

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

Thomas Middleton

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The Names of the Principal Persons

Mr. YELLOWHAMMER, a goldsmith

MAUDLIN, his wife

TIM, their son

MOLL, their daughter

TUTOR to Tim

SIR WALTER Whorehound, a suitor to Moll

SIR OLIVER Kix, and his wife [LADY KIX], kin to Sir Walter

Mr. [John] ALLWIT, and his wife [MISTRESS ALLWIT], whom Sir Walter keeps

A WELSH GENTLEWOMAN, Sir Walter's whore

WAT and NICK, his bastards [by Mistress Allwit]

DAVY Dahumma, his man

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR, and his wife [MISTRESS TOUCHWOOD], a decayed gentleman

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR, another suitor to Moll

TWO PROMOTERS

SERVANTS [three of Allwit's, three of Sir Oliver's]

[Three or four] WATERMEN

[Sims, a PORTER]

[A GENTLEMAN]

[A WENCH with Touchwood Senior's bastard]

[Jugg, Lady Kix's MAID]

[A DRY NURSE]

[A WET NURSE]

[A MAN with a basket]

[A SECOND MAN with a basket]

[TWO PURITANS, the first named Mistress Underman]

[FIVE GOSSIPS]

[A MIDWIFE]

[A PARSON]

[A third NURSE]

[SUSAN, Moll's maid]

I.[i. A street in front of Yellowhammer's shop.]

Enter Maudlin and Moll, a shop being discovered.

MAUDLIN

Have you played over all your old lessons o' the virginals?

MOLL

Yes.

MAUDLIN

Yes, you are a dull maid alate, methinks you had need have somewhat to quicken your green sickness; do you weep? A husband. Had not such a piece of flesh been ordained, what had us wives been good for? To make salads, or else cried up and down for samphire. To see the difference of these seasons! When I was of your youth, I was lightsome, and quick, two years before I was married. You fit for a knight's bed—drowsy—browed, dull-eyed, drossy—spirited! I hold my life you have forgot your dancing: when was the dancer with you?

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MOLL

The last week.

MAUDLIN

Last week? When I was of your bord, he missed me not a night, I was kept at it; I took delight to learn, and he to teach me, pretty brown gentleman, he took pleasure in my company; but you are dull, nothing comes nimbly from you, you dance like a plumber's daughter, and deserve two thousand pounds in lead to your marriage, and not in goldsmith's ware.

Enter Yellowhammer.

YELLOWHAMMER

Now what's the din betwixt mother and daughter, ha?

MAUDLIN

Faith, small, telling your daughter Mary of her errors.

YELLOWHAMMER

Errors! Nay, the city cannot hold you, wife, but you must needs fetch words from Westminster; I ha' done, i'faith. Has no attorney's clerk been here alate and changed his half-crown-piece his mother sent him, or rather cozened you with a gilded twopence, to bring the word in fashion for her faults or cracks in duty and obedience, term 'em e'en so, sweet wife? As there is no woman made without a flaw, your purest lawns have frays, and cambrics bracks.

MAUDLIN

But 'tis a husband solders up all cracks.

MOLL

What is he come, sir?

YELLOWHAMMER

Sir Walter's come.

He was met at Holborn Bridge, and in his company
A proper fair young gentlewoman, which I guess
By her red hair, and other rank descriptions,
To be his landed niece brought out of Wales,
Which Tim our son (the Cambridge boy) must marry.
'Tis a match of Sir Walter's own making
To bind us to him, and our heirs for ever.

MAUDLIN

We are honoured then, if this baggage would be humble,
And kiss him with devotion when he enters.
I cannot get her for my life
To instruct her hand thus, before and after,
Which a knight will look for, before and after.
I have told her still, 'tis the waving of a woman
Does often move a man, and prevails strongly.
But sweet, ha' you sent to Cambridge,
Has Tim word on't?

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YELLOWHAMMIER

Had word just the day after when you sent him the silver spoon to eat his broth in the hall, amongst the gentlemen commoners.

MAUDLIN

O, 'twas timely.

Enter Porter.

YELLOWHAMMER

How now?

PORTER

A letter from a gentleman in Cambridge.

YELLOWHAMMER

O, one of Hobson's porters, thou art welcome. I told thee, Maud, we should hear from Tim. [Reads letter] Amantissimis charissimisque ambobus parentibus patri et matri.

MAUDLIN

What's the matter?

YELLOWHAMMER

Nay, by my troth, I know not, ask not me, he's grown too verbal; this learning is a great witch.

MAUDLIN

Pray, let me see it, I was wont to understand him. Amantissimus charissimus, he has sent the carrier's man, he says; ambobus parentibus, for a pair of boots; patri et matri, pay the porter, or it makes no matter.

PORTER

Yes, by my faith, mistress, there's no true construction in that, I have took a great deal of pains, and come from the Bell sweating. Let me come to't, for I was a scholar forty years ago; 'tis thus, I warrant you: Matri, it makes no matter: ambobus parentibus, for a pair of boots; patri, pay the porter; amantissimis charissimis, he's the carrier's man, and his name is Sims, and there he says true, forsooth, my name is Sims indeed; I have not forgot all my learning. A money matter, I thought I should hit on't.

YELLOWHAMMER

Go, thou art an old fox, there's a tester for thee.

PORTER

If I see your worship at Goose Fair, I have a dish of birds for you.

YELLOWHAMMER

Why, dost dwell at Bow?

PORTER

All my lifetime, sir; I could ever say "Bo" to a goose. Farewell to your worship.

Exit Porter.

YELLOWHAMMER

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A merry porter.

MAUDLIN

How can he choose but be so, coming with Cambridge letters from our son Tim?

YELLOWHAMMER

What's here? [Reads] Maximus diligo. Faith, I must to my learned counsel with this gear, 'twill ne'er be discerned else.

MAUDLIN

Go to my cousin then, at Inns of Court.

YELLOWHAMMER

Fie, they are all for French, they speak no Latin.

MAUDLIN

The parson then will do it.

Enter a Gentleman with a chain.

YELLOWHAMMER

Nay, he disclaims it, calls Latin Papistry, he will not deal with it. What is't you lack, gentleman?

GENTLEMAN

Pray, weigh this chain.

Enter Sir Walter Whorehound, Welsh Gentlewoman and Davy [Dahumma].

SIR WALTER

Now, wench, thou art welcome to the heart of the city of London.

WELSH GENTLEWOMAN

Dugat a whee.

SIR WALTER

You can thank me in English if you list.

WELSH GENTLEWOMAN

I can, sir, simply.

SIR WALTER

'Twill serve to pass, wench; 'twas strange that I should lie with thee so often, to leave thee without English: that were unnatural. I bring thee up to turn thee into gold, wench, and make thy fortune shine like your bright trade. A goldsmith's shop sets out a city maid. Davy [Dahumma], not a word.

DAVY

Mum, mum, sir.

SIR WALTER

Here you must pass for a pure virgin.

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DAVY

[Aside] Pure Welsh virgin, she lost her maidenhead in Brecknockshire.

SIR WALTER

I hear you mumble, Davy.

DAVY

I have teeth, sir, I need not mumble yet this forty years.

SIR WALTER

The knave bites plaguily.

YELLOWHAMMER

What's your price, sir?

GENTLEMAN

A hundred pound, sir.

YELLOWHAMMER

A hundred marks the utmost, 'tis not for me else.

[Exit Gentleman.]

What, Sir Walter Whorehound?

MOLL

O death!

Exit Moll.

MAUDLIN

Why, daughter; faith, the baggage,
A bashful girl, sir; these young things are shamefast.
Besides, you have a presence, sweet Sir Walter,
Able to daunt a maid brought up i' the city;

Enter [Moll].

A brave court spirit makes our virgins quiver,
And kiss with trembling thighs. Yet see, she comes, sir.

SIR WALTER

Why, how now, pretty mistress, now I have caught you. What, can you injure so your time to stray thus from your faithful servant?

YELLOWHAMMER

Pish, stop your words, good knight, 'twill make her blush else, which would too high for the daughters of the freedom. "Honour," and "faithful servant," they are compliments for the worthies of Whitehall, or Greenwich. E'en plain, sufficient subsidy words serves us, sir. And is this gentlewoman your worthy niece?

SIR WALTER

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You may be bold with her on these terms, 'tis she, sir, heir to some nineteen mountains.

YELLOWHAMMER

Bless us all, you overwhelm me, sir, with love and riches.

SIR WALTER

And all as high as Paul's.

DAVY

Here's work, i'faith.

SIR WALTER

How sayst thou, Davy?

DAVY

Higher, sir, by far: you cannot see the top of 'em.

YELLOWHAMMER

What, man? Maudlin, salute this gentlewoman, our daughter if things hit right.

Enter Touchwood Junior.

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

[Aside] My knight with a brace of footmen
Is come and brought up his ewe mutton
To find a ram at London; I must hasten it,
Or else pick a' famine; her blood's mine,
And that's the surest. Well, knight, that choice [spoil]
Is only kept for me.

MOLL

[Aside to Touchwood Junior] Sir?

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

[To Moll, hands her note] Turn not to me till thou mayst lawfully,
It but whets my stomach, which is too sharp
Set already. Read that note carefully,
Keep me from suspicion still, nor know
My zeal but in thy heart:
Read and send but thy liking in three words,
I'll be at hand to take it.

YELLOWHAMMER

O, turn, sir, turn.
A poor plain boy, an university man,
Proceeds next Lent to a Bachelor of Art;
He will be called Sir Yellowhammer then
Over all Cambridge, and that's half a knight.

MAUDLIN

Please you draw near, and taste the welcome of the city, sir?

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YELLOWHAMMER

Come, good Sir Walter, and your virtuous niece here.

SIR WALTER

'Tis manners to take kindness.

YELLOWHAMMER

Lead 'em in, wife.

SIR WALTER

Your company, sir.

YELLOWHAMMER

I'll give't you instantly.

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

[Aside] How strangely busy is the devil and riches;
Poor soul kept in too hard, her mother's eye
Is cruel toward her, being to him.
'Twere a good mirth now to set him a-work
To make her wedding ring. I must about it.
Rather than the game should fall to a stranger,
'Twas honesty in me to enrich my father.

YELLOWHAMMER

[Aside] The girl is wondrous peevish; I fear nothing
But that she's taken with some other love,
Then all's quite dashed; that must be narrowly looked to;
We cannot be too wary in our children.—
What is't you lack?

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

O, nothing now, all that I wish is present. I would have a wedding ring made for a gentlewoman, with all speed that may be.

YELLOWHAMMER

Of what weight, sir?

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

Of some half ounce, stand fair and comely, with the spark of a diamond. Sir, 'twere pity to lose the least grace.

YELLOWHAMMER

Pray, let's see it; indeed, sir, 'tis a pure one.

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

So is the mistress.

YELLOWHAMMER

Have you the wideness of her finger, sir?

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

Yes, sure I think I have her measure about me.
[Searches for a paper] Good faith, 'tis down, I cannot show't you,
I must pull too many things out to be certain.
Let me see: long, and slender, and neatly jointed,
Just such another gentlewoman that's your daughter, sir.

YELLOWHAMMER

And therefore, sir, no gentlewoman.

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

I protest I never saw two maids handed more alike;
I'll ne'er seek farther, if you'll give me leave, sir.

YELLOWHAMMER

If you dare venture by her finger, sir.

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

Ay, and I'll bide all loss, sir.

YELLOWHAMMER

Say you so, sir; let's see hither, girl.

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

Shall I make bold with your finger, gentlewoman?

MOLL

Your pleasure, sir.

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

That fits her to a hair, sir.

YELLOWHAMMER

What's your posy now, sir?

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

Mass, that's true, posy, i'faith; e'en thus, sir:
"Love that's wise, blinds parents' eyes."

YELLOWHAMMER

How, how? If I may speak without offence, sir,
I hold my life—

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

What, sir?

YELLOWHAMMER

Go to, you'll pardon me?

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

Pardon you?

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Ay, sir.

YELLOWHAMMER

Will you, i'faith?

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

Yes, faith, I will.

YELLOWHAMMER

You'll steal away some man's daughter, am I near you?
Do you turn aside? You gentlemen are mad wags;
I wonder things can be so warily carried,
And parents blinded so, but they're served right
That have two eyes, and were so dull a sight.

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

[Aside] Thy doom take hold of thee.

YELLOWHAMMER

Tomorrow noon shall show your ring well done.

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

Being so, 'tis soon; thanks, and your leave sweet gentlewoman.

Exit.

MOLL

Sir, you are welcome.

[Aside] O, were I made of wishes, I went with thee.

YELLOWHAMMER

Come, now we'll see how the rules go within.

MOLL

That robs my joy, there I lose all I win.

[Exeunt.]

[I.ii. Allwit's house.]

Enter Davy and Allwit severally.

DAVY

Honesty wash my eyes, I have spied a wittol.

ALLWIT

What, Davy [Dahumma]? Welcome from North Wales,
I'faith, and is Sir Walter come?

DAVY

New come to town, sir.

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ALLWIT

Into the maids, sweet Davy, and give order his chamber be made ready instantly; my wife's as great as she can wallow, Davy, and longs for nothing but pickled cucumbers, and his coming, and now she shall ha't, boy.

DAVY

She's sure of them, sir.

ALLWIT

Thy very [sight] will hold my wife in pleasure, till the knight come himself. Go in, in, in, Davy.

Exit [Davy].

The founder's come to town; I am like a man
Finding a table furnished to his hand,
As mine is still to me, prays for the founder;
Bless the right worshipful, the good founder's life.
I thank him, h'as maintained my house this ten years,
Not only keeps my wife, but 'a keeps me,
And all my family; I am at his table,
He gets me all my children, and pays the nurse,
Monthly, or weekly, puts me to nothing,
Rent, nor church duties, not so much as the scavenger:
The happiest state that ever man was born to.
I walk out in a morning, come to breakfast,
Find excellent cheer, a good fire in winter,
Look in my coal house about midsummer eve,
That's full, five or six chaldron, new laid up;
Look in my back yard, I shall find a steeple
Made up with Kentish faggots, which o'erlooks
The waterhouse and the windmills; I say nothing
But smile, and pin the door. When she lies in,
As now she's even upon the point of grunting,
A lady lies not in like her; there's her embossings,
Embroiderings, spanglings, and I know not what,
As if she lay with all the gaudy shops
In Gresham's Burse about her; then her restoratives,
Able to set up a young 'pothecary,
And richly stock the foreman of a drug shop;
Her sugar by whole loaves, her wines by rundlets.
I see these things, but like a happy man,
I pay for none at all, yet fools think's mine;
I have the name, and in his gold I shine.
And where some merchants would in soul kiss hell,
To buy a paradise for their wives, and dye
Their conscience in the bloods of prodigal heirs
To deck their night-piece, yet all this being done,
Eaten with jealousy to the inmost bone—
As what affliction nature more constrains,
Than feed the wife plump for another's veins?—
These torments stand I freed of, I am as clear

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

From jealousy of a wife as from the charge.
O, two miraculous blessings; 'tis the knight
Hath took that labour all out of my hands;
I may sit still and play; he's jealous for me—
Watches her steps, sets spies—I live at ease;
He has both the cost and torment; when the strings
Of his heart [fret], I feed, laugh, or sing,
"La dildo, dildo la dildo, la dildo dildo de dildo."

Enter two Servants.

FIRST SERVANT

What has he got a-singing in his head now?

SECOND SERVANT

Now he's out of work he falls to making dildoes.

ALLWIT

Now, sirs, Sir Walter's come.

FIRST SERVANT

Is our master come?

ALLWIT

Your master? What am I?

FIRST SERVANT

Do not you know, sir?

ALLWIT

Pray, am not I your master?

FIRST SERVANT

O, you are but our mistress's husband.

Enter Sir Walter and Davy.

ALLWIT

Ergo, knave, your master.

FIRST SERVANT

Negatur argumentum. Here comes Sir Walter.

[Allwit takes off his hat.]

[Aside to Second Servant] Now 'a stands bare as well as we; make the most of him, he's but one peep above a serving-man, and so much his horns make him.

SIR WALTER

How dost, Jack?

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ALLWIT

Proud of your worship's health, sir.

SIR WALTER

How does your wife?

ALLWIT

E'en after your own making, sir,
She's a tumbler, i'faith, the nose and belly meets.

SIR WALTER

They'll part in time again.

ALLWIT

At the good hour, they will, and please your worship.

SIR WALTER

Here, sirrah, pull off my boots. Put on, put on, Jack.

ALLWIT

I thank your kind worship, sir.

SIR WALTER

Slippers! Heart, you are sleepy.

ALLWIT

[Aside] The game begins already.

SIR WALTER

Pish, put on, Jack.

ALLWIT

[Aside] Now I must do it, or he'll be as angry now as if I had put it on at first bidding; 'tis but observing, 'tis but observing a man's humour once, and he may ha' him by the nose all his life. [Puts his hat back on]

SIR WALTER

What entertainment has lain open here?
No strangers in my absence?

FIRST SERVANT

Sure, sir, not any.

ALLWIT

[Aside] His jealousy begins, am not I happy now
That can laugh inward whilst his marrow melts?

SIR WALTER

How do you satisfy me?

FIRST SERVANT

Good sir, be patient.

SIR WALTER

For two months' absence I'll be satisfied.

FIRST SERVANT

No living creature entered—

SIR WALTER

Entered? Come, swear—

FIRST SERVANT

You will not hear me out, sir—

SIR WALTER

Yes, I'll hear't out, sir.

FIRST SERVANT

Sir, he can tell himself.

SIR WALTER

Heart, he can tell!

Do you think I'll trust him? As a usurer
With forfeited lordships. Him? O monstrous injury!
Believe him? Can the devil speak ill of darkness?
What can you say, sir?

ALLWIT

Of my soul and conscience,
Sir, she's a wife as honest of her body
To me as any lord's proud lady can be.

SIR WALTER

Yet, by your leave, I heard you were once offering
To go to bed to her.

ALLWIT

No, I protest, sir.

SIR WALTER

Heart, if you do, you shall take all—I'll marry.

ALLWIT

O, I beseech you, sir—

SIR WALTER

That wakes the slave,
And keeps his flesh in awe.

ALLWIT

[Aside] I'll stop that gap
Where'er I find it open; I have poisoned

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

His hopes in marriage already—
Some old rich widows, and some landed virgins—

Enter two children[, Wat and Nick].

And I'll fall to work still before I'll lose him,
He's yet too sweet to part from.

[WAT]

God—den, father.

ALLWIT

Ha, villain, peace.

NICK

God—den, father.

ALLWIT

Peace, bastard.

[Aside] Should he hear 'em! These are two foolish children,
They do not know the gentleman that sits there.

SIR WALTER

Oh Wat, how dost, Nick? Go to school,
Ply your books, boys, ha?

[Exeunt Wat and Nick.]

ALLWIT

[Aside] Where's your legs, whoresons?
They should kneel indeed if they could say their prayers.

SIR WALTER

[Aside] Let me see, stay,
How shall I dispose of these two brats now
When I am married, for they must not mingle
Amongst my children that I get in wedlock,
'Twill make foul work that, and raise many storms.
I'll bind Wat prentice to a goldsmith, my father Yellowhammer;
As fit as can be. Nick with some vintner; good, goldsmith
And vintner; there will be wine in bowls, i'faith.

Enter Allwit's Wife.

MISTRESS ALLWIT

Sweet knight,
Welcome; I have all my longings now in town,
Now well—come the good hour.

SIR WALTER

How cheers my mistress?

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MISTRESS ALLWIT

Made lightsome, e'en by him that made me heavy.

SIR WALTER

Methinks she shows gallantly, like a moon at full, sir.

ALLWIT

True, and if she bear a male child, there's the man in the moon, sir.

SIR WALTER

'Tis but the boy in the moon yet, goodman calf.

ALLWIT

There was a man; the boy had never been there else.

SIR WALTER

It shall be yours, sir.

[Exeunt Mistress Allwit and Sir Walter.]

ALLWIT

No, by my troth,
I'll swear it's none of mine, let him that got it
Keep it. Thus do I rid myself of fear,
Lie soft, sleep hard, drink wine, and eat good cheer.

[Exit.]

II.[i. A street.]

Enter Touchwood Senior and his Wife.

[MISTRESS TOUCHWOOD]

'Twill be so tedious, sir, to live from you,
But that necessity must be obeyed.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

I would it might not, wife; the tediousness
Will be the most part mine, that understand
The blessings I have in thee; so to part,
That drives the torment to a knowing heart;
But as thou sayst, we must give way to need
And live awhile asunder, our desires
Are both too fruitful for our barren fortunes.
How adverse runs the destiny of some creatures—
Some only can get riches and no children,
We only can get children and no riches;

II.[i. A street.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

Then 'tis the [prudent'st] part to check our wills,
And till our state rise, make our bloods lie still.
Life, every year a child, and some years two,
Besides drinkings abroad, that's never reckoned;
This gear will not hold out.

[MISTRESS TOUCHWOOD]

Sir, for a time, I'll take the courtesy of my uncle's house
If you be pleased to like on't, till prosperity
Look with a friendly eye upon our states.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Honest wife, I thank thee; I ne'er knew
The perfect treasure thou brought'st with thee more
Than at this instant minute. A man's happy
When he's at poorest that has matched his soul
As rightly as his body. Had I married
A sensual fool now, as 'tis hard to 'scape it
'Mongst gentlewomen of our time, she would ha' hanged
About my neck, and never left her hold
Till she had kissed me into wanton businesses,
Which at the waking of my better judgment
I should have cursed most bitterly,
And laid a thicker vengeance on my act
Than misery of the birth, which were enough
If it were born to greatness, whereas mine
Is sure of beggary, though it were got in wine.
Fulness of joy showeth the goodness in thee,
Thou art a matchless wife; farewell, my joy.

[MISTRESS TOUCHWOOD]

I shall not want your sight?

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

I'll see thee often,
Talk in mirth, and play at kisses with thee,
Anything, wench, but what may beget beggars;
There I give o'er the set, throw down the cards,
And dare not take them up.

[MISTRESS TOUCHWOOD]

Your will be mine, sir.

Exit.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

This does not only make her honesty perfect,
But her discretion, and approves her judgment.
Had her desire[s] been wanton, they'd been blameless
In being lawful ever, but of all creatures
I hold that wife a most unmatched treasure

II.[i. A street.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

That can unto her fortunes fix her pleasure,
And not unto her blood—this is like wedlock;
The feast of marriage is not lust but love,
And care of the estate. When I please blood,
Merely I sing, and suck out others'; then,
'Tis many a wise man's fault; but of all men
I am the most unfortunate in that game
That ever pleased both genders, I ne'er played yet
Under a bastard; the poor wenches curse me
To the pit where'er I come; they were ne'er served so,
But used to have more words than one to a bargain.
I have such a fatal finger in such business
I must forth with't, chiefly for country wenches,
For every harvest I shall hinder hay-making;

Enter a Wench with a child.

I had no less than seven lay in last progress,
Within three weeks of one another's time.

WENCH

O Snaphance, have I found you?

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

How Snaphance?

WENCH

Do you see your workmanship?
Nay, turn not from it, nor offer to escape, for if you do,
I'll cry it through the streets, and follow you.
Your name may well be called Touchwood, a pox on you,
You do but touch and take; thou hast undone me;
I was a maid before, I can bring a certificate for it,
From both the churchwardens.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

I'll have the parson's hand, too, or I'll not yield to't.

WENCH

Thou shalt have more, thou villain; nothing grieves me, but Ellen, my poor cousin in Derbyshire, thou hast cracked her marriage quite; she'll have a bout with thee.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Faith, when she will I'll have a bout with her.

WENCH

A law bout, sir, I mean.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

True, lawyers use such bouts as other men do,
And if that be all thy grief, I'll tender her a husband;

ll.[i. A street.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

I keep of purpose two or three gulls in pickle
To eat such mutton with, and she shall choose one.
Do but in courtesy, faith, wench, excuse me
Of this half yard of flesh, in which I think it wants
A nail or two.

WENCH

No, thou shalt find, villain
It hath right shape, and all the nails it should have.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Faith, I am poor; do a charitable deed, wench,
I am a younger brother, and have nothing.

WENCH

Nothing! Thou hast too much, thou lying villain
Unless thou wert more thankful.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

I have no dwelling,
I brake up house but this morning; pray thee, pity me,
I am a good fellow, faith, have been too kind
To people of your gender; if I ha't
Without my belly, none of your sex shall want it.
[Aside] That word has been of force to move a woman.--
There's tricks enough to rid thy hand on't, wench,
Some rich man's porch, tomorrow before day,
Or else anon i' the evening, twenty devices;
Here's all I have, i'faith, take purse and all.
[Aside] And would I were rid of all the ware i' the shop so.

WENCH

Where I find manly dealings I am pitiful,
This shall not trouble you.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

And I protest, wench,
The next I'll keep myself.

WENCH

Soft, let it be got first.
This is the fifth; if e'er I venture more
Where I now go for a maid, may I ride for a whore.

Exit.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

What shift she'll make now with this piece of flesh
In this strict time of Lent, I cannot imagine;
Flesh dare not peep abroad now; I have known
This city now above this seven years,

II.[i. A street.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

But I protest in better state of government
I never knew it yet, nor ever heard of;
There has been more religious wholesome laws
In the half circle of a year erected
For common good, than memory ever knew of,

Enter Sir Oliver Kix and his Lady.

Setting apart corruption of promoters,
And other poisonous officers that infect
And with a venomous breath taint every goodness.

[LADY KIX]

O, that e'er I was begot, or bred, or born.

SIR OLIVER

Be content, sweet wife.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

What's here to do now?
I hold my life she's in deep passion
For the imprisonment of veal and mutton
Now kept in garrets, weeps for some calf's head now;
Methinks her husband's head might serve with bacon.

Enter Touchwood Junior.

[LADY KIX]

Hist.

SIR OLIVER

Patience, sweet wife.

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

Brother, I have sought you strangely.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Why, what's the business?

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

With all speed thou canst,
Procure a licence for me.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

How, a licence?

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

Cud's foot, she's lost else, I shall miss her ever.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Nay, sure thou shalt not miss so fair a mark

Il.[i. A street.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

For thirteen shillings fourpence.

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

Thanks by hundreds.

Exit [with Touchwood Senior].

SIR OLIVER

Nay, pray thee cease, I'll be at more cost yet,
Thou know'st we are rich enough.

[LADY KIX]

All but in blessings,
And there the beggar goes beyond us. O, O, O,
To be seven years a wife and not a child, O, not a child!

SIR OLIVER

Sweet wife, have patience.

[LADY KIX]

Can any woman have a greater cut?

SIR OLIVER

I know 'tis great, but what of that, wife?
I cannot do withal; there's things making
By thine own doctor's advice at 'pothecary's;
I spare for nothing, wife, no, if the price
Were forty marks a spoonful,
I'd give a thousand pound to purchase fruitfulness;
'Tis but bating so many good works
In the erecting of Bridewells and spital-houses,
And so fetch it up again, for having none
I mean to make good deeds my children.

[LADY KIX]

Give me but those good deeds, and I'll find children.

SIR OLIVER

Hang thee, thou hast had too many.

[LADY KIX]

Thou li'st, brevity.

SIR OLIVER

O horrible, dar'st thou call me brevity?
Dar'st thou be so short with me?

[LADY KIX]

Thou deservest worse.
Think but upon the goodly lands and livings
That's kept back through want on't.

II.[i. A street.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

SIR OLIVER

Talk not on't, pray thee,
Thou'lt make me play the woman and weep too.

[LADY KIX]

'Tis our dry barrenness puffs up Sir Walter—
None gets by your not-getting, but that knight;
He's made by th' means, and fats his fortune shortly
In a great dowry with a goldsmith's daughter.

SIR OLIVER

They may all be deceived,
Be but you patient, wife.

[LADY KIX]

I have suffered a long time.

SIR OLIVER

Suffer thy heart out; a pox suffer thee!

[LADY KIX]

Nay, thee, thou desertless slave!

SIR OLIVER

Come, come, I ha' done;
You'll to the gossiping of Mr. Allwit's child?

[LADY KIX]

Yes, to my much joy;
Everyone gets before me—there's my sister
Was married but at Bartholomew eve last,
And she can have two children at a birth;
O, one of them, one of them would ha' served my turn.

SIR OLIVER

Sorrow consume thee, thou art still crossing me,
And know'st my nature.

Enter a Maid.

MAID

[Aside] O mistress, weeping or railing,
That's our house harmony.

[LADY KIX]

What sayst, Jugg?

MAID

The sweetest news.

ll.[i. A street.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

[LADY KIX]
What is't, wench?

MAID
Throw down your doctor's drugs,
They're all but heretics; I bring certain remedy
That has been taught, and proved, and never failed.

SIR OLIVER
O that, that, that or nothing.

MAID
There's a gentleman,
I haply have his name, too, that has got
Nine children by one water that he useth;
It never misses, they come so fast upon him,
He was fain to give it over.

[LADY KIX]
His name, sweet Jugg?

MAID
One Mr. Touchwood, a fine gentleman,
But run behind hand much with getting children.

SIR OLIVER
Is't possible?

MAID
Why, sir, he'll undertake
Using that water, within fifteen year,
For all your wealth, to make you a poor man,
You shall so swarm with children.

SIR OLIVER
I'll venture that, i'faith.

[LADY KIX]
That shall you, husband.

MAID
But I must tell you first, he's very dear.

SIR OLIVER
No matter, what serves wealth for?

[LADY KIX]
True, sweet husband,
There's land to come; put case his water stands me
In some five hundred pound a pint,
'Twill fetch a thousand, and a Kersten soul,

II.[i. A street.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

And that's worth all, sweet husband.
I'll about it.

[Exeunt.]

[II.ii. Another street.]
Enter Allwit.

ALLWIT

I'll go bid gossips presently myself,
That's all the work I'll do, nor need I stir,
But that it is my pleasure to walk forth
And air myself a little; I am tied to nothing
In this business, what I do is merely recreation,
Not constraint.
Here's running to and fro, nurse upon nurse,
Three charwomen, besides maids and neighbours' children.
Fie, what a trouble I have rid my hands on;
It makes me sweat to think on't.

Enter Sir Walter Whorehound.

SIR WALTER

How now, Jack?

ALLWIT

I am going to bid gossips for your worship's child, sir,
A goodly girl, i'faith, give you joy on her,
She looks as if she had two thousand pound
To her portion, and run away with a tailor;
A fine, plump, black-eyed slut, under correction, sir,
I take delight to see her: Nurse!

[Enter a Dry Nurse.]

[DRY] NURSE

Do you call, sir?

ALLWIT

I call not you, I call the wet nurse hither,
Give me the wet nurse.

Exit [Dry Nurse]. Enter a Wet Nurse [carrying a baby].

Ay, 'tis thou,
Come hither, come hither,
Let's see her once again; I cannot choose
But buss her thrice an hour.

[WET] NURSE

II.[i. A street.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

You may be proud on't, sir,
'Tis the best piece of work that e'er you did.

ALLWIT

Think'st thou so, Nurse? What sayst to Wat and Nick?

[WET] NURSE

They're pretty children both, but here's a wench
Will be a knocker.

ALLWIT

Pup—sayst thou me so? Pup, little countess;
Faith, sir, I thank your worship for this girl,
Ten thousand times, and upward.

SIR WALTER

I am glad
I have her for you, sir.

ALLWIT

Here, take her in, Nurse,
Wipe her, and give her spoonmeat.

[WET] NURSE

[Aside] Wipe your mouth, sir.

Exit.

ALLWIT

And now about these gossips.

SIR WALTER

Get but two,
I'll stand for one myself.

ALLWIT

To your own child, sir?

SIR WALTER

The better policy, it prevents suspicion,
'Tis good to play with rumour at all weapons.

ALLWIT

Troth, I commend your care, sir, 'tis a thing
That I should ne'er have thought on.

SIR WALTER

[Aside] The more slave;
When man turns base, out goes his soul's pure flame,
The fat of ease o'erthrows the eyes of shame.

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

ALLWIT

I am studying who to get for godmother
Suitable to your worship: now I ha' thought on't.

SIR WALTER

I'll ease you of that care, and please myself in't.
[Aside] My love, the goldsmith's daughter, if I send,
Her father will command her.—Davy Dahumma!

Enter Davy.

ALLWIT

I'll fit your worship then with a male partner.

SIR WALTER

What is he?

ALLWIT

A kind, proper gentleman,
Brother to Mr. Touchwood.

SIR WALTER

I know Touchwood,
Has he a brother living?

ALLWIT

A neat bachelor.

SIR WALTER

Now we know him we'll make shift with him.
Dispatch, the time draws near. Come hither, Davy.

Exit [with Davy].

ALLWIT

In troth, I pity him, he ne'er stands still.
Poor knight, what pains he takes—sends this way one,
That way another, has not an hour's leisure—
I would not have thy toil, for all thy pleasure.

Enter two Promoters.

Ha, how now, what are these that stand so close
At the street corner, pricking up their ears,
And snuffing up their noses, like rich men's dogs
When the first course goes in? By the mass, promoters,
'Tis so, I hold my life, and planted there
To arrest the dead corps of poor calves and sheep,
Like ravenous creditors that will not suffer
The bodies of their poor departed debtors
To go to th' grave, but e'en in death to vex

ll.[i. A street.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

And stay the corps, with bills of Middlesex.
This Lent will fat the whoresons up with sweetbreads
And lard their whores with lamb–stones; what their golls
Can clutch goes presently to their Molls and Dolls.
The bawds will be so fat with what they earn
Their chins will hang like udders by Easter eve,
And being stroked, will give the milk of witches.
How did the mongrels hear my wife lies in?
Well, I may baffle 'em gallantly.—By your favour, gentlemen,
I am a stranger both unto the city
And to her carnal strictness.

FIRST PROMOTER

Good; your will, sir?

ALLWIT

Pray tell me where one dwells that kills this Lent.

FIRST PROMOTER

How, kills? [Aside to Second Promoter] Come hither, Dick, a bird, a bird.

SECOND PROMOTER

What is't that you would have?

ALLWIT

Faith, any flesh,
But I long especially for veal and green sauce.

FIRST PROMOTER

[Aside] Green goose, you shall be sauced.

ALLWIT

I have half a scornful stomach,
No fish will be admitted.

FIRST PROMOTER

Not this Lent, sir?

ALLWIT

Lent, what cares colon here for Lent?

FIRST PROMOTER

You say well, sir;
Good reason that the colon of a gentleman,
As you were lately pleased to term your worship, sir,
Should be fulfilled with answerable food,
To sharpen blood, delight health, and tickle nature.
Were you directed hither to this street, sir?

ALLWIT

That I was, ay, marry.

ll.[i. A street.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

SECOND PROMOTER

And the butcher belike
Should kill and sell close in some upper room?

ALLWIT

Some apple loft as I take it, or a coal house,
I know not which, i'faith.

SECOND PROMOTER

Either will serve.
[Aside] This butcher shall kiss Newgate, 'less he turn up
The bottom of the pocket of his apron.—
You go to seek him?

ALLWIT

Where you shall not find him;
I'll buy, walk by your noses with my flesh,
Sheep-biting mongrels, hand basket freebooters!
My wife lies in; a foutra for promoters!

Exit.

FIRST PROMOTER

That shall not serve your turn! What a rogue's this;
How cunningly he came over us!

Enter a Man with meat in a basket.

SECOND PROMOTER

Husht, stand close.

MAN

I have 'scaped well thus far; they say the knaves
Are wondrous hot and busy.

FIRST PROMOTER

By your leave sir,
We must see what you have under your cloak there.

MAN

Have? I have nothing.

FIRST PROMOTER

No, do you tell us that?
What makes this lump stick out then; we must see, sir.

MAN

What will you see, sir—a pair of sheets, and two
Of my wife's foul smocks, going to the washers?

Il.[i. A street.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

SECOND PROMOTER

O, we love that sight well, you cannot please us better.

[He takes the basket and opens it.]

What, do you gull us? Call you these shirts and smocks?

MAN

Now a pox choke you!

You have cozened me and five of my wife's kindred

Of a good dinner; we must make it up now

With herrings and milk pottage.

Exit.

FIRST PROMOTER

'Tis all veal.

SECOND PROMOTER

All veal? Pox, the worse luck; I promised faithfully to send this morning a fat quarter of lamb to a kind gentlewoman in Turnbull Street that longs, and how I'm crossed.

FIRST PROMOTER

Let's share this, and see what hap comes next then.

Enter another with a basket.

SECOND PROMOTER

Agreed, stand close again; another booty.

What's he?

FIRST PROMOTER

Sir, by your favour.

[SECOND] MAN

Meaning me, sir?

FIRST PROMOTER

Good Mr. Oliver, cry thee mercy, i'faith.

What has thou there?

[SECOND] MAN

A rack of mutton, sir,

And half a lamb; you know my mistress's diet.

FIRST PROMOTER

Go, go, we see thee not; away, keep close,

Heart, let him pass, thou'lt never have the wit

To know our benefactors.

[Exit Second Man.]

Il.[i. A street.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

SECOND PROMOTER

I have forgot him.

FIRST PROMOTE

'Tis Mr. Beggarland's man, the wealthy merchant
That is in fee with us.

SECOND PROMOTER

Now I have a feeling of him.

FIRST PROMOTER

You know he purchased the whole Lent together,
Gave us ten groats apiece on Ash Wednesday.

SECOND PROMOTER

True, true.

Enter a Wench with a basket, and a child in it under a loin of mutton.

FIRST PROMOTER

A wench.

SECOND PROMOTER

Why then, stand close indeed.

WENCH

[Aside] Women had need of wit, if they'll shift here,
And she that hath wit may shift anywhere.

FIRST PROMOTER

Look, look, poor fool,
She has left the rump uncovered too,
More to betray her; this is like a murderer
That will outface the deed with a bloody band.

SECOND PROMOTER

[Taking her basket] What time of the year is't, sister?

WENCH

O sweet gentlemen, I am a poor servant,
Let me go.

FIRST PROMOTER

You shall, wench, but this must stay with us.

WENCH

O, you undo me, sir;
'Tis for a wealthy gentlewoman that takes physic, sir,
The doctor does allow my mistress mutton.
O, as you tender the dear life of a gentlewoman,

ll.[i. A street.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

I'll bring my master to you, he shall show you
A true authority from the higher powers,
And I'll run every foot.

SECOND PROMOTER

Well, leave your basket
Then, and run and spare not.

WENCH

Will you swear then
To me to keep it till I come?

FIRST PROMOTER

Now by
This light, I will.

WENCH

What say you, gentleman?

SECOND PROMOTER

What a strange wench 'tis. Would we might perish else.

WENCH

Nay then, I run, sir.

Exit.

FIRST PROMOTER

And ne'er return I hope.

SECOND PROMOTER

A politic baggage, she makes us swear to keep it;
I prithee, look what market she hath made.

FIRST PROMOTER

Imprimis, sir, a good fat loin of mutton;
What comes next under this cloth?
Now for a quarter of lamb.

SECOND PROMOTER

Now for a shoulder
Of mutton.

FIRST PROMOTER

Done.

SECOND PROMOTER

Why done, sir?

FIRST PROMOTER

By the mass,

ll.[i. A street.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

I feel I have lost, 'tis of more weight, i'faith.

SECOND PROMOTER

Some loin of veal?

FIRST PROMOTER

No, faith, here's a lamb's head,
I feel that plainly, why yet I'll win my wager.

SECOND PROMOTER

Ha?

FIRST PROMOTER

'Swounds, what's here?

SECOND PROMOTER

A child!

FIRST PROMOTER

A pox of all dissembling, cunning whores!

SECOND PROMOTER

Here's an unlucky breakfast.

FIRST PROMOTER

What shall's do?

SECOND PROMOTER

The quean made us swear to keep it, too.

FIRST PROMOTER

We might leave it else.

SECOND PROMOTER

Villainous strange;
Life, had she none to gull but poor promoters
That watch hard for a living?

FIRST PROMOTER

Half our gettings
Must run in sugar-sops and nurses' wages
Now, besides many a pound of soap and tallow;
We have need to get loins of mutton still,
To save suet to change for candles.

SECOND PROMOTER

Nothing
Mads me but this was a lamb's head with you,
You felt it; she has made calves' heads of us.

FIRST PROMOTER

Il.[i. A street.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

Prithee no more on't, there's time to get it up;
It is not come to mid-Lent Sunday yet.

SECOND PROMOTER

I am so angry, I'll watch no more today.

FIRST PROMOTER

Faith, nor I neither.

SECOND PROMOTER

Why then I'll make a motion.

FIRST PROMOTER

Well, what is't?

SECOND PROMOTER

Let's e'en go to the Checker
At Queenhive and roast the loin of mutton
Till young flood; then send the child to Branford.

[Exeunt.]

[II.iii. A hall in Allwit's house.]

Enter Allwit in one of Sir Walter's suits, and Davy trussing him.

ALLWIT

'Tis a busy day at our house, Davy.

DAVY

Always the kursning day, sir.

ALLWIT

Truss, truss me, Davy.

DAVY

[Aside] No matter and you were hanged, sir.

ALLWIT

How does this suit fit me, Davy?

DAVY

Excellent neatly; my master's things were ever fit for you, sir, e'en to a hair, you know.

ALLWIT

Thou has hit it right, Davy,
We ever jumped in one this ten years, Davy.

Enter a Servant with a box.

So, well said; what art thou?

II.[i. A street.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

THIRD SERVANT

Your comfit-maker's man, sir.

ALLWIT

O sweet youth, into the nurse quick,
Quick, 'tis time, i'faith; your mistress will be here?

THIRD SERVANT

She was setting forth, sir.

[Exit Third Servant.] Enter two Puritans.

ALLWIT

Here comes our gossips now;
O, I shall have such kissing work today;
Sweet Mistress Underman, welcome, i'faith.

FIRST PURITAN

Give you joy of your fine girl, sir,
Grant that her education may be pure,
And become one of the faithful.

ALLWIT

Thanks to your sisterly wishes, Mistress Underman.

SECOND PURITAN

Are any of the brethren's wives yet come?

ALLWIT

There are some wives within, and some at home.

FIRST PURITAN

Verily thanks, sir.

[Exeunt Puritans.]

ALLWIT

Verily you are an ass, forsooth;
I must fit all these times, or there's no music.

Enter two Gossips.

Here comes a friendly and familiar pair,
Now I like these wenches well.

FIRST GOSSIP

How dost, sirrah?

ALLWIT

Faith, well, I thank you, neighbour, and how dost thou?

ll.[i. A street.]

SECOND GOSSIP

Want nothing, but such getting, sir, as thine.

ALLWIT

My gettings, wench, they are poor.

FIRST GOSSIP

Fie that thou'lt say so,
Th'ast as fine children as a man can get.

DAVY

[Aside] Ay, as a man can get, and that's my master.

ALLWIT

They are pretty foolish things,
Put to making in minutes;
I ne'er stand long about 'em,
Will you walk in wenches?

[Exeunt Gossips.] Enter Touchwood Junior and Moll.

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

The happiest meeting that our souls could wish for.
Here's the ring ready; I am beholding
Unto your father's haste, h'as kept his hour.

MOLL

He never kept it better.

Enter Sir Walter Whorehound.

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

Back, be silent.

SIR WALTER

Mistress and partner, I will put you both
Into one cup.

DAVY

[Aside] Into one cup, most proper,
A fitting compliment for a goldsmith's daughter.

ALLWIT

Yes, sir, that's he must be your worship's partner
In this day's business, Mr. Touchwood's brother.

SIR WALTER

I embrace your acquaintance, sir.

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

It vows your service, sir.

ll.[i. A street.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

SIR WALTER

It's near high time; come, Mr. Allwit.

ALLWIT

Ready, sir.

SIR WALTER

Will't please you walk?

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

Sir, I obey your time.

[Exeunt.]

[II.iv. The street outside Allwit's house.]

Enter Midwife with the child, [Maudlin] and the Gossips to the Kursning.

FIRST GOSSIP

Good Mrs. Yellowhammer.

MAUDLIN

In faith, I will not.

FIRST GOSSIP

Indeed, it shall be yours.

MAUDLIN

I have sworn, i'faith.

FIRST GOSSIP

I'll stand still then.

MAUDLIN

So will you let the child go without company and make me forsworn.

FIRST GOSSIP

You are such another creature.

SECOND GOSSIP

Before me? I pray come down a little.

THIRD GOSSIP

Not a whit; I hope I know my place.

SECOND GOSSIP

Your place? Great wonder sure! Are you any better than a comfit-maker's wife?

THIRD GOSSIP

And that's as good at all times as a 'pothecary's.

II.[i. A street.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

SECOND GOSSIP

Ye lie, yet I forbear you, too.

FIRST PURITAN

Come, sweet sister, we go in unity, and show the fruits of peace like children of the spirit.

SECOND PURITAN

I love lowliness.

FOURTH GOSSIP

True, so say I, though they strive more,
There comes as proud behind as goes before.

FIFTH GOSSIP

Every inch, i'faith.

[Exeunt.]

III.[i. A church.]

Enter Touchwood Junior and a Parson.

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

O sir, if ever you felt the force of love, pity it in me.

PARSON

Yes, though I ne'er was married, sir,
I have felt the force of love from good men's daughters,
And some that will be maids yet three years hence.
Have you got a licence?

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

Here, 'tis ready, sir.

PARSON

That's well.

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

The ring and all things perfect, she'll steal hither.

PARSON

She shall be welcome sir; I'll not be long
A-clapping you together.

Enter Moll and Touchwood Senior.

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

O, here she's come, sir.

III.[i. A church.]

PARSON

What's he?

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

My honest brother.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Quick, make haste, sirs.

MOLL

You must dispatch with all the speed you can,
For I shall be missed straight; I made hard shift
For this small time I have.

PARSON

Then I'll not linger,
Place that ring upon her finger,
This the finger plays the part,
Whose master vein shoots from the heart;
Now join hands---

Enter Yellowhammer and Sir Walter.

YELLOWHAMMER

Which I will sever,
And so ne'er again meet, never.

MOLL

O, we are betrayed!

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

Hard fate!

SIR WALTER

I am struck with wonder.

YELLOWHAMMER

Was this the politic fetch, thou mystical baggage,
Thou disobedient strumpet? [To Sir Walter] And were
So wise to send for her to such an end?

SIR WALTER

Now I disclaim the end, you'll make me mad.

YELLOWHAMMER

And what are you, sir?

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

And you cannot see
With those two glasses, put on a pair more.

YELLOWHAMMER

I dreamt of anger still, here take your ring, sir;
Ha, this? Life, 'tis the same: abominable!
Did not I sell this ring?

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

I think you did,
You received money for it.

YELLOWHAMMER

Heart, hark you, knight,
Here's no inconscionable villainy--
Set me a-work to make the wedding ring,
And come with an intent to steal my daughter;
Did ever runaway match it?

SIR WALTER

This your brother, sir?

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

He can tell that as well as I.

YELLOWHAMMER

The very posy mocks me to my face:
"Love that's wise, blinds parents' eyes."
I thank your wisdom, sir, for blinding of us;
We have good hope to recover our sight shortly,
In the meantime I will lock up this baggage,
As carefully as my gold; she shall see as little sun
If a close room or so can keep her from the light on't.

MOLL

O sweet father, for love's sake pity me!

YELLOWHAMMER

Away!

MOLL

Farewell, sir, all content bless thee,
And take this for comfort,
Though violence keep me, thou canst lose me never,
I am ever thine although we part for ever.

YELLOWHAMMER

Ay, we shall part you, minx.

Exit [Yellowhammer with Moll].

SIR WALTER

Your acquaintance, sir,
Came very lately, yet it came too soon;

III.[i. A church.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

I must hereafter know you for no friend,
But one that I must shun like pestilence,
Or the disease of lust.

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

Like enough, sir,
You ha' ta'en me at the worst time for words
That e'er ye picked out; faith, do not wrong me, sir.

Exit.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Look after him and spare not; there he walks
That never yet received baffling; you're blessed
More than e'er I knew. Go take your rest.

Exit.

SIR WALTER

I pardon you, you are both losers.

[Exeunt.]

[III.ii. Allwit's house.]

A bed thrust out upon the stage, Allwit's Wife in it. Enter all the Gossips [including Maudlin and Lady Kix].

FIRST GOSSIP

How is't, woman? We have brought you home
A kursen soul.

MISTRESS ALLWIT

Ay, I thank your pains.

FIRST PURITAN

And verily well kursened, i' the right way,
Without idolatry or superstition,
After the pure manner of Amsterdam.

MISTRESS ALLWIT

Sit down, good neighbours; Nurse!

[Enter Wet Nurse.]

WET NURSE

At hand, forsooth.

MISTRESS ALLWIT

Look they have all low stools.

III.[i. A church.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

WET NURSE

They have, forsooth.

SECOND GOSSIP

Bring the child hither, Nurse;
How say you now, Gossip,
Is't not a chopping girl, so like the father?

THIRD GOSSIP

As if it had been spit out of his mouth,
Eyed, nosed and browed as like a girl can be,
Only indeed it has the mother's mouth.

SECOND GOSSIP

The mother's mouth up and down, up and down.

THIRD GOSSIP

'Tis a large child, she's but a little woman.

SECOND PURITAN

No, believe me, a very spiny creature, but all heart,
Well mettled, like the faithful to endure
Her tribulation here, and raise up seed.

SECOND GOSSIP

She had a sore labour on't, I warrant you, you can tell, neighbour.

THIRD GOSSIP

O, she had great speed; we were afraid once,
But she made us all have joyful hearts again;
'Tis a good soul, i'faith;
The midwife found her a most cheerful daughter.

FIRST PURITAN

'Tis the spirit, the sisters are all like her.

Enter Sir Walter with two spoons and plate and Allwit.

SECOND GOSSIP

O, here comes the chief gossip, neighbours.

SIR WALTER

The fatness of your wishes to you all, ladies.

THIRD GOSSIP

O dear sweet gentleman, what fine words he has—
The fatness of our wishes.

SECOND GOSSIP

Calls us all ladies.

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

FOURTH GOSSIP

I promise you a fine gentleman, and a courteous.

SECOND GOSSIP

Methinks her husband shows like a clown to him.

THIRD GOSSIP

I would not care what clown my husband were too, so I had such fine children.

SECOND GOSSIP

She's all fine children, gossip.

THIRD GOSSIP

Ay, and see how fast they come.

FIRST PURITAN

Children are blessings, if they be got with zeal,
By the brethren, as I have five at home.

SIR WALTER

The worst is past, I hope, now, gossip.

MISTRESS ALLWIT

So I hope too, good sir.

ALLWIT

Why then so hope I too for company,
I have nothing to do else.

SIR WALTER

[Giving Mrs. Allwit a cup and spoons] A poor remembrance, lady!
To the love of the babe; I pray accept of it.

MISTRESS ALLWIT

O, you are at too much charge, sir.

SECOND GOSSIP

Look, look, what has he given her, what is't, gossip?

THIRD GOSSIP

Now by my faith, a fair high standing cup, and two great postle spoons, one of them gilt.

FIRST PURITAN

Sure that was Judas then with the red beard.

SECOND PURITAN

I would not feed my daughter with that spoon
For all the world, for fear of colouring her hair;
Red hair the brethren like not, it consumes them much,
'Tis not the sisters' colour.

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

Enter Nurse with comfits and wine.

ALLWIT

Well said, Nurse;
About, about with them amongst the gossips:
Now out comes all the tasseled handkerchers,
They are spread abroad between their knees already;
Now in goes the long fingers that are washed
Some thrice a day in urine—my wife uses it—
Now we shall have such pocketing;
See how they lurch at the lower end.

FIRST PURITAN

Come hither, Nurse.

ALLWIT

Again! She has taken twice already.

FIRST PURITAN

I had forgot a sister's child that's sick.

ALLWIT

A pox, it seems your purity loves sweet things well that puts in thrice together. Had this been all my cost now I had been beggared. These women have no consciences at sweetmeats, where'er they come; see and they have not culled out all the long plums, too—they have left nothing here but short riggle-tail comfits, not worth mouthing; no mar'l I heard a citizen complain once that his wife's belly only broke his back: mine had been all in fitters seven years since, but for this worthy knight that with a prop upholds my wife and me, and all my estate buried in Bucklersbury.

MISTRESS ALLWIT

Here, Mistress Yellowhammer, and neighbours,
To you all that have taken pains with me,
All the good wives at once.

FIRST PURITAN

I'll answer for them;
They wish all health and strength,
And that you may courageously go forward,
To perform the like and many such,
Like a true sister with motherly bearing.

ALLWIT

Now the cups troll about to wet the gossips' whistles;
It pours down, i'faith: they never think of payment.

FIRST PURITAN

Fill again, Nurse.

ALLWIT

Now bless thee, two at once; I'll stay no longer;
It would kill me and if I paid for't.

III.[i. A church.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

Will it please you to walk down and leave the women?

SIR WALTER

With all my heart, Jack.

ALLWIT

Troth, I cannot blame you.

SIR WALTER

Sit you all, merry ladies.

ALL GOSSIPS

Thank your worship, sir.

FIRST PURITAN

Thank your worship, sir.

ALLWIT

A pox twice tippie ye, you are last and lowest.

Exit [Allwit with Sir Walter].

FIRST PURITAN

Bring hither that same cup, Nurse, I would fain drive away this (hup!) anti-Christian grief.

THIRD GOSSIP

See, gossip, and she lies not in like a countess;
Would I had such a husband for my daughter.

FOURTH GOSSIP

Is not she toward marriage?

THIRD GOSSIP

O no, sweet gossip.

FOURTH GOSSIP

Why, she's nineteen!

THIRD GOSSIP

Ay, that she was last Lammas,
But she has a fault gossip, a secret fault.

FOURTH GOSSIP

A fault, what is't?

THIRD GOSSIP

I'll tell you when I have drunk.

FOURTH GOSSIP

Wine can do that, I see, that friendship cannot.

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

THIRD GOSSIP

And now I'll tell you, gossip—she's too free.

FOURTH GOSSIP

Too free?

THIRD GOSSIP

O ay, she cannot lie dry in her bed.

FOURTH GOSSIP

What, and nineteen?

THIRD GOSSIP

'Tis as I tell you, gossip.

[Enter Dry Nurse and speaks to Maudlin.]

MAUDLIN

Speak with me, Nurse? Who is't?

[DRY] NURSE

A gentleman
From Cambridge, I think it be your son, forsooth.

MAUDLIN

'Tis my son Tim, i'faith, prithee call him up
Among the women, 'twill embolden him well,
For he wants nothing but audacity;
Would the Welsh gentlewoman at home were here now.

[LADY KIX]

Is your son come, forsooth!

MAUDLIN

Yes, from the university, forsooth.

[LADY KIX]

'Tis a great joy on ye.

MAUDLIN

There's a great marriage
Towards for him.

[LADY KIX]

A marriage?

MAUDLIN

Yes, sure,
A huge heir in Wales, at least to nineteen mountains,
Besides her goods and cattle.

III.[i. A church.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

Enter Tim.

TIM

O, I'm betrayed.

Exit.

MAUDLIN

What gone again? Run after him, good Nurse;

[Exit Dry Nurse.]

He's so bashful, that's the spoil of youth;
In the university they're kept still to men,
And ne'er trained up to women's company.

[LADY KIX]

'Tis a great spoil of youth indeed.

Enter [Dry] Nurse and Tim.

NURSE

Your mother will have it so.

MAUDLIN

Why son, why Tim,
What, must I rise and fetch you? For shame, son.

TIM

Mother, you do intreat like a freshwoman;
'Tis against the laws of the university
For any that has answered under bachelor to thrust
'Mongst married wives.

MAUDLIN

Come, we'll excuse you here.

TIM

Call up my tutor, mother, and I care not.

MAUDLIN

What, is your tutor come, have you brought him up?

TIM

I ha' not brought him up, he stands at door,
Negatur, there's logic to begin with you, mother.

MAUDLIN

Run, call the gentleman, Nurse, he's my son's tutor;
Here, eat some plums.

III.[i. A church.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

[Exit Dry Nurse.]

TIM

Come I from Cambridge,
And offer me six plums?

MAUDLIN

Why, how now, Tim,
Will not your old tricks yet be left?

TIM

Served like a child,
When I have answered under bachelor?

MAUDLIN

You'll never lin till I make your tutor whip you;
You know how I served you once at the free school
In Paul's churchyard?

TIM

O monstrous absurdity!
Ne'er was the like in Cambridge since my time;
Life, whip a bachelor? You'd be laughed at
Soundly; let not my tutor hear you, 'twould be
A jest through the whole university;
No more words, mother.

Enter Tutor.

MAUDLIN

Is this your tutor Tim?

TUTOR

Yes, surely, lady, I am the man that brought him
In league with logic, and read the Dunces to him.

TIM

That did he, mother, but now I have 'em all
In my own pate, and can as well read 'em to others.

TUTOR

That can he, mistress, for they flow naturally from him.

MAUDLIN

I'm the more beholding to your pains, sir.

TUTOR

Non ideo sane.

MAUDLIN

True, he was an idiot indeed

III.[i. A church.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

When he went out of London, but now he's well mended;
Did you receive the two goose pies I sent you?

TUTOR

And eat them heartily, thanks to your worship.

MAUDLIN

'Tis my son Tim, I pray bid him welcome, gentlewomen.

TIM

Tim? Hark you, Timotheus, mother, Timotheus.

MAUDLIN

How, shall I deny your name? "Timotheus" quoth he?
Faith, there's a name, 'tis my son Tim, forsooth.

[LADY KIX]

You're welcome, Mr. Tim.

Kiss.

TIM

O, this is horrible, she wets as she kisses;
Your handkercher, sweet tutor, to wipe them off,
As fast as they come on.

SECOND GOSSIP

Welcome from Cambridge.

Kiss.

TIM

This is intolerable! This woman has a villainous sweet breath, did she not stink of comfits; help me, sweet tutor,
or I shall rub my lips off.

TUTOR

I'll go kiss the lower end the whilst.

TIM

Perhaps that's the sweeter,
And we shall dispatch the sooner.

FIRST PURITAN

Let me come next.
Welcome from the wellspring of discipline
That waters all the brethren.

Reels and falls.

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

TIM

Hoist, I beseech thee!

THIRD GOSSIP

O, bless the woman—Mistress Underman!

FIRST PURITAN

'Tis but the common affliction of the faithful,
We must embrace our falls.

TIM

I'm glad I 'scaped it,
It was some rotten kiss sure,
It dropped down before it came at me.

Enter Allwit and Davy.

ALLWIT

Here's a noise, not parted yet? [Heyday],
A looking glass; they have drunk so hard in plate,
That some of them had need of other vessels.
Yonder's the bravest show.

ALL GOSSIPS

Where? Where, sir?

ALLWIT

Come along presently by the Pissing Conduit,
With two brave drums and a standard bearer.

ALL GOSSIPS

O, brave.

TIM

Come, tutor.

ALL GOSSIPS

Farewell, sweet gossip.

MISTRESS ALLWIT

I thank you all for your pains.

FIRST PURITAN

Feed and grow strong.

[Exeunt all but Allwit and Davy.]

ALLWIT

You had more need to sleep than eat;

III.[i. A church.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

Go, take a nap with some of the brethren, go,
And rise up a well-edified, boldified sister;
O, here's a day of toil well passed o'er,
Able to make a citizen hare-mad;
How hot they have made the room with their thick bums,
Dost not feel it, Davy?

DAVY

Monstrous strong, sir.

ALLWIT

What's here under the stools?

DAVY

Nothing but wet, sir,
Some wine spilt here belike.

ALLWIT

Is't no worse thinkst thou?
Fair needlework stools cost nothing with them, Davy.

DAVY

[Aside] Nor you neither, i'faith.

ALLWIT

Look how they have laid them,
E'en as they lie themselves, with their heels up;
How they have shuffled up the rushes, too, Davy,
With their short, figging, little, shittle-cork heels;
These women can let nothing stand as they find it;
But what's the secret thou'st about to tell me,
My honest Davy?

DAVY

If you should disclose it, sir--

ALLWIT

Life, rip my belly up to the throat then, Davy.

DAVY

My master's upon marriage.

ALLWIT

Marriage, Davy?
Send me to hanging rather.

DAVY

[Aside] I have stung him.

ALLWIT

When, where, what is she, Davy?

III.[i. A church.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

DAVY

E'en the same was gossip, and gave the spoon.

ALLWIT

I have no time to stay, nor scarce can speak,
I'll stop those wheels, or all the work will break.

Exit.

DAVY

I knew 'twould prick. Thus do I fashion still
All mine own ends by him and his rank toil;
'Tis my desire to keep him still from marriage;
Being his poor nearest kinsman, I may fare
The better at his death, there my hopes build
Since my Lady Kix is dry, and hath no child.

Exit.

[III.iii. Sir Oliver's house.]

Enter both the Touchwoods.

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

Y'are in the happiest way to enrich yourself,
And pleasure me, brother, as man's feet can tread in,
For though she be locked up, her vow is fixed
Only to me; then time shall never grieve me,
For by that vow, e'en absent [I] enjoy her,
Assuredly confirmed that none else shall,
Which will make tedious years seem gameful to me.
In the mean space lose you no time, sweet brother;
You have the means to strike at this knight's fortunes
And lay him level with his bankrout merit;
Get but his wife with child, perch at tree top,
And shake the golden fruit into her lap.
About it, before she weep herself to a dry ground,
And whine out all her goodness.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Prithee cease,
I find a too much aptness in my blood
For such a business without provocation;
You might well spared this banquet of eringoes,
Artichokes, potatoes, and your buttered crab,
They were fitter kept for your own wedding dinner.

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

Nay, and you'll follow my suit, and save my purse, too,
Fortune dotes on me; he's in happy case
Finds such an honest friend i' the common place.

III.[i. A church.]

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Life, what makes thee so merry? Thou hast no cause
That I could hear of lately since thy crosses,
Unless there be news come, with new additions.

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

Why there thou hast it right, I look for her
This evening, brother.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

How's that, look for her?

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

I will deliver you of the wonder straight, brother:
By the firm secrecy and kind assistance
Of a good wench i' the house, who, made of pity,
Weighing the case her own, she's led through gutters,
Strange hidden ways, which none but love could find,
Or ha' the heart to venture; I expect her
Where you would little think.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

I care not where,
So she be safe, and yours.

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

Hope tells me so,
But from your love and time my peace must grow.

Exit.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

You know the worst then, brother; now to my Kix,
The barren he and she, they're i' the next room,
But to say which of their two humours hold them
Now at this instant, I cannot say truly.

Kix to his Lady within.

SIR OLIVER

Thou liest, barrenness.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

O, is't that time of day? Give you joy of your tongue,
There's nothing else good in you; this their life
The whole day from eyes open to eyes shut,
Kissing or scolding, and then must be made friends,
Then rail the second part of the first fit out,
And then be pleased again, no man knows which way,
Fall out like giants, and fall in like children—

III.[i. A church.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

Their fruit can witness as much.

Enter Sir Oliver Kix and his Lady.

SIR OLIVER

'Tis thy fault.

[LADY KIX]

Mine, drouth and coldness?

SIR OLIVER

Thine, 'tis thou art barren.

[LADY KIX]

I barren! O life, that I durst but speak now,
In mine own justice, in mine own right—I barren!
'Twas otherways with me when I was at court,
I was ne'er called so till I was married.

SIR OLIVER

I'll be divorced.

[LADY KIX]

Be hanged! I need not wish it,
That will come too soon to thee: I may say,
Marriage and hanging goes by destiny,
For all the goodness I can find in't yet.

SIR OLIVER

I'll give up house, and keep some fruitful whore,
Like an old bachelor in a tradesman's chamber;
She and her children shall have all.

[LADY KIX]

Where be they?

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Pray, cease;
When there are friendlier courses took for you
To get and multiply within your house,
At your own proper costs in spite of censure,
Methinks an honest peace might be established.

SIR OLIVER

What with her? Never.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Sweet sir.

SIR OLIVER

You work all in vain.

III.[i. A church.]

[LADY KIX]

Then he doth all like thee.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Let me intreat, sir.

SIR OLIVER

Singleness confound her,
I took her with one smock.

[LADY KIX]

But indeed you came not so single,
When you came from shipboard.

SIR OLIVER

Heart, she bit sore there; prithee, make's friends.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Is't come to that? The peal begins to cease.

SIR OLIVER

I'll sell all at an outcry.

[LADY KIX]

Do thy worst, slave;
Good sweet sir, bring us into love again.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Some would think this impossible to compass;
Pray, let this storm fly over.

SIR OLIVER

Good sir, pardon me, I'm master of this house,
Which I'll sell presently, I'll clap up bills this evening.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Lady, friends? Come.

[LADY KIX]

If e'er ye loved woman, talk not on't, sir;
What, friends with him? Good faith, do you think I'm mad?
With one that's scarce the hinder quarter of a man?

SIR OLIVER

Thou art nothing of a woman.

[LADY KIX]

Would I were less than nothing.

Weeps.

III.[i. A church.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

SIR OLIVER

Nay, prithee what dost mean?

[LADY KIX]

I cannot please you.

SIR OLIVER

I'faith, thou art a good soul, he lies that says it;
Buss, buss, pretty rogue.

[LADY KIX]

You care not for me.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Can any man tell now which way they came in?
By this light, I'll be hanged then.

SIR OLIVER

Is the drink come?

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Here's a little vial of almond-milk--
[Aside] That stood me in some three pence.

SIR OLIVER

I hope to see thee, wench, within these few years,
Circl'd with children, pranking up a girl,
And putting jewels in their little ears;
Fine sport, i'faith.

[LADY KIX]

Ay, had you been aught, husband,
It had been done ere this time.

SIR OLIVER

Had been aught, hang thee, hadst thou been aught;
But a cross thing I ever found thee.

[LADY KIX]

Thou art a grub to say so.

SIR OLIVER

A pox on thee.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

By this light, they are out again at the same door,
And no man can tell which way;
Come here's your drink, sir.

SIR OLIVER

III.[i. A church.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

I will not take it now, sir,
And I were sure to get three boys ere midnight.

[LADY KIX]

Why there thou show'st now of what breed thou com'st;
To hinder generation! O thou villain,
That knows how crookedly the world goes with us
For want of heirs, yet put by all good fortune.

SIR OLIVER

Hang, strumpet, I will take it now in spite.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Then you must ride upon't five hours.

SIR OLIVER

I mean so.
Within there?

Enter a Servant.

SERVANT

Sir?

SIR OLIVER

Saddle the white mare,
I'll take a whore along, and ride to Ware.

[LADY KIX]

Ride to the devil.

SIR OLIVER

I'll plague you every way;
Look ye, do you see, 'tis gone.

Drinks.

[LADY KIX]

A pox go with it.

SIR OLIVER

I curse and spare not now.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Stir up and down, sir,
You must not stand.

SIR OLIVER

Nay, I'm not given to standing.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

So much the better, sir, for the—

SIR OLIVER

I never could stand long in one place yet,
I learnt it of my father, ever figient;
How if I crossed this, sir?

Capers.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

O, passing good, sir,
And would show well a—horseback; when you come
To your inn, if you leapt over a joint—stool or two
'Twere not amiss—[Aside] although you brake your neck, sir.

SIR OLIVER

What say you to a table thus high, sir?

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Nothing better, sir, if it be furnished
With good victuals. You remember how
The bargain runs about this business?

SIR OLIVER

Or else I had a bad head: you must receive, sir,
Four hundred pounds of me at four several payments:
One hundred pound now in hand.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Right, that I have, sir.

SIR OLIVER

Another hundred when my wife is quick,
The third when she's brought to bed, and the last hundred
When the child cries; for if it should be stillborn,
It doth no good, sir.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

All this is even still;
A little faster, sir.

SIR OLIVER

Not a whit, sir,
I'm in an excellent pace for any physic.

III.[i. A church.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

Enter a Servant.

SERVANT

Your white mare's ready.

SIR OLIVER

I shall up presently:

One kiss, and farewell.

[LADY KIX]

Thou shalt have two, love.

[Kiss.]

SIR OLIVER

Expect me about three.

Exit.

[LADY KIX]

With all my heart, sweet.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

By this light, they have forgot their anger since,

And are as far in again as e'er they were;

Which way the devil came they? Heart, I saw 'em not,

Their ways are beyond finding out. Come, sweet lady.

[LADY KIX]

How must I take mine, sir?

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Clean contrary,

Yours must be taken lying.

[LADY KIX]

Abed, sir?

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Abed, or where you will for your own ease;

Your coach will serve.

[LADY KIX]

The physic must needs please.

[Exeunt.]

IV.[i. Yellowhammer's house.]

Enter Tim and Tutor.

TIM

Negatur argumentum, tutor.

TUTOR

Probo tibi, pupil, stultus non est animal rationale.

TIM

Falleris sane.

TUTOR

Quaeso ut taceas; probo tibi.

TIM

Quomodo probas, domine?

TUTOR

Stultus non habet rationem, ergo non est animal rationale.

TIM

Sic argumentaris, domine: stultus non habet rationem, ergo non est animal rationale. Negatur argumentum again, tutor.

TUTOR

Argumentum iterum probo tibi, domine: qui non participat de ratione nullo modo potest vocari rationalibus, but stultus non participat de ratione, ergo stultus nullo modo potest dicere rationali.

TIM

Participat.

TUTOR

Sic disputus, qui participat quomodo participate.

TIM

Ut homo; probabo tibi in syllogismo.

TUTOR

Hunc proba.

TIM

Sic probo, domine: stultus est homo sicut tu et ego sum; homo est animal rationale, sicut stultus est animal rationale.

Enter Maudlin.

MAUDLIN

Here's nothing but disputing all the day long with 'em.

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

TUTOR

Sic disputus, stultus est homo sicut tu et ego sum; homo est animal rationale, sicut stultus est animal rationale.

MAUDLIN

Your reasons are both good, whate'er they be;
Pray give them o'er, faith, you'll tire yourselves,
What's the matter between you?

TIM

Nothing but reasoning about a fool, mother.

MAUDLIN

About a fool, son? Alas, what need you trouble your heads about that, none of us all but knows what a fool is.

TIM

Why, what's a fool, mother? I come to you now.

MAUDLIN

Why, one that's married before he has wit.

TIM

'Tis pretty, i'faith, and well guessed of a woman never brought up at the university: but bring forth what fool you will, mother, I'll prove him to be as reasonable a creature, as myself or my tutor here.

MAUDLIN

Fie, 'tis impossible.

TUTOR

Nay, he shall do't, forsooth.

TIM

'Tis the easiest thing to prove a fool by logic,
By logic I'll prove anything.

MAUDLIN

What thou wilt not?

TIM

I'll prove a whore to be an honest woman.

MAUDLIN

Nay, by my faith, she must prove that herself,
Or logic will never do't.

TIM

'Twill do't, I tell you.

MAUDLIN

Some in this street would give a thousand pounds
That you could prove their wives so.

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

TIM

Faith, I can,
And all their daughters, too, though they had three bastards.
When comes your tailor hither?

MAUDLIN

Why, what of him?

TIM

By logic I'll prove him to be a man,
Let him come when he will.

MAUDLIN

How hard at first was learning to him? Truly, sir, I thought he would never a took the Latin tongue. How many accidences do you think he wore out ere he came to his grammar?

TUTOR

Some three or four.

MAUDLIN

Believe me, sir, some four and thirty.

TIM

Pish, I made haberdins of 'em in church porches.

MAUDLIN

He was eight years in his grammar, and stuck horribly at a foolish place there called as in presenti.

TIM

Pox, I have it here now.

MAUDLIN

He so shamed me once before an honest gentleman that knew me when I was a maid.

TIM

These women must have all out.

MAUDLIN

Quid est grammatica? says the gentleman to him—I shall remember by a sweet, sweet token—but nothing could he answer.

TUTOR

How now, pupil, ha, quid est grammatica?

TIM

Grammatica? Ha, ha, ha.

MAUDLIN

Nay, do not laugh, son, but let me hear you say it now: there was one word went so prettily off the gentleman's tongue, I shall remember it the longest day of my life.

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

TUTOR

Come, quid est grammatica?

TIM

Are you not ashamed, tutor? Grammatica? Why, recte scribendi atque loquendi ars, sir—reverence of my mother.

MAUDLIN

That was it, i'faith: why now, son, I see you are a deep scholar; and master tutor, a word, I pray, let us withdraw a little into my husband's chamber. I'll send in the North Wales gentlewoman to him, she looks for wooing: I'll put together both, and lock the door.

TUTOR

I give great approbation to your conclusion.

Exit [with Maudlin].

TIM

I mar'l what this gentlewoman should be
That I should have in marriage, she's a stranger to me:
I wonder what my parents mean, i'faith,
To match me with a stranger so:
A maid that's neither kiff nor kin to me:
Life, do they think I have no more care of my body,
Than to lie with one that I ne'er knew,
A mere stranger,
One that ne'er went to school with me neither,
Nor ever playfellows together;
They're mightily o'erseen in't methinks;
They say she has mountains to her marriage,
She's full of cattle, some two thousand runts;
Now what the meaning of these runts should be,
My tutor cannot tell me;
I have looked in Rider's dictionary for the letter R,
And there I can hear no tidings of these runts neither;
Unless they should be Rumford hogs,
I know them not,

Enter Welsh Gentlewoman.

And here she comes.

If I know what to say to her now
In the way of marriage, I'm no graduate;
Methinks, i'faith, 'tis boldly done of her
To come into my chamber being but a stranger;
She shall not say I'm so proud yet, but I'll speak to her:
Marry, as I will order it,
She shall take no hold of my words I'll warrant her;
She looks and makes a curtsy—
[To her] Salve tu quoque puella pulcherrima,
Quid vis nescio nec sane curo—
Tully's own phrase to a heart.

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

WELSH GENTLEWOMAN

[Aside] I know not what he means; a suitor, quotha?
I hold my life he understands no English.

TIM

Ferter me hercule tu virgo,
Wallia ut opibus abundis maximis.

WELSH GENTLEWOMAN

[Aside] What's this ferter and abundundis?
He mocks me sure, and calls me a bundle of farts.

TIM

[Aside] I have no Latin word now for their runts; I'll make some shift or other.—Iterum, dico opibus abundat maximis montibus et fontibus et, ut ita dicam, rontibus; attamen, vero, homanculus ego sum natura, simule arte bachalarius, lecto profecto non parata.

WELSH GENTLEWOMAN

[Aside] This is most strange; may be he can speak Welsh—
Avedera whee comrage? Derdue cog foginis?

TIM

[Aside] Cog foggin? I scorn to cog with her, I'll tell her so, too, in a word near her own language.—Ego non cogo.

WELSH GENTLEWOMAN

Rhegosin a whiggin harle ron corid ambre.

TIM

[Aside] By my faith, she's a good scholar, I see that already;
She has the tongues plain, I hold my life she has travelled;
What will folks say? There goes the learned couple;
Faith, if the truth were known, she hath proceeded.

Enter Maudlin.

MAUDLIN

How now, how speeds your business?

TIM

I'm glad my mother's come to part us.

MAUDLIN

How do you agree, forsooth?

WELSH GENTLEWOMAN

As well as e'er we did before we met.

MAUDLIN

How's that?

IV.[i. Yellowhammer's house.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

WELSH GENTLEWOMAN

You put me to a man I understand not;
Your son's no English man methinks.

MAUDLIN

No English man, bless my boy,
And born i' the heart of London?

WELSH GENTLEWOMAN

I ha' been long enough in the chamber with him,
And I find neither Welsh nor English in him.

MAUDLIN

Why, Tim, how have you used the gentlewoman?

TIM

As well as a man might do, mother, in modest Latin.

MAUDLIN

Latin, fool?

TIM

And she recoiled in Hebrew.

MAUDLIN

In Hebrew, fool? 'Tis Welsh.

TIM

All comes to one, mother.

MAUDLIN

She can speak English, too.

TIM

Who told me so much?
Heart, and she can speak English, I'll clap to her,
I thought you'd marry me to a stranger.

MAUDLIN

You must forgive him, he's so inured to Latin,
He and his tutor, that he hath quite forgot
To use the Protestant tongue.

WELSH GENTLEWOMAN

'Tis quickly pardoned, forsooth.

MAUDLIN

Tim, make amends and kiss her,
He makes towards you, forsooth.

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

[He kisses her.]

TIM

O, delicious, one may discover her country by her kissing. 'Tis a true saying, there's nothing tastes so sweet as your Welsh mutton: it was reported you could sing.

MAUDLIN

O, rarely, Tim, the sweetest British songs.

TIM

And 'tis my mind, I swear, before I marry
I would see all my wife's good parts at once,
To view how rich I were.

MAUDLIN

Thou shalt hear sweet music, Tim. Pray, forsooth.

Music and Welsh song.

[WELSH GENTLEWOMAN]

Cupid is Venus' only joy,
But he is a wanton boy,
A very, very wanton boy,
He shoots at ladies' naked breasts,
He is the cause of most men's crests,
I mean upon the forehead,
Invisible but horrid;
'Twas he first taught upon the way
To keep a lady's lips in play.
Why should not Venus chide her son,
For the pranks that he hath done,
The wanton pranks that he hath done?
He shoots his fiery darts so thick,
They hurt poor ladies to the quick,
Ah me, with cruel wounding;
His darts are so confounding,
That life and sense would soon decay,
But that he keeps their lips in play.
Can there be any part of bliss,
In a quickly fleeting kiss,
A quickly fleeting kiss?
To one's pleasure, leisures are but waste,
The slowest kiss makes too much haste,
And lose it ere we find it,
The pleasing sport they only know,
That close above and close below.

TIM

I would not change my wife for a kingdom;
I can do somewhat, too, in my own lodging.
Enter Yellowhammer and Allwit [in disguise].

IV.[i. Yellowhammer's house.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

YELLOWHAMMER

Why, well said, Tim, the bells go merrily,
I love such peals, a' life; wife, lead them in a while,
Here's a strange gentleman desires private conference.

[Exeunt Maudlin, Tim and Welsh Gentlewoman.]

You're welcome, sir, the more for your name's sake.
Good Master Yellowhammer, I love my name well,
And which o' the Yellowhammers take you descent from,
If I may be so bold with you, which, I pray?

ALLWIT

The Yellowhammers in Oxfordshire, near Abbingdon.

YELLOWHAMMER

And those are the best Yellowhammers, and truest bred: I came from thence myself, though now a citizen. I'll be bold with you: you are most welcome.

ALLWIT

I hope the zeal I bring with me shall deserve it.

YELLOWHAMMER

I hope no less; what is your will, sir?

ALLWIT

I understand by rumours, you have a daughter,
Which my bold love shall henceforth title "cousin."

YELLOWHAMMER

I thank you for her, sir.

ALLWIT

I heard of her virtues,
And other confirmed graces.

YELLOWHAMMER

A plaguy girl, sir.

ALLWIT

Fame sets her out with richer ornaments
Than you are pleased to boast of; 'tis done modestly;
I hear she's towards marriage.

YELLOWHAMMER

You hear truth, sir.

ALLWIT

And with a knight in town, Sir Walter Whorehound.

IV.[i. Yellowhammer's house.]

YELLOWHAMMER

The very same, sir.

ALLWIT

I am the sorrier for't.

YELLOWHAMMER

The sorrier? Why, cousin?

ALLWIT

'Tis not too far past, is't? It may be yet recalled?

YELLOWHAMMER

Recalled? Why, good sir?

ALLWIT

Resolve me in that point, ye shall hear from me.

YELLOWHAMMER

There's no contract passed.

ALLWIT

I am very joyful, sir.

YELLOWHAMMER

But he's the man must bed her.

ALLWIT

By no means, coz, she's quite undone then,
And you'll curse the time that e'er you made the match;
He's an arrant whoremaster, consumes his time and state—
Whom in my knowledge he hath kept this seven years,
Nay, coz, another man's wife, too.

YELLOWHAMMER

O, abominable!

ALLWIT

Maintains the whole house, apparels the husband,
Pays servants' wages, not so much, but—

YELLOWHAMMER

Worse and worse, and doth the husband know this?

ALLWIT

Knows? Ay, and glad he may too, 'tis his living;
As other trades thrive, butchers by selling flesh,
Poulterers by venting conies, or the like, coz.

YELLOWHAMMER

What an incomparable wittol's this?

IV.[i. Yellowhammer's house.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

ALLWIT

Tush, what cares he for that, believe me, coz,
No more than I do.

YELLOWHAMMER

What a base slave is that?

ALLWIT

All's one to him; he feeds and takes his ease,
Was ne'er the man that ever broke his sleep
To get a child yet by his own confession,
And yet his wife has seven.

YELLOWHAMMER

What, by Sir Walter?

ALLWIT

Sir Walter's like to keep 'em, and maintain 'em,
In excellent fashion, he dares do no less, sir.

YELLOWHAMMER

Life, has he children too?

ALLWIT

Children? Boys thus high,
In their Cato and Cordelius.

YELLOWHAMMER

What, you jest, sir!

ALLWIT

Why, one can make a verse,
And is now at Eton College.

YELLOWHAMMER

O, this news has cut into my heart, coz.

ALLWIT

It had eaten nearer if it had not been prevented.
One Allwit's wife.

YELLOWHAMMER

Allwit? Foot, I have heard of him,
He had a girl kursened lately?

ALLWIT

Ay, that work did cost the knight above a hundred mark.

YELLOWHAMMER

I'll mark him for a knave and villain for't,

IV.[i. Yellowhammer's house.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

A thousand thanks and blessings, I have done with him.

ALLWIT

[Aside] Ha, ha, ha, this knight will stick by my ribs still,
I shall not lose him yet, no wife will come,
Where'er he woos, I find him still at home, ha, ha!

Exit.

YELLOWHAMMER

Well, grant all this, say now his deeds are black,
Pray, what serves marriage, but to call him back;
I have kept a whore myself, and had a bastard,
By Mistress Anne, in Anno [].
I care not who knows it; he's now a jolly fellow,
H'as been twice warden, so may his fruit be,
They were but base begot, and so was he;
The knight is rich, he shall be my son-in-law,
No matter so the whore he keeps be wholesome,
My daughter takes no hurt then, so let them wed,
I'll have him sweat well e'er they go to bed.

Enter Maudlin.

MAUDLIN

O husband, husband.

YELLOWHAMMER

How now, Maudlin?

MAUDLIN

We are all undone, she's gone, she's gone.

YELLOWHAMMER

Again? Death, which way?

MAUDLIN

Over the houses:
Lay the waterside, she's gone forever else.

YELLOWHAMMER

O venturous baggage!

Exit [with Maudlin]. Enter Tim and Tutor.

TIM

Thieves, thieves, my sister's stolen, some thief hath got her:
O, how miraculously did my father's plate 'scape,
'Twas all left out, tutor.

TUTOR

IV.[i. Yellowhammer's house.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

Is't possible?

TIM

Besides three chains of pearl and a box of coral.
My sister's gone, let's look at Trig stairs for her;
My mother's gone to lay the Common stairs
At Puddle wharf, and at the dock below
Stands my poor silly father. Run, sweet tutor, run.

Exit [with Tutor].

[IV.ii. A bank of the Thames.]

Enter both the Touchwoods.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

I had been taken, brother, by eight sergeants,
But for the honest watermen; I am bound to them,
They are the most requiteful'st people living,
For as they get their means by gentlemen,
They are still the forwardest to help gentlemen.
You heard how one 'scaped out of the Blackfriars
But a while since from two or three varlets
Came into the house with all their rapiers drawn,
As if they'd dance the sword dance on the stage,
With candles in their hands like chandlers' ghosts,
Whilst the poor gentleman so pursued and banded
Was by an honest pair of oars safely landed.

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

I love them with my heart for't.

Enter three or four Watermen.

FIRST WATERMAN

Your first man, sir.

SECOND WATERMAN

Shall I carry you gentlemen with a pair of oars?

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

These be the honest fellows; take one pair,
And leave the rest for her.

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

Barn Elms.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

No more, brother.

[Exit.]

IV.[i. Yellowhammer's house.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

FIRST WATERMAN

Your first man.

SECOND WATERMAN

Shall I carry your worship?

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

Go, and you honest watermen that stay,
Here's a French crown for you;
There comes a maid with all speed to take water,
Row her lustily to Barn Elms after me.

SECOND WATERMAN

To Barn Elms, good sir. Make ready the boat, Sam.
We'll wait below.

Exit [with First Waterman]. Enter Moll.

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

What made you stay so long?

MOLL

I found the way more dangerous than I looked for.

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

Away quick, there's a boat waits for you,
And I'll take water at Paul's wharf, and overtake you.

MOLL

Good sir, do, we cannot be too safe.

[Exeunt.] Enter Sir Walter, Yellowhammer, Tim and Tutor.

SIR WALTER

Life, call you this close keeping?

YELLOWHAMMER

She was kept
Under a double lock.

SIR WALTER

A double devil.

TIM

That's a buff sergeant, tutor, he'll ne'er wear out.

YELLOWHAMMER

How would you have women locked?

TIM

With padlocks, father, the Venetian uses it,

IV.[i. Yellowhammer's house.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

My tutor reads it.

SIR WALTER

Heart, if she were so locked up, how got she out?

YELLOWHAMMER

There was a little hole looked into the gutter,
But who would have dreamt of that?

SIR WALTER

A wiser man would.

TIM

He says true, father, a wise man for love will seek every hole: my tutor knows it.

TUTOR

Verum poeta dicit.

TIM

Dicit Virgilius, father.

YELLOWHAMMER

Prithee, talk of thy gills somewhere else, she's played the gill with me: where's your wise mother now?

TIM

Run mad I think, I thought she would have drowned herself; she would not stay for oars, but took a smelt boat:
sure I think she be gone a-fishing for her.

YELLOWHAMMER

She'll catch a goodly dish of gudgeons now,
Will serve us all to supper.

Enter Maudlin drawing Moll by the hair, and Watermen.

MAUDLIN

I'll tug thee home by the hair.

WATERMEN

Good mistress, spare her.

MAUDLIN

Tend your own business.

WATERMEN

You are a cruel mother.

[Exeunt Watermen.]

MOLL

O, my heart dies!

IV.[i. Yellowhammer's house.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

MAUDLIN

I'll make thee an example
For all the neighbours' daughters.

MOLL

Farewell, life.

MAUDLIN

You that have tricks can counterfeit.

YELLOWHAMMER

Hold, hold, Maudlin.

MAUDLIN

I have brought your jewel by the hair.

YELLOWHAMMER

She's here, knight.

SIR WALTER

[To Yellowhammer and Maudlin] Forbear or I'll grow worse.

TIM

Look on her, tutor, she hath brought her from the water like a mermaid; she's but half my sister now, as far as the flesh goes, the rest may be sold to fishwives.

MAUDLIN

Dissembling, cunning baggage!

YELLOWHAMMER

Impudent strumpet!

SIR WALTER

Either give over both, or I'll give over:
Why have you used me thus, unkind mistress?
Wherein have I deserved?

YELLOWHAMMER

You talk too fondly, sir,
We'll take another course and prevent all;
We might have done't long since; we'll lose no time now,
Nor trust to't any longer: tomorrow morn as early
As sunrise we'll have you joined.

MOLL

O, bring me death tonight, love-pitying Fates,
Let me not see tomorrow up upon the world.

YELLOWHAMMER

Are you content, sir, till then she shall be watched?

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

MAUDLIN

Baggage, you shall.

Exit [with Moll and Yellowhammer].

TIM

Why, father, my tutor and I will both watch in armour.

TUTOR

How shall we do for weapons?

TIM

Take you no care for that, if need be I can send for conquering metal, tutor, ne'er lost day yet; 'tis but at Westminster. I am acquainted with him that keeps the monuments; I can borrow Harry the Fifth's sword, 't will serve us both to watch with.

Exit [with Tutor].

SIR WALTER

I never was so near my wish, as this chance
Makes me; ere tomorrow noon,
I shall receive two thousand pound in gold,
And a sweet maidenhead
Worth forty.

Enter Touchwood Junior with a Waterman.

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

O, thy news splits me.

[FIRST] WATERMAN

Half drowned, she cruelly tugged her by the hair,
Forced her disgracefully, not like a mother.

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

Enough, leave me like my joys.

Exit Waterman.

Sir, saw you not a wretched maid pass this way?
Heart, villain, is it thou?

SIR WALTER

Yes, slave, 'tis I.

Both draw and fight.

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

I must break through thee then, there is no stop
That checks my tongue and all my hopeful fortunes,
That breast excepted, and I must have way.

IV.[i. Yellowhammer's house.]

SIR WALTER

Sir, I believe 'twill hold your life in play.

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

Sir, you'll gain the heart in my breast at first?

SIR WALTER

There is no dealing then, think on the dowry
For two thousand pounds.

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

O, now 'tis quit, sir.

[Wounds Sir Walter.]

SIR WALTER

And being of even hand, I'll play no longer.

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

No longer, slave?

SIR WALTER

I have certain things to think on,
Before I dare go further.

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

But one bout?
I'll follow thee to death, but ha't out.

[Exeunt.]

V.[i. Allwit's house.]

Enter Allwit, his Wife, and Davy Dahumma.

MISTRESS ALLWIT

A misery of a house.

ALLWIT

What shall become of us?

DAVY

I think his wound be mortal.

ALLWIT

Think'st thou so, Davy?
Then am I mortal too, but a dead man, Davy;
This is no world for me, whene'er he goes,

V.[i. Allwit's house.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

I must e'en truss up all, and after him, Davy,
A sheet with two knots, and away.

Enter Sir Walter led in hurt.

DAVY

O see, sir,
How faint he goes, two of my fellows lead him.

MISTRESS ALLWIT

O me!

ALLWIT

Heyday, my wife's laid down, too, here's like to be
A good house kept, when we are altogether down;
Take pains with her, good Davy, cheer her up there,
Let me come to his worship, let me come.

SIR WALTER

Touch me not, villain, my wound aches at thee,
Thou poison to my heart.

ALLWIT

He raves already,
His senses are quite gone, he knows me not;
Look up, an't like your worship, heave those eyes,
Call me to mind, is your remembrance lost?
Look in my face, who am I, an't like your worship?

SIR WALTER

If any thing be worse than slave or villain,
Thou art the man.

ALLWIT

Alas his poor worship's weakness,
He will begin to know me by little and little.

SIR WALTER

No devil can be like thee.

ALLWIT

Ah, poor gentleman,
Methinks the pain that thou endurest.

SIR WALTER

Thou know'st me to be wicked, for thy baseness
Kept the eyes open still on all my sins,
None knew the dear account my soul stood charged with
So well as thou, yet like Hell's flattering angel
Would'st thou never tell me on't, let'st me go on,
And join with death in sleep, that if I had not waked

V.[i. Allwit's house.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

Now by chance, even by a stranger's pity,
I had everlastingly slept out all hope
Of grace and mercy.

ALLWIT

Now he is worse and worse,
Wife, to him wife, thou wast wont to do good on him.

MISTRESS ALLWIT

How is't with you, sir?

SIR WALTER

Not as with you,
Thou loathsome strumpet: some good pitying man
Remove my sins out of my sight a little;
I tremble to behold her, she keeps back
All comfort while she stays; is this a time,
Unconscionable woman, to see thee?
Art thou so cruel to the peace of man,
Not to give liberty now? The devil himself
Shows a far fairer reverence and respect
To goodness than thyself; he dares not do this,
But part in time of penitence, hides his face;
When man withdraws from him, he leaves the place;
Hast thou less manners, and more impudence,
Than thy instructor? Prithee show thy modesty,
If the least grain be left, and get thee from me.
Thou should'st be rather locked many rooms hence,
From the poor miserable sight of me,
If either love or grace had part in thee.

MISTRESS ALLWIT

He is lost for ever.

ALLWIT

Run, sweet Davy, quickly,
And fetch the children hither—sight of them
Will make him cheerful straight.

SIR WALTER

O death! Is this
A place for you to weep? What tears are those?
Get you away with them, I shall fare the worse
As long as they are a-weeping; they work against me;
There's nothing but thy appetite in that sorrow,
Thou weep'st for lust, I feel it in the slackness
Of comforts coming towards me;
I was well till thou began'st to undo me;
This shows like the fruitless sorrow of a careless mother
That brings her son with dalliance to the gallows,
And then stands by, and weeps to see him suffer.

V.[i. Allwit's house.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

Enter Davy with the Children.

DAVY

There are the children, sir, an't like your worship,
Your last fine girl, in troth, she smiles,
Look, look, in faith, sir.

SIR WALTER

O my vengeance,
Let me forever hide my cursed face
From sight of those that darken all my hopes,
And stand between me and the sight of Heaven;
Who sees me now, [he] too, and those so near me,
May rightly say, I am o'ergrown with sin;
O how my offences wrestle with my repentance,
It hath scarce breath—
Still my adulterous guilt hovers aloft,
And with her black wings beats down all my prayers
Ere they be half way up; what's he knows now
How long I have to live? O, what comes then?
My taste grows bitter, the round world all gall now,
Her pleasing pleasures now hath poisoned me,
Which I exchanged my soul for;
Make way a hundred sighs at once for me.

ALLWIT

Speak to him, Nick.

NICK

I dare not, I am afraid.

ALLWIT

Tell him he hurts his wounds, Wat, with making moan.

SIR WALTER

Wretched, death of seven!

ALLWIT

Come, let's be talking somewhat to keep him alive.
Ah, sirrah Wat, and did my lord bestow that jewel on thee,
For an epistle thou mad'st in Latin?
Thou art a good forward boy, there's great joy on thee.

SIR WALTER

O sorrow!

ALLWIT

Heart, will nothing comfort him?
If he be so far gone, 'tis time to moan;
Here's pen, and ink, and paper, and all things ready,

V.[i. Allwit's house.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

Will't please your worship for to make your will?

SIR WALTER

My will? Yes, yes, what else? Who writes apace now?

ALLWIT

That can your man Davy, an't like your worship,
A fair, fast, legible hand.

SIR WALTER

Set it down then:
Imprimis, I bequeath to yonder wittol,
Three times his weight in curses--

ALLWIT

How?

SIR WALTER

All plagues of body and of mind--

ALLWIT

Write them not down, Davy.

DAVY

It is his will, I must.

SIR WALTER

Together also,
With such a sickness, ten days ere his death.

ALLWIT

There's a sweet legacy,
I am almost choked with't.

SIR WALTER

Next I bequeath to that foul whore, his wife,
All barrenness of joy, a drouth of virtue,
And dearth of all repentance: for her end,
The common misery of an English strumpet,
In French and Dutch, beholding ere she dies
Confusion of her brats before her eyes,
And never shed a tear for it.

Enter a Servant.

FIRST SERVANT

Where's the knight?
O sir, the gentleman you wounded is newly departed.

SIR WALTER

Dead? Lift, lift, who helps me?

V.[i. Allwit's house.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

ALLWIT

Let the law lift you now, that must have all,
I have done lifting on you, and my wife, too.

FIRST SERVANT

You were best lock yourself close.

ALLWIT

Not in my house, sir,
I'll harbour no such persons as men-slayers,
Lock yourself where you will.

SIR WALTER

What's this?

MISTRESS ALLWIT

Why, husband!

ALLWIT

I know what I do, wife.

MISTRESS ALLWIT

You cannot tell yet;
For having killed the man in his defence,
Neither his life, nor estate will be touched, husband.

ALLWIT

Away, wife, hear a fool, his lands will hang him.

SIR WALTER

Am I denied a chamber? What say you, forsooth?

MISTRESS ALLWIT

Alas, sir, I am one that would have all well,
But must obey my husband. Prithee, love,
Let the poor gentleman stay, being so sore wounded,
There's a close chamber at one end of the garret
We never use, let him have that, I prithee.

ALLWIT

We never use? You forget sickness then,
And physic times: is't not a place for easement?

Enter a Servant.

SIR WALTER

O death! Do I hear this with part
Of former life in me? What's the news now?

SECOND SERVANT

V.[i. Allwit's house.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

Troth, worse and worse, you're like to lose your land
If the law save your life, sir, or the surgeon.

ALLWIT

Hark you there, wife.

SIR WALTER

Why, how, sir?

SECOND SERVANT

Sir Oliver Kix's wife is new quickened;
That child undoes you, sir.

SIR WALTER

All ill at once.

ALLWIT

I wonder what he makes here with his consorts?
Cannot our house be private to ourselves,
But we must have such guests? I pray depart, sirs,
And take your murderer along with you—
Good he were apprehended ere he go,
He's killed some honest gentleman; send for officers.

SIR WALTER

I'll soon save you that labour.

ALLWIT

I must tell you, sir,
You have been somewhat bolder in my house
Than I could well like of; I suffered you
Till it stuck here at my heart; I tell you truly
I thought you had been familiar with my wife once.

MISTRESS ALLWIT

With me? I'll see him hanged first; I defy him,
And all such gentlemen in the like extremity.

SIR WALTER

If ever eyes were open, these are they;
Gamesters, farewell, I have nothing left to play.

Exit.

ALLWIT

And therefore get you gone, sir.

DAVY

Of all wittols,
Be thou the head. Thou, the grand whore of spitals.

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

Exit [with Servants].

ALLWIT

So, since he's like now to be rid of all,
I am right glad I am so well rid of him.

MISTRESS ALLWIT

I knew he durst not stay, when you named officers.

ALLWIT

That stopped his spirits straight;
What shall we do now, wife?

MISTRESS ALLWIT

As we were wont to do.

ALLWIT

We are richly furnished wife, with household stuff.

MISTRESS ALLWIT

Let's let out lodgings then,
And take a house in the Strand.

ALLWIT

In troth, a match, wench:
We are simply stocked with cloth of tissue cushions,
To furnish out bay windows: push, what not that's quaint
And costly, from the top to the bottom.
Life, for furniture, we may lodge a countess:
There's a closestool of tawny velvet, too,
Now I think on't, wife.

MISTRESS ALLWIT

There's that should be, sir;
Your nose must be in everything.

ALLWIT

I have done, wench;
And let this stand in every gallant's chamber:
There no gamester like a politic sinner,
For whoe'er games, the box is sure a winner.

Exit [with Mistress Allwit].

[V.ii. Yellowhammer's house.]
Enter Yellowhammer and his Wife.

MAUDLIN

O husband, husband, she will die, she will die,
There is no sign but death.

V.[i. Allwit's house.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

YELLOWHAMMER

'Twill be our shame then.

MAUDLIN

O, how she's changed in compass of an hour.

YELLOWHAMMER

Ah, my poor girl! Good faith, thou wert too cruel
To drag her by the hair.

MAUDLIN

You would have done
As much, sir, to curb her of her humour.

YELLOWHAMMER

'Tis curbed sweetly, she caught her bane o' th' water.

Enter Tim.

MAUDLIN

How now, Tim?

TIM

Faith, busy, mother, about an epitaph
Upon my sister's death.

MAUDLIN

Death! She is not dead, I hope?

TIM

No: but she means to be, and that's as good,
And when a thing's done, 'tis done,
You taught me that, mother.

YELLOWHAMMER

What is your tutor doing?

TIM

Making one too, in principal pure Latin,
Culled out of Ovid de Tristibus.

YELLOWHAMMER

How does your sister look, is she not changed?

TIM

Changed? Gold into white money was never so changed,
As is my sister's colour into paleness.

Enter Moll.

YELLOWHAMMER

V.[i. Allwit's house.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

O, here she's brought, see how she looks like death.

TIM

Looks she like death, and ne'er a word made yet?
I must go beat my brains against a bed post,
And get before my tutor.

[Exit.]

YELLOWHAMMER

Speak, how dost thou?

MOLL

I hope I shall be well, for I am as sick
At heart as I can be.

YELLOWHAMMER

'Las my poor girl,
The doctor's making a most sovereign drink for thee,
The worst [ingredients], dissolved pearl and amber;
We spare no cost, girl.

MOLL

Your love comes too late,
Yet timely thanks reward it. What is comfort,
When the poor patient's heart is past relief?
It is no doctor's art can cure my grief.

YELLOWHAMMER

All is cast away then;
Prithee, look upon me cheerfully.

MAUDLIN

Sing but a strain or two, thou wilt not think
How 'twill revive thy spirits: strive with thy fit,
Prithee, sweet Moll.

MOLL

You shall have my good will, Mother.

MAUDLIN

Why, well said, wench.

[MOLL]

[Sings] Weep eyes, break heart,
My love and I must part;
Cruel fates true love do soonest sever,
O, I shall see thee, never, never, never.
O, happy is the maid whose life takes end,
Ere it knows parent's frown, or loss of friend.
Weep eyes, break heart,

V.[i. Allwit's house.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

My love and I must part.

Enter Touchwood Senior with a letter.

MAUDLIN

O, I could die with music: well sung, girl.

MOLL

If you call it so, it was.

YELLOWHAMMER

She plays the swan,
And sings herself to death.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

By your leave, sir.

YELLOWHAMMER

What are you, sir? Or what's your business, pray?

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

I may be admitted, though the brother
Of him your hate pursued, it spreads no further;
Your malice sets in death, does it not, sir?

YELLOWHAMMER

In death?

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

He's dead: 'twas a dear love to him,
It cost him but his life, that was all, sir:
He paid enough, poor gentleman, for his love.

YELLOWHAMMER

[Aside] There's all our ill removed, if she were well now.--
Impute not, sir, his end to any hate
That sprung from us; he had a fair wound brought that.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

That helped him forward, I must needs confess:
But the restraint of love, and your unkindness,
Those were the wounds that from his heart drew blood;
But being past help, let words forget it, too:
Scarcely three minutes ere his eyelids closed
And too eternal leave of this world's light,
He wrote this letter, which by oath he bound me,
To give to her own hands; that's all my business.

YELLOWHAMMER

You may perform it then, there she sits.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

O, with a following look.

YELLOWHAMMER

Ay, trust me, sir,
I think she'll follow him quickly.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Here's some gold
He willed me to distribute faithfully
Amongst your servants.

YELLOWHAMMER

'Las, what doth he mean, sir?

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

How cheer you, mistress?

MOLL

I must learn of you, sir.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Here's a letter from a friend of yours,
And where that fails, in satisfaction
I have a sad tongue ready to supply.

MOLL

How does he, ere I look on't?

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Seldom better,
H'as a contented health now.

MOLL

I am most glad on't.

MAUDLIN

Dead, sir?

YELLOWHAMMER

He is. Now, wife, let's but get the girl
Upon her legs again, and to church
Roundly with her.

MOLL

O, sick to death he tells me:
How does he after this?

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Faith, feels no pain
At all, he's dead, sweet mistress.

V.[i. Allwit's house.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

MOLL

Peace close mine eyes. [Swoons.]

YELLOWHAMMER

The girl, look to the girl, wife.

MAUDLIN

Moll, daughter,
Sweet girl, speak, look but once up, thou shalt have
All the wishes of thy heart that wealth can purchase.

YELLOWHAMMER

O, she's gone forever, that letter broke her heart.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

As good now, then, as let her lie in torment,
And then break it.

Enter Susan.

MAUDLIN

O Susan, she thou lovedst so dear is gone.

SUSAN

O sweet maid!

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

This is she that helped her still,
I've a reward here for thee.

YELLOWHAMMER

Take her in,
Remove her from our sight, our shame, and sorrow.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Stay, let me help thee, 'tis the last cold kindness
I can perform for my sweet brother's sake.

[Exeunt Touchwood Senior and Susan, carrying Moll].

YELLOWHAMMER

All the whole street will hate us, and the world
Point me out cruel: it is our best course, wife,
After we have given order for the funeral,
To absent ourselves, till she be laid in ground.

MAUDLIN

Where shall we spend that time?

YELLOWHAMMER

V.[i. Allwit's house.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

I'll tell thee where, wench,
Go to some private church, and marry Tim
To the rich Brecknock gentlewoman.

MAUDLIN

Mass, a match,
We'll not lose all at once, somewhat we'll catch.

Exit [with Yellowhammer].

[V.iii. Sir Oliver's house.]

Enter Sir Oliver and Servants.

SIR OLIVER

Ho, my wife's quickened, I am a man forever,
I think I have bestirred my stumps, i'faith:
Run, get your fellows all together instantly,
Then to the parish church, and ring the bells.

FIRST SERVANT

It shall be done, sir.

[Exit.]

SIR OLIVER

Upon my love I charge you, villain, that you make a bonfire before the door at night.

SECOND SERVANT

A bonfire, sir?

SIR OLIVER

A thwacking one, I charge you.

SECOND SERVANT

[Aside] This is monstrous.

[Exit.]

SIR OLIVER

Run, tell a hundred pound out for the gentleman
That gave my wife the drink, the first thing you do.

THIRD SERVANT

A hundred pounds, sir?

SIR OLIVER

A bargain, as our [joy] grows,
We must remember still from whence it flows,
Or else we prove ungrateful multipliers:
The child is coming, and the land comes after;
The news of this will make a poor Sir Walter.

V.[i. Allwit's house.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

I have struck it home, i'faith.

THIRD SERVANT

That you have, marry, sir.
But will not your worship go to the funeral
Of both these lovers?

SIR OLIVER

Both, go both together?

THIRD SERVANT

Ay, sir, the gentleman's brother will have it so,
'Twill be the pitifullest sight; there's such running,
Such rumours, and such throngs, a pair of lovers
Had never more spectators, more men's pities,
Or women's wet eyes.

SIR OLIVER

My wife helps the number then?

THIRD SERVANT

There's such a drawing out of handkerchers,
And those that have no handkerchers, lift up aprons.

SIR OLIVER

Her parents may have joyful hearts at this,
I would not have my cruelty so talked on,
To any child of mine, for a monopoly.

THIRD SERVANT

I believe you, sir.
'Tis cast so, too, that both their coffins meet,
Which will be lamentable.

SIR OLIVER

Come, we'll see't.

[Exeunt.]

[V.iv. A church.]

Recorders dolefully playing. Enter at one door the coffin of the gentleman [Touchwood Junior], solemnly decked, his sword upon it, attended by many in black [including Sir Oliver, Allwit, and a Parson], his brother [Touchwood Senior] being the chief mourner. At the other door, the coffin of the virgin [Moll], with a garland of flowers, with epitaphs pinned on it, attended by maids and women [including Lady Kix, Mistress Allwit, and Susan]. Then set them down one right over against the other, while all the company seem to weep and mourn; there is a sad song in the music room.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Never could death boast of a richer prize
From the first parent, let the world bring forth
A pair of truer hearts; to speak but truth

V.[i. Allwit's house.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

Of this departed gentleman, in a brother,
Might by hard censure be called flattery,
Which makes me rather silent in his right
Than so to be delivered to the thoughts
Of any envious hearer starved in virtue,
And therefore pining to hear others thrive.
But for this maid, whom envy cannot hurt
With all her poisons, having left to ages
The true, chaste monuments of her living name,
Which no time can deface, I say of her
The full truth freely, without fear of censure;
What nature could there shine, that might redeem
Perfection home to woman, but in her
Was fully glorious; beauty set in goodness
Speaks what she was, that jewel so infixed;
There was no want of anything of life,
To make these virtuous precedents man and wife.

ALLWIT

Great pity of their deaths.

ALL

Ne'er more pity.

[LADY KIX]

It makes a hundred weeping eyes, sweet gossip.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

I cannot think, there's anyone amongst you,
In this full fair assembly, maid, man, or wife,
Whose heart would not have sprung with joy and gladness
To have seen their marriage day?

ALL

It would have made a thousand joyful hearts.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Up then apace, and take your fortunes,
Make these joyful hearts, here's none but friends.

[Moll and Touchwood Junior rise from their coffins.]

ALL

Alive, sir? O sweet, dear couple.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Nay, do not hinder 'em now, stand from about 'em,
If she be caught again, and have this time,
I'll ne'er plot further for 'em, nor this honest chambermaid
That helped all at a push.

V.[i. Allwit's house.]

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

Good sir, apace.

PARSON

Hands join now, but hearts for ever,
Which no parent's mood shall sever.
You shall forsake all widows, wives, and maids:
You, lords, knights, gentlemen, and men of trades:
And if in haste, any article misses,
Go interline it with a brace of kisses.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Here's a thing trolled nimbly. Give you joy, brother,
Were't not better thou should'st have her,
Than the maid should die?

MISTRESS ALLWIT

To you, sweet mistress bride.

ALL

Joy, joy to you both.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Here be your wedding sheets you brought along with you, you may both go to bed, when you please [to].

TOUCHWOOD JUNIOR

My joy wants utterance.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Utter all at night then, brother.

MOLL

I am silent with delight.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Sister, delight will silence any woman,
But you'll find your tongue again among maidservants,
Now you keep house, sister.

ALL

Never was hour so filled with joy and wonder.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

To tell you the full story of this chambermaid,
And of her kindness in this business to us,
'Twould ask an hour's discourse. In brief, 'twas she
That wrought it to this purpose cunningly.

ALL

We shall all love her for't.

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

Enter Yellowhammer and his Wife.

ALLWIT

See who comes here now.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

A storm, a storm, but we are sheltered for it.

YELLOWHAMMER

I will prevent you all, and mock you thus,
You, and your expectations; I stand happy,
Both in your lives, and your hearts' combination.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Here's a strange day again.

YELLOWHAMMER

The knight's proved villain,
All's come out now, his niece an arrant baggage;
My poor boy Tim is cast away this morning,
Even before breakfast: married a whore
Next to his heart.

ALL

A whore?

YELLOWHAMMER

His niece, forsooth.

ALLWIT

I think we rid our hands in good time of him.

MISTRESS ALLWIT

I knew he was past the best, when I gave him over.
What is become of him, pray, sir?

YELLOWHAMMER

Who, the knight?
He lies i' th' knight's ward now. [To Lady Kix] Your belly, lady,
Begins to blossom, there's no peace for him,
His creditors are so greedy.

SIR OLIVER

Mr. Touchwood, hear'st thou this news?
I am so endeared to thee for my wife's fruitfulness,

V.[i. Allwit's house.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

That I charge you both, your wife and thee,
To live no more asunder for the world's frowns;
I have purse, and bed, and board for you:
Be not afraid to go to your business roundly,
Get children, and I'll keep them.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Say you so, sir?

SIR OLIVER

Prove me, with three at a birth, and thou dar'st now.

TOUCHWOOD SENIOR

Take heed how you dare a man, while you live, sir,
That has good skill at his weapon.

Enter Tim[, Tutor,] and Welsh Gentlewoman.

SIR OLIVER

Foot, I dare you, sir.

YELLOWHAMMIER

Look, gentlemen, if ever you say the picture
Of the unfortunate marriage, yonder 'tis.

WELSH GENTLEWOMAN

Nay, good sweet, Tim.

TIM

Come from the university,
To marry a whore in London, with my tutor, too?
O tempora! O mors!

TUTOR

Prithee, Tim, be patient.

TIM

I bought a jade at Cambridge,
I'll let her out to execution, tutor,
For eighteen pence a day, or Brainford horse races;
She'll serve to carry seven miles out of town well.
Where be these mountains? I was promised mountains,
But there's such a mist, I can see none of 'em.
What are become of those two thousand runts?
Let's have about with them in the meantime.
A vengeance runt thee.

MAUDLIN

Good sweet Tim, have patience.

TIM

V.[i. Allwit's house.]

A Chaste Maid in Cheapside

Flectere si [nequeo] superos, Acheronta [movebo], mother.

MAUDLIN

I think you have married her in logic, Tim.
You told me once, by logic you would prove
A whore an honest woman, prove her so, Tim,
And take her for thy labour.

TIM

Troth, I thank you.
I grant you I may prove another man's wife so,
But not mine own.

MAUDLIN

There's no remedy now, Tim,
You must prove her so as well as you may.

TIM

Why then my tutor and I will about her,
As well as we can.
Uxor non est meretrix, ergo falacis.

WELSH GENTLEWOMAN

Sir, if your logic cannot prove me honest,
There's a thing called marriage, and that makes me honest.

MAUDLIN

O, there's a trick beyond your logic, Tim.

TIM

I perceive then a woman may be honest according to the English print, when she is a whore in the Latin. So much for marriage and logic. I'll love her for her wit, I'll pick out my runts there: and for my mountains, I'll mount upon--

YELLOWHAMMER

So fortune seldom deals two marriages
With one hand, and both lucky: the best is,
One feast will serve them both: marry, for room
I'll have the dinner kept in Goldsmiths' Hall,
To which, kind gallants, I invite you all.

[Exeunt omnes.]