
LOVE IN A VILLAGE

Comic opera.

Text by

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Music by

Thomas Augustine Arne

Varied authors

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Infine ringrazio la mia famiglia, per il tempo rubatole e dedicato a questa attività.

I titoli vengono scelti in base a una serie di criteri: disponibilità del materiale, data della prima rappresentazione, autori di testi e musiche, importanza del testo nella storia della lirica, difficoltà di reperimento.

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Quindi viene eseguita una revisione del testo tramite rilettura, e con un sistema automatico di rilevazione sia delle anomalie strutturali, sia della validità dei lemmi.

Vengono integrati se disponibili i numeri musicali, e individuati i brani più significativi secondo la critica.

Viene quindi eseguita una conversione in formato stampabile, che state leggendo.

Grazie ancora.

Dario Zanotti

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DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Men

SIR WILLIAM MEADOWS OTHER

YOUNG MEADOWS TENOR

JUSTICE WOODCOCK OTHER

HAWTHORN TENOR

EUSTACE TENOR

HODGE TENOR

Women

ROSSETTA SOPRANO

LUCINDA SOPRANO

MRS. DEBORAH WOODCOCK OTHER

MARGERY SOPRANO

Country men, Country women, Servants, ecc.

A village.

To Mister Beard

sir,

it is with great pleasure I embrace this opportunity to acknowledge the favours I have received from you. Among others I would mention, in particular, the warmth with which you espoused this piece in its passage to the stage; but I am afraid it would be thought a compliment to your good nature, too much at the expence of your judgement.

If what I now venture to lay before the public is considered merely as a piece of dramatic writing, it will certainly be found to have very little merit: in that light no one can think more indifferently of it than I do myself; but I believe I may venture to assert, on your opinion, that some of the songs are tolerable; that the music is more pleasing than has hitherto appeared in any composition of this kind; and the words better adapted, considering the nature of the airs, which are not common ballads, than could be expected, supposing any degree of poetry to be preserved in the versification. More than this few people expect in an opera; and if some of the severer critics should be inclined to blame your indulgence to one of the first attempts of a young writer, I am persuaded the public in general will applaud your endeavour to provide them with something new, in a species of entertainment, in which the performers at your theatre so eminently excel.

You may perceive, sir, that I yield a punctual observance to the injunctions you laid upon me, when I threatened you with this address, and make it rather a preface than a dedication: and yet I must confess I can hardly reconcile those formalities which render it indelicate to pay praises where all the world allows them to be due; nor can I easily conceive why a man should be so studious to deserve what he does not desire: but since you will not allow me to offer any panegyric to you, I must hasten to bestow one upon myself, and let the public know (which was my chief design in this introduction) that I have the honor to be, sir,

your most obliged, and most obedient servant,
the author.

ACT THE FIRST

Scene the first

A garden with statues, fountains, and flower-pots. Several arbours appear in the side-scenes: Rossetta and Lucinda are discovered at work, seated upon two garden chairs.

[Air I]

ROSSETTA Hope! thou nurse of young desire,
 fairy promiser of joy;
 painted vapour, glow-worm fire,
 temp'rate sweet, that ne'er can cloy.

LUCINDA Hope! thou earnest of delight,
 softest soother of the mind;
 balmy cordial, prospect bright,
 surest friend the wretched find.

ROSSETTA AND
LUCINDA Kind deceiver, flatter still,
 deal out pleasures unpossesst;
 with thy dreams my fancy fill,
 and in wishes make me blest.

LUCINDA Heigho ~ Rossetta?

ROSSETTA Well, child, what do you say?

LUCINDA 'Tis a devilish thing to live in a village an hundred miles from the capital, with a preposterous gouty father, and a superannuated maiden aunt. ~ I am heartily sick of my situation.

ROSSETTA And with reason. ~ But 'tis in a great measure your own fault: here is this mister Eustace, a man of character and family; he likes you, you like him; you know one another's minds, and yet you will not resolve to make yourself happy with him.

[Air II]

.....
Whence can you inherit
so slavish a spirit?
Confin'd thus, and chain'd to a log!
Now fondl'd, now chid,
permitted, forbid,
'tis leading the life of a dog.

Continued on next page.

- ROSSETTA For shame, you a lover!
More firmness discover;
take courage, nor here longer mope;
resist and be free,
run riot like me,
and to perfect the picture elope.
- LUCINDA And this is your advice?
- ROSSETTA Positively.
- LUCINDA Here's my hand; positively I'll follow it. ~ I have already sent to my gentleman, who is now in the country, to let him know he may come hither this day; we will make use of the opportunity to settle all preliminaries ~ and then ~ but take notice, whenever we decamp, you march off along with us.
- ROSSETTA Oh! madam, your servant; I have no inclination to be left behind, I assure you ~ but you say you got acquainted with this spark, while you were with your mother during her last illness at Bath, so that your father has never seen him.
- LUCINDA Never in his life, my dear; and I am confident he entertains not the least suspicion of my having any such connection; my aunt, indeed, has her doubts and surmises; but, besides that my father will not allow any one to be wiser than himself, it is an established maxim between these affectionate relations, never to agree in any thing.
- ROSSETTA Except being absurd; you must allow they sympathize, perfectly, in that ~ but now we are on the subject, I desire to know what I am to do with this wicked old justice of peace, this libidinous father of yours? he follows me about the house like a tame goat.
- LUCINDA Nay, I'll assure you he has been a wag in his time ~ you must have a care of yourself.
- ROSSETTA Wretched me! to fall into such hands, who have been just forced to run away from my parents to avoid an odious marriage ~ you smile at that now; and I know you think me whimsical, as you have often told me; but you must excuse my being a little over delicate in this particular.

[Air III]

My heart's my own, my will is free,
and so shall be my voice;
no mortal man shall wed with me,
'till first he's made my choice.
Let parents rule, cry nature's laws,
and children still obey;
and is there then no saving clause,
against tyrannic sway?

- LUCINDA Well, but my dear mad girl. ~
- ROSSETTA Lucinda, don't talk to me ~ was your father to go to London, meet there by accident with an old fellow as wrong-headed as himself; and in a fit of absurd friendship, agree to marry you to that old fellow's son, whom you had never seen, without consulting your inclinations, or allowing you a negative, in case he should not prove agreeable ~
- LUCINDA Why, I should think it a little hard, I confess ~ yet when I see you in the character of a chambermaid ~
- ROSSETTA It is the only character, my dear, in which I could hope to lie concealed; and I can tell you, I was reduced to the last extremity, when, in consequence of our old boarding-school friendship, I applied to you to receive me in this capacity: for we expected the parties the very next week ~
- LUCINDA But had not you a message from your intended spouse, to let you know he was as little inclined to such ill-concerted nuptials as you were?
- ROSSETTA More than so; he wrote to advise me, by all means, to contrive some method of breaking them off, for he had rather return to his dear studies at Oxford; and after that, what hopes could I have of being happy with him?
- LUCINDA Then you are not at all uneasy at the strange rout you must have occasioned at home? I warrant, during this month that you have been absent ~
- ROSSETTA Oh! don't mention it, my dear; I have had so many admirers since I commenced Abigail, that I am quite charmed with my situation ~ but hold, who stalks yonder into the yard, that the dogs are so glad to see?
- LUCINDA Daddy Hawthorn as I live! He is come to pay my father a visit; and never more luckily, for he always forces him abroad. By the way, what will you do with yourself while I step into the house to see after my trusty messenger, Hodge?
- ROSSETTA No matter, I'll sit down in that arbour and listen to the singing of the birds: you know I am fond of melancholy amusements.
- LUCINDA So it seems indeed: sure Rossetta none of your admirers had power to touch your heart; you are not in love, I hope?
- ROSSETTA In love! that's pleasant: who do you suppose I should be in love with, pray?
- LUCINDA Why let me see ~ what do you think of Thomas, our gardener? there he is at the other end of the walk ~ he's a pretty young man, and the servants say he's always writing verses on you.
- ROSSETTA Indeed Lucinda you are very silly.
- LUCINDA Indeed Rossetta that blush makes you look very handsome.

ROSSETTA Blush! I am sure I don't blush.

LUCINDA Ha, ha, ha!

ROSSETTA Pshaw, Lucinda, how can you be so ridiculous?

LUCINDA Well, don't be angry and I have done ~ but suppose you did like him, how could you help yourself?

[Air IV]

When once love's subtle poison gains
a passage to the female breast;
like lightning rushing through the veins,
each wish, and ev'ry thought's possess.
To heal the pangs our minds endure,
reason in vain its skill applies;
nought can afford the heart a cure,
but what is pleasing to the eyes.

Scene the second

Enter Young Meadows.

YOUNG MEADOWS Let me see ~ on the fifteenth of June, at half an hour past five in the morning (taking out a pocket-book) I left my father's house unknown to any one, having made free with a coat and jacket of our gardener's which fitted me, by way of a disguise: ~ so says my pocket book; and chance directing me to this village, on the twentieth of the same month I procured a recommendation to the worshipful Justice Woodcock, to be the superintendant of his pumpkins and cabbages, because I would let my father see I chose to run any lengths rather than submit to what his obstinacy would have forced me, a marriage against my inclination, with a woman I never saw. (puts up the book, and takes a watering-pot). Here I have been three weeks, and in that time I am as much altered as if I had changed my nature with my habit. 'Sdeath, to fall in love with a chambermaid! And yet, if I could forget that I am the son and heir of Sir William Meadows ~ but that's impossible.

[Air V]

Oh! had I been by fate decreed
 some humble cottage swain;
 in fair Rossetta's sight to feed,
 my sheep upon the plain.
 What bliss had I been born to taste,
 which now I ne'er must know?
 Ye envious pow'rs! why have ye plac'd
 my fair one's lot so low?

Hah! who was it I had a glimpse of as I past by that arbour? was it not she sat reading there? the trembling of my heart tells me my eyes were not mistaken ~ here she comes.

Scene the third

Young Meadows, Rossetta.

ROSSETTA Lucinda was certainly in the right of it, and yet I blush to own my weakness even to myself ~ marry, hang the fellow for not being a gentleman.

YOUNG MEADOWS I am determin'd I won't speak to her (turning to a rose tree, and plucking the flowers).
 Now or never is the time to conquer myself: besides, I have some reason to believe the girl has no aversion to me, and as I wish not to do her an injury, it would be cruel to fill her head with notions of what can never happen (hums a tune).
 Psha; rot these roses, how they prick one's fingers.

ROSSETTA He takes no notice of me, but so much the better, I'll be as indifferent as he is. I am sure the poor lad likes me; and if I was to give him any encouragement; I suppose the next thing he talked of would be buying a ring; and being asked in church ~ oh, dear pride, I thank you for that thought!

YOUNG MEADOWS Hah, going without a word! a look! ~ I can't bear that ~ Mrs. Rossetta, I am gathering a few roses here, if you'll please to take them in with you.

ROSSETTA Thank you, Mr. Thomas, but all my lady's flower-pots are full.

YOUNG MEADOWS Will you accept of them for yourself, then, (catching hold of her) What's the matter? you look as if you were angry with me.

ROSSETTA Pray, let go my hand.

YOUNG MEADOWS Nay, pr'ythee, why is this? you shan't go, I have something to say to you.

ROSSETTA Well, but I must go, I will go; I desire, Mr. Thomas!

[Air VI]

Gentle youth, ah, tell me why
still you force me thus to fly;
cease, oh! cease, to persevere,
speak not what I must not hear,
to my heart it's ease restore,
go, and never see me more.

Scene the fourth

Young Meadows.

This girl is a riddle ~ that she loves me I think there is no room to doubt; she takes a thousand opportunities to let me see it, and yet when I speak to her, she will hardly give me an answer, and if I attempt the smallest familiarity, is gone in an instant ~ I feel my passion for her grow every day more and more violent ~ well, would I marry her? would I make a mistress of her if I could? Two things, called prudence and honour, forbid either. What am I pursuing, then? a shadow. Sure my evil genius laid this snare in my way. However, there is one comfort, it is in my power to fly from it; if so, why do I hesitate? I am distracted, unable to determine any thing.

[Air VII]

Still in hopes to get the better
of my stubborn flame I try,
swear this moment to forget her,
and the next my oath deny.
Now prepar'd with scorn to treat her,
ev'ry charm in thought I brave;
boast my freedom, fly to meet her,
and confess myself a slave.

Scene the fifth

A hall in Justice Woodcock's house. Enter Hawthorn with a fowling piece in his hand, and a net with birds at his girdle: and afterwards Justice Woodcock.

[Air VIII]

HAWTHORN

There was a jolly miller once,
lived on the river Dee;
he work'd, and sung, from morn 'till night,
no lark more blyth than he.
And this the burthen of his song,
for ever used to be,
I care for nobody, not I,
if no one cares for me.

House here, house; what all gadding, all abroad! house I say, hilli
ho ho!

JUSTICE WOODCOCK Here's a noise, here's a racket! William, Robert, Hodge! why does
not somebody answer? Odds my life, I believe the fellows have
lost their hearing:

JUSTICE WOODCOCK (Entering)
Oh master Hawthorn! I guessed it was some such mad cap ~ are
you there?

HAWTHORN Am I here, yes: and if you had been where I was three hours ago,
you would find the good effects of it by this time: but you have
got the lazy, unwholsome London fashion, of lying a bed in a
morning, and there's gout for you ~ why, Sir, I have not been in
bed five minutes after sun-rise these thirty years, am generally up
before it; and I never took a dose of physic but once in my life,
and that was in compliment to a cousin of mine, an apothecary,
that had just set up business.

JUSTICE WOODCOCK Well but master Hawthorn, let me tell you, you know nothing of
the matter, for I say sleep is necessary for a man, ay and I'll
maintain it.

HAWTHORN What, when I maintain the contrary! ~ Look you, neighbour
Woodcock, you are a rich man, a man of worship, a Justice of
peace, and all that; but learn to know the respect that is due to the
sound from the infirm; and allow me the superiority a good
constitution gives me over you ~ health is the greatest of all
possessions, and 'tis a maxim with me, that an hail cobbler is a
better man than a sick king.

JUSTICE WOODCOCK Well, well, you are a sportsman.

HAWTHORN And so would you too, if you would take my advice. A sportsman! why there is nothing like it: I would not exchange the satisfaction I feel while I am beating the lawns and thickets about my little farm, for all the entertainments and pageantry in Christendom.

[Air IX]

Let gay ones and great
 make the most of their fate,
 from pleasure to pleasure they run:
 well, who cares a jot,
 I envy them not,
 while I have my dog and my gun.
 For exercise, air,
 to the fields I repair,
 with spirits unclouded and light.
 The blisses I find,
 no stings leave behind,
 but health and diversion unite.

Scene the sixth

Justice Woodcock, Hawthorn, Hodge.

HODGE Did your worship call, sir?

JUSTICE WOODCOCK Call, Sir! where have you and the rest of those rascals been? But I suppose I need not ask ~ you must know there is a statute, a fair for hiring servants, held upon my green to-day, we have it usually at this season of the year, and it never fails to put all the folks hereabout out of their senses.

HODGE Lord your honour look out, and see what a nice shew they make yonder; they had got pipers, and fiddlers, and were dancing as I com'd along for dear life ~ I never saw such a mortal throng in our village in all my born days again.

HAWTHORN Why I like this now, this is as it should be.

JUSTICE WOODCOCK No no, 'tis a very foolish piece of business; good for nothing but to promote idleness and the getting of bastards: but I shall take measures for preventing it another year, and I doubt whether I am not sufficiently authorized already: for by an act passed Anno undecimo Caroli primi, which impowers a Justice of peace, who is lord of the manor ~

HAWTHORN Come come, never mind the act, let me tell you this is a very proper, a very useful meeting; I want a servant or two myself, I must go see what your market affords; ~ and you shall go, and the girls, my little Lucy and the other young rogue, and we'll make a day on't as well as the rest.

JUSTICE WOODCOCK I wish, master Hawthorn, I cou'd teach you to be a little more sedate: why won't you take pattern by me, and consider your dignity ~ odds heart, I don't wonder you are not a rich man, you laugh too much ever to be rich.

HAWTHORN Right, neighbour Woodcock! health, good humour, and competence is my motto: and if my executors have a mind, they are welcome to make it my epitaph.

[Air X]

The honest heart, whose thoughts are clear
 from fraud, disguise, and guile,
 need neither fortune's frowning fear,
 nor court the harlot's smile.
 The greatness that would make us grave
 is but an empty thing;
 what more than mirth wou'd mortals have?
 the chearful man's a king.

Scene the seventh

Lucinda, Hodge.

LUCINDA Hist, hist, Hodge!

HODGE Who calls? here am I.

LUCINDA Well, have you been?

HODGE Been, ay I ha' been far enough, an that be all: you never knew any thing fall out so crossly in your born days.

LUCINDA Why, what's the matter?

HODGE Why you know, I dare not take a horse out of his worship's stables this morning, for fear it should be missed, and breed questions; and our old nag at home was so cruelly beat i'th'hoofs, that, poor beast, it had not a foot to set to ground; so I was fain to go to farmer Ploughshare's, at the Grange, to borrow the loan of his bald filly: and wou'd you think it? after walking all that way ~ de'el from me, if the cross-grain'd toad, did not deny me the favour.

LUCINDA Unlucky!

- HODGE Well, then I went my ways to the King's head in the village, but all their cattle were at plough: and I was as far to seek below at the turnpike: so at last, for want of a better, I was forced to take up with dame Quickset's blind mare.
- LUCINDA Oh, then you have been?
- HODGE Yes, yes, I ha' been.
- LUCINDA Psha! why did not you say so at once?
- HODGE Ay, but I have had a main tiresome jaunt on't, for she is but a sorry jade at best ~
- LUCINDA Well, well, did you see Mr. Eustace, and what did he say to you: ~ come quick ~ have you e'er a letter?
- HODGE Yes, he gave me a letter, if I ha' na' lost it.
- LUCINDA Lost it, man!
- HODGE Nay, nay, have a bit of patience, adwawns, you are always in such a hurry
(rummaging his pockets)
I put it somewhere in this waistcoat pocket. Oh here it is.
- LUCINDA So, give it me.
(reads the letter to herself)
- HODGE Lord-a-mercy! how my arm achs with beating that plaguy beast; I'll be hang'd if I won'na' rather ha'thrash'd half a day, than ha' ridden her.
- LUCINDA Well Hodge, you have done your business very well.
- HODGE Well, have not I now?
- LUCINDA Yes ~ Mr. Eustace tells me in this letter, that he will be in the green lane at the other end of the village, by twelve o'clock ~ you know where he came before.
- HODGE Ay ay.
- LUCINDA Well, you must go there; and wait till he arrives; and watch your opportunity to introduce him across the fields, into the little summer house, on the left side of the garden.
- HODGE That's enough.
- LUCINDA But take particular care that nobody sees you.
- HODGE I warrant you.
- LUCINDA Nor for your life drop a word of it to any mortal.
- HODGE Never fear me.
- LUCINDA And Hodge ~

[Air XI]

HODGE

Well, well, say no more,
 sure you told me before;
 I know the full length of my tether;
 do you think I'm a fool,
 that I need go to school?
 I can spell you and put you together.
 A word to the wise,
 will always suffice,
 addsnigers go talk to your parrot;
 I'm not such an elf,
 though I say it myself,
 but I know a sheep's head from a carrot.

Scene the eighth

Lucinda.

How severe is my case? here am I obliged to carry on a clandestine correspondence with a man in all respects my equal, because the oddity of my father's temper is such, that I dare not tell him, I have ever yet seen the person I should like to marry ~ but hold ~ is not the blame his then ~ when princes are oppressive in their government, subjects have a right to assert their liberty ~ perhaps my father has quality in his eye, and hopes one day or other, as I am his only child, to match me with an earl or a duke ~ vain imagination!

[Air XII]

Cupid, god of soft persuasion,
 take the helpless lover's part:
 seize, oh seize, some kind occasion,
 to reward a faithful heart.
 Justly those we tyrants call,
 who the body would enthrall;
 tyrants of more cruel kind,
 those who would enslave the mind.
 What is grandeur? foe to rest;
 childish mummery at best;
 happy I in humble state;
 catch, ye fools, the glitt'ring bait.

Scene ninth

A field with a stile.

Enter Hodge, followed by Margery; and in some time after, enter young Meadows.

HODGE What does the wench follow me for? Odds flesh, folk may well talk, to see you dangling after me every where, like a tantony pig; find some other road can't you; and don't keep wherreting me with your nonsense.

MARGERY Nay pray you Hodge stay, and let me speak to you a bit.

HODGE Well; what fayn you?

MARGERY Dear heart, how can you be so barbarous? and is this the way you serve me after all? and won't you keep your word, Hodge?

HODGE Why no I won't, I tell you; I have chang'd my mind.

MARGERY Nay but surely, surely ~ consider, Hodge, you are obligated in conscience, to make me an honest woman.

HODGE Obligated in conscience! how am I obligated?

MARGERY Because you are: and none but the basest of rogues wou'd bring a poor girl to shame, and afterwards leave her to the wide world.

HODGE Bring you to shame! don't make me speak, Madge, don't make me speak.

MARGERY Yes do, speak your worst.

HODGE Why then if you go to that, you were fain to leave your own village down in the west, for a bastard you had by the clerk of the parish, and I'll bring the man shall say it to your face.

MARGERY No no Hodge, 'tis no such a thing, 'tis a base lie of farmer Ploughshare's ~ but I know what makes you false hearted to me, that you may keep company with young madam's waiting woman, and I am sure she's no fit body for a poor man's wife.

HODGE How should you know what she's fit for, she's fit for as much as you mayhap; don't find fault with your betters, Madge. (seeing young Meadows) Oh! master Thomas, I have a word or two to say to you; pray did not you go down the village one day last week with a basket of somewhat upon your shoulder?

YOUNG MEADOWS Well, and what then?

HODGE Nay, not much, only the ostler at the Greenman was saying as how there was a passenger at their house, as see'd you go by, and said he know'd you; and axt a mourt of questions ~ so I thought I'd tell you.

YOUNG MEADOWS The devil! ask questions about me! I know nobody in this part of the country; there must be some mistake in it ~ come hither
Hodge

MARGERY A nasty ungrateful fellow, to use me at this rate, after being to him as I have. ~ Well, well, I wish all poor girls would take warning by my mishap, and never have nothing to say to none of them.

[Air XIII]

How happy were my days, till now
I ne'er did sorrow feel,
I rose with joy to milk my cow,
or take my spinning wheel.
My heart was lighter than a fly,
like any bird I sung,
till he pretended love, and I
believed his flatt'ring tongue.
Oh the fool, the silly, silly fool,
who trusts what man may be;
I wish I was a maid again,
and in my own country.

Scene the tenth

A green with the prospect of a village, and the representation of a statute or fair.

Enter Justice Woodcock, Hawthorn, Mrs. Deborah, Lucinda, Rossetta, Young Meadows, Hodge, and several country people.

HODGE This way, your worship, this way. Why don't you stand aside there? Here's his worship a coming.

COUNTRYMAN His worship!

JUSTICE WOODCOCK Fye, fye, what a crowd's this! odd, I'll put some of them in the stocks. (Striking a fellow.) Stand out of the way, sirrah.

HAWTHORN For shame, neighbour. Well, my lad, are you willing to serve the king?

COUNTRYMAN Why, can you list ma? Serve the king, master! no, no, I pay the king, that's enough for me. Ho, ho, ho!

HAWTHORN Well said, sturdy-boots.

JUSTICE WOODCOCK Nay, if you talk to them, they'll answer you.

- HAWTHORN I would have them do so, I like they should. ~ Well, madam, is not this a fine sight? I did not know my neighbour's estate had been so well peopled ~ are all these his own tenants?
- MRS. DEBORAH More than are good of them, Mr. Hawthorn. I don't like to see such a parcel of young husseys fleeing with the fellows.
- HAWTHORN There's a lass (beckoning a country girl). Come hither my pretty maid. What brings you here? (chucking her under the chin). Do you come to look for a service?
- COUNTRY GIRL Yes, an't please you.
- HAWTHORN Well, and what place are you for?
- COUNTRY GIRL All work, an't please you.
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK Ay, ay, I don't doubt it; any work you'll put her to.
- MRS. DEBORAH She looks like a brazen one. ~ Go hussey.
- HAWTHORN Here's another (catching a girl that goes by). What health, what bloom! ~ This is nature's work; no art, no daubing. Don't be ashamed, child; those cheeks of thine are enough to put a whole drawing-room out of countenance.

[Air XIV]

The court, and the city, fine folk may extol,
 where beauties, all shining, a paradise make;
 but shew me the belles, at a play or a ball,
 to equal the lass at a fair, or a wake.
 Behold, in a garden, the roses new blown,
 such freshness smiles here upon every face;
 while flow'rs in a chimney, your fair ones in town,
 look wither'd, and bear the dark hue of the place.

Scene the eleventh

Justice Woodcock, Hawthorn, Mrs. Deborah, Lucinda, Rossetta, Young Meadows, Hodge, and men and women Servants.

- HODGE Now your honour, now the sport will come. The gut-scrapers are here, and some among them are going to sing and dance. Why, there's not the likes of our statute, mun, in five counties; others are but fools to it.
- SERVANT MAN Come good people, make a ring, and stand out, fellow servants, as many of you as are willing, and able to bear a bob. We'll let my masters and mistresses see we can do something at least; if they won't hire us, it shan't be our fault. Strike up the servants medley.

[Air XV]

- GARDENER
Those who in gardens take delight,
attend to what I say,
to pleasure you, with main and might,
I'll labour every day.
All sort of gardener-craft I know,
though it be ne'er so nice;
with me your fruits and flowers shall grow,
as 'twere in paradise.
- HOUSE-MAID
I pray ye, gentles, list to me,
I'm young, and strong, and clean to see:
I'll not turn tail to any she
for work that's in the county.
Of all your house the charge I take,
I wash, I scrub, I brew, I bake;
and more can do than here I'll speak,
depending on your bounty.
- HUNTSMAN
A huntsman I am, with a merry ton'd horn,
come here in the search of a place;
hark away, jolly sportsmen, I'll rouse you each morn
to enjoy the delights of the chase ~ my brave boys.
- LANDRY-MAID
If for your landry you desire
a sober, careful girl to hire,
I dare be bound, your linen all
to get up neat, both great and small;
I would not brag but where I might;
no driven snow shall be more white.
- FOOTMAN
Behold a blade, who knows his trade
in chamber, hall, and entry;
and what tho' here, I now appear,
I've serv'd the best of gentry.
A footman would you have,
I can dress, and comb, and shave;
for I a handy lad am,
on a message I can go,
and slip a billet-doux,
with your humble servant, madam.
- COOK-MAID
Who wants a good cook, my hand they must cross,
for plain wholesome dishes I'm ne'er at a loss;
and what are your soups, your ragouts, and your sauce,
compar'd to old English roast-beef?
- GROOM
Clear the course, my boys, clear the course, and make room,
ye gents of the turf, have you need of a groom?
Let me ride your match, and you'll certainly win,
I'll teach you to take the knowing ones in.

DAIRY-MAID

To prove the market be'nt afraid,
in me you'll find a dairy-maid,
whate'er you can expect her;
I've often had the place before,
and always gave content, and more,
can have a good charackter.

CARTER

If you want a young man, with a true honest heart,
who knows how to manage a plough and a cart,
here's one for your purpose, come take me and try;
you'll say you ne'er met with a better nor I,
ge ho dobbin, *etc.*

CHORUS

My masters and mistresses, hither repair,
what servants you want you will find in our fair;
men and maids fit for all sorts of stations there be;
and, as for the wages, we shan't disagree.

End of the first act.

ACT THE SECOND

Scene the first

A parlour in Justice Woodcock's house.

Enter Lucinda followed by Eustace in a riding dress.

LUCINDA Well, am not I a bold adventurer, to bring you into my father's house at noonday? though, to say the truth, we are safer here than in the garden; for there is not a human creature under the roof beside ourselves.

EUSTACE Then why not put our scheme into execution this moment? I have a post-chaise ready ~

LUCINDA Fye! how can you talk so lightly? I protest I am afraid to have any thing to do with you; your passion seems too much founded on appetite; and my aunt Deborah says ~

EUSTACE What! by all the rapture my heart now feels ~

LUCINDA Oh to be sure, promise and vow; it sounds prettily, and never fails to impose upon a fond female.

[Air XVI]

.....

We women like weak indians trade,
whose judgment tinsel shew decoys;
dupes to our folly we are made,
while artful man the gain enjoys:
we give our treasure to be paid,
a paltry, poor return in toys.

EUSTACE Well, I see you have a mind to divert yourself with me; but I wish I could prevail on you to be a little serious.

LUCINDA Seriously then, what would you desire me to say? I have promised to run away with you; which is as great a concession, as any reasonable lover can expect from his mistress.

EUSTACE Yes, but you dear provoking angel, you have not told me, when you will run away with me.

LUCINDA Why that, I confess, requires some consideration.

EUSTACE Yet remember, while you are deliberating, the season, now so favourable to us, may elapse, never to return.

Think, my fairest, how delay
 danger ev'ry moment brings;
 time flies swift, and will away;
 time that's ever on it's wings:
 doubting and suspence at best,
 lover's late repentance cost,
 let us, eager to be blest,
 sieze occasion e'er 'tis lost.

Scene the second

Lucinda, Eustace, Justice Woodcock, Mrs. Deborah.

- JUSTICE WOODCOCK Why, here is nothing in the world in this house but catter-wawling from morning till night, nothing but catter-wawling. Hoity toity! who have we here?
- LUCINDA My father and my aunt!
- EUSTACE The devil, what shall we do?
- LUCINDA Take no notice of them, only observe me. (speaks aloud to Eustace) Upon my word sir, I don't know what to say to it, unless the justice was at home; he is just stepped into the village with some company; but, if you will sit down a moment, I dare sware he will return ~ (pretends to see the Justice) ~ Oh! sir, here is my papa!
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK Here is your papa, hussey! Who's this you have got with you? Hark you, sirrah, who are you, ye dog? and what's your business here?
- EUSTACE Sir, this is a language I am not used to.
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK Don't answer me you rascal ~ I am a justice of peace, and if I hear a word out of your mouth, I'll send you to jail, for all your lac'd hat.
- MRS. DEBORAH Send him to jail brother, that's right.
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK And how do you know it's right? How should you know any thing's right? ~ sister Deborah, you are never in the right.
- MRS. DEBORAH Brother, this is the man I have been telling you about so long.
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK What man, goody wiseacre?
- MRS. DEBORAH Why, the man your daughter has an intrigue with; but I hope you will not believe it now, though you see it with your own eyes. ~ Come, hussey, confess, and don't let your father make a fool of himself any longer.

- LUCINDA Confess what aunt? this gentleman is a music master; he goes about the country teaching ladies to play and sing; and has been recommended to instruct me; I could not turn him out when he came to offer his service, and did not know what answer to give him 'till I saw my papa.
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK A music master?
- EUSTACE Yes sir, that's my profession.
- MRS. DEBORAH It's a lye, young man, it's a lye. Brother, he is no more a music master, than I am a music master.
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK What then you know better than the fellow himself, do you? and you will be wiser than all the world?
- MRS. DEBORAH Brother, he does not look like a music master.
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK He does not look! ha, ha, ha! Was ever such a poor stupe! Well, and what does he look like then? But I suppose you mean, he is not dressed like a music master, because of his ruffles, and this bit of garnishing about his coat, which seems to be copper too ~ why you silly wretch, these whippersnappers set up for gentlemen, now a-days, and give themselves as many airs, as if they were people of quality. ~ Hark, you friend, I suppose you don't come within the vagrant act; you have some settled habitation ~ where do you live?
- MRS. DEBORAH It's an easy matter for him to tell you a wrong place.
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK Sister Deborah don't provoke me.
- MRS. DEBORAH I wish brother you would let me examine him a little.
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK You shan't say a word to him, you shan't say a word to him.
- MRS. DEBORAH She says he was recommended here brother, ask him by whom?
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK No I won't now, because you desire it.
- LUCINDA If my papa did ask the question aunt, it would be very easily resolved.
- MRS. DEBORAH Who bid you speak, mistress nimble chops? I suppose the man has a tongue in his head, to answer for himself.
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK Will no body stop that prating old woman's mouth for me? Get out of the room.
- MRS. DEBORAH Well, so I can, brother; I don't want to stay; but remember, I tell you, you will make yourself ridiculous in this affair; for through your own obstinacy you will have your daughter run away with before your face.
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK My daughter! who will run away with my daughter?
- MRS. DEBORAH That fellow will.
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK Go, go, you are a wicked censorious woman.
- LUCINDA Why, sure madam you must think me very coming indeed.

JUSTICE WOODCOCK Ay, she judges of others by herself; I remember when she was a girl, her mother dare not trust her the length of her apron string; she was clambering upon every fellows back.

MRS. DEBORAH I was not.

JUSTICE WOODCOCK You were.

LUCINDA Well, but why so violent.

[Air XVIII]

Believe me dear aunt,
if you rave thus, and rant,
you'll never a lover persuade;
the men will all fly,
and leave you to die,
oh, terrible chance! an old maid ~
How happy the lass,
must she come to this pass,
who antient virginity 'scapes:
'twere better on earth
have five brats at a birth
than in hell be a leader of apes.

MRS. DEBORAH You are an impudent slut.

Scene the third

Justice Woodcock, Lucinda, Eustace.

JUSTICE WOODCOCK Well done, Lucy, send her about her business, a troublesome, foolish creature; does she think I want to be directed by her ~ come hither, my lad, you look tolerably honest ~

EUSTACE I hope sir, I shall never give you cause to alter your opinion.

JUSTICE WOODCOCK No, no, I am not easily deceived, I am generally pretty right in my conjectures; ~ you must know, I had once a little notion of music myself, and learned upon the fiddle; I could play the Trumpet Minuet, and Buttered Pease, and two or three tunes. I remember when I was in London, about thirty years ago, there was a song, a great favourite at our club at Nando's coffee-house; Jack Pickle used to sing it for us: a droll fish; but 'tis an old thing, I dare swear you have heard it often.

[Air XIX]

When I follow'd a lass that was froward and shy,
 oh! I stuck to her stuff, 'till I made her comply;
 oh! I took her so lovingly round the waist,
 and I smack'd her lips, and I held her fast:
 when hugged and haul'd,
 she squeal'd and squall'd;
 but though she vow'd all I did was in vain,
 yet I pleas'd her so well, that she bore it again,
 then hoity, toity,
 wisking, frisking,
 green was her gown upon the grass:
 oh! such were the joys of our dancing days.

EUSTACE Very well sir, upon my word.

JUSTICE WOODCOCK No no, I forget all those things now; but I could do a little at them
 once ~ well, stay and eat your dinner, and we'll talk about your
 teaching the girl ~ Lucy, take your master to your spinnet, and
 shew him what you can do ~ I must go and give some orders;

Then hoity, toity,
etc.

Scene the fourth

Lucinda, Eustace.

LUCINDA My sweet pretty papa, your most obedient humble servant, hah,
 hah, hah! was ever so whimsical an accident! well sir, what do
 you think of this?

EUSTACE Think of it! I am in a maze.

LUCINDA O your aukwardness! I was frightened out of my wits, lest you
 should not take the hint! and if I had not turned matters so
 cleverly, we should have been utterly undone.

EUSTACE 'Sdeath! why would you bring me into the house? we could
 expect nothing else: besides, since they did surprise us, it would
 have been better to have discovered the truth.

LUCINDA Yes, and never have seen one another afterwards. I know my
 father better than you do; he has taken it into his head, I have no
 inclination for a husband, and let me tell you, that is our best
 security; for if once he has said a thing, he will not be easily
 persuaded to the contrary.

EUSTACE And pray, what am I to do now?

LUCINDA Why, as I think all danger is pretty well over, since he has invited you to dinner with him, stay, only be cautious of your behaviour; and in the mean time, I will consider what is next to be done.

EUSTACE Had not I better go to your father?

LUCINDA Do so, while I endeavour to recover myself a little, out of the flurry this affair has put me in.

EUSTACE Well, but what sort of a parting is this, without so much as your servant, or good by to you; no ceremony at all? can you afford me no token to keep up my spirits 'till I see you again.

LUCINDA Ah childish!

EUSTACE My angel!

[Air XX]

Let rakes and libertines resign'd
to sensual pleasures, range!
Here all the sex's charms I find,
and ne'er can cool, or change.

LUCINDA Let vain coquets, and prudes conceal,
what most their hearts desire;
with pride my passion I reveal,
oh! may it ne'er expire.

EUSTACE, LUCINDA

The sun shall cease to spread its light,
the stars their orbits leave;
and fair creation sink in night,
when I my dear deceive.

Scene the fifth

A garden.

Enter Rossetta, musing.

If ever poor creature was in a pitiable condition, surely I am. The devil take this fellow, I cannot get him out of my head, and yet I would fain persuade myself I don't care for him: well, but surely I am not in love, let me examine my heart a little: I saw him kissing one of the maids the other day; I could have boxed his ears for it, and have done nothing but find fault and quarrel with the girl ever since. Why was I uneasy at his toying with another woman? what was it to me? ~ Then I dream of him almost every night ~ but that may proceed from his being generally uppermost in my thoughts all day: oh! worse and worse! ~

Continued on next page.

ROSSETTA Well, he is certainly a pretty lad, he has something uncommon about him, considering his rank: ~ and now let me only put the case, if he was not a servant, would I, or would I not prefer him to all the men I ever saw? Why, to be sure, if he was not a servant ~ in short, I'll ask myself no more questions, for, the further I examine, the less reason I shall have to be satisfied.

[Air XXI]

How bless'd the maid, whose bosom
no head-strong passion knows;
her days in joys she passes,
her nights in calm repose.
Where e'er her fancy leads her,
no pain, no fear invades her,
but pleasure,
without measure,
from ev'ry object flows.

Scene the sixth

Young Meadows and Rossetta.

YOUNG MEADOWS Do you come into the garden, Mrs. Rossetta, to put my lilies and roses out of countenance; or to save me the trouble of watering my flowers, by reviving them? The sun seems to have hid himself a little, to give you an opportunity of supplying his place.

ROSSETTA Where could he get that now? he never read it in the academy of compliments.

YOUNG MEADOWS Come, don't affect to treat me with contempt; I can suffer any thing better than that: in short I love you; there is no more to be said: I am angry with myself for it, and strive all I can against it; but in spite of myself, I love you.

[Air XXII]

In vain I ev'ry art assay,
to pluck the venom'd shaft away
that wrankles in my heart;
deep in the centre fix'd, and bound,
my efforts but enlarge the wound,
and fiercer make the smart.

ROSSETTA Really, Mr. Thomas, this is very improper language; it is what I don't understand; I can't suffer it, and in short, I don't like it.

YOUNG MEADOWS Perhaps you don't like me.

- ROSSETTA Well, perhaps I don't.
- YOUNG MEADOWS Nay, but 'tis not so; come, confess you love me.
- ROSSETTA Confess! indeed I shall confess no such thing: besides, to what purpose should I confess it?
- YOUNG MEADOWS Why, as you say, I don't know to what purpose; only it would be a satisfaction to me to hear you say so; that's all.
- ROSSETTA Why, if I did love you, I can assure you, you wou'd never be the better for it ~ women are apt enough to be weak; we cannot always answer for our inclinations, but it is in our power not to give way to them; and, if I was so silly, I say, if I was so indiscreet, which I hope I am not, as to entertain an improper regard, when people's circumstances are quite unsuitable, and there are obstacles in the way that cannot be surmounted ~
- YOUNG MEADOWS Oh! to be sure, Mrs. Rossetta, to be sure: you are entirely in the right of it ~ I ~ know very well, you and I can never come together.
- ROSSETTA Well then, since that is the case, as I assure you it is, I think we had better behave accordingly.
- YOUNG MEADOWS Suppose we make a bargain, then, never to speak to one another any more?
- ROSSETTA With all my heart.
- YOUNG MEADOWS Nor look at, nor, if possible, think of, one another.
- ROSSETTA I am very willing.
- YOUNG MEADOWS And, as long as we stay in the house together, never to take any notice.
- ROSSETTA It is the best way.
- YOUNG MEADOWS Why, I believe it is ~ well, Mrs. Rossetta ~

[Air XXIII]

- ROSSETTA Be gone ~ I agree,
from this moment we're free,
already the matter I've sworn:
- YOUNG MEADOWS yet let me complain
of the fates that ordain,
a tryal so hard to be born.
- ROSSETTA When things are but fit,
we should calmly submit;
no cure in reluctance we find:
- YOUNG MEADOWS then thus I obey,
tear your image away;
and banish you quite from my mind.

ROSSETTA Well, now I think I am somewhat easier: I am glad I have come to this explanation with him, because it puts an end to things at once.

YOUNG MEADOWS Hold, Mrs. Rossetta, pray stay a moment ~ The airs this girl gives herself are intolerable: I find now the cause of her behaviour; she despises the meanness of my condition, thinking a gardener below the notice of a lady's waiting-woman: 'sdeath, I have a good mind to discover myself to her.

ROSSETTA He seems in a brown study, poor wretch! I believe he is heartily mortified, but I must not pity him.

YOUNG MEADOWS It shall be so; I will discover myself to her, and leave the house directly ~ Mrs. Rossetta ~ (starting back) ~ pox on it, yonder's the Justice come into the garden ~

ROSSETTA Oh lord; he will walk round this way; pray go about your business; I would not for the world he shou'd see us together.

YOUNG MEADOWS The devil take him, he's gone across the parterre, and can't hobble here this half-hour, I must and will have a little conversation with you.

ROSSETTA Some other time.

YOUNG MEADOWS This evening, in the green-house at the lower end of the canal; I have some thing to communicate to you of importance. Will you meet me there?

ROSSETTA Meet you!

YOUNG MEADOWS Ay, I have a secret to tell you; and I swear, from that moment, there shall be an end of every thing betwixt us.

ROSSETTA Well, well, pray leave me now.

YOUNG MEADOWS You'll come then.

ROSSETTA I don't know, perhaps I may.

YOUNG MEADOWS Nay, but promise.

ROSSETTA What signifies promising; I may break my promise ~ but I tell you I will.

YOUNG MEADOWS Enough ~ yet before I leave you, let me desire you to believe I love you more than ever man loved woman; and that, when I relinquish you, I give up all that can make my life supportable.

[Air XXIV]

Oh! how shall I in language weak,
 my ardent passion tell;
 or form my falt'ring tongue to speak,
 that cruel word, farewell!
 Farewell ~ but know tho' thus we part,
 my thoughts can never stray:
 go where I will, my constant heart,
 must with my charmer stay.

Scene the seventh

Rossetta, Justice Woodcock.

- ROSSETTA What can this be that he wants to tell me, I have a strange curiosity to hear it, methinks ~ well ~
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK Hem, hem: Rossetta.
- ROSSETTA So, I thought the devil would throw him in my way; now for a courtship of a different kind, but I'll give him a forfeit ~ did you call me, sir?
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK Ay, where are you running so fast?
- ROSSETTA I was only going into the house sir.
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK Well but come here; come here, I say (looking about) how do you do, Rossetta?
- ROSSETTA Thank you sir, pretty well.
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK Why you look as fresh and bloomy to day ~ Adad you little slut I believe you are painted.
- ROSSETTA Oh! sir, you are pleased to compliment.
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK Adad I believe you are ~ let me try ~
- ROSSETTA Lord sir!
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK What brings you into this garden so often Rossetta? I hope you don't get eating green fruit and trash; or have you a hankering after some lover in dowlas, who spoils my trees by engraving true lovers knots on them, with your horn and buck-handled knives? I see your name written upon the cieling of the servants hall, with the smoak of a candle; and I suspect ~
- ROSSETTA Not me I hope sir ~ no sir; I am of another guess mind I assure you; for I have heard say, men are so false and fickle ~
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK Ay, that's your flanting idle young fellows; so they are; and they are so damm'd impudent, I wonder a woman will have any thing to say to them; besides, all that they want, is something to brag of, and tell again.

- ROSSETTA Why, I own sir, if ever I was to make a slip, it should be with an elderly gentleman ~ about seventy or seventy-five years of age.
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK No, child, that's out of reason; tho' I have known many a man turned of threescore with a hale constitution ~
- ROSSETTA Then, sir, he should be troubled with the gout, have a good strong, substantial winter cough ~ and I should not like him the worse ~ if he had a small of the rheumatism.
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK Pho, pho, Rossetta, this is jesting.
- ROSSETTA No, sir, every body has a taste, and I have mine.
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK Well, but Rossetta, have you thought of what I was saying to you?
- ROSSETTA What was it, sir?
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK Ah! you know, you know, well enough, hussey.
- ROSSETTA Dear sir, consider my soul; would you have me endanger my soul?
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK No, no ~ repent.
- ROSSETTA Besides, sir, consider, what has a poor servant to depend on but her character? And I have heard you gentlemen will talk one thing before, and another after.
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK I tell you again, these are the idle, flashy young dogs: but when you have to do with a staid, sober man ~
- ROSSETTA And a magistrate! sir.
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK Right, it's quite a different thing ~ well, shall we Rosseta, shall we?
- ROSSETTA Really, sir, I don't know what to say to it.

[Air XXV]

Young I am, and sore afraid:
wou'd you hurt a harmless maid?
Lead an innocent astray?
Tempt me not, kind sir, I pray.
Men too often we believe,
and shou'd you my faith deceive;
ruin first, and then forsake,
sure my tender heart would break,

- JUSTICE WOODCOCK Why you silly girl, I won't do you any harm.
- ROSSETTA Won't you, sir?
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK Not I.
- ROSSETTA But won't you, indeed, sir?
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK Why I tell you I won't.
- ROSSETTA Ha, ha, ha.

JUSTICE WOODCOCK Hussey, hussey.
 ROSSETTA Ha, ha, ha! ~ your servant, sir, your servant.
 JUSTICE WOODCOCK Why you impudent, audacious ~

Scene the eighth

Justice Woodcock, Hawthorn.

HAWTHORN So, so, justice, at odds with gravity! his worship playing a game at romps! ~ Your servant, sir.
 JUSTICE WOODCOCK Hah: friend Hawthorn!
 HAWTHORN I hope I don't spoil sport, neighbour: I thought I had the glympse of a petticoat as I came in here.
 JUSTICE WOODCOCK Oh! the maid. Ay, she has been gathering a sallad ~ but come hither, master Hawthorn, and I'll shew you some alterations I intend to make in my garden ~
 HAWTHORN No, no, I am no judge of it ~ besides, I want to talk to you a little more about this ~ tell me, sir justice, were you helping your maid to gather a sallad here, or consulting her taste in your improvements, eh? Ha, ha, ha! ~ let me see, all among the roses; egad, I like your notion: but you look a little blank upon it; you are ashamed of the business, then, are you?

[Air XXVI]

Oons! neighbour, ne'er blush for a trifle like this;
 what harm with a fair one to toy and to kiss?
 The greatest and gravest ~ a truce with grimace ~
 would do the same thing, were they in the same
 place.
 No age, no profession, no station is free;
 to sovereign beauty mankind bends the knee:
 that power, resistless, no strength can oppose:
 we all love a pretty girl ~ under the rose.

JUSTICE WOODCOCK I profess, master Hawthorn, this is all Indian, all Cherokee language to me; I don't understand a word of it.
 HAWTHORN No, may be not: well, Sir, will you read this letter, and try whether you can understand that: it is just brought by a servant, who stays for an answer.

- JUSTICE WOODCOCK A letter, and to me! (taking the letter) Yes, it is to me; and yet I am sure it comes from no correspondent. Where are my spectacles? not but I can see very well without them, master Hawthorn; but this seems to be a sort of a crabbed hand.
(reads the letter)
Sir, I am ashamed of giving you this trouble, partly; but I am informed there is an unthinking boy, a son of mine, now disguised, and in your service, in the capacity of a gardener: Tom is a little wild, but an honest lad, and no fool either, tho' I am his father that say it.
Tom ~ oh, this is Thomas, our gardener; I always thought that he was a better man's child than he appeared to be, though I never mentioned it.
- HAWTHORN Well, well, sir; pray let's hear the rest of the letter.
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK Stay, where is the place? oh, here:
I am come in quest of my runaway, and write this at an inn in your village, while I am swallowing a morsel of dinner: because, not having the pleasure of your acquaintance, I did not care to intrude, without giving you notice (whoever this person is, he understands good manners). I beg leave to wait on you, sir; but desire you would keep my arrival a secret particularly from the young man.
William Meadows.
I'll assure you, a very well worded, civil letter. Do you know any thing of the person who writes it, neighbour?
- HAWTHORN Let me consider ~ Meadows ~ By dad I believe it is Sir William Meadows, of Northamptonshire; and, now I remember, I heard, some time ago, that the heir of that family had absconded, on account of a marriage that was disagreeable to him. It is a good many years since I have seen Sir William, but we were once well acquainted; and, if you please, sir, I will go and conduct him up to the house.
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK Do so, master Hawthorn, do so ~ But, pray what sort of a man is this Sir William Meadows, is he a wise man?
- HAWTHORN There is no occasion for a man that has five thousand pounds a year to be a conjurer; but I suppose you ask that question because of this story about his son; taking it for granted, that wise parents make wise children?
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK No doubt of it, master Hawthorn, no doubt of it ~ I warrant we shall find, now, that this young rascal has fallen in love with some minx, against his father's consent ~ Why, sir, if I had as many children as king Priam had, that we read of at school in the destruction of Troy, not one of them would serve me so.

HAWTHORN Well, well, neighbour, perhaps not; but we should remember when we were young ourselves; and I was as likely to play an old don such a trick in my day, as e'er a spark in the hundred; nay, between you and me, I had done it once, had the wench been as willing as I.

[Air XXVII]

My dolly was the fairest thing!
 Her breath disclos'd the sweets of spring;
 and if for summer you wou'd seek,
 'twas painted in her eye, her cheek.
 Her swelling bosom, tempting ripe,
 of fruitful autumn was the type.
 But, when my tender tale I told,
 I found her heart was winter cold.

JUSTICE WOODCOCK Ah, you were always a scape-grace rattle-cap.

HAWTHORN Odds heart, neighbour Woodcock, don't tell me, young fellows will be young fellows, though we preach 'till we're hoarse again; and so there's an end on't.

Scene the ninth

Justice Woodcock's hall.

Enter Lucinda, followed by Hodge.

HODGE Mercy on us ~ I wish I may be hanged if I had not like to drop down with the fright, when I saw the gentleman in the parlour with my master: I thought all the fat was in the fire, and I should have lost my place, that's for certain.

LUCINDA Well, but Hodge, things have fallen out more luckily; and my papa is very well reconciled to the gentleman, but does not suspect who he is; so take care you don't blab it.

HODGE Blab it, did I ever? ~

LUCINDA I don't accuse you ~ and, as I have often put confidence in you before, I am now going to give you a fresh instance of my dependance on your fidelity. ~ I have just come to a resolution to leave the house, with mister Eustace, this night.

HODGE What! and his worship know nothing of the matter?

LUCINDA Not a syllable; nor would I have him, till we are out of his reach, which we shall be by to-morrow morning, for the world.

HODGE Why, then you are going to run away, miss!

- LUCINDA I dare swear I shall return soon again, Hodge ~ when my father finds that we are married, and what's done cannot be undone, you know ~
- HODGE Nay, ecod, you'll be of the sure side of the hedge, then; but have you any thing for me to do?
- LUCINDA That you shall be told, if you come into my chamber after dinner; Mr. Eustace will be there ~ and, in the mean time, as a reward for the services you have done us already, there's somewhat (gives money).
- HODGE Five guineas! ~ Mayhap you think it's for the value of this, now ~ why I'd go through fire and water for you, by day or by night, without ever a penny ~ but if his worship should come to know that I have meddled or made ~
- LUCINDA Depend upon it, Hodge, I will insure you from all damages. ~ But where shall I find Rossetta, to tell her of this? ~ Well, I am going to do a strange bold thing, but I hope we shall be happy.

[Air XXVIII]

Oh hymen, propitious, receive in thy train,
a pair uneduc'd by the selfish and vain;
whom neither ambition, nor int'rest, draws,
but love cordial subjects, submits to thy laws:
our souls for the sweets of thy union prepare,
and grant us thy blisses unblended with care:
let mutual compliance endear all our days,
and friendship grow stronger, as passion decays.

Scene the tenth

Hodge, Margery.

- HODGE So mistress, who let you in?
- MARGERY Why, I let myself in.
- HODGE Indeed! Marry come up! why, then pray let yourself out again. Times are come to a pretty pass; I think you might have had the manners to knock at the door first ~ what does the wench stand for?
- MARGERY I want to know if his worship's at home.
- HODGE Well, what's your business with his worship!
- MARGERY Perhaps you will hear that ~ Look ye, Hodge, it does not signify talking, I am come, once for all, to know what you intends to do; for I won't be made a fool of any longer.
- HODGE You won't.

MARGERY No, that's what I won't, by the best man that ever wore a head; I am the make-game of the whole village upon your account; and I'll try whether your master gives you toleration in your doings.

HODGE You will.

MARGERY Yes, that's what I will, his worship shall be acquainted with all your pranks, and see how you will like to be sent for a soldier.

HODGE There's the door, take a friend's advice and go about your business.

MARGERY My business is with his worship.

HODGE Look you Madge, if you make any of your orations here, never stir if I don't set the dogs at you ~ will you be gone?

MARGERY I won't.

HODGE Here towzer, (whistling) whu, whu, whu.

[Air XXIX]

Was ever poor fellow so plag'd with a vixen?
 Zawns! Madge don't provoke me, but mind what I say;
 you've chose a wrong parson for playing your tricks on,
 so pack up your awls and be trudging away:
 you'd better be quiet,
 and not breed a riot;
 s'blood must I stand prating with you here all day?
 I've got other matters to mind;
 may hap you may think me an ass;
 but to the contrary you'll find:
 a fine piece of a work by the mass!

Scene the eleventh

Rossetta, Hodge, Margery.

ROSSETTA Sure I heard the voice of discord here ~ as I live an admirer of mine, and if I mistake not, a rival ~ I'll have some sport with them ~ how now fellow servant what's the matter?

HODGE Nothing Mrs. Rossetta, only this young woman wants to speak with his worship ~ Madge follow me.

MARGERY No Hodge, this is your fine madam! but I am as good flesh and blood as she, and have as clean a skin too, tho'f I mayn't go so gay; and now she's here I'll tell her a piece of my mind.

HODGE Hold your tongue will you.

MARGERY No, I'll speak if I die for it.

ROSSETTA What is the matter I say.

HODGE Why nothing I tell you ~ Madge ~

- MARGERY Yes, but it is something, it's all along of she, and she may be ashamed of herself.
- ROSSETTA Bless me child, do you direct your discourse to me?
- MARGERY Yes, I do, and to nobody else; there was not a kinder soul breathing than he was 'till of late; I had never a cross word from him till he kept you company; but all the girls about say, there's no such thing as keeping a sweetheart for you.
- ROSSETTA Do you hear this, friend Hodge?
- HODGE Why, you don't mind she I hope; but if that vexes her, I do like you, I do; my mind runs upon nothing else; and if so be as you was agreeable to it, I would marry you to night, before to morrow.
- MARGERY Oh you base rogue, you deceitful fellow, you are parjur'd, you know you are, and you deserve to have your eyes tore out.
- HODGE Let me come at her ~ I'll teach you to call names, and abuse folk.
- MARGERY Do, strike me; you a man!
- ROSSETTA Hold, hold ~ we shall have a battle, here presently, and I may chance to get my cap tore off ~ never exasperate a jealous woman, 'tis taking a mad bull by the horns ~ leave me to manage her.
- HODGE You manage her! I'll kick her.
- ROSSETTA No, no, it will be more for my credit, to get the better of her by fair means ~ I warrant I'll bring her to reason.
- HODGE Well, do so then ~ but may I depend upon you? when shall I speak to the parson?
- ROSSETTA We'll talk of that another time ~ go.
- HODGE Madge, good by.
- ROSSETTA The brutality of this fellow shocks me! ~ oh man, man ~ you are all alike ~ a bumkin here, bred at the barn door! had he been brought up in a court, could he have been more fashionably vicious? shew me the lord, 'squire, colonel, or captain of them all, that can out-do him.

[Air XXX]

Cease gay seducers pride to take,
in triumphs o'er the fair;
since clowns as well can act the rake,
as those in higher sphere.
Where then to shun a shameful fate
shall hapless beauty go;
in ev'ry rank, in ev'ry state,
poor woman finds a foe!

Scene the twelfth

Rossetta, Margery.

MARGERY I am ready to burst, I can't stay in the place any longer.

ROSSETTA Hold child, come hither.

MARGERY Don't speak to me, don't you.

ROSSETTA Well, but I have something to say to you of consequence, and that will be for your good; I suppose this fellow promised you marriage.

MARGERY Ay, or he should never have prevail'd upon me.

ROSSETTA Well, now you see the ill consequence of trusting to such promises: when once a man hath cheated a woman of her virtue, she has no longer hold of him; he despises her for wanting that which he hath robb'd her of; and like a lawless conqueror, triumphs in the ruin he hath occasioned.

MARGERY ~ Nan!

ROSSETTA However, I hope the experience you have got, though somewhat dearly purchased, will be of use to you for the future; and as to any designs I have upon the heart of your lover, you may make yourself easy, for I assure you, I shall be no dangerous rival, so go your ways and be a good girl.

MARGERY Yes ~ I don't very well understand her talk, but I suppose that's as much as to say she'll keep him herself; well let her, who cares, I don't fear getting better nor he is any day of the year, for the matter of that; and I have a thought come into my head that may be will be more to my advantage.

[Air XXXI]

Since Hodge proves ungrateful, no farther I'll seek,
but go up to town in the waggon next week;
a service in London is no such disgrace,
and register's office will get me a place.
Bet Blossom went there, and soon met with a friend,
folks say in her silks, she's now standing an end!
Then why should not I the same maxim pursue?
And better my fortune as other girls do.

Scene the thirteenth

Enter Rossetta, and Lucinda.

ROSSETTA Ha! ha! ha! Oh admirable, most delectibly ridiculous. And so your father is content he should be a music-master, and will have him such, in spite of all your aunt can say to the contrary?

LUCINDA My father and he, child, are the best companions you ever saw: they have been singing together the most hideous duets! Bobbing Joan, and Old Sir Simon the King: heaven knows where Eustace could pick them up; but he has gone through half the contents of pills to purge melancholy with him.

ROSSETTA And have you resolved to take wing to-night?

LUCINDA This very night, my dear: my swain will go from hence this evening, but no farther than the inn, where he has left his horses; and, at twelve precisely, he will be with a post-chaise at the little gate that opens from the lawn into the road, where I have promised to meet him.

ROSSETTA Then depend upon it, I'll bear you company.

LUCINDA We shall easily slip out when the family is a-sleep, and I have prepared Hodge already.

ROSSETTA Nay, for that matter, you need not have a more expert pilot than myself upon such an expedition, but hark you ~

Scene the fourteenth

Rossetta, Lucinda, Hawthorn.

HAWTHORN Lucy, where are you?

LUCINDA Your pleasure, sir.

ROSSETTA Mister Hawthorn, your servant.

HAWTHORN What, my little water-wagtail! The very couple I wished to meet: come hither both of you.

ROSSETTA Now sir, what would you say to both of us?

HAWTHORN Why, let me look at you a little ~ have you got on your best gowns, and your best faces? If not, go and trick yourselves out directly, for I'll tell you a secret ~ there will be a young batchelor in the house, within these three hours, that may fall to the share of one of you, if you look sharp ~ but whether mistress or maid ~

ROSSETTA Ay, marry, this is something; but how do you know, whether either mistress or maid, will think him worth acceptance.

HAWTHORN Follow me, follow me, I warrant you.

LUCINDA I can assure you, mister Hawthorn, I am very difficult to please.

ROSSETTA And so am I sir.

HAWTHORN Indeed!

[Air XXXII]

HAWTHORN Well, come, let us hear, what the swain must possess
who may hope at your feet to implore with success?

ROSSETTA He must be, first of all,
straight, comely, and tall:

LUCINDA neither aukward,

ROSSETTA nor foolish;

LUCINDA nor apish,

ROSSETTA nor mulish;

LUCINDA, ROSSETTA nor yet shou'd his fortune be small.

HAWTHORN What think'st of a captain?

LUCINDA All bluster and wounds!

HAWTHORN What think'st of a squire?

ROSSETTA To be left for his hounds.

LUCINDA, ROSSETTA The youth that is form'd to my mind,
must be gentle, obliging, and kind;
of all things in nature love me:
have sense both to speak, and to see,
yet sometimes be silent and blind.

HAWTHORN,
ROSSETTA, LUCINDA 'Fore George a most rare matrimonial receipt,
observe it, ye fair, in the choice of a mate;
remember 'tis wedlock determines your fate.

End of the second act.

ACT THE THIRD

Scene the first

A parlour in Justice Woodcock's house.

Enter Sir William Meadows, followed by Hawthorn.

SIR WILLIAM Well this is excellent, this is mighty good, this is mighty merry faith; ha, ha, ha; was ever the like heard of? that my boy Tom should run away from me, for fear of being forced to marry a girl he never saw! that she should scamper from her father, for fear of being forced to marry him; and that they should run into one another's arms this way in disguise; by mere accident; against their consents, and without knowing it, as a body may say? may I never do an ill turn, master Hawthorn, if it is not one of the oddest adventures partly ~

HAWTHORN Why, Sir William, it is romance, a novel, a pleasanter history, by half, than the loves of Dorastus and Faunia: we shall have ballads made of it within these two months, setting forth; how a young 'squire became a serving man of low degree; and it will be stuck up with Margaret's Ghost, and the Spanish Lady, against the walls of every cottage in the country.

SIR WILLIAM But what pleases me best of all, master Hawthorn, is the ingenuity of the girl. May I never do an ill turn, when I was called out of the room, and the servant said she wanted to speak to me, if I knew what to make on't: but when the little gypsey took me aside, and told me her name, and how matters stood, I was quite astonish'd as a body may say; and could not believe it partly; till her young friend, that she is with here, assured me of the truth on't. Indeed at last I began to recollect her face, though I have not set eyes on her before, since she was the height of a full grown greyhound.

HAWTHORN Well Sir William, your son as yet knows nothing of what has happen'd, nor of your being come hither; and if you'll follow my counsel, we'll have some sport with him ~ he and his mistress were to meet in the garden this evening by appointment, she's gone to dress herself in all her airs; will you let me direct your proceedings in this affair?

SIR WILLIAM With all my heart, master Hawthorn, with all my heart, do what you will with me; say what you please for me; I am so overjoy'd and so happy ~ And may I never do an ill turn, but I am very glad to see you too, ay, and partly as much pleased at that as any thing else, for we have been merry together before now, when we were some years younger: well and how has the world gone with you master Hawthorn since we saw one another last?

HAWTHORN Why, pretty well Sir William, I have no reason to complain; every one has a mixture of four with his sweets; but in the main I believe I have done in a degree as tollerably as my neighbours.

[Air XXXIII]

The world is a well furnish'd table,
 where guests are promisc'ously set;
 we all fare as well as we're able,
 and scramble for what we can get.
 My simile holds to a tittle,
 some gorge while some scarce have a taste;
 but if I am content with a little,
 enough is as good as a feast.

Scene the second

Sir William Meadows, Hawthorn, Rossetta.

ROSSETTA Sir William, I beg pardon for detaining you; but I have had so much difficulty in adjusting my borrowed plumes ~

SIR WILLIAM May I never do an ill turn but they fit you to a T, and you look very well, so you do; cocksbones how your father will chuckle when he comes to hear this ~ Her father, master Hawthorn, is as worthy a man as lives by bread, and has been almost out of his senses for the loss of her ~ But tell me hussey, has not this been all a scheme, a piece of conjuration between you and my son? Faith I am half persuaded it has, it looks so like hocus pocus as a body may say.

ROSSETTA Upon my honour, Sir William, what has happened has been the mere effect of chance; I came hither unknown to your son, and he unknown to me: I never in the least suspected that Thomas the gardener was other than his appearance spoke him, and least of all, that he was a person with whom I had so close a connection. Mr. Hawthorn can testify the astonishment I was in when he first informed me of it: but I thought it was my duty to come to an immediate explanation with you.

SIR WILLIAM Is not she a neat wench master Hawthorn? May I never do an ill turn but she is ~ but you little plaguy devil, how came this love affair between you?

ROSSETTA I have told you the whole truth very ingenuously sir; since your son and I have been fellow servants, as I may call it, in this house; I have had more than reason to suspect he had taken a liking to me; and I will own with equal frankness, had I not look'd upon him as a person so much below me, I should have had no objection to receiving his courtship.

HAWTHORN Well said by the lord Harry, all above board, fair and open.

ROSSETTA Perhaps I may be censured by some for this candid declaration; but I love to speak my sentiments; and I assure you Sir William, in my own opinion, I should prefer a gardener, with your son's good qualities, to a knight of the shire without them.

[Air XXXIV]

'Tis not wealth, it is not birth,
 can value to the soul convey;
 minds possess superior worth,
 which chance nor gives, nor takes away.
 Like the sun true merit shows,
 by nature warm by nature bright;
 with inbred flames, he nobly glows,
 nor needs the aid of borrow'd light.

HAWTHORN Well, but sir, we lose time ~ is not this about the hour you appointed to meet in the garden?

ROSSETTA Pretty near it.

HAWTHORN Oons then, what do we stay for? come my old friend come along, and by the way we will consult how to manage your interview.

SIR WILLIAM Ay, but I must speak a word or two to my man about the horses first.

Scene the third

Rossetta, Hodge.

ROSSETTA Well ~ What's the business?

HODGE Madam ~ mercy on us, I crave pardon!

ROSSETTA Why Hodge, don't you know me?

HODGE Mrs. Rossetta!

ROSSETTA Ay.

- HODGE Know you, ecod I don't know whether I do or not: never stir, if I did not think it was some lady belonging to the strange gentlefolks; why you ben't dizen'd this way, to go to the statute dance presently, be you?
- ROSSETTA Have patience and you'll see ~ but is there any thing amiss, that you came in so abruptly?
- HODGE Amiss! why there's ruination.
- ROSSETTA How, where?
- HODGE Why with miss Lucinda: her aunt has catch'd she, and the gentleman above stairs, and over-heard all their love discourse.
- ROSSETTA You don't say so!
- HODGE Ecod, I had like to have pop'd in among them this instant, but by good luck, I heard Mrs. Deborah's voice, and ran down again, as fast as ever my legs could carry me.
- ROSSETTA Is your master in the house?
- HODGE What his worship? no, no, he is gone into the fields to talk with the reapers and people.
- ROSSETTA Poor Lucinda, I wish I could go up to her, but I am so engaged with my own affairs ~
- HODGE Mrs. Rossetta.
- ROSSETTA Well.
- HODGE Odds bobs, I must have one smack of your sweet lips.
- ROSSETTA Oh stand off, you know I never allow liberties.
- HODGE Nay, but why so coy, there's reason in roasting of eggs; I would not deny you such a thing.
- ROSSETTA That's kind, ha, ha, ha! ~ but what will become of Lucinda? Sir William waits for me, I must be gone ~ friendship a moment by your leave, yet as our sufferings have been mutual, so shall our joys; I already lose the remembrance of all former pains and anxieties.

[Air XXXV]

The traveller benighted,
and led thro' weary ways;
the lamp of day new lighted,
with joy the dawn surveys.
The rising prospects viewing,
each look is forward cast;
he smiles his course pursuing,
nor thinks of what is past.

Scene the fourth

Hodge, Mrs. Deborah, Lucinda.

HODGE Hist, stay! don't I hear a noise?

LUCINDA Well, but dear, dear aunt.
(within)

MRS. DEBORAH You need not speak to me, for it does not signify.
(within)

HODGE Adwawns they are coming here, ecod I'll get out of the way ~
murrain take it, this door is bolted now ~ so so.

MRS. DEBORAH Get along, get along; (driving in Lucinda before her) you are a
scandal to the name of Woodcock! but I was resolved to find you
out, for I have suspected you a great while, though your father,
silly man, will have you such a poor innocent.

LUCINDA What shall I do?

MRS. DEBORAH I was determin'd to discover what you, and your pretended music
master were about; and lay in wait on purpose: I believe he
thought to escape me, by slipping into the closet when I knocked
at the door; but I was even with him, for now I have him under
lock and key, and please the fates there he shall remain till your
father comes in: I will convince him of his error, whether he will
or not.

LUCINDA You won't be so cruel, I am sure you won't; I thought I had made
you my friend, by telling you the truth.

MRS. DEBORAH Telling me the truth quotha? did I not overhear your scheme of
running away to night, through the partition! did not I find the
very bundles pack'd up in the room with you ready for going off?
No brazenface, I found out the truth by my own sagacity, though
your father says I am a fool! but now we'll be judged who is the
greatest ~ and you mister rascal, my brother shall know what an
honest servant he has got.

HODGE Madam!

MRS. DEBORAH You were to have been aiding and assisting them in their escape,
and have been the go-between it seems, the letter-carrier!

HODGE Who me madam!

MRS. DEBORAH Yes, you sirrah!

HODGE Miss Lucinda, did I ever carry a letter for you? I'll make my
affidavy before his worship ~

MRS. DEBORAH Go, go, you are a villain, hold your tongue.

LUCINDA I own aunt I have been very faulty in this affair; I don't pretend to excuse myself; but we are all subject to frailties, consider that, and judge of me by yourself, who were once young, and inexperienced as I am.

[Air XXXVI]

If ever a fond inclination,
 rose in your bosom, to rob you of rest;
 reflect with a little compassion,
 on the soft pangs, which prevail'd in my breast.
 Oh where, where would you fly me;
 can you deny me thus torn and distrest;
 think when my lover was by me,
 would I, how cou'd I, refuse his request?
 Kneeling before you, let me implore you;
 look on me sighing, crying, dying;
 ah! is there no language can move?
 If I have been too complying!
 Hard was the conflict 'twixt duty, and love.

MRS. DEBORAH This is mighty pretty romantick stuff! but you learn it out of your play books, and novels. Girls in my time had other employments, we work'd at our needles, and kept ourselves from idle thoughts: before I was your age, I had finished with my own fingers, a compleat set of chairs, and a fire screen in tent stitch; four counterpanes, in Marsailles quilting; and the creed, and the ten commandments, in the hair of our family: it was framed, and glazed, and hung over the parlour chimney piece, and your poor dear grandfather was prouder of it, than of e'er a picture in his house. I never looked into a book, but when I said my prayers, except it was the compleat housewife, or the great family receipt book: whereas you are always at your studies! Ah, I never knew a woman come to good, that was fond of reading.

LUCINDA Well, pray madam, let me prevail on you to give me the key to let Mr. Eustace out, and I promise, I never will proceed a step farther in this business, without your advice and approbation.

MRS. DEBORAH Have not I told you already my resolution? ~ where are my clogs and my bonnet? I'll go out to my brother in the fields; I'm a fool you know child, now let's see what the wits will think of themselves, ~ don't hold me ~

LUCINDA I'm not going ~ I have thought of a way to be even with you, so you may do as you please.

Scene the fifth

Hodge.

Well, I thought it would come to this, I'll be shot if I didn't ~ so here's a fine jobb ~ but what can they do to me ~ they can't send me to jail for carrying a letter, seeing there was no treason in it; and how was I obligated to know my master did not allow of their meetings ~ the worst they can do, is to turn me off, and I am sure the place is no such great purchase ~ indeed, I shall be sorry to leave Mrs. Rossetta, seeing as how matters are so near being brought to an end, betwixt us; but she and I may keep company all as one: and I finds Madge has been speaking with Gaffer Broadwheels, the waggoner, about her carriage up to London; so that I have got rid of she, and I am sure I have reason to be main glad of it, for she led me a wearysome life ~ but that's the way of them all.

[Air XXXVII]

A plague of those wenchs, they make such a pother,
when once they have let'n a man have his will;
they're always a whining for something or other,
and cry he's unkind in his carriage,
what tho'f he speaks them ne'er so fairly
still they keep teasing, teasing on:
you cannot persuade 'em;
'till promise you've made 'em:
and after they have got it,
they tell you ~ add rot it,
their character's blasted, they're ruin'd, undone;
and then, to be sure, sir,
there is but one cure, sir,
and all the discourse is of marriage.

Scene the sixth

A green-house.

Enter Young Meadows.

YOUNG MEADOWS I am glad I had the precaution to bring this suit of cloaths in my bundle, though I hardly know myself in them again, they appear so strange, and feel so unwieldy. However, my gardener's jacket goes on no more ~ I wonder this girl does not come (looking at his watch); perhaps she won't come ~ why, then I'll go into the village, take a post-chaise, and depart without any farther ceremony.

[Air XXXVIII]

How much superior beauty awes,
the coldest bosoms find;
but with resistless force it draws,
to sense and sweetness join'd.
The casket, where to outward shew,
the workman's art is seen,
is doubly valu'd, when we know
it holds a gem within.

Hark! she comes.

Scene the seventh

Enter Sir William Meadows and Hawthorn.

YOUNG MEADOWS Confusion! my father! What can this mean?

SIR WILLIAM Tom, are not you a sad boy, Tom, to bring me a hundred and forty miles here ~ may I never do an ill turn, but you deserve to have your head broke; and I have a good mind, partly ~ what, sirrah, don't you think it worth your while to speak to me?

YOUNG MEADOWS Forgive me, sir, I own I have been in a fault.

SIR WILLIAM In a fault! to run away from me because I was going to do you good ~ may I never do an ill turn, master Hawthorn, if I did not pick out as fine a girl for him, partly, as any in England; and the rascal run away from me, and came here and turn'd gardener. And pray what did you propose to yourself, Tom? I know you were always fond of botany, as they call it; did you intend to keep the trade going, and advertise fruit-trees and flowering-shrubs, to be had at Meadows's nursery?

- HAWTHORN No, Sir William, I apprehend the young gentleman designed to lay by the profession; for he has quitted the habit already.
- YOUNG MEADOWS I am so astonished to see you here, Sir, that I don't know what to say; but, I assure you, if you had not come, I should have returned home to you directly. Pray, sir, how did you find me out?
- SIR WILLIAM No matter, Tom, no matter; it was partly by accident, as a body may say; but what does that signify ~ tell me, boy, how stands your stomach towards matrimony? Do you think you could digest a wife now?
- YOUNG MEADOWS Pray, sir, don't mention it; I shall always behave myself as a dutiful son ought: I will never marry without your consent, and I hope you won't force me to do it against my own.
- SIR WILLIAM Is not this mighty provoking, master Hawthorn? Why, sirrah, did you ever see the lady I designed for you?
- YOUNG MEADOWS Sir, I don't doubt the lady's merit; but, at present, I am not disposed.
- HAWTHORN Nay, but young gentleman, fair and softly, you should pay some respect to your father in this matter.
- SIR WILLIAM Respect, master Hawthorn! may I never do an ill turn, but he shall marry her, or I'll disinherit him! there's once. Look you, Tom, not to make any more words of the matter, I have brought the lady here with me, and I'll see you contracted before we part; or you shall delve and plant cucumbers as long as you live.
- YOUNG MEADOWS Have you brought the lady here, sir? I am sorry for it.
- SIR WILLIAM Why sorry? what then you won't marry her? we'll see that; pray, master Hawthorn, conduct the fair one in ~ ay, sir, you may fret, and dance about, trot at the rate of fifteen miles an hour, if you please; but may I never do an ill turn, but I am resolved.

Scene the eighth

Sir William Meadows, Hawthorn, Young Meadows, Rossetta.

- HAWTHORN Here is the lady, Sir William.
- SIR WILLIAM Come in, madam, but turn your face from him ~ he would not marry you because he had not seen you; but I'll let him know my choice shall be his, and he shall consent to marry you before he sees you, or not an acre of estate ~ Pray, sir, walk this way.
- YOUNG MEADOWS Sir, I cannot help thinking your conduct a little extraordinary; but, since you urge me so closely, I must tell you my affections are engaged.
- SIR WILLIAM How, Tom! how!

YOUNG MEADOWS I was determined, Sir, to have got the better of my inclination, and never have done a thing which I knew would be disagreeable to you.

SIR WILLIAM And pray, sir, who are your affections engaged to? let me know that.

YOUNG MEADOWS To a person, sir, whose rank and fortune may be no recommendations to her; but whose charms and accomplishments entitle her to a monarch. I am sorry, sir, it's impossible for me to comply with your commands, and I hope you will not be offended if I quit your presence.

SIR WILLIAM Not I, not in the least; go about your business.

YOUNG MEADOWS Sir, I obey.

HAWTHORN Now is your time, madam.

[Air XXXIX]

ROSSETTA

When we see a lover languish,
and his truth and honour prove,
ah! how sweet to heal his anguish,
and repay him love for love.

SIR WILLIAM Well, Tom, will you go away from me now?

HAWTHORN Perhaps, Sir William, your son does not like the lady; and, if so, pray don't put a force upon his inclination.

YOUNG MEADOWS You need not have taken this method, sir, to let me see you were acquainted with my folly, whatever my inclinations are.

SIR WILLIAM Well, but Tom, suppose I give my consent to your marrying this young woman?

YOUNG MEADOWS Your consent, sir!

ROSSETTA Come, Sir William, we have carried the jest far enough; I see your son is in a kind of embarrassment, and I don't wonder at it; but this letter, which I received from him a few days before I left my father's house, will, I apprehend, expound the riddle. He cannot be surprized that I ran away from a gentleman who expressed so much dislike to me; and what has happened since chance brought us together in masquerade, there is no occasion for me to inform him of.

YOUNG MEADOWS What is all this? pray don't make a jest of me.

SIR WILLIAM May I never do an ill turn, Tom, if it is not truth; this is my friend's daughter.

YOUNG MEADOWS Sir!

- ROSSETTA Even so; 'tis very true indeed. In short, you have not been a more whimsical gentleman, than I have a gentlewoman; but you see we were designed for one another, 'tis plain.
- YOUNG MEADOWS I know not, madam, what I either hear or see, a thousand things are crowding on my imagination; while, like one just wakened from a dream, I doubt which is reality, which delusion.
- SIR WILLIAM Well then, Tom, come into the air a bit, and recover yourself.
- YOUNG MEADOWS Nay, dear sir, have a little patience; do you give her to me?
- SIR WILLIAM Give her to you! ay, that I do, and my blessing into the bargain.
- YOUNG MEADOWS Then, sir, I am the happiest man in the world. I enquire no farther; here I fix the utmost limits of my hopes and happiness.

[Air XL]

- Young Meadows
All I wish in her obtaining,
fortune can no more impart;
- ROSSETTA let my eyes, my thoughts explaining,
speak the feelings of my heart.
- YOUNG MEADOWS Joy and pleasure never ceasing,
ROSSETTA love with length of years increasing.

ROSSETTA AND YOUNG MEADOWS

- Thus my heart and hand surrender,
here my faith and truth I plight;
constant still, and kind and tender,
may our flames burn ever bright.
- HAWTHORN Give you joy, sir; and you fair lady ~ and, under favour, I'll salute you, too, if there's no fear of jealousy.
- YOUNG MEADOWS But may I believe this? ~ pr'ythee tell me, dear Rossetta.
- ROSSETTA Step into the house and I'll tell you every thing ~ I must intreat the good offices of Sir William, and mister Hawthorn, immediately; for I am in the utmost uneasiness about my poor friend Lucinda.
- HAWTHORN Why, what's the matter?
- ROSSETTA I don't know, but I have reason to fear, I left her just now in very disagreeable circumstances, however, I hope, if there is any mischief fallen out between her father and her lover ~
- HAWTHORN The music master! I thought so.
- SIR WILLIAM What is there a lover in the case? may I never do an ill turn, but I am glad, so I am; for we'll make a double wedding; and, by way of celebrating it, take a trip to London, to shew the brides some of the pleasures of the town. And, master Hawthorn, you shall be of the party ~ come, children, go before us.

HAWTHORN Thank you, Sir William, I'll go into the house with you, and to church, to see the young folks married; but, as to London, I beg to be excused.

[Air XLI]

If ever I'm catch'd in those regions of smoak,
 that seat of confusion and noise,
 may I ne'er know the sweets of a slumber unbroke,
 nor the pleasures the country enjoys.
 Nay more, let them take me, to punish my sin,
 where, gaping, the cockneys they fleece,
 clap me up with their monsters, cry, masters, walk in,
 and shew me for two-pence a-piece.

Scene the ninth

Justice Woodcock's hall.

Enter Justice Woodcock, Mrs. Deborah Woodcock, Lucinda, Eustace, Hodge

MRS. DEBORAH Why, brother, do you think I can hear or see, or make use of my senses? I tell you, I left that fellow locked up in her closet; and, while I have been with you, they have broke open the door, and got him out again.

JUSTICE WOODCOCK Well, you hear what they say.

MRS. DEBORAH I care not what they say; it's you encourage them in their impudence ~ hark'e, hussey, will you face me down that I did not lock the fellow up?

LUCINDA Really, aunt, I don't know what you mean; when you talk intelligibly, I'll answer you.

EUSTACE Seriously madam, this is carrying the jest a little too far.

MRS. DEBORAH What then, I did not catch you together in her chamber, nor overhear your design of going off to night, nor find the bundles packt up ~

EUSTACE Ha, ha, ha!

LUCINDA Why aunt you rave.

MRS. DEBORAH Brother, as I am a christian woman, she confessed the whole affair to me from first to last: and in this very place was down upon her marrow-bones, for half an hour together, to beg I would conceal it from you.

HODGE Oh lord! oh lord!

MRS. DEBORAH What sirrah, would you brazen me too, take that (boxes him).

- HODGE I wish you would keep your hands to yourself, you strike me, because you have been telling his worship stories.
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK Why sister you are tipsey!
- MRS. DEBORAH I tipsey brother! ~ I ~ that never touch a drop of any thing strong from year's end to year's end; but now and then a little annyseed water, when I have got the cholic.
- LUCINDA Well, aunt, you have been complaining of the stomach-ach all day; and may have taken too powerful a dose of your cordial.
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK Come, come, I see well enough how it is, this is a lye of her own invention, to make herself appear wise: but you simpleton, did not you know I must find you out?

Scene the tenth

Enter Sir William Meadows, Hawthorn, Rossetta, Young Meadows.

- YOUNG MEADOWS Bless me sir! look who is yonder.
- SIR WILLIAM Cocksbones, Jack, honest Jack, are you there.
- EUSTACE Plague on't, this rencounter is unlucky ~ Sir William your servant.
- SIR WILLIAM Your servant again, and again, heartily your servant; may I never do an ill turn, but I am glad to meet you.
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK Pray Sir William, are you acquainted with this person?
- SIR WILLIAM What, with Jack Eustace? why he's my kinsman: his mother and I are cousin-germans once removed, and Jack's a very worthy young fellow; may I never do an ill turn if I tell you a word of a lye.
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK Well, but Sir William, let me tell you, you know nothing of the matter; this man is a music master; a thrummer of wire, and scraper of cat-gut, and teaches my daughter to sing.
- SIR WILLIAM What Jack Eustace a music master! no, no, I know him better.
- EUSTACE S'death, why should I attempt to carry on this absurd farce any longer? ~ what that gentleman tells you is very true, sir; I am no music master indeed.
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK You are not, you own it then?
- EUSTACE Nay, more sir, I am as this lady has represented me, (pointing to Mrs. Deborah) your daughter's lover; whom with her own consent, I did intend to have carried off this night; but now that Sir William Meadows is here, to tell you who, and what I am; I throw myself upon your generosity, from which I expect greater advantages, than I could reap from any imposition on your unsuspecting nature.

MRS. DEBORAH Well brother, what have you to say for yourself now? you have made a precious day's work of it? had my advice been taken: oh I am ashamed of you, but you are a weak man and it can't be helpt; however you should let wiser heads direct you.

LUCINDA Dear papa, pardon me.

SIR WILLIAM Ay, do sir forgive her; my cousin Jack, will make her a good husband, I'll answer for it.

ROSSETTA Stand out of the way, and let me speak two or three words to his worship ~ come my dear Sir, though you refuse all the world, I am sure you can deny me nothing: love is a venial fault ~ you know what I mean ~ be reconciled to your daughter, I conjure you, by the memory of our past affections ~ what not a word!

[Air XLII]

Go naughty man, I can't abide you;
are then your vows so soon forgot?
Ah! now I see if I had tryed you;
what would have been my hopeful lot.
But here I charge you ~ make them happy;
bless the fond pair, and crown their bliss:
come be a dear good-natur'd pappy;
and I'll reward you with a kiss.

MRS. DEBORAH Come turn out of the house; and be thankful my brother does not hang you, for he could do it, he's a justice of peace; ~ turn out of the house I say ~

JUSTICE WOODCOCK Who gave you authority to turn him out of the house ~ he shall stay where he is.

MRS. DEBORAH He shan't marry my niece.

JUSTICE WOODCOCK Shan't he? but I'll shew you the difference now, I say he shall marry her, and what will you do about it?

MRS. DEBORAH And you will give him your estate too, will you?

JUSTICE WOODCOCK Yes I will.

MRS. DEBORAH Why, I am sure he's a vagabond.

JUSTICE WOODCOCK I like him the better, I would have him a vagabond.

MRS. DEBORAH Brother, brother!

HAWTHORN Come, come, madam all's very well, and I see my neighbour is what I always thought him, a man of sense and prudence.

SIR WILLIAM May I never do an ill turn, but I say so too.

JUSTICE WOODCOCK Here young fellow, take my daughter; and bless you both together; but hark you, no money till I die; observe that.

EUSTACE Sir in giving me your daughter, you bestow upon me more than the whole world would be without her.

[Air XLIII]

- The merchant whose vessel, the winds made their sport
at last thus arrives with his treasure in port;
his labour requited, his duty he pays;
his dangers are past, and his heart is at ease.
- LUCINDA Were monarchs contending to make me a bride,
undazzled I'd look on their splendour and pride;
refused should their crowns, and their palaces be,
contented to live in a cottage with thee.
- EUSTACE, LUCINDA On earth, if there's ought of substantial delight,
'tis sure when like us a fond couple unite;
when blessed in each other their struggles are o'er,
and pleasures are heighten'd by pains gone before.
- ROSSETTA Dear Lucinda, if words could convey the transports of my heart
upon this occasion ~
- LUCINDA Words are the tools of hypocrites, the pretenders to friendship;
only let us resolve to preserve our esteem for each other.
- YOUNG MEADOWS Dear Jack, I little thought we should ever meet in such odd
circumstances ~ but here has been the strangest business between
this lady and me ~
- HODGE What then Mrs. Rossetta, are you turned false-hearted after all;
will you marry Thomas the gardener, and did I forsake Madge for
this?
- ROSSETTA Oh lord! Hodge, I beg your pardon; I protest I forgot; but I must
reconcile you and Madge I think; and give you a wedding dinner
to make you amends.
- HODGE N ~ ah.
- HAWTHORN Adds me sir, here are some of your neighbours come to visit you,
and I suppose, to make up the company of your statute ball;
yonder's music too I see, shall we enjoy ourselves! if so give me
your hand ~
- JUSTICE WOODCOCK Why, here's my hand, and we will enjoy ourselves, heaven bless
you both children I say ~ sister Deborah, you are a fool.
- MRS. DEBORAH You are a fool brother; and mark my words ~ but I'll give myself
no more trouble about you.
- HAWTHORN Fidlers strike up.

[Air XLIV]

ALL

Hence with cares complaints and frowning,
welcome jollity and joy;
ev'ry grief in pleasure drowning,
mirth this happy night employ:
let's to friendship do our duty;
laugh and sing some good old strain,
drink a health to love and beauty,
may they long in triumph reign.

The end.

INDEX

Dramatis Personae.....	3	[Air XXII].....	27
To Mister Beard.....	4	[Air XXIII].....	28
Act the first.....	5	[Air XXIV].....	30
Scene the first.....	5	Scene the seventh.....	30
[Air I].....	5	[Air XXV].....	31
[Air II].....	5	Scene the eighth.....	32
[Air III].....	6	[Air XXVI].....	32
[Air IV].....	8	[Air XXVII].....	34
Scene the second.....	8	Scene the ninth.....	34
[Air V].....	9	[Air XXVIII].....	35
Scene the third.....	9	Scene the tenth.....	35
[Air VI].....	10	[Air XXIX].....	36
Scene the fourth.....	10	Scene the eleventh.....	36
[Air VII].....	10	[Air XXX].....	37
Scene the fifth.....	11	Scene the twelfth.....	38
[Air VIII].....	11	[Air XXXI].....	38
[Air IX].....	12	Scene the thirteenth.....	39
Scene the sixth.....	12	Scene the fourteenth.....	39
[Air X].....	13	[Air XXXII].....	40
Scene the seventh.....	13	Act the third.....	41
[Air XI].....	15	Scene the first.....	41
Scene the eighth.....	15	[Air XXXIII].....	42
[Air XII].....	15	Scene the second.....	42
Scene ninth.....	16	[Air XXXIV].....	43
[Air XIII].....	17	Scene the third.....	43
Scene the tenth.....	17	[Air XXXV].....	44
[Air XIV].....	18	Scene the fourth.....	45
Scene the eleventh.....	18	[Air XXXVI].....	46
[Air XV].....	19	Scene the fifth.....	47
Act the second.....	21	[Air XXXVII].....	47
Scene the first.....	21	Scene the sixth.....	48
[Air XVI].....	21	[Air XXXVIII].....	48
[Air XVII].....	22	Scene the seventh.....	48
Scene the second.....	22	Scene the eighth.....	49
[Air XVIII].....	24	[Air XXXIX].....	50
Scene the third.....	24	[Air XL].....	51
[Air XIX].....	25	[Air XLI].....	52
Scene the fourth.....	25	Scene the ninth.....	52
[Air XX].....	26	Scene the tenth.....	53
Scene the fifth.....	26	[Air XLII].....	54
[Air XXI].....	27	[Air XLIII].....	55
Scene the sixth.....	27	[Air XLIV].....	56

SIGNIFICANT PIECES

Go naughty man, I can't abide you (Rossetta)	54
The traveller benighted (Rossetta)	44
There was a jolly miller once (Hawthorn)	11
Well, come, let us hear (Hawthorn, Rossetta, Lucinda)	40