

Burney, Frances. Love and Fashion. Ed. with an Introduction by Jessica Richard. British Women Playwrights around 1800. 15 April 2000. [date of access.] <<http://www-sul.stanford.edu/mirrors/romnet/wp1800/editions/love/love.html>>

# *Love and Fashion, a Comedy in Five Acts*

Frances Burney

(1799)

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## *Persons of the Drama*

|                            |                         |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Lord Exbury                | Brothers                |
| Lord Arville               | ”                       |
| Mordaunt Exbury            | Sons of Lord Exbury     |
| Valentine Exbury           |                         |
| Sir Achy Fineer            | ”                       |
| Mr. Litchburn              |                         |
| Davis                      | Valet to Lord Exbury    |
| Dawson                     | Butler to Lord Arville  |
| The Porter to Lord Arville |                         |
| A Wood Cutter              |                         |
| A Strange Man              |                         |
| Miss Exbury                | Daughter to Lord Exbury |
| Hilaria                    | ward of Lord Exbury     |
| Innis                      | Maid to Hilaria         |
| A Hay Maker                |                         |

## Act I

### Scene 1

*[A Servant's Room at Lord Ardvile's. Dawson sitting at a Table with Wine & Glasses.]*

*Dawson.*

How a warm Glass comforts a man when he is out of spirits! If I were to belong to this house in any other shape than that of Butler, I should be off in a month with the hip. (1) Yet I question if there's another person in the World as sober as I am; or e'en a one that would put up as affably with my lord's tantarums; or, indeed, a more honest & agreeable Man in any shape of life; so that why I should not have as good a chance with Mrs. Innis as Mr. Davis has, I can't tell; unless, indeed, it be from my foolish own modesty, which is always hindering me from putting myself forward; so that nobody knows, & nobody guesses one quarter of what I am worth.—Ah! My dear Mrs. Innis!

*[Enter Innis.]*

*Innis.*

O Mr. Dawson, I'm so flustered—

*Dawson.*

Flustered? At what?

*Innis.*

Why I just walked out a little way on t'other side the park pales, & who should I come plump against, but that odd man we don't know what to make of?

*Dawson.*

What, the fellow who has was dodging about so all day yesterday?

*Innis.*

The same, & it has put me in such a flurry—(2)

*Dawson.*

Did he say any thing?

*Innis.*

Say any thing? He asked me questions by the hundred: how long we should stay here, & whether our young Gentleman rode out, &

whether Mr. Valentine, in particular,—

*Dawson.*

And why did not you call me to him?

*Innis.*

Why?—why because I had a mind to walk on a little—only he put me in such a fright; he looked so black, & so grim, & so staring!—

*Dawson.*

Ah, Mrs. Innis, I am afraid I can guess why you wanted to walk that way alone: you expected Mr. Davis would be coming home?

*Innis.*

Why you know, Mr. Dawson, such a heap of things has happened since he went away, that, to be sure, one should like to hear what he would say to them all. However, I would not have had my dear young lady take your cross old lord for all the World. They say he was not half so proud before he got his title, upon going that last time to the Indies, where he made his great fortune.

*Dawson.*

Why he was always pretty unbearable, Mrs. Innis. Lauk! to see his elder brother, Lord Exbury, that's a natural lord, as one may say, being no more than what comes to him from Father to son, so genteel-behaved, & so affable!—while this, that only got it by fortune-hunting, in comparison, to be so *highly & imperial!* (3)

*Innis.*

Yes, lord Exbury's the best man in the World; I & my young lady both think so. But as to Lord Ardvile, I & my young lady can't abide him. He thinks himself so wise, too! He pretends to be never in the wrong.

*Dawson.*

Very true, Mrs. Innis; & of all things what I hate most, is a man's singing his own praises. My lord's got such a trick of it, that it has made me take a resolve never to speak up for myself as long as I live; though I'll consent to be hanged if I think I've my fellow either for quickness or

honesty; or for sobriety, or, indeed, for the matter of that, for anything that's proper;—but it's what I make a rule never to say. (4)

*Innis.*

O, you are so modest, Mr. Dawson!

*Dawson.*

Ah, Mrs. Innis, if I were but as happy as Mr. Davis! to live under the same roof with you, & to serve lord Exbury! (5)

*Innis.*

Lord Exbury (6) is very good to Mr. Davis, to be sure, for he never thwarts him in any thing—except just to try to break him of that droll trick he has of talking so wide of the mark.

*Dawson.*

And if ever he breaks him of that, say my name isn't Dawson. It's in the very blood of him, & he can't speak of a thing just as it is for his life. If a house be large, 'tis a Castle; if small, it won't do for a pig-stie: if a Man be weak, he can't wrestle with a doll; if strong, he can twist round a lion with the tip of his little finger. For every five, he counts fifty, & for every fifty, five hundred.

*Innis.*

Well, Mr. Dawson, he's very agreeable if he does; & he means no harm, I am sure.

*Dawson.*

Harm? no; he's a good fellow Mrs. Innis; I know that; as faithful a good fellow as ever lived; & Lord Exbury has checked him so often for speaking so out of the way, that he begins to try to check himself, now; & as soon as he has said a thing in a full hearty voice, that not a sould can believe, he'll sneak back, in a small little tone, to the plain truth, like a school boy at sight of a rod.

*Innis [aside].*

What a spite he has to poor Mr. Davis! & he never sees, the whole time, he's the mere ape of his own lord, puff, puff, puffing himself!

*[Enter Davis, booted & spurred, followed by the Strange Man.]*

*Innis.*

O Mr. Davis, I've so many things to tell you!—

*Strange Man.*

I hope, your Honour -

*Davis.*

What do you follow me in for, friend? The house isn't mine, I tell you.

*Innis.*

O lud! it's the odd man!

*Dawson.*

What do you do here, Mister? What do you come into the house for?

*Strange Man.*

I don't come a begging, your honour; I only axes for a cup of beer; & just to rest me a bit.

*Dawson.*

Get out this minute, sirrah!

*Strange Man.*

Would not your honours like a merry song? or a comical story?

*Davis.*

O, if you can sing a song, my boy -

*Dawson.*

Get out of the house, I say! If my lord should come home, he'd blow us all the the Devil.

*Strange Man.*

Would a' so? 'Tis to be hoped, then, we should have his worshipful Lordship along with us. I likes good company. (7)

*Dawson.*

You impudent rogue! *[drives him out.]*

*Innis.*

I never saw such a nasty black bold-looking man in my days! Who can he be?

*Dawson.*

A thief, I make no doubt. (8)

*Innis.*

Lud! I hope I've lost nothing! *[feeling in her pockets.]*

*Davis.*

A theif? no; he'd wait for the night then. I take

him for some spy.

*Innis.*

A spy? Lud, Mr. Davis, who does he come to spy?

*Dawson.*

No, no; he would not go about so like a scrub (9) if he were a spy.

*Davis.* Well a fortune teller, at least.

*Innis.*

A fortune-teller? O lud! What did you send him away for, then? I'd rather have my fortune told than any thing. I'll run and make somebody call him back.

*Davis.*

My dear Mrs. Innis, let me go for you.

*Dawson.*

No, let me Mrs. Innis.—

*Innis.*

No, no, stay both where you are. I'll have him into the house-keeper's room. You must neither of you come. I'll let nobody hear what my fortune is—till I know how I like it. [*Exit in haste.*]

*Davis.*

Well, Mr. Dawson, I am glad, however, to hve caught you toping. Shall I pledge you?

*Dawson.*

With all my heart. I scorn to drink alone. [*helping him.*]

*Davis.* So do I, too;—When I don't pay for the Wine. [*aside.*]

*Dawson.*

You are come back to very bad news, Mr. Davis; our two lords have had a quarrel.

*Davis.*

Have they? They I'll venture what you will the fault is all lord Ardvile's; for as to my own lord, you can't find out he has one in the World, if you'd give a thousand pound a piece for them. What will you bet of that, Mr. Dawson? I'll lay you twenty thousand pounds to ten.

*Dawson.*

I never lay more than I can pay, Mr. Davis.

*Davis.*

Come, then, a shilling! a shilling to sixpence? But pray, what's the quarrel about?

*Dawson.*

Why you know we have all long seen how sweet my old lord has looked upod Miss Hilaria Dalton, sour as he is to every body else: &, last night, he came to the point, & downright asked her to marry him. Did you ever hear of such an old dotard?

*Davis.*

Yes, of a million such, at least! But poor Mr. Valentine! he'll shoot himself, to be sure! (10) that's no more than one must naturally expect from him. (11)

*Dawson.*

And what for?

*Davis.*

Why don't you know he's so in love with Miss Hilaria, that he reckons it a crime to eat, drink, or sleep, for fear it should put him off from thinking of her? And when she refused him, though it was plain she liked him as well as he liked her, we were all sure, among ourseves, it was only because she was waiting for this offer from his rich old uncle.

*Dawson.*

But she has refused the rich old uncle, too.

*Davis.*

Refused lord Ardvile? I'll give her a kiss the next time I see her. (12)

*Dawson.*

You? You kiss Miss Dalton?

*Davis.*

Nay, I don't mean quite a kiss—but I'll make her the handsomest bow she ever saw in her life. Look! [*Bowing grotesquely.*] (13)

*Dawson.*

You may guess what a rage this has put my lord

in. He threw all the blame directly upon Lord Exbury, (14) & was so over above rude to him, that the poor worthy Gentleman ordered his carriages to be ready this morning for leaving us, though but one week is over of the month he came to spend here.

*Davis.*

My dear good lord! And he was so troubled already, what with debts of Mr. Mordaunt, & what with Miss Hilaria refusing Mr. Valentine, that you might hear him sigh half a mile off! My dear good lord! to be so used! I'd die an hundred times a day, with pleasure, to serve him.

*Dawson.*

And I'd let my lord die as many to serve me! There's the difference. But, would you believe it, Mr. Davis? no sooner was breakfast over this morning, than out goes my lord, & vows he won't come home again till the house is cleared of his relations? boasting, all the time, after his old way, that there is not his like, high or low, for discovering what every body's at.

*Davis.*

Yes, he's a special wise-acre. (15) He don't believe his Equal is to be found in the whole World—no, not if Captain Cooke (16) were brought to life again, on purpose to go around it, & look him out.

*Dawson.*

Well, of all things, what I can't put up with is a Man's vaunting himself so. Any thing else I can excuse, be it what it will, because I am one that hate to find fault; for, indeed, I can safely say, as to the matter of that, that as for good-nature, or kindness, or obligingness, you may go the whole country about before you'll meet with my fellow.

*Davis.*

Pray did not I see Sir Achy Fineer's carriage as I passed by the coach-house?

*Dawson.*

Yes, Sir Achy came from town this morning, has been close closetted with your two young Gentlemen till within this house; & now he's with your lord himself.

*Davis.*

I must stay, then, till he is gone, for my business must be a secret to the very Walls:—though I might just as well have sone it here; too, after riding all about the country, miles & miles, up & down, round & round, I've fixed upon a spot close by.

*Dawson.*

What spot, Mr. Davis?

*Davis.*

Spot, did I say?—well, if I did—but remember! it's a secret of state!—Only between my lord & me. Why he bid me go and hire, out of hand, a small neat ready-furnished house, in the most retired place I could find: & I have met with one just down that pretty valley to the right of your Park.

*Dawson.*

Why, as sure as can be, it's the haunted house, then?

*Davis.*

Haunted?

*[Enter Innis, tittering.]*

*Innis.*

O Mr. Davis! O Mr. Dawson! I've had my fortune told!—But I won't let you know what it is!—but it's very good, I assure you!—A young Gentleman—but I won't tell you a word! -

*Davis.*

I hope, Mrs. Innis, you don't mind -

*Innis [laughing].*

Yes, I do mind, Mr. Davis!

*Dawson.*

No, sure, Mrs. Innis, I hope you don't care -

*Innis.*

Yes, I do care, Mr. Dawson!

*Dawson.*

I'll thrash the rascal out of the house this minute! *[Exit.]*

*[Davis. Innis.]*

*Innis.*

O no, don't! don't! All the maids want to have their fortunes told, & he says he has a mind to tell Mr. Valentine his.

*Dawson.* (17)

Mr. Valentine? Does he think -

*Innis.*

Yes, he asked a heap of questions about Mr. Valentine—but he did not tell me Mr. Valentine was the young Gentleman he meant—nor yet Mr. Mordaunt;—nor yet Sir Archy Fineer. He would not own who it was, all I could say; But he said I should be sure to find it out.

*Davis.*

But, who ever it is, Mrs. Innis, you would not forget -

*Innis.*

Would not I, Mr. Davis?

*Davis.*

No, you would not be so unkind -

*Innis.*

What, not if a Conjuror made me?

*Davis.*

No, I am sure you would not.

*Innis.*

Yes, I should, Mr. Davis!—as sure as you stand there! *[Exit, giggling.]*

*[Davis looks aghast. Enter Dawson.]*

*Dawson.*

I have shown the rogue the way out of doors, to a tune that will prevent him, I believe, from being in a hurry to come within them again. What's the matter with you, Mr. Davis?

*Davis.*

Nothing—nothing.—She's only at one of her jokes, I dare say. *[aside.]* What was that you were talking of about that house being haunted?

*Dawson.*

Why, a lady died there, lately, in one of the rooms, & she has been seen there since! And, once, she appeared to old Mr. Litchburn.

*Davis.*

What, does Mr. Litchburn believe in Ghosts? Why I could just as soon believe we were all walking upon our heads, & did not know them from our heels. He's a sad noodle, that old Mr. Litchburn. He stares so, sometimes, at a mere nothing, that, once or twice, I could almost take my bible oath I saw both his eyes walk out of his head!

*Dawson.*

Yet he's the only person that comes nigh us. My lord's frightened away every body else,—except just on public days. (18) Now Pride is a thing no one can accuse Me of; for though I don't like to talk of my own good qualities, I can fairly say, that there is not perhaps in the whole kingdom a Person that has a better temper than I have.

*Davis.*

Poor Mr. Litchburn! To come but into the house of a lord he thinks will be the making of him. And he's so dull, that he don't understand above one half what Lord Ardvile says, & so must put up with t'other half.

*Dawson.*

But that isn't all: about twenty years ago, my lord got him a kind of a sort of a very poor place; so he comes here every day, paying his court, in hopes he'll change it for a better.

*Davis.*

Ay, poor stupid noddy! (19) Cringe, cringe, cringe—bowing the lower for every affront! But if he were to be pulled by the nose, & it were by a lord,—he'd be proud of the honour.

*Dawson.*

Hark! I think I hear him with the Porter. Now he'll come & stay an hour, humming and hawing, & spelling over every thing one says, word by word—a tiresome old drone!

*Davis.*

O, I'll hoax him off in a few minutes. You shall see. Only tell him of the quarrel here, & I'll put all the fault of it upon him. He's soon frightened; & he takes every syllable one speaks for Gospel.

*[Enter Mr. Litchburn.]*

*Litchburn.*

Good morrow, to you, good Mr. Dawson. Good Mr. Davis, good morrow to you. The worthy Porter tells me my Lord Ardvile is gone abroad. I just come to ask you, my good Gentlemen, if you think his good lordship will be pleased to condescend to expect I should do myself the honour to wait in the ante-room?

*Dawson.*

Why, really, it's hard to say, Mr. Litchburn, for yesterday evening my lord fell out with the whole family. It's all what you may call a civil War.

*Litchburn.*

Civil, Mr. Dawson? I don't mean to find fault, but if you call that civil, I am sure I don't know what's rude.

*Dawson.*

O, that's only a way of speaking, as one may say; it has not much meaning. But my lord has disinherited the whole race of 'em, one after t'other.

*Litchburn.*

I can't say but I am somewhat sorry to hear it—not that I take such a liberty as to surmise such a notion as that my Lord Ardvile is not in the right—Heaven forbid I should so forget myself!—but my lord Exbury is so good—and he is so hard put to it by his eldest son, Mr. Mordaunt, as I hear—though I don't say it in any blame of the young Gentleman. I hope I know what becomes me better. But he is a sad hand, that Mr. Mordaunt. He cares for nothing & nobody. If the youngest had been the eldest -

*Dawson.*

Ay, every body has a good word for Mr. Valentine.

*Litchburn.*

But what is it has so disordered my worthy patron, my good Gentlemen?

*Dawson.* Why Miss Hilaria Dalton has given him the go by.

*Litchburn.*

You don't say so? Dear Heart! He must be sore affronted! We all thought it as good as a

matrimony over.

*Dawson.*

And he will have it, because Lord Exbury is her guardian, it was he made her refuse him; & both his nephews, as well as his niece, he says, helped. Every body's in fault, by what I can make out.

*Litchburn.*

Every body? Not poor I, I hope, Mr. Dawson?

*Davis.*

O yes; you were the first person he mentioned, as being the worst.

*Litchburn.*

I? Dear Heart!

*Davis.*

Yes; for he says, if it had not been for you, he should not have made the offer.

*Litchburn.*

For me?—This is quite the extraordinary! Why I never spoke a word about it! nor even had so much as a thought, if I may be believed!

*Davis.*

He has been stamping about his room these two hours, & saying, says he, if it has not been for that old fool Litchburn, says he -

*Litchburn.*

Dear Heart! old fool, did his lordship say?

*Davis.*

If it had not been, says he, as I said before, for that old fool Litchburn, this would never have happened, for it was only upon his advice I acted.

*Litchburn.*

Dear Heart, how my lord can say so! However, if he's so angry, it's as well not contradict him; so take no notice of my denying it, my good Gentlemen: but, if I may be believed, I never presumed to open my lips upon such a thing since the hour I was born. However, if he is so out of sorts, I had almost as lief put off the pleasure of having the honour of paying my respects to him, till he has got the better of it. It



may only be troublesome; for I have not any thing particular to say. So I would not disturb his lordship just for nothing. Good morning, Mr. Dawson. Mr. Davis, good morning. You'll take no notice of my calling—Dear Heart! that's his lordship's voice!—I wish I could slip out!—Can't you let me just pass that way, Mr. Dawson? -

*[Enter the Porter.]*

*Porter.*

My lord is just returned; but he only enquired if the family was set off, & if Mr. Litchburn had called; & then went down towards the valley on foot, & desired that Mr. Litchburn would be so good as to follow, & walk with him.

*Litchburn.*

Dear heart! how unlucky I had not slid away!

*Porter.*

My lord says he can't wait a minute.

*Litchburn.*

My lord wait? No, to be sure, Mr. Porter! I hope I know better what an honour it is to walk with my lord. I am coming with the greatest haste.—Dear Heart! I wish I were further—if it were not for the honour! *[Exit.]*

*Davis.*

Well, now, I would not have taken an hundred pound not to have frightened that old Toby! (20) —that is, not five shilling, I am sure.

*Porter.*

My lord asked for you too, Mr. Dawson. *[Exit.]*

*Dawson.*

I don't doubt he did. He can never be quiet two minutes without me. And, indeed, for that matter, little as I like to say any thing in my own favour, if ever he'll meet with another man as useful about his affairs, or one half as serviceable to him as I am—I'll give him my wages for nothing. *[Exit.]*

*Davis.*

There's a swaggerer, now! (21) For my part, I like nothing but plain speech. But I'd give, this very moment, a thousand pound out of my pocket, to trounce that fortune-teller, for putting

young Gentlemen into Mrs. Innis's head—at least, a good half Crown. *[Exit.]*

## Scene 2

*[A magnificent Drawing Room.]*

*Miss Exbury.*

This charming Sir Achy Fineer! how amazingly lucky he arrived before we were gone! I wonder *[taking out a pocket mirror]* how my hair looks—O, not amiss. I was sure that last ball would decide him. My dress was so becoming—I wonder if he will speak to Papa first, or to me.—Hilaria!

*[Enter Hilaria.]*

*Hilaria.*

O Miss Exbury, I bring you the most enchanting news! That divine cousin of mine, Sir Archy Fineer -

*Miss Exbury.*

Pho —la!—what makes you suppose—how can you even imagine—dear Miss Dalton, what can Sir Archy Fineer be to me?

*Hilaria.*

To you? he is the most delightful creature upon earth to every body! He has just sent in cards to us all for a most superb fête to be given at his house next Tuesday.

*Miss Exbury.*

A fête? Indeed? Dear!—I wonder who it's for! Do you think he has any particular object in view?

*Hilaria.*

Every object, I doubt not, that is pretty, or brilliant, or fashionable, throughout the metropolis.

*Miss Exbury.*

We shall just arrive in Grosvenor Square (22) time enough to make our preparations. How amazingly lucky Papa & my Uncle have quarreled!

*Hilaria.*

The most fortunate thing in the world—though I am grieved at any vexation to Lord Exbury.



*Miss Exbury.*

But is not Sir Archy very angry at your rejecting my uncle Ardville?

*Hilaria.*

Angry? He is enraged. He has gathered it, I know not how, from the servants, & vows he shall never rest till he brings the union to bear. Union! What a word!

*Miss Exbury.*

Nay, Miss Dalton, if to preside in Fashion would make you happy -

*Hilaria.*

Yes, I acknowledge, as Lady Ardville I might be its very Empress—And nobody would like it better. But though, at a distance, Fashion seemed all I desired, when the decision rested with myself, my lord Ardville—pardon me, my dear Miss Exbury, I would not say any thing shocking of your Uncle—but really, his countenance—his deportment—his Eyes—Oh!

*Miss Exbury.*

'Tis all true; yet if Love alone could have sufficed, my brother Valentine -

*Hilaria.*

Nay, did I ever deny that your Brother—that Valentine—but don't let me talk nonsense. With my pitiful six thousand, joined to his pitiful five, we must both have been poor & obscure, & consequently, miserable. (23)

*Miss Exbury.*

Will you never, then, marry, till you can unite Love with Fashion?

*Hilaria.*

Never!

*Miss Exbury.*

But pray, now, do tell me,—don't you think it is amazingly odd that Sir Archy Fineer should come down to my Uncle Ardville's?

*Hilaria.*

Not at all. He's my cousin, you know.

*Miss Exbury.*

How blind she is! as if people came to see their

relations! [*aside*] You don't imagine, then, Miss Dalton, that he had any sort of -- rather -- particular inducement?

*Hilaria.*

I have hardly seen him yet. He had been with Lord Exbury, or with your Brothers all the morning.

*Miss Exbury.*

With my Brothers?—Indeed!

*Hilaria.*

Yes.

*Miss Exbury.*

O then, I am sure... Do pray tell me if my Hair ... don't it look horrible? And this frightful dress—is it not amazingly unbecoming? I never happened (24) to put my things on so ill before. An't I quite horrid?

*Hilaria.*

By no means. You look remarkably well. But I must run and see whether Sir Archy has left Lord Exbury, for I have ten thousand enquiries to make of him. How I long to be gone, & quit the dreary, drowsy country, for London—animated London! [*Exit.*]

*Miss Exbury.*

I would give the World I had put on something prettier to day! Sir Archy has such delightful taste!—How happy I shall be with him! I wonder what settlement he will offer. (25) Something very handsome, I make no doubt. But—do I look so remarkably well, I wonder? [*taking out the pocket mirror.*]

[*Re-enter Hilaria.*]

*Hilaria.*

O Miss Exbury, I am quite alarmed! Intending to pass through the next room, which I thought empty, I surprised Lord Exbury alone, leaning upon a Table, with an air so absorbed & melancholy, so unlike his usually serene & cheerful appearance, that I started back: but, hearing me open the door, he raised his Eyes, & I saw in them an expression of care & disturbance that struck me to the heart. I instantly withdrew; but heard him sigh so heavily, I would have given the World to have

offered him some consolation.

*Miss Exbury [to herself].*

I am sadly afraid it's because he don't like Sir Archy!—so I suppose I shall have to go to Gretna Green! (26)—and I have no tolerable travelling dress ready!—How tormenting!—Nothing in the least becoming!—And Sir Archy is so elegant!—he'll hate any thing not pretty .

*Hilaria.*

To see Lord Exbury, my dear & honoured Guardian afflicted, makes me quite unhappy. Surely he, whose whole study is to turn sorrow from others, should be spared it himself!

*Miss Exbury.*

I wonder what he has said about pin-money [*aside*] (27)—O, here's papa!

[*Enter Lord Exbury.*]

*Lord Exbury.*

I fear, my dear Hilaria, I have startled you. I need not, I am sure, say how unintentionally. I must the less, however, regret it, since imperious necessity compels my immediate disclosure of the uneasiness with which you saw me oppressed.

*Hilaria.*

Uneasiness? Dear my lord! -

*Miss Exbury [to herself].*

I am afraid Sir Archy has offered something shabby.

*Lord Exbury.*

I will but enquire if Davis is returned, and then, my dear Girl, [*to Miss Exbury*] I must unfold to you—Alas, perforce!—a tale that will demand your fortitude as much as your attention.

*Miss Exbury [to herself].*

Yes, his proposals have certainly been very paltry! I could never have suspected Sir Archy of such meanness. I won't go to Gretna Green with him, I'm resolved. 'Twould be very indelicate.

[*Enter Davis.*]

*Lord Exbury.*

O, Davis, you are come? Follow me to my room. The orders I have to give you admit no delay.

*Hilaria.*

Speak to him here, my dear lord, & let us retire till you summon us.

*Miss Exbury [to herself].*

How vexatious to go without hearing what he has said about the pin-money! For, after all, very likely it has been very handsome. I dare say it's only Papa's prejudice against Sir Archy.

[*Exeunt Miss Exbury & Hilaria.*]

*Lord Exbury.*

Well, Davis, have you had any success? Have you seen any small house, or cottage, fitted for the style & family I described to you?

*Davis.*

O, a thousand, my lord!—one, however, hard by, that will just do.

*Lord Exbury.*

Hard by? I am sorry for that! But I foresaw not, when I gave you the commission, the events which now make this vicinity unpleasant to me. Have you seen nothing of this description more distant?

*Davis.*

Nothing, my lord, that's been lived in so lately. The old house-keeper who shewed me this, told me its owners had not left it an hour.—That is,—not a week.

*Lord Exbury.*

It will be well-aired, then, & every thing now must yield to that recommendation. Hasten back, therefore, & see (28) that it be instantly secured & prepared.

*Davis.*

It is completely ready now, my lord.

*Lord Exbury.*

We are all going hence, Davis, immediately.

*Davis.*

To London, my lord, to day?

*Lord Exbury.*

No, Davis, nor to-morrow. I know not when I may see London again.

*Davis.*

I dare say, my lord, Sims will have kept the house always ready for your lordship's return.

*Lord Exbury.*

I have ordered it to be sold.

*Davis.*

Your lordship means to live entirely in the country, then?

*Lord Exbury.*

How far distant is this cottage?

*Davis.*

Not three inches out of the Park, my lord—not five yards, I am sure. Which of your lordship's seats am I to order to be got ready? Exbury Hall?

*Lord Exbury.*

I have directed it should be let.

*Davis.*

Let? —O, then—we are alltogether [sic] at Spring Lawn?

*Lord Exbury.*

I have instructed Sims to have that advertised.

*Davis.*

My lord?

*Lord Exbury.*

I mean, for the present, to reside at this cottage. Order the carriages, therefore, directly.

*Davis.*

This cottage, my lord? Why it isn't so big as a nut-shell!—not big enough, however, for a squirrel to nibble one in.

*Lord Exbury.*

It will the better suit me! [*Sighing.*]

*Davis.*

Besides, my lord, people say it's haunted!

*Lord Exbury.*

I have no time, & no taste, Davis, for idle stories.

*Davis.*

It won't hold half the household.

*Lord Exbury.*

My household will be more than half diminished.

*Davis.*

Mercy on me!

*Lord Exbury.*

You are a good fellow, Davis, & though extravagant in speech, honest at heart. I have long found you a faithful, as well as a useful, domestic. It is painful to me to explain myself, but a calamity has fallen upon my family, that makes it necessary I should change my whole mode of living.

*Davis.*

Good lauk!—but I hope, at least, -

*Lord Exbury.*

I am sensible of your good will, Davis; but send off without delay to settle every thing for our reception.

*Davis.*

Am I not to write for some of the servants from town, my lord?

*Lord Exbury.*

I have employed Sims to discharge them all.

*Davis.*

Good lauk! good lauk! -

*Lord Exbury.*

'Twas an ungrateful office, but indispensable. If I am able, some years hence, to resume my usual mode of life, I shall seek them all back; & if any of them are not better provided for, gladly open my house to them. Pray, be quick.

*Davis.*

But I hope, my lord,—I hope, my most honoured lord -

*Lord Exbury.*

Send my daughter to me as you pass, & lose no more time.

*Davis.*

Forgive me, my lord,—pray do—pray forgive me—but -

*Lord Exbury.*

What is the matter Davis?

*Davis.*

Only just let me make bold to ask—I hope, my lord, such an old servant as I am i'n't to be discharged with the rest?

*Lord Exbury.*

I thank you, Davis; but your situation would be so changed, as to lose as much in pleasure as in profit.

*Davis.*

O my dear lord! I have been paid, an hundred and an hundred fold, for all my poor services already.

*Lord Exbury.*

I am glad you think so. But the place would be too hard for you. I shall keep, at present, only two men for everything, and -

*Davis.*

I will do the work of twenty—& twenty million, my dear lord!—to stay with you! -

*Lord Exbury.*

My good Davis! [*laying his hand upon Davis's shoulder.*] We will surely, then, never part. I shall consider you, henceforth, as a friend.

*Davis.*

My honoured lord!—I feel so proud!—I can't—hardly—keep the tears from my Eyes!

*Lord Exbury.*

Worthy creature!—but hasten to my arrangements. I will go to my daughter, however, myself. Your countenance, at this moment, would but give her new alarm. [*Exit.*]

*Davis.*

My dear good lord!—He has one comfort left, however, for he sees, now, that I serve him without the lucre of gain: & that's more than that proud, ill-natured Lord Ardvile, with all his fortune, will ever (29) see, if he should live to be ninety methusalahs. (30) Well, by what I can

make out, your lords are much like other men; some good, some bad. My own's of the best; & I would not but serve him, now he can hardly pay me, to be made forty Emperors—at least, not a Justice of the Peace. And, if Mrs. Innis would but think no more about young Gentlemen, I had just as lief be poor as rich— that is,—if I can't help it!

## END OF ACT I

### Act II

#### Scene 1

[*The Drawing Room at Lord Ardvile's.*]

*Hilaria.*

The secret must ere now be revealed to Miss Exbury. My heart is very heavy about this good and dear old lord; and not very light, I am afraid, about his son! How odd it is I never can get that Valentine out of my head! Do what I will, try how I may, turn which way I can,—still he rises uppermost in my thoughts. If it had not been for Sir Archy—but how glad I am I resisted! Yet I have never been happy since!—but I have been gay—so nobody has found it out. [*Enter Lord Exbury.*] My lord!

*Lord Exbury.*

I thought I should have met you in the room with my Daughter.

*Hilaria.*

Shall I call Miss Exbury, my lord?

*Lord Exbury.*

By no means. I have stated to her all it is essential she should learn, and I am better satisfied to speak with you alone.

*Hilaria.*

Should he name Valentine!—[*aside.*]

*Lord Exbury.*

The solemn trust with which my friend, your Father, left you to my guardianship, your residence in my family, and still more, if possible, the endearing disposition with which you have captivated all our hearts—

*Hilaria.*

He is coming to Valentine!—[*aside.*]

*Lord Exbury.*

—Are circumstances which do not give me more pleasure, from the confidence with which they urge me to treat you, than pain, at this moment, from the nature of my present communication.

*Hilaria.*

I am sure, my lord, if I thought—I am sure, my lord, I—I—He will plead for Valentine, and I shall never withstand him! [*aside.*]

*Lord Exbury.*

The evil which must now burst publicly upon my house, has long hung upon my apprehensions; yet, while I saw any chance it might be averted, I confined them to my own bosom. The time is over now for concealment: it is over for hope! In one word, I must renounce the world for the present myself, or know I shall leave my children to obscurity and distress.

*Hilaria.*

Is it possible!

*Lord Exbury.*

You will easily trace the cause to its source: the extravagances of my son Mordaunt are at least not darkened by hypocrisy, for he does not more carelessly involve than unconcernedly betray himself—not, alas!—as you will know—from frankness of character, but from deeming it fine to be wholly indifferent to the opinions and the feelings of others.

*Hilaria.*

I have long feared he was imprudent, but suspected not how widely.

*Lord Exbury.*

Three or four years of retirement and oeconomy may yet retrieve his fortune and credit, and enable me to secure his sister's portion from any mischief through a future relapse into the same courses: for though I mean severely to probe, and hope a little to touch him, I dare not build upon much stability of repentance from a disposition which submits to be guided by the fluctuating breath of Fashion.

*Hilaria.*

How I grieve for you, my lord!—yet—I wish he would not speak with such contempt of Fashion! [*aside.*]

*Lord Exbury.*

Numberless have been my efforts to convince his mind, and induce him to retrench his expences: but there is a madness in the times that sets Reason at naught, and commits conviction to punishment. His creditors are now come upon him in a body, his resources are at an end, and his character, and my name—are disgraced together!

*Hilaria.*

Your name? O no, my lord! Your name, established by your own unsullied life, must be respected as long as it can be remembered.

*Lord Exbury.*

Yesterday he confessed to me his situation, and informed me of a compromise to which his creditors had agreed, but which he had no means to fulfil without my aid. As he seasoned the avowal by a promise to be wholly directed by me, I formed at once the plan I am now going to execute: I ordered the immediate discharge of all my servants, the sale of my town house and furniture—

*Hilaria.*

Oh!

*Lord Exbury.*

And that both my villas should be let upon a three years lease. I then sent off Davis in search of a cheap asylum for myself and family.

*Hilaria.*

I am thunderstruck!

*Lord Exbury.*

Yet I then thought I had three Weeks before me for preparation; but when I acquainted my Brother Ardville with my design, his reluctance to lose sight of his fair Enslaver, precipitated the proposals of which the failure has caused this general breach. The violence of his displeasure, which obliges me thus suddenly to quit his house, forces from me also this abrupt communication. Your cousin, Sir Archy Fineer,

who has been agent, I find, for Mordaunt, with his chief creditors, has come hither this morning to acquaint us that the compromise is arranged. All is now ready for our removal. I grieve for my poor Girl; but Mordaunt engages to subscribe to any reform; and Valentine—

*Hilaria.*

I wish I were safe in town! [*aside.*]

*Lord Exbury.*

Valentine, whose little independent fortune, left him by his aunt, is in no danger from this storm, has youth, and, I think, talents. I am not uneasy for him. He will be my best support.

*Hilaria.*

What next! [*aside.*]

*Lord Exbury.*

But with regard to you, my dear Hilaria—I have, indeed, much solicitude. I cannot expect you should shut yourself up with us in the country—

*Hilaria.*

Indeed, my lord, if you knew half my concern for this affair—or half the reverence I bear for you—

*Lord Exbury.*

I know your kindness of Heart, & am but too sensible of the loss we shall all sustain by the deprivation of your society—though you will permit me, I trust, to hope we shall not entirely lose sight of you? Where-ever you fix your abode, you will come to us, I must flatter myself, sometimes, for a week or two, in the summer?

*Hilaria.*

In the summer? My dearest lord Exbury!—my honoured Guardian!—I will come to you at all seasons—or, rather, I will quit you in none! Take me with you, my dear lord, whither soever you go!

*Lord Exbury.*

My amiable Ward! You oblige, penetrate me!—From Valentine—

*Hilaria.*

I am undone! [*aside.*]

*Lord Exbury.*

You must be sure you have nothing to fear from Valentine. You have thought him romantic, but you will never find him ungenerous. He proposed himself with an idea—vain, perhaps, but not unnatural, that you might both relinquish the luxuries—the nominal ones—of the World, for the sake of each other; he is now separately driven from them himself by the fall of his family: he will propose, therefore, no more, since the sacrifice would no longer be mutual, nor voluntary. I hear the Horses. I must return to my poor Girl. [*Exit.*]

*Hilaria.*

He will propose to me no more!—& Lord Exbury is not uneasy for him?—I have a great mind not to be of the party.—Yet, to abandon this admirable man—my friend, my Guardian—in his fallen state—abominable! detestable! No! I'll go with him—& I'll stay with him—but as to Valentine—How I wish I could keep him from my thoughts!

[*Enter Porter.*]

*Porter.*

The carriages are at the door, ma'am. [*Exit.*]

*Hilaria.*

I come. What a glance shall I have from Valentine, when he hears my resolution to live with him—with them, I mean!—in the country! Ah, if I trust myself to meet his Eyes, Love will win the day, & Fashion may resent it at leisure! No! I won't look at him! [*Exit.*]

## Scene 2

[*A Country Landscape, with a view of Lord Ardvile's House & Park. Enter Mr. Litchburn.*]

*Litchburn.*

I don't see which way my lord is; but I must needs stop a little, I am so tired. I can't but say that I had as lief he had not asked for me—if it were not for the honour! Being always looked down upon keeps a man's spirit under surprisingly. If a poor dependant did but dare speak out, how many things his Patron would hear that, naturally, he does not much dream of! But the lower a man is, & the more he has to

say, the less he must come out with it. O—here is my lord.

*[Enter Lord Ardvile.]*

*Lord Ardvile.*

Yes! I penetrate into the mystery without difficulty. 'Twas a family compact. They think to secure my Estate to themselves, by instigating this silly chit (31) to refuse me. 'Tis vainly, however, they seek to deceive me! To form a wrong judgement is a weakness that has never happened to me yet. Their mercenary malice shall recoil to its source. I must repress my resentment, however, &, for my own honour's sake, take care that the secret not be spread.

*Litchburn.*

My lord!—*[advancing fearfully, & bowing at every step.]*

*Lord Ardvile.*

O, good Morning, Mr. Litchburn. I shall discover from this Ideot if any rumour of my rejection be got abroad *[aside.]* I was afraid, Mr. Litchburn, you did not mean to do me the favour of following me.

*Litchburn.*

Yes, I did, my lord, indeed!

*Lord Ardvile.*

You did? You think it a favour, then?

*Litchburn.*

If it's your lordship's pleasure, I'll think it so, to be sure!

*Lord Ardvile.*

May I take the liberty, sir, to ask what it was brought you to my house just now?

*Litchburn.*

What brought me, my lord? I never come but on foot.

*Lord Ardvile.*

I did not mean to enquire about your equipage, Sir! What an empty Fellow! *[half apart.]*

*Litchburn [overhearing him].*

Empty? I'm sure I have eat as good a dinner—but great folks always suspect one come to eat! *[aside.]*

*Lord Ardvile.*

I fear I have betrayed some disorder. I must not have him think me piqued. *[aside.]* My good Mr. Litchburn, I only want to know if any body has been babbling to you—that is, if you came this Morning with any particular curiosity or design? But I see you did! —Nay, don't deny it!

*Litchburn.*

Design, my good lord? I am sure I may safely say I never had any designs in the course of my whole life.

*Lord Ardvile.*

You'll pardon me, Mr. Litchburn! I am not very apt to be mistaken. It is not a thing to which you will very commonly find me addicted. Think again!

*Litchburn.*

I will, my lord. *[bowing.]*

*Lord Ardvile.*

Well, sir?

*Litchburn.*

Your lordship is the best judge, to be sure, my lord; but if I came for any thing else—it's quite unknown to me!—though I don't in the least mean to doubt of it.

*Lord Ardvile.*

And what did you find all my people about?

*Litchburn.*

Nothing, my lord.

*Lord Ardvile.*

Their usual employment!—But of what did they talk? Did they open their budget of family scandal to you?

*Litchburn.*

They opened nothing before me, my lord, to the best of my recollection.

*Lord Ardvile.*

What a literal blockhead! But what did you pick up? *[aside.]*

*Litchburn.*

Nothing, as I hope to live, my good lord!



*[spreading his hands.]*

*Lord Ardville.*

What a consummate driveler! *[aside.]* In one word—Who's that?

*[The Strange Man crosses the stage.]*

*Litchburn.*

My lord, it's somewhat surprising, but I can't rightly tell myself! though it's a person that I met yesterday no less than three times. But we have interchanged nothing in the discourse way. And what's the extraordinary, is, that nobody hereabouts knows so much as an iota of what he may have in his head.

*Lord Ardville.*

Be so good, then, as either to learn his business, or give him to understand I allow of no person's patrolling about my grounds unexamined.

*Litchburn.*

I will, my lord.

*Lord Ardville.*

Stay, Mr. Litchburn; tell me, first, and without scruple—did my people insinuate any thing to you relative to... to... Miss Dalton? I see, by your look, how it is! I don't very customarily form a wrong opinion. They spoke to you, then, did they?—They fabricated an hundred falsehoods?—Hay?—

*Litchburn.*

I did not take any particular account, indeed, my lord.

*Lord Ardville.*

Perhaps you think it all truth? Hay?—And you mean to run all round the neighbourhood to promulgate it?

*Litchburn.*

I run, my lord?—I must not contradict your lordship—but, if I may be believed, I have not run these thirty years!

*Lord Ardville.*

His stupidity is amazing! *[aside.]* You'll tell all the county, I say, that Miss Dalton has rejected me?

*Litchburn.*

If it is your lordship's order.

*Lord Ardville.*

My order?

*Litchburn.*

My lord?

*Lord Ardville.*

What do you mean, Mr. Litchburn?

*Litchburn.*

I mean nothing, I'm sure, my lord!

*Lord Ardville.*

That I have often found! You think, also, yourself, perhaps, that I have been playing the part of an old fool?—Hay?—Speak!

*Litchburn.*

I must not contradict your lordship.

*Lord Ardville.*

How, sir! *[angrily.]*

*Litchburn.*

With your lordship's permission, I'll humbly take my leave.

*Lord Ardville.*

What now? What are you going for?

*Litchburn.*

I am so at a loss how to answer, my lord

*Lord Ardville.*

Suppose, then, you remain a few minutes without answering? Is that impossible to you, Mr. Litchburn?

*Litchburn.*

I hope I sha'n't speak another word, my good lord.

*Lord Ardville.*

Very well. Tell me, now, then, what they said about my nephew Valentine.

*Litchburn.*

They said he was a very good young Gentleman, indeed, my lord.

*Lord Ardville.*

They did?—And what else?

*Litchburn.*

And that he was so surprisingly in love with Miss Hilaria but it was not today they said that,—it was yesterday—so surprisingly in love, that he took no natural pleasure, not even in his meals! And what's more the extraordinary still, hardly knew his bed time.

*Lord Ardvile.*

So, so, so! That's settled, is it? And my brother is so weak as to give his consent? But I was confident that was the case.

*Litchburn.*

Dear Heart! he's making out the lord knows what that I've never said a word of! But I dare not interrupt him. [*aside.*]

*Lord Ardvile.*

I'll pursue her, however, through some other channel, and yet disappoint them.

*Litchburn.*

I must not utter a syllable. [*aside.*]

*Lord Ardvile.*

What are you so silent for, Mr. Litchburn? Why don't you speak?

*Litchburn.*

I was only just going to think what to say, my lord.

*Lord Ardvile.*

Did you gather nothing else?—speak honestly.

*Litchburn.*

No, indeed, my lord!—except just this little daisie, that I took the liberty to pluck by the Park Gate, and put in my buttonhole.

*Lord Ardvile.*

Who's that sauntering this way?

*Litchburn.*

The Porter told me Sir Archy Fineer was here, my lord.

*Lord Ardvile.*

Miss Dalton's Cousin! Now would I forfeit my estate to know if any one has had the impertinence to hint to him that I put myself

into the power of that little fool!—which, however, I shall totally disclaim,—unless I appoint him my ambassador for opening a new treaty with her. I'll sound him. [*aside.*] Mr. Litchburn, if you have any engagement for this morning—

*Litchburn.*

None at all, my lord.

*Lord Ardvile.*

I won't impede your keeping it.

*Litchburn.*

I've none to keep, if I may be believed, my lord!

*Lord Ardvile.*

Why then keep that none!—Good morning, sir.

*Litchburn.*

I believe he means I may go. [*aside.*] My lord [*bows*]—I am as glad to be off as a man that's just out of the Pillory!—except for the honour!—[*aside. Exit.*]

[*Lord Ardvile walks apart. Enter Sir Archy Fineer.*]

*Sir Archy.*

O, there parades my old spark!—what a jaunty Philander (32) to sigh at the feet of a blooming young nymph! If a man did but know, when he acts like a fool, how he looks like a fool, he would either hide himself, or grow wiser. If I make this match, the coterie of Hilaria,—her opera Box,—her purse, occasionally —and her Table habitually, must be mine. (33) 'Twill be mighty convenient. Yes, I'll e'en tie the noose for her. [*aside.*] My lord Ardvile! I am proud of this opportunity of paying you my respects. What a superb place you have here!

*Lord Ardvile.*

Your Servant, Sir Archy.

*Sir Archy.*

I have been charmed with your mansion, and in rapture with your grounds. All is beauty, magnificence, attraction. One thing alone I find incomplete: I see no fair Participator in the delights of your habitation.

*Lord Ardvile.*

He has learnt the whole business already. I can scarcely contain my rage. *[aside.]* Every one is the best judge, sir, of his own delights.

*Sir Archy.*

Yet every one must join in acknowledging that a lovely young female—

*Lord Ardvile.*

Have a care, sir!

*Sir Archy.*

My lord?

*Lord Ardvile.*

I am not easily amused with railery, Sir Archy.

*Sir Archy.*

Pardon me, my lord; I meant none. I had seriously imagined, from the sight of my fair young cousin under your lordship's roof—

*Lord Ardvile.*

What would you insinuate, sir?

*Sir Archy.*

Forgive me, my lord; 'twas, at least, a natural mistake; for who can see Beauty and Splendour meet, and not fancy they seem just adapted for each other?

*Lord Ardvile.*

If this is one of your sneers, Sir Archy—

*Sir Archy.*

No, upon my word! Related as I am to Miss Dalton, how could I help wishing her such an honourable establishment?

*Lord Ardvile.*

He is the very man for my embassy. *[aside.]* I perceive, Sir Archy—for you will not very often, I believe, find me guilty of misapprehension—you are fully apprized of this little—simple—anecdote: but before I enquire into the means of your information, permit me to ask, categorically, the use you wish to make of it?

*Sir Archy.*

I would not, my lord, be officious, or impertinent; but I am impelled, equally by regard for my cousin, and respect for your lordship, to offer my poor services towards

bringing this affair to a happier conclusion.

*Lord Ardvile.*

You must conceive, Sir Archy, I am not a person to be trifled with, and your Cousin —

*Sir Archy.*

Youthful inexperience, my lord, may sometimes stand in need of friendly counsel.

*Lord Ardvile.*

You conclude her conduct, then, to be under some inimical influence?

*Sir Archy.*

'Tis impossible, otherwise, to account for what has happened.

*Lord Ardvile.*

I confess myself of that opinion, sir; and an error of judgement is not—precisely—the thing to which I am most liable.

*Sir Archy.*

Can your lordship wonder, then, at my solicitude to save an amiable young relation from repentance?

*Lord Ardvile.*

If you observe any symptoms of that, sir, I here endow you with full powers to renew to Miss Dalton the proposals I made her last night.

*Sir Archy.*

I am enchanted with the commission. I will fly to her new habitation, which is not ten paces from this spot, and, in less than half an hour, I shall have the honour of waiting upon your lordship with the result of my enterprize.

*Lord Ardvile.*

I shall expect you, sir.

*Sir Archy.*

I'll make the match—and Hilaria shall keep me a pharo Table (34) in return. *[aside. Exit.]*

*Lord Ardvile.*

My Brother and his family will now, I flatter myself, discover that I have the skill to execute what I have the sagacity to plan. My calculations, I believe, will be found tolerably correct. *[Exit.]*

*[Enter Mr. Litchburn, slowly.]*

*Litchburn.*

Now my good lord is gone on, I may come back, and go by the right way; for it's quite the extraordinary, but I am always in such a dilemma when my lord's by, that I am sure to go the direct contrary. My poor legs ache prodigiously with waiting to get by.

*[Enter the Strange Man.]*

O, there's the dodging man that my lord did me the honour to order me to get out of the way: and, to be sure, I am very proud to do what my lord, bids me—else, he looks so bluff, I had almost as lief be excused speaking to him. However, my lord must be obeyed. Pray, sir *[gently advancing to the Strange Man]*—Pray, sir, might I just take the liberty to ask an iota, or two, of what you may happen to want in this neighbourhood?

*Strange Man.*  
No.

*Litchburn.*

He speaks so unexpected, I feel almost as if he had knocked me down! *[aside.]* Will you favour me, then, sir, with a permit just to enquire what your business may be?

*Strange Man.*  
Yes.

*Litchburn.*

I am very much beholden to you, indeed, sir. Pray, sir, what is it?

*Strange Man.*  
My own.

*Litchburn.*

Then perhaps, sir, it may be somewhat of the secret?

*Strange Man.*  
Perhaps it be.

*Litchburn.*

May be, then, sir, it mayn't be agreeable to you to advise me of it?

*Strange Man.*

Belike it be n't.

*Litchburn.*

I mean no harm, sir; only my lord has had the condescension to command me to say, that he is rather of the particular, in not being over complaisant about any Gentleman's walking much at random just without his Park pales.

*Strange Man.*  
Don't a like it?

*Litchburn.*

I am inclined to think not, sir.

*Strange Man.*

Why then let un ax 'em to walk within 'em.

*Litchburn.*

What, my lord? My lord ask such a thing of a stranger!

*Strange Man.*

If a don't like a stranger, let a strike up an acquaintance. If he be ready, so be I. Here's my fist.

*Litchburn.*

Dear Heart! your fist to my lord?—It's pretty lucky his lordship does not hear you... craving your pardon for the remark.

*Strange Man.*

'Tmought be luckier if a did.

*Litchburn.*

Luckier?

*Strange Man.*

Ay; prove a wa'n't deaf. *[Mr. Litchburn holds up his hands in amazement.]* Does a bide all alone in that big house?

*Litchburn.*

Yes; except when he has his good Brother there—or his niece—or his nephews— or—

*Strange Man.*

Is not one Muster Wallentine (35) one of 'um?

*Litchburn.*

I don't extraordinary much like being queried by such a low companion.—(36) Only it's a moot point, if I affront him, but he tells me it's a word

& a blow! And I should make but a puny hand at a boxing match. I'd better try a civil get off. *[aside.]* Sir, I hope you'll favour me to excuse my not over-caring to stay in this sharp air, the wind being rather a detriment than otherwise to my Cough; for, last Thursday Evening, walking out pretty nigh upon twilight, I caught a great cold. Good day, Sir. *[Exit.]*

*Strange Man.*

Did ye? Make much on't, then; it's well to catch anything these hard times. So Muster Wallentine—*[following.]*

### Scene 3

*[An ordinary Parlour. Enter Hilaria.]*

*Hilaria.*

How singular that Valentine should not hand me to the carriage! Where could he possibly be? What a dismal place is this? *[looking round]* O London! enchanting London! when shall I behold thee again? If Valentine were not expected, I greatly fear—dearly as I love lord Exbury—I could hardly remain in this petrifying country spot another hour.

*[Enter Sir Archy Finer.]*

Sir Archy! I thought you were gone back to town?

*Sir Archy.*

I have deferred my journey only for five minutes, in which small space of time you must answer me the following questions: will you be a Baroness?—or a Shepherdess?—order your carriages? Or feed your chickens?—Give a ball to half London?—or a dish of tea to the Curate's wife, and five small children?

*Hilaria.*

O, if you mean to speak again of that hideous old Peer—

*Sir Archy.*

What matters his being hideous to a wife?

*Hilaria.*

How?

*Sir Archy.*

The honey-moon, indeed, may be somewhat less

loving for it, but, that over, who, of any fashion, live enough together to care whether their mate be hideous, or adorable?

*Hilaria.*

But he is so dreadfully haughty—

*Sir Archy.*

You need desire no greater advantage. Your youth and beauty will soon cast all his pride and ill-humour upon others; while, for yourself, with the smallest portion of address, you may contrive to have your pharo Table recruited (37) for every cross word.

*Hilaria.*

Pharo Table?

*Sir Archy.*

Should you not like to keep one?

*Hilaria.*

How can you teize one so!—to be sure I should!—

*Sir Archy.*

Then he is just the thing for you: he is exactly framed to give the celebrity of Fashion to spirit and beauty—for where a woman cares for her husband—you hear of her no more.

*Hilaria.*

O fie, Sir Archy!

*Sir Archy.*

Take it, my fair Cousin, for a general rule, That where a lady is peculiarly famed for her entertainments to the world, she is not in high danger of envy for her conjugal bliss.

*Hilaria.*

Now how provoking that is! And I really cannot—just now—recollect many instances to contradict it.

*Sir Archy.*

And yet you fancy you shall do better to waste your prime in a lonely Village?

*Hilaria.*

I am sure we shall be very... comfortable.

*Sir Archy.*

For a week, or so,—in the dog days, to refresh

and clarify, the country is very well; but for a whole season—a year—two, three years—

*Hilaria.*

I owe so much to Lord Exbury—

*Sir Archy.*

To consume a whole life with sauntering in a Garden,—visiting a drowsy neighbour, —or coqueting with a wretched red Coat, (38) bound apprentice for three years to the nearest town?

*Hilaria.*

Now don't try to frighten me!

*Sir Archy.*

To be shut up, evening after evening, certain that not a soul will enter the house; —to see the same faces to day as yesterday, & to-morrow as to day;—no relief from insipidity,—no escape from uniformity,—no awakening from sleep! —

*Hilaria.*

You are really cruel: yet I don't shrink from your picture. [*walking away.*]

*Sir Archy.*

No concert!—no assembly!—no ball!—[*following her.*]

*Hilaria.*

Do be quiet!—

*Sir Archy.*

No Milliners!

*Hilaria.*

How you delight to torment!

*Sir Archy.*

And no better companion than that dawdling Miss Exbury!

*Hilaria.*

Yes, but the family—

*Sir Archy.*

Mordaunt yawning of your party, only because he has not a Guinea to carry him elsewhere.

*Hilaria.*

Yes, —but still—the family—alltogether—

*Sir Archy.*

Valentine, who alone might give some spirit to

the tribe, shirking it—

*Hilaria.*

How!

*Sir Archy.*

Did you think he would come to this dreary hovel?

*Hilaria.*

Nay, why should he not?

*Sir Archy.*

Very possibly he may have some business—some little engagement—in town.

*Hilaria.*

In Town? What? will he quit the Country just as we all—that is, just as his Father fixes his abode in it?

*Sir Archy.*

He will, past doubt. You may depend upon that.

*Hilaria.*

Is it possible!—so fond as he seemed of domestic life! so eager for a rural residence! ah! all men are alike!

*Sir Archy.*

Yes, where they have a point to carry. Your good sense rendered his attempt upon you abortive, & his own therefore, now shews him, that he may find full as good entertainment in London, as in peering through hedges in the country, for a peep at the high road that leads to it.

*Hilaria.*

How stupid the house will be! I shall never bear it!—That frivolous Miss Exbury —that Mordaunt —such utter retirement—it will be quite insupportable! [*half apart, & walking about.*]

*Sir Archy.*

She is struck at last! [*aside.*] Well, then, coz, I must tell Lord Ardvile you won't hear of any settlements, however sumptuous?

*Hilaria.*

What?



*Sir Archy.*

That the thoughts of his equipages only fill you with disdain?

*Hilaria.*

Ha?

*Sir Archy.*

That pin-money is your aversion?

*Hilaria.*

What are you talking about?

*Sir Archy.*

That you hold nothing in such contempt as a title?

*Hilaria.*

Pho!

*Sir Archy.*

And that a young Widow's jointure (39)—and that living in London—and that a Box at the Opera—

*Hilaria.*

O sir Archy!—

*Sir Archy.*

Are all things so detestable you can never endure to hear them mentioned?

*Hilaria.*

A Box at the Opera!—Do go, tormenter!

*Sir Archy.*

And this is the answer I am to take.

*Hilaria.*

If you insist upon carrying one of your own fabricating.

*Sir Archy.*

Will you help me to a softer one?

*Hilaria.*

No! —I cannot! [*sighing.*]

*Sir Archy.*

Will you suffer him to frame one for himself?

*Hilaria.*

I don't know what I shall do!—I am quite—now don't look so provoking!

*Sir Archy.*

He is waiting impatiently for your decision. The crisis is come, & it must be made. Solitude and Morpheus—or the Opera and a Coronet! (40)

*Hilaria.*

I'll —I'll send an answer tomorrow.

*Sir Archy.*

Come, come, you waver?—Take courage, sweet Coz, and receive my felicitations as Lady Ardvile at once!—I will fetch him!—

*Hilaria.*

O no, no!—you terrify me!

*Sir Archy.* I rejoice in the fair issue of my negociation!—Adieu!

*Hilaria.*

Stay! stay!—keep him off, at least, as long as possible!

*Sir Archy.*

He shall not come till the evening.

*Hilaria.*

O no!—not then!—not so soon!—

*Sir Archy.*

I will defer my own journey back till to-morrow, and herald him hither to supper.

*Hilaria.*

But—but—understand me, now!—I don't intend—I don't mean—

*Sir Archy.*

I understand your meaning, my lovely coz, better than you do yourself; but I cannot wait another minute to talk about it.—Hold—Miss Exbury!—

*Hilaria.*

Miss Exbury!—ah! quick let me escape her!—O Valentine! the die is cast!—O Fashion —tyrant Fashion! [*Exit, passing hastily by Miss Exbury.*]

[*Enter Miss Exbury.*]

*Sir Archy.*

The deer is fairly caught; and the best way to fix



the business, will be to proclaim it at once to all the family. *[aside.]*

*Miss Exbury.*

Hilaria run away?—Is it to favour his declaration? How I wish I had put on something else! I wonder how my hair—*[aside.]*

*Sir Archy.*

I have taken the earliest opportunity to pay you my devoirs in your new habitation. I have just had a little discourse with my cousin Hilaria, to whom I have had the honour of presenting myself as ambassador from Lord Ardvile.

*Miss Exbury.*

My uncle?—I suppose he has been asking his consent!—*[aside.]*

*Sir Archy.*

You will pardon, therefore, the brevity of my visit, when you know that an expecting Lover waits his doom from my lips. *[going.]*

*Miss Exbury.*

Lover? —what!—how?—stay!—whom do you talk of?

*Sir Archy.*

His lordship,—Lord Ardvile,—to whom I am carrying the news—That he is the happiest of Men. She looks so confounded, that I fancy she expected to have been his heiress! Poor thing! I must say a soft word to console her. *[aside.]* Yes! the happiest of men!—while I... am the most miserable! *[Exit.]*

*Miss Exbury.*

What can this mean? Has Miss Dalton, at last, the perfidy to accept my uncle? And has my uncle the barbarity to let such an offer as Sir Archy's want his support? The most miserable of men!—Poor Sir Archy!—But our mutual attachment shall prevail over every obstacle;—for, else, in this shabby dwelling, I may be an old maid before I have another offer. O Mordaunt! what have you not to answer for? I'll go & load him with reproaches—though he'll neither listen to, nor mind me! He's so vastly easy about every thing, that if we were all to faint away before him, he'd never find it out—unless we fell over him!

## END OF ACT II

### Act III

#### Scene 1

*[The Country Landscape near Lord Ardvile's House and Park. The Strange Man appears at a distance. Enter Davis & Dawson.]*

*Davis.*

There he is! There!—Now if you'll do me this little piece of service—

*Dawson.*

To be sure I will; for though it goes against me to say it of myself, you may walk from one end of England to t'other before you'll find a man that will go beyond me for doing a good turn.

*Davis.*

Well, then, as Mrs. Innis sets such store by fortune-telling that she'll hardly look at me now she's heard of this young Gentleman if you'll only get the fellow to make out it was I all the time he meant—

*Dawson.*

You?—what, for the young Gentleman, He! He!

*Davis.*

No, no, I don't say that—but only that he—that is, that he did not mean any body! That's all. So then he must begin all over again—so then he may make it appear—you see—that she has no real, true sweetheart—but me.

*Dawson.*

And do you think that in your conscience Mr. Davis?

*Davis.*

Think it? I know it.

*Dawson.*

What? never another?

*Davis.*

Never another worth having.

*Dawson.*

How I hate to hear a man brag of himself so! I could not talk at such a rate for all the World; though I am just as certain as that I stand here, that there is not a person living would make her so good a husband as I should. *[aside.]*

*Davis.*

I think I see her in that next field. I'll go and keep her off, till you can give the Conjuror his cue; and then, you shall march one way, & I another, and when she comes home, we shall see how the spell has worked.

*Dawson.*

I'll call him directly.

*Davis.*

And mind! you must not name me; for that i'n't the way; you must only teach him to let her make me out by description, saying that I am so,—& so,—& so,—& such like; & what's most natural for her to guess me by. Now—don't set me off to a disadvantage, Mr. Dawson!

*Dawson.*

I should scorn it. I'll say every thing that's genteelst.

*Davis.*

You'll make me out cleverly, then, will you? like a friend?

*Dawson.*

I'll say nothing but what's handsome.

*Davis.*

I depend upon you. *[Exit.]*

*Dawson.*

Now that such an old Goose as that can think of such a young Chick as Mrs. Innis! Such a conceit of himself is what I can't forgive. To be sure I am not a school boy myself—but then, I dress in such a style—& have such a smartness, & all that, about me—that if Mrs. Innis does not give me the preference, she must put her eyes in her pocket. However, it's not a bad thought about the Fortune-teller. I'll make him lend me a hand. He may be of some use to me; but as to poor Davis, it could answer no end, for she'll never think of such a common man as that. Here! You sir!

*[Enter the Strange Man.]*

How came you to talk to that young woman at our house about young Gentlemen?

*Strange Man.*

Please your honour, it's what they all likes to hear.

*Dawson.*

Well she's coming this way now; so, do you see, stop her, & tell her, 'twas all a mistake. Tell her it's a Gentleman much more comely & likely than those that are younger, and one that's very agreeable, & affable, & clever, &—do you hear?—look! one that dresses very handsome, & wears powder in his hair—she'll be sure that i'n't old Davis! *[aside.]* And knows how to take snuff—do you see?—and to poke his hands into his bosom—do you mind?—or to stuff them into his pockets,—do you take me?

*Strange Man.*

Ay, ay, I takes your honour, I warrants me. I'll mark you out as like as two pots of ale one to t'other.

*Dawson.*

Will you? there, then. *[Gives him money.]* You are sure you take notice? The height?—the air?—the features?—the Coat?— & all that?—*[turning about.]*

*Strange Man.*

Ay, ay, I sees well enough.

*Dawson.*

I believe this is the very first time in my life I ever spoke a good word for myself; but a low fellow, like that, could not know how to describe any thing of a Gentleman of his own accord —& if ever there was one that was not born one,—I must needs say I think I am he! *[Exit.]*

*Strange Man.*

Does a b'lieve I'll sarve un, a'ter drubbing me out of the house so this morning? A may go to old Nick first. Ecod, now I've touch'd the ready, (41) I'll have a bit of fun of my own.

*[Enter Innis.]*

*Innis.*

O, there's the fortune-teller. Now I'll try to get out of him who the young Gentleman is; for that it's either Mr. Mordaunt or Mr. Valentine, is quite plain—unless, indeed, it's Sir Archy Fineer. *[taking out her purse.]* I must cross his hand, (42) as they call it, first, I suppose.

*[Enter Davis.]*

*Davis.*

I can stand safe enough behind these trees, & watch how she looks, when she discovers, by what's said that it's only her own old Davis all the time. *[places himself behind a group of trees.]*

*[Enter Dawson.]*

*Dawson.*

I can't persuade myself to go away, till I know if the fortune-teller will speak handsomely enough to let her find out it's me. I sha'n't be observed by the side of this hedge. *[places himself on the opposite side.]*

*Innis.*

Mr. Fortune-teller! should you like to see another little bit of silver?

*Strange Man.*

Mayhap I mought.

*Innis.*

There, then. Now tell me something of this young Gentleman that's to come after me.

*Dawson. [aside.]*

Now for it!

*Davis. [aside.]*

What will he begin with, I wonder!

*Innis.*

Pray... What is his name?

*Strange Man.*

What his father's was afore un.

*Dawson. [aside.]*

Right! right! I'm glad he don't name names.

*Davis. [aside.]*

Very well, that! a good come off.

*Innis.*

Pho, pho,—if you won't tell me his name, then, tell me his nature. Describe him by signs, and let me find him out.

*Dawson. [aside.]*

Now let's hear!

*Davis. [aside.]*

I hope Mr. Dawson's tutored him to make me out cleverly.

*Innis.*

In the first place, what kind of a head piece (43) has he? Is he sensible?

*Strange Man.*

Ay.—a wont munch dry bread—when a can get meat to it.

*Dawson. [aside.]*

Is that all?

*Davis. [aside.]*

That's a cold compliment!

*Innis.*

Is he a brave fellow? has he courage?

*Strange Man.*

Why yes,—a won't take a pull o' the nose—without making a wry Face.

*Dawson. [aside.]*

What does he mean by that?

*Davis. [aside.]*

I don't see much good this will do me.

*Innis.*

Is he agreeable?

*Strange Man.*

A be:—a never gives a cross word—to himself.

*Dawson. [aside.]*

I can't make out what he's after!

*Davis. [aside.]*

I don't over-much relish this!

*Innis.*

Well, and what sort of a Face has he?

*Strange Man.*  
A pure cheap one.

*Innis.*  
A cheap one?

*Strange Man.*  
Ay; one that will hide dirt, and save soap; pretty nigh black of itself.

*Dawson. [aside.]*  
D-l take the fellow, he can't have looked at me.

*Davis. [aside.]*  
Black? Why I was never thought blacker than my neighbours!

*Innis.*  
And what are his Eyes?

*Strange Man.*  
Very loving ones.

*Innis.*  
Loving ones?

*Strange Man.*  
Ay; they like hugely to star (44) one at t'other.

*Innis.*  
Why—what—does he squint?

*Strange Man.*  
Belike a does.

*Dawson. [aside.]*  
Squint! what a scoundrel!

*Davis. [aside.]*  
Squint! Well, I never knew it before!

*Innis.*  
And what kind of a nose has he?

*Strange Man.*  
The true Pug.

*Innis.*  
Why he's a nasty fright, then?

*Dawson. [aside.]*  
A pug nose! what a rasca!! If I don't believe I've as handsome a nose as ever a man in England!

*Davis. [aside.]*  
My nose a pug? I believe he would be glad to have as good a one! where did he get that into his head?

*Innis.*  
And how does he dress?

*Dawson. [aside.]*  
Now, then, now!

*Strange Man.*  
Very vartuosly.

*Innis.*  
Virtuously? How so?

*Strange Man.*  
Icod, in what not a Christian beside would touch with a pair of tongs.

*Dawson. [aside.]*  
This is the top of all!—If I don't drub him!—

*Davis. [aside.]*  
This is no better than downright back-biting.

*Innis.*  
You give me such a bad account, that I'll ask but one more question; what kind of figure has he?

*Strange Man.*  
Squat.

*Innis.*  
Why then it can neither be Mr. Mordaunt, nor Mr. Valentine, nor Sir Archy Fineer neither!

*Dawson. [aside.]*  
Squat? I can bear it no longer. I question if, in the king's whole dominions, there's a properer figure!

*Davis [aside.].*  
Squat? I can't keep my place!— How a friend could give such a picture of me—

*[They come softly from their hiding places, till both stop at the same moment, & seize an arm of the Strange Man.]*

*Dawson.*  
You're a cheat and a rogue!

*Davis.*

Who put you upon saying I had a pug nose?

*Dawson.*

What do you mean by calling me squat? —and saying I squint?

*Davis.*

You? What have you to do with it?

*Strange Man.*

Sauce for a Goose, is sauce for a Gander, your Honours. But it was only a bit of a joke.

*Innis.*

O lud! has it all been a joke? And will the young Gentleman come all one?

*Strange Man.*

Ay, ay.—If a don't let it alone! (45) *[aside.]*

*Davis [quitting the Strange Man, & going to the side of Innis.]*

But I hope, Mrs. Innis,—

*Dawson [quitting him also, & going to her other side.]*

But I think, Mrs. Innis—

*Innis.*

Don't hope, Mr. Davis—except that my good luck may prove true!—And don't think, Mr. Dawson—except of how glad it ought to make you: & then, if you are good old men, & the young Gentleman appears,—perhaps I may let you both stand behind my chair at my wedding dinner. *[Exit.]*

*Davis.*

Well, Mr. Dawson, I am much obliged to you, however, for saying every thing so handsome of me!

*Dawson.*

The fellow did not utter a word I bid him.

*Davis.*

Yes, yes, it was all of the genteelest sort!

*Dawson.*

Come hither, fellow, and let me get you tossed in a blanket this moment.

*Strange Man.*

I wonder you don't! *[walks sturdily off.]*

*Dawson.*

That rogue is no more of a fortune-teller than I am. He has none of the manner of it.

*Davis.*

I'll go after Mrs. Innis, & tell her about the Ghost; if anything will bring her round, 'twill be the fright of that. This fellow has set her up so on high, that I sha'n't, else, get a kind word from her these six Years—at least, not this day or two. *[Exit.]*

*Dawson.*

Now I can't follow him, to make my own part good with her, for fear of my lord's wanting me. 'Tis the plague of my life, that all the rest of the servants are such a parcel of blockheads; for though 'tis always my nature to under-value myself, I must be stark blind not to see that I am the only person in the whole house who can be called really clever. *[Exit.]*

## Scene 2

*[A dressing Room. Mordaunt walking up & down. Enter Miss Exbury.]*

*Miss Exbury.*

O Brother Mordaunt!

*Mordaunt.*

What?

*Miss Exbury.*

How cruel is all this!

*Mordaunt.*

Is any thing the matter?

*Miss Exbury.*

The matter? Good Heaven! are we not all undone?

*Mordaunt.*

What, you think the country rather amusing? (46)

*Miss Exbury.*

O Brother! is this all the apology you make for bringing us to such a miserable place?

*Mordaunt.*

Why what does it signify?

*Miss Exbury.*

What signify? To vegetate in this pitiful hovel? to have no better drawing room than this half furnished old chamber? Not to know how to put any thing on—

*Mordaunt.*

Nobody'll see you.

*Miss Exbury.*

And do you think that a consolation? To be shut up from all amusements? not to know what any body does? not to see what any body wears? never to meet with any of ones friends—

*Mordaunt.*

You'll miss very few people.

*Miss Exbury.*

You are always so easy about ones misfortunes! Do you know where Valentine is? My Father has seemed more unhappy at his so abruptly forsaking us than at all the rest.

*Mordaunt.*

Why what does he want with him?

*Miss Exbury.*

I believe he depended upon him for every thing. I am sadly afraid, Brother Mordaunt, he means to speak to you a little severely.

*Mordaunt.*

I think that likely enough.

*Miss Exbury.*

But how will your philosophy sustain hearing that Hilaria, at last, has consented to become Lady Ardville?

*Mordaunt.*

Lady Ardville? That's rather awkward, faith.

*Miss Exbury.*

Awkward? Is that all you have to say to such shocking intelligence? Why, if our expectations are over from my uncle, who'll think of us any more? We shall be entirely forgotten. Besides, how foolish it will make us look!

*Mordaunt.*

Not a soul will observe us.

*Miss Exbury.*

Only conceive her going about every where, in jewels & nabob muslins, (47) while I may be making pastry in a yard wide cotton, and you & Valentine be clipping Hedges in Carter's frocks! (48)

*Mordaunt.*

I sha'n't give my direction to a creature.

*Miss Exbury.*

La, Brother, if nobody see you, you care for nothing.

*Mordaunt.*

Why what is there to care for?

*Miss Exbury.*

Well, I wonder, at least; you don't care about your own waistcoat, for I never saw you in such an ugly thing before.

*Mordaunt [starting].*

Ugly? What, my waistcoat?

*Miss Exbury.*

And Sir Archy Fineer had on the most beautiful one in the World.

*Mordaunt [eagerly].*

Had he? Do you know who's make it is?

*Miss Exbury.*

Did not you remark it?

*Mordaunt.*

He had not taken off his great coat when I saw him. But—what sort of cut?

*Miss Exbury.*

I'm sure I don't know, but 'twas amazingly pretty; & yours—pardon me,—is the greatest fright I ever beheld. I dare say Sir Archy would not be seen in it for a thousand pounds.

*Mordaunt.*

Do you think so? I'll throw it to the dogs directly [walks up & down, disturbed, looking at his waistcoat.].

*Miss Exbury [to herself].*

Now how my Uncle can be so cruel —when my heart is so deeply engaged—as not to let me



know, all this time, what Sir Archy has said about the settlement, & about the pin money!

*[Enter Innis.]*

*Innis.*

I beg pardon—I thought my young lady was with you, ma'am. Now if it's Mr. Mordaunt, I'll watch well, and find him out. *[aside.]*

*Miss Exbury.*

No, Mrs. Innis. But what is the matter? You look fluttered.

*Innis.*

Any body would be fluttered, I believe, ma'am!—I only just went out a little way, at my young lady's desire, to see if there were any pretty walks near the House, and, just as I came back, I was joined by Mr. Davis, and he says—he says—

*Miss Exbury.*

What does he say?

*Innis.*

Don't be frightened, ma'am!—

*Miss Exbury.*

At what?

*Innis.*

Why he says—but, now, pray don't mind it!

*Miss Exbury.*

Do tell what you mean?

*Innis.*

Why he says, ma'am—that we're all come to a haunted house!

*Miss Exbury.*

How ridiculous!

*Mordaunt.*

So you don't think Sir Archy would wear this waistcoat?

*Miss Exbury.*

Now I protest you dwell more upon that foolish waistcoat, than upon bringing us all into this barbarous disgrace! But pray, Mrs. Innis, have you heard the news about your young lady?

*Innis [simpering].*

Y..e..s, ma'am—Mr. Davis was told it by Sir Archy himself, as he went away; so we had just a little chat about it, together. No, I don't think it's Mr. Mordaunt. He has not a bit the look of a lover. I dare say it's Mr. Valentine. *[aside. Exit.]*

*[Mordaunt walks apart.]*

*Miss Exbury [to herself].*

The settlement can't be very bad, I think. Let's see; he has four thousand a year; & he'll have two thousand more when his mother dies—& she is very sickly. And if his sister does not marry, there's ten thousand to return to him at her death—& she looks very consumptive. And if his younger Brother should die without Children, there's another five thousand—& he was in a very bad way last spring. O, it will certainly do! I feel my regard for him encrease every moment.—Besides, his uncle is so rich—& so fond of him—& every body thinks him in a decline —

*[Enter Davis.]*

*Davis [to Mordaunt].*

My lord desires, sir,—

*Miss Exbury.*

O Davis, do tell us something of all this quantity of news. What is it Sir Archy said to you? And what is this story about a Ghost? And does my Father know any thing yet of Valentine?

*Davis.*

I am no great believer in Ghost stories myself, ma'am; but I was told, by the servants at Lord Ardvile's, that no less than seventy or eighty had been seen about this House & the grounds, six of which once appeared to old Mr. Litchburn—at least, one did.

*Miss Exbury.*

How disagreeable!

*Mordaunt.*

Why you're not so simple as to believe it?

*Miss Exbury.*

O dear, no!—And... what did Sir Archy say?

*Davis.*

That he was just (49) going to fetch my lord



Ardville to his intended Bride Miss Dalton.

*Miss Exbury.*

And does my Father know this new misfortune?

*Davis.*

Yes, madam; I thought it my duty to tell my lord immediately.

*Mordaunt.*

An awkward business enough, that.

*Davis.*

He was surprised, &, certainly, a good deal concerned; but lauk! you might have taken him for a Merry Andrew, —or a Punch, (50) in comparison to what he was about t'other thing.

*Miss Exbury.*

What other thing, Davis?

*Davis.*

Mr. Valentine's going so sudenly to London.

*Miss Exbury.*

To London?

*Davis.*

We found, at last, he had left word with Mr. Dawson, that he should tell my lord he was sorry he could not attend him, but he was obliged to go to town.

*Miss Exbury.*

And without even taking leave! O fie, Valentine!

*Mordaunt.*

What's the use of taking leave?

*Davis.*

I never saw my poor lord so much hurt before. I thought I heard his heart-strings crack as I looked at him. And his face turned all blue that is, a sort of a blue green. But he has ordered me, sir, to request you would not be out of the way, for he wishes to speak with you, as soon as he has settled some business he has now at hand.

(51)

*Mordaunt.*

So I expected.

*Davis.*

Unless you prefer its being to-morrow morning.

*Mordaunt.*

O yes; by all means I prefer to-morrow morning.

*Miss Exbury.*

Are you not frightened, Brother?

*Mordaunt.*

About the ghost?

*Miss Exbury.*

No; about this interview with my Father?

*Mordaunt.*

What should I be frightened at? Do you think he will whip me?

*Miss Exbury.*

I do, indeed! though not with a rod of birch!

*Mordaunt.*

Well, give me a call, Davis, when he is ready, lest I should forget it, & be out of the way.

*Davis.*

Yes, sir. And I'd give a good five hundred pounds to prove you were not my dear lord's son- a month's wages, at least. [*aside. Exit.*]

*Miss Exbury.*

Forget it? would that be possible, when you know what dreadful things he must have to say to you?

*Mordaunt.*

Nobody'll hear them.

*Miss Exbury.*

O Brother!—But what can I put on, now, if Sir Archy comes to night? I have nothing ready.

*Mordaunt.*

Keep your chamber, then. [*yawning.*]

[*Enter Innis.*]

*Innis.*

O ma'am!—my young lady's walked out—and I have such a thing to tell her!

*Miss Exbury.*

What? what? Mrs. Innis?

*Mordaunt.*

Ay, how many more Ghosts have you conjured up?

*Innis.*

O Sir, don't joke! for it's all true! I have just heard all the whole particulars.

*Miss Exbury.*

What nonsense!

*Innis.*

I'm sure, ma'am, I wish it were nonsense with all my heart,—but it's a lady, ma'am!

*Mordaunt.*

A lady? O, then, nonsense, certainly, is out of the question!

*Innis.*

Yes, sir, a lady, that died in the very house we are now in!

*Miss Exbury.*

How shocking!

*Mordaunt.*

What, you imagined people in this house lived for ever, did you?

*Innis.*

And she's been seen walking in the very same cloaths she wore alive!

*Miss Exbury.*

How horrid!

*Mordaunt.*

You think, perhaps, she ought to have set you some new Fashion?

*Innis.*

And there's been such a screeching heard since, between whiles, through the key-holes—

*Mordaunt.*

Every time the wind blew, I suppose? But you look pale sister? I really suspect you are afraid?

*Miss Exbury.*

I?—no;—I should like to see a Ghost of all things. I only wish Sir Archy would call, for this is just a story to divert him.

*Innis.*

I'm sure, ma'am, I'm glad you don't mind it, for nobody so much as passes by the door, now, but o' tip toe.

*Miss Exbury.*

What door, Mrs. Innis?

*Innis.*

Why that door, ma'am—There!—

*Miss Exbury.*

What do you mean? That's my apartment.

*Innis.*

It's the Ghost's room, ma'am! [*whispering.*]

*Miss Exbury.*

The Ghost's room?

*Innis.*

Yes, ma'am, it's there the Ghost appears.

*Miss Exbury.*

How absurd! And where have you heard all this?

*Innis.*

Mr. Dawson, ma'am, came over just now from Lord Ardvile's & he told it all himself, for he knows it from old Mr. Litchburn.

*Miss Exbury.*

How silly! Send me the house keeper, however. I'll desire her to put a stop to such rumours.

*Innis.*

She's been gone this hour & more, ma'am; for when she found we were crowded so bad, she gave us out all the things she had in her care, and went away, before any of us knew of the house being haunted, except Mr. Davis; and he was unpacking for my lord till after she was gone.

*Miss Exbury.*

I hope you don't suppose I care about this idle tale, Brother Mordaunt,—but yet—I think—I was thinking—suppose you were to occupy that room,—& so let me have yours?—Will you, Brother?

*Mordaunt.*

What, you are afraid of being taken for the Ghost yourself, are you? Well, let's see what condition it's in.

*Innis.*

O lud, sir! You won't go there alone?

*Mordaunt.*

Why not? What would you have me fear? A puff of wind? Or the flutter of a moth? Or a fly caught in some old cobweb? *[goes in.]*

*Miss Exbury.*

Mrs. Innis, come hither! *[whispers]* Don't think me frightened, for all this only makes me laugh—but I shall find some other room to sleep in; only take no notice of it;—& fetch out all my things yourself, unknown to any body.

*Innis.*

I? good lud, ma'am, how can you think to ask me such a thing?

*Miss Exbury [peeping through the door].*  
Well, Brother?

*Mordaunt [re-entering].*

No; it's worse accoutred than my own. It won't do for me.

*Miss Exbury.*

O, it does not matter.

*Mordaunt.*

But, pray, what's that closet locked for?

*Innis.*

O sir, I hope you did not meddle with that closet?

*Mordaunt.*

Why? Is it bewitched?

*Innis.*

It's there the Ghost is, Sir!

*Mordaunt.*

Let's have a look at it, then.

*Innis.*

O no, sir! stop! stop!—When the housekeeper agreed with Mr. Davis about the house, she said

he could not have the use of that closet on account of something particular. She owned to that herself! but Mr. Davis, knowing nothing, then, about the Ghost, asked no questions. And now, she has taken the key away with her.

*Mordaunt.*

Well, then, Mrs. Innis, since the Ghost is locked up, you've nothing to fear.

*Innis.*

La, sir, a Ghost is not like to such a person as I!

*Mordaunt.*

That I'll be sworn!

*Innis.*

I never heard to the contrary but what it could come as well through a key-hole as through an open door.

*Mordaunt.*

I wish Lord Ardvile would have lent me a Horse. I don't know how to get on with the afternoon.

*Miss Exbury.*

O, if you were to ride out, Brother, I dare say you would meet with thousands of your acquaintance—all so curious & inquisitive!

*Mordaunt.*

My acquaintances? O the d--l—I won't be seen by a soul.—What shall I do?—Can't you help me, Mrs. Innis? Have you found out nothing in these parts good for the spleen? No Wake? no Pig-race? ([52](#)) no fortune telling? no—

*Innis.*

Fortune telling?—O yes, sir! There's a fortune-teller who keeps walking all about so, one can't stir but one meets him.

*Mordaunt.*

Is there so? I think I'll try what that will do for me.

*Miss Exbury.*

Sure, Brother, you won't go out, now Papa may want to speak to you.

*Mordaunt.*

O, ay, true! I did not recollect that. I'll take a nap, I think, then. *[Exit.]*

*Innis [to herself].*

No, no; it's not Mr. Mordaunt. A snow ball, or a lump of Ice, is just as like a lover as he is. It must be Mr. Valentine. That's sure.

*Miss Exbury.*

Come, Mrs. Innis, quick!—help out my things.

*Innis.*

Lud, ma'am!

*Miss Exbury.*

Make haste! make haste!

*Innis.*

Why then, ma'am, will you go in first?—

*Miss Exbury.*

Pho, pho—how can you be so silly?

*Innis.*

And just give a little peep through the key-hole of that closet, to see if you can see any thing?

*Miss Exbury.*

I? No, indeed!—I don't like to take so much trouble.

*Innis [looking in].*

Dear ma'am—I do think I hear something moving!

*Miss Exbury.*

Where?—where?—

*Innis.*

In that corner—yonder—Do pray, ma'am, step & see if it's any thing.

*Miss Exbury.*

Not I, indeed! I have no such silly curiosity. *[retreating.]* Go in, Mrs. Innis.

*Innis.*

O dear ma'am, what alone?

*Miss Exbury.*

Why you'll soon be back, you know.

*Innis.*

O dear, I could not for never so much!

*Miss Exbury.*

Pho, pho; I'm close behind you— go in, I say.

*Innis.*

O dear me!—*[peeping in]* Ah!

*Miss Exbury.*

What's the matter?—Do you hear any thing?

*Innis.*

I thought I did, I'm sure!—such an odd sort of rustling!—something just like I don't know what!

*Miss Exbury.*

Nonsense! Come, let's go in, and bring away the things together.

*[They go in. A loud screaming is heard from the inner Room. Re-enter Miss Exbury, running, & holding up her hands.]*

How frightful! How horrid! *[Exit.]*

*[Re-enter Innis, who stumbles in passing the door.]*

*Innis.*

O ma'am!—O stay, stay for me! —The Ghost is at my heels!

*A Voice Within.*

Innis!

*Innis.*

O, it knows me!—O mercy!—*[kneels.]*

*Voice Within.*

Innis!

*Innis.*

O! it calls me!—I'm dead! *[falls on her Face.]*

*[Enter Valentine, softly.]*

*Valentine.*

What is all this? Why do you lie there?

*Innis.*

No offence, I hope!—I dare not lift up my head!—no offence, I hope!

*Valentine.*

Offence? I am all amazement!

*Innis [fearfully looking up].*

La! if it is not just like to the shade of Mr. Valentine!

*Valentine.*  
The shade?

*Innis.*  
Lud! it's the very sound of his voice!

*Valentine.*  
The sound? What do you mean?

*Innis.*  
Good la! in his very cloaths!

*Valentine.*  
In my very cloaths?—would you have me in yours?

*Innis.*  
I can't believe my eyes! A'n't you the Ghost, then, sir?

*Valentine.*  
A Ghost?—No, I thank you!

*Innis [rising].*  
What! are you the right real Mr. Valentine all this time? How glad I am! I thought as much as could be you were the Ghost!

*Valentine.*  
My dear Innis! what folly is this?

*Innis.*  
Folly, sir? why then what did you come out of that Ghost's place for?

*Valentine.*  
Ghost's place?—Are you crazy?

*Innis.*  
I'm sure, sir, I don't know what I am: and your sister is worse.—Perhaps he has only hid himself here on purpose to speak to me! I'm all in a quake! *[aside.]*

*Davis [without].*  
Mrs. Innis!

*Innis.*  
Hark!—somebody calls!—If that should be the right Ghost!

*Davis [without].*  
Innis! Mrs. Innis!

*Innis.*

No; it's only Mr. Davis.

*Valentine [fastening the door].*  
No one must enter.

*Innis.*  
La, Sir, what do you mean? Don't fright me!—O yes! it's Mr. Valentine! it's Mr. Valentine! *[aside.]*

*Valentine.*  
Move softly. No one must know I am here.

*Innis.*  
La, Sir, don't lock me in with only you & the Ghost!—Yes! he's going to speak! *[aside.]*

*Davis [without].*  
Mrs. Innis! can't you slip out?

*Innis.*  
Yes, Mr. Davis, only—

*Valentine.*  
Don't answer! don't utter a word! stay till I am concealed.

*Davis [without].*  
Mrs. Innis, I say!—The Door is fastened!

*Valentine [in a hurried manner].*  
My dear Innis, the most urgent necessity impels my present conduct. It must not be known I am here. I intended only to speak to my sister;—but my enquiries can be answered by yourself. *[A great clamour at the door, and call of Mrs. Innis, Mrs. Innis.]* Get rid of these people as quickly as possible, without any explanation; and then let me see you one minute alone; and if you would ensure me your firm, unalterable friend for life—utter not my name! I shall be bound to you for-ever! *[puts a purse into her hand, & glides into the inner room.]*

*Innis.*  
I am all in such a twitter, I might be knocked down with a feather!—Bound to me for-ever! Yes! it's Mr. Valentine is the man! How those fortune-telling people do know every thing! But I won't let Mr. Davis into the secret, till I am sure he means honourable. What a generous Gentleman he is! A firm friend's a very good thing indeed! *[looking at her purse, & putting it up. A clamour again at the door. She opens it.]*

*[Enter Davis.]*

*Davis [stopping at the door].*

My dear Mrs. Innis!—what has been the matter?  
I am in such a sweat!—You know I don't  
believe in Ghosts—but if this lady really  
walks—Are you quite sure you are  
alone?—*[looking cautiously round as he  
advances.]*

*Innis.*

I don't know what I am, indeed, Mr. Davis.

*Davis [in a low voice].*

Have you seen any thing?

*Innis.*

Yes, I have Mr. Davis!

*Davis.*

Good lauk! then it's true!—And pray—is it  
vanished away?—or do you see something now,  
invisible?

*Innis.*

I must not tell, Mr. Davis!

*Davis.*

What a thing that ever I should have taken such  
a house as this! But I never supposed it was for  
ourselves. The Groom, & both the new maids  
came up with me, to try to get you out; but they  
jumped so, as soon as the door began opening,  
that they all tumbled down stairs. We were sure  
there was a voice!

*Innis.*

That there was, indeed, Mr. Davis!

*Davis.*

Good lauk!—This is come upon me as a  
judgement, for my scoffing at poor Mr.  
Litchburn so for his fears!—which I will never  
do any more;—no, not if I should catch him  
again, as I did this morning, bowing to Lord  
Arville's shadow, for fear the substance should  
turn round, and see him standing up, like a  
Man!—Miss Exbury is so frightened! She  
wanted my lord to come; but he said he must not  
be disturbed till he had finished his Letters. She  
asked Mr. Mordaunt, too; but he said he was  
sleepy, and must take his nap first: and your  
young lady, Miss Dalton, is not returned from

her walk yet.

*Innis.*

You must not stay, Mr. Davis!

*Davis.*

Why not?

*Innis.*

I can't tell! *[Shaking her head.]*

*Davis.*

But why?

*Innis.*

Because I don't know, Mr. Davis! But you must  
not stay!

*Davis.*

Surely you are not bound over to secrecy?

*Innis.*

Yes, I am, Mr. Davis.

*Davis.*

That's surprising indeed!—But how came you to  
fasten the door?

*Innis.*

It was not I fastened the door, Mr. Davis!

*Davis.*

Good lauk! why—did the Ghost lock you up  
with it?

*Innis.*

You must not ask, Mr. Davis!

*Davis.*

Why you won't stay to be all alone with it  
again?—Why do you shake your head?—Do  
you motion me away?—What do you put your  
finger on your lips for?—Must not you  
speak?—Good lauk! —Tell me, at least, you  
don't think any more about what the Fortune-  
teller said of a young Gentleman?

*Innis [hiding a laugh].*

N... o, not much!—but if you don't make haste,  
Mr. Davis—presently you'll see something  
appear!

*Davis.*

O lord! *[hurries out.]*

*Innis.*

I never thought to have so much courage, I'm sure. But Mr. Valentine's such a generous Gentleman—one would do any thing for a firm friend!—*[calls softly at the door.]* Mr. Valentine! —Not think of the Fortune-teller? O to be sure! why I think of nothing else.

*[Enter Valentine.]*

*Valentine.*

You oblige me for-ever, my dear Innis. I will not detain you two minutes. I have only to ask—I have only a small enquiry—a single word—

*Innis.*

It's all coming out now! *[aside.]*

*Valentine.*

In the haste with which I quitted my uncle's house this morning, I left some papers behind me of so much consequence, that I was forced to ride ten miles back for them: and, upon re-entering the hall, I heard—I was told—Dawson said—that your young lady—that my Uncle Ardville—but I can never, never believe it!—

*Innis.*

Poor Gentleman! he has been crossed in his first love-but he sha'n't be in his second! I was afraid it would vex you, sir. *[aside.]*

*Valentine.*

How?—Is it true?—Perdition! —

*Innis.*

Sir!

*Valentine.*

May all that is most horrible—

*Innis.*

You fright me, sir!

*Valentine.*

Do I?—I frighten myself!—but I have been surprised—I have no right, however—yet, in such an exquisite machine, can a mercenary Soul be lodged? Can sordid depravity lurk in such a guise?—Innis, is it not possible there may yet be some mistake?

*Innis.*

I am afraid there is, sir!—I'm sure I can't tell what to think, between one thing & t'other!

*Valentine.*

I perplex you—but no more.—Yet, you can be no stranger—

*Innis.*

So it i'n't him, at last!—But it don't signify, for I dare say it's Sir Archy Fineer *[aside.]*—Why no, sir, we're none of us no great strangers to your liking to my young lady.

*Valentine.*

I have been a fool—and my folly meets its merited reward. Mrs. Innis, good evening to you. You will not mention—but that I cannot expect—I send, however, no felicitations,—I am not so false!—It were profanation to congratulate her upon (53) such nuptials!

*Innis.*

Pray, sir, don't speak so loud, for fear they'll come to see if the Ghost's doing me a mischief!

*Valentine.*

Ghost?—I talk wildly, indeed— But you'll excuse me. Good Evening.

*Innis.*

Stay, sir, one bit of a minute, and just let me ask if you're sure you locked the door of the closet when you come out of it?

*Valentine.*

What closet?

*Innis.*

The Ghost's closet, sir.

*Valentine.*

What absurdity is this! I came out of no closet.

*Innis.*

No? what, don't you know nothing about the Ghost, then?

*Valentine.*

I came through the Garden, and up some back stairs, which were shewn me by Mr. Litchburn, whom I knew to have been a frequent visitor of the former inhabitants of this House.



*Innis.*

Good la! why then you can't tell what may be in that closet all this time no more than I can?

*Valentine.*

I conjure you, Innis, that my appearing here this evening, may not reach the ears of my Father. That is all I require from you. To every thing else I am wholly indifferent.—O Heartless Hilaria! —*[Exit by the inner door.]*

*Innis.*

'Tis Sir Archy Fineer, as sure as a Gun!—Poor Mr. Valentine! 'tis none of him. And he's so sorrowful, I could almost find in my heart to give him back his Purse. And so I will, too, for I shall have plenty, now, from Sir Archy. Mr. Valentine!—Mr. Valentine !— *[calling softly.]*—And yet, he's so unhappy, he won't know how to spend it. 'Twill be pity to throw it away, without nobody's enjoyment from it. —I'll run, for he's coming back! *[Exit.]*

*[Re-enter Valentine, cautiously.]*

*Valentine.*

Mrs. Innis!—Mrs. Innis!—Did you call?—I am sorry she's gone. She will certainly repeat my ravings to Hilaria, who may suppose me only hurt lest my Uncle, for her sake, should disinherit us. Intolerable!—I must see her, & explain myself. I will watch for her here, and take my last farewell. A choice so obviously mercenary renders her unworthy even of regret. Had I sought to beguile her into poverty for the gratification of my own passion—she had done well to plead our want of fortune: but no; competence was ours, if moderation bounded our desires. It is to the vanities, not the comforts of life that she aspires. She is the slave of Fashion—& I, a plain, but feeling man, am happy to have escaped her.—Happy, said I?—O! heartless Hilaria! *[Exit, as before.]*

*[Enter Hilaria.]*

*Hilaria.*

Miss Exbury?—where can she be gone? I am glad, however, she is not here, that I may enjoy, a little longer, the delicious calm with which this charming walk has tranquilised my spirits. That lane was so romantic—those meadows

were so beautiful—that pretty simple Cottage—those interesting children—And is this the retired residence, this the country life I have so much dreaded? What a fool I have been! I have judged it by stately dwellings, where luxury satiates the very wishes, and a superfluity of domestics makes even the use of our limbs unnecessary. But this view of Nature in its wild variety, this intercourse with Cottagers, this charm of rural Liberty—I never even dreamt of it, till this my first stroll in paths unknown to equipage. Heaven keep me from repentance!—I think I hear some sound in that next room—Miss Exbury! *[looking in.]*—Heavens!—a man?—Ah!—Valentine! —I die!—

*[Enter Valentine.]*

*Valentine.*

Pardon, madam, this uncalled, unauthorised intrusion. The fear of misrepresentation—you look alarmed?

*Hilaria.*

I—I—I—no, I am not—only—a little astonished.

*Valentine.*

You tremble? You cannot imagine I had the presumption to mean to utter a reproach?

*Hilaria.*

No;—I only imagined—that is, I thought—that—that—you were returned to town.

*Valentine.*

I am going, madam, immediately. Be not impatient of this little minute.

*Hilaria.*

Did I say I was impatient?—But I have been so extremely—so inexpressibly—Lord Exbury, I would say, has been so much surprised at missing you so suddenly—but surprised is no word—disappointed—afflicted—

*Valentine.*

My honoured Father!—Ah, Miss Dalton, deign an instant, all occupied as you are with gayer subjects, & newer views, to speak to me of my Father!

*Hilaria.*

Could he help being hurt that you deserted him?

*Valentine.*

Deserted him? Heavens! is it so he interprets my non-appearance? Does he so completely give me up? Deem me an alien to his blood, & undeserving it should flow in my veins?—And you—have you thought so too?—Tell, tell me!

*Hilaria.*

I don't know what to tell you! I can recollect nothing; I hardly know if I am awake!—

*Valentine.*

How I came hither, which, perhaps, thus amazes you, Mrs. Innis can relate;—why I came—I had better forget myself!—some step approaches—I must begone. You will have the goodness to avoid mentioning that I have been here. Circumstances the most cruel force me from the sight of my Father, whom I can fly—but never deceive. Adieu, madam,—adieu! [*going.*]

*Hilaria [gently].*

Valentine!

*Valentine [returning].*

Hilaria!

*Davis [from the outer door].*

May I make bold to ask if Miss Dalton be in that room?

*Valentine [retreating].*

How barbarous!

*Hilaria [running to the door].*

Fly! I will keep them all without, till you are safe. [*She goes out, pulling the door after her.*]

*Valentine.*

How kind in her cruelty! And is such a creature made for so base a prostitution of all faith, all sincerity? ah! she wants thought more than heart! She is plunging into a gulph of which she sees not the depth. What if I try—though hopeless, alas, for myself!—to rescue her from such false vows? such worthless ambition? such contemptible motives of choice? Litchburn can easily let me sleep at his house to night, and

conduct me hither, by that private entrance, to-morrow morning. I will make the attempt. Yes! ere I see thee consigned to age, to avarice & to regret, I will probe thee, Hilaria, till I pierce thee to the soul! [*Exit through the inner room.*]

[*Re-enter Hilaria, slowly; Davis peeping behind her.*]

*Hilaria [looking into the inner room].*

He is quite gone!—quite!—what a terrible encounter! O Valentine! where, now, are my tranquilised spirits?

*Innis [at the door].*

Ma'am!—ma'am!—may I come in?

*Hilaria.*

Yes.

[*Enter Innis.*]

*Innis.*

I've been so frightened for you, ma'am! Mr. Davis said he was sure he heard a voice; & I was so afraid to venture, not knowing if it were the real Ghost itself, or only Mr. Valentine.

*Hilaria.*

Mr. Valentine?—What made you think of Mr. Valentine?

*Innis.*

Why, ma'am, since you've been gone —

[*Enter Davis.*]

*Davis.*

My lord Ardvile, & Sir Archy Fineer, ma'am.

*Hilaria.*

Good Heaven!

*Innis [aside].*

Sir Archy Fineer! O lud! I dare say the Fortune-teller has set him upon coming!

*Davis.*

Shall I shew his lordship up here, ma'am?

*Hilaria.*

Not for the world!

*Davis.*

Am I to say you will come down, ma'am?

*Hilaria.*

Not for the universe!

*Davis.*

What am I to do, ma'am?

*Hilaria.*

Nothing.

*Davis.*

His lordship is standing in the little passage,  
ma'am.

*Hilaria.*

Then why don't you tell Lord Exbury?

*Davis [aside].*

If I don't think the Ghost has turned her head!  
[Exit, looking amazed.]

*Innis.*

La, ma'am,—

*Hilaria [disturbed].*

Don't talk to me! [Innis retires to a distance.]  
What a situation am I in! O Valentine! what a  
conflict have you once more raised in my  
Breast! O Love! O powerful Love! —O  
Fashion!—hateful Fashion!

[Enter Sir Archy Fineer.]

*Sir Archy.*

My dear Miss Dalton, what strange mistake is  
this? Davis says you desired Lord Ardvile  
might be shewn to his Brother; have you  
forgotten their quarrel?

*Hilaria [with affected ease].*

Yes, I hate to think of quarrels. Besides, if he  
can't see his Brother, what brings him to his  
house?

*Sir Archy.*

Your own appointment.

*Hilaria.*

But so late? I am just asleep.

*Sir Archy.*

My dear cousin! at eight o'clock?

*Hilaria.*

O, all your watches go wrong. I am quite

drowsy. [yawning.]

*Sir Archy.*

Amazing! What am I to say to him?

*Hilaria.*

What you will.

*Sir Archy.*

And what is he to think?

*Hilaria.*

What he pleases.

*Sir Archy.*

And what will the family—what will the world  
report?

*Hilaria.*

What it likes.

*Sir Archy.*

If you are so very easy, cousin, pardon me if I  
bring him up stairs, to hear his answer from  
yourself. [going.]

*Hilaria.*

O cruel! O horrid!—Dear Sir Archy! spare me  
but now—and to-morrow arrange what you will.

*Sir Archy.*

To that condition I agree. I will tell him you are  
suddenly indisposed, but invite him to breakfast  
with you to-morrow morning: and, that no time  
may be lost, I shall charge him to write himself  
to his Lawyer to night—before he is—[mocking  
her] drowsy! [Exit.]

*Hilaria.*

O no! O stop, barbarian!—he's gone!—

*Innis.*

I don't know what to make of it yet. He hardly  
gave me a look. [aside.]—Pray, ma'am,—

*Hilaria.*

Don't say a word to me!—Don't follow me  
about!—What a wretched barter have I made!  
my whole self, my free existence, for wealth &  
vanity thus encumbered! How my heart throbs  
& sinks alternately!—Alas! that I should  
scarcely suspect I had one, till the instant of  
selling for-ever its dearest natural rights! [Exit.]

*Innis.*

Well, if ever—sending off one's lover in such a manner as that, when he's a lord! I shan't send off mine so, if he proves a true one, though he's only a Baronight. (54) Nor I had not need, for if she goes on at this rate, I may look long enough before I get such another firm friend as this! *[taking out her purse.]* O lud!—Sir Archy!—Now then!—Now for it! *[putting it up again.]*

*[Enter Sir Archy Fineer.]*

*Sir Archy.*

In good truth, my fair cousin— How? Gone? Mrs. Innis, which way is your young lady?

*Innis.*

He'll out with it now! (55) *[aside.]* She went to her own room, I fancy, sir.

*Sir Archy.*

Tell her—

*Innis.*

I dare not, Sir!

*Sir Archy.*

Dare not what?

*Innis.*

Tell her about—I am sure, sir, I don't know myself, yet!—but only she ordered me not to follow her quite premterring. (56)

*Sir Archy.*

No matter; I must speak to her. Go and say so, I beg, sweet Mrs. Innis.

*Innis.*

Yes, sir. He's a mighty pretty spoken man, for a Gentleman. But I wonder he should send me away, when he might as easily open his mind to me. Love makes us sad fools! *[aside. Exit.]*

*Sir Archy.*

If my noble old innamorato be again denied, the Game is lost. I strongly suspect some secret hankering after that romantic Boy Valentine.

*[Re-enter Innis.]*

*Innis.*

Sir, my young lady's sent me back quite out of sorts. She says she's laid down with a bad headache, and can't see a single soul till tomorrow morning, at no rate.

*Sir Archy.*

So! so! so! she's qualmish. *[aside.]* I must have a little talk with her. What time does she usually rise, Mrs. Innis?

*Innis.*

Very early, since we have been in the country, sir. Perhaps he wants to speak to me before she is stirring! *[aside.]*

*Sir Archy.*

How can I contrive to be the first person she sees in the morning? Have you never a spare room?

*Innis.*

Dear Sir, no! not so much as a closet. They are all crammed full—*[pointing, and lowering her voice]* except just that one that the Ghost's got.

*Sir Archy.*

The Ghost? Do you believe in Ghosts, Mrs. Innis?

*Innis.*

O no, sir! only it's a little shocking, you know, sir, hearing of such things.

*Sir Archy.*

And what room is this haunted one?

*Innis.*

Nobody's, sir. Miss Exbury has ordered the bed to be moved to where Mr. Valentine was to have been, and all her cloaths to be carried away, for fear of something's coming out of that closet in the night.—Not that she believes at all in Ghosts. Only it's a little horrid, you know, being so near, in case of any things happening.

*Sir Archy.*

If it's unoccupied, it will just do for me. *[entering the inner room.]*

*Innis.*

How adventuresome he is!

*Sir Archy [returning].*

It's a mighty good chamber. I can pass the night

admirably upon that sofa. For I shall probably quit my lord Ardville too late to make it worth while to undress, as I wish to rise so early.  
—You have no room for my servant?

*Innis.*

Not a corner Cupboard, if he were no bigger than a slop bason! But what will you do if any thing should appear?

*Sir Archy.*

Dance a rigadoon with it to your apartment.

*Innis.*

Oh!—

*Sir Archy.*

Well, call me in the morning, the instant your lady is awake, and I will keep the Ghost to myself. I will step and ask leave of Lord Exbury—though he will wish me at the very devil for my interference—but a man of spirit is wished there so often, 'tis no great matter.  
[*aside.*] You won't fail me, pretty Innis?  
[*putting money into her hand.*] [*Exit.*]

*Innis.*

Yes, yes! he has a mind to speak to me by myself in the morning! 'Tis as plain as can be! That's a dear Fortune-teller!—though if he don't mean honourable, I'll sooner take up with old Mr. Davis. These marrying times with young ladies are very gay.—They bring one in a heap of firm Friends! [*Exit, looking at the two Purses.*]

### END OF ACT III

## Act IV

### Scene 1

[*A dark Chamber, in which the door of a closet is just distinguished. Sir Archy Fineer is discovered lying on a sofa.*]

*Sir Archy* [*trying to look at his Watch*].

Now what the devil is it o'clock? I have fastened the shutters so closely, for fear of some trick, that I cannot make out the hour. But the Ghost, according to custom, reserves its favours for those who fly them. 'Tis so dark, I'll e'en venture

to take another nap. [*lies down. A rustling noise within the wainscoat.*] What's that? [*lifting up his head.*] Is it Innis?—No; 'tis in an opposite direction from the door—Again?—Why what the deuce—

*Valentine* [*opening a door of which there was no outward mark.*]

The room has been darkened. How unlucky! I can't see my way. [*to himself*].

*Sir Archy.*

There is somebody stirring, past doubt. [*aside.*]

*Valentine.*

How shall I get at Innis? [*to himself.*]

*Sir Archy.*

The d---! Somebody's come into the room!  
[*aside.*]

*Valentine.*

Or if I could find my Sister—[*to himself.*]

*Sir Archy.*

I hear a footstep distinctly! [*aside.*]

*Valentine.*

I can't make out where the door is! [*to himself, and groping about.*]

*Sir Archy.*

This is no fancy! [*aside.*]

*Valentine.*

I think I hear something like breathing! [*listens*]  
Perhaps 'tis the pretended Ghost! [*to himself.*]

*Sir Archy.*

Is this some theif, now? or a sweetheart of the fair Innis, in the disguise of a spectre? I wish I had my Pistols! [*aside.*]

*Valentine.*

I should like to devellop this fraud. I'll get my stick. [*to himself; goes back by the private door.*]

[*A tap at the outer door.*]

*Sir Archy.*

What's that, now? That's still another sound!  
Are there two of these Goblins?

*Davis [without].*  
Sir!

*Sir Archy.*  
Who calls?

*Davis [without].*  
Davis, Sir.

*Sir Archy.*  
I am heartily glad. Open the door and come in,  
Mr. Davis.

*[Enter Davis, but no farther than the door.]*

*Davis.*  
I have only stept up to call you, Sir, because  
Mrs. Innis—

*Sir Archy [rising].*  
Come in, come in, Mr. Davis, and open the door  
wide, to give some light. *[draws him in.]* Do  
you know, Mr. Davis, somebody has certainly  
got into the room?

*Davis.*  
O lord! *[hastening to the door, to get out, runs  
against it, and shuts himself in.]* I'm a dead  
man! The door's shut upon me!

*Sir Archy.*  
Hark! the sound came that way. Don't speak!

*Davis.*  
I won't, sir, indeed! only, for mercy's sake, let  
me out!

*Sir Archy.*  
Hush! I hear it again!

*Davis.*  
O lord!

*[Re-enter Valentine, with a Stick.]*

*Valentine.*  
Some infamous imposition is afloat, I have no  
doubt, and if, unknown myself, I can detect, or  
frighten its author —

*Sir Archy.*  
Don't fetch your breath so hard, Davis;  
somebody is certainly advancing! *[in a  
whisper.]*

*Davis.*  
Oh! oh! *[shaking.]*

*Valentine.*  
That's a groan, meant to terrify the house, I  
suppose. What knavery! But I'll try who will  
shrink first. Who are you? What do you do  
here? *[in a feigned & hoarse voice.]*

*Davis [to himself].*  
O lord! 'tis the lady that walks!

*Sir Archy.*  
'Tis some cursed ruffian by the voice! I don't  
much like my situation! *[to himself, &  
retreating.]*

*Valentine.*  
Answer! by what right or title are you in this  
house? *[in the same voice.]*

*Davis [trembling].*  
None, honourable lady! I'll go out of it directly.

*Valentine.*  
Lady? I am glad he thinks my voice so delicate.  
*[aside]* For what evil purpose, then, have you  
entered it? *[in the feigned voice.]*

*Davis.*  
I humbly crave pardon, (57) but I knew nothing  
of your ladyship's walking!

*Valentine.*  
Walking? What does the booby mean? would he  
have me come into the room on horse-back?  
*[aside.]* Out! out, I say! Why are you not gone?  
*[in the feigned voice.]*

*Davis.*  
I can't find the way, madam!

*Valentine.*  
Would you have me find a way for you? *[in the  
same voice.]*

*Davis.*  
O lord, no!

*Sir Archy.*  
What an impudent rascal this must be. *[aside.]*

*Valentine.*

If ever you dare play any more of your tricks in this house... [*in the feigned voice.*]

*Davis.*

I never will, indeed, honourable madam!—O, where's the door? [*groping about.*]

*Sir Archy.*

I wish I had a blunderbuss, with all my heart! [*aside.*]

*Valentine.*

Or ever dare appear in it again to the last hour of your life...

*Davis.*

O, I've found the door! I'm as glad as if it were the twenty thousand pound prize in the lottery! (58) [*opens it, & runs out, pulling it after him.*]

*Valentine.*

Expect the condign punishment you merit! [*in a still deeper voice, & brandishing his Stick, but retreating behind the door, while it is open.*]

*Sir Archy.*

What a complete knave! If I were sure he had no weapon; I'd throttle him! [*aside & advancing, receives a stroke from the brandishing stick.*]  
The devil!—This is the most substantial sort of a spectre!—[*to himself.*]

*Valentine.*

So! so! so! do Ghosts come in Pairs here? I have not cleared the coast yet; but if a little wholesome discipline will do it—[*to himself, & feeling about with his stick.*]

*Sir Archy* [*gliding closely to the wall, to avoid it.*]

My blood boils to take him by the Collar! [*aside.*]

*Valentine.*

'Tis a species of imposter for which I have no mercy. [*aside.*]

*Voices Without.*

Sir Archy! Sir Archy! Sir Archy Fineer!

*Valentine.*

Sir Archy Fineer? Heavens! —let me make my

escape! [*aside, & glides away by the private door, which he closes, as the other is thrown open from without.*]

*Sir Archy.*

Come in, come in!—Bring lights!

*The Same Voices.*

We dare not come in!

*Innis* [*without.*]

We are afraid you have got the Ghost with you!

*Sir Archy.*

Be sure keep guard that no one slip past you (59) through the door. Some villain is parading the chamber with a bludgeon; but I shall soon seize him now.—What can this mean? [*looking round*] Here's nobody!

*Innis* [*coming gently in.*]

Are you sure of that, sir? Poor Mr. Davis is quite in a transe; and the new servants have run down, and say they'll all give warning.

*Sir Archy.*

Which way could he get out?

*Innis.*

Which way? Good la, sir!—Why how should a Ghost vanish, but vanish, you know, sir?

*Sir Archy.*

I see no issue, no door—except this closet.

*Innis.*

But that's the very place, sir! [*whispering.*]

*Sir Archy.*

It is, is it? I'll break it open this very moment, then.

*Innis.*

O lud, how can you be so wicked? [*running away.*]

*Sir Archy.*

'Tis but one of her lovers, I'll be sworn. I won't derange him. The golden rule for-ever! [*aside.*]  
Stay! stay!—Is your young lady up yet?

*Innis.*

Up? yes, sir; & gone out.

*Sir Archy.*



Gone out? Why did not you tell me?

*Innis.*

She would not let me, sir.

*Sir Archy.*

And what's to be said to Lord Ardvile?

*Innis.*

My young lady only bid me tell him she was walked out in the fields.

*Sir Archy.*

And is this the breakfast she has prepared for him? A little torment!—I must fly & stop the old celadon (60) from approaching, till I can catch her for a few more of my worldly lessons. *[aside.]* Be sure tell my adventure to Lord Exbury, & let this room be well examined. Tell him, too, that however ariel may be the Ghost, it weilds a weapon that might make its way through a mob at a contested election. *[Exit.]*

*Innis.*

Gone off?—without so much as a single word with any meaning in it! So then it i'n't Sir Archy neither! So I suppose its nobody, all the time, but a trick! O if I could catch that nasty old Fortune-teller!—I am glad, however, I had not sent off poor Mr. Davis—O lud! if I a'n't left all alone with the Closet! *[runs out.]*

## Scene 2

*[The Study of Lord Exbury. Lord Exbury sits writing. Enter Davis.]*

*Davis.*

May I come in?—O my lord, my lord, I have seen it!

*Lord Exbury.*

Seen what?

*Davis.*

The lady, my lord! the lady that walks—that is, I have seen nothing—for I durst not look up, & we were all in the dark—but it came into the room while I was there, my lord, & ordered me to go straight out of the house!

*Lord Exbury.*

Is it possible, Davis, you can suffer your imagination to transport you thus beyond

reason?

*Davis.*

O my lord, if you had heard such a sound of a voice as I have heard! You would not think it imagination! I never was afraid of the least thing in the World before—never since I was that high *[holding his hand a foot from the ground]*—unless it might just be a wild Cat—or perhaps a mad ox,—or it may be a Bull Dog—or—

*Lord Exbury.*

And did this lady come from the closet Innis has been talking about ?

*Davis.*

I can't pretend to say where she came from, my lord, but she was perilous angry with me—though what for I know no more than the man in the moon—unless it might be the taking her house while she continues walking; for she told me that if ever she surprised me in it again, she'd find a new way out of it for me!—which, I take it, was pretty near the same thing as saying she'd make away with me! *[whispering, & looking round affrighted.]*

*Lord Exbury.*

No more of this, Davis. (61) Let Innis go immediately in search of the house-keeper, & insist upon a public examination of this closet: & do you tell my son Mordaunt that, if he is at leisure, I would speak with him.

*Davis.*

Yes, my lord.—But it's a sad thing not to be believed, just because one is not—sometimes—over-exact, just to a tittle!

*Lord Exbury.*

Let this be a lesson to you, Davis, & the Ghost may prove your friend.

*Davis.*

I humbly hope, at least, your lordship won't stay any longer in this house, for I am fallen away already so with this fright—

*Lord Exbury.*

Make haste, Davis.

*Davis.*

I dare say I weigh six or seven stone lighter than when I came into it.

*Lord Exbury [frowning].*

Davis!

*Davis [in a melancholy tone].*

Half a pound, I hope, at least, my lord, I may say! *[Exit.]*

*Lord Exbury.*

How uniformly it seems the business of Credulity to forget Reason, & annihilate Probability!

*[Re-enter Davis.]*

*Davis.*

I beg pardon, my lord, but I just saw, through the stair case window, the old Gentleman going by, who told all about the lady's walking at Lord Ardville's.

*Lord Exbury.*

O, Mr. Litchburn? I will hear his own account, then; for he is Just as scrupulous to be literal, as you are prodigal to exaggerate. Tell him I should be glad of the pleasure of a moment's conversation with him.

*Davis.*

Yes, my lord. I wish I could know whether the Ghost appeared to him with that same trumpet voice it did to me! but I dare say he'll be bound over not to tell. *[Exit.]*

*Lord Exbury.*

Whatever excites terror, however simply, ought to be traced to its source. Wonder flourishes under obscurity, & Fear has no better patron than mystery.

*[Enter Mr. Litchburn.]*

*Litchburn [before Lord Exbury perceives him].*

I feel as cold as a stone at putting my feet into this house again. Would I were safe out of it again! & I fear 'tis only to question me about lending poor dear Mr. Valentine the key to the Garden Stair-case. *[aside.]*

*Lord Exbury [turning round].*

Mr. Litchburn, I am almost ashamed of troubling you about (62) so foolish a business;

but I understand you are acquainted with some particulars relative to the idle report that this house is haunted?

*Litchburn.*

Alack, yes, my lord! but what's the extraordinary, is to say, that what I have to offer upon this matter, is a something that nobody credits!

*Lord Exbury.*

If the subject is disagreeable to you—

*Litchburn.*

No subject can be disagreeable to me, I hope, my lord, that your worthy lordship has the affability to call up... not even... *[lowering his voice]* the walking lady herself!

*Lord Exbury.*

Favour me, then, with the account.

*Litchburn.*

A young man in my service, my lord, cast an... I am afraid... a sort of an amorous glance at a young damsel belonging to the house-keeper of the lady lately deceased in this house. A complaint being made to me, I forbade such naughtiness: but—you'll never believe it, my lord! —all I said was as good as thrown away!

*Lord Exbury.*

Well?

*Litchburn.*

I'll, rather,—humbly craving your lordship's pardon for letting the truth slip out so rudely. Never suspecting, however, but what I said had won upon him, I always took his part, when I was told of his tricks, 'till one day—it was a Friday—the house-keeper came to me, &, looking full in my face, said I had no Eyes! Upon which,—rather in a pet,—I am afraid,—at such unceremoniousness, No Eyes, Mrs. Patson, says I; why then what may you call these two things here at each side of my nose? upon which she downright told me I was as good as blind! for that the lad had got a key made to what they call the little Garden Stair-case!

*Lord Exbury.*

But what is this to the house being haunted?

*Litchburn.*

It's coming round, my lord, in a surprising manner. I got the key from the lad, as it so happened; on the very eve of the day that the late lady was defunct; but though I talked to him till the tears ran down my Cheeks at the melting things I said, I am dubious if they touched him; for only a week after the poor lady was buried, he took a ladder, at four o'clock in the morning, & mounted it, to get into the house through a closet Window!

*Lord Exbury.*

O,—a closet?

*Litchburn.*

Ah, my good lord, I can hardly tell you!—but, just as he put his hands upon the Window frame—the dead lady appeared before him!

*Lord Exbury.*

Surely, Mr. Litchburn—

*Litchburn.*

She shook her head at him, my lord, as who should say—What do you do here, young sinner?—& waved her hand, gracefully,—as I may do now;—upon which he felt himself turned, quite suddenly, from his wicked courses;—for he fell from the top of the ladder to the bottom!

*Lord Exbury.*

I should be better reconciled to Ghost stories, if I heard oftener so good a moral to them.

*Litchburn.*

He was brought home by some workmen quite in a stound; (63) & when he came to himself, he confessed the whole; &, what I think as much the extraordinary as any, he owned he was more struck with the sight of that dead lady, appearing to him for a moment, than with all I had been at the trouble of saying to him for so many days & hours!

*Lord Exbury.*

And can you really credit all this?

*Litchburn.*

It's surprising to say, my lord, but that is the identical question every body puts to me! However, your good lordship does not yet know

what's to come! I went to the house next day, purporting to deliver up the key, but a thing happened so horrid, that it put it neat out of my head!—which is the way that I had it for the service of your good son.

*Lord Exbury.*

How?—My Son?—

*Litchburn.*

Dear Heart! there's the truth slipping out again! However, pray, my good lord, take no notice of it to the poor young Gentleman, he having begged it to be kept secret, &, most in particular, from your good lordship.

*Lord Exbury.*

Incorrigible Mordaunt! what new clandestine scheme art thou pursuing? [*aside.*] Proceed, Mr. Litchburn.

*Litchburn.*

I made a pretence, my lord, to go to the room where the closet is, not believing the thing then myself; but I found the door was locked!—which it had never been before!—& the House-keeper refused to signify to me the why or the wherefore!—& now, my lord, to come to the worst at once, I contrived to peep through the key-hole—& there—I saw the spectre myself! All white, & standing as stiff as a post! Just in this manner, as I may do now!

*Lord Exbury.*

My dear Mr. Litchburn—

*Litchburn.*

I was never so nigh to a swoon in my life. But I crept away, as well as I could—

*Lord Exbury.*

Without informing the house-keeper what you had seen?

*Litchburn.*

As she would not open the door, my lord, I naturally concluded her under influence.

*Lord Exbury.*

I had imagined superstition of this force confined to the wholly ignorant.

*Litchburn.*

Ah, my lord! what a man has seen with his

Eyes, he finds hard to get out of his head—humbly craving your lordship's pardon for taking the liberty to speak my opinion so uncomplaisantly:—which, indeed, my good Lord Ardville has broken me of doing, till it's somewhat of the extraordinary I don't forget the having one.

*Lord Exbury.*

I am much obliged to you, Mr. Litchburn, for this account; & shall be still more so, if you will be kind enough to remain in the house about half an hour.

*Litchburn [bowing & retiring].*

I should be a beast, my good lord, not to be happy to obey;—though, Heaven knows, I had as lief, to the very full, stand in the stocks—only I won't take such a liberty as to say so! [*aside. Exit.*]

*Lord Exbury.*

Poor simple soul! it will be highly necessary to include him in the party present at unravelling this absurdity. But I must now, alas! exert myself for a far harder task than detecting a village apparition—the task of attempting to touch a heart grown callous to Reason, & dead to Nature, yet alive, "tremblingly alive," (64) to every folly of Fashion. Davis!

[*Enter Davis.*]

Is not Mordaunt coming?

*Davis.*

I will call him again, my lord. I wish the Ghost would call him! I warrant he would not want so many biddings! [*Exit.*]

*Lord Exbury.*

Yet, had it been he who thus had failed me, though for his sake alone I have forced this severe measure upon my family, it would less acutely have wounded me. Our disappointments are but proportioned to our expectations; & what are the paternal hopes that Mordaunt has not long since blighted? But Valentine—by him to be deserted in distress! —by him, neglected in sorrow! Where must I look for sympathy? to whom turn for zeal, or virtue?—O Valentine! son of my cherished hopes! whatever it may be that hath wrought thee to this change, short be

its duration, that I may know again my son!

[*Enter Mordaunt.*]

*Mordaunt.*

I am afraid I have made you wait, my lord.

*Lord Exbury.*

Not much. What unfeeling ease! [*aside.*]

*Mordaunt.*

Not that you can have any thing of consequence to do with your time, to be sure, in such a place as this.

*Lord Exbury.*

Astonishing! his courage almost diverts me of self-command! [*aside.*]

*Mordaunt.*

Had not you better sit down, my lord? [*taking a Chair, & seating himself.*]

*Lord Exbury.*

My heart swells with resentment. I shall become violent. I had better postpone my purpose. [*aside.*]

*Mordaunt.*

The truth is, I was taking a little nap.

*Lord Exbury.*

How he disorders me! Is this apathy? or assurance? [*aside.*]

*Mordaunt.*

I have a miserable room up there, my lord; full of holes & cracks. This is much better,—of the two.

*Lord Exbury.*

I must not lecture him now. I dare not trust myself. [*aside.*] Mr. Exbury, [*with constrained calmness.*] I will not detain you at present. Come to me in the evening.

*Mordaunt.*

Very well, my lord. But I was thinking, if you make no other use of this room than just writing in it, if you could not as well change with me.

*Lord Exbury.*

I am urged too far! [*aside*] Mordaunt!—[*with*

*emotion.]*

*Mordaunt [without looking at him].*

Being visited by the zephyrs where one sleeps,  
won't do at all.

*Lord Exbury [with severity].*

Mordaunt!

*Mordaunt [still looking another way].*

And as to the shabbiness of the room, it can't  
much signify; for you'll never think of letting  
any one in while we live in such a manner as  
this.

*Lord Exbury.*

I am overpowered! *[aside.]* Mordaunt! *[striking  
his hand upon the Table]* hear me!

*Mordaunt [starting].*

What's the matter, my lord?

*Lord Exbury.*

It is strange, &, no doubt, it is wrong, but I am  
not master of myself sufficiently to disguise that  
your insensibility, at this moment, offends me  
yet more keenly than your vices!

*Mordaunt.*

So! now the Storm is coming on! *[aside, but  
keeping his seat.]*

*Lord Exbury.*

Various are the excuses, & many the palliations  
for the indiscretions of youth, where repentance  
follows misdeeds, & error is succeeded by  
calamity: but so impenetrably are you hardened,  
that you seem as indifferent to the consequences  
of your faults, as to their heinousness.

*Mordaunt.*

I am frightened to death lest I should drop  
asleep before he has done! *[aside.]*

*Lord Exbury.*

The smallest appearance of concern would  
soften us all; one single moment of contrition  
subdue us completely.—

*Mordaunt.*

He'll never forgive it if I do! *[aside.]*

*Lord Exbury.*

But no! you drive your sister, in her first bloom,  
from the World; rob your Brother, in his  
opening prospects, of the assistance of his  
family, & sever your Father, in the decline of  
his life, from his friends, his habits, & his  
comforts.—

*Mordaunt.*

I wish he'd have done! *[aside.]*

*Lord Exbury.*

And all with as careless an indolence as if you  
were but blowing bubbles into the air!—alas!  
bubbles we are indeed! —not, it is true, so gay  
in our colours, or so transparent in our  
composition, but as unsubstantial, as frail,—&  
nearly, as evanescent!

*Mordaunt.*

He don't talk ill—if he were not so long.  
*[aside.]*

*Lord Exbury.*

And for what?—tell me, I beseech! for what  
have you adopted expences thus ruinous to your  
fortune, & destructive of your integrity? For  
what, I conjure you tell me!—are we all round  
sacrificed —Will you not answer?

*Mordaunt [starting].*

My lord?

*Lord Exbury.*

Has it been to assist some object in distress?

*Mordaunt.*

Sir!

*Lord Exbury.*

To help a friend?

*Mordaunt.*

Ha?

*Lord Exbury.*

To serve your country?

*Mordaunt.*

What a set of queer questions! *[aside.]*

*Lord Exbury.*

No!—it has been but to buy finer Horses than  
some other spendthrift! to bet higher wagers

than some other profligate! & to drown reason in better wines than some other futile waster of life & faculties!

*Mordaunt.*

He does not spare for cutting! [*aside.*]

*Lord Exbury.*

Pitiful pre-eminence! Ambition is not a word it merits; even the meanest is higher—even the greatest not more mischievous. Yet you have the courage to complain of an inconvenience! Mordaunt! if your privations were incurred by doing good to a single fellow creature, they would render you an object of pity; but in springing solely from your own wilful folly, they must be considered but as a part of it. [*a pause.*] Are you determined not to answer?

*Mordaunt.*

My lord!

*Lord Exbury.*

Perhaps you have not even heard me? Well, sir, I have done! This total want of feeling you think, I presume, philosophy? But have a care how you support it! You can see, unmoved, your family in anguish; but—mean, wretched trembler at the imperious bar of Fashion!—let any one inform you, that your Hat is not in the dimensions of that last fop whose model has been admired—and you will change colour, & betray immediate disturbance!

*Mordaunt.*

My hat, my lord? [*looking at it anxiously.*]  
What's the matter with my hat?

*Lord Exbury.*

O Mordaunt, it is time, indeed, I should have done! I have not been able to touch you—but I have tortured myself! [*Exit.*]

*Mordaunt.*

I thought he would mount his great horse. But what the devil put it in his head to talk of my hat? Is it not the thing, I wonder? Plague take it!—not that he understands much of the matter. He has cured me of my sleeping fit, however! He's been cursedly severe. But I forgive him. He is not quite without reason. I've been but a fool, I believe. I feel devilish queer. I must not give the thing up, though. I'll go look for the Fortune-

teller, I think—and make him send me a few shepherdesses to amuse me. [*Exit.*]

### Scene 3

[*A beautiful country prospect, presenting distant hills, & groups of Trees. Enter Dawson.*]

*Dawson.*

Now if I were not looking for this fellow, I should meet him at every turn. A sorry rascal! one of his pieces of fun, quotha? I wish I could light on him! I'd soon teach him to make so merry with me! Mrs. Innis is a very smart Girl, no doubt; but what am I?—If ever she meets with a man who for good looks, or a pretty sort of way with him, or a genteel turn, is so much as to be compared with me—I'll say I'm no judge;—that's all!

[*Enter a Wood Cutter, loaded.*]

This way, my lad!—Have you seen any thing in your walks of a grim hulky fellow that's lurking hereabouts?

*Wood Cutter.*

Not I! I be seeing after something mainly better. I do no' look for such like.

*Dawson.*

Why he's a cunning man. He could tell you your fortune.

*Wood Cutter.*

Could he? I do guess I could tell it myself, partly .

*Dawson.*

Ay? What is it, then?

*Wood Cutter.*

Neighbour's fare; to work hard till it comes, & then play till it goes!

*Dawson.*

Will you help me to hunt him?

*Wood Cutter.*

Ay, master—when I cannot get better game. But I be but of a faint stomach to start after the worst, when I may start after the best.

*Dawson.*



The best? Why you don't pretend to be a Sportsman?

*Wood Cutter.*  
Yes, but I do.

*Dawson.*  
And what do you chace?

*Wood Cutter.*  
Three things, master, that may be but a trifle to great folk, but that do serve to keep me in special plight: & the first, it be a good stomach, by earning with my hands what I do put into my mouth & the second, it be good rest at nights, by falling foul of no man, & the third, it be the best of any, for it be a sweet'ning to all my labours, an they were tenfold more; for it be the promise of Kate that, come the day she will marry me. & then, I warr'nt you, we shall bless one another with such a mart of little ones, as there won't be the like in all the parish. & we will tend 'em, & nurse 'em, together—till we be old enough, & weakly enough, for they to tend & nurse we.

*Dawson.*  
Who's Kate?

*Wood Cutter.*  
Do no' you know Kate? You do come from some far country, thee; for, here about, there be none so oafish but do know pretty Kate.

*Dawson.*  
Well but, my lad,—

*Wood Cutter.*  
I canno' prate any more, man, for I do think I see her, yinder;—& if it be she, she be looking for I. [*Exit.*]

*Dawson.*  
Now that such a young rascal as that can get a pretty Girl to trip after him sooner than such a man as I! If it don't make me sick, I'm a dog. However, Mrs. Innis may do as she likes; but if she lives to be as old as Mother Red Cap, & as ugly as Mother Shipton, (65) she'll never have such another offer as mine. I question, indeed, when all's put together—little as I am given to think much of my own merits—whether such

another offer (66) is to be had. [*Exit.*]

[*Enter Hilaria.*]

*Hilaria.*  
Ah, here I am again, enjoying this delightful retreat, once more in happy liberty. Are the beauties of Nature all left to the poorer classes? And when again I have a Carriage, shall I again neglect them? Arrange my head so daintily as to dread every wind of Heaven? My feet so slightly, that they will shrink from the touch of the Earth? And make all the elements my enemies by the delicacy of my apparel? Relinquish views that enrapture my senses? Exercise, that invigorates my health? And a contemplation of Nature in its sweet simplicity that exalts my Soul? Ah, if even in solitude I am thus enchanted, what must be the rural life with a chosen companion? How my reflections run away with me! I must not heed them. No! Happiness is so impossible without Wealth—What are those two young Persons? A pair of true *loveyers* by their fond looks. Poor wretches! how I pity them! And can Love exist where toil must occupy the time, & meanness the character?

[*Enter the Wood Cutter, with a load of wood, & the Hay Maker, with a rake, holding by his arm. Hilaria retreats, but keeps in sight.*]

*Hay Maker.*  
Nay, nay, but put down thy load, & rest thee, dear Tom.

*Wood Cutter.*  
Dost think me tired—& thee so nigh, Kate?

*Hay Maker.*  
Nay, but a while, Tom;—I do pray it of thee!

*Wood Cutter [unloading].*  
Then will I do it, for I can gainsay thee in nothing. Wilt not sit by me, Kate? Nay, nigher.—Dost think I would hurt thee, my wench? Dost not know I would die first? But why dost take it in thy fancy, Kate, that I be so main soon tired? An I were such a poor hand as that, what would become of thee when we shall be fetching a walk together of a Sunday, & three or four of thy little ones be clinging about us, & calling out, Dad! take me up! Pretty dears! dost



think I could let 'em crawl on? No, no; I be n't so stone-hearted.

*Hay Maker [turning from him].*  
Nay, Tom, nay!—

*Wood Cutter.*  
Why art thy cheeks so red, Kate? Be'st ashamed? Thee'llt be the loveliest mother in all the Parish. How shall I bestride me home, when I bethink me that thee & thy little ones be on the watch for me! I shall have my heart in my shoes, Kate, till I get to thee —& then, I warr'nt, it will be bouncing into thy bosom. But I'll ne'er come within till I have earned wherewithal to gladden thee.

*Hay Maker.*  
Ah, Tom! will not thy sight do that? How will I rub, & clean, & brighten my platters, & my pans, & my nice red bricks, to make them all shine, & look sightly, to welcome thee!

*Wood Cutter.*  
But, Kate, why be'st thee so shy? Shalt not like to see thy own little prattlers, climbing up thy knees, & playing pretty gambols around thee?

*Hay Maker.*  
If thee couldst keep 'em, Tom!—

*Wood Cutter.*  
Keep 'em, Kate? Look at my arm? What dost fancy 'twas gi'n me for? not to dandle beside me, like a lout, & do nothing, but to work for thee, Kate! to fight for thee, & to hold thee to my heart! *[going to embrace her.]*

*Hay Maker.*  
Nay, nay,—but not yet, Tom!—

*Wood Cutter.*  
But when, Kate, when?—We ha' been asked out & out; when, then, when?

*Hay Maker.*  
Art thee not too poor, Tom, yet?

*Wood Cutter.*  
Dost want to be rich, Kate?

*Hay Maker.*  
Yes, Tom,—for Thee!

*Wood Cutter.*  
And for Thee, my Kate, I be proud to be poor! How could I prove my true love, an I were rich? I could but go share & share with what I should not know which way to withhold from thee: but now, my Kate, I will work—that Thou mayst feed: I will labour,—that Thou mayst be cloathed: & with the sweat of my brow I will thatch the roof that shall shelter thy dear head! Where's the rich man, Kate, that can prove true love like this?—When, then, when?

*Hay Maker.*  
Dear Tom—when thee wilt!

*Wood Cutter.*  
Sunday?

*Hay Maker.*  
Ah, Tom!—'t be but three days to Sunday!

*Wood Cutter.*  
Ah, Kate!—will not every day after be shorter?

*Hay Maker.*  
If thee thinkst so, Tom—

*Wood Cutter.*  
Come, then, let's to the Parson together, & tell him a bit of our mind. I'll make thee a koind husband, Kate!

*Hay Maker.*  
Dear Tom!—I'll make thee a loving Wife!

*[Exeunt.]*

*Hilaria [coming forward].*  
Heavens! what a scene! I feel almost annihilated!—I might have spared, alas, my pity for myself! Can I see, & not emulate, affection that has thus its source in Virtue? O Valentine! for Thee could I not, also, watch & wait? listen for thy step, & at thy loved approach—

*[The Strange Man crosses the stage.]*

Ah, there's that ill looking man I observed skulking about yesterday. He seems watching for some one, &, I fear, with evil intent.—Oh happy Pair! Objects of Envy, not disdain! I will fit up, at least, your little cottage, I will furnish your wedding Garments, I will—Ah! Sir

Archy—Now must I rally—or die!—

[Enter Sir Archy Fineer.]

*Sir Archy.*

Ah ha, my little Cousin! whither are you running? To Gretna Green?

*Hilaria.*

I am glad, at least, you are in such good humour. I was almost afraid to see you.

*Sir Archy.*

No, no; we must never dwell upon grievances. But whence comes it, my fair fugitive, you think it necessary to lead your poor Strephon such a dance?

*Hilaria.*

O Sir Archy! I must speak to you sincerely. I am ready to expire!—'Tis so shocking—so abominable, giving a man one's hand, when one hates him so cordially! I have been considering the matter over gravely, & thinking what my horror will be, when I get into my carriage—O Sir Archy!—to see Him at my Elbow!—when I enter my house to have no right to prevent Him from entering it also!—&, when I want to be alone—O Sir Archy!—to make a scruple of bidding the footman shut the door in his face!

*Sir Archy.*

Why all this is rather irksome, I confess.

*Hilaria.*

Is it not provoking one can't marry a man's fortune, without marrying himself? that one can't take a fancy to his mansions, his parks, his establishment,—but one must have his odious society into the bargain?

*Sir Archy.*

But think how soon you'll be free.

*Hilaria.*

No; I hate to think about people's dying.

*Sir Archy.*

But you don't hate to think about people's being comfortably wrapt in fleecy hosiery,—reclined on an easy chair, & unable, by the month together, to hop after & torment their fair mates?

*Hilaria.*

Why no—that is not quite disagreeable. But, really, poor Women are cruelly off: 'tis so prodigious a temptation to be made mistress in a moment of mansions, carriages, domestics—to have Time, Power, & Pleasure cast at once at their disposal—

*Sir Archy.*

And where is the cruelty of all this?

*Hilaria.*

It's accompaniment is so often discordant! If the regard of Lord Ardville be sincere—why can he not settle half his wealth upon me at once, without making me a prisoner for life in return?

*Sir Archy.*

Why that would be disinterested, I own; but you must forgive the brightness of your Eyes, that has rendered him more selfish. He is not, however, illiberal, for he had proposed this very morning adorning your breakfast Table with a case of Jewels of the finest Gems of the East.

*Hilaria.*

Indeed? But how came they to be set so soon?

*Sir Archy.*

They belonged to his late lady, during his splendid Eastern embassy. But that is of no import to you. You are deciding, I find, upon a more simple mode of life?

*Hilaria.*

I think so!

*Sir Archy.*

And a mate who has none of these fopperies to present to you?

*Hilaria.*

No, no, no mate at all.

*Sir Archy.*

You blush a little, though—Ah, Cousin! after prospects, offers, possessions such as these—shall I wait upon you to dine on a scrag of mutton, & a rice pudding?

*Hilaria.*

No, no, no!—

*Sir Archy.*

Hear you ring your bell, when you want to go out, that you may order—your Pattens? (67)

*Hilaria.*

Fie—

*Sir Archy.*

When I enquire for your servant at a public place, hearken to a child's voice that squeaks out, Ready, Sir! & see a little Imp jump up, not three feet high?

*Hilaria.*

What pleasure you take in teizing!

*Sir Archy.*

Or, when I call your Carriage for you myself, be told—'tis Number 347? (68)

*Hilaria.*

You are quite ill-natured. I'll hear no more.  
[walking away.]

*Sir Archy.*

And will you, also, see no more? [producing a chagrin case.] (69)

*Hilaria.*

What do you mean?

*Sir Archy.*

That before you entirely decide, you will view the contents of this case, entrusted to my presentation by his lordship.

*Hilaria.*

No, no!

*Sir Archy* [opening the box].

Tell me if ever—

*Hilaria.*

I won't see them, I protest. [walking off, but looking back.] How they glitter!

*Sir Archy.*

Ah, sweet Coz!

*Hilaria.*

Nay, I don't deny it's a sort of madness to refuse—but I have witnessed, just now, so touching a union of happiness with simplicity, nay, with poverty, that—

*Sir Archy.*

I know, then, what you are thinking of! but when you hear that a certain youth—now why cast down your Eyes?— is utterly ruined—

*Hilaria.*

Good heaven!

*Sir Archy.*

Ay, to his last shilling!—but 'tis a secret, because an affair of honour. (70) You must not, therefore, even hint at it. Nor should I divulge it, but to shew you, in time, your alternative. Valentine is only gone to town, to escape from a person who is come down into the Country to arrest him.

*Hilaria.*

That's the very man, then, I have seen dodging about! Dear unhappy Lord Exbury!—And can Valentine too,—even Valentine—O Sir Archy!—

*Sir Archy.*

You will have a thousand opportunities to serve them all when Lady Ardvile; but you can only encrease their distress in any other capacity.

*Hilaria.*

Give me, then, the Jewels! [seizing the case] Beautiful as they are, I will but possess to devote them to the aid of my beloved & excellent Guardian, to whom of right they ought to belong!

*Sir Archy.*

You accept them?

*Hilaria.*

Alas—Yes!—I do!—

*Sir Archy.*

Lord Ardvile will be at your feet, then, in ten minutes.

*Hilaria.*

Well—it can't be helped!—I'll never allow myself to think again—that's all! [Exit abruptly.]

*Sir Archy* [laughing].

Shew me the Woman who can resist a case of Jewels, &—Egad, & I'll look out for a Gamester who'll decline to hold a Pharo Table! *[Exit.]*

## END OF ACT IV

### Act V

#### Scene 1

*[The beautiful country landscape, with hills & groups of trees. Mordaunt saunters in.]*

*Mordaunt.*

I see nothing of this conjuror. It's being devilishly hard driven to look out for such a resource; &, after all, as the good old Gentleman says, what the deuce it is makes us run this cursed race, & never stop till we are blown up, (71) is more than I quite understand, though I have played so deeply in the Game. I thought to have found it devilishly pleasanter. But every body does it. So there's no help. Ha! probably that's my necromancer!

*[Enter the Strange Man.]*

*Strange Man.*

Why I can light of all on um but Mr. Valentine.  
*[aside.]*

*Mordaunt.*

Harkee, friend—Are you the fellow that tells fortunes in this neighbourhood?

*Strange Man.*

Ay, your honour, one does what one can to turn a penny.

*Mordaunt.*

Well, I sha'n't fatigue your ingenuity to tell me mine; but, harkee,—go towards the village, &, by means of your art, persuade the first two or three young damsels you meet, that, if they come to this spot, they will see the exact resemblance of their destined sweethearts. Here!  
*[gives him money.]*

*Strange Man.*

Very well, your honour.—Icod, this is rare fun enough! I'll tip the Master the same compliment I tip the Wallets. I likes to serve all with the

same sarse. *[aside. Exit.]*

*Mordaunt.*

Now let's see what this will do for us—scanning the ideas of little field savages upon Love & Marriage. Devilishly hard driven! devilishly! I wish to my Soul I had never touched a dice.—Ah ha! one of the Natives coming down already! How eagerly she sucks in his fine promises! Poor little toad! 'tis almost ill-natured to set her upon looking out for a man of my figure among her louts of lovers. It may make her turn off Pretender after Pretender, till she ends in leading apes. (72)

*[Enter the Hay Maker.]*

Ha! here already!—What shall I do to prevent her being afraid of me? She can hardly ever have been spoken to by a man of Fashion before. Come hither, little maid. You're a pretty Girl, 'pon honour.

*Hay Maker.*

So they do tell me, Master. *[courtsying.]*

*Mordaunt.*

They do, do they? But you don't believe them?

*Hay Maker.*

Foie, then! I do believe all the World. But so Tom do fancy me, it be all one to I what I be.

*Mordaunt.*

Tom? O, there's a Tom, is there?

*Hay Maker.*

Yes; And I be a looking for him up & down. May hap you do know to shew me which way he be?

*Mordaunt.*

O, very likely!

*Hay Maker.*

You may be years & years before you do guess the good luck I have to tell him. Why one of the fine folk come to yon house thinder, have sent me a new Gown, & Tom a new Coat, for no one yearthly thing but for we two to be married in!

*Mordaunt.*

And is that what brought you this way?

*Hay Maker.*

Why no,—partly—for I do think Tom be gone yinder, up the hill. But I did meet with a man who do say he be a Conjuror; & he told me if I would be of good heart, to look at something froightful, an I would come this way, & star it full in the face, it would bring me main good luck.

*Mordaunt.*

And is that all he said to you about coming to this spot?

*Hay Maker.*

Yes; And I be a peering & a looking, & a looking & a peering, & no one yearthly thing can I see but only you—so I do hope no offence, but I do e'en almost think it must be You, Master.

*Mordaunt.*

What!

*Hay Maker.*

Why you would no' be sorry to bring a poor lassy good luck—would ee, now?

*Mordaunt.*

Why what the deuce! do you think I look like something *froightful*, then?

*Hay Maker.*

You mayn't be affronted, Master, for you may be main good, an you be never so plain.

*Mordaunt.*

I may, may I? Commend me to your consolation! I appear to you very plain, then, do I?

*Hay Maker.*

Nay, Master, I've seen worser looking men;—no offence, I hope.

*Mordaunt.*

O, you have? That's comforting, however.

*Hay Maker.*

There be our parish clerk—he have a hair lip; & a large big wart do hang to his Chin, that do make him look like unto a scare crow.

*Mordaunt.*

O, so you think I am rather better than a scare crow?

*Hay Maker.*

Yes, I do, Master.

*Mordaunt.*

You do? I wish I may die if this i'n't agreeable enough! & pray, what's Tom? I must not presume, I suppose, to be as handsome as Tom?

*Hay Maker.*

As Tom? Why he be the likeliest lad of all our Parish! He be as ruddy as a rose, & as strait as a Poplar; & his two Eyes do shoine as broight as two glow worms in a dark lane after sun set. You as handsome as Tom? Why all our folk would e'en almost laugh to hear you.

*Mordaunt.*

They would, would they? I am only like the Parish clerk, then, maybe?

*Hay Maker.*

Ah, yinder he be! I must run to tell him of our fine new geer. [*Exit.*]

*Mordaunt.*

A facetious encounter enough! My Fortune-teller is a good pleasant sort of a wag. I should not be sorry to lop both his Ears off. A Parish clerk, with a hare lip, & a large big wort pendant from the Chin!—A little ignorant, impertinent Pauper!—Well, it i'n't worth resenting; but I'll make off before I have any more of this rural sport. I've had enough. [*Exit.*]

[*Enter Lord Ardville & Sir Archy.*]

*Lord Ardville.*

I am ill disposed to go on, Sir Archy.

*Sir Archy.*

O, relent, my lord, relent! The freaks of female youth are not worth a man's attention. Leave them alone, & they wear away of themselves—though 'tis odds, I own, but they wear you away first! [*aside.*]

*Lord Ardville.*

It may be so, Sir Archy, but I beg it may be understood I submit to no liberties, let them be

obtruded from what quarter they may.

*Sir Archy.*

Nay, nay, my lord, 'tis vain to oppose Destiny. What Hero has borne, you must bear. A young Beauty, in the first flight of her charms, makes at every point of attraction in half an Hour; now radiant in smiles, now glowing with blushes, now melting into Tears. No Fawn is more timid,—yet no Colt is so skittish; no Dove is more tender—yet no monkey so delights in mischief. If she looks at you with softness turn & see what Rival she would hang, or drown; if she exclaim You are a good Creature! make speedy enquiry if she has not told her confident you are a fool:—but, if she says You wicked Wretch, I can't bear You!—open your arms,—for she means to run into them. Yet call her capricious, & she breaks with you! Call her false—& she only pats you with her Fan. Reproach her with a foible, & she is like a heroine in despair: forsake her altogether, & in three weeks the little Gipsy stares at You as a new acquaintance. You storm—she laughs; you reason—she pouts: you humble yourself—she softens; you catch her—but, if you look another way, though it be but to thank your stars—before you can look again, she is dancing off!—Ah, my lord, what sleepy business were life, if Woman,—as well as Man, were, really, a rational being!

*Lord Ardvile.*

I never yet formed a plan that was so ill combined as to fail, Sir Archy; & I wish to have it understood, I never intend it.

*Sir Archy.*

This will not produce an exception, be assured, my lord.

*Lord Ardvile.*

Well, sir, if you are so confident —

*Sir Archy.*

I am. Come on, my lord, come on!

## Scene 2

*[The inner Chamber. Enter Hilaria, with the case of Jewels.]*

*Hilaria.*

In this room, I shall be free from interruption, for no one dare enter it. O Valentine!—but I will never think of him again!—No!—I will provide for the virtuous Wood-Cutter & Hay-maker—but never ruminates upon their happy lot—No!—I will examine these beautiful gems, & dwell upon the plan of good which shall succeed when their novelty is over,—but admit no retrospection!—none! none!—O Valentine! I must turn wholly from the past, & strain every nerve, to acquire courage, at length, to look this frightful old Peer in the face. *[opens the case.]* They are really most sumptuous. I'll shut the door & try them on. *[Shuts the door, & goes to a looking glass.]* How becoming this is!—And how elegant this!—O, I never saw such a love as this beautiful—ah!—Good God! —who's there?—

*[Valentine, softly opening the private door, advances gently, & appears to her in the Glass.]*

*Valentine.*

Once again, madam,—

*Hilaria.*

Heavens!

*Valentine.*

And yet more unopportunately than before, I have the misfortune to give you unwelcome surprise; but the employment which I interrupt, shews me that the purpose for which I ventured to approach you is already out of date. *[He retires.]*

*Hilaria. [in great confusion, pulling of the Jewels, & putting them into the case].*

I was only—I did not mean—I was merely—*[turning round]*. He is gone!—what a barbarous incident! He will think me revelling in the spoils of which I seem to bereave his family! —And if he appear now, he will be seized by that horrible bailiff!—Ah! *[runs to the door he has just closed.]* Mr. Exbury!—Mr. Valentine!—

*Valentine [returning].*

Do you permit me to come back?

*Hilaria.*

For heaven's sake, be careful how you leave the

house!—There is a man—there is a person—who is watching—who, I hear from Sir Archy—

*Valentine.*

Is it possible! has Sir Archy betrayed —

*Hilaria.*

No, no—he only said—I only gathered—in short, never mind how I heard it, but don't terrify me by running into the very midst of danger!

*Valentine.*

Amiable, generous Hilaria! Would You save Me, & shall I not try to save You? Since my ruined situation is now known to You, I may speak with more propriety, more courage, for in learning that I am.... undone, you cannot deem me villain enough to mean to plead for myself.

*Hilaria.*

And what do I care for any thing else? [*aside.*]

*Valentine.*

I must be plain, for my time is short. May I—will you give me leave to be explicit?

*Hilaria.*

What is it you wish to say?

*Valentine.*

I would frankly urge you to examine your own motives for accepting Lord Ardville.

*Hilaria.*

Pshaw!

*Valentine.*

And I would honestly point out to you the consequences for yourself to which your acceptance may lead.

*Hilaria.*

I can see no use in all this—but if it will give you any pleasure—

*Valentine.*

With a thousand native good qualities—sweetness, sense, kindness, spirit—You have suffered yourself—pardon me, Miss Dalton, to become merely a Vassal, a cypher in the dominion of Fashion.

*Hilaria.*

And who, that lives in the World, is otherwise?

*Valentine.*

All—who dare think for themselves, or who feel for others!

*Hilaria.*

Your most obedient!

*Valentine.*

Let me not anger you—yet I come forward now solely as a friend, & if I can hope to convince, must refrain from sparing you. But, not of you, individually, do I at this moment speak: your excellencies would counterbalance a thousand foibles; I mean but to paint that vortex of Fashion into which you are drawn, & to whose capricious, but despotic laws, if you are not upon your guard, Time & habit may reconcile you.

*Hilaria.*

Only one previous question: do not you allow yourself to be—rather—a little—severe?

*Valentine.*

You must judge that; but, if I am just, disdain not to listen. The votaries, the general votaries of Fashion, weak rather than wicked, are less the slaves of their own follies, than of those of others. They do not, therefore, in their matrimonial choice, enquire whom they prefer, or whom they dislike: their sole solicitude is to gather whom their associates will approve, or will scorn. For themselves, if self-consulted, they might, perhaps, acknowledge, that an amiable companion would make them happier than the trappings of a Coach horse; but when they ask what is said around them, they find the equipage alone considered the Companion not thought of: his disposition never investigated, his principles never examined, his humours, his age, nay, his character left to chance—as if all, save his establishment, were immaterial to happiness.

*Hilaria.*

Now don't say more shocking things than you can help!

*Valentine.*



For purposes such as these—for the gratification of bye standers, the applause of lookers on—are we to chuse the friends of our bosom?—the Partners of our days?

*Hilaria.*

Why it is but—foolish, to be sure!

*Valentine.*

For This was that sacred union ordained? For This were we gifted with descriminative faculties? Invested with taste? Endued with powers of reflexion? a sense of virtue? a love of excellence? a soul of sympathy?—

*Hilaria [turning away from him].*

Now don't speak—& look too!

*Valentine.*

You wish, I know, to unite Love with Fashion?

*Hilaria [turning quick back to him].*

You are right! That alone would answer my ideas of complete felicity.

*Valentine.*

And will the heart, think you, be content to be the servant of Appearance? No! You will find such a union impracticable. The happiness of true Love is domestic life: the very existence of Fashion is public admiration.

*Hilaria [disturbed].*

We don't, you know, all think exactly alike about these things—however, make haste,—for really—

*Valentine [with encreased energy].*

Do those who trample upon Nature, imagine they destroy her? The attempt is shallow & vain. While we breath the vital air, while existence is accorded us, be she abused, disguised, offended as she may, Nature will still rise triumphant, & assert her claims!

*Hilaria [with emotion].*

Well, now—is not this enough?

*Valentine [with a softened tone].*

Ah then!—when you are satiated with art, & artifice, & Nature—all powerful Nature, resume her dominion —when the vanities of life, losing their charm with their novelty, give silent, instinctive way to the impressions of the heart,

how dreadful the self-view of the wilful martyr at the shrine of Interest!—

*Hilaria.*

No more!—no more!—

*Valentine.*

Honour bartered for wealth—yet irretrievably shackled!—Tenderness cast away for shew,—yet divested of all right of complaint!—Domestic bliss sacrificed for luxury—yet never more to be attained!—nor even sought, nor even hoped for,—except by the fatal road of frailty—dishonour—& guilty, premeditated divorce!

*Hilaria [bursting into tears].*

O Valentine!—you wish to kill me!

*Valentine.*

Mercenary ties are ultimately miserable, because radically dishonest. Virtuous love is as truly the principle of conjugal happiness, as untainted integrity is of bosom repose. To forego the first, you consign your youth to regret; to tarnish the last, you deliver up your latter days to remorse.

*Hilaria [casting herself upon the sofa].*

I die!

*Valentine [kneeling, & kissing her hand].*

Forgive—& forget me!—but remember my exhortation,—& bestow not your unhallowed hand, where you withhold your generous heart!  
[Exit, with precipitation.]

[Hilaria covers her face, & remains motionless.  
Enter Davis.]

*Davis [standing at the door].*

Lord Ardville, ma'am, & Sir Archy Fineer

*Hilaria [starting up].*

Where is Lord Exbury? [runs out.]

*Davis.*

She goes so fast, I take it, for fear of the closet! I'm sure I won't be behind hand! [running after.]

### Scene 3

*[Lord Exbury's Study. Lord Exbury sits writing.]*

*Hilaria [without].*  
Where is Lord Exbury?

*[Enter Hilaria. She runs to Lord Exbury & flings herself upon one knee before him.]*

*Hilaria.*  
I cast myself upon your goodness, my dear lord, I fly to you for aid—counsel—support! Save me, I beseech you, the horror of an explanation with Lord Ardville,—save me the danger of derision & persecution from Sir Archy! Act for me, dearest Lord Exbury! I am upon the brink of perjury & wretchedness, & have not fortitude to act for myself!

*Lord Exbury [raising her].*  
Rise, my dear Hilaria; this posture oppresses me. What can I ever have power to do for you, that the most simple request will not obtain?

*Hilaria.*  
O my lord! I recoil with penitence from the ungenerous part I have been performing! My Eyes are now opened, & I look back upon myself with disdain.

*Lord Exbury.*  
What step do you wish me to take?

*Hilaria.*  
Send for Lord Ardville, return him these Jewels, & tell him I can't help it,—but—I find I hate him more & more!—

*Lord Exbury.*  
And is that all? *[half smiling.]*

*Hilaria.*  
I know I have no right to impose upon you so disagreeable a task, yet, consider—

*Lord Exbury.*  
I do consider that the impulse of Conscience ought never to be checked. You shall command me. Is my Brother here?

*Hilaria.*  
Yes, with Sir Archy Fineer, in the chamber they called the Ghost room.

*Lord Exbury.*

That may prove a fortunate circumstance; to speak of so ludicrous a report, will somewhat lessen the awkward solemnity of our meeting. Mordaunt & my daughter shall accompany me to receive him; &, while they engage the attention of Sir Archy, I will execute as I can!—my commission. *[Exit.]*

*Hilaria.*  
Heavens! if Valentine should have neglected to fasten the private door!—I'll fly to the adjoining room, & watch, &, if there should be any danger—run every risk to turn it from—or share it with him! *[Exit.]*

#### Scene 4

*[The inner Chamber. Lord Ardville, & Sir Archy Fineer. Enter, to them, Lord Exbury, Mordaunt, & Miss Exbury.]*

*Lord Exbury.*  
Sir Archy, your most obedient Brother, let me welcome you to my Cottage, where, if I cannot regale you according to my wishes, I may at least amuse you beyond your expectations, for know! you are now in a Chamber that, by village report, is haunted.

*Miss Exbury.*  
O, it's vastly foolish to believe in such things, but yet, I can assure you—

*[Enter Davis.]*

*Davis [only putting his head in the door].*  
My lord, Mr. Litchburn humbly begs to know whether he may go home? not that he presumes, he says, to be in any hurry, for he is very sensible, he says, of the honour of waiting two hours in the cold; only—

*Lord Exbury.*  
Poor Mr. Litchburn! I really beg his pardon. He is a principal character in this Ghost drama. Ask him up.

*Davis.*  
Up here, my lord?

*Sir Archy [laughing].*  
Ah, Davis, you have not forgotten our Ghost

adventure? Why do you only put in your head?

*Davis.*

Please your honour—that my heels may be on the road to carry it off! *[Exit.]*

*Miss Exbury.*

Sir Archy is amazingly at his ease, I think! however, I am very glad of it, for he's so vastly shy about the settlement & the Pin money, that it has quite conquered my partiality for him. *[aside.]*

*Lord Exbury [apart to Mordaunt].*

Mordaunt, did I not beg you to entertain Sir Archy while I spoke with your Uncle?

*Mordaunt.*

My lord?—I entertain Sir Archy?—what the deuce can the good old Gentleman have gotten into his head to suppose I should take that trouble? *[aside, & throwing himself on the sofa.]*

*[Enter Mr. Litchburn, shewn in by Davis, who is retiring.]*

*Miss Exbury.*

Come in, Davis. I want you to shew me the very spot where the Ghost appeared to you. *[Makes Davis enter, with whom she discourses apart.]*

*Litchburn.*

My good lord! I humbly hope your good lordship won't command me in here? Why that's the very closet!—I'm all in an ague!—Not but I'm proud of the honour!

*[Enter Innis, out of breath.]*

*Innis.*

O, my young lady is not here? I was just coming to tell about the Ghost.

*Miss Exbury.*

The Ghost? O dear, Mrs. Innis,— don't say any thing frightful!

*Lord Exbury.*

Give your account, Mrs. Innis.

*Davis.*

The Ghost! I wish to the lord I were at the land's End!—at least, as far off as Kensington Gravel

Pits!

*Litchburn [trembling].*

I'm in such a prodigious shake, I am afraid my Wig will fall off my head! *[holding on his wig.]*

*Sir Archy.*

A dispatch from the Ghost? Deliver it, I entreat, fair Innis. My nocturnal recreation gives me a peculiar interest in that business.

*Innis.*

Why, sir,—why, my lord,—why, ma'am—I've seen it! I've seen it myself!—

*Davis.*

O lord!—& have you heard it, too, Mrs. Innis? Had it the voice?

*Sir Archy.*

And did you approach it, Mrs. Innis? Had it the Bludgeon?

*Litchburn.*

A fly might knock me plump off my balance!

*Innis.*

The house-keeper shewed it me herself; & there's the key of the Closet, for who will to look in it.

*Litchburn.*

Not I, for one, I'll be bound!

*Davis.*

Nor I, if I might look till my Eyes turned to diamonds!

*Sir Archy [snatching the key].*

I'm the man for that! *[opens the door.]*

*Litchburn [pulling his Wig over his Eyes].*

If I see it again, I shall swoon out-right!

*Sir Archy.*

Here are old trunks & bandboxes to pack up all the Ghosts of Macbeth—but nothing else.

*Innis.*

Why it's all a trick, Sir! all a trick, ma'am!—nothing else but a trick, to frighten away wickedness.

*Davis.*

A trick? Why then it must have borrowed that

voice of forty or fifty devils!—two or three, at any rate!

*Litchburn.*

A trick? Dear Heart! I've pulled my new wig out of curl for nothing! [*settling his wig.*]

*Lord Exbury.*

Explain, Mrs. Innis.

*Innis.*

Why, my lord, the house keeper told me a young Girl belonging to her happened to be very pretty; & so,—people will be wicked, you know, my lord—there's no help for that! & so, Mr. Litchburn—

*All.*

Mr. Litchburn!

*Mordaunt.*

What! did the Ghost come to take care of the virtue of old Litchburn?

*Miss Exbury.*

Old Mr. Litchburn a man of gallantry!

*Sir Archy.*

Another antediluvian Strephon! Why I may come & play the lover in these parts any time these thirty years!

*Litchburn.*

I'm so astound, I don't know of a truth whether I a'n't in a dream!—but, if I may be believed, my good lords —& ladies—I hadn't so much as cast a glance at a pretty Girl these twenty years!—

*Innis.*

La, Mr. Litchburn, I don't know what makes you so quick, but—

*Litchburn.*

I quick? Why this is quite the extraordinary of all! In our whole neighbourhood, it's the mode to nominate me the snail! & what I may have done to the Young Gentlewoman, that she should put all the badness upon me, is more than I can get at the bottom of:—though I hope I don't so far forget myself as not to know what an honour it is for such a nobody as I am, to be smiled upon by such a company as This!

*Innis.*

Why I did not mean You, Mr. Litchburn—for all you have not cast a glance at a pretty Girl these twenty years!—[*courtsying.*] However, what I was going to say, ma'am, was, that Mr. Litchburn had a young lad that the house-keeper found out was to meet the young Girl, early one morning, in that closet. So she thought she'd give him a good cure at once. So she sent the young Girl out of the way, & then borrowed a layman—(73)

*All.*

A layman?

*Innis.*

Yes, a layman, of a nephew that was a Painter, & dressed it up in her late lady's cloaths. And That was the Ghost! which she took away with her privately this morning.

*Lord Exbury.*

Your walking lady, Davis, will now, I trust, cease to disturb You. Like all other reported apparitions, it waited but investigation, to be metamorphosed into fraud, or mistake.

*Davis.*

Well, I can only say—if I did not hear a voice—I've been out of my head. [*Exit.*]

*Innis [aside].*

And if I don't bring you round again, I shall be out of mme; for I see there's no good comes of waiting for Young Gentlemen. [*Exit.*]

*Miss Exbury [aside].*

Sir Archy behaves so vastly meanly, that I won't stay in the room with him. Not but I'm extremely rejoiced at it, for, after all, very likely his uncle may recover;—& perhaps his Brother & Sister may both get better;—& nobody can tell but his mother may live these ten years.

[*Exit.*]

*Lord Ardvile.*

And werefore am I condemned -

*Lord Exbury.*

I have other matter, Brother for your Ear, &—

[*A noise is made within the wainscoat.*]

*Sir Archy.*

Egad, I hear a noise myself, now?

*Lord Exbury.*

Some rats or mice are playing gambols within the Walls.

*Litchburn.*

Dear Heart, it's from the Garden Stair-case!  
[*aside.*]

*Sir Archy.*

I am curious to see farther into this business.  
[*They all listen.*] The sound seems to proceed from within this pannel. Let's try if it has any opening.

[*Enter Hilaria, who places herself between Sir Archy, & the private door.*]

*Hilaria.*

No, Sir Archy, it has none!

*Sir Archy.*

Hey day, my fair Cousin?

*Lord Ardvile.*

Miss Dalton!

*Hilaria [agitated].*

Do pray go, Sir Archy?

*Sir Archy.*

Go? & for what reason, my sweet Coz?

*Hilaria.*

O, don't wait asking reasons—I hate reason.

*Mordaunt.*

I never knew a lady that did not.

*Lord Exbury.*

Let me beg you, Miss Dalton, to make way, & suffer me to examine—you tremble?—what can disturb you? —you change colour?—what can thus affect you? Surely you are not seriously frightened ?

*A Coarse Voice from Within.*

You're somewhere here-abouts, my young 'Squire, I'll be bound.

*Hilaria.*

Ah Heaven!

[*The private door is burst open, & Valentine enters in disorder.*]

*Valentine.*

Miss Dalton—How? Company! Confusion!  
—My Father!—Good Heaven!—[*turns round in distress, as if seeking where to hide himself.*]

*Lord Exbury.*

Valentine!

*Lord Ardvile.*

So! so! so!—but I thought how it was! I anticipated it exactly.

[*Enter the Strange Man. He stops & looks warily around him.*]

*Hilaria.*

Alas!

*Strange Man [laying his hand on Valentine's Shoulder].*

O ho, my young sir, I've caught you at last!

*Lord Exbury [darting forward, & laying his hand on his other Shoulder].*

My life is his protection! What claim, sir, have you upon this Gentleman ?

*Bailiff [taking out a writ].*

Claim, your worship? Ecod, a claim to the tune of five thousand pounds.

*Lord Exbury.*

What barbarous mystery is unfolding? Here, too, must ruin meet me?—Valentine! utter but one word: Is this true? —Is it false?

*Valentine [striking his forehead].*

Oh God!

*Lord Exbury.*

He cannot answer!—Tis enough! [*to the Bailiff*] Sir, do your office!—[*withdrawing his hand*] I interfere no more.—He is guilty!

*Mordaunt [suddenly springing from the sofa].*

He is innocent!

*Lord Exbury.*

Blessed be those words!—Mordaunt, I forgive all that is passed! [*falling on his neck.*]

*Mordaunt.*

Brother Valentine, I feel awakened as from a lethargy by your unexampled generosity. My lord, I'll tell you plainly how the matter stands. A short time ago, I lost, in one night, five thousand pounds, to an old friend who, that same night, after gaining it, lost thirty to another, & immediately shot himself. My bond for the five thousand was all he left his widow. His Executers came upon me, I could produce neither cash nor security; & Valentine—to save me—or rather, I believe, You,—the disgrace of an arrest, took the bond, though to the full amount of his fortune, upon himself.

*Lord Exbury.*

Go on!—I cannot breathe!

*Mordaunt.*

The affair, however, got buzzed about, & my Creditors becoming cursed troublesome, the application followed to yourself, which brought us all to this shabby habitation. But when I tried to have this five thousand consolidated with my general compromise the lady's agents refused, insisting, since the bond had been transferred to Valentine, he should be responsible for full payment: an event which, I protest, I had not foreseen.

*Valentine.*

How kind, how seasonable for me, my dear Mordaunt, is the openness of this explanation! I thankfully accept— but should never have demanded it. The lady's claim, however, my lord, seems to me so equitable, that accident alone prevented my immediately setting off for town, to settle the business I had only wished that my Father might not learn my misfortune, till I had entered the army, & was in the road of Honour for retrieving it.

*Lord Exbury.*

Son of my cherished hopes! my prop! my pride! Thou art innocent!—Come to thy Father's bosom!—Fortune, I defy thee!

*Mordaunt.*

I have been the ruin of you all, —& I feel cursed queer. I'll go & lie down again. [*going.*]

*Lord Exbury.*

Mordaunt! You could brave the detection of

your errors but you blush at being surprised into repentance! You have strewn, however, some marks of sensibility; return not, then, again, into the nothingness of affected apathy. Feel for your friends, & fear not but they will feel for you.

[*Mordaunt abashed, returns to the Sofa.*]

*Bailiff.*

Well, have you done your palavering? (74)

*Valentine.*

I am ready to attend you. [*Valentine & the Bailiff are retiring.*]

*Hilaria [flying to Lord Ardvile].*

O my lord! save your noble nephew —& I am yours for-ever!

*Lord Ardvile.*

How, madam! What!

*Valentine [returning].*

No! save me not, my lord!—I will not be saved!

*Lord Exbury.*

And can my Brother know my situation, yet suffer him to be torn from me?

*Bailiff.*

Come, sir, come!

*Hilaria.*

I cannot bear it!—Release him, Lord Ardvile,—take his bond upon yourself—or let me present him with these jewels—& see behold!—I offer you my hand!

*Valentine.*

Take it not, my lord!—Perdition be my portion if I profit I from such perjured vows! No, madam, I accept not your boon!

*Lord Ardvile.*

What does all this signify?

*Hilaria [advancing to Valentine].*

You won't have the Jewels, then?

*Valentine.*

No, madam!

*Hilaria.*

And my lord must not have my hand?

*Valentine [turning away].*  
Inhuman!

*Hilaria.*  
Why, then,—suppose my lord takes the Jewels,  
&—&—&—[hesitating.]

*Lord Exbury.*  
Valentine the hand? [smiling.] Have I finished  
the phrase rightly?

*Valentine [returning].*  
Heavens!

*Hilaria.*  
My dear lord Exbury, under your wing I will not  
blush to be sincere. Yes, it was Valentine who  
opened my Eyes to the error of my conduct.  
Forgive me, Lord Ardvile, that I had ever  
consented to be yours; & bless & thank your  
nephew that—I retract!

*Lord Ardvile.*  
Madam!

*Sir Archy.*  
Off again, Egad!—A whirlpool is stagnant,  
compared with a woman! [aside.]

*Hilaria.*  
He has saved You, my lord, from  
disappointment, & me from repentance. He has  
rescued You from a Wife who might have  
revelled in all your wealth—without  
participating in one of your cares!—might have  
shared all your honours—yet have fled your  
society!—have enjoyed all your luxuries,—yet  
have shrunk from your affection!

*Lord Ardvile.*  
Astonishing!—But 'tis what I have uniformly  
expected.

*Hilaria.*  
I attempt no apology, my lord— I am too much  
ashamed. I only entreat to restore these Jewels.

*Lord Ardvile.*  
To whom, madam? [haughtily.]

*Hilaria.*  
To your lordship.

*Lord Ardvile.*

I comprehend you, madam! You would teach  
the World to infer you return a disappointed  
man his rejected offerings?

*Hilaria.*  
My lord?

*Lord Ardvile.*  
But you are mistaken, madam. I had not any  
design—believe me,—of a personal application.  
They were a free gift.

*Sir Archy.*  
A free gift?—And the lawyer, my lord, to whom  
your lordship wrote last night concerning the  
settlement?

*Lord Ardvile.*  
That, sir, was merely—that was entirely—

*Sir Archy.*  
Ah, my lord, human nature, even at its best, has  
a sad trick of being fallible; & your lordship  
yourself—for once!—seems to have been  
tinctured with misapprehension.

*Lord Ardvile.*  
I, sir? With misapprehension? That will be new  
to me, I confess! No, sir! that settlement was  
meant—believe me, —solely, &  
unequivocally—for—for the bride of my  
nephew Valentine—with whom I  
have—uniformly—wished Miss Dalton—very  
happy.

*Sir Archy.*  
My dear lord!—

*Lord Ardvile.*  
Sir Archy, you will give me leave, I presume, to  
know my own purposes? I here protest it has  
been my invariable design to form the  
establishment of my youngest nephew,  
upon—upon his alliance with—Miss Dalton.

*Sir Archy.*  
Invariable?—

*Lord Ardvile.*  
No smiling, sir!—to convince you of the  
sincerity with which I desire to promote the  
union, I here take upon myself the discharge of



my nephew's fraternal debt.—Are you satisfied now, sir? or am I still guilty of misapprehension?

*Lord Exbury.*

Brother! [*approaching him*].

*Valentine.*

Uncle!

*Lord Ardvile* [*repulsing them*].

I hate acknowledgements. All I require is to be vindicated from an imputation so foreign to my character as that of ever framing a design that has proved abortive—a weakness that has never occurred to me yet;—though I can discern, Sir Archy, that you think me—I perceive, indeed, you all around think me—a dupe & a fool!

*Sir Archy.*

Your lordship's judgement, is, I own, unerring!—I submit! [*bowing*].

*Lord Ardvile.*

I demand, therefore, to be cleared to the whole World from this unfounded rumour—the origin of which I can only attribute to the officious loquacity of Mr. Litchburn.

*Litchburn.*

Of me?—Dear Heart!—but I'd best not speak!—

*Lord Ardvile.*

My resentment, therefore, closes my patronage. I notice him no more.

*Litchburn.*

My good lord—but I'd always better hold my tongue!—

*Lord Ardvile.*

I am much indebted to you, Lord Exbury, for pressing me into this diverting scene, with your Goblins, & merry sprites: & I beg you to accept my compliments in return—with my warmest wishes—that You & your Ghost—were laid in the red sea together! [*Exit*].

[*Lord Exbury whispers the Bailiff, who retires.*]

*Litchburn.*

Dear Heart! if this is not the extraordinary of

all! So here I've been trampled upon all these years for nothing—except just the Honour!—

*Mordaunt.*

For me—I deserve, I know, to be hanged;—& I feel cursedly ashamed—[*to Lord Exbury*] but if You can forgive the past, I will live upon roots, I will lie upon straw, to accelerate your restoration to your rights.

*Lord Exbury.*

You restore me those I most prize, my affection & hopes in my son! [*embraces him*].

*Hilaria* [*approaching Lord Exbury*].

To You, then, my dear lord, let me commit this case, which never can be mine—or never but through your family. —

*Lord Exbury.*

Valentine! must all acknowledgement to this generous creature flow solely from me?

*Valentine.*

Amazement—admiration—& the acutest sensations, silence—agitate—entrance me!—But I will not abuse her goodness, her nobleness, No!—let me fly!—

*Lord Exbury.*

Valentine, mistake not pride for delicacy. My Brother, for every reason, will adhere to his declaration; & even were it otherwise, your misfortunes have been the result of kindness & generosity, not of extravagance or dishonour. Upon such falls no shame! Your character, & your situation in life, will soon raise you above them. Is This a Land where spirit & Virtue shall want Protection? What is there of Fortune or distinction unattainable in Britain by Talents, probity, & Courage?

*Valentine* [*taking his Father's hand*].

And you would not deem me base—

*Hilaria* [*speaking over his shoulder*].

And you do not think me mad—

*Lord Exbury.*

Base?—Mad?—No! Has a man hands, & shall he fear to work for the Wife of his choice? Has a Woman a heart —& shall she barter her Person for Gold?

## Notes

## Works Cited:

Σ Pool, Daniel. What Jane Austen Ate and Charles Dickens Knew. NY: Simon & Schuster, 1993.

Σ Sabor, Peter, ed. The Complete Plays of Frances Burney, Volume 1. London: William Pickering, 1995.

1. I.1. with the hip: "Down in the hip(s): said of a horse when the haunch-bone is injured; hence, *fig.*, out of sorts, out of spirits" (OED). ([back](#))

2. I.1. Pencilled revisions emend this to:  
*Dawson*.  
What, the fellow who has been dodging about so all the morning?

*Innis*.  
Yes. & it has put me in a flurry - ([back](#))

3. I.1. Pencilled revisions emend this to:  
*Dawson*.  
Why he was always pretty unbearable, Mrs. Innis. Lauk! to see his elder Brother, Mr. Exbury, that's only got his natural Estate, as one may say, being no more that what comes to him from Father to son, so genteel-behaved, & agreeable! - while this, that only got his topping income by by fortune-hunting, in comparison, to be so *highly & imperial!* ([back](#))

4. I.1. Pencilled revisions emend the last word of this speech:  
*Dawson*.  
Very true, Mrs. Innis; & of all things what I hate most, is a man's singing his own praises. My lord's got such a trick of it, that it has made me take a resolve never to speak up for myself as long as I live; though I'll consent to be hanged if I think I've my fellow either for quickness or honesty; or for sobriety, or, indeed, for the matter of that, for anything that's proper; - but it's what I make a rule never to mention. ([back](#))

5. I.1. Red crayon addition to this speech:  
*Dawson*.  
Ah, Mrs. Innis, if I were but as happy as Mr. Davis! to live under the same roof with you, & to serve lord Exbury! - Then you'd see - ([back](#))

6. I.1. In pencil, "Lord Exbury" is emended to "Mr Exbury". ([back](#))

7. I.1. Pencilled revisions emend this to:  
*Strange Man*.  
Would a' so? 'Tis to be hoped, then, we should have his

*Valentine [to Hilaria]*.  
Dare I then, thus encouraged—

*Hilaria*.  
O Valentine, You have drawn me for-ever from the vortex of dissipation & Fashion

*Valentine*.  
To fold thee, my Hilaria, in the bosom of conjugal Love! [*embracing her.*]

*Lord Exbury*.  
Happy be ye both, my dearest Children! [*throwing his arms round him.*]

*Sir Archy*.  
I have the honour to wish you all much joy.—So here, with a breath, is her coronet blown to the Winds, & my Pharo Table to—old Nick!—for aught I know, Egad, the fittest person to receive it! [*aside.*]

*Litchburn [sighing deeply]*.  
Poor me!—If I'd fifty Sons, I'd bring 'em all up to be Cobblers—rather than Dependants—if it were not for the honour!

*Lord Exbury*.  
Mr. Litchburn, do not be dejected. I shall make it my peculiar business to take care of you.

*Litchburn*.  
Your good lordship?—Dear Heart! And shall I have a patron that will let me say my Soul's my own? Why then, the next time I see my good lord Ardvile, I'll pluck up courage to tell him—at least to give a little—sort of a—kind of a—hint,—respectfully! [*bowing*] that I begin to think [*smiling*] I know—almost—black from white—humbly craving pardon for the liberty.

*Lord Exbury*.  
And now, my dear Children, let your desires be as moderate as your affections are disinterested—& while Virtue will be the Guardian of Your Union, Felicity will be its recompense.

## END OF ACT V

worshipful Lordship to go along with us. I likes good company. ([back](#))

8. I.1. Pencilled revisions emend this passage:

*Dawson.*

A thief, or a Spy, or a fortune-teller, or somewhat of that sort.

*Innis.*

A fortune-teller? O lud! I'll run and make somebody call him back into the house-keeper's room. You must neither of you come. I'll let nobody hear what my fortune is - till I know how I like it. [*Exit in haste.*] ([back](#))

9. I.1. a scrub: "a mean insignificant fellow, a person of little account or poor appearance" (OED). ([back](#))

10. I.1. Four lines cancelled in ink here. According to Sabor, they read: "or toss himself into a river or run himself through the body - or else knock his brains out against a wall - two or three of these things." (Sabor 112). ([back](#))

11. I.1. "from him" cancelled in pencil. ([back](#))

12. I.1. Speech emended in pencil to read:

*Davis.*

Refused lord Ardville? I could give her a kiss the next time I see her. ([back](#))

13. I.1. Davis' lines here appear to be crossed in pencil for omission. ([back](#))

14. I.1. "Lord Exbury" emended in pencil to "Mr. Exbury". ([back](#))

15. I.1. wise-acre: "One who thinks himself, or wishes to be thought, wise; a pretender to wisdom; a foolish person with an air or affectation of wisdom" (OED). ([back](#))

16. I.1. Captain Cooke: "James Cook, who was killed in Hawaii in 1799, circumnavigated the earth on three occasions. Burney's brother James accompanied Cook in his second and third expeditions" (Sabor 113). ([back](#))

17. I.1. This should be Davis' speech, not Dawson's, since Dawson has just exited. ([back](#))

18. I.1. public days: days, often held monthly, when the manor house on a country estate was open to visitors, particularly tenants. ([back](#))

19. I.1. noddly: "a fool, simpleton, noodle" (OED). ([back](#))

20. I.1. old Toby: "a contemptuous term for an old man" (Sabor 117). ([back](#))

21. I.1. Three lines cancelled in ink here, which read (according to Sabor): "He don't believe his fellow can be found in the whold world! no, not if Captain Cook was brought to life again, on purpose to go round it, & look him out" (Sabor 117). ([back](#))

22. I.2. Grosvenor Square: a glamorous residential square in London. ([back](#))

23. I.2. Sabor notes, "on the interest of & pound;11,000, about & pound;550 per annum when invested in the 5% government funds, the couple could live tolerably but not fashionably. They would not be 'poor,' but they would be 'obscure'" (Sabor 118). ([back](#))

24. I.2. happenend: *sic*. Burney's consistent spelling of the word. ([back](#))

25. I.2. settlement: a legal document laying out the allowance (called "pin money") a husband will give his wife during his lifetime and what jointure, or property or annuity, she will receive after his death. ([back](#))

26. I.2. Gretna Green: a small Scottish town just across the border where English couples could marry without their parents' consent, according to the looser regulations of the Scottish Presbyterian Church (Pool 183). ([back](#))

27. I.2. pin-money: a married woman's "small personal annual allowance" (Pool 182). ([back](#))

28. I.2. Six lines cancelled here in ink, which read, according to Sabor:  
you think, though small -

*Davis.*

Yes, my lord, a comfortable house enough for people of about forty pounds a year or it may be a hundred, or so.

*Lord Exbury.*

Speak simply to the facts, Davis, and if the house be free then hasten back and see ([back](#))

29. I.2. Originally read: "will ever live to see" - "live to" cancelled in ink. ([back](#))

30. I.2. methuselah: name of a biblical patriarch, "stated to have lived 969 years (Gen. v.27); hence used as a type of extreme longevity" (OED). ([back](#))

31. II.2. chit: "a person considered as no better than a child" (OED). ([back](#))

32. II.2. Philander: "a proper name in story, drama, dialogue... esp. for a lover" (OED). ([back](#))

33. II.2. Opera box: Sabor notes "boxes at the opera house, the King's Theatre in the Haymarket, amounted to nearly two hundred at the turn of the century. They could be privately subscribed for during the first fifty nights of the season. Possession of an opera box was a prominent sign of wealth" (Sabor 125).

Table: Sir Archy is referring to the games of Pharo, a roulette-like card game that, as a wealthy aristocrat, Hilaria (as Lady Ardville) would regularly hold. The odds heavily favor the banker, or organizer of the game, and Sir Archy hopes either to take advantage of her marriage to play Pharo or to profit from her Pharo bank. ([back](#))

34. II.2. Pharo Table: See note 33. ([back](#))

35. II.2. Muster Wallentine: According to Sabor, "the Strange Man's confusion of v and w indicates his Cockney origin" (Sabor 131). ([back](#))

36. II.2. Inserted at this point: It's not much of an honour. ([back](#))

37. II.3. recruit: "to furnish with a fresh supply of something; to replenish" (OED). ([back](#))

38. II.3. red Coat: a soldier. ([back](#))

39. II.3. A young Widow's jointure: see note 25. ([back](#))

40. II.3. Morpheus: the Greek god of dreams; hence drowsiness and a dull life.  
Coronet: "a small crown, indicating that the owner belongs to the peerage" (Sabor 134). ([back](#))

41. III.1. touch'd the ready: "been given money" (Sabor 137). ([back](#))

42. III.1. cross his hand: give him money. ([back](#))

43. III.1. head-piece: "figurative for 'intelligence'" (Sabor 138). ([back](#))

44. III.1. star: stare. ([back](#))

45. III.1. "If he doesn't, leave it be" (Sabor 140). ([back](#))

46. III.2. Emended to read: What, you don't think the country very amusing? ([back](#))

47. III.2. nabob muslins: 'nabob' (from Urdu *nawwab*) indicated in eighteenth-century English a person "who has returned from India with a large fortune acquired there" (OED). Lord Ardvile himself is a nabob, as Innis tells us in the first act: "They say he was not half so proud before he got his title, upon going that last time to the Indies, where he made his great fortune." 'Nabob muslins' thus either simply means, figuratively, costly fabrics, or may refer specifically to fancy Indian muslin. See Burney's play *A Busy Day* (c.1802) for further treatment of nabob figures. ([back](#))

48. III.2. Carter's frocks: "cheap outer garments, such as those worn by cart drivers" (Sabor 142). ([back](#))

49. III.2. "just" is cancelled. ([back](#))

50. III.2. Merry Andrew: "a clown or buffoon"; Punch: "the principal character in puppet shows" (Sabor 143). ([back](#))

51. III.2. Emended to: he has now in hand. ([back](#))

52. III.2. Pig-race: Sabor notes, "Burney describes a pig-catching contest in her journal for 19 August 1773 (*Early Journals*, I, 290) and in *The Wanderer*, p. 461" (Sabor 146). ([back](#))

53. III.2. "her upon" is cancelled. ([back](#))

54. III.2. Baro night: Baronet. ([back](#))

55. III.2. Emended to: He'll speak out, now! ([back](#))

56. III.2. prem terring: preemptory. ([back](#))

57. IV.1. Emended to: I humbly beg pardon, ([back](#))

58. IV.1. Prizes in state lotteries were rarely, if ever, as high as &pound;20,000. ([back](#))

59. IV.1. past you is cancelled. ([back](#))

60. IV.1. celadon: "a type name for a lover" (Sabor 160). ([back](#))

61. IV.2. Insertion: Your perpetual amplifications fatigue me. ([back](#))

62. IV.2. about emended to upon. ([back](#))

63. IV.2. a stound: "a state of stupefaction or amazement" (OED). ([back](#))

64. IV.2. 'tremblingly alive': "Or touch, if tremblingly alive all o'er, / To smart and agonize at ev'ry pore?" Pope, *An Essay on Man* (1733-4), I.197. ([back](#))

65. IV.3. "Mother Red Cap was the name given to an aged London nurse; Mother Shipton was a reputed prophetess, Ursula Southill, born c. 1485, notorious for her ugliness" (Sabor 169). ([back](#))

66. IV.3. offer is cancelled. ([back](#))

67. IV.3. Pattens: a working-class woman's footwear. ([back](#))

68. IV.3. Without Lord Ardvile's wealth, Hilaria would have to travel in a hired carriage rather than one owned by her husband. ([back](#))

69. IV.3. chagrin case: green-dyed leather. ([back](#))

70. IV.3. an affair of honour: Sir Archy insinuates that gambling debts have ruined Valentine. ([back](#))

71. V.1. as the good old Gentleman says...: allusion untraced. ([back](#))

72. V.1. leading apes: "from the proverbial 'old maids lead apes in hell'" (Sabor 174). ([back](#))

73. V.4. layman: a wooden model used by painters (OED). ([back](#))

74. V.4. palaver: "to talk profusely or unnecessarily" (OED). ([back](#))