

SIDE A – COURTLEY & PRESUMPTION

Enter COURTLEY and PRESUMPTION, two young gentlemen, the best of friends. They have come to the estate to woo LUCENY and TATTINEY. One gets the sense that these two have been round rather a lot lately. They are the early modern era's version of the Princes from Into the Woods. They enter mid-pine.

COURTLEY

Prithee, dear companion, tell me in what humour is thy mistress?

PRESUMPTION

Faith, my misfortune is she knows her scene-self¹ too well.

COURTLEY

What mean you by that?

PRESUMPTION

That is she will not lessen herself at all by valuing me.

COURTLEY

What, doth she scorn you?

PRESUMPTION

No, nor she doth not admire me.

COURTLEY

And that's your grief.

PRESUMPTION

Aye, for I would have her possessed with a little Cupid, if I could.

COURTLEY

O, then you're not for matrimony, if you pretend Cupid².

PRESUMPTION

Yes, but I am, for I hope Cupid will be the gentleman-usher to Hymen³.

COURTLEY

Fie, that's not becoming to have a boy to usher in the gods.

PRESUMPTION

Well then, allow him to be a page; so she were in love, I care not. Now I have confessed so largely to you, freely relate your mistress to me, and let me know her humour.

COURTLEY

By God, mine's so courtly-coy, I know not what to make of her; for when she smiles, I know not whether 'tis a scorn or a grace.

1 Her outward presentation as a scornful lover, with a metatheatrical pun.

2 Act like Cupid, interested only in erotic love

3 Cupid's erotic love will serve and lead to the matrimonial love of Hymen (the god of marriage)

PRESUMPTION

Doth she speak much?

COURTLEY

No, but she is so full of her neglecting silence as I am almost in despair.

PRESUMPTION

But I see you have some relics of hope left you.

COURTLEY

Wer't not for that, I should be absolutely nothing.

PRESUMPTION

Tell me her name.

COURTLEY

Tell you her name...will you be secret, then?

PRESUMPTION

Or may I never be happy if I speak of yours till you shall reveal mine.

COURTLEY

But my curiosity is to know yours first.

PRESUMPTION

What, must I be Saint George⁴, first both in her humour and her name? I will not be made so much your fool.

COURTLEY

Well, I'll speak her name in a soft whisper: Luceny.

PRESUMPTION

Sister to mine, i' faith!

COURTLEY

If so, she values Cupid no more than if he were her footboy, and her language is the torture to a lover's soul.

PRESUMPTION

Faith, by your description, I perceive they are sisters.

COURTLEY

Certainly, they educate one another.

PRESUMPTION

Come, let's go to them and see how they will act their scenes.

4 The patron saint of England, heroic slayer of dragons; "Must I be brave like St. George?"

SIDE B – TOY & LADY TRANQUILITY

Enter LADY TRANQUILITY and her gentlewoman, TOY. LADY TRANQUILITY does not so much move as flounce. TOY is attempting to get her mistress ready to face the day, which seems to be quite the Herculean (or Sisyphean?) task. LADY TRANQUILITY is sorting through a variety of outfit and makeup choices for herself, some of which seem to be on the scandalous and seductive side of the spectrum.

LADY TRANQUILITY

Toy, come hither. I will tell you, though I am up yet, my design is (for all I am well) to keep my bed⁵; therefore, resolve, Toy, to dress me neatly.

TOY

I will, Madam, so well as my education will give me leave.

LADY TRANQUILITY

Toy, tomorrow I intend to go to my wits⁶.

TOY

Who are they?

LADY TRANQUILITY

Monsieur Calsindow's daughters; therefore, my keeping of my bed is to plump up my face, Toy.

TOY

But truly, Madam, in my opinion those ladies looks as if they would not mind much⁷; they're too young.

LADY TRANQUILITY

O, Toy, but they can give such characters, as to make a Lady appear or not appear⁸. Besides, I am in love with their Father, so I would have them like me.

TOY

But your Ladyship will not let them know so much.

LADY TRANQUILITY

Thou'rt an ass, Toy, for of my faith, I will! They shall not be ignorant of my love, for then I hope Monsieur Calsindow will know, and in respect to him, I will see the two Lady [Sisters], and will [accompany] one of [their suitors] or both, for then I know I shall be welcome, for they are their servants, and 'tis welcome [that] they are their servants, and 'tis thought will marry them. But what say'st thou to that pinner that hath the gillyflower⁹, and my best smock-

5 "I'm feeling fine, but I'm going to stay in bed all day anyway."

6 My clever, cultured friends; i.e., Luceny and Tattiney.

7 "They are too young to notice if you aren't looking your best."

8 "They can, with clever words, build someone up or tear them down to make them seem more noble or less so."

9 A head covering pinned into place, this one embroidered with carnations.

band¹⁰ -- will they not agree well together? Speak! What, art thou in a study of my marriage to their father?

TOY

I was thinking of your laces, and truly your Ladyship hath match'd them very well; if your Ladyship please, I will fetch them.

LADY TRANQUILITY

No, stay, what a clock is't?

TOY

'Tis almost ten, Madam.

LADY TRANQUILITY

That's well, for I have time to talk and dress five hours without interruption.

10 A fancy collar (probably embroidered or festooned with ribbon) for a smock, a chemise, an undergarment.

SIDE C – LUCENY & TATTINEY

Enter the two sisters, LUCENY and TATTINEY, a pair of self-assured young women aptly described by other characters as “the wits.”

LUCENY

Sister, pray tell me in what humour thou wert with thy [suitor] yesterday. Prithee tell me how you acted your scene.

TATTINEY

I beg your excuse; a younger sister cannot have the confidence to teach an elder.

LUCENY

Well then, I'll begin first. I dressed myself in [an artful] way of carelessness, which becomes as well, if not better than, a set dress¹¹, and when he made his approaches of love, by speaking in a formal way, I answer'd him I could not love so dull a brain as he had, always to repeat he loved me. I had rather have him say he hated me, for that would be some variety.

TATTINEY

But what said you when he express'd himself by oaths and execrations¹²?

LUCENY

I told him I wondered he had the confidence, seeing I kept my chamber, to trouble me with his impertinent language, which ever produceth my vexation. For I will tell you, Sister, It is impossible to answer him to what he speak but he will catch some handle to blow up his ambitious wishes. Therefore, I put him off with a sharp reply, as I have told you before, and then said my face could be [in] no ways inevitable for his affection. Therefore, I did not desire to be his courting-stock to practice with against he comes to his Mistress, and therefore told him if he would not make an honourable retreat out of the house, I would proclaim him a malignant, or cause [the] steward to make him make his retreat with more confusion, [and] so bid him think of some visit, for here I was resolv'd he should not stay.

TATTINEY

Pray, Sister, [has] he a good fortune?

LUCENY

Yes, and a very good title.

TATTINEY

Then I perceive your discretion likes him.

LUCENY

¹¹ Formal or courtly dress.

¹² Curses.

Aye, and his discretion may very well like me, for my father intends to give me a great portion¹³; therefore, I shall not know whether 'tis his wisdom or affection that makes choice of me¹⁴.

TATTINEY

And will you continue this way of discretion with him when you're married?

LUCENY

Why, do you think "I take thee" shall alter me?

TATTINEY

I hear their coming!

13 Dowry, the money given by a family on occasion of a daughter's marriage.

14 "I don't know if he likes me for my money or for me."

SIDE D – LUCENY & COURTLEY

Enter COURTLEY, the very picture of wounded love.

COURTLEY

Madam, your Admirer attends you.

LUCENY

And thinks to be accepted for your new suit?

COURTLEY

Still in your insulting way.

LUCENY

'Tis tyranny indeed to tell you truth. You are so conscious to yourself as you think you are the only object of perfection.

COURTLEY

No, Madam, I am the object of misfortune, not having the least hope of your ladyship's good opinion.

LUCENY

I should think myself debauched should I lend you a thought, for as I hear, you are the only libertine in the town, and I wonder you can be so great an Imposture in your pretended love, as to contract that face of freedom to so serious a piece of formality¹⁵.

COURTLEY

No, Madam, it is your sweeter face of innocence that converts the rudest peasant even into modesty.

LUCENY

Aye, but when [my visage] returns back, my face, methinks should be converted into debaseness¹⁶. Now, will not your next posture be to stand with folded arms? But that posture now grows much out of fashion! That's altered to a serious look of admiration, as if your face was so terrible, as to turn men to statues.

COURTLEY

I wish damnation, Madam, rather than thus to be tormented by your unkind love.

LUCENY

Away, away, with your hypocritical language, for I am not yet so vain as to believe your dissembling romances.

¹⁵ "...to arrange your flirtatious face into the serious expression that befits honestly wooing me."

¹⁶ "When I get my innocent face back from your aforementioned peasant, my face will be the worse for it."

COURTLEY

Well, I'm gone, and am resolved to be no more.

LUCENY

What, you'll give out you're dead to try what vanity of love I may be possessed withall? Go, take what resolution you please.

COURTLEY

Ho, I'll love myself better than to die for one that hates me. But I could be a willing martyr to her that loves me.

LUCENY

Ha, Ha, Ha! I think so! You would be a willing martyr to her that loves you? And do you think that is a high expression of love? This shows how much you hated her, that would quit her so soon, besides leaving her this legacy to die of a consumption for your sake.

COURTLEY

Madam, am not I worth that ribbon you hate worst and that will I contemplate upon with adoration?

LUCENY

I thought you had learnt better manners than to offer to plunder me of my favors.

COURTLEY

Give me leave then passionately to beg a [kiss], and I will never see you more unless I may be answered with more mildness, for now every word you speak is a rack unto my soul! Therefore, give me once more leave to beg the favor of your lips.

LUCENY

When did you hear my lips were so rude as to come within distance of your sex? And to confirm you, there is nothing I hate more than a country gentleman who must ever [kiss], coming and going! I am proud, and I swear, I would rather cut my lips off than suffer you a salute.

Exits towards TATTINEY. They high-five and leave together. COURTLEY addresses the audience with great tragic gravitas.

COURTLEY

What a misfortune's this to me,
To court a wench that doth so truly see.

Exit.

SIDE E – TATTINEY & PRESUMPTION

Enter PRESUMPTION and TATTINEY.

PRESUMPTION

Are you in better humour today? Will you give me leave to speak?

TATTINEY

Your tongue's at liberty.

PRESUMPTION

Faith, so 'tis, but did not know whether you would suffer your lover of admiration to express himself your perpetual servant.

TATTINEY

O, sir, now I understand you! You spoke this yesterday to your Mistress, and think to confer the same upon me, and I to believe so foolish a romance.

PRESUMPTION

Are you still pleased to neglect your honorer?

TATTINEY

How now, your “still” is nothing but full of impudence. How you mistake yourself! Did I ever keep you so much company as you to take the freedom as to title [your]self [my] servant or my honorer?

PRESUMPTION

I beseech your sweetness to account of me as of your sad creature and vassal. What, will you be always my Tyrant?

TATTINEY

Now, do you think the pulling down your hat and looking sad shall make me believe your speech for truth? But you are deceived. Therefore, begone to your Mistress and let her know to make mirth that you have been with me, and how rarely you have acted your part, and what a fine fool you will make her if you can, to be confident of your affection.

PRESUMPTION

By the Gods, you would make me mad! And when I was, you would not pity me.

TATTINEY

There's no danger of your distraction, since you can have that ejaculation! [Of speech.]

PRESUMPTION

I desire you will be pleas'd to give me the happiness to salute your hand, and then I will be gone.

TATTINEY

How I vow I hate you! Begone, rude creature.

Exit.

PRESUMPTION

I swear this coy wench makes me not the same,
But she takes the right way to make me tame.

Exit.

SIDE F – COLONEL FREE, COURTLEY, PRESUMPTION, & COMMADIERA

Enter PRESUMPTION and COLONEL FREE. The COLONEL is part of LUCNEY's and TATTINEY's extended family, and he and his soldiers are staying at LORD CALSINDOW's manor to guard the household. A jovial man, he receives great joy from teasing the suitors to his cousins.

COLONEL FREE

Presumption, I know thou dost presume of thy own wit and fancy; therefore, prithee tell me thy loved humor of [a] mistress. I see sweet Tattiney in your song.

PRESUMPTION

O that lov'd name's a cordial to my tongue.

Enter COURTLY and COMMADIERA, a wine-loving braggart in the style of Shakespeare's Falstaff, but much richer and somehow even lazier. He's ostensibly one of COLONEL FREE's soldiers, but the only way he'd be useful in a battle would be if the victory depended upon someone drinking an entire barrel of wine. He's got it in his head that he has a chance at LUCNEY.

[COMMADIERA]

O Courtly, my pouch of gold with my way of craft shall gain your mistress from you.

COURTLEY

Do you think your bank of sordidness can make her misunderstand herself?

[COMMADIERA]

Why, sir, what can she wish but she shall have! If title[s] please her, I'll lay out twenty thousand pounds for what honour or name she likes best, and I know her discretion is not taken with a rich suit or a fair face that appears like one of your polished pictures.

COURTLEY

No, sir; nor she is not taken with your [perambulating butt of Malmsey wine], whose face appears [as ruddy] as your worst rustic. Have you ever spoke to her in the way of marriage?

[COMMADIERA]

No, but I intend first to speak to her cousin to make the way, and then to her father.

COURTLEY

You're mistaken; because she carved you once a leg of a capon¹⁷ and gave you sauce to boot, your puffed-up [wineskin] thinks to marry her by reason she gave you the civility of the house, as being her father's friend, which modest courtesy blows your brain up as gunpowder into folly! But pray you, so do me the favour: after you have spoke to her in the way of a suitor, let me know your opinion.

[COMMADEIRA]

I will, sir, and doubt not of success.

COURTLEY

Of being counted an impertinent ass.

PRESUMPTION

Come, [Commadeira], if you be in love, I'll put you into a consumption. What do you take my friend to be?

[COMMADEIRA]

A fine piece of vanity in a rich suit.

PRESUMPTION

Ho! [Commadeira, Commadeira], you're deceived! He hath a good estate besides a rich suit, and that Mistress Luceny knows.

[COMMADEIRA]

I believe you not, youth, I believe you not.

PRESUMPTION

It concerns you to have no faith in that.

[COMMADEIRA]

Here's her cousin! Come, now we have good company. Let's drink Mistress Luceny's health! If she would but love, she should have all my wealth.

COLONEL FREE

I have other business than to drink.

[COMMADEIRA]

What have you to do?

COLONEL FREE

To give order for the army.

¹⁷ A small roasted rooster.

SIDE G – COLONEL FREE, GRAVITY, & JACK

Sounds of battle can be heard offstage -- steel hitting steel, the crash of muskets, and general shouting. Enter in great haste COLONEL FREE, GRAVITY, and JACK. COLONEL FREE holds a very legitimate looking sword, but the cook and his boy are wearing pots on their heads as helmets and holding pot lids as shields.

[COLONEL FREE]

Come, what a siege?

[GRAVITY]

By God, I think so, but where's the relief? I'm sure our party¹⁸ is now as flat[-footed] as a flounder.

[JACK]

And this garrison flatter than any.

[COLONEL FREE]

Pox on't, I know that! Where's our Officer?

[GRAVITY]

[Commadeira?] Why, the old man is at the works¹⁹.

[COLONEL FREE]

Have we not more?

[GRAVITY]

What wilt thou do?

[COLONEL FREE]

Fight as well as a Gentleman shall! And what wilt thou do with thy bulk?

[GRAVITY]

Stand in the [barricade], and swear you all into heart, and now and then fight. By God, I think the ladies have a mind to see how I shall look without an eye.

[JACK]

Then you must have a pension²⁰, and if it be a good one, it will buy sack and claret enough in time to make you as [red-faced] as [Commadeira].

[GRAVITY]

Come, Colonel, what sayest thou?

18 Our side (in this case, the Royalist side in the English Civil War)

19 The barricade.

20 A pension from the king for being wounded in war.

[COLONEL FREE]

Faith, I've been measuring, and the [walls] are not made high enough for the enemies if shot will enter into every chamber of the house.

[GRAVITY]

Why, will you not tell our [steward] so?

[COLONEL FREE]

I have, but he is so confounded.

[JACK]

Why? Doth he doubt his works?

[COLONEL FREE]

I think [he] will have no siege, having no possibility of relief.

[GRAVITY]

Come, [Colonel], let us go drink.

And afterwards to bed and wink.