

The Unfortunate Happy Lady: A True History

Aphra Behn

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I CANNOT omit giving the World an account of the uncommon Villany of a Gentleman of a good Family in *England*, practis'd upon his Sister, which was attested to me by one who liv'd in the Family, and from whom I had the whole Truth of the Story. I shall conceal the unhappy Gentleman's own under the borrow'd Names of Sir *William Wilding*, who succeeded his Father Sir *Edward*, in an Estate of near 4000*l.* a Year, inheriting all that belong'd to him, except his Virtues. 'Tis true, he was oblig'd to pay his only Sister a Portion of 6000*l.*, which he might very easily have done out of his Patrimony in a little Time, the Estate being not in the least incumbred. But the Death of his good Father gave a loose to the Extravagancy of his Inclinations, which till then was hardly observable. The first Discovery he made of his Humour, was in the extraordinary rich Equipage he prepar'd for his Journey to *London*, which was much greater than his fair and plentiful Fortune cou'd maintain, nor were his Expences any way inferior to the Figure he made here in Town; insomuch, that in less than a Twelve-Month, he was forc'd to return to his Seat in the Country, to Mortgage a part of his Estate of a Thousand Pounds a Year to satisfy the Debts he had already contracted in his profuse Treats, Gaming and Women, which in a few Weeks he effected, to the great Affliction of his Sister *Philadelphia*, a young Lady of excellent Beauty, Education, and Virtue; who, fore-seeing the utter Ruin of the Estate, if not timely prevented, daily begg'd of him, with Prayers and Tears, that might have mov'd a *Scythian* or wild *Arab*, or indeed any thing but him, to pay her her Portion. To which, however, he seemingly consented, and promis'd to take her to Town with him, and there give her all the Satisfaction she cou'd expect: And having dipp'd some paltry Acres of Land, deeper than ever Heaven dipp'd 'em in Rain, he was as good as his Word, and brought her to Town with him, where he told her he would place her with an ancient Lady, with whom he had contracted a Friendship at his first coming to *London*; adding, that she was a Lady of incomparable Morals, and of a matchless Life and Conversation. *Philadelphia* took him in the best Sense, and was very desirous to be planted in the same House with her, hoping she might grow to as great a Perfection in such excellent Qualifications, as she imagined 'em. About four Days, therefore, after they had been in Town, she sollicit her Brother to wait on that Lady with her: He reply'd, that "it is absolutely Necessary and Convenient that I should first acquaint her with my Design and beg that she will be pleas'd to take you into her Care, and this shall be my chief Business to Day": Accordingly, that very Hour he went to the Lady *Beldam's*, his reverend and honourable Acquaintance, whom he prepar'd for the Reception of his Sister, who he told her was a Cast-Mistress of his, and desir'd her Assistance to prevent the Trouble and Charge which she knew such Cattle would bring upon young Gentlemen of plentiful Estates. "To morrow Morning about Eleven, I'll leave her with your Ladyship, who, I doubt not, will give her a wholesome Lesson or two before Night, and your Reward is certain."

"My Son," (return'd she) "I know the Greatness of your Spirit, the Heat of your Temper has both warm'd and inflam'd me! I joy to see you in Town again — Ah! That I could but recall one twenty Years for your Sake! — Well — no matter. — I won't forget your Instructions, nor my Duty to Morrow: In the mean time, I'll drink your Health in a Bottle of *Sherry* or two."

"O! Cry your Mercy, good my Lady *Beldam*," (said the young Debauchee) "I had like to have forfeited my Title to your Care, in not remembering to leave you an Obligation. There are three Guineas, which, I hope, will plead for me till to Morrow. — So — Your Ladyship's Servant humbly kisses your Hand."

"Your Honour's most Obedient Servant, most gratefully Acknowledges your Favours. — Your humble Servant, Good Sir *William*," added she, seeing him leave her in haste.

Never were three Persons better pleas'd for a Time than this unnatural Man, his sweet innocent Sister, and the Lady *Beldam*; upon his return to *Philadelphia*, who could not rest that Night, for thinking on the Happiness she was going to enjoy in the Conversation of so virtuous a Lady as her Brother's Acquaintance, to whom she was in Hopes that she might discover her dearest Thoughts, and complain of Sir *William's* Extravagance and Unkindness, without running the Hazzard of being betray'd; and at the same Time, reasonably expect from so pious a Lady all the Assistance within her Capacity. On the other side, her Brother hugg'd himself in the Prospect he had of getting

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rid of his own Sister and the Payment of 6000*l.* for the Sum of forty or fifty Guineas, by the Help and Discretion of this sage Matron; who, for her part, by this Time, had reckon'd up, and promis'd to herself an Advantage of at least three hundred Pounds, one way or other by this bargain.

About Ten the next Morning, Sir *William* took Coach with his Sister, for the old Lady's Enchanted Castle, taking only one Trunk of hers with them for the present, promising her to send her other Things to her the next Day. The young Lady was very joyfully and respectfully received by her Brother's venerable Acquaintance, who was mightily charm'd with her Youth and Beauty. A Bottle of the Best was then strait brought in, and not long after, a very splendid Entertainment for Breakfast: The Furniture was all very modish and rich, and the Attendance was suitable. Nor was the Lady *Beldam's* Conversation less obliging and modest than Sir *William's* Discourse had given *Philadelphia* occasion to expect. After they had eaten and drank what they thought Convenient, the reverend old Lady led 'em out of the Parlour to shew 'em the House, every Room of which they found answerably furnish'd to that whence they came. At last she led 'em into a very pleasant Chamber, richly hung, and curiously adorn'd with the Pictures of several beautiful young Ladies, wherein there was a Bed which might have been worthy the Reception of a Dutchess: "This, Madam," (said she) "is your Apartment, with the Anti-chamber, and little Withdrawing-Room."

"Alas, Madam!" (returned the dear innocent unthinking Lady) "you set too great a Value on your Servant; but I rather think your Ladyship designs me this Honour for the sake of Sir *William*, who has had the Happiness of your Acquaintance for some Months":

"Something for Sir *William*," (returned the venerable Lady *Beldam*) "but much more for your Ladyship's own, as you will have Occasion to find hereafter."

"I shall Study to deserve your Favours and Friendship, Madam," reply'd *Philadelphia*:

"I hope you will, Madam," said the barbarous Man. "But my Business now calls me hence; to Morrow at Dinner I will return to you, and Order the rest of your Things to be brought with me. In the mean while" (pursu'd the Traytor, kissing his Sister, as he thought and hop'd, the last time) "be as chearful as you can, my Dear! and expect all you can wish from me."

"A thousand Thanks, my dearest Brother," return'd she, with Tears in her Eyes:

"And Madam," (said he to his old mischievous Confederate, giving her a very rich Purse which held 50 Guineas) "be pleas'd to accept this Trifle, as an humble Acknowledgment of the great Favour you do this Lady, and the Care of her, which you promise; and I'm sure she cannot want. — So, once more," (added he) "my Dear! and, Madam! I am your humble Servant *Jusqu' a Revoir*," and went out bowing.

"Heavens bless my dear Brother!" (cry'd *Philadelphia*).

"Your Honour's most Faithful and obedient Servant," said the venerable *Beldam*.

No sooner was the treacherous Brother gone, than the old Lady, taking *Philadelphia* by the Hand, led her into the Parlour; where she began to her to this Effect: "If I mistake not, Madam, you were pleas'd to call Sir *William* Brother once or twice of late in Conversation: Pray be pleas'd to satisfy my Curiosity so far as to inform me in the Truth of this Matter? Is it really so or not?"

Philadelphia reply'd, blushing, "your Ladyship strangely surprizes me with this Question: For, I thought it had been past your Doubt that it is so. Did not he let you know so much himself?"

"I humbly beg your Pardon, Madam," (returned the true Offspring of old Mother *Eve*) "that I have so visibly disturb'd you by my Curiosity: But, indeed, Madam, Sir *William* did not say your Ladyship was his Sister, when he gave me the Charge of you, as of the nearest and dearest Friend he had in the World."

"Now our Father and Mother are dead," (said the sweet Innocent) "who never had more Children than us two, who can be a nearer or dearer Friend unto me, than my Brother Sir *William*, or than I, his Sister, to him?"

"None? Certainly, you'll excuse me, Madam," (answer'd t'other) "a Wife or Mistress may."

"A Wife indeed," (return'd the beautiful Innocent) "has the Pre-eminence, and perhaps a Mistress too, if honourably lov'd and sought for in Marriage: But," (she continu'd) "I can assure your Ladyship that he has not a Wife, nor did I ever hear he had a Mistress yet."

"Love in Youth" (said old Venerable) "is very fearful of Discovery. I have known, Madam, a great many fine young Gentlemen and Ladies who have conceal'd their violent Passions and greater Affection under the Notion and Apellation of Brother and Sister."

"And your Ladyship imagines Sir *William* and I do so?" reply'd *Philadelphia*, by way of Question.

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``Twere no imprudence, if you did, Madam," return'd old Lady *Beldam*, with all the Subtlety she had learn'd from the Serpent.

``Alas! Madam," (reply'd she) ``there is nothing like Secrecy in Love":

``Tis the very Life and Soul of it! I have been young myself, and have known it by Experience."

``But, all this, Madam," (interrupted *Philadelphia*, something nettl'd at her Discourse) ``all this can't convince me, that I am not the true and only Sister both by Father and Mother of Sir *William Wilding*; however, he wou'd impose upon your Ladyship, for what Ends, indeed, I know not, unless (unhappily, which Heaven forbid!) he designs to gain your Ladyship's Assistance in defeating me of the Portion left me by my Father: But," (she continued with Tears) ``I have too great an Assurance of your Virtue to Fear that you will consent to so wicked a Practise."

``You may be confident, Madam," (said t'other) ``I never will. And, supposing that he were capable of perpetrating so base an Act of himself, yet if your Ladyship will be guided and directed by me, I will shew you the Means of living Happy and Great, without your Portion, or your Brother's Help; so much I am charm'd with your Beauty and Innocence."

``But, pray, Madam," (pursu'd she) ``what is your Portion? And what makes you doubt your Brother's Kindness?" *Philadelphia* then told her how much her Brother was to pay her, and gave her an Account of his Extravagancies, as far as she knew 'em; to which t'other was no Stranger; and (doubtless) cou'd have put a Period to her Sorrows with her Life, had she given her as perfect a Relation of his riotous and vicious Practices, as she was capable of: But she had farther Business with her Life, and, in short, bid her be of good Comfort, and lay all her Care on her, and then she cou'd not miss of continual Happiness. The sweet Lady took all her Promises for sterling, and kissing her Impious Hand, humbly return'd her Thanks.

Not long after, they went to Dinner; and in the Afternoon, three or four young Ladies came to visit the Right Reverend the Lady *Beldam*; who told her new Guest that these were all her Relations, and no less than her own Sister's Children. The Discourse among 'em was general and very modest, which lasted for some Hours: For our Sex seldom wants matter of Tattle. But, whether their Tongues were then miraculously wearied, or that they were tir'd with one continued Scene of Place, I won't pretend to determine: But they left the Parlour for the Garden, where after about half an Hour's Walk, there was a very fine Desert of Sweetmeats and Fruits brought into one of the Arbours. *Cherbetts*, *Ros Solis*, rich and small Wines, with Tea, Chocolate, &c. compleated the old Lady's Treat; the Pleasure of which was much heighten'd by the Voices of two of her Ladyship's Sham-Nieces, who sung very charmingly. The Dear, sweet Creature, thought she had happily got into the Company of Angels: But (alas!) they were Angels that had fallen more than once. She heard talk of Nunneries, and having never been out of her own Country till within four or five Days, she had certainly concluded she had been in one of those Religious-Houses now, had she but heard a Bell ring, and seen 'em kneel to Prayers, and make use of their Beads, as she had been told those happy people do. However it was, she was extremely pleas'd with the Place and Company. So nearly does Hell counterfeit Heaven sometimes.

At last, said one of the white Devils, ``wou'd my dear *Tommy* were here!"

``O Sister!" (cry'd another) ``you won't be long without your wish: For my Husband and he went out together, and both promis'd to be here after the Play."

``Is my Brother Sir *Francis* with him there?" (ask'd the first).

``Yes," (answer'd the third) ``Sir *Thomas* and Sir *Francis* took Coach from St. *James's*, about two Hours since":

``We shall be excellent Company when they come," (said a fourth);

``I hope they'll bring the Fiddlers with 'em," added the first:

``Don't you love Musick, Madam?" (ask'd the old Lady *Beldam*).

``Sometimes, Madam," (reply'd *Philadelphia*) ``but now I am out o'tune myself."

``A little harmless Mirth will chear your drooping Spirits, my dear," (return'd t'other, taking her by the Hand) ``come! These are all my Relations, as I told you, Madam; and so consequently are their Husbands."

``Are these Ladies all marry'd, Madam?" *Philadelphia* ask'd.

``All, all, my dear Soul!" (reply'd the insinuating Mother of Iniquity); ``and thou shalt have a Husband too, e're long."

``Alas, Madam!" (return'd the fair Innocent) ``I have no Merit, nor Money: Besides, I never yet could Love so

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well as to make Choice of one Man before another."

``How long have you liv'd then, Madam?" (ask'd the Lady *Beldam*).

``Too long by almost sixteen Years," (reply'd *Philadelphia*) ``had Heaven seen good." This Conversation lasted till Word was brought that Sir *Francis* and Sir *Thomas*, with Two other Gentlemen, were just lighted at the Gate: Which so discompos'd the fair Innocent, that trembling, she begg'd leave to retire to her Chamber. To which, after some Perswasion to the contrary, the venerable *Beldam* waited on her. For these were none of the Sparks to whom *Philadelphia* was design'd to be Sacrific'd. In her Retirement, the Beautiful dear Creature had the Satisfaction of venting her Grief in Tears, and addressing herself to Heaven, on which only she trusted, notwithstanding all the fair Promises of her reverend Hostess. She had not been retir'd above an Hour, e're a She-attendant waited on her, to know if she wanted any thing, and what she wou'd please to have for her Supper; if she wou'd not give her Lady the Honour of her Company below? To which she return'd, that she wou'd not Sup, and that she wanted nothing but Rest, which she wou'd presently seek in Bed. This Answer brought up the officious old Lady herself; who, by all Means wou'd needs see her undress'd, for other Reasons more than a bare Compliment; which she perform'd with a great deal of Ceremony, and a Diligence that seem'd more than double. For she had then the Opportunity of observing the Delicacy of her Skin, the fine turn of her Limbs, and the richness of her Night-dress, part of the Furniture of her Trunk. As soon as she had cover'd herself, she kiss'd and wish'd her a good Repose. The dear Soul, as Innocent and White as her Linen, return'd her Thanks, and address'd herself to Sleep; out of which she was waken'd by a loud Consort of Musick, in less than two Hours time, which continu'd till long after Midnight. This occasion'd strange and doubtful Thoughts in her, tho' she was altogether so unskilled in these Mysteries, that she cou'd not guess the right Meaning. She apprehended, that (possibly) her Brother had a Mistress, from the Lady *Beldam's* Discourse, and that this was their Place of Assignation: Suspecting too, that either Sir *Francis* or Sir *Thomas*, of whom she had heard not long before, was Sir *William*, her Brother. The Musick and all the Noise in the House ceas'd about four a Clock in the Morning; when she again fell into a Sleep, that took away the Sense of her Sorrows and Doubts 'till Nine; when she was again visited from her Lady, by the same She-attendant, to know how she had rested, and if she wou'd Please to Command her any Service. *Philadelphia* reply'd, That she had rested very well most Part of the Morning, and that she wanted nothing, but to know how her Lady had Slept, and whether she were in Health, unless it were the Sight of her Brother. The Servant return'd with this Answer to her Lady, while *Philadelphia* made shift to rise, and begin to Dress without an Assistant; but she had hardly put on anything more than her Night-gown, e're the Lady *Beldam* herself came in her *Dishabille*, to assure her of her Brother's Company with 'em at Dinner, exactly at One a Clock; and finding *Philadelphia* doing the Office of a Waiting-woman to herself, call'd up the same Servant, and in a great Heat (in which however she took Care to make Use of none of her familiar develish Dialect) ask'd the Reason that she durst leave the Lady when she was Rising. The Wench trembling, reply'd, That indeed the Lady did not let her know that she had any Thoughts of Rising.

``Well then" (said her seeming offended Lady) ``stir not from her now, I charge you, 'till she shall think fit to dismiss you, and Command your Absence. Dear Madam, Good Morrow to you," (said she to *Philadelphia*) ``I'll make haste and Dress too."

``Good Morrow to your Ladyship" (return'd the design'd Victim). When she was *Habile*, she desir'd the Servant to withdraw; after which she betook herself to her Devotion; at the end of which, the Lady *Beldam* return'd, attended by a Servant, who brought some Bread and Wine for her Breakfast; which might then be seasonable enough to *Philadelphia*; who cou'd not forbear discovering the Apprehensions she had of her Brother's Unkindness, still entertaining her *Reverence* with the Fear she had of his Disappointment that Day at Dinner; which t'other oppos'd with all the seeming Reasons her Art cou'd suggest, 'till the Clock had struck Twelve; when a Servant came to tell the Lady *Beldam*, that one Sir *William Wilding* wou'd certainly wait on her precisely at One, and desir'd that he might Dine in the young Lady's Apartment, to avoid being seen by any Visitants that might come; and besides, that he had invited a Gentleman, his particular Friend, to Dinner with him there. This Message being deliver'd aloud by the Servant, was no little Satisfaction to the poor desponding young Lady, who discour's'd very chearfully of indifferent Matters, 'till the Clock gave 'em Notice that the Hour was come; within three Minutes after which, Word was brought to the Lady *Beldam*, that a Gentleman below enquir'd for Sir *William Wilding*, whom she immediately went down to receive, and led up to *Philadelphia*.

``Madam," (cry'd the great Mistress of her Art) ``this is the Gentleman whom Sir *William* has invited to Dinner

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with us; and I am very Happy to see him, for he is my worthy Friend, and of a long Acquaintance. Trust me, Madam, he is a Man of Honour, and has a very large Estate: I doubt not" (added she) ``that you will find his Merits in his Conversation." Here *Gracelove*, for that was the Gentleman's Name, saluted *Philadelphia*, and acquitted himself like a Person of good Sense and Education in his first Address to her; which she return'd with all the Modesty and ingenuous Simplicity that was still proper to her. At last she ask'd him how long he thought it wou'd be e're Sir *William* came? To which he reply'd, that Sir *William* told him, unless he were there exactly at half an Hour after One, they shou'd not stay Dinner for him; that he had not parted with him much above a Quarter of an Hour, when he left him engag'd with particular Company, about some weighty Business: But however, that, if he shou'd be so unhappy as to lose their Conversation at Dinner, he wou'd not fail to wait on 'em by Four at farthest. The young Lady seem'd a little uneasie at this; but the Gentleman appearing so very Modest, and speaking it with such an assur'd Gravity, took away all Thoughts of Suspicion. To say Truth, *Gracelove* was a very honest, modest, worthy and handsome Person, and had the Command, at present, of a many Thousand Pounds; he was by Profession a *Turkey* Merchant: He had Travell'd much for his Age, not having then reach'd Thirty, and had seen most of the Courts in *Christendom*: He was a Man of a sweet Temper, of just Principles, and of inviolable Friendship, where he promis'd; which was no where, but where 'twas merited. The Minute came then at length, but without any Sir *William*; so Dinner was serv'd up in the Room next to *Philadelphia*'s Bed-chamber. What they had was Nice and Seasonable; and they were all Three as Pleasant as cou'd be expected, without Sir *William*; to whose Health the Glass went round once or twice. Dinner over, and the Table clear'd, the old Lady *Beldam* entreated Mr. *Gracelove* to entertain the young Lady with a Discourse of his Travels, and of the most remarkable Passages and Encounters of 'em, which he perform'd with a Modesty and Gravity peculiar to himself; and in some part of his Discourse mov'd the innocent Passions of the beauteous and compassionate *Philadelphia*; who was as attentive as she us'd to be in Church at Divine Service. When the old Lady perceiv'd that he had made an end, or at least, that he desir'd to proceed no farther, she took Occasion to leave 'em together, in haste; pretending that she had forgotten to give Orders to one of her Servants about a Business of Moment, and that she wou'd return to 'em in a very little Time. The Gentleman, you may believe, was very well pleas'd with her Retreat, since he had a Discourse to make to *Philadelphia* of a quite contrary Nature to the Preceding, which requir'd Privacy: But how grateful her Absence was to *Philadelphia*, we may judge by the Sequel.

``Madam," (said *Gracelove*) ``how do you like the Town? Have you yet seen any Man here whom you cou'd Love?"

``Alas, Sir!" (she reply'd) ``I have not seen the Town, only in a Coach, as I pass'd along, nor ever was in any House, except this and another, where my Brother lodg'd: And to your other Question I must Answer, that I Love all Men."

``That's generous, indeed, Madam!" (cry'd he) ``there is then some hope that I am one of the Number."

``No doubt, Sir," (she return'd) ``that I Love you as well as any, except Sir *William*."

``Is he the happy Man then, Madam?" (said *Gracelove*).

``If to be loved best by me, may make any Man happy, doubtless it must be he, for he is my own Brother."

``I fancy, Madam," (return'd he) ``that you may make me as dear a Relation to you, as Sir *William*."

``How is that possible, Sir?" she ask'd.

``Thus, Madam," (replied he, drawing closer to her) ``by our nearer Approaches to one another."

``O, Heaven defend me!" (cried she aloud) ``what do you mean? Take away your Hand; you uncivil Man! Help! Madam! my Lady!"

``O," (said *Gracelove*) ``she's gone purposely out of hearing."

``Am I betray'd then?" she cried.

``Betray'd! as if your pretty innocent Ladyship did not know where you were lodged. Ah, Lady," (said he) ``this Faint will never do. Come, Child," (pursued he) ``here are an hundred Guineas for you; and I promise you Yearly as much, and Two Hundred with every Child that I shall get on thy sweet Body: Faith I love thee, thou pretty Creature. Come! let's be better acquainted! you know my Meaning."

``Hell does, no doubt of" (she return'd !) ``O Monster a Man! I hate the Sight of you." With that she flung from him, and ran into the Bed-chamber, where she thought to have locked herself in; but the Key was conveyed into his Pocket. Thither, therefore, he pursued her, crying, ``Ah, Madam, this is the proper Field for our Dispute." Perceiving her Error, and animated by Despair, she rushed between him and the Door, into the outward Room

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again, he still following, and dodging her from Chair to Chair, she still Shrieking.

``At last" (cried he) ``a Parley, Madam, with you. Let me ask you one Question, and will you Answer me directly and truly to it?"

``Indeed, I will," (said she) ``if it be Civil."

``Don't you know then, that you are in a naughty House, and that old *Beldam* is a rank Procuress, to whom I am to give Two hundred Guineas for your Maidenhead?"

``O Heaven" (cried she, kneeling with Tears gushing out from her dear Eyes) ``thou Asserter and Guardian of Innocence! protect me from the impious Practices intended against me!" Then, looking steadfastly on him, ``Sir," (pursued she) ``I can but Difficultly guess what you mean: But I find, that unless you prove what at first you seemed to me, I would say, an honest worthy Gentleman, I shall be in danger of eternal Ruin. You, Sir, are the only Person that may yet Preserve me. Therefore I beseech you, Sir, hear my Story, with the Injuries and Afflictions that so dreadfully torment me; of which, I am sure, none of those *Barbarians*, of which you had Occasion to speak but now, would have been guilty! O hear, and help me! for Heaven's Sake, hear and help me!"

``I will, poor Creature" (return'd he) ``methinks I now begin to see my Crime and thy Innocence in thy Words and Looks." Here she recounted to him all the Accidents of her Life since her Father's Decease, to that very Day, e're *Gracelove* came to Dinner. ``And now" (cry'd she, sobbing and weeping) ``how dare I trust this naughty Brother again? Can I be safe with him, think you, Sir?"

``O! no; thou dear sweet Creature! by no Means. O infernal Monsters! Brother and Bawd!"

``If you distrust that I am yet his Sister, here, Sir, take this Key," (said she) ``and open that Trunk within, where you will find Letters from him to me in his own Hand; and from my own dear dead Father too, Sir *Edward*, that gracious, that good Man! He shew'd us both the Paths of Virtue: which I have not yet forsaken. Pray satisfy me, Sir, and see the Truth!"

``For your Satisfaction I will, Madam," (said he) ``but I am now fully convinc'd that you have greater Beauties within, than those I admire without." Saying this, he open'd the Trunk, where he read a Line or two from her Father, and as many from her Brother, which, having again laid down, return'd to her, with this Advice: ``I see, Madam," (said he) ``that you have Money there, and several Things of Value, which I desire you to secure about you this Moment; for I mean to deliver you out of this cursed Place, if you dare put any Confidence in a Stranger, after your own Brother has acted the Part of so great a Villain; if you dare trust a Stranger too, Madam, who had himself a Design upon you; Heaven forgive me for it! but by all Things sacred I find my Error: I pity you, and I fear I shall love you."

``Do you fear that, Sir?" (said she) ``Why I love you dearly now, because I see you are going to be good again; that is, you are going to be your self again."

``I hope, nay, I resolve I will, tho' it cost me my Life" (said he.) ``Can you submit, Madam, to attend on a young Lady of my Acquaintance here in Town, 'till I can provide better for you?"

``O I can be any Thing; a Chamber-Maid, a Cook-Maid, a Scullion, what you shall think fit, tho' never so mean, that is not naughty."

``Well, Madam," (said he) ``compose your self then, and seem a little pleasant when I bring up that old Factoress of Hell."

``I will endeavour it, Sir," she return'd; and he went down to the Devil's chief Agent, to whom he said, that the poor Thing was at first very uneasy, but that now she had consented to go along with him for an Hour or two to some other Place, ``doubting your Secrecy; for she would not have her Brother know it, as she calls him, for a thousand Worlds, and more Money."

``Well, my Son," (reply'd old *Beldam*) ``you may take her with you: But you remember your Bargain."

``O fie, Mother!" (cry'd he) ``did you ever know me false to you?"

``No, no, you smock'd-fac'd Wag," (said she) ``but be sure you bring her again to Night, for fear Sir *William* should come."

``Never doubt it! Come up with me," (cry'd he) ``you'll see a strange Alteration, I believe." To *Philadelphia* they came then, whom they found walking about the Room, and looking something more pleasantly than she had ever done since she came thither. After she had taken her Money, and other Things of Value, ``so, Madam," (said *Beldam*) ``how does your Ladiship now? I find, the Sight of a young handsome Gentleman has work'd Wonders with you in a little Time: I understand you are going to take a Walk with my worthy Friend here, and 'tis well

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done: I dare trust you with him, but with no other Man living, except Sir *William*."

"Madam," (return'd the fair afflicted Lady) "I am strangely oblig'd to you for your Care of me, and am sure I shall never be able to return your Obligations as I ought, and as I could wish."

"You won't stay late, Mr. *Gracelove*?" (said the Mother of Mischief).

"No, no," (reply'd he) "I will only shew the Lady a Play, and return to Supper."

"What is play'd to Night?" (ask'd the old One).

"*The Cheats*, Mother, *The Cheats*." (answer'd *Gracelove*).

"Ha," (said *Beldam*, laughing) "a very pretty Comedy, indeed!"

"Ay, if well play'd," return'd he. At these Words, they went down, where a Coach was call'd; which carry'd 'em to Counsellor *Fairlaw's* House, in *Great Lincolns-Inn-Fields*, whom they found accidentally at Home; but his Lady and Daughter were just gone to Chapel, being then turn'd of Five. *Gracelove* began his Apology to the good old Counsellor, who was his Relation, for bringing a strange Lady thither, with a Design to place her in his Family: "But Sir," continu'd he, "if you knew her sorrowful Story, you would be as ambitious of entertaining her, as I am earnest to entreat it of you."

"A very beautiful Lady 'tis," (return'd the Counsellor) "and very modest, I believe."

"That I can witness" (reply'd t'other).

"Alas, Sir!" (said the fair Unfortunate) "I have nothing but my Modesty and honest Education to recommend me to your Regard. I am wrong'd and forsaken by my nearest Relation"; then she wept extravagantly: "That Gentleman can give you an Account of my Misfortunes, if he pleases, with greater Ease and less Trouble than my self."

"Not with less Trouble, believe me, Madam"; (return'd *Gracelove*) and then began to inform *Fairlaw* in every Point of her unhappy Circumstances. The good old Gentleman heard 'em with Amazement and Horror; but told her, however, that she need not despond, for he would take Care to right her against her Brother; and, that in the mean Time she should be as welcome to him as any of his nearest Kindred, except his Wife and Daughter. *Philadelphia* would have knelt to thank him; but he told her, that humble Posture was due to none but Heaven, and the King sometimes. In a little While after, the Lady *Fairlaw* and her Daughter came Home, who were surpriz'd at the Sight of a Stranger, but more at her Beauty, and most of all at her Story, which the good old Gentleman himself could not forbear relating to 'em: Which ended, the Mother and Daughter both kindly and tenderly embrac'd her, promising her all the Assistance within their Power, and bid her a thousand Welcomes. *Gracelove* stay'd there 'till after Supper, and left her extremely satisfy'd with her new Station. 'Twas here she fix'd, then; and her Department was so obliging, that they would not part with her for any Consideration. About three Days after her coming from that lewd Woman's House, *Gracelove* took a Constable and some other Assistants, and went to *Beldam's* to demand the Trunk, and what was in it, which at first her Reverence deny'd to return, 'till Mr. Constable produc'd the Emblem of his Authority, upon which it was deliver'd, without so much as reminding *Gracelove* of his Bargain; who then pretended he would search the House for Sir *William Wilding*; but her graceless Reverence swore most devoutly that he had never been there, and that she had neither seen nor heard from him since the Day he left *Philadelphia* with her. With these Things, and this Account he return'd to Counsellor *Fairlaw's*, who desir'd *Gracelove*, if possible, to find out Sir *William*, and employ'd several others on the same Account. In less than a Month's Time *Gracelove* had the good Fortune to find him at his Lodgings in *Soho-Square*, where he discours'd him about his Sister's Portion, and desir'd Sir *William* to take some speedy Care for the Payment of it; otherwise she had Friends that would oblige him to it, tho' never so contrary to his Intentions. *Wilding* ask'd where she was? T'other enquir'd where he left her? Sir *William* reply'd, that he had plac'd her with an old grave Gentlewoman of his Acquaintance, and that he thought she was there still.

"No, Sir," (return'd *Gracelove*) "I have deliver'd her out of the Jaws of Perdition and Hell. Come, Sir *William*," (answer'd he) "'twas impiously done, to leave your beautiful, young, and virtuous Sister, to the Management of that pernicious Woman. I found her at old *Beldam's*, who would have prostituted her to me for two hundred Guineas; but her heavenly Virtues might have secur'd and guarded her from more violent Attempts than mine. Blush, if you can, Sir! and repent of this! It will become you. If not, Sir, you will hear farther from your Servant," added he and left him staring after him. This Discourse was a great Mortification to the Knight, whose Conscience, harden'd as it was, felt yet some Pain by it. He found he was not like to continue safe or at Ease there, where he immediately retreated into a Place of Sanctuary, call'd the *Savoy*, whither his whole

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Equipage was remov'd as soon as possible, he having left Order with his Servants to report that he went out of Town that very Afternoon for his own Country. *Gracelove* in the mean Time return'd to the Counsellor's, with a great deal of Joy, for having discover'd Sir *William* at his Lodgings, which was likewise no little Satisfaction to *Fairlaw*, his Lady and Daughter; *Philadelphia* only was disturb'd when she heard the good old Gentleman threaten to lay her Brother fast enough: But, alas! he was too cunning for 'em; for in a whole Twelvemonth after, all which Time they made Enquiry, and narrowly search'd for him, they could not see him, nor any one that could give an Account of him, for he had chang'd his true Name and Title, for that of 'Squire *Sportman*. The farther Pursuit of him then seem'd fruitless to 'em, and they were forc'd to be contented with their Wishes to find him.

Gracelove by this Time had entertain'd the sincerest Affections and noblest Passion that Man can be capable of, for *Philadelphia*; of which he had made her sensible, who had at that Time comply'd with his honourable Demands, had she not entreated him to expect a kind Turn of Providence, which might (happily) e're long put her in Possession of her Right; without which, she told him, she could not consent to marry him, who had so plentiful a Fortune, and she nothing but her Person and Innocence. ``How, Madam!" (cry'd he) ``have you no Love in Store for me!"

``Yes, Sir," (return'd she) ``as much as you can wish I have in Store for you, and so I beg it may be kept 'till a better Opportunity."

``Well, Madam," (said he) ``I must leave you for some Months, perhaps for a whole Year; I have receiv'd Letters of Advice that urge the Necessity of my going to *Turkey*; I have not a Week's Time to endeavour so dreaded a Separation as I must suffer; therefore, thou beautiful, thou dear, thou virtuous Creature, let me begin now! Here, thou tenderest Part of my Soul!" (continu'd he, giving her a rich Diamond Ring) ``wear this 'till my Return! I hope the Sight of it may sometimes recall the dying Memory of *Gracelove* to your better-busy'd Thoughts."

``Ah, *Gracelove*!" (said she) ``nothing can so well, nothing I am sure can better employ my Thoughts, than thy dear self: Heaven only excepted." They enlarg'd a great deal more on this Subject at that Time; but the Night before his Departure was entirely spent in Sighs, Vows, and Tears, on both Sides. In the Morning, after he had again entreated his Cousin's, and the Lady's, and her Daughter's Care and Kindness to *Philadelphia*, the remaining and best Part of his Soul, with one hearty Kiss, accompany'd with Tears, he took a long Farewel of his dear Mistress, who pursu'd him with her Eyes, 'till they could give her no farther Intelligence of him; and they help'd her Kindness to him, and eas'd her Grief for his Absence in weeping for above a Week together, when in private. He never omitted writing to her and his Cousin by every Opportunity, for near nine Months, as he touch'd at any Port; but afterwards they could not hear from him for above half a Year; when, by Accident, the Counsellor met a Gentleman of *Gracelove*'s Acquaintance at a Coffee-House, who gave him an Account, that the Ship and he were both cast away, near five Months since; that most if not all of the Ship's Company perish'd; of which, 'twas fear'd, *Gracelove* was one, having never since been heard of. That his Loss in that Ship amounted to above twelve thousand Pounds: With this dreadful and amazing News the good old Gentlemen returns Home, afflicts his poor sorrowful Lady and Daughter, and almost kills unhappy *Philadelphia*; who the next Day, by mere Chance, and from a Stranger, who came on Business to the Counsellor, heard that one Sir *William Wilding*, an extravagant, mad, young Spark of such a County, who lately went by the borrow'd Name and Title of 'Squire *Sportman*, had mortgag'd all his Estate, which was near four thousand a Year, and carry'd the Money over with him into *France* on Saturday last. This, added to the former News, put so great a Check on her Spirits, that she immediately dropp'd down in a Swoon; whence she only recover'd, to fall into what was of a much more dangerous Consequence, a violent Feaver, which held her for near six Weeks, e're she could get Strength enough to go down Stairs: In all which Time, Madam *Fairlaw* and *Eugenia*, her Daughter, attended her as carefully and constantly as if they had been her own Mother and Sister: The good old Counsellor still commending and encouraging their Care. The Roses and Lillies at last took their Places again; but the Clouds of her Sorrow were still but too visible. Two Years more past, without one Word of Advice from *Gracelove*, or any Account of him from any one else; insomuch, that they all concluded he was certainly dead: And, 'twas true, indeed, that his Ship and he were cast away, much about that Time that the Gentleman gave *Fairlaw* a Relation: That 'twas certain he had lost above 12000*l.* and had like to have lost his Life; but being very expert in Swimming, he got to Shoar upon the Coast of *Barbary*, the Wreck happening not to be above three Leagues thence; he was in almost as bad a Condition as if he had been drown'd, for here he was made a Prisoner to one of the Natives; in which miserable Circumstance he

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languish'd for above six Years, for Want of a Ransom; which he had often endeavour'd to raise by Letters, that he sent hither to his Friends (in *England*); amongst which Counsellor *Fairlaw* was one of his most particular and assur'd. But however Providence or Accident, if you please, order'd it, not a Line came to the Hands of any of his Friends; so that had not Heaven had yet a future Blessing in Store for him, he had certainly have better perish'd in the Sea, than to have fall'n into the Power of a People less merciful than Seas, Winds, or hungry wild Beasts in Pursuit of their Prey. But this could not be learn'd (it seems) from any Man but himself, upon his Return, after his Redemption.

Two Years more pass'd on; towards the latter of which the old Lady *Fairlaw* took her Bed, desperately sick, insomuch that she was given over by all her Physicians; she continu'd in great Misery for near two Months; in all which Time *Philadelphia* was constantly with her all the Day, or all the Night; much about that Time she dy'd; and, dying, told her Husband, that she had observ'd he had a particular Esteem or Kindness for *Philadelphia*; which was now a great Satisfaction to her; since she was assur'd, that if he marry'd her, she would prove an excellent Nurse to him, and prolong his Life by some Years. ``As for *Eugenia*," (added she) ``you need not be concern'd; I'm sure she will consent to any Thing that you shall propose, having already so plentifully provided for her." The good old Gentleman answer'd, that he would fulfil her Will as far as lay in his Power: And not long after, she departed this Life. Her Burial was very handsome and honourable. Half a Year was now expir'd since her Interment, when the old Counsellor began to plead his own Cause to young *Philadelphia*, reminding her that now the Death of *Gracelove* was out of Question; and that therefore she was as much at her Liberty to make her own Choice of an Husband as he was of a Wife; not forgetting at the same Time, to let her know, that his Widow (whoever had the good Fortune to be so) would be worth above thirty thousand Pounds in ready Money, besides a thousand a Year. But, above all, he urg'd his dying Lady's last Advice to him, that he would marry her; and hop'd she would see the Will of the Dead satisfy'd. The young Lady being broken in Sorrows, and having mortify'd all her Appetites to the Enjoyments of this World, and not knowing where to meet with so fair an Overture, tho' at first in Modesty she seem'd to refuse it as too great an Honour, yet yielded to less than a Quarter of an Hour's Courtship. And the next Sunday marry'd they were, with the Consent, and to the perfect Satisfaction of, his Daughter, Madam *Eugenia*; who lov'd *Philadelphia* sincerely. They kept their Wedding very nobly for a Month, at their own House in *Great Lincolns-Inn-Fields*; but the Memory of the old Lady was still so fresh with the young Lady *Fairlaw*, that she prevail'd with him to remove to another, more convenient as she fancy'd, in *Covent-Garden*. They had dwelt there not much more than four Months, e're the good old Gentleman fell sick and dy'd. Whether it were the Change of an old House for a new, or an old Wife for a young, is yet uncertain, tho' his Physicians said, and are still of Opinion, that doubtless it was the last. 'Tis past all Doubt that she did really mourn for and lament his Death; for she lov'd him perfectly, and pay'd him all the dutiful respect of a virtuous Wife, while she liv'd within that State with him; which he rewarded as I have said before. His Funeral was very sumptuous and honourable indeed! and as soon as it was over, *Eugenia* desir'd her young beautiful Mother-in-Law to retreat a little with her into the Country, to a pleasant House she had, not twenty Miles distant from Town; urging That she could by no Means enjoy her self under that Roof, where her dear Father dy'd. The obliging Step-mother, who might more properly have been call'd her Sister, being exactly of the same Age with her, readily comply'd, and she pass'd away all that Summer with *Eugenia*, at their Country-Seat, and most Part of the Winter too; for *Eugenia* could by no Means be prevail'd on to lie one Night in her Mother's House; 'twas with some Reluctancy that she consented to dine there sometimes. At length the whole Year of *Philadelphia's* Widowhood was expir'd; during which, you can't but imagine that she was solicited and address'd to by as many Lovers, or pretended Lovers, as our dear *King Charles*, whom God grant long to reign was lately by the Presbyterians, Independants, Anabaptists, and all those canting whiggish Brethren! But she had never lik'd any Man so well as to make him her Husband, by Inclination, unless it was *Gracelove*, devour'd by the greedy Inhabitants of the Sea.

Whilst her Fortune began to mend thus, her Brother's grew worse; but that was indeed the Effect of his Extravagancy: In less than two Years Time, he had spent eight thousand Pounds in *France*, whence he return'd to *England*, and pursuing his old profuse Manner of Living, contracted above 100*l.* Debts here, in less than four Months Time; which not being able to satisfy, he was arrested and thrown into a Gaol, whence he remov'd himself into the *King's Bench*, on that very Day that old *Fairlaw* dy'd. There, at first, for about a Month, he was entertain'd like a Gentleman; but finding no Money coming, nor having a Prospect of any, the Marshal and his Instruments

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turn'd him to the Common Side, where he learnt the Art of Peg-making, a Mystery to which he had been a Stranger all his life long 'till then. 'Twas then he wish'd he might see his Sister, hoping that she was in a Condition to relieve him; which he was apt to believe, from the Discourse he had with *Gracelove* some Years past. Often he wish'd to see her, but in vain; however, the next *Easter* after the old Counsellor's Death, *Philadelphia*, according to his Custom sent her Steward to relieve all the poor Prisoners about Town; among the rest he visited those in the common Side of the *King's Bench*, where he heard 'em call Sir *William Wilding* to partake of his Lady's Charity. The poor Prodigal was then feeding on the Relief of the Basket, not being yet able to get his Bread at his new Trade: To him the Steward gave a Crown, whereas the other had but Half a Crown apiece. Then he enquir'd of some of the unhappy Gentlemen, Sir *William's* Fellow-Collegians, of what Country Sir *William* was? How long he had been there? And how much his Debts were? All of which he receiv'd a satisfactory Account. Upon his Return to his Lady, he repeated the dismal News of her Brother's Misfortunes to her; who immediately dispatch'd him back again to the Prison, with Orders to give him twenty Shillings more at present, and to get him remov'd to the Master's Side, into a convenient Chamber, for the Rent of which the Steward engag'd to pay; and promis'd him, as she had commanded, twenty Shillings a Week, as long as he stay'd there, on Condition that he would give the Names of all his Creditors, and of all those to whom he had engag'd any Part of his Estate; which the poor Gentleman did most readily and faithfully: After which, the Steward enquir'd for a Taylor, who came and took Measure of *Philadelphia's* unkind Brother, and was order'd to provide him Linnen, a Hat, Shoes, Stockings, and all such Necessaries, not so much as omitting a Sword: With all which he acquainted his Lady at his Return; who was very much griev'd at her Brother's unhappy Circumstances, and at the same Time extremely well pleas'd to find her self in a Condition to relieve him. The Steward went constantly once a Week to pay him his Money; and Sir *William* was continually very curious to know to whom he was oblig'd for so many and great Favours; But he was answer'd, That they came from a Lady who desir'd to have her Name conceal'd. In less than a Year, *Philadelphia* had paid 25000*l.* and taken off the Mortgages on 2500*l. per Annum*, of her Brother's Estate; and coming to Town from *Eugenia's* Country-House one Day, to make the last Payment of two thousand Pounds, looking out of her Coach on the Road, near *Dartford*, she saw a Traveller on Foot, who seem'd to be tir'd with his Journey, whose Face, she thought, she had formerly known: This Thought invited her to look on him so long, that she, at last, perswaded her self it was *Gracelove*, or his Ghost: For, to say Truth, he was very pale and thin, his Complexion swarthy, and his Cloaths (perhaps) as rotten as if he had been bury'd in 'em. However, unpleasant as it was, she could not forbear gazing after this miserable Spectacle; and the more she beheld it, the more she was confirm'd it was *Gracelove*, or something that had usurp'd his Figure. In short, she could not rest 'till she call'd to one of her Servants, who rode by the Coach, whom she strictly charg'd to go to that poor Traveller, and mount him on his Horse, 'till they came to *Dartford*; where she order'd him to take him to the same Inn where she baited, and refresh him with any Thing that he would eat or drink; and after that, to hire a Horse for him, to come to Town with them: That then he should be brought Home to her own House, and be carefully look'd after, 'till farther Orders from her. All which was most duly and punctually perform'd.

The next Morning early she sent for the Steward, whom she order'd to take the Stranger to a Sale-shop and fit him with a Suit of good Cloaths, to buy him Shirts, and other Linnen, and all Necessaries, as he had provided for her Brother; and gave him Charge to use him as her particular Friend, during his Stay there, bidding him, withal, learn his Name and Circumstances, if possible, and to supply him with Money for his Pocket Expences: All which he most faithfully and discreetly perform'd, and brought his Lady an Account of his Sufferings by Sea, and Slavery among the *Turks*, as I have before related; adding, that his Name was *Gracelove*. This was the greatest Happiness, certainly, that ever yet the dear beautiful Creature was sensible of. On t'other Side, *Gracelove* could not but admire and praise his good Fortune, that had so miraculously and bountifully reliev'd him; and one Day having some private Discourse with the Steward, he could not forbear expressing the Sense he had of it; declaring, That he could not have expected such kind Treatment from any Body breathing, but from his Cousin, Counsellor Fairlaw, his Lady, or another young Lady, whom he plac'd and left with his Cousins. ``Counsellor *Fairlaw*!" (cry'd the Steward) ``why, Sir, my Lady is the old Counsellor's Widow; she is very beautiful and young too."

``What was her Name, Sir, before she marry'd the Counsellor?" (ask'd *Gracelove*).

``That I know not," (reply'd t'other) ``for the old Steward dy'd presently after the old Lady, which is not a Year and a Half since; in whose Place I succeed; and I have never been so curious or inquisitive, as to pry into former

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Passages of the Family."

``Do you know, Sir," (said *Gracelove*) ``whereabouts in Town they liv'd before?"

``Yes, Sir," (return'd the Steward, who was taught how to answer) ``in *Great Lincolns-Inn-Fields*, I think."

``Alas!" (cry'd *Gracelove*) ``'twas the same Gentleman to whom I design'd to apply my self when I came to *England*."

``You need not despair now, Sir," (said t'other) ``I dare say my Lady will supply your Wants."

``O wonderful Goodness of a Stranger!" (cry'd *Gracelove*) ``uncommon and rare amongst Relations and Friends! How have I, or how can I ever merit this?" Upon the End of their Conference, the Steward went to *Philadelphia*, and repeated it almost *verbatim* to her; who order'd *Gracelove* should be taken Measure of by the best Taylor in *Covent-Garden*; that he should have three of the most modish rich Suits made, that might become a private Gentleman of a Thousand Pounds a Year, and Hats, Perukes, Linnen, Swords, and all Things suitable to 'em, all to be got ready in less than a Month; in which Time, she took all the Opportunity she could either find or make to see him, and not to be seen by him: She oblig'd her Steward to invite him to a Play, whither she follow'd 'em, and sat next to *Gracelove*, and talk'd with him; but all the while masq'd. In this Month's Time she was daily pester'd with the Visits of her Addressors; several there were of 'em; but the chief were only a Lord of a very small Estate, tho' of a pretty great Age; a young blustering Knight, who had a Place of 500*l.* a Year at Court; and a County Gentleman, of a very plentiful Estate, a Widower, and of a middle Age. These three only of her Lovers she invited to Dinner, on the first Day of the next Month: In the mean while she sent a rich Suit, and Equipage proportionable, to her Brother, with an Invitation to dine with her on the same Day. Then she writ to *Eugenia* to come and stay in Town, if not in the same House with her, for two or three Days before; which her affectionate Daughter obey'd; to whom *Philadelphia* related all her Brother's past Extravagancies and what she had done for him in redeeming most Part of his Estate; begging of her, that if she could fancy his Person, she would take him into her Mercy and marry him. Being assur'd, that such a virtuous Wife as she would prove, must necessarily reclaim him, if yet he were not perfectly convinc'd of his Follies; which, she doubted not, his late long Sufferings had done. *Eugenia* return'd, That she would wholly be directed and advis'd by her in all Things; and that certainly she could not but like the Brother, since she lov'd the Sister so perfectly and truly.

The Day came, and just at Twelve, *Gracelove* meeting the Steward on the Stairs coming from his Lady, *Gracelove* then told him that he believ'd he might take the Opportunity of that Afternoon to go over to *Putney*, and take a Game or two at Bowls. The Steward return'd, ``Very well, Sir, I shall let my Lady know it, if she enquires for you." *Philadelphia*, who overheard what they said, call'd the Steward in Haste, and bid him call *Gracelove* back, and tell him she expected his Company at her Table to Day, and that she desir'd he would appear like himself. The Steward Soon overtook him at the Door, just going out as *Eugenia* came in, who look'd back on *Gracelove*: The poor Gentleman was strangely surpriz'd at the Sight of her, as she was at his; but the Steward's Message did more amaze and confound him. He went directly to his Chamber, to dress himself in one of those rich Suits lately made for him; but, the Distraction he was in, made him mistake his Coat for his Waistcoat, and put the Coat on first; but, recalling his stragglng Thoughts, he made Shift to get ready time enough to make his Appearance without a second Summons. *Philadelphia* was as pleasant at Dinner as ever she had been all her Life; she look'd very obligingly on all the Sparks, and drank to every one of 'em particularly, beginning to the Lord — and ending to the Stranger, who durst hardly lift up his Eyes a second Time to her's, to confirm him that he knew her. Her Brother was so confounded, that he bow'd and continu'd his Head down 'till she had done drinking, not daring to encounter her Eyes, that would then have reproach'd him with his Villany to her.

After Dinner the Cloth was taken away; She began thus to her Lovers: ``My Lord! Sir *Thomas!* and Mr.*Fat-acres!* I doubt not, that it will be of some Satisfaction to you, to know whom I have made Choice for my next Husband; which now I am resolv'd no longer to defer."

``The Person to whom I shall next drink, must be the Man who shall ever command me and my Fortune, were it ten times greater than it is; which I wish only for his Sake, since he deserves much more. — Here," (said she to one that waited) ``put Wine into two Glasses": Then she took the Diamond Ring from her Finger, and put it into one of 'em. ``My dear *Gracelove*," (cry'd she) ``I drank to thee; and send thee back thy own Ring, with *Philadelphia's* Heart." He startl'd, blush'd, and looked wildly; whilst all the Company stared on him. ``Nay, pledge me," (persu'd she) ``and return me the Ring: for it shall make us both one the next Morning." He bow'd, kiss'd, and return'd it, after he had taken off his Wine. The defeated Lovers knew not how to resent it? The Lord and Knight

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were for going, but the Country Gentleman oppos'd it, and told 'em, 'twas the greatest Argument of Folly, to be disturb'd at the Caprice of a Woman's Humour. They sat down again therefore, and she invited 'em to her Wedding on the Morrow.

``And now, Brother," (said she) ``I have not quite forgotten you, tho' you have not been pleas'd to take Notice of me: I have a Dish in Reserve for you, which will be more grateful to your Fancy than all you have tasted to Day. Here!" (cry'd she to the Steward) ``Mr. *Rightman*, do you serve up that Dish your self." *Rightman* then set a cover'd Dish on the Table.

``What! more Tricks yet?" (cry'd my Lord and Sir *Thomas*).

``Come, Sir *William*!" (said his Sister) ``uncover it!"

He did so; and cry'd out, ``O matchless Goodness of a virtuous Sister! here are the Mortgages of the best Part of my Estate! O! what a Villain! what a Monster have I been!"

``No more, dear Brother;" (said she, with Tears in her Eyes) ``I have yet a greater Happiness in Store for you: This Lady, this beautiful virtuous Lady, with twenty thousand Pounds, will make you happy in her Love." Saying this, she join'd their Hands; Sir *William* eagerly kiss'd *Eugenia's*, who blush'd, and said, ``Thus, Madam, I hope to shew how much I love and honour you."

``My Cousin *Eugenia*!" (cry'd *Gracelove*!)

``The same, my dear lost dead Cousin *Gracelove*!" (reply'd she).

``O!" (said he in a Transport) ``my present Joys are greater than all my past Miseries! my Mistress and my Friend are found, and still are mine."

``Nay, faith," (said my Lord) ``this is pleasant enough to me, tho' I have been defeated of the Enjoyment of the Lady." The whole Company in general went away very well that Night, who return'd the next Morning, and saw the two happy Pair firmly united.

FINIS.