

The Beaux Stratagem by George Farquhar  
M/M SS, SmS, R&D, Kn

V.ii

THE BEAUX' STRATAGEM

MRS. SULLEN (*shrieks*).

Ah!

ARCHER.

Oons, madam, what d'ye mean? You'll raise the house.

MRS. SULLEN.

Sir, I'll wake the dead before I bear this. What, approach me with the freedoms of a keeper! I'm glad on't. Your impudence has cured me. 50

ARCHER (*kneels*).

If this be impudence I leave to your partial self. No panting pilgrim after a tedious, painful voyage e'er bowed before his saint with more devotion.

MRS. SULLEN (*aside*).

Now, now, I'm ruined if he kneels! —[*To him.*] Rise, thou prostrate engineer. Not all thy undermining skill shall reach my heart. Rise, and know I am a woman without my sex. I can love to all the tenderness of wishes, sighs, and tears, but go no farther. Still to convince you that I'm more than woman, I can speak my frailty, confess my weakness even for you, but— 60

ARCHER.

For me! *Going to lay hold on her.*

MRS. SULLEN.

Hold, sir, build not upon that. For my most mortal hatred follows if you disobey what I command you. Now! Leave me this minute. —(*Aside.*) If he denies, I'm lost. 65

ARCHER.

Then you'll promise—

MRS. SULLEN.

Anything another time.

ARCHER.

When shall I come?

MRS. SULLEN.

Tomorrow when you will.

55. *engineer*] plotter. Among other duties, military engineers were responsible for undermining enemy fortifications.

57. *without my sex*] "beyond the capacity or comprehension of" my sex (*OED*).

THE BEAUX' STRATAGEM

V.ii

ARCHER.

Your lips must seal the promise. 70

MRS. SULLEN.

Pshaw!

ARCHER.

They must, they must. (*Kisses her.*) Raptures and paradise! And why not now, my angel? The time, the place, silence, and secrecy all conspire; and the now conscious stars have preordained this moment for my happiness. 75  
*Takes her in his arms.*

MRS. SULLEN.

You will not, cannot, sure.

ARCHER.

If the sun rides fast and disappoints not mortals of tomorrow's dawn, this night shall crown my joys.

MRS. SULLEN.

My sex's pride assist me. 80

ARCHER.

My sex's strength help me.

MRS. SULLEN.

You shall kill me first.

ARCHER.

I'll die with you. *Carrying her off.*

MRS. SULLEN.

Thieves, thieves, murder!

*Enter Scrub in his breeches and one shoe.*

SCRUB.

Thieves, thieves, murder, popery! 85

ARCHER.

Ha, the very timorous stag will kill in rutting time.

*Draws and offers to stab Scrub.*

SCRUB (*kneeling*).

O, pray, sir, spare all I have and take my life.

MRS. SULLEN (*holding Archer's hand*).

What does the fellow mean?

76. S.D. *in his arms*] C; *in her arms* Q1.

SCRUB.  
O, madam, down upon your knees, your marrowbones.  
He's one of 'um. 90

ARCHER.  
Of whom?

SCRUB.  
One of the rogues—I beg your pardon, sir—one of the  
honest gentlemen that just now are broke into the  
house.

ARCHER.  
How! 95

MRS. SULLEN.  
I hope you did not come to rob me?

ARCHER.  
Indeed I did, madam, but I would have taken nothing  
but what you might ha' spared; but your crying thieves  
has waked this dreaming fool, and so he takes 'em for  
granted. 100

SCRUB.  
Granted! 'Tis granted, sir. Take all we have.

MRS. SULLEN.  
The fellow looks as if he were broke out of Bedlam.

SCRUB.  
Oons, madam, they're broke into the house with fire  
and sword; I saw them, heard them. They'll be here this  
minute. 105

ARCHER.  
What, thieves?

SCRUB.  
Under favor, sir, I think so.

MRS. SULLEN.  
What shall we do, sir?

ARCHER.  
Madam, I wish your ladyship a good night.

MRS. SULLEN.  
Will you leave me? 110

ARCHER.  
Leave you! Lord, madam, did you not command me to

102. *Bedlam*] the Hospital of St. Mary of Bethlehem, an asylum for the  
insane.

be gone just now upon pain of your immortal hatred?

MRS. SULLEN.  
Nay, but pray, sir— *Takes hold of him.*

ARCHER.  
Ha, ha, ha, now comes my turn to be ravished. You see  
now, madam, you must use men one way or other. But 115  
take this by the way, good madam, that none but a fool  
will give you the benefit of his courage unless you'll take  
his love along with it. —How are they armed, friend?

SCRUB.  
With sword and pistol, sir.

ARCHER.  
Hush, I see a dark lanthorn coming through the gallery. 120  
Madam, be assured I will protect you or lose my life.

MRS. SULLEN.  
Your life! No, sir, they can rob me of nothing that I  
value half so much. Therefore now, sir, let me intreat  
you to be gone.

ARCHER.  
No, madam, I'll consult my own safety for the sake of 125  
yours. I'll work by stratagem. Have you courage enough  
to stand the appearance of 'em?

MRS. SULLEN.  
Yes, yes. Since I have 'scaped your hands I can face  
anything.

ARCHER.  
Come hither, Brother Scrub, don't you know me? 130

SCRUB.  
Eh, my dear brother, let me kiss thee. *Kisses Archer.*

ARCHER.  
This way—here—

*Archer and Scrub hide behind the bed. Enter Gibbet with a dark lanthorn in one hand and a pistol in t'other.*

GIBBET.  
Ay, ay, this is the chamber, and the lady alone.

MRS. SULLEN.  
Who are you, sir? What would you have? D'ye come to  
rob me? 135

GIBBET.

Rob you! Alack a day, madam, I'm only a younger brother, madam, and so, madam, if you make a noise I'll shoot you through the head. But don't be afraid, madam. (*Laying his lanthorn and pistol upon the table.*) These rings, madam; don't be concerned, madam; I have a profound respect for you, madam; your keys, madam; don't be frightened, madam; I'm the most of a gentleman. (*Searching her pockets.*) This necklace, madam; I never was rude to a lady; I have a veneration—for this necklace— 145

*Here Archer having come round and seized the pistol, takes Gibbet by the collar, trips up his heels, and claps the pistol to his breast.*

ARCHER.

Hold, profane villain, and take the reward of thy sacrilege.

GIBBET.

Oh, pray, sir, don't kill me; I an't prepared.

ARCHER.

How many is there of 'em, Scrub?

SCRUB.

Five and forty, sir. 150

ARCHER.

Then I must kill the villain to have him out of the way.

GIBBET.

Hold, hold, sir, we are but three, upon my honor.

ARCHER.

Scrub, will you undertake to secure him?

SCRUB.

Not I, sir. Kill him, kill him!

ARCHER.

Run to Gipsy's chamber; there you'll find the doctor. 155

Bring him hither presently. *Exit Scrub running.*

Come, rogue, if you have a short prayer, say it.

GIBBET.

Sir, I have no prayer at all. The government has pro-

139. S.D. *pistol*] *O*; *pistols Q1*.

136-37. *only . . . brother*] Under the laws of primogeniture only eldest sons inherited, making it necessary for their younger brothers to provide for themselves.

vided a chaplain to say prayers for us on these occasions.

MRS. SULLEN.

Pray, sir, don't kill him. You fright me as much as him. 160

ARCHER.

The dog shall die, madam, for being the occasion of my disappointment. —Sirrah, this moment is your last.

GIBBET.

Sir, I'll give you two hundred pound to spare my life.

ARCHER.

Have you no more, rascal?

GIBBET.

Yes, sir, I can command four hundred, but I must reserve two of 'em to save my life at the sessions.

*Enter Scrub and Foigard.*

ARCHER.

Here, doctor, I suppose Scrub and you between you may manage him. Lay hold of him, doctor.

*Foigard lays hold of Gibbet.*

GIBBET.

What, turned over to the priest already? —Look ye, doctor, you come before your time; I an't condemned yet, 170  
I thank ye.

FOIGARD.

Come, my dear joy, I will secure your body and your shoul too. I will make you a good Catholic and give you an absolution.

GIBBET.

Absolution! Can you procure me a pardon, doctor? 175

FOIGARD.

No, joy.

GIBBET.

Then you and your absolution may go to the devil.

ARCHER.

Convey him into the cellar; there bind him. Take the pistol, and if he offers to resist shoot him through the head. And come back to us with all the speed you can. 180

166. *sessions*] the periodical sittings of justices of the peace or other magistrates.

SCRUB.

Ay, ay, come, doctor. Do you hold him fast, and I'll guard him.

[*Exeunt Foigard and Scrub with Gibbet.*]

MRS. SULLEN.

But how came the doctor?

ARCHER.

In short, madam— (*Shrieking without.*) S'death, the rogues are at work with the other ladies. I'm vexed I parted with the pistol, but I must fly to their assistance:—Will you stay here, madam, or venture yourself with me?

MRS. SULLEN.

O, with you, dear sir, with you.

*Takes him by the arm and exeunt.*

[V.iii] *Scene changes to another apartment in the same house.*

*Enter Hounslow dragging in Lady Bountiful, and Bagshot hauling in Dorinda; the rogues with swords drawn.*

HOUNSLOW.

Come, come, your jewels, mistress.

BAGSHOT.

Your keys, your keys, old gentlewoman.

*Enter Aimwell and Cherry.*

AIMWELL.

Turn this way, villains. I durst engage an army in such a cause. *He engages 'em both.*

DORINDA.

O, madam, had I but a sword to help the brave man! 5

LADY BOUNTIFUL.

There's three or four hanging up in the hall, but they won't draw. I'll go fetch one, however. *Exit.*

*Enter Archer and Mrs. Sullen.*

ARCHER.

Hold, hold, my lord; every man his bird, pray.

8. *every man his bird*] Archer means that each of them should pick out his own man to fight. The phrase was undoubtedly used by those shooting at game birds.

*They engage man to man; the rogues are thrown and disarmed.*

CHERRY.

What, the rogues taken! Then they'll impeach my father. I must give him timely notice. *Runs out.* 10

ARCHER.

Shall we kill the rogues?

AIMWELL.

No, no, we'll bind them.

ARCHER.

Ay, ay. —(*To Mrs. Sullen, who stands by him.*) Here, madam, lend me your garter.

MRS. SULLEN [*aside*].

The devil's in this fellow. He fights, loves, and banter, all in a breath. —Here's a cord that the rogues brought with 'em, I suppose. 15

ARCHER.

Right, right, the rogue's destiny, a rope to hang himself. —Come, my lord. This is but a scandalous sort of an office (*binding the rogues together*) if our adventures should end in this sort of hangman-work, but I hope there is something in prospect that— 20

*Enter Scrub.*

Well, Scrub, have you secured your tartar?

SCRUB.

Yes, sir, I left the priest and him disputing about religion. 25

AIMWELL.

And pray carry these gentlemen to reap the benefit of the controversy.

*Delivers the prisoners to Scrub, who leads 'em out.*

MRS. SULLEN.

Pray, sister, how came my lord here?

DORINDA.

And pray, how came the gentleman here?

MRS. SULLEN.

I'll tell you the greatest piece of villainy— 30  
*They talk in dumb show.*

23. *tartar*] a rough or violent person.