rather wish in such discoveries, where reputation lies bleeding, a slackness of truth than a fullness of slander.

Thomas Middleton

### Prologus

A play expected long makes the audience look  
For wonders, that each scene should be a book,  
Compos'd to all perfection; each one comes  
And brings a play in's head with him: up he sums  
What he would of a roaring girl have writ;  
If that he finds not here, he mews at it.  
Only we entreat you think our scene  
Cannot speak high, the subject being but mean:  
A roaring girl whose notes till now never were  
Shall fill with laughter our vast theatre;  
That's all which I dare promise: tragic passion,  
And such grave stuff, is this day out of fashion.  
I see attention sets wide ope her gates  
Of hearing, and with covetous list'ning waits,  
To know what girl this roaring girl should be,  
For of that tribe are many. One is she  
That roars at midnight in deep tavern bowls,  
That beats the watch, and constables controls;  
Another roars i' th' daytime, swears, stabs, gives braves,  
Yet sells her soul to the lust of fools and slaves.  
Both these are suburb roarers. Then there's beside  
A civil city roaring girl, whose pride,  
Feasting, and riding, shakes her husband's state,  
And leaves him roaring through an iron grate.  
None of these roaring girls is ours: she flies  
With wings more lofty. Thus her character lies;  
Yet what need characters, when to give a guess  
Is better than the person to express?  
But would you know who 'tis? Would you hear her name?  
She is call'd mad Moll; her life, our acts proclaim.

**I.i. [Sebastian's chambers in Sir Alexander's house]**

Enter Mary Fitzallard disguised like a sempster with a case for bands, and Neatfoot a serving-man with her, with a napkin on his shoulder and a trencher in his hand as from table.

**NEATFOOT**

The young gentleman our young master, Sir Alexander's son, is it into his ears, sweet damsel emblem of fragility, you desire to have a message transported, or to be transcendent?

**MARY**

A private word or two, sir, nothing else.

**NEATFOOT**

You shall fructify in that which you come for: your pleasure shall be satisfied to your full contentation. I will, fairest tree of generation, watch when our young master is erected, that is to say, up, and deliver him to this your most white hand.

**MARY**

Thanks, sir.

**NEATFOOT**

And withal certify him that I have culled out for him, now his belly is replenished, a daintier bit or modicum than any lay upon his trencher at dinner. Hath he notion of your name, I beseech your chastity?

**MARY**

One, sir, of whom he bespake falling bands.

**NEATFOOT**

Falling bands: it shall so be given him. If you please to venture your modesty in the hall amongst a curl-pated company of rude serving-men, and take such as they can set before you, you shall be most seriously and ingeniously welcome.

**MARY**

I have [dined] indeed already, sir.

**NEATFOOT**

Or will you vouchsafe to kiss the lip of a cup of rich Orleans in the buttery amongst our waiting-women?

**MARY**

Not now in truth, sir.

**NEATFOOT**

Our young master shall then have a feeling of your being here; presently it shall so be given him.

**MARY**

I humbly thank you, sir.

Exit Neatfoot.

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But that my bosom  
Is full of bitter sorrows, I could smile  
To see this formal ape play antic tricks:  
But in my breast a poisoned arrow sticks,  
And smiles cannot become me. Love woven slightly,  
Such as thy false heart makes, wears out as lightly,  
But love being truly bred i' th' the soul like mine  
Bleeds even to death at the least wound it takes:  
The more we quench this [fire], the less it slakes.  
Oh, me!

Enter Sebastian Wengrave with Neatfoot.

**SEBASTIAN**

A sempster speak with me, sayst thou?

**NEATFOOT**

Yes, sir, she's there, viva voce, to deliver her auricular confession.

**SEBASTIAN**

With me, sweet heart? What is't?

**MARY**

I have brought home your bands, sir.

**SEBASTIAN**

Bands? Neatfoot.

**NEATFOOT**

Sir.

**SEBASTIAN**

Prithee look in, for all the gentlemen are upon rising.

**NEATFOOT**

Yes, sir, a most methodical attendance shall be given.

**SEBASTIAN**

And dost hear? If my father call for me, say I am busy with a sempster.

**NEATFOOT**

Yes, sir, he shall know it that you are busied with a needlewoman.

**SEBASTIAN**

In's ear, good Neatfoot.

**NEATFOOT**

It shall be so given him.

Exit Neatfoot.



## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

### SEBASTIAN

Bands? Y'are mistaken, sweet heart, I bespake none. When, where? I prithee, what bands? Let me see them.

### MARY

Yes, sir, a bond fast sealed with solemn oaths,  
Subscribed unto as I thought with your soul,  
Delivered as your deed in sight of heaven.  
Is this bond cancell'd? Have you forgot me?  
[She removes her disguise.]

### SEBASTIAN

Ha! Life of my life: Sir Guy Fitzallard's daughter!  
What has transform'd my love to this strange shape?  
Stay, make all sure. So, now speak and be brief,  
Because the wolf's at door that lies in wait  
To prey upon us both. Albeit mine eyes  
Are bless'd by thine, yet this so strange disguise  
Holds me with fear and wonder.

### MARY

Mine's a loathed sight.  
Why from it are you banish'd else so long?

### SEBASTIAN

I must cut short my speech. In broken language,  
Thus much: sweet Moll, I must thy company shun;  
I court another Moll. My thoughts must run  
As a horse runs that's blind round in a mill,  
Out every step yet keeping one path still.

### MARY

Umh! Must you shun my company? In one knot  
Have both our hands by th' hands of heaven been tied,  
Now to be broke? I thought me once your bride:  
Our fathers did agree on the time when,  
And must another bedfellow fill my room?

### SEBASTIAN

Sweet maid, let's lose no time. 'Tis in heaven's book  
Set down that I must have thee. An oath we took  
To keep our vows, but when the knight your father  
Was from mine parted, storms began to sit  
Upon my covetous father's brow, which fell  
From them on me. He reckon'd up what gold  
This marriage would draw from him, at which he swore  
To lose so much blood could not grieve him more.  
He then dissuades me from thee, call'd thee not fair,  
And ask'd what is she but a beggar's heir?  
He scorn'd thy dowry of five thousand marks.  
If such a sum of money could be found,  
And I would match with that, he'd not undo it,

l.i. [Sebastian's chambers in Sir Alexander's house]

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Provided his bags might add nothing to it,  
But vow'd, if I took thee, nay, more, did swear it,  
Save birth from him I nothing should inherit.

**MARY**

What follows then, my shipwreck?

**SEBASTIAN**

Dear'st, no:  
Tho' wildly in a labyrinth I go,  
My end is to meet thee; with a side wind  
Must I now sail, else I no haven can find  
But both must sink forever. There's a wench  
Call'd Moll, mad Moll or merry Moll, a creature  
So strange in quality a whole city takes  
Note of her name and person. All that affection  
I owe to thee on her in counterfeit passion  
I spend to mad my father: he believes  
I dote upon this roaring girl, and grieves  
As it becomes a father for a son  
That could be so bewitch'd. Yet I'll go on  
This crooked way, sigh still for her, feign dreams  
In which I'll talk only of her: these streams  
Shall, I hope, force my father to consent  
That here I anchor rather than be rent  
Upon a rock so dangerous. Art thou pleas'd,  
Because thou seest we are waylaid, that I take  
A path that's safe, tho' it be far about?

**MARY**

My prayers with heaven guide thee.

**SEBASTIAN**

Then I will on.  
My father is at hand: kiss and be gone.  
Hours shall be watch'd for meetings; I must now,  
As men for fear, to a strange idol bow.

**MARY**

Farewell.

**SEBASTIAN**

I'll guide thee forth; when next we meet  
A story of Moll shall make our mirth more sweet.

Exeunt.

[I.ii. The parlour of Sir Alexander's house]

Enter Sir Alexander Wengrave, Sir Davy Dapper, Sir Adam Appleton, Goshawk, Laxton, and gentlemen.

OMNES

I.i. [Sebastian's chambers in Sir Alexander's house]

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

Thanks, good Sir Alexander, for our bounteous cheer.

### **SIR ALEXANDER**

Fie, fie, in giving thanks you pay too dear.

### **SIR DAVY**

When bounty spreads the table, faith, 'twere sin,  
At going off, if thanks should not step in.

### **SIR ALEXANDER**

No more of thanks, no more. Ay, marry, sir,  
Th' inner room was too close. How do you like  
This parlour, gentlemen?

### **OMNES**

Oh, passing well!

### **SIR ADAM**

What a sweet breath the air casts here, so cool!

### **GOSHAWK**

I like the prospect best.

### **LAXTON**

See how 'tis furnish'd.

### **SIR DAVY**

A very fair, sweet room.

### **SIR ALEXANDER**

Sir Davy Dapper,  
The furniture that doth adorn this room  
Cost many a fair grey groat ere it came here,  
But good things are most cheap when th' are most dear.  
Nay, when you look into my galleries,  
How bravely they are trimm'd up, you all shall swear  
Y'are highly pleas'd to see what's set down there:  
Stories of men and women mix'd together,  
Fair ones with foul, like sunshine in wet weather;  
Within one square a thousand heads are laid  
So close that all of heads the room seems made.  
As many faces there fill'd with blithe looks  
Show like the promising titles of new books  
Writ merrily, the readers being their own eyes,  
Which seem to move and to give plaudities.  
And here and there, whilst with obsequious ears  
Throng'd heaps do listen, a cutpurse thrusts and leers  
With hawk's eyes for his prey; I need not show him:  
By a hanging villainous look yourselves may know him,  
The face is drawn so rarely. Then, sir, below,  
The very flower as 'twere waves to and fro,

l.i. [Sebastian's chambers in Sir Alexander's house]

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

And like a floating island seems to move  
Upon a sea bound in with shores above.

Enter Sebastian and M[aster] Greenwit.

**OMNES**

These sights are excellent.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

I'll show you all.

Since we are met, make our parting comical.

**SEBASTIAN**

This gentleman, my friend, will take his leave, sir.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Ha, take his leave, Sebastian? Who?

**SEBASTIAN**

This gentleman.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Your love, sir, has already given me some time,

And if you please to trust my age with more,

It shall pay double interest. Good sir, stay.

**GREENWIT**

I have been too bold.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Not so, sir. A merry day

'Mongst friends being spent is better than gold sav'd.

Some wine, some wine. Where be these knaves I keep?

Enter three or four serving-men, and Neatfoot.

**NEATFOOT**

At your worshipful elbow, sir.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

You are kissing my maids, drinking, or fast asleep.

**NEATFOOT**

Your worship has given it us right.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

You varlets, stir:

Chairs, stools and cushions! Prithee, Sir Davy Dapper,

Make that chair thine.

**SIR DAVY**

l.i. [Sebastian's chambers in Sir Alexander's house]

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

'Tis but an easy gift,  
And yet I thank you for it, sir; I'll take it.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

A chair for old Sir Adam Appleton.

**NEATFOOT**

A back friend to your worship.

**SIR ADAM**

Marry, good Neatfoot,  
I thank thee for it: back friends sometimes are good.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Pray make that stool your perch, good M[aster] Goshawk.

**GOSHAWK**

I stoop to your lure, sir.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Son Sebastian,  
Take Master Greenwit to you.

**SEBASTIAN**

Sit, dear friend.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Nay, Master Laxton. Furnish Master Laxton  
With what he wants, a stone: a stool I would say,  
A stool.

**LAXTON**

I had rather stand, sir.

Exeunt servants.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

I know you had, good Master Laxton. So, so.  
Now here's a mess of friends, and, gentlemen,  
Because time's glass shall not be running long,  
I'll quicken it with a pretty tale.

**SIR DAVY**

Good tales do well  
In these bad days, where vice does so excel.

**SIR ADAM**

Begin, Sir Alexander.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Last day I met

i.i. [Sebastian's chambers in Sir Alexander's house]

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

An aged man upon whose head was scor'd  
A debt of just so many years as these  
Which I owe to my grave: the man you all know.

OMNES

His name I pray you, sir.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Nay, you shall pardon me;  
But when he saw me, with a sigh that brake,  
Or seem'd to break, his heartstrings, thus he spake:  
"Oh, my good knight," says he, and then his eyes  
Were richer even by that which made them poor,  
They had spent so many tears they had no more.  
"Oh, sir," says he, "you know it, for you ha' seen  
Blessings to rain upon mine house and me:  
Fortune, who slaves men, was my slave; her wheel  
Hath spun me golden threads, for, I thank heaven,  
I ne'er had but one cause to curse my stars."  
I ask'd him then what that one cause might be.

OMNES

So, sir?

**SIR ALEXANDER**

He paus'd, and as we often see  
A sea so much becalm'd there can be found  
No wrinkle on his brow, his waves being drown'd  
In their own rage, but when th' imperious wind[s]  
Use strange invisible tyranny to shake  
Both heaven's and earth's foundation at their noise,  
The seas, swelling with wrath to part that fray,  
Rise up and are more wild, more mad, than they:  
Even so this good old man was by my question  
Stirr'd up to roughness, you might see his gall  
Flow even in's eyes. Then grew he fantastical.

**SIR DAVY**

Fantastical? Ha, ha!

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Yes, and talk['d] oddly.

**SIR ADAM**

Pray, sir, proceed:  
How did this old man end?

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Marry, sir, thus:  
He left his wild fit to read o'er his cards,  
Yet then, though age cast snow on all his hairs,

l.i. [Sebastian's chambers in Sir Alexander's house]

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

He joy'd because, says he, "The god of gold  
Has been to me no niggard: that disease  
Of which all old men sicken, avarice,  
Never infected me."

### LAXTON

[Aside] He means not himself, I'm sure.

### SIR ALEXANDER

"For, like a lamp  
Fed with continual oil, I spend and throw  
My light to all that need it, yet have still  
Enough to serve myself. Oh, but," quoth he,  
"Tho' heaven's dew fall thus on this aged tree,  
I have a son that like a wedge doth cleave  
My very heart-root."

### SIR DAVY

Had he such a son?

### SEBASTIAN

[Aside] Now I do smell a fox strongly.

### SIR ALEXANDER

Let's see: no, Master Greenwit is not yet  
So mellow in years as he; but as like Sebastian,  
Just like my son Sebastian, such another.

### SEBASTIAN

[Aside] How finely like a fencer my father fetches his by-blows to hit me, but if I beat you not at your own  
weapon of subtlety—

### SIR ALEXANDER

"This son," saith he, "that should be  
The column and main arch unto my house,  
The crutch unto my age, becomes a whirlwind  
Shaking the firm foundation."

### SIR ADAM

'Tis some prodigal.

### SEBASTIAN

[Aside] Well shot, old Adam Bell!

### SIR ALEXANDER

"No city monster neither, no prodigal,  
But sparing, wary, civil, and, tho' wifeless,  
An excellent husband, and such a traveller,  
He has more tongues in his head than some have teeth."

### SIR DAVY

l.i. [Sebastian's chambers in Sir Alexander's house]

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

I have but two in mine.

### **GOSHAWK**

So sparing and so wary?  
What then could vex his father so?

### **SIR ALEXANDER**

Oh, a woman!

### **SEBASTIAN**

A flesh-fly, that can vex any man.

### **SIR ALEXANDER**

A scurvy woman,  
On whom the passionate old man swore he doted;  
A creature, saith he, nature hath brought forth  
To mock the sex of woman. It is a thing  
One knows not how to name; her birth began  
Ere she was all made. 'Tis woman more than man,  
Man more than woman, and, which to none can hap,  
The sun gives her two shadows to one shape;  
Nay, more, let this strange thing walk, stand or sit,  
No blazing star draws more eyes after it.

### **SIR DAVY**

A monster, 'tis some monster.

### **SIR ALEXANDER**

She's a varlet.

### **SEBASTIAN**

[Aside] Now is my cue to bristle.

### **SIR ALEXANDER**

A naughty pack.

### **SEBASTIAN**

'Tis false.

### **SIR ALEXANDER**

Ha, boy?

### **SEBASTIAN**

'Tis false.

### **SIR ALEXANDER**

What's false? I say she's naught.

### **SEBASTIAN**

I say that tongue  
That dares speak so but yours sticks in the throat

l.i. [Sebastian's chambers in Sir Alexander's house]



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Of a rank villain; set yourself aside—

**SIR ALEXANDER**

So, sir, what then?

**SEBASTIAN**

Any here else had lied.

(Aside) I think I shall fit you!

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Lie?

**SEBASTIAN**

Yes.

**SIR DAVY**

Doth this concern him?

**SIR ALEXANDER**

[Aside] Ah, sirrah boy!

Is your blood heated? Boils it? Are you stung?

I'll pierce you deeper yet.—Oh, my dear friends,

I am that wretched father, this that son

That sees his ruin yet headlong on doth run!

**SIR ADAM**

Will you love such a poison?

**SIR DAVY**

Fie, fie!

**SEBASTIAN**

Y'are all mad!

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Th' art sick at heart, yet feel'st it not. Of all these,

What gentleman but thou, knowing his disease

Mortal, would shun the cure? Oh, Master Greenwit,

Would you to such an idol bow?

**GREENWIT**

Not I, sir.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Here's Master Laxton: has he mind to a woman

As thou hast?

**LAXTON**

No, not I, sir.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

l.i. [Sebastian's chambers in Sir Alexander's house]

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Sir, I know it.

**LAXTON**

Their good parts are so rare, their bad so common,  
I will have nought to do with any woman.

**SIR DAVY**

'Tis well done, Master Laxton.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Oh, thou cruel boy,  
Thou wouldst with lust an old man's life destroy;  
Because thou seest I'm half-way in my grave,  
Thou shovel'st dust upon me: would thou mightest have  
Thy wish, most wicked, most unnatural!

**SIR DAVY**

Why, sir, 'tis thought Sir Guy Fitzallard's daughter  
Shall wed your son Sebastian.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Sir Davy Dapper,  
I have upon my knees woo'd this fond boy  
To take that virtuous maiden.

**SEBASTIAN**

Hark you, a word, sir.  
You on your knees have curs'd that virtuous maiden  
And me for loving her, yet do you now  
Thus baffle me to my face? [Wear] not your knees  
In such entreats; give me Fitzallard's daughter.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

I'll give thee rats-bane rather!

**SEBASTIAN**

Well, then you know  
What dish I mean to feed upon.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Hark, gentlemen, he swears  
To have this cutpurse drab to spite my gall.

**OMNES**

Master Sebastian!

**SEBASTIAN**

I am deaf to you all.  
I'm so bewitch'd, so bound to my desires,  
Tears, prayers, threats, nothing can quench out those fires  
That burn within me.

l.i. [Sebastian's chambers in Sir Alexander's house]

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Exit Sebastian.

### **SIR ALEXANDER**

[Aside] Her blood shall quench it then.--  
Lose him not, oh, dissuade him, gentlemen!

### **SIR DAVY**

He shall be wean'd, I warrant you.

### **SIR ALEXANDER**

Before his eyes  
Lay down his shame, my grief, his miseries.

### **OMNES**

No more, no more, away!

Exeunt all but Sir Alexander.

### **SIR ALEXANDER**

I wash a negro,  
Losing both pains and cost; but take thy flight:  
I'll be most near thee when I'm least in sight.  
Wild buck, I'll hunt thee breathless; thou shalt run on,  
But I will turn thee when I'm not thought upon.

Enter Ralph Trapdoor.

Now, sirrah, what are you? Leave your ape's tricks and speak!

### **TRAPDOOR**

A letter from my captain to your worship.

### **SIR ALEXANDER**

Oh, oh, now I remember: 'tis to prefer thee into my service.

### **TRAPDOOR**

To be a shifter under your worship's nose of a clean trencher when there's a good bit upon't.

### **SIR ALEXANDER**

Troth, honest fellow. [Aside] Humh, ha, let me see.  
This knave shall be the axe to hew that down  
At which I stumble; h'as a face that promiseth  
Much of a villain. I will grind his wit,  
And if the edge prove fine make use of it.--  
Come hither, sirrah. Canst thou be secret, ha?

### **TRAPDOOR**

As two crafty attorneys plotting the undoing of their clients.

### **SIR ALEXANDER**

l.i. [Sebastian's chambers in Sir Alexander's house]

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

Didst never, as thou hast walk'd about this town,  
Hear of a wench call'd Moll, mad, merry Moll?

### TRAPDOOR

Moll Cutpurse, sir?

### SIR ALEXANDER

The same. Dost thou know her then?

### TRAPDOOR

As well as I know 'twill rain upon Simon and Jude's day next. I will sift all the taverns i' th' city and drink half-pots with all the watermen a' th' Bankside, but if you will, sir, I'll find her out.

### SIR ALEXANDER

That task is easy; do 't then. Hold thy hand up.  
What's this? Is't burnt?

### TRAPDOOR

No, sir, no, a little sing'd with making fireworks.

### SIR ALEXANDER

[Giving him money] There's money, spend it; that being spent, fetch more.

### TRAPDOOR

Oh, sir, that all the poor soldiers in England had such a leader! For fetching, no water-spaniel is like me.

### SIR ALEXANDER

This wench we speak of strays so from her kind  
Nature repents she made her. 'Tis a mermaid  
Has toll'd my son to shipwreck.

### TRAPDOOR

I'll cut her comb for you.

### SIR ALEXANDER

I'll tell out gold for thee then; hunt her forth,  
Cast out a line hung full of silver hooks  
To catch her to thy company: deep spendings  
May draw her that's most chaste to a man's bosom.

### TRAPDOOR

The jingling of golden bells and a good fool with a hobbyhorse will draw all the whores i' th' town to dance in a morris.

### SIR ALEXANDER

Or rather—for that's best, they say sometimes  
She goes in breeches—follow her as her man.

### TRAPDOOR

And when her breeches are off, she shall follow me.

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Beat all thy brains to serve her.

**TRAPDOOR**

Zounds, sir, as country wenches beat cream till butter comes.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Play thou the subtle spider, weave fine nets  
To ensnare her very life.

**TRAPDOOR**

Her life?

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Yes, suck  
Her heart—blood if thou canst; twist thou but cords  
To catch her, I'll find law to hang her up.

**TRAPDOOR**

Spoke like a worshipful bencher.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Trace all her steps; at this she—fox's den  
Watch what lambs enter: let me play the shepherd  
To save their throats from bleeding and cut hers.

**TRAPDOOR**

This is the goll shall do't.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Be firm and gain me  
Ever thine own. This done, I entertain thee:  
How is thy name?

**TRAPDOOR**

My name sir is Ralph Trapdoor, honest Ralph.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Trapdoor, be like thy name, a dangerous step  
For her to venture on, but unto me—

**TRAPDOOR**

As fast as your sole to your boot or shoe, sir.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Hence then, be little seen here as thou canst.  
I'll still be at thine elbow.

**TRAPDOOR**

The trapdoor's set.  
Moll, if you budge y'are gone; this me shall crown:

l.i. [Sebastian's chambers in Sir Alexander's house]

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

A roaring boy the Roaring Girl puts down.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

God—a—mercy, lose no time.

Exeunt.

**[[II.i.] The three shops open in a rank**

The first a pothecary's shop, the next a feather shop, the third a sempster's shop: Mistress Gallipot in the first, Mistress Tiltyard in the next, Master Openwork and his wife in the third. To them enters Laxton, Goshawk and Greenwit.

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Gentlemen, what is't you lack? What is't you buy? See fine bands and ruffs, fine lawns, fine cambrics! What is't you lack, gentlemen, what is't you buy?

**LAXTON**

Yonder's the shop.

**GOSHAWK**

Is that she?

**LAXTON**

Peace.

**GREENWIT**

She that minces tobacco.

**LAXTON**

Ay, she's a gentlewoman born, I can tell you, tho' it be her hard fortune now to shred Indian pot-herbs.

**GOSHAWK**

Oh, sir, 'tis many a good woman's fortune, when her husband turns bankrout, to begin with pipes and set up again.

**LAXTON**

And indeed the raising of the woman is the lifting up of the man's head at all times: if one flourish, t'other will bud as fast, I warrant ye.

**GOSHAWK**

Come, th' art familiarly acquainted there, I grope that.

**LAXTON**

And you grope no better i' th' dark, you may chance lie i' th' ditch when y'are drunk.

**GOSHAWK**

Go, th' art a mystical lecher.

**LAXTON**

I will not deny but my credit may take up an ounce of pure smoke.

**GOSHAWK**

May take up an ell of pure smock. Away, go! [Aside] 'Tis the closest striker. Life, I think he commits venery foot deep; no man's aware on't. I like a palpable smockster go to work so openly with the tricks of art that I'm as apparently seen as a naked boy in a vial, and were it not for a gift of treachery that I have in me to betray my friend when he puts most trust in me—mass, yonder he is too—and by his injury to make good my access to her,

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

I should appear as defective in courting as a farmer's son the first day of his feather that doth nothing at court but woo the hangings and glass windows for a month together, and some broken waiting-woman forever after. I find those imperfections in my venery that were 't not for flattery and falsehood, I should want discourse and impudence, and he that wants impudence among women is worthy to be kick'd out at beds' feet. He shall not see me yet.

### GREENWIT

Troth, this is finely shred.

### LAXTON

Oh, women are the best mincers.

### MISTRESS GALLIPOT

'T had been a good phrase for a cook's wife, sir.

### LAXTON

But 'twill serve generally, like the front of a new almanac, as thus: calculated for the meridian of cooks' wives, but generally for all Englishwomen.

### MISTRESS GALLIPOT

Nay, you shall ha't, sir, I have fill'd it for you.

She puts it to the fire.

### LAXTON

The pipe's in a good hand, and I wish mine always so.

### GREENWIT

But not to be us'd a' that fashion.

### LAXTON

Oh, pardon me, sir, I understand no French.

[Greenwit doffs his hat and bows.]

I pray be cover'd. [Handing Goshawk a pipe] Jack, a pipe of rich smoke.

### GOSHAWK

Rich smoke? That's sixpence a pipe, is't?

### GREENWIT

To me, sweet lady.

### MISTRESS GALLIPOT

[Aside to Laxton] Be not forgetful: respect my credit, seem strange. Art and wit makes a fool of suspicion; pray be wary.

### LAXTON

[Aside to Mistress Gallipot] Push, I warrant you!—Come, how is't, gallants?

### GREENWIT

[ll.i.] The three shops open in a rank



## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

Pure and excellent.

### LAXTON

I thought 'twas good, you were grown so silent; you are like those that love not to talk at victuals, tho' they make a worse noise i' the nose than a common fiddler's prentice and discourse a whole supper with snuffling. [Aside to Mistress Gallipot] I must speak a word with you anon.

### MISTRESS GALLIPOT

[Aside to Laxton] Make your way wisely then.

### GOSHAWK

Oh, what else, sir? He's perfection itself, full of manners, but not an acre of ground belonging to ['im].

### GREENWIT

Ay, and full of form: h'as ne'er a good stool in's chamber.

### GOSHAWK

But above all religious: he preyeth daily upon elder brothers.

### GREENWIT

And valiant above measure; h'as run three streets from a sergeant.

### LAXTON

Puh, puh!

He blows tobacco in their faces.

### GREENWIT, GOSHAWK

Oh, puh, ho, ho!

[They move away.]

### LAXTON

So, so.

### MISTRESS GALLIPOT

What's the matter now, sir?

### LAXTON

I protest I'm in extreme want of money: if you can supply me now with any means, you do me the greatest pleasure, next to the bounty of your love, as ever poor gentleman tasted.

### MISTRESS GALLIPOT

What's the sum would pleasure ye, sir? Tho' you deserve nothing less at my hands.

### LAXTON

Why, 'tis but for want of opportunity, thou know'st. [Aside] I put her off with opportunity still. By this light, I hate her but for means to keep me in fashion with gallants, for what I take from her I spend upon other wenches. Bear her in hand still; she has wit enough to rob her husband, and I ways enough to consume the money.--[Approaching Goshawk from behind and slapping him on the back] Why, how now? What, the chincough?

[ll.i.] The three shops open in a rank

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

**GOSHAWK**

Thou hast the cowardliest trick to come before a man's face and strangle him ere he be aware! I could find in my heart to make a quarrel in earnest.

**LAXTON**

Pox and thou dost—thou know'st I never use to fight with my friends—thou'll but lose thy labour in't.

Enter J[ack] Dapper and his man Gull.

Jack Dapper!

**GREENWIT**

Monsieur Dapper, I dive down to your ankles.

**JACK**

Save ye gentlemen, all three in a peculiar salute.

**GOSHAWK**

[Aside to Laxton] He were ill to make a lawyer: he dispatches three at once.

**LAXTON**

So, well said.

[Mistress Gallipot secretly gives him money.]

But is this of the same tobacco, Mistress Gallipot?

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

The same you had at first, sir.

**LAXTON**

I wish it no better: this will serve to drink at my chamber.

**GOSHAWK**

Shall we taste a pipe on't?

**LAXTON**

Not of this, by my troth, gentlemen; I have sworn before you.

**GOSHAWK**

What, not Jack Dapper?

**LAXTON**

Pardon me, sweet Jack, I'm sorry I made such a rash oath, but foolish oaths must stand. Where art going, Jack?

**JACK**

Faith, to buy one feather.

**LAXTON**

[Aside] One feather? The fool's peculiar still.

[ll.i.] The three shops open in a rank

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

**JACK**

Gull.

**GULL**

Master.

**JACK**

Here's three halfpence for your ordinary, boy; meet me an hour hence in Paul's.

**GULL**

How! Three single halfpence! Life, this will scarce serve a man in sauce, a hal'p'orth of mustard, a hal'p'orth of oil, and a hal'p'orth of vinegar. What's left then for the pickle herring? This shows like small beer i' th' morning after a great surfeit of wine o'ernight. He could spend his three pound last night in a supper amongst girls and brave bawdy-house boys; I thought his pockets cackl'd not for nothing. These are the eggs of three pound; I'll go sup 'em up presently.

Exit Gull.

**LAXTON**

[Aside, counting his money] Eight, nine, ten angels. Good wench, i'faith, and one that loves darkness well: she puts out a candle with the best tricks of any drugster's wife in England; but that which mads her, I rail upon opportunity still and take no notice on't. The other night she would needs lead me into a room with a candle in her hand to show me a naked picture, where no sooner entered but the candle was sent of an arrant; now I not intending to understand her, but, like a puny at the inns of ventry, call'd for another light innocently: thus reward I all her cunning with simple mistaking. I know she cozens her husband to keep me, and I'll keep her honest as long as I can to make the poor man some part of amends: an honest mind of a whoremaster!—How think you amongst you? What, a fresh pipe? Draw in a third man.

**GOSHAWK**

No, you're a hoarder; you engross by th' ounces.

At the feather shop now

**JACK**

Puh, I like it not.

**[MISTRESS] TILTYARD**

What feather is't you'ld have, sir?

These are most worn and most in fashion

Amongst the beaver gallants, the stone riders,

The private stage's audience, the tweldepenny-stool gentlemen:

I can inform you 'tis the general feather.

**JACK**

And therefore I mislike it; tell me of general!

Now a continual Simon and Jude's rain

Beat all your feathers as flat down as pancakes.

Show me a spangled feather.

**MISTRESS TILTYARD**

[ll.i.] The three shops open in a rank

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

Oh, to go  
A-feasting with? You'd have it for a [hench]-boy;  
You shall.

At the sempster's shop now

**OPENWORK**

Mass, I had quite forgot  
His honour's footman was here last night, wife.  
Ha' you done with my lord's shirt?

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

What's that to you, sir?  
I was this morning at his honour's lodging  
Ere such a [snail] as you crept out of your shell.

**OPENWORK**

Oh, 'twas well done, good wife!

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

I hold it better, sir, than if you had done 't yourself.

**OPENWORK**

Nay, so say I. But is the countess's smock almost done, mouse?

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Here, yes, the cambric, sir, but wants, I fear me.

**OPENWORK**

I'll resolve you of that presently.

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

[Hoyda]! Oh, audacious groom,  
Dare you presume to noblewomen's linen?  
Keep you your yard to measure shepherd's holland!  
I must confine you, I see that.

At the tobacco shop now.

**GOSHAWK**

What say you to this gear?

**LAXTON**

I dare the arrant's[t] critic in tobacco  
To lay one fault upon't.

Enter Moll in a frieze jerkin and a black safeguard.

**GOSHAWK**

Life, yonder's Moll!

[ll.i.] The three shops open in a rank

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

**LAXTON**

Moll? Which Moll?

**GOSHAWK**

Honest Moll.

**LAXTON**

Prithee, let's call her. Moll!

[GOSHAWK, GREENWIT]

Moll, Moll, pist, Moll!

**MOLL**

How now, what's the matter?

**GOSHAWK**

A pipe of good tobacco, Moll?

**MOLL**

I cannot stay.

**GOSHAWK**

Nay, Moll, puh! Prithee hark, but one word, i'faith.

**MOLL**

Well, what is't?

**GREENWIT**

Prithee come hither, sirrah.

**LAXTON**

[Aside] Heart, I would give but too much money to be nibbling with that wench! Life, sh'as the spirit of four great parishes, and a voice that will drown all the city; methinks a brave captain might get all his soldiers upon her and ne'er be beholding to a company of Mile End milksops, if he could come on and come off quick enough. Such a Moll were a marrow-bone before an Italian; he would cry bona roba till his ribs were nothing but bone. I'll lay hard siege to her; money is that aqua fortis that eats into many a maidenhead: where the walls are flesh and blood, I'll ever pierce through with a golden auger.

**GOSHAWK**

Now thy judgment, Moll: is't not good?

**MOLL**

Yes, faith, 'tis very good tobacco. How do you sell an ounce? Farewell. God b'i'you, Mistress Gallipot.

**GOSHAWK**

Why, Moll, Moll!

**MOLL**

I cannot stay now, i'faith. I am going to buy a shag ruff; the shop will be shut in presently.

**GOSHAWK**

[ll.i.] The three shops open in a rank

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

'Tis the maddest, fantastical'st girl: I never knew so much flesh and so much nimbleness put together.

### LAXTON

She slips from one company to another, like a fat eel between a Dutchman's fingers. [Aside] I'll watch my time for her.

### MISTRESS GALLIPOT

Some will not stick to say she's a man  
And some both man and woman.

### LAXTON

That were excellent: she might first cuckold the husband and then make him do as much for the wife.

The feather shop again.

### MOLL

Save you. How does Mistress Tiltyard?

### JACK

Moll.

### MOLL

Jack Dapper.

### JACK

How dost, Moll?

### MOLL

I'll tell thee by and by; I go but to th' next shop.

### JACK

Thou shalt find me here this hour about a feather.

### MOLL

Nay, and a feather hold you in play a whole hour, a goose will last you all the days of your life.

The sempster shop

Let me see a good shag ruff.

### OPENWORK

Mistress Mary, that shalt thou i'faith, and the best in the shop.

### MISTRESS OPENWORK

How now! Greetings? Love—terms with a pox between you! Have I found out one of your haunts? I send you for hollands, and you're i' th' low countries with a mischief. I'm serv'd with good ware by th' shift, that makes it lie dead so long upon my hands: I were as good shut up shop, for when I open it I take nothing.

### OPENWORK

Nay, and you fall a—ringing once the devil cannot stop you. I'll out of the belfry as fast as I can. Moll.

[ll.i.] The three shops open in a rank

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Get you from my shop.

**MOLL**

I come to buy.

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

I'll sell ye nothing; I warn ye my house and shop.

**MOLL**

You goody Openwork, you that prick out a poor living  
And sews many a bawdy skin-coat together,  
Thou private pandress between shirt and smock,  
I wish thee for a minute but a man:  
Thou shouldst never use more shapes. But as th' art  
I pity my revenge: now my spleen's up,  
I would not mock it willingly.

Enter a Fellow with a long rapier by his side.

Ha! Be thankful.  
Now I forgive thee.

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Marry, hang thee;  
I never ask'd forgiveness in my life.

**MOLL**

You, goodman swine's-face!

**FELLOW**

What, will you murder me?

**MOLL**

You remember, slave, how you abus'd me t'other night in a tavern?

**FELLOW**

Not I, by this light.

**MOLL**

No, but by candlelight you did. You have tricks to save your oaths, reservations have you, and I have reserved somewhat for you. [Strikes him.] As you like that, call for more; you know the sign again.

**FELLOW**

Pox on't, had I brought any company along with me to have borne witness on't; 'twould ne'er have griev'd me; but to be struck and nobody by, 'tis my ill fortune still. Why, tread upon a worm, they say 'twill turn tail, but indeed a gentleman should have more manners.

Exit Fellow.

**LAXTON**

[ll.i.] The three shops open in a rank

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

Gallantly performed, i'faith, Moll, and manfully! I love thee forever for't! Base rogue! Had he offer'd but the least counterbuff, by this hand I was prepared for him.

**MOLL**

You prepared for him! Why should you be prepared for him? Was he any more than a man?

**LAXTON**

No, nor so much by a yard and a handful London measure.

**MOLL**

Why do you speak this then? Do you think I cannot ride a stone horse unless one lead him by th' snaffle?

**LAXTON**

Yes, and sit him bravely; I know thou canst, Moll. 'Twas but an honest mistake through love, and I'll make amends for't any way. Prithee, sweet, plump Moll, when shall thou and I go out a' town together?

**MOLL**

Whither? To Tyburn prithee?

**LAXTON**

Mass, that's out a' town indeed; thou hang'st so many jests upon thy friends still. I mean honestly to Brainford, Staines or Ware.

**MOLL**

What to do there?

**LAXTON**

Nothing but be merry and lie together; I'll hire a coach with four horses.

**MOLL**

I thought 'twould be a beastly journey. You may leave out one well: three horses will serve if I play the jade myself.

**LAXTON**

Nay, push, th' art such another kicking wench! Prithee be kind and let's meet.

**MOLL**

'Tis hard but we shall meet, sir.

**LAXTON**

Nay, but appoint the place then. [Giving her money] There's ten angels in fair gold, Moll; you see I do not trifle with you. Do but say thou wilt meet me, and I'll have a coach ready for thee.

**MOLL**

Why, here's my hand I'll meet you, sir.

**LAXTON**

[Aside] Oh, good gold!—The place, sweet Moll?

**MOLL**

It shall be your appointment.

[ll.i.] The three shops open in a rank



The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

**LAXTON**

Somewhat near Holborn, Moll.

**MOLL**

In Gray's Inn Fields then.

**LAXTON**

A match.

**MOLL**

I'll meet you there.

**LAXTON**

The hour?

**MOLL**

Three.

**LAXTON**

That will be time enough to sup at Brainford.

Fall from them to the other.

**OPENWORK**

I am of such a nature, sir, I cannot endure the house when she scolds. Sh' has a tongue will be [heard] further in a still morning than Saint Antling's bell. She rails upon me for foreign wenching, that I being a freeman must needs keep a whore i' th' suburbs, and seek to impoverish the liberties. When we fall out, I trouble you still to make all whole with my wife.

**GOSHAWK**

No trouble at all; 'tis a pleasure to me to join things together.

**OPENWORK**

Go thy ways. [Aside] I do this but to try thy honesty, Goshawk.

The feather shop

**JACK**

How lik'st thou this, Moll?

**MOLL**

Oh, singularly! You're fitted now for a bunch. [Aside] He looks for all the world with those spangled feathers like a nobleman's bedpost! The purity of your wench would I fain try; she seems like Kent, unconquered, and I believe as many wiles are in her. Oh, the gallants of these times are shallow lechers; they put not their courtship home enough to a wench. 'Tis impossible to know what woman is thoroughly honest, because she's ne'er thoroughly tried; I am of that certain belief there are more queans in this town of their own making than of any man's provoking. Where lies the slackness then? Many a poor soul would down, and there's nobody will push 'em:

Women are courted but ne'er soundly tried,  
As many walk in spurs that never ride.

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

The sempster's shop.

### **MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Oh, abominable!

### **GOSHAWK**

Nay, more: I tell you in private, he keeps a whore i' th' suburbs.

### **MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Oh, spital dealing! I came to him a gentlewoman born. I'll show you mine arms when you please, sir.

### **GOSHAWK**

[Aside] I had rather see your legs and begin that way.

### **MISTRESS OPENWORK**

'Tis well known he took me from a lady's service, where I was well beloved of the steward; I had my Latin tongue and a spice of the French before I came to him, and now doth he keep a suburban whore under my nostrils.

### **GOSHAWK**

There's ways enough to cry quit with him; hark in thine ear.

### **MISTRESS OPENWORK**

There's a friend worth a million.

### **MOLL**

[Aside] I'll try one spear against your chastity, Mistress Tiltyard, though it prove too short by the [burr].

Enter Ralph Trapdoor.

### **TRAPDOOR**

[Aside] Mass, here she is! I'm bound already to serve her, tho' it be but a sluttish trick.—Bless my hopeful young mistress with long life and great limbs! Send her the upper hand of all bailiffs and their hungry adherents!

### **MOLL**

How now! What art thou?

### **TRAPDOOR**

A poor, ebbing gentleman that would gladly wait for the young flood of your service.

### **MOLL**

My service! What should move you to offer your service to me, sir?

### **TRAPDOOR**

The love I bear to your heroic spirit and masculine womanhood.

### **MOLL**

So, sir, put case we should retain you to us, what parts are there in you for a gentlewoman's service?

### **TRAPDOOR**

Of two kinds, right worshipful, movable and immovable: movable to run of arrants, and immovable to stand when you have occasion to use me.

[ll.i.] The three shops open in a rank

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

**MOLL**

What strength have you?

**TRAPDOOR**

Strength, Mistress Moll? I have gone up into a steeple and stayed the great bell as 't has been ringing, stopp'd a windmill going.

**MOLL**

And never struck down yourself?

**TRAPDOOR**

Stood as upright as I do at this present.

Molls trips up his heels; he falls.

**MOLL**

Come, I pardon you for this; it shall be no disgrace to you: I have struck up the heels of the high German's size ere now. What, not stand?

**TRAPDOOR**

I am of that nature where I love, I'll be at my mistress' foot to do her service.

**MOLL**

Why, well said. But say your mistress should receive injury: have you the spirit of fighting in you? Durst you second her?

**TRAPDOOR**

Life, I have kept a bridge myself and drove seven at a time before me.

**MOLL**

Ay?

**TRAPDOOR** aside

But they were all Lincolnshire bullocks, by my troth.

**MOLL**

Well, meet me in Gray's Inn Fields between three and four this afternoon, and upon better consideration we'll retain you.

**TRAPDOOR**

I humbly thank your good mistress—ship.  
[Aside] I'll crack your neck for this kindness.

Exit Trapdoor. Moll meets Laxton.

**LAXTON**

Remember: three.

**MOLL**

Nay, if I fail you, hang me.

[ll.i.] The three shops open in a rank

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

**LAXTON**

Good wench, i'faith.

Then Openwork

**MOLL**

Who's this?

**OPENWORK**

'Tis I, Moll.

**MOLL**

Prithee tend thy shop and prevent bastards.

**OPENWORK**

We'll have a pint of the same wine, i'faith, Moll.

[Exeunt Moll and Openwork.] The bell rings.

**GOSHAWK**

Hark the bell rings; come, gentlemen.

Jack Dapper, where shall's all munch?

**JACK**

I am for Parker's ordinary.

**LAXTON**

He's a good guest to 'm; he deserves his board:

He draws all the gentlemen in a term–time thither.

We'll be your followers, Jack, lead the way.

Look you, by my faith, the fool has feather'd his nest well.

Exeunt gallants [Laxton, Goshawk, Greenwit, Jack Dapper]. Enter Master Gallipot, Master Tiltyard, and servants with water–spaniels and a duck.

**TILTYARD**

Come, shut up your shops. Where's Master Openwork?

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Nay, ask not me, Master Tiltyard.

**TILTYARD**

Where's his water–dog? Puh–pist–her–her–pist!

**GALLIPOT**

Come, wenches, come, we're going all to Hogsden.

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

To Hogsden, husband?

[ll.i.] The three shops open in a rank

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

**GALLIPOT**

Ay, to Hogsden, pigsney.

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

I'm not ready, husband.

**GALLIPOT**

Faith, that's well. Hum–pist–pist!

Spits in the dog's mouth.

Come, Mistress Openwork, you are so long.

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

I have no joy of my life, Master Gallipot.

**GALLIPOT**

Push, let your boy lead his water–spaniel along and we'll show you the bravest sport at Parlous Pond. Hey Trug, hey Trug, hey Trug! Here's the best duck in England, except my wife.

Hey, hey, hey, fetch, fetch, fetch, come let's away;

Of all the year this is the sportfull'st day.

[II.ii. A street]

Enter Sebastian solus.

**SEBASTIAN**

If a man have a free will, where should the use

More perfect shine than in his will to love?

All creatures have their liberty in that,

Enter Sir Alexander and listens to him.

Tho' else kept under servile yoke and fear;

The very bondslave has his freedom there.

Amongst a world of creatures voic'd and silent

Must my desires wear fetters? [Aside] Yea, are you

So near? Then I must break with my heart's truth,

Meet grief at a back way; well.—Why, suppose

The two–leav'd tongues of slander or of truth

Pronounce Moll loathsome: if before my love

She appear fair, what injury have I?

I have the thing I like. In all things else

Mine own eye guides me, and I find 'em prosper.

Life, what should ail it now? I know that man

Ne'er truly loves, if he gainsay 't he lies,

That winks and marries with his father's eyes.

I'll keep mine own wide open.

Enter Moll and a Porter with a viol on his back.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

[III.i.] The three shops open in a rank

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

[Aside] Here's brave willfulness,  
A made match. Here she comes; they met a' purpose.

### PORTER

Must I carry this great fiddle to your chamber, Mistress Mary?

### MOLL

Fiddle, goodman hog-rubber? Some of these porters bear so much for others they have no time to carry wit for themselves.

### PORTER

To your own chamber, Mistress Mary?

### MOLL

Who'll hear an ass speak? Whither else, goodman pageant-bearer? They're people of the worst memories.

Exit Porter.

### SEBASTIAN

Why, 'twere too great a burthen, love, to have them carry things in their minds and a' their backs together.

### MOLL

Pardon me, sir, I thought not you so near.

### SIR ALEXANDER

[Aside] So, so, so.

### SEBASTIAN

I would be nearer to thee, and in that fashion  
That makes the best part of all creatures honest.  
No otherwise I wish it.

### MOLL

Sir, I am so poor to requite you, you must look for nothing but thanks of me. I have no humour to marry: I love to lie a' both sides a' th' bed myself; and again a' th' other side, a wife, you know, ought to be obedient, but I fear me I am too headstrong to obey, therefore I'll ne'er go about it. I love you so well, sir, for your good will I'd be loath you should repent your bargain after, and therefore we'll ne'er come together at first. I have the head now of myself and am man enough for a woman; marriage is but a chopping and changing, where a maiden loses one head and has a worse i' th' place.

### SIR ALEXANDER

[Aside] The most comfortablest answer from a roaring girl  
That ever mine ears drunk in.

### SEBASTIAN

This were enough  
Now to affright a fool forever from thee,  
When 'tis the music that I love thee for.

### SIR ALEXANDER

[Aside] There's a boy spoils all again.

[ll.i.] The three shops open in a rank

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

**MOLL**

Believe it, sir, I am not of that disdainful temper, but I could love you faithfully.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

[Aside] A pox on you for that word! I like you not now:

Y'are a cunning roarer; I see that already.

**MOLL**

But sleep upon this once more, sir, you may chance shift a mind tomorrow. Be not too hasty to wrong yourself; never while you live, sir, take a wife running: many have run out at heels that have done 't. You see, sir, I speak against myself, and if every woman would deal with their suitor so honestly, poor younger brothers would not be so often gull'd with old cozening widows that turn o'er all their wealth in trust to some kinsman and make the poor gentleman work hard for a pension. Fare you well, sir.

**SEBASTIAN**

Nay, prithe, one word more.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

[Aside] How do I wrong this girl: she puts him off still!

**MOLL**

Think upon this in cold blood, sir: you make as much haste as if you were a-going upon a sturgeon voyage. Take deliberation, sir; never choose a wife as if you were going to Virginia.

**SEBASTIAN**

And so we parted, my too-cursed fate.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

[Aside] She is but cunning, gives him longer time in't.

Enter a Tailor.

**TAILOR**

Mistress Moll, Mistress Moll: so ho ho so ho!

**MOLL**

There boy, there boy! What, dost thou go a-hawking after me with a red clout on thy finger?

**TAILOR**

I forgot to take measure on you for your new breeches.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

[Aside] Hoyda! Breeches! What, will he marry a monster with two trinkets? What age is this? If the wife go in breeches, the man must wear long coats like a fool.

**MOLL**

What fiddling's here? Would not the old pattern have serv'd your turn?

**TAILOR**

You change the fashion; you say you'll have the great Dutch slop, Mistress Mary.

[ll.i.] The three shops open in a rank

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

**MOLL**

Why, sir, I say so still.

**TAILOR**

Your breeches then will take up a yard more.

**MOLL**

Well, pray look it be put in then.

**TAILOR**

It shall stand round and full, I warrant you,

**MOLL**

Pray make 'em easy enough.

**TAILOR**

I know my fault now: t'other was somewhat stiff between the legs; I'll make these open enough, I warrant you.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

[Aside] Here's good gear towards! I have brought up my son to marry a Dutch slop and a French doublet, a codpiece—daughter!

**TAILOR**

So, I have gone as far as I can go.

**MOLL**

Why then, farewell.

**TAILOR**

If you go presently to your chamber, Mistress Mary, pray send me the measure of your thigh by some honest body.

**MOLL**

Well, sir, I'll send it by a porter presently.

Exit Moll.

**TAILOR**

So you had need: it is a lusty one; both of them would make any porter's back ache in England.

Exit Tailor.

**SEBASTIAN**

I have examined the best part of man,  
Reason and judgment, and in love they tell me  
They leave me uncontroll'd: he that is sway'd  
By an unfeeling blood past heat of love,  
His springtime must needs err; his watch ne'er goes right  
That sets his dial by a rusty clock.



The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

**SIR ALEXANDER**

[Coming forward] So, and which is that rusty clock, sir? You?

**SEBASTIAN**

The clock at Ludgate, sir; it ne'er goes true.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

But thou goest falser: not thy father's cares  
Can keep thee right. When that insensible work  
Obeys the workman's art, lets off the hour  
And stops again when time is satisfied;  
But thou runn'st on, and judgment, thy main wheel,  
Beats by all stops, as if the work would break  
Begun with long pains for a minute's ruin,  
Much like a suffering man brought up with care  
At last bequeath'd to shame and a short prayer.

**SEBASTIAN**

I taste you bitterer than I can deserve, sir.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Who has bewitch[<sup>d</sup>] thee, son? What devil or drug  
Hath wrought upon the weakness of thy blood  
And betray'd all her hopes to ruinous folly?  
Oh, wake from drowsy and enchanted shame,  
Wherein thy soul sits with a golden dream,  
Flatter'd and poisoned! I am old, my son;  
Oh, let me prevail quickly,  
For I have weightier business of mine own  
Than to chide thee: I must not to my grave  
As a drunkard to his bed, whereon he lies  
Only to sleep and never cares to rise.  
Let me dispatch in time; come no more near her.

**SEBASTIAN**

Not honestly? Not in the way of marriage?

**SIR ALEXANDER**

What, sayst thou marriage? In what place, the sessions-house? And who shall give the bride, prithee, an indictment?

**SEBASTIAN**

Sir, now ye take part with the world to wrong her.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Why, wouldst thou fain marry to be pointed at?  
Alas, the number's great; do not o'erburden 't.  
Why, as good marry a beacon on a hill,  
Which all the country fix their eyes upon  
As her thy folly dotes on. If thou long'st  
To have the story of thy infamous fortunes,

[ll.i.] The three shops open in a rank

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

Serve for discourse in ordinaries and taverns,  
Th' art in the way; or to confound thy name,  
Keep on, thou canst not miss it; or to strike  
Thy wretched father to untimely coldness,  
Keep the left hand still, it will bring thee to't.  
Yet if no tears wrung from thy father's eyes,  
Nor sighs that fly in sparkles from his sorrows,  
Had power to alter what is willful in thee,  
Methinks her very name should fright thee from her  
And never trouble me.

### SEBASTIAN

Why is the name of Moll so fatal, sir?

### SIR ALEXANDER

[Marry], one, sir, where suspect is ent'red,  
For seek all London from one end to t'other  
More whores of that name than of any ten other.

### SEBASTIAN

What's that to her? Let those blush for themselves.  
Can any guilt in others condemn her?  
I've vow'd to love her: let all storms oppose me  
That ever beat against the breast of man,  
Nothing but death's black tempest shall divide us.

### SIR ALEXANDER

Oh, folly that can dote on nought but shame!

### SEBASTIAN

Put case a wanton itch runs through one name  
More than another: is that name the worse  
Where honesty sits possess'd in't? It should rather  
Appear more excellent and deserve more praise  
When through foul mists a brightness it can raise.  
Why, there are of the devil's honest gentlemen,  
And well descended, keep an open house,  
And some a' th' good man's that are arrant knaves.  
He hates unworthily that by rote contemns,  
For the name neither saves nor yet condemns.  
And for her honesty, I have made such proof an't  
In several forms, so nearly watch'd her ways,  
I will maintain that strict against an army,  
Excepting you my father. Here's her worst:  
Sh' has a bold spirit that mingles with mankind,  
But nothing else comes near it, and oftentimes  
Through her apparel somewhat shames her birth,  
But she is loose in nothing but in mirth.  
Would all Molls were no worse.

### SIR ALEXANDER

[ll.i.] The three shops open in a rank

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

[Aside] This way I toil in vain and give but aim  
To infamy and ruin. He will fall;  
My blessing cannot stay him: all my joys  
Stand at the brink of a devouring flood  
And will be willfully swallowed, willfully,  
But why so vain? Let all these tears be lost:  
I'll pursue her to shame, and so all's cross'd.

Exit Sir Alexander.

### **SEBASTIAN**

He is gone with some strange purpose, whose effect  
Will hurt me little if he shoot so wide,  
To think I love so blindly. I but feed  
His heart to this match to draw on th' other,  
Wherein my joy sits with a full wish crown'd,  
Only his mood excepted, which must change  
By opposite policies, courses indirect:  
Plain dealing in this world takes no effect.  
This mad girl I'll acquaint with my intent,  
Get her assistance, make my fortunes known:  
'Twixt lovers' hearts, she's a fit instrument  
And has the art to help them to their own  
By her advice, for in that craft she's wise:  
My love and I may meet, spite of all spies.

Exit Sebastian.

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

**[III.i. Gray's Inn Fields]**

Enter Laxton in Gray's Inn Fields with the Coachman.

**LAXTON**

Coachman.

**COACHMAN**

Here sir.

**LAXTON**

[Giving him money] There's a tester more. Prithee drive thy coach to the hither end of Marybone Park, a fit place for Moll to get in.

**COACHMAN**

Marybone Park, sir?

**LAXTON**

Ay, it's in our way, thou know'st.

**COACHMAN**

It shall be done, sir.

**LAXTON**

Coachman.

**COACHMAN**

Anon, sir.

**LAXTON**

Are we fitted with good [frampold] jades?

**COACHMAN**

The best in Smithfield, I warrant you, sir.

**LAXTON**

May we safely take the upper hand of any [couch'd] velvet cap or tufftaffety jacket? For they keep a vild swaggering in coaches nowadays; the highways are stopp'd with them.

**COACHMAN**

My life for yours and baffle 'em too, sir. Why, they are the same jades, believe it, sir, that have drawn all your famous whores to Ware.

**LAXTON**

Nay then, they know their business; they need no more instructions.

**COACHMAN**

They're so us'd to such journeys, sir, I never use whip to 'em, for if they catch but the scent of a wench once, they run like devils.

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

Exit Coachman with his whip.

### LAXTON

Fine Cerberus: that rogue will have the start of a thousand ones, for whilst others trot afoot, he'll ride prancing to hell upon a coach-horse. Stay, 'tis now about the hour of her appointment, but yet I see her not.

The clock strikes three.

Hark, what's this? One, two, three, three by the clock at Savoy: this is the hour, and Gray's Inn Fields the place. She swore she'd meet me. Ha, yonder's two Inns a' Court men with one wench, but that's not she; they walk toward Islington out of my way. I see none yet dress'd like her: I must look for a shag ruff, a frieze jerkin, a short sword, and safeguard, or I get none. Why, Moll, prithee make haste or the coachman will curse us anon.

Enter Moll like a man.

### MOLL

[Aside] Oh, here's my gentleman: if they would keep their days as well with their mercers as their hours with their harlots, no bankout would give seven score pound for a sergeant's place, for would you know a catchpole rightly deriv'd, the corruption of a citizen is the generation of a sergeant! How his eye hawks for venery!—Come, are you ready, sir?

### LAXTON

Ready for what, sir?

### MOLL

Do you ask that now, sir? Why was this meeting 'pointed?

### LAXTON

I thought you mistook me, sir.  
You seem to be some young barrister.  
I have no suit in law; all my land's sold:  
I praise heaven for't; 't has rid me of much trouble.

### MOLL

Then I must wake you, sir. Where stands the coach?

### LAXTON

Who's this? Moll? Honest Moll?

### MOLL

So young and purblind? You're an old wanton in your eyes, I see that.

### LAXTON

Th' art admirably suited for the Three Pigeons at Brainford; I'll swear I knew thee not.

### MOLL

I'll swear you did not, but you shall know me now.

### LAXTON

No, not here, we shall be spied, i'faith; the coach is better, come.

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

**MOLL**

Stay.

**LAXTON**

What, wilt thou untruss a point, Moll?

She puts off her cloak and draws.

**MOLL**

Yes, here's the point that I untruss: 't has but one tag; 'twill serve tho' to tie up a rogue's tongue.

**LAXTON**

How!

**MOLL**

There's the gold with which you hir'd your hackney.  
[Attacking him] Here's her pace;  
She racks hard, and perhaps your bones will feel it!  
Ten angels of mine own I've put to thine;  
Win 'em and wear 'em!

**LAXTON**

Hold, Moll, Mistress Mary!

**MOLL**

Draw or I'll serve an execution on thee  
Shall lay thee up till doomsday!

**LAXTON**

Draw upon a woman? Why, what dost mean, Moll?

**MOLL**

To teach thy base thoughts manners: th' art one of those  
That thinks each woman thy fond, flexible whore  
If she but cast a liberal eye upon thee;  
Turn back her head, she's thine, or amongst company,  
By chance drink first to thee. Then she's quite gone;  
There's no means to help her, nay, for a need,  
Wilt swear unto thy credulous fellow lechers  
That th' art more in favour with a lady  
At first sight than her monkey all her lifetime.  
How many of our sex by such as thou  
Have their good thoughts paid with a blasted name  
That never deserved loosely, or did trip  
In path of whoredom beyond cup and lip?  
But for the stain of conscience and of soul,  
Better had women fall into the hands  
Of an act silent than a bragging nothing.  
There's no mercy in't. What durst move you, sir,  
To think me whorish, a name which I'd tear out  
From the high German's throat if it lay ledger there

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

To dispatch privy slanders against me?  
In thee I defy all men, their worst hates  
And their best flatteries, all their golden witchcrafts  
With which they entangle the poor spirits of fools,  
Distressed needlewomen, and trade-fall'n wives.  
Fish that must needs bite or themselves be bitten,  
Such hungry things as these may soon be took  
With a worm fast'ned on a golden hook:  
Those are the lecher's food, his prey; he watches  
For quarrelling wedlocks, and poor shifting sisters:  
'Tis the best fish he takes. But why, good fisherman,  
Am I thought meat for you, that never yet  
Had angling rod cast towards me? 'Cause, you'll say,  
I'm given to sport, I'm often merry, jest.  
Had mirth no kindred in the world but lust?  
Oh, shame take all her friends then! But howe'er  
Thou and the baser world censure my life,  
I'll send 'em word by thee, and write so much  
Upon thy breast, 'cause thou shalt bear 't in mind:  
Tell them 'twere base to yield where I have conquer'd.  
I scorn to prostitute myself to a man,  
I that can prostitute a man to me:  
And so I greet thee.

**LAXTON**

Hear me!

**MOLL**

Would the spirits  
Of all my [slanderers] were clasp'd in thine  
That I might vex an army at one time!

They fight.

**LAXTON**

I do repent me! Hold!

**MOLL**

You'll die the better Christian then.

**LAXTON**

I do confess I have wrong'd thee, Moll.

**MOLL**

Confession is but poor amends for wrong,  
Unless a rope would follow.

**LAXTON**

I ask thee pardon.

**MOLL**

[III.i. Gray's Inn Fields]

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

I'm your hir'd whore, sir.

**LAXTON**

I yield both purse and body!

**MOLL**

Both are mine and now at my disposing.

**LAXTON**

Spare my life!

**MOLL**

I scorn to strike thee basely.

**LAXTON**

Spoke like a noble girl, i'faith! [Aside] Heart, I think I fight with a familiar or the ghost of a fencer! Sh' has wounded me gallantly. Call you this a lecherous [voyage]? Here's blood would have serv'd me this seven year in broken heads and cut fingers, and it now runs all out together. Pox a' the Three Pigeons! I would the coach were here now to carry me to the chirurgeon's.

Exit Laxton.

**MOLL**

If I could meet my enemies one by one thus,  
I might make pretty shift with 'em in time  
And make 'em know she that has wit and spirit  
May scorn to live beholding to her body for meat  
Or for apparel like your common dame  
That makes shame get her clothes to cover shame.  
Base is that mind that kneels unto her body,  
As if a husband stood in awe on's wife:  
My spirit shall be mistress of this house  
As long as I have time in't.

Enter Trapdoor.

[Aside] Oh,  
Here comes my man that would be: 'tis his hour.  
Faith, a good well-set fellow, if his spirit  
Be answerable to his umbles. He walks stiff,  
But whether he will stand to't stiffly, there's the point;  
H'as a good calf for't, and ye shall have many a woman  
Choose him she means to [make] her head by his calf.  
I do not know their tricks in't. Faith, he seems  
A man without; I'll try what he is within.

**TRAPDOOR**

[Aside] She told me Gray's Inn Fields 'twixt three and four.  
I'll fit her mistress-ship with a piece of service!  
I'm hir'd to rid the town of one mad girl.



The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

She justles him.

What a pox ails you, sir?

**MOLL**

[Aside] He begins like a gentleman.

**TRAPDOOR**

Heart, is the field so narrow, or your eyesight?

She comes towards him.

Life, he comes back again!

**MOLL**

Was this spoke to me, sir?

**TRAPDOOR**

I cannot tell, sir.

**MOLL**

Go, y'are a coxcomb!

**TRAPDOOR**

Coxcomb?

**MOLL**

Y'are a slave!

**TRAPDOOR**

I hope there's law for you, sir.

**MOLL**

[Yea], do you see, sir?

Turn his hat.

**TRAPDOOR**

Heart, this is no good dealing!  
Pray let me know what house you're of.

**MOLL**

One of the Temple, sir.

Fillips him.

**TRAPDOOR**

Mass, so methinks!

**MOLL**

And yet sometime I lie

[III.i. Gray's Inn Fields]

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

About Chick Lane.

**TRAPDOOR**

I like you the worse  
Because you shift your lodging so often.  
I'll not meddle with you for that trick, sir.

**MOLL**

A good shift, but it shall not serve your turn.

**TRAPDOOR**

You'll give me leave to pass about my business, sir?

**MOLL**

Your business?  
I'll make you wait on me before I ha' done,  
And glad to serve me too.

**TRAPDOOR**

How, sir! Serve you?  
Not if there were no more men in England!

**MOLL**

But if there were no more women in England,  
I hope you'd wait upon your mistress then.

**TRAPDOOR**

Mistress!

**MOLL**

Oh, you're a tried spirit at a push, sir!

**TRAPDOOR**

What would your worship have me do?

**MOLL**

You a fighter?

**TRAPDOOR**

No, I praise heaven; I had better grace and more manners.

**MOLL**

As how I pray, sir?

**TRAPDOOR**

Life, 't had been a beastly part of me to have drawn my weapons upon my mistress! All the world would 'a' cried shame of me for that.

**MOLL**

Why, but you knew me not.

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

**TRAPDOOR**

Do not say so, mistress; I knew you by your wide straddle, as well as if I had been in your belly.

**MOLL**

Well, we shall try you further; i' th' mean time we give you entertainment.

**TRAPDOOR**

Thank your good mistress-ship.

**MOLL**

How many suits have you?

**TRAPDOOR**

No more suits than backs, mistress.

**MOLL**

Well, if you deserve, I cast off this next week,  
And you may creep into't.

**TRAPDOOR**

Thank your good worship.

**MOLL**

Come, follow me to St. Thomas Apostle's;  
I'll put a livery cloak upon your back  
The first thing I do.

**TRAPDOOR**

I follow, my dear mistress.

Exeunt omnes.

[III.ii. Gallipot's house]

Enter Mistress Gallipot as from supper, her husband after her.

**GALLIPOT**

What, Pru! Nay, sweet Prudence!

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

What a pruing keep you; I think the baby would have a teat, it kyes so. Pray be not so fond of me: leave your city humours; I'm vex'd at you to see how like a calf you come bleating after me.

**GALLIPOT**

Nay, honey Pru. How does your rising up before all the table show? And flinging from my friends so uncivilly? Fie, Pru, fie, come!

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Then up and ride, i'faith.

**GALLIPOT**

Up and ride? Nay, my pretty Pru, that's far from my thought, duck. Why, mouse, thy mind is nibbling at

[III.i. Gray's Inn Fields]

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

something. What is't? What lies upon thy stomach?

### **MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Such an ass as you. Hoyda, y'are best turn midwife or physician! Y'are a pothecary already, but I'm none of your drugs.

### **GALLIPOT**

Thou art a sweet drug, sweet'st Pru, and the more thou art pounded, the more precious.

### **MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Must you be prying into a woman's secrets, say ye?

### **GALLIPOT**

Woman's secrets?

### **MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

What, I cannot have a qualm come upon me but your teeth waters till your nose hang over it.

### **GALLIPOT**

It is my love, dear wife.

### **MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Your love? Your love is all words; give me deeds: I cannot abide a man that's too fond over me, so cookish; thou dost not know how to handle a woman in her kind.

### **GALLIPOT**

No, Pru? Why, I hope I have handled—

### **MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Handle a fool's head of your own, fie, fie!

### **GALLIPOT**

Ha, ha, 'tis such a wasp! It does me good now to have her [sting] me, little rogue.

### **MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Now fie, how you vex me! I cannot abide these [apron] husbands, such cotqueans: you overdo your things; they become you scurvily.

### **GALLIPOT**

[Aside] Upon my life, she breeds! Heaven knows how I have strain'd myself to please her, night and day. I wonder why we citizens should get children so fretful and untoward in the breeding, their fathers being for the most part as gentle as milch-kine.—Shall I leave thee, my Pru?

### **MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Fie, fie, fie.

### **GALLIPOT**

Thou shalt not be vex'd no more, pretty kind rogue: take no cold, sweet Pru.

Exit Gallipot.

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

### MISTRESS GALLIPOT

As your wit has done. [Taking out a letter] Now, Master Laxton, show your head. What news from you? Would any husband suspect that a woman crying, "Buy any scurvygrass" should bring love letters amongst her herbs to his wife? Pretty trick, fine conveyance! Had jealousy a thousand eyes, a silly woman with scurvygrass blinds them all.

Laxton, with bays

Crown I thy wit for this: it deserves praise.

This makes me affect thee more; this proves thee wise.

'Lack what poor shift is love forc'd to devise?

To th' point:

She reads the letter.

"Oh, sweet creature,"—a sweet beginning—"pardon my long absence, for thou shalt shortly be possessed with my presence. Though Demophon was false to Phyllis, I will be to thee as Pan-da-rus was to Cres-sida; tho' Aeneas made an ass of Dido, I will die to thee ere I do so. Oh, sweet'st creature, make much of me, for no man beneath the silver moon shall make more of a woman than I do of thee. Furnish me therefore with thirty pounds; you must do it of necessity for me: I languish till I see some comfort come from thee, protesting not to die in thy debt, but rather to live so, as hitherto I have and will.

Thy true Laxton ever."

Alas, poor gentleman! Troth, I pity him.

How shall I raise this money? Thirty pound?

'Tis thirty sure, a 3 before an O;

I know his threes too well. My childbed linen?

Shall I pawn that for him? Then if my mark

Be known, I am undone; it may be thought

My husband's bankrout. Which way shall I turn?

Laxton, what with my own fears and thy wants,

I'm as a needle 'twixt two adamants.

Enter Master Gallipot hastily.

### GALLIPOT

Nay, nay, wife, the women are all up! [Aside] Ha! How, reading a' letters? I smell a goose, a couple of capons, and a gammon of bacon from her mother out of the country, I hold my life.—Steal, steal!

### MISTRESS GALLIPOT

Oh, beshrew your heart!

### GALLIPOT

What letter's that?

I'll see't.

She tears the letter.

### MISTRESS GALLIPOT

Oh, would thou hadst no eyes to see

The downfall of me and thyself: I'm forever,

Forever I'm undone!

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

**GALLIPOT**

What ails my Pru?  
What paper's that thou tear'st?

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Would I could tear  
My very heart in pieces, for my soul  
Lies on the rack of shame that tortures me  
Beyond a woman's suffering.

**GALLIPOT**

What means this?

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Had you no other vengeance to throw down  
But even in height of all my joys—

**GALLIPOT**

Dear woman!

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

When the full sea of pleasure and content  
Seem'd to flow over me—

**GALLIPOT**

As thou desirest to keep  
Me out of bedlam, tell what troubles thee?  
Is not thy child at nurse fall'n sick, or dead?

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Oh, no!

**GALLIPOT**

Heavens bless me! Are my barns and houses  
Yonder at Hockley Hole consum'd with fire?  
I can build more, sweet Pru.

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

'Tis worse, 'tis worse.

**GALLIPOT**

My factor broke, or is the Jonas sunk?

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Would all we had were swallowed in the waves,  
Rather than both should be the scorn of slaves.

**GALLIPOT**

I'm at my wits' end!

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Oh, my dear husband,  
Where once I thought myself a fixed star  
Plac'd only in the heaven of thine arms,  
I fear now I shall prove a wanderer.  
Oh, Laxton, Laxton, is it then my fate  
To be by thee o'erthrown?

**GALLIPOT**

Defend me, wisdom,  
From falling into frenzy! On my knees,  
Sweet Pru, speak: what's that Laxton who so heavy  
Lies on thy bosom?

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

I shall sure run mad!

**GALLIPOT**

I shall run mad for company then. Speak to me:  
I'm Gallipot thy husband. Pru, why, Pru!  
Art sick in conscience for some villainous deed  
Thou wert about to act? Didst mean to rob me?  
Tush, I forgive thee! Hast thou on my bed  
Thrust my soft pillow under another's head?  
I'll wink at all faults, Pru; 'las, that's no more  
Than what some neighbours near thee have done before.  
Sweet honey Pru, what's that Laxton?

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Oh!

**GALLIPOT**

Out with him!

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Oh, he's born to be my undoer!  
This hand which thou call'st thine to him was given;  
To him was I made sure i' th' sight of heaven.

**GALLIPOT**

I never heard this thunder.

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Yes, yes, before  
I was to thee contracted, to him I swore,  
Since last I saw him twelve months three times told  
The moon hath drawn through her light silver bow,  
For o'er the seas he went, and it was said,  
But rumour lies, that he in France was dead.  
But he's alive, oh, he's alive! He sent  
That letter to me, which in rage I rent,

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

Swearing with oaths most damnably to have me,  
Or tear me from this bosom. Oh, heavens save me!

**GALLIPOT**

My heart will break! Sham'd and undone forever!

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

So black a day poor wretch went o'er thee never.

**GALLIPOT**

If thou shouldst wrastle with him at the law,  
Th' art sure to fall: no odd sleight, no prevention.  
I'll tell him th' art with child.

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Umh.

**GALLIPOT**

Or give out  
One of my men was ta'en a-bed with thee.

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Umh, umh.

**GALLIPOT**

Before I lose thee, my dear Pru,  
I'll drive it to that push.

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Worse, and worse still:  
You embrace a mischief to prevent an ill.

**GALLIPOT**

I'll buy thee of him, stop his mouth with gold.  
Think'st thou twill do?

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Oh me, heavens grant it would!  
Yet now my senses are set more in tune,  
He writ, as I remember in his letter,  
That he in riding up and down had spent  
Ere he could find me thirty pounds: send that;  
Stand not on thirty with him.

**GALLIPOT**

Forty, Pru;  
Say thou the word 'tis done. We venture lives  
For wealth, but must do more to keep our wives.  
Thirty or forty, Pru?

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

[III.i. Gray's Inn Fields]



## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

Thirty, good sweet;  
Of an ill bargain let's save what we can.  
I'll pay it him with my tears: he was a man  
When first I knew him of a meek spirit;  
All goodness is not yet dried up, I hope.

### **GALLIPOT**

He shall have thirty pound; let that stop all:  
Love's sweets taste best when we have drunk down gall.

Enter Master Tiltyard and his wife, Master Goshawk, and Mistress Openwork.

God—so, our friends! Come, come, smooth your cheek;  
After a storm the face of heaven looks sleek.

### **TILTYARD**

Did I not tell you these turtles were together?

### **MISTRESS TILTYARD**

How dost thou, sirrah? Why, sister Gallipot!

### **MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Lord, how she's chang'd!

### **GOSHAWK**

Is your wife ill, sir?

### **GALLIPOT**

Yes, indeed la, sir, very ill, very ill, never worse!

### **MISTRESS TILTYARD**

How her head burns! Feel how her pulses work.

### **MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Sister, lie down a little; that always does me good.

### **MISTRESS TILTYARD**

In good sadness, I find best ease in that too.  
Has she laid some hot thing to her stomach?

### **MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

No, but I will lay something anon.

### **TILTYARD**

Come, come, fools, you trouble her. Shall's go, Master Goshawk?

### **GOSHAWK**

Yes, sweet Master Tiltyard. [Taking Mistress Openwork aside] Sirrah Rosamond, I hold my life Gallipot hath vex'd his wife.

### **MISTRESS OPENWORK**

[III.i. Gray's Inn Fields]

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

She has a horrible high colour indeed.

**GOSHAWK**

We shall have your face painted with the same red soon at night when your husband comes from his rubbers in a false alley; thou wilt not believe me that his bowls run with a wrong bias.

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

It cannot sink into me that he feeds upon stale mutton abroad, having better and fresher at home.

**GOSHAWK**

What if I bring thee where thou shalt see him stand at rack and manger?

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

I'll saddle him in's kind and spur him till he kick again.

**GOSHAWK**

Shall thou and I ride our journey then?

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Here's my hand.

**GOSHAWK**

No more.—Come, Master Tiltyard, shall we leap into the stirrups with our women and amble home?

**TILTYARD**

Yes, yes; come, wife.

**MISTRESS TILTYARD**

In troth, sister, I hope you will do well for all this.

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

I hope I shall. Farewell, good sister, sweet Master Goshawk.

**GALLIPOT**

Welcome, brother, most kindly welcome, sir.

**OMNES**

Thanks, sir, for our good cheer.

Exeunt all but Gallipot and his wife.

**GALLIPOT**

It shall be so, because a crafty knave  
Shall not outreach me nor walk by my door  
With my wife arm in arm, as 'twere his whore,  
I'll give him a golden coxcomb, thirty pound.  
Tush, Pru, what's thirty pound? Sweet duck, look cheerly.

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Thou art worthy of my heart: thou buy'st it dearly.

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

Enter Laxton muffled.

**LAXTON**

'Ud's light, the tide's against me! A pox of your pothecaryship! Oh, for some glister to set him going! 'Tis one of Hercules' labours to tread one of these city hens because their cocks are still crowing over them; there's no turning tail here, I must on.

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Oh, husband, see, he comes!

**GALLIPOT**

Let me deal with him.

**LAXTON**

Bless you, sir.

**GALLIPOT**

Be you bless'd too, sir, if you come in peace.

**LAXTON**

Have you any good pudding tobacco, sir?

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Oh, pick no quarrels, gentle sir! My husband  
Is not a man of weapon as you are;  
He knows all: I have op'ned all before him  
Concerning you.

**LAXTON**

Zounds, has she shown my letters!

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Suppose my case were yours, what would you do  
At such a pinch, such batteries, such assaults  
Of father, mother, kindred, to dissolve  
The knot you tied, and to be bound to him?  
How could you shift this storm off?

**LAXTON**

If I know, hang me.

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Besides a story of your death was read  
Each minute to me.

**LAXTON**

[Aside] What a pox means this riddling?

**GALLIPOT**

Be wise, sir; let not you and I be toss'd  
On lawyers' pens: they have sharp nibs and draw

[III.i. Gray's Inn Fields]

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

Men's very heart–blood from them. What need you, sir,  
To beat the drum of my wife's infamy,  
And call your friends together, sir, to prove  
Your [precontract] when sh' has confess'd it?

**LAXTON**

Umh, sir,  
Has she confess'd it?

**GALLIPOT**

Sh' has, faith, to me, sir,  
Upon your letter sending.

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

I have, I have.

**LAXTON**

[Aside] If I let this iron cool, call me slave.--  
Do you hear, you dame Prudence? Think'st thou, vile woman,  
I'll take these blows and wink?

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Upon my knees--

**LAXTON**

Out, impudence!

**GALLIPOT**

Good sir--

**LAXTON**

You goatish slaves,  
No wild fowl to cut up but mine?

**GALLIPOT**

Alas, sir,  
You make her flesh to tremble; fright her not.  
She shall do reason and what's fit.

**LAXTON**

I'll have thee,  
Wert thou more common than an hospital  
And more diseased.

**GALLIPOT**

But one word, good sir.

**LAXTON**

So, sir?

**GALLIPOT**

[III.i. Gray's Inn Fields]

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

I married her, have [lain] with her, and got  
Two children on her body; think but on that.  
Have you so beggarly an appetite,  
When I upon a dainty dish have fed,  
To dine upon my scraps, my leavings? Ha, sir?  
Do I come near you [now], sir?

**LAXTON**

Be—Lady, you touch me.

**GALLIPOT**

Would not you scorn to wear my clothes, sir?

**LAXTON**

Right, sir.

**GALLIPOT**

Then pray, sir, wear not her, for she's a garment  
So fitting for my body, I'm loath  
Another should put it on; you will undo both.  
Your letter, as she said, complain'd you had spent  
In quest of her some thirty pound: I'll pay it.  
Shall that, sir, stop this gap up 'twixt you two?

**LAXTON**

Well, if I swallow this wrong, let her thank you;  
The money being paid, sir, I am gone.  
Farewell, oh women! Happy's he trusts none.

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Dispatch him hence, sweet husband.

**GALLIPOT**

Yes, dear wife.  
Pray, sir, come in. Ere Master Laxton part  
Thou shalt in wine drink to him.

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

With all my heart.  
[Aside to Laxton] How dost thou like my wit?

**LAXTON**

[Aside to Mistress Gallipot] Rarely!

Exit Master Gallipot and his wife.

That wile  
By which the serpent did the first woman beguile  
Did ever since all women's bosoms fill;  
Y'are apple—eaters all, deceivers still.

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

Exit Laxton.

[III.iii. Holborn Street]

Enter Sir Alexander Wengrave, Sir Davy Dapper, Sir Adam Appleton at one door, and Trapdoor at another door.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Out with your tale, Sir Davy, to Sir Adam;  
A knave is in mine eye deep in my debt.

**SIR DAVY**

Nay, if he be a knave, sir, hold him fast.

[Sir Alexander takes Trapdoor aside.]

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Speak softly. What egg is there hatching now?

**TRAPDOOR**

A duck's egg, sir, a duck that has eaten a frog; I have crack'd the shell and some villainy or other will peep out presently. The duck that sits is the bouncing ramp, that roaring girl my mistress, the drake that must tread is your son Sebastian.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Be quick.

**TRAPDOOR**

As the tongue of an oyster—wench.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

And see thy news be true.

**TRAPDOOR**

As a barber's every Saturday night. Mad Moll—

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Ah.

**TRAPDOOR**

Must be let in without knocking at your back gate.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

So.

**TRAPDOOR**

Your chamber will be made bawdy.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Good.

**TRAPDOOR**

She comes in a shirt of mail.

[III.i. Gray's Inn Fields]

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

**SIR ALEXANDER**

How shirt of mail?

**TRAPDOOR**

Yes, sir, or a male shirt, that's to say in man's apparel.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

To my son?

**TRAPDOOR**

Close to your son: your son and her moon will be in conjunction, if all almanacs lie not. Her black safeguard is turn'd into a deep slop, the holes of her upper body to button holes, her waistcoat to a doublet, her placket to the ancient seat of a codpiece, and you shall take 'em both with standing collars.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Art sure of this?

**TRAPDOOR**

As every throng is sure of a pickpocket, as sure as a whore is of the clients all Michaelmas Term, and of the pox after the term.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

The time of their tilting?

**TRAPDOOR**

Three.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

The day?

**TRAPDOOR**

This.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Away, ply it, watch her.

**TRAPDOOR**

As the devil doth for the death of a bawd, I'll watch her; do you catch her.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

She's fast: here weave thou the nets. Hark—

**TRAPDOOR**

They are made.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

I told them thou didst owe me money; hold it up, maintain 't.

**TRAPDOOR**

Stiffly, as a puritan does contention. [Loudly] [Pox], I owe thee not the value of a halfpenny halter!

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Thou shalt be hang'd in't ere thou scape so! Varlet, I'll make thee look through a grate.

**TRAPDOOR**

I'll do't presently, through a tavern grate. Drawer! Pish!

Exit Trapdoor.

**SIR ADAM**

Has the knave vex'd you, sir?

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Ask'd him my money;  
He swears my son receiv'd it. Oh, that boy  
Will ne'er leave heaping sorrows on my heart  
Till he has broke it quite.

**SIR ADAM**

Is he still wild?

**SIR ALEXANDER**

As is a Russian bear.

**SIR ADAM**

But he has left  
His old haunt with that baggage?

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Worse still and worse:  
He lays on me his shame, I on him my curse.

**SIR DAVY**

My son Jack Dapper then shall run with him,  
All in one pasture.

**SIR ADAM**

Proves your son bad too, sir?

**SIR DAVY**

As villainy can make him. Your Sebastian  
Dotes but on one drab, mine on a thousand,  
A noise of fiddlers, tobacco, wine and a whore,  
A mercer that will let him take up more,  
Dice, and a water-spaniel with a duck: oh,  
Bring him a-bed with these! When his purse jingles,  
Roaring boys follow at's tale, fencers and ningles,  
Beasts Adam ne'er gave name to: these horse-leeches suck  
My son; he being drawn dry, they all live on smoke.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

[III.i. Gray's Inn Fields]



## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

Tobacco?

### **SIR DAVY**

Right, but I have in my brain  
A windmill going that shall grind to dust  
The follies of my son, and make him wise  
Or a stark fool; pray lend me your advise.

[SIR ALEXANDER, SIR ADAM]

That shall you, good Sir Davy.

### **SIR DAVY**

Here's the springe  
I ha' set to catch this woodcock in: an action  
In a false name, unknown to him, is ent'red  
I' th' counter to arrest Jack Dapper.

[SIR ALEXANDER, SIR ADAM]

Ha, ha, he!

### **SIR DAVY**

Think you the counter cannot break him?

### **SIR ADAM**

Break him?  
Yes, and break's heart too if he lie there long.

### **SIR DAVY**

I'll make him sing a countertenor sure.

### **SIR ADAM**

No way to tame him like it; there he shall learn  
What money is indeed, and how to spend it.

### **SIR DAVY**

He's bridled there.

### **SIR ALEXANDER**

Ay, yet knows not how to mend it.  
Bedlam cures not more madmen in a year  
Than one of the counters does; men pay more dear  
There for their wit than anywhere; a counter:  
Why, 'tis an university! Who not sees?  
As scholars there, so here men take degrees  
And follow the same studies all alike.  
Scholars learn first logic and rhetoric.  
So does a prisoner: with fine honey'd speech  
At's first coming in he doth persuade, beseech,  
He may be lodg'd with one that is not itchy,  
To lie in a clean chamber, in sheets not lousy;  
But when he has no money, then does he try

[III.i. Gray's Inn Fields]

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

By subtle logic and quaint sophistry  
To make the keepers trust him.

**SIR ADAM**  
Say they do?

**SIR ALEXANDER**  
Then he's a graduate.

**SIR DAVY**  
Say they trust him not?

**SIR ALEXANDER**  
Then is he held a freshman and a sot,  
And never shall commence, but being still barr'd  
Be expuls'd from the master's side to th' twopenny ward,  
Or else i' th' hole be plac'd.

**SIR ADAM**  
When then I pray  
Proceeds a prisoner?

**SIR ALEXANDER**  
When money being the aim  
He can dispute with his hard creditors' hearts  
And get out clear, he's then a Master of Arts.  
Sir Davy, send your son to Wood Street College:  
A gentleman can nowhere get more knowledge.

**SIR DAVY**  
There gallants study hard.

**SIR ALEXANDER**  
True, to get money.

**SIR DAVY**  
Lies by th' heels, i'faith; thanks, thanks. I ha' sent  
For a couple of bears shall paw him.

Enter Sergeant Curtilax and Yeoman Hanger.

**SIR ADAM**  
Who comes yonder?

**SIR DAVY**  
They look like puttocks; these should be they.

**SIR ALEXANDER**  
I know 'em;  
They are officers, sir. We'll leave you.

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

### **SIR DAVY**

My good knights.  
Leave me; you see I'm haunted now with spirits.

[SIR ALEXANDER, SIR ADAM]

Fare you well, sir.

Exeunt [Sir] Alexander and [Sir] Adam.

### **CURTILAX**

[Aside to Hanger] This old muzzle—chops should be he by the fellow's description.—Save you, sir.

### **SIR DAVY**

Come hither, you mad varlets. Did not my man tell you I watch'd here for you?

### **CURTILAX**

One in a blue coat, sir, told us that in this place an old gentleman would watch for us, a thing contrary to our oath, for we are to watch for every wicked member in a city.

### **SIR DAVY**

You'll watch then for ten thousand. What's thy name, honesty?

### **CURTILAX**

Sergeant Curtilax I, sir.

### **SIR DAVY**

An excellent name for a sergeant, Curtilax.  
Sergeants indeed are weapons of the law  
When prodigal ruffians far in debt are grown:  
Should not you cut them, citizens were o'erthrown.  
Thou dwell'st hereby in Holborn, Curtilax?

### **CURTILAX**

That's my circuit, sir; I conjure most in that circle.

### **SIR DAVY**

And what young toward whelp is this?

### **HANGER**

Of the same litter: his yeoman, sir; my name's Hanger.

### **SIR DAVY**

Yeoman Hanger.  
One pair of shears sure cut out both your coats:  
You have two names most dangerous to men's throats;  
You two are villainous loads on gentlemen's backs.  
Dear ware, this Hanger and this Curtilax.

### **CURTILAX**

We are as other men are, sir. I cannot see but he who makes a show of honesty and religion, if his claws can fasten to his liking, he draws blood. All that live in the world are but great fish and little fish, and feed upon one

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

another: some eat up whole men; a sergeant cares but for the shoulder of a man. They call us knaves and curs, but many times he that sets us on worries more lambs one year than we do in seven.

**SIR DAVY**

Spoke like a noble Cerberus. Is the action ent'red?

**HANGER**

His name is ent'red in the book of unbelievers.

**SIR DAVY**

What book's that?

**CURTILAX**

The book where all prisoners' names stand, and not one amongst forty when he comes in believes to come out in haste.

**SIR DAVY**

Be as dogged to him as your office allows you to be.

[CURTILAX, HANGER]

Oh, sir!

**SIR DAVY**

You know the unthrift Jack Dapper?

**CURTILAX**

Ay, ay, sir. That gull? As well as I know my yeoman.

**SIR DAVY**

And you know his father too, Sir Davy Dapper?

**CURTILAX**

As damn'd a usurer as ever was among Jews; if he were sure his father's skin would yield him any money, he would when he dies [flay] it off, and sell it to cover drums for children at Bartholomew Fair.

**SIR DAVY**

[Aside] What toads are these to spit poison on a man to his face!—Do you see, my honest rascals? Yonder greyhound is the dog he hunts with: out of that tavern Jack Dapper will sally. Sa, sa; give the counter, on, set upon him.

[CURTILAX, HANGER]

We'll charge him upo' th' back, sir.

**SIR DAVY**

Take no bail, put mace enough into his caudle, double your files, traverse your ground.

[CURTILAX, HANGER]

Brave, sir.

**SIR DAVY**

Cry arm, arm, arm.

[III.i. Gray's Inn Fields]

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

[CURTILAX, HANGER]

Thus, sir.

**SIR DAVY**

There boy, there boy, away: look to your prey, my true English wolves, and so I vanish.

Exit Sir Davy.

**CURTILAX**

Some warden of the sergeants begat this old fellow, upon my life! Stand close.

**HANGER**

Shall the ambuscado lie in one place?

**CURTILAX**

No, [nook] thou yonder.

Enter Moll and Trapdoor.

**MOLL**

Ralph.

**TRAPDOOR**

What says my brave captain male and female?

**MOLL**

This Holborn is such a wrangling street.

**TRAPDOOR**

That's because lawyers walks to and fro in't.

**MOLL**

Here's such justling, as if everyone we met were drunk and reel'd.

**TRAPDOOR**

Stand, mistress: do you not smell carrion?

**MOLL**

Carrion? No, yet I spy ravens.

**TRAPDOOR**

Some poor wind-shaken gallant will anon fall into sore labour, and these men-midwives must bring him to bed i' the counter: there all those that are great with child with debts lie in.

**MOLL**

Stand up.

**TRAPDOOR**

Like your new maypole.

[III.i. Gray's Inn Fields]

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

**HANGER**

Whist, whew.

**CURTILAX**

Hump, no.

**MOLL**

Peeping? It shall go hard, huntsmen, but I'll spoil your game. They look for all the world like two infected maltmen coming muffled up in their cloaks in a frosty morning to London.

**TRAPDOOR**

A course, captain; a bear comes to the stake.

Enter Jack Dapper and Gull.

**MOLL**

It should be so, for the dogs struggle to be let loose.

**HANGER**

Whew.

**CURTILAX**

Hemp.

**MOLL**

Hark, Trapdoor, follow your leader.

**JACK**

Gull.

**GULL**

Master.

**JACK**

Didst ever see such an ass as I am, boy?

**GULL**

No, by my troth, sir. To lose all your money, yet have false dice of your own! Why, 'tis as I saw a great fellow used t'other day: he had a fair sword and buckler, and yet a butcher dry—beat him with a cudgel.

[MOLL]

Honest sergeant—

[TRAPDOOR]

Fly, fly, Master Dapper: you'll be arrested else!

**JACK**

Run, Gull, and draw!

**GULL**

Run, master, Gull follows you!

[III.i. Gray's Inn Fields]

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

[Exeunt Jack] Dapper and Gull.

**CURTILAX**

I know you well enough: you're but a whore to hang upon any man.

**MOLL**

Whores then are like sergeants, so now hang you! [To Trapdoor] Draw, rogue, but strike not: for a broken pate they'll keep their beds and recover twenty marks damages.

**CURTILAX**

You shall pay for this rescue! [To Hanger] Run down Shoe Lane and meet him.

[Exeunt Curtilax and Hanger.]

**TRAPDOOR**

Shoo! Is this a rescue, gentlemen, or no?

**MOLL**

Rescue? A pox on 'em! Trapdoor, let's away;  
I'm glad I have done perfect one good work today.  
If any gentleman be in scriveners' bands,  
Send but for Moll, she'll bail him by these hands.

Exeunt.

**[IV.i. Sir Alexander's chamber]**

Enter Sir Alexander Wengrave solus.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Unhappy in the follies of a son,  
Led against judgment, sense, obedience,  
And all the powers of nobleness and wit:  
Oh, wretched father!

Enter Trapdoor.

Now, Trapdoor, will she come?

**TRAPDOOR**

In man's apparel, sir; I am in her heart now  
And share in all her secrets.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Peace, peace, peace.  
Here, take my German watch; hang 't up in sight  
That I may see her hang in English for't.

**TRAPDOOR**

I warrant you for that now; next sessions rids her, sir: this watch will bring her in better than a hundred constables.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Good Trapdoor, sayst thou so? Thou cheer'st my heart  
After a storm of sorrow. My gold chain too:  
Here, take a hundred marks in yellow links.

**TRAPDOOR**

That will do well to bring the watch to light, sir,  
And worth a thousand of your headboroughs' lanthorns.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Place that a' the court cupboard, let it lie  
Full in the view of her thief-whorish eye.

**TRAPDOOR**

She cannot miss it, sir; I see't so plain  
That I could steal 't myself.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Perhaps thou shalt too,  
That or something as weighty; what she leaves,  
Thou shalt come closely in and filch away,  
And all the weight upon her back I'll lay.

**TRAPDOOR**



The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

You cannot assure that, sir.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

No, what lets it?

**TRAPDOOR**

Being a stout girl, perhaps she'll desire pressing,  
Then all the weight must lie upon her belly.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Belly or back I care not so I've one.

**TRAPDOOR**

You're of my mind for that, sir.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Hang up my ruff band with the diamond at it;  
It may be she'll like that best.

**TRAPDOOR**

[Aside] It's well for her that she must have her choice; he thinks nothing too good for her.—If you hold on this mind a little longer, it shall be the first work I do to turn thief myself; would do a man good to be hang'd when he is so well provided for.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

So, well said; all hangs well, would she hung so too:  
The sight would please me more than all their [glistenings].  
Oh, that my mysteries to such straits should run  
That I must rob myself to bless my son!

Exeunt. Enter Sebastian, with Mary Fitzallard like a page, and Moll [in man's clothing].

**SEBASTIAN**

Thou hast done me a kind office, without touch  
Either of sin or shame; our loves are honest.

**MOLL**

I'd scorn to make such shift to bring you together else.

**SEBASTIAN**

Now have I time and opportunity  
Without all fear to bid thee welcome, love.

Kiss.

**MARY**

Never with more desire and harder venture.

**MOLL**

How strange this shows, one man to kiss another.

[IV.i. Sir Alexander's chamber]

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

**SEBASTIAN**

I'd kiss such men to choose, Moll;  
Methinks a woman's lip tastes well in a doublet.

**MOLL**

Many an old madam has the better fortune then,  
Whose breaths grew stale before the fashion came;  
If that will help 'em, as you think 'twill do,  
They'll learn in time to pluck on the hose too.

**SEBASTIAN**

The older they wax, Moll—troth, I speak seriously—  
As some have a conceit their drink tastes better  
In an outlandish cup than in our own,  
So methinks every kiss she gives me now  
In this strange form is worth a pair of two.  
Here we are safe and furthest from the eye  
Of all suspicion: this is my [father's] chamber,  
Upon which floor he never steps till night;  
Here he mistrusts me not, nor I his coming.  
At mine own chamber he still pries unto me;  
My freedom is not there at mine own finding,  
Still check'd and curb'd: here he shall miss his purpose.

**MOLL**

And what's your business now you have your mind, sir?  
At your great suit I promis'd you to come;  
I pitied her for name's sake, that a Moll  
Should be so cross'd in love when there's so many  
That owes nine lays apiece, and not so little.  
My tailor fitted her. How like you his work?

**SEBASTIAN**

So well no art can mend it for this purpose,  
But to thy wit and help we're chief in debt  
And must live still beholding.

**MOLL**

Any honest pity  
I'm willing to bestow upon poor ring-doves.

**SEBASTIAN**

I'll offer no worse play.

**MOLL**

Nay, and you should, sir;  
I should draw first and prove the quicker man.

**SEBASTIAN**

Hold, there shall need no weapon at this meeting;  
But 'cause thou shalt not loose thy fury idle,

[IV.i. Sir Alexander's chamber]

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

Here take this viol, run upon the guts,  
And end thy quarrel singing.

### **MOLL**

Like a swan above bridge,  
For look you here's the bridge, and here am I.

### **SEBASTIAN**

Hold on, sweet Moll.

### **MARY**

I've heard her much commended, sir, for one that was ne'er taught.

### **MOLL**

I'm much beholding to 'em. Well, since you'll needs put us together, sir, I'll play my part as well as I can; it shall ne'er be said I came into a gentleman's chamber and let his instrument hang by the walls.

### **SEBASTIAN**

Why, well said, Moll! I'faith, it had been a shame for that gentleman then that would have let it hung still and ne'er off'red thee it.

### **MOLL**

There it should have been still then for Moll, for though the world judge impudently of me, I ne'er came into that chamber yet where I took down the instrument myself.

### **SEBASTIAN**

Pish, let 'em prate abroad; th' art here where thou art known and lov'd. There be a thousand close dames that will call the viol an unmannerly instrument for a woman and therefore talk broadly of thee, when you shall have them sit wider to a worse quality.

### **MOLL**

Push, I ever fall asleep and think not of 'em, sir, and thus I dream.

### **SEBASTIAN**

Prithee let's hear thy dream, Moll.

The song.

**MOLL.** I dream there is a mistress,  
And she lays out the money;  
She goes unto her sisters,  
She never comes at any.  
Enter Sir Alexander behind them.

She says she went to th' Burse for patterns;  
You shall find her at Saint Kathern's,  
And comes home with never a penny.

### **SEBASTIAN**

That's a free mistress, faith.

[IV.i. Sir Alexander's chamber]

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

### SIR ALEXANDER

[Aside] Ay, ay, ay, like her that sings it, one of thine own choosing.

### MOLL

But shall I dream again?

Here comes a wench will brave ye,  
Her courage was so great:  
She lay with one o' the navy,  
Her husband lying i' the Fleet,  
Yet oft with him she cavill'd.  
I wonder what she ails.  
Her husband's ship lay gravell'd,  
When hers could hoise up sails;  
Yet she began like all my foes  
To call whore first, for so do those:  
A pox of all false tails!

### SEBASTIAN

Marry, amen say I.

### SIR ALEXANDER

[Aside] So say I too.

### MOLL

Hang up the viol now, sir: all this while I was in a dream; one shall lie rudely then, but being awake, I keep my legs together. A watch: what's a' clock here?

### SIR ALEXANDER

[Aside] Now, now, she's trapp'd.

### MOLL

Between one and two; nay, then I care not. A watch and a musician are cousin-germans in one thing: they must both keep time well, or there's no goodness in 'em; the one else deserves to be dash'd against a wall, and t'other to have his brains knock'd out with a fiddle case. What? A loose chain and a dangling diamond. Here were a brave booty for an evening-thief now; There's many a younger brother would be glad To look twice in at a window for't, And wriggle in and out, like an eel in a sandbag. Oh, if men's secret youthful faults should judge 'em, 'Twould be the general'st execution That e'er was seen in England; There would be but few left to sing the ballets. There would be so much work: most of our brokers Would be chosen for hangmen, a good day for them; They might renew their wardropes of free cost then.

### SEBASTIAN

This is the roaring wench must do us good.

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

**MARY**

No poison, sir, but serves us for some use,  
Which is confirm'd in her.

**SEBASTIAN**

Peace, peace!  
Foot, I did hear him sure, where'er he be!

**MOLL**

Who did you hear?

**SEBASTIAN**

My father.  
'Twas like a sight of his; I must be wary.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

[Aside] No, wilt not be. Am I alone so wretched  
That nothing takes? I'll put him to his plunge for't.

**SEBASTIAN**

Life, here he comes! [To Moll, giving her money] Sir, I beseech you take it;  
Your way of teaching does so much content me,  
I'll make it four pound. Here's forty shillings, sir.  
I think I name it right. [Aside to her] Help me, good Moll.--  
Forty in hand.

**MOLL**

Sir, you shall pardon me;  
I have more of the mean'st scholar I can teach.  
This pays me more than you have off'red yet.

**SEBASTIAN**

At the next quarter  
When I receive the means my father 'lows me,  
You shall have t'other forty.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

[Aside] This were well now,  
Were 't to a man whose sorrows had blind eyes,  
But mine behold his follies and untruths  
With two clear glasses.—How now?

**SEBASTIAN**

Sir.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

What's he there?

**SEBASTIAN**

You're come in good time, sir: I've a suit to you;  
I'd crave your present kindness.

[IV.i. Sir Alexander's chamber]

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

**SIR ALEXANDER**

What is he there?

**SEBASTIAN**

A gentleman, a musician, sir, one of excellent fing'ring.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

[Aside] Ay, I think so; I wonder how they scap'd her.

**SEBASTIAN**

H'as the most delicate stroke, sir.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

[Aside] A stroke indeed: I feel it at my heart.

**SEBASTIAN**

Puts down all your famous musicians.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

[Aside] Ay, a whore may put down a hundred of 'em.

**SEBASTIAN**

Forty shillings is the agreement, sir, between us.  
Now, sir, my present means mounts but to half on't.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

And he stands upon the whole.

**SEBASTIAN**

Ay, indeed does he, sir.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

[Aside] And will do still; he'll ne'er be in other tale.

**SEBASTIAN**

Therefore I'd stop his mouth, sir, and I could.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Hum, true, there is no other way indeed.  
[Aside] His folly hardens; shame must needs succeed.—  
Now, sir, I understand you profess music.

**MOLL**

I am a poor servant to that liberal science, sir.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Where is it you teach?

**MOLL**

Right against Clifford's Inn.

[IV.i. Sir Alexander's chamber]

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Hum, that's a fit place for it. You have many scholars?

**MOLL**

And some of worth whom I may call my masters.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

[Aside] Ay, true, a company of whoremasters.—

You teach to sing too?

**MOLL**

Marry, do I, sir.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

I think you'll find an apt scholar of my son,  
Especially for prick-song.

**MOLL**

I have much hope of him.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

[Aside] I am sorry for't; I have the less for that.—

You can play any lesson?

**MOLL**

At first sight, sir.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

There's a thing called "The Witch." Can you play that?

**MOLL**

I would be sorry anyone should mend me in't.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

[Aside] Ay, I believe thee: thou hast so bewitch'd my son,

No care will mend the work that thou hast done.

I have bethought myself, since my art fails,

I'll make her policy the art to trap her.

Here are four angels mark'd with holes in them,

Fit for his crack'd companions; gold he will give her:

These will I make induction to her ruin

And rid shame from my house, grief from my heart.—

Here, son, in what you take content and pleasure,

Want shall not curb you. [Giving him money] Pay the gentleman

His latter half in gold.

**SEBASTIAN**

I thank you, sir.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

[IV.i. Sir Alexander's chamber]

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

[Aside] Oh, may the operation an't end three:  
In her, life, shame in him, and grief in me.

Exit [Sir] Alexander.

**SEBASTIAN**

Faith, thou shalt have 'em: 'tis my father's gift.  
Never was man beguil'd with better shift.

**MOLL**

He that can take me for a male musician,  
I cannot choose but make him my instrument  
And play upon him.

Exeunt omnes.

[IV.ii. Openwork's house]

Enter Mistress Gallipot and Mistress Openwork.

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Is then that bird of yours, Master Goshawk, so wild?

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

A goshawk, a puttock: all for prey; he angles for fish, but he loves flesh better.

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Is't possible his smooth face should have wrinkles in't and we not see them?

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Possible! Why, have not many handsome legs in silk stockings villainous splay feet for all their great roses?

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Troth, sirrah, thou sayst true.

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Didst never see an archer as thou 'ast walk'd by Bunhill look a-squint when he drew his bow?

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Yes, when his arrows have fline toward Islington, his eyes have shot clean contrary towards Pimlico.

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

For all the world so does Master Goshawk double with me.

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Oh, fie upon him! If he double once, he's not for me.

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Because Goshawk goes in a shag-ruff band, with a face sticking up in't which shows like an agate set in a cramp-ring, he thinks I'm in love with him.

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

[IV.i. Sir Alexander's chamber]



## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

'Las, I think he takes his mark amiss in thee.

### **MISTRESS OPENWORK**

He has by often beating into me made me believe that my husband kept a whore.

### **MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Very good.

### **MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Swore to me that my husband this very morning went in a boat with a tilt over it to the Three Pigeons at Brainford, and his punk with him under his tilt.

### **MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

That were wholesome.

### **MISTRESS OPENWORK**

I believ'd it, fell a—swearing at him, cursing of harlots, made me ready to hoise up sail, and be there as soon as he.

### **MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

So, so.

### **MISTRESS OPENWORK**

And for that voyage Goshawk comes hither incontinently. But, sirrah, this water—spaniel dives after no duck but me; his hope is having me at Brainford to make me cry quack.

### **MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Art sure of it?

### **MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Sure of it! My poor innocent Openwork came in as I was poking my ruff; presently hit I him i' the teeth with the Three Pigeons: he forswore all, I up and opened all, and now stands he in a shop hard by like a musket on a rest, to hit Goshawk i' the eye when he comes to fetch me to the boat.

### **MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Such another lame gelding offered to carry me through thick and thin—Laxton, sirrah—but I am rid of him now.

### **MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Happy is the woman can be rid of 'em all. 'Las, what are your whisking gallants to our husbands, weigh 'em rightly man for man?

### **MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Troth, mere shallow things.

### **MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Idle simple things, running heads, and yet let 'em run over us never so fast, we shopkeepers, when all's done, are sure to have 'em in our purse—nets at length, and when they are in, Lord, what simple animals they are!

[MISTRESS GALLIPOT

]

[IV.i. Sir Alexander's chamber]

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Then they hang the head.

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Then they droop.

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Then they write letters.

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Then they cog.

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Then they deal underhand with us, and we mustingle with our husbands a-bed, and we must swear they are our cousins, and able to do us a pleasure at court.

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

And yet when we have done our best, all's but put into a riven dish: we are but frump'd at and libell'd upon.

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Oh, if it were the good Lord's will, there were a law made no citizen should trust any of 'em at all!

Enter Goshawk.

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

[Aside to Mistress Openwork] Hush, sirrah, Goshawk flutters.

**GOSHAWK**

How now, are you ready?

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Nay, are you ready? A little thing, you see, makes us ready.

**GOSHAWK**

Us? Why, must she make one i' the voyage?

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Oh, by any means. Do I know how my husband will handle me?

**GOSHAWK**

[Aside] Foot, how shall I find water to keep these two mills going?—Well, since you'll needs be clapp'd under hatches, if I sail not with you both till all split, hang me up at the mainyard and duck me. [Aside] It's but liquoring them both soundly, and then you shall see their cork heels fly up high, like two swans when their tails are above water and their long necks under water, diving to catch gudgeons.—Come, come, oars stand ready, the tide's with us: on with those false faces. Blow winds and thou shalt take thy husband casting out his net to catch fresh salmon at Brainford.

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

I believe you'll eat of a cod's head of your own dressing before you reach half way thither.

[The women don masks.]

[IV.i. Sir Alexander's chamber]

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

**GOSHAWK**

So, so, follow close; pin as you go.

Enter Laxton muffled.

**LAXTON**

Do you hear?

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Yes, I thank my ears.

**LAXTON**

I must have a bout with your pothecaryship.

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

At what weapon?

**LAXTON**

I must speak with you.

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

No.

**LAXTON**

No? You shall.

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Shall? Away, sous'd sturgeon, half fish, half flesh!

**LAXTON**

Faith, gib, are you spitting? I'll cut your tail, pusscat, for this.

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

'Las, poor Laxton, I think thy tail's cut already. Your worst!

**LAXTON**

If I do not--

Exit Laxton.

**GOSHAWK**

Come, ha' you done?

Enter Master Openwork.

[Aside to her] 'Sfoot, Rosamond, your husband!

**OPENWORK**

How now? Sweet Master Goshawk, none more welcome;  
I have wanted your embracements: when friends meet,

[IV.i. Sir Alexander's chamber]

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

The music of the spheres sounds not more sweet  
Than does their conference. Who is this? Rosamond?  
Wife? How now, sister?

**GOSHAWK**

[Aside to Mistress Openwork] Silence if you love me.

**OPENWORK**

Why mask'd?

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Does a mask grieve you, sir?

**OPENWORK**

It does.

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Then y'are best get you a-mumming.

**GOSHAWK**

[Aside to her] 'Sfoot, you'll spoil all!

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

May not we cover our bare faces with masks  
As well as you cover your bald heads with hats?

**OPENWORK**

No masks. Why, th' are thieves to beauty, that rob eyes  
Of admiration in which true love lies.  
Why are masks worn? Why good, or why desired,  
Unless by their gay covers wits are fired  
To read the vild'st looks? Many bad faces,  
Because rich gems are treasured up in cases,  
Pass by their privilege current, but as caves  
Dam misers' gold, so masks are beauty's graves.  
Men ne'er meet women with such muffled eyes  
But they curse her that first did masks devise,  
And swear it was some beldam. Come, off with 't.

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

I will not.

**OPENWORK**

Good faces mask'd are jewels kept by [sprites].  
Hide none but bad ones, for they poison men's sights:  
Show [them] as shopkeepers do their broid'ed stuff,  
By owl-light; fine wares cannot be open enough.  
Prithee, sweet Rose, come strike this sail.

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Sail?

[IV.i. Sir Alexander's chamber]

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

OPENWORK

Ha?

Yes, wife, strike sail, for storms are in thine eyes.

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Th' are here, sir, in my brows if any rise.

OPENWORK

Ha, brows? What says she, friend? Pray tell me why  
Your two flags were advanc'd. The comedy,  
Come, what's the comedy?

**MISTRESS [GALLIPOT]**

Westward Ho!

OPENWORK

How?

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

'Tis Westward Ho she says.

**GOSHAWK**

Are you both mad?

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Is't market day at Brainford, and your ware  
Not sent up yet?

OPENWORK

What market day? What ware?

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

A pie with three pigeons in't; 'tis drawn and stays  
Your cutting up.

**GOSHAWK**

[Aside to her] As you regard my credit--

OPENWORK

Art mad?

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Yes, lecherous goat, baboon!

OPENWORK

Baboon? Then toss  
Me in a blanket.

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Do I it well?

[IV.i. Sir Alexander's chamber]

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Rarely.

**GOSHAWK**

Belike, sir, she's not well; best leave her.

**OPENWORK**

No,  
I'll stand the storm now how fierce so e'er it blow.

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Did I for this lose all my friends? Refuse  
Rich hopes and golden fortunes to be made  
A stale to a common whore?

**OPENWORK**

This does amaze me!

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Oh God, oh God, feed at reversion now?  
A strumpet's leaving?

**OPENWORK**

Rosamond---

**GOSHAWK**

[Aside] I sweat!  
Would I lay in Cold Harbour!

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Thou hast struck ten thousand daggers through my heart!

**OPENWORK**

Not I, by heaven, sweet wife.

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Go, devil, go;  
That which thou swear'st by damns thee.

**GOSHAWK**

[Aside to her] 'Sheart, will you undo me?

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Why stay you here? The star by which you sail  
Shines yonder above Chelsea; you lose your shore  
If this moon light you: seek out your light whore.

**OPENWORK**

Ha?

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

MISTRESS [OPENWORK]  
Push! Your western [pug]—

**GOSHAWK**  
[Aside] Zounds, now hell roars!

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**  
With whom you tilted in a pair of oars  
This very morning.

OPENWORK  
Oars?

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**  
At Brainford, sir.

OPENWORK  
Rack not my patience. Master Goshawk,  
Some slave has buzzed this into her, has he not?  
I run atilt in Brainford with a woman?  
'Tis a lie!  
What old bawd tells thee this? 'Sdeath, 'tis a lie!

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**  
'Tis one to thy face shall justify all that I speak.

OPENWORK  
'Ud's soul, do but name that rascal!

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**  
No, sir, I will not.

**GOSHAWK**  
[Aside] Keep thee there girl, then!

OPENWORK  
Sister, know you this varlet?

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**  
Yes.

OPENWORK  
Swear true:  
Is there a rogue so low damn'd? A second Judas?  
A common hangman? Cutting a man's throat?  
Does it to his face? Bite me behind my back?  
A cur dog? Swear if you know this hell-hound!

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**  
In truth I do.

[IV.i. Sir Alexander's chamber]

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

OPENWORK

His name?

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Not for the world,  
To have you to stab him.

**GOSHAWK**

[Aside] Oh, brave girls: worth gold!

OPENWORK

A word, honest Master Goshawk.

Draw out his sword.

**GOSHAWK**

What do you mean, sir?

OPENWORK

Keep off, and if the devil can give a name  
To this new fury, holla it through my ear,  
Or wrap it up in some hid character.  
I'll ride to Oxford and watch out mine eyes,  
But I'll hear the brazen head speak; or else  
Show me but one hair of his head or beard,  
That I may sample it. If the fiend I meet  
In mine own house, I'll kill him, [in] the street,  
Or at the church door: there, 'cause he seeks to untie  
The knot God fastens, he deserves to die.

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

My husband titles him.

OPENWORK

Master Goshawk, pray, sir,  
Swear to me that you know him or know him not.  
Who makes me at Brainford to take up a petticoat  
Beside my wife's?

**GOSHAWK**

By heaven that man I know not!

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Come, come, you lie.

**GOSHAWK**

[Aside to her] Will you not have all out?  
By heaven I know no man beneath the moon  
Should do you wrong, but if I had his name,  
I'd print it in text letters.

[IV.i. Sir Alexander's chamber]



**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Print thine own then:

Didst not thou swear to me he kept his whore?

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

And that in sinful Brainford they would commit

That which our lips did water at, sir, ha?

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Thou spider, that hast woven thy cunning web

In mine own house t' ensnare me! Hast not thou

Suck'd nourishment even underneath this roof

And turn'd it all to poison? Spitting it

On thy friend's face, my husband, he as 'twere sleeping?

Only to leave him ugly to mine eyes

That they might glance on thee?

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Speak: are these lies?

**GOSHAWK**

Mine own shame me confounds.

**OPENWORK**

No more; he's stung.

Who'd think that in one body there could dwell

Deformity and beauty, heaven and hell?

Goodness I see is but outside: we all set

In rings of gold stones that be [counterfeit].

I thought you none.

**GOSHAWK**

Pardon me.

**OPENWORK**

Truth, I do.

This blemish grows in nature not in you,

For man's creation stick[s] even moles in scorn

On fairest cheeks. Wife, nothing is perfect born.

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

I thought you had been born perfect.

**OPENWORK**

What's this whole world but a gilt, rotten pill?

For at the heart lies the old chore still.

I'll tell you, Master Goshawk, in your eye

I have seen wanton fire, and then to try

The soundness of my judgment, I told you

I kept a whore, made you believe 'twas true,

Only to feel how your pulse beat, but find

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

The world can hardly yield a perfect friend.  
Come, come, a trick of youth, and 'tis forgiven;  
This rub put by, our love shall run more even.

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

You'll deal upon men's wives no more?

**GOSHAWK**

No, you teach me  
A trick for that.

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

Troth, do not, they'll o'erreach thee.

**OPENWORK**

Make my house yours, sir, still.

**GOSHAWK**

No.

**OPENWORK**

I say you shall:  
Seeing thus besieg'd it holds out, 'twill never fall.

Enter Master Gallipot, and Greenwit like a sumner, Laxton muffled aloof off.

**OMNES**

How now?

**GALLIPOT**

With me, sir?

**GREENWIT**

You, sir. I have gone snaffling up and down by your door this hour to watch for you.

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

What's the matter, husband?

**GREENWIT**

I have caught a cold in my head, sir, by sitting up late in the Rose Tavern, but I hope you understand my speech.

**GALLIPOT**

So, sir.

**GREENWIT**

I cite you by the name of Hippocrates Gallipot, and you by the name of Prudence Gallipot, to appear upon Crastino, do you see, Crastino sancti Dunstani this Easter Term in Bow Church.

**GALLIPOT**

Where sir? What says he?

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

**GREENWIT**

Bow, Bow Church, to answer to a libel of precontract on the part and behalf of the said Prudence and another.  
Y'are best, sir, take a copy of the citation; 'tis but twelvecence.

OMNES

A citation?

**GALLIPOT**

You pocky-nosed rascal, what slave fees you to this?

**LAXTON**

Slave? I ha' nothing to do with you, do you hear, sir?

**GOSHAWK**

Laxton, is't not? What fagary is this?

**GALLIPOT**

Trust me, I thought, sir, this storm long ago  
Had been full laid when, if you be rememb'red,  
I paid you the last fifteen pound, besides  
The thirty you had first, for then you swore.

**LAXTON**

Tush, tush, sir, oaths!

Truth, yet I'm loath to vex you, tell you what:  
Make up the money I had an hundred pound  
And take your belly full of her.

**GALLIPOT**

An hundred pound?

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

What, a hundred pound? He gets none: what, a hundred pound!

**GALLIPOT**

Sweet Pru, be calm, the gentleman offers thus,  
If I will make the moneys that are past  
A hundred pound, he will discharge all courts  
And give his bond never to vex us more.

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

A hundred pound! 'Las! Take, sir, but threescore.  
Do you seek my undoing?

**LAXTON**

I'll not bate one sixpence.  
I'll maul you, puss, for spitting.

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Do thy worst!  
Will fourscore stop thy mouth?

[IV.i. Sir Alexander's chamber]

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

**LAXTON**

No.

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Y'are a slave!

Thou cheat, I'll now tear money from thy throat!

Husband, lay hold on yonder tawny-coat.

**GREENWIT**

Nay, gentlemen, seeing your women are so hot,

I must lose my hair in their company, I see.

[Removes his wig.]

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

His hair sheds off, and yet he speaks not so much in the nose as he did before.

**GOSHAWK**

He has had the better chirurgeon. Master Greenwit, is your wit so raw as to play no better a part than a sumner's?

**GALLIPOT**

I pray who plays a knack to know an honest man in this company?

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Dear husband, pardon me, I did dissemble,

Told thee I was his precontracted wife,

When letters came from him for thirty pound;

I had no shift but that.

**GALLIPOT**

A very clean shift,

But able to make me lousy. On.

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

Husband, I pluck'd,

When he had tempted me to think well of him,

[Gelt] feathers from thy wings to make him fly

More lofty.

**GALLIPOT**

A' the top of you, wife. On.

**MISTRESS GALLIPOT**

He, having wasted them, comes now for more,

Using me as a ruffian doth his whore,

Whose sin keeps him in breath. By heaven I vow

Thy bed he never wrong'd, more than he does now.

**GALLIPOT**

My bed? Ha, ha, like enough: a shop-board will serve

[IV.i. Sir Alexander's chamber]

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

To have a cuckold's coat cut out upon.  
Of that we'll talk hereafter. Y'are a villain.

**LAXTON**

Hear me but speak, sir, you shall find me none.

**OMNES**

Pray, sir, be patient and hear him.

**GALLIPOT**

I am muzzled  
For biting, sir; use me how you will.

**LAXTON**

The first hour that your wife was in my eye,  
Myself with other gentlemen sitting by  
In your shop tasting smoke, and speech being used,  
That men who have fairest wives are most abused  
And hardly scap'd the horn, your wife maintain'd  
That only such spots in city dames were stain'd,  
Justly, but by men's slanders: for her own part,  
She vow'd that you had so much of her heart;  
No man by all his wit, by any wile  
Never so fine spun, should yourself beguile  
Of what in her was yours.

**GALLIPOT**

Yet Pru, 'tis well.  
Play out your game at Irish, sir. Who wins?

**MISTRESS OPENWORK**

The trial is when she comes to bearing.

**LAXTON**

I scorn'd one woman thus should brave all men  
And, which more vex'd me, a she-citizen.  
Therefore I laid siege to her; out she held,  
Gave many a brave repulse, and me compell'd  
With shame to sound retreat to my hot lust.  
Then seeing all base desires rak'd up in dust,  
And that to tempt her modest ears, I swore  
Ne'er to presume again. She said her eye  
Would ever give me welcome honestly,  
And since I was a gentleman, if it run low,  
She would my state relieve, not to o'erthrow  
Your own and hers; did so. Then seeing I wrought  
Upon her meekness, me she set at nought,  
And yet to try if I could turn that tide,  
You see what stream I strove with. But, sir, I swear  
By heaven, and by those hopes men lay up there,  
I neither have nor had a base intent

[IV.i. Sir Alexander's chamber]

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

To wrong your bed; what's done is merriment.  
Your gold I pay back with this interest:  
When I had most power to do't, I wrong'd you least.

**GALLIPOT**

If this no gullery be, sir—

**OMNES**

No, no, on my life!

**GALLIPOT**

Then, sir, I am beholden not to you, wife,  
But, Master Laxton, to your want of doing ill,  
Which it seems you have not. Gentlemen,  
Tarry and dine here all.

**OPENWORK**

Brother, we have a jest  
As good as yours to furnish out a feast.

**GALLIPOT**

We'll crown our table with it. Wife, brag no more  
Of holding out: who most brags is most whore.

Exeunt omnes.

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

**[V.i. A street]**

Enter Jack Dapper, Moll, Sir Beauteous Ganymede, and Sir Thomas Long.

**JACK**

But prithee, Master Captain Jack, be plain and perspicuous with me: was it your Meg of Westminster's courage that rescued me from the Poultry puttocks indeed?

**MOLL**

The valour of my wit, I ensure you, sir, fetch'd you off bravely when you were i' the forlorn hope among those desperates. Sir Beauteous Ganymede here and Sir Thomas Long heard that cuckoo, my man Trapdoor, sing the note of your ransom from captivity.

**SIR BEAUTEOUS**

'Uds so, Moll, where's that Trapdoor?

**MOLL**

Hang'd I think by this time: a justice in this town that speaks nothing but "make a mittimus, away with him to Newgate" used that rogue like a firework to run upon a line betwixt him and me.

**OMNES**

How, how?

**MOLL**

Marry, to lay trains of villainy to blow up my life; I smelt the powder, spied what linstock gave fire to shoot against the poor captain of the galley—foist, and away slid I my man, like a shovel—board shilling. He struts up and down the suburbs, I think, and eats up whores, feeds upon a bawd's garbage.

**SIR THOMAS**

Sirrah Jack Dapper.

**JACK**

What sayst Tom Long?

**SIR THOMAS**

Thou hadst a sweet—fac'd boy, hail—fellow with thee to your little Gull. How is he spent?

**JACK**

Troth, I whistled the poor little buzzard off a' my fist, because when he waited upon me at the ordinaries, the gallants hit me i' the teeth still, and said I look'd like a painted alderman's tomb, and the boy at my elbow like a death's head. Sirrah Jack, Moll.

**MOLL**

What says my little Dapper?

**SIR BEAUTEOUS**

Come, come, walk and talk, walk and talk.

**JACK**

[V.i. A street]

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

Moll and I'll be i' the midst.

**MOLL**

These knights shall have squires' places, belike then. Well, Dapper, what say you?

**JACK**

Sirrah Captain Mad Mary, the gull my own father, Dapper Sir Davy, laid these London boot-halers, the catchpoles, in ambush to set upon me.

OMNES

Your father? Away, Jack!

**JACK**

By the tassels of this handkercher, 'tis true. And what was his warlike stratagem, think you? He thought because a wicker cage tames a nightingale, a lousy prison could make an ass of me.

OMNES

A nasty plot.

**JACK**

Ay, as though a counter, which is a park in which all the wild beasts of the city run head by head, could tame me.

Enter the Lord Noland.

**MOLL**

Yonder comes my Lord Noland.

OMNES

Save you, my lord.

**LORD NOLAND**

Well met gentlemen all, good Sir Beauteous Ganymede, Sir Thomas Long. And how does Master Dapper?

**JACK**

Thanks, my lord.

**MOLL**

No tobacco, my lord?

**LORD NOLAND**

No, faith, Jack.

**JACK**

My Lord Noland, will you go to Pimlico with us? We are making a boon voyage to that nappy land of spice-cakes.

**LORD NOLAND**

Here's such a merry ging, I could find in my heart to sail to the world's end with such company. Come, gentlemen, let's on.

**JACK**

[V.i. A street]



## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

Here's most amorous weather, my lord.

**OMNES**

Amorous weather?

They walk.

**JACK**

Is not amorous a good word?

Enter Trapdoor like a poor soldier with a patch o'er one eye, and Tearcat with him, all tatters.

**TRAPDOOR**

Shall we set upon the infantry, these troops of foot? Zounds, yonder comes Moll, my whorish master and mistress! Would I had her kidneys between my teeth.

**TEARCAT**

I had rather have a cow-heel.

**TRAPDOOR**

Zounds, I am so patch'd up, she cannot discover me; we'll on.

**TEARCAT**

Alla corago then.

**TRAPDOOR**

Good your honours and worships, enlarge the ears of commiseration and let the sound of a hoarse military organ-pipe, penetrate your pitiful bowels to extract out of them so many small drops of silver, as may give a hard straw-bed lodging to a couple of maim'd soldiers.

**JACK**

Where are you maim'd?

**TEARCAT**

In both our nether limbs.

**MOLL**

Come, come, Dapper, let's give 'em something. 'Las, poor men, what money have you? By my troth, I love a soldier with my soul.

**SIR BEAUTEOUS**

Stay, stay, where have you serv'd?

**SIR THOMAS**

In any part of the Low Countries?

**TRAPDOOR**

Not in the Low Countries, if it please your manhood, but in Hungary against the Turk at the siege of Belgrade.

**LORD NOLAND**

Who serv'd there with you, sirrah?

[V.i. A street]

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

### TRAPDOOR

Many Hungarians, Moldavians, Walachians, and Transylvanians, with some Sclavonians, and retiring home, sir, the Venetian galleys took us prisoners, yet freed us and suffered us to beg up and down the country.

### JACK

You have ambled all over Italy then?

### TRAPDOOR

Oh, sir, from Venice to Roma, Vecchio, Bononia, Romania, Bologna, Modena, Piacenza, and Tuscana with all her cities, as Pistoia, Valteria, Mountepulchena, Arezzo with the Siennesis, and diverse others.

### MOLL

Mere rogues: put spurs to 'em once more.

### JACK

Thou look'st like a strange creature, a fat butter-box, yet speak'st English. What are thou?

### TEARCAT

Ick, mine here? Ick bin den ruffling Tearcat, den brave soldado; ick bin dorick all Dutchlant gueresen: der shellum das meere ine beasa ine woert gaeb. Ick slaag um stroakes on tom cop: dastick den hundred touzun divell halle frolick, mine here.

### SIR BEAUTEOUS

Here, here, let's be rid of their jobbering.

### MOLL

Not a cross, Sir Beauteous. You base rogues, I have taken measure of you better than a tailor can, and I'll fit you as you, monster with one eye, have fitted me.

### TRAPDOOR

Your worship will not abuse a soldier?

### MOLL

Soldier? Thou deserv'st to be hang'd up by that tongue which dishonours so noble a profession. Soldier, you skeldering varlet? Hold, stand, there should be a trapdoor hereabouts.

Pull off his patch.

### TRAPDOOR

The balls of these glaziers of mine, mine eyes, shall be shot up and down in any hot piece of service for my invincible mistress.

### JACK

I did not think there had been such knavery in black patches, as now I see.

### MOLL

Oh, sir, he hath been brought up in the Isle of Dogs, and can both fawn like a spaniel and bite like a mastiff as he finds occasion.

### LORD NOLAND

[V.i. A street]

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

What are you, sirrah? A bird of this feather too?

### **TEARCAT**

A man beat'n from the wars, sir.

### **SIR THOMAS**

I think so, for you never stood to fight.

### **DAPPER**

What's thy name, fellow soldier?

### **TEARCAT**

I am call'd by those that have seen my valour, Tearcat.

### **OMNES**

Tearcat?

### **MOLL**

A mere whip-jack, and that is, in the commonwealth of rogues, a slave that can talk of sea-fight, name all your chief pirates, discover more countries to you than either the Dutch, Spanish, French, or English ever found out, yet indeed all his service is by land, and that is to rob a fair or some such venturous exploit. Tearcat! Foot, sirrah, I have your name now! I remember me in my book of horners horns for the thumb, you know how.

### **TEARCAT**

No indeed, Captain Moll, for I know you by sight: I am no such nipping Christian, but a maunderer upon on the pad, I confess, and meeting with honest Trapdoor here, whom you had cashier'd from bearing arms, out at elbows under your colours, I instructed him in the rudiments of roguery, and by my map made him sail over any country you can name, so that now he can maunder better than myself.

### **JACK**

So then, Trapdoor, thou art turn'd soldier now.

### **TRAPDOOR**

Alas, sir, now there's no wars, 'tis the safest course of life I could take.

### **MOLL**

I hope then you can cant, for by your cudgels, you, sirrah, are an upright man.

### **TRAPDOOR**

As any walks the highway, I assure you.

### **MOLL**

And Tearcat, what are you? A wild rogue, an angler, or a ruffler?

### **TEARCAT**

Brother to this upright man, flesh and blood, ruffling Tearcat is my name, and a ruffler is my style, my title, my profession.

### **MOLL**

Sirrah, where's your doxy? Halt not with me.

[V.i. A street]

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

OMNES

Doxy, Moll? What's that?

**MOLL**

His wench.

**TRAPDOOR**

My doxy? I have, by the salomon, a doxy that carries a kinchin mort in her slate at her back, besides my dell and my dainty wild dell, with all whom I'll tumble this next darkmans in the strommel, and drink ben [booze], and eat a fat gruntling cheat, a cackling cheat, and a quacking cheat.

**JACK**

Here's old cheating.

**TRAPDOOR**

My doxy stays for me in a boozing ken, brave captain.

**MOLL**

He says his wench stays for him in an alehouse. You are no pure rogues.

**TEARCAT**

Pure rogues? No, we scorn to be pure rogues, but if you come to our lib ken, or our stalling ken, you shall find neither him nor me a queer cuffin.

**MOLL**

So, sir, no churl of you.

**TEARCAT**

No, but a ben cove, a brave cove, a gentry cuffin.

**LORD NOLAND**

Call you this canting?

**JACK**

Zounds, I'll give a schoolmaster half a crown a week, and teach me this pedlar's French.

**TRAPDOOR**

Do but stroll, sir, half a harvest with us, sir, and you shall gabble your bellyful.

**MOLL**

Come, you rogue, cant with me.

**SIR THOMAS**

Well said, Moll. Cant with her, sirrah, and you shall have money, else not a penny.

**TRAPDOOR**

I'll have a bout if she please.

**MOLL**

Come on, sirrah.

[V.i. A street]

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

### TRAPDOOR

Ben mort, shall you and I heave a booth, mill a ken, or nip a bung? And then we'll couch a hogshead under the ruffmans, and there you shall wap with me, and I'll niggle with you.

### MOLL

[Slapping and kicking him] Out, you damn'd, impudent rascal!

### TRAPDOOR

Cut benar whids, and hold your fambles and your stamps.

### LORD NOLAND

Nay, nay, Moll, why art thou angry? What was his gibberish?

### MOLL

Marry, this, my lord, says he: ben mort, good wench, shall you and I heave a booth, mill a ken, or nip a bung? Shall you and I rob a house or cut a purse?

### OMNES

Very good.

### MOLL

And then we'll couch a hogshead under the ruffmans: and then we'll lie under a hedge.

### TRAPDOOR

That was my desire, captain, as 'tis fit a soldier should lie.

### MOLL

And there you shall wap with me and I'll niggle with you, and that's all!

### SIR BEAUTEOUS

Nay, nay, Moll, what's that wap?

### JACK

Nay, teach me what niggling is; I'd fain be niggling.

### MOLL

Wapping and niggling is all one, the rogue my man can tell you.

### TRAPDOOR

'Tis fadoodling, if it please you.

### SIR BEAUTEOUS

This is excellent. One fit more, good Moll.

### MOLL

Come, you rogue, sing with me.

The song.

A gage of ben rom–booze

[V.i. A street]

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

In a boozing ken of Romville

**TEARCAT.** Is benar than a caster,

Peck, pannam, [lap] or popler,

Which we mill in deuse a [vill].

[MOLL, TEARCAT]. Oh, I would lib all the lightmans,

Oh, I would lib all the darkmans,

By the salomon, under the ruffmans,

By the salomon, in the hartmans!

**TEARCAT.** And scour the queer cramp–ring,

And couch till a palliard docked my dell,

So my boozy nab might skew rom–booze well.

[MOLL, TEARCAT]. Avast to the pad, let us bing,

Avast to the pad, let us bing.

OMNES

Fine knaves, i'faith!

**JACK**

The grating of ten new cartwheels and the grunting of five hundred hogs coming from Romford market cannot make a worse noise than this canting language does in my ears. Pray, my Lord Noland, let's give these soldiers their pay.

**SIR BEAUTEOUS**

Agreed, and let them march.

**LORD NOLAND**

[Giving her money] Here, Moll.

**MOLL**

Now I see that you are stall'd to the rogue and are not ashamed of your professions. [Giving Tearcat and Trapdoor the money] Look you, my Lord Noland here and these gentlemen bestows upon you two two boards and a half, that's two shillings sixpence.

**TRAPDOOR**

Thanks to your lordship.

**TEARCAT**

Thanks, heroical captain.

**MOLL**

Away.

**TRAPDOOR**

We shall cut ben whids of your masters and mistress–ship wheresoever we come.

**MOLL**

You'll maintain, sirrah, the old justice's plot to his face?

**TRAPDOOR**

Else trine me on the cheats, hang me.

**MOLL**

[V.i. A street]

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

Be sure you meet me there.

### TRAPDOOR

Without any more maundering I'll do't. Follow, brave Tearcat.

### TEARCAT

I prae, sequor, let us go mouse.

Exeunt they two, manet the rest.

### LORD NOLAND

Moll, what was in that canting song?

### MOLL

Troth, my lord, only a praise of good drink, the only milk which these wild beasts love to suck, and thus it was:  
A rich cup of wine,  
Oh, it is juice divine,  
More wholesome for the head  
Than meat, drink, or bread  
To fill my drunken pate!  
With that, I'd sit up late;  
By the heels would I lie,  
Under a lousy hedge die.  
Let a slave have a pull  
At my whore, so I be full  
Of that precious liquor—  
And a parcel of such stuff, my lord, not worth the opening.

Enter a Cutpurse very gallant, with four or five men after him, one with a wand.

### LORD NOLAND

What gallant comes yonder?

### SIR THOMAS

Mass, I think I know him: 'tis one of Cumberland.

### FIRST CUTPURSE

Shall we venture to shuffle in amongst yon heap of gallants and strike?

### SECOND CUTPURSE

'Tis a question whether there be any silver shells amongst them for all their satin outsides.

### OMNES [CUTPURSES]

Let's try.

### MOLL

Pox on him! A gallant? Shadow me, I know him: 'tis one that cumberes the land indeed; if he swim near to the shore of any of your pockets, look to your purses.

### OMNES [WITH MOLL]

Is't possible?

[V.i. A street]

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

### **MOLL**

This brave fellow is no better than a foist.

### **OMNES [WITH MOLL]**

Foist? What's that?

### **MOLL**

A diver with two fingers, a pickpocket: all his train study the figging law, that's to say, cutting of purses and foisting. One of them is a nip; I took him once i' the twopenny gallery at the Fortune. Then there's a cloyer, or snap, that dogs any new brother in that trade, and snaps will have half in any booty. He with the wand is both a stale, whose office is to face a man i' the streets whilst shells are drawn by another, and then with his black conjuring rod in his hand, he, by the nimbleness of his eye and juggling—stick, will in cheaping a piece of plate at a goldsmith's stall, make four or five rings mount from the top of his caduceus, and, as if it were at leap—frog, they skip into his hand presently.

### **SECOND CUTPURSE**

Zounds, we are smok'd!

### **OMNES [CUTPURSES]**

Ha?

### **SECOND CUTPURSE**

We are boil'd. Pox on her! See, Moll, the roaring drab.

### **FIRST CUTPURSE**

All the diseases of sixteen hospitals boil her! Away!

### **MOLL**

Bless you, sir.

### **FIRST CUTPURSE**

And you, good sir.

### **MOLL**

Dost not ken me, man?

### **FIRST CUTPURSE**

No, [trust] me, sir.

### **MOLL**

Heart, there's a knight to whom I'm bound for many favours lost his purse at the last new play i' the Swan, seven angels in't. Make it good; you're best. Do you see? No more.

### **FIRST CUTPURSE**

A synagogue shall be call'd, Mistress Mary; disgrace me not. Pacus palabros, I will conjure for you. Farewell.

[Exeunt Cutpurses.]

### **MOLL**

Did not I tell you, my lord?

[V.i. A street]



## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

### LORD NOLAND

I wonder how thou cam'st to the knowledge of these nasty villains.

### SIR THOMAS

And why do the foul mouths of the world call thee Moll Cutpurse? A name, methinks, damn'd and odious.

### MOLL

Dare any step forth to my face and say,  
"I have ta'en thee doing so, Moll," I must confess,  
In younger days, when I was apt to stray,  
I have sat amongst such adders, seen their stings  
As any here might, and in full playhouses  
Watch'd their quick-diving hands to bring to shame  
Such rogues, and in that stream met an ill name.  
When next, my lord, you spy any one of those,  
So he be in his art a scholar, question him,  
Tempt him with gold to open the large book  
Of his close villainies, and you yourself shall cant  
Better than poor Moll can, and know more laws  
Of cheaters, lifters, nips, foists, puggards, curbers,  
With all the devil's black guard, than it is fit  
Should be discovered to a noble wit.  
I know they have their orders, offices,  
Circuits and circles unto which they are bound  
To raise their own damnation in.

### JACK

How dost thou know it?

### MOLL

As you do: I show it you, they to me show it.  
Suppose, my lord, you were in Venice.

### LORD NOLAND

Well.

### MOLL

If some Italian pander there would tell  
All the close tricks of courtesans, would not you  
Hearken to such a fellow?

### LORD NOLAND

Yes.

### MOLL

And here,  
Being come from Venice, to a friend most dear  
That were to travel thither, you would proclaim  
Your knowledge in those villainies to save  
Your friend from their quick danger. Must you have

[V.i. A street]

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

A black, ill name because ill things you know?  
Good troth, my lord, I am made Moll Cutpurse so.  
How many are whores in small ruffs and still looks!  
How many chaste whose names fill slander's books!  
Were all men cuckolds, whom gallants in their scorns  
Call so, we should not walk for goring horns.  
Perhaps for my mad going some reprove me:  
I please myself and care not else who loves me.

OMNES

A brave mind, Moll, i'faith.

**SIR THOMAS**

Come, my lord, shall's to the ordinary?

**LORD NOLAND**

Ay, 'tis noon sure.

**MOLL**

Good my lord, let not my name condemn me to you or to the world. A fencer I hope may be call'd a coward: is he so for that? If all that have ill names in London were to be whipp'd and to pay but twelvecence apiece to the beadle, I would rather have his office than a constable's.

**JACK**

So would I, Captain Moll: 'twere a sweet, tickling office, i'faith.

Exeunt.

[V.ii. Sir Alexander's house]

Enter Sir Alexander Wengrave, Goshawk and Greenwit, and others.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

My son marry a thief, that impudent girl,  
Whom all the world stick their worst eyes upon?

**GREENWIT**

How will your care prevent it?

**GOSHAWK**

'Tis impossible.  
They marry close; they're gone, but none knows whither.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Oh, gentlemen, when has a father's heart—strings  
Held out so long from breaking?

Enter a Servant.

Now what news, sir?

SERVANT

[V.i. A street]

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

They were met upo' th' water an hour since, sir,  
Putting in towards the Sluice.

[Exit Servant.]

### SIR ALEXANDER

The Sluice? Come, gentlemen,  
'Tis Lambeth works against us.

### GREENWIT

And that Lambeth  
Joins more mad matches than your six wet towns  
'Twixt that and Windsor Bridge, where fares lie soaking.

### SIR ALEXANDER

Delay no time, sweet gentlemen: to Blackfriars!  
We'll take a pair of oars and make after 'em.

Enter Trapdoor.

### TRAPDOOR

Your son and that bold masculine ramp,  
My mistress, are landed now at Tower.

### SIR ALEXANDER

Hoyda, at Tower?

### TRAPDOOR

I heard it now reported.

[Exit Trapdoor.]

### SIR ALEXANDER

Which way gentlemen shall I bestow my care?  
I'm drawn in pieces betwixt deceit and shame.

Enter Sir [Guy] Fitzallard.

### SIR GUY

Sir Alexander,  
You're well met and most rightly served:  
My daughter was a scorn to you.

### SIR ALEXANDER

Say not so, sir.

### SIR GUY

A very abject she, poor gentlewoman;  
Your house [has] been dishonoured. Give you joy, sir,  
Of your son's gaskin-bride; you'll be a grandfather shortly  
To a fine crew of roaring sons and daughters:

[V.i. A street]

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

'Twill help to stock the suburbs passing well, sir.

### SIR ALEXANDER

Oh, play not with the miseries of my heart!  
Wounds should be dress'd and heal'd, not vex'd or left  
Wide open to the anguish of the patient,  
And scornful air let in: rather let pity  
And advice charitably help to refresh 'em.

### SIR GUY

Who'd place his charity so unworthily  
Like one that gives alms to a cursing beggar?  
Had I but found one spark of goodness in you  
Toward my deserving child, which then grew fond  
Of your son's virtues, I had eased you now;  
But I perceive both fire of youth and goodness  
Are rak'd up in the ashes of your age,  
Else no such shame should have come near your house,  
Nor such ignoble sorrow touch your heart.

### SIR ALEXANDER

If not for worth, for pity's sake, assist me.

### GREENWIT

You urge a thing past sense. How can he help you?  
All his assistance is as frail as ours,  
Full as uncertain. Where's the place that holds 'em?  
One brings us water-news; then comes another  
With a full-charg'd mouth, like a culverin's voice,  
And he reports the Tower. Whose sounds are truest?

### GOSHAWK

In vain you flatter him, Sir Alexander.

[SIR ALEXANDER]

I flatter him! Gentlemen, you wrong me grossly.

### GREENWIT

He does it well, i'faith.

### SIR GUY

Both news are false  
Of Tower or water: they took no such way yet.

### SIR ALEXANDER

Oh, strange! Hear you this, gentlemen: yet more plunges?

### SIR GUY

Th' are nearer than you think for, yet more close  
Than if they were further off.

[V.i. A street]

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

**SIR ALEXANDER**

How am I lost  
In these distractions!

**SIR GUY**

For your speeches, gentlemen,  
In taxing me for rashness, 'fore you all  
I will engage my state to half his wealth,  
Nay, to his son's revenues, which are less,  
And yet nothing at all till they come from him,  
That I could, if my will stuck to my power,  
Prevent this marriage yet, nay, banish her  
Forever from his thoughts, much more his arms.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Slack not this goodness, though you heap upon me  
Mountains of malice and revenge hereafter:  
I'd willingly resign up half my state to him,  
So he would marry the mean'st drudge I hire.

**GREENWIT**

He talks impossibilities, and you believe 'em.

**SIR GUY**

I talk no more than I know how to finish;  
My fortunes else are his that dares stake with me.  
The poor young gentleman I love and pity,  
And to keep shame from him, because the spring  
Of his affection was my daughter's first  
Till his frown blasted all, do but estate him  
In those possessions which your love and care  
Once pointed out for him, that he may have room  
To entertain fortunes of noble birth,  
Where now his desperate wants casts him upon her;  
And if I do not for his own sake chiefly  
Rid him of this disease that now grows on him,  
I'll forfeit my whole state before these gentlemen.

**GREENWIT**

Troth, but you shall not undertake such matches;  
We'll persuade so much with you.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Here's my ring;  
He will believe this token. 'Fore these gentlemen  
I will confirm it fully: all those lands  
My first love 'lotted him he shall straight possess  
In that refusal.

**SIR GUY**

If I change it not,

[V.i. A street]

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

Change me into a beggar.

**GREENWIT**

Are you mad, sir?

**SIR GUY**

'Tis done.

**GOSHAWK**

Will you undo yourself by doing,  
And show a prodigal trick in your old days?

**SIR ALEXANDER**

'Tis a match, gentlemen.

**SIR GUY**

Ay, ay, sir, ay.  
I ask no favour, trust to you for none;  
My hope rests in the goodness of your son.

Exit [Sir Guy] Fitzallard.

**GREENWIT**

He holds it up well yet.

**GOSHAWK**

Of an old knight, i'faith.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Curs'd be the time I laid his first love barren,  
Willfully barren, that before this hour  
Had sprung forth fruits of comfort and of honour!  
He lov'd a virtuous gentlewoman.

Enter Moll [in man's clothes].

**GOSHAWK**

Life,  
Here's Moll!

**GREENWIT**

Jack?

**GOSHAWK**

How dost thou, Jack?

**MOLL**

How dost thou, gallant?

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Impudence, where's my son?

[V.i. A street]

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

**MOLL**

Weakness, go look him.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Is this your wedding gown?

**MOLL**

The man talks monthly:  
Hot broth and a dark chamber for the knight;  
I see he'll be stark mad at our next meeting.

Exit Moll.

**GOSHAWK**

Why, sir, take comfort now, there's no such matter:  
No priest will marry her, sir, for a woman  
Whiles that shape's on, and it was never known  
Two men were married and conjoin'd in one.  
Your son hath made some shift to love another.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Whate'er she be, she has my blessing with her.  
May they be rich and fruitful, and receive  
Like comfort to their issue as I take  
In them; h'as pleas'd me now, marrying not this:  
Through a whole world he could not choose amiss.

**GREENWIT**

Glad y'are so penitent for your former sin, sir.

**GOSHAWK**

Say he should take a wench with her smock-dowry,  
No portion with her but her lips and arms?

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Why, who thrive better, sir? They have most blessing,  
Though other have more wealth, and least repent:  
Many that want most know the most content.

**GREENWIT**

Say he should marry a kind, youthful sinner?

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Age will quench that: any offence but theft  
And drunkenness, nothing but death can wipe away;  
Their sins are green even when their heads are grey.  
Nay, I despair not now; my heart's cheer'd, gentlemen:  
No face can come unfortunately to me.

Enter a Servant.

[V.i. A street]

The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

Now, sir, your news?

**SERVANT**

Your son with his fair bride  
Is near at hand.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Fair may their fortunes be!

**GREENWIT**

Now you're resolv'd, sir, it was never she?

**SIR ALEXANDER**

I find it in the music of my heart.

Enter Moll mask'd, in Sebastian's hand, and [Sir Guy] Fitzallard.

See where they come.

**GOSHAWK**

A proper lusty presence, sir.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Now has he pleas'd me right: I always counsell'd him  
To choose a goodly, personable creature;  
Just of her pitch was my first wife his mother.

**SEBASTIAN**

Before I dare discover my offence,  
I kneel for pardon.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

My heart gave it thee  
Before thy tongue could ask it.  
Rise; thou hast rais'd my joy to greater height  
Than to that seat where grief dejected it.  
Both welcome to my love and care forever,  
Hide not my happiness too long, all's pardoned.  
Here are our friends. Salute her, gentlemen.

They unmask her.

**OMNES**

Heart! Who[']s] this? Moll?

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Oh, my reviving shame! Is't I must live  
To be struck blind? Be it the work of sorrow,  
Before age take 't in hand.

[V.i. A street]



The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

**SIR GUY**

Darkness and death!  
Have you deceiv'd me thus? Did I engage  
My whole estate for this?

**SIR ALEXANDER**

You ask'd no favour,  
And you shall find as little; since my comforts  
Play false with me, I'll be as cruel to thee  
As grief to fathers' hearts.

**MOLL**

Why, what's the matter with you,  
'Less too much joy should make your age forgetful?  
Are you too well, too happy?

**SIR ALEXANDER**

With a vengeance.

**MOLL**

Methinks you should be proud of such a daughter,  
As good a man as your son.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Oh, monstrous impudence!

**MOLL**

You had no note before, an unmark'd knight:  
Now all the town will take regard on you,  
And all your enemies fear you for my sake.  
You may pass where you list through crowds most thick,  
And come off bravely with your purse unpick'd;  
You do not know the benefits I bring with me:  
No cheat dares work upon you with thumb or knife  
While y'ave a roaring girl to your son's wife.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

A devil rampant!

**SIR GUY**

Have you so much charity  
Yet to release me of my last rash bargain,  
And I'll give in your pledge.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

No sir, I stand to't, I'll work upon advantage,  
As all mischiefs do upon me.

**SIR GUY**

Content, bear witness all then  
His are the lands, and so contention ends.

[V.i. A street]

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

Here comes your son's bride, 'twixt two noble friends.

Enter the Lord Noland and Sir Beauteous Ganymede with Mary Fitzallard between them, the citizens and their wives with them.

### **MOLL**

Now are you gull'd as you would be, thank me for't:  
I'd a forefinger in't.

### **SEBASTIAN**

Forgive me, father;  
Though there before your eyes my sorrow feigned,  
This still was she for whom true love complain'd.

### **SIR ALEXANDER**

Blessings eternal and the joys of angels  
Begin your peace here to be sign'd in heaven.  
How short my sleep of sorrow seems now to me  
To this eternity of boundless comforts  
That finds no want but utterance and expression!  
My lord, your office here appears so honourably,  
So full of ancient goodness, grace, and worthiness:  
I never took more joy in sight of man  
Than in your comfortable presence now.

### **LORD NOLAND**

Nor I more delight in doing grace to virtue  
Than in this worthy gentlewoman, your son's bride,  
Noble Fitzallard's daughter, to whose honour  
And modest fame I am a servant vow'd;  
So is this knight.

### **SIR ALEXANDER**

Your loves make my joys proud.  
Bring forth those deeds of land my care laid ready,  
And which, old knight, thy nobleness may challenge,  
Join'd with thy daughter's virtues, whom I prize now  
As dearly as that flesh I call mine own.  
Forgive me, worthy gentlewoman, 'twas my blindness  
When I rejected thee; I saw thee not:  
Sorrow and willful rashness grew like films  
Over the eyes of judgment, now so clear  
I see the brightness of thy worth appear.

### **MARY**

Duty and love may I deserve in those,  
And all my wishes have a perfect close,

### **SIR ALEXANDER**

That tongue can never err, the sound's so sweet.  
Here, honest son, receive into thy hands

[V.i. A street]

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

The keys of wealth, possession of those lands  
Which my first care provided: they're thine own;  
Heaven give thee a blessing with 'em. The best joys  
That can in worldly shapes to man betide  
Are fertile lands and a fair fruitful bride,  
Of which I hope thou'rt sped.

**SEBASTIAN**

I hope so too, sir.

**MOLL**

Father and son, I ha' done you simple service here.

**SEBASTIAN**

For which thou shalt not part, Moll, unrequited.

**SIR ALEXANDER**

Thou art a mad girl, and yet I cannot now  
Condemn thee.

**MOLL**

Condemn me? Troth, and you should, sir.  
I'd make you seek out one to hang in my room;  
I'd give you the slip at gallows and cozen the people.  
Heard you this jest, my lord?

**LORD NOLAND**

What is it, Jack?

**MOLL**

He was in fear his son would marry me,  
But never dreamt that I would ne'er agree.

**LORD NOLAND**

Why? Thou hadst a suitor once, Jack. When wilt marry?

**MOLL**

Who, I, my lord? I'll tell you when, i'faith.  
When you shall hear  
Gallants void from sergeants' fear,  
Honesty and truth unslan'd red,  
Woman mann'd but never pand'red,  
[Cheaters] boot'd but not coach'd,  
Vessels older ere they're broach'd:  
If my mind be then not varied,  
Next day following I'll be married.

**LORD NOLAND**

This sounds like doomsday,

**MOLL**

[V.i. A street]

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

Then were marriage best,  
For if I should repent, I were soon at rest.

### SIR ALEXANDER

In troth, th' art a good wench. I'm sorry now  
The opinion was so hard I conceiv'd of thee;  
Some wrongs I've done thee.

Enter Trapdoor.

### TRAPDOOR

Is the wind there now?  
'Tis time for me to kneel and confess first,  
For fear it come too late and my brains feel it:  
Upon my paws, I ask you pardon, mistress.

### MOLL

Pardon? For what, sir? What has your roguiship done now?

### TRAPDOOR

I have been from time to time hir'd to confound you  
By this old gentleman.

### MOLL

How!

### TRAPDOOR

Pray forgive him,  
But may I counsel you, you should never do't.  
Many a snare to entrap your worship's life  
Have I laid privily, chains, watches, jewels,  
And when he saw nothing could mount you up,  
Four hollow-hearted angels he then gave you  
By which he meant to trap you, I to save you.

### SIR ALEXANDER

To all which shame and grief in me cry guilty.  
Forgive me; now I cast the world's eyes from me  
And look upon thee freely with mine own:  
I see the most of many wrongs before [thee],  
Cast from the jaws of envy and her people,  
And nothing foul but that. I'll never more  
Condemn by common voice, for that's the whore  
That deceives man's opinion, mocks his trust,  
Cozens his love, and makes his heart unjust.

### MOLL

Here be the angels, gentlemen; they were given me  
As a musician. I pursue no pity;  
Follow the law: and you can cuckold me, spare not;  
Hang up my viol by me, and I care not.

[V.i. A street]

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

### SIR ALEXANDER

So far I'm sorry I'll thrice double 'em  
To make thy wrongs amends.  
Come, worthy friends, my honourable lord,  
Sir Beauteous Ganymede, and noble Fitzallard,  
And you kind [gentlewomen], whose sparkling presence  
Are glories set in marriage, beams of society,  
For all your loves give lustre to my joys.  
The happiness of this day shall be rememb'ed  
At the return of every smiling spring;  
In my time now 'tis born, and may no sadness  
Sit on the brows of men upon that day,  
But as I am, so all go pleas'd away.

[Exeunt all but Moll.]

### Epilogus

[MOLL]

A painter, having drawn with curious art  
The picture of a woman, every part  
Limn'd to the life, hung out the piece to sell.  
People who pass'd along, viewing it well,  
Gave several verdicts on it: some dispraised  
The hair; some said the brows too high were raised;  
Some hit her o'er the lips, mislik'd their colour;  
Some wish'd her nose were shorter; some, the eyes fuller;  
Others said roses on her cheeks should grow,  
Swearing they look'd too pale; others cried no.  
The workman still as fault was found did mend it  
In hope to please all, but this work being ended  
And hung open at stall, it was so vile,  
So monstrous and so ugly, all men did smile  
At the poor painter's folly. Such we doubt  
Is this our comedy. Some perhaps do flout  
The plot, saying, "'Tis too thin, too weak, too mean;"  
Some for the person will revile the scene,  
And wonder that a creature of her being  
Should be the subject of a poet, seeing  
In the world's eye none weighs so light; others look  
For all those base tricks publish'd in a book,  
Foul as his brains they flow'd from, of cutpurse[s],  
Of nips and foists, nasty, obscene discourses,  
As full of lies, as empty of worth or wit,  
For any honest ear or eye unfit. And thus,  
If we to every brain that's humourous  
Should fashion scenes, we with the painter shall  
In striving to please all please none at all.  
Yet for such faults as either the writers' wit  
Or negligence of the actors do commit,  
Both crave your pardons; if what both have done

[V.i. A street]

## The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse

Cannot full pay your expectation,  
The Roaring Girl herself some few days hence  
Shall on this stage give larger recompense,  
Which mirth that you may share in herself does woo you,  
And craves this sign: your hands to beckon her to you.  
[Exit.]

FINIS