

SCENE XV.

SIR WILFULL WITWOUD, PETULANT, WITWOUD, MRS. MARWOOD.

SIR WIL. Oons, this fellow knows less than a starling: I don't think a knows his own name.

MRS. MAR. Mr. Witwoud, your brother is not behindhand in forgetfulness. I fancy he has forgot you too.

WIT. I hope so. The devil take him that remembers first, I say.

SIR WIL. Save you, gentlemen and lady.

MRS. MAR. For shame, Mr. Witwoud; why won't you speak to him?--And you, sir.

WIT. Petulant, speak.

PET. And you, sir.

SIR WIL. No offence, I hope? [Salutes MARWOOD.]

MRS. MAR. No, sure, sir.

WIT. This is a vile dog, I see that already. No offence? Ha, ha, ha. To him, to him, Petulant, smoke him.

PET. It seems as if you had come a journey, sir; hem, hem. [Surveying him round.]

SIR WIL. Very likely, sir, that it may seem so.

PET. No offence, I hope, sir?

WIT. Smoke the boots, the boots, Petulant, the boots; ha, ha, ha!

SIR WILL. Maybe not, sir; thereafter as 'tis meant, sir.

PET. Sir, I presume upon the information of your boots.

SIR WIL. Why, 'tis like you may, sir: if you are not satisfied with the information of my boots, sir, if you will step to the stable, you may enquire further of my horse, sir.

PET. Your horse, sir! Your horse is an ass, sir!

SIR WIL. Do you speak by way of offence, sir?

MRS. MAR. The gentleman's merry, that's all, sir. 'Slife, we shall have a quarrel betwixt an horse and an ass, before they find one another out.--You must not take anything amiss from your friends, sir. You are among your friends here, though it--may be you don't know it. If I am not mistaken, you are Sir Wilfull Witwoud?

SIR WIL. Right, lady; I am Sir Wilfull Witwoud, so I write myself; no offence to anybody, I hope? and nephew to the Lady Wishfort of this mansion.

MRS. MAR. Don't you know this gentleman, sir?

SIR WIL. Hum! What, sure 'tis not--yea by'r lady but 'tis-- 'sheart, I know not whether 'tis or no. Yea, but 'tis, by the Wrekin. Brother Antony! What, Tony, i'faith! What, dost thou not know me? By'r lady, nor I thee, thou art so becravated and so beperiwigged. 'Sheart, why dost not speak? Art thou o'erjoyed?

WIT. Odso, brother, is it you? Your servant, brother.

SIR WIL. Your servant? Why, yours, sir. Your servant again-- 'sheart, and your friend and servant to that--and a--[puff] and a flap-dragon for your service, sir, and a hare's foot and a hare's scut for your service, sir, an you be so cold and so courtly!

WIT. No offence, I hope, brother?

SIR WIL. 'Sheart, sir, but there is, and much offence. A pox, is this your inns o' court breeding, not to know your friends and your relations, your elders, and your betters?

WIT. Why, brother Wilfull of Salop, you may be as short as a Shrewsbury cake, if you please. But I tell you 'tis not modish to know relations in town. You think you're in the country, where great lubberly brothers slabber and kiss one another when they meet, like a call of sergeants. 'Tis not the fashion here; 'tis not, indeed, dear brother.

SIR WIL. The fashion's a fool and you're a fop, dear brother. 'Sheart, I've suspected this--by'r lady I conjectured you were a fop, since you began to change the style of your letters, and write in a scrap of paper gilt round the edges, no bigger than a subpoena. I might expect this when you left off 'Honoured brother,' and 'Hoping you are in good health,' and so forth, to begin with a 'Rat me, knight, I'm so sick of a last night's debauch.' Ods heart, and then tell a familiar tale of a cock and a bull, and a whore and a bottle, and so conclude. You could write news before you were out of your time, when you lived with honest Pumple-Nose, the attorney of Furnival's Inn. You could intreat to be remembered then to your friends round the Wrekin. We could have Gazettes then, and Dawks's Letter, and the Weekly Bill, till of late days.

PET. 'Slife, Witwoud, were you ever an attorney's clerk? Of the family of the Furnivals? Ha, ha, ha!

WIT. Ay, ay, but that was but for a while. Not long, not long; pshaw, I was not in my own power then. An orphan, and this fellow was my guardian; ay, ay, I was glad to consent to that man to come to London. He had the disposal of me then. If I had not agreed to that, I might have been bound prentice to a feltmaker in Shrewsbury: this fellow would have bound me to a maker of felts.

SIR WIL. 'Sheart, and better than to be bound to a maker of fops, where, I suppose, you have served your time, and now you may set up for yourself.

MRS. MAR. You intend to travel, sir, as I'm informed?

SIR WIL. Belike I may, madam. I may chance to sail upon the salt seas, if my mind hold.

PET. And the wind serve.

SIR WIL. Serve or not serve, I shan't ask license of you, sir, nor the weathercock your companion. I direct my discourse to the lady, sir. 'Tis like my aunt may have told you, madam? Yes, I have settled my concerns, I may say now, and am minded to see foreign parts. If an how that the peace holds, whereby, that is, taxes abate.

MRS. MAR. I thought you had designed for France at all adventures.

SIR WIL. I can't tell that; 'tis like I may, and 'tis like I may not. I am somewhat dainty in making a resolution, because when I make it I keep it. I don't stand shill I, shall I, then; if I say't, I'll do't. But I have thoughts to tarry a small matter in town, to learn somewhat of your lingo first, before I cross the seas. I'd gladly have a spice of your French as they say, whereby to hold discourse in foreign countries.

MRS. MAR. Here's an academy in town for that use.

SIR WIL. There is? 'Tis like there may.

MRS. MAR. No doubt you will return very much improved.

WIT. Yes, refined like a Dutch skipper from a whale-fishing.