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THE WIT
OF A WOMAN

1604

THE MALONE SOCIETY
REPRINTS

1913

This reprint of the *Wit of a Woman* has been prepared under the direction of the General Editor.

Dec. 1913.

W. W. Greg.

PK
2411
W73
1913

No entry of the *Wit of a Woman* has been found in the Stationers' Register. The quarto printed with the date 1604 for Edward White contains ornaments used by Edward Allde. It is in roman type of a size approximating to modern pica (20 ll. = 83 mm.). There are copies at the British Museum, at the Bodleian Library, and in the collection of the Duke of Devonshire. The second of these has formed the basis of the present reprint, while the first has been constantly and the third occasionally consulted.

Nothing whatever is known as to the authorship or date of this play, or as to the circumstances either of its production or printing.

LIST OF DOUBTFUL READINGS, &C.

N.B.—The following is primarily a list of those passages in which the reading of the original is open to question, and of those in which different copies of the original have been found to vary. It also includes a number of readings which are evident typographical blunders of the original, or which are liable to be mistaken for such, this being necessary as a defence of the accuracy of the reprint. It makes, however, no pretence of supplying a complete list of errors and corruptions, still less of offering any criticism or emendation, nor does the appearance of a reading in this list necessarily imply that it is incorrect.

The present play is extremely corrupt, particularly as regards the dramatic arrangement of the text. Speakers' names are frequently misprinted, speeches are wrongly assigned, and stage directions repeated, misplaced and omitted. We also frequently find commas and colons in place of periods at the ends of speeches. In some instances this is probably intentional. Periods are also present or absent incorrectly after such words as *Exit*. The following list does not necessarily take notice of such irregularities.

The observed variations between copies are confined to the two pages B4 recto and verso. On the first of these a single letter has dropped out in the Bodleian copy (l. 318), on the second that copy has several errors not found in the one at the British Museum, showing that the sheet was printed from an uncorrected outer forme.

1713

Dram. Pers. l. 1 Interlocutors.]
original Interlocutors.
 12 *Derio.*
 14 *Borio.*
 18 woman.] *possibly* woman,
 Prol. l. 3 prooue:] *possibly* prooue.
 5 Nature
 Text. l. 13 it,] *possibly* it;
 30 *Ne.*
 32 Icould;
 41 Intruth
 72 *manent*
 79, &c. *Gie.*
 122 *Ne.*
 128 enou gh,
 135 *Ner.*
 138 therefore] *possibly* the refore
 202 *Doctor, Lino.*
 283 face:] *possibly* fa ce:
 288 *Gri.*
 310 vnder
 318 what] *so B.M., Devon.:* wha
Bodl.
 347 foollish
 352 am louing] *possibly* amlouing
 353 *Gianetta]* *so B.M., Devon.:*
Giauetta Bodl.
 356 nothing:] *so B.M., Devon.:*
 nothing *Bodl.*
 362 *Foggo.]* *so B.M., Devon.:* *Faggo.*
Bodl.
 379 *veronte*
 394 *anolde*
 466 mindecan
 470 Ican,
 500 thin ke
 521 *Bar*
 566 *Neofi*
 603 woney,
 606 c.w. *Maid*
 666 arefor
 695 wiil

718 *Balio.*
 726 *Erin,*
 739-40 Iust|tice
 800 then
 802 *Dod.*
 803 *Feof.*
 882 *Bizar.*
 891 *Bar.*
 896 *Bar*
 923 tomy
 936 *Bragardo*
cōpanie
 937 *Biz*
 948 mitresse, as
 952] *speeches reversed*
 956 hangesat
 959 of, Sir
 962 ama
 987 lenrning,
 990 yon] *really* turned u
 996 swetnes
 1026 *Manent]* *first n really* turned u
 1055 *Baz.*
 1088 yon] *really* turned u
 1090 will come] *belongs at end of*
 1091
 1092 forfooth
 1093 *Erinto*
 1097 t o
 1103 they] *probably* error for then
 1107 streight
 1119 haue] *possibly* hau c
 1127 grouud
 1135 Sir she] *possibly* Sirshe
 1172 but
 1179 confen] *first n really* turned u
 1180 them.
 1183 *Gia,*
 1184 (Ithinke)
 1187 *Ezeunt.*
 1225 will
 1261 *Rin,*

1277 eueuing,
 1317-8 *Lod.* | *Lodonica.*
 1353 *Lod.*
 1356 *Fir.* it
 1389 mas
 1396 clontes,] *really turned u*
 1400 warning-pan,
 1427 laft
 1429 *Ver*
 1439 They Deuill the
 1455 to, her
 1470 perfect
 1505 resolution
 1508 aspin leaf] *possibly aspinleaf*
 1524 worde,] *comma doubtful*
 1527 *hell*
 1680 *lone*

1689 *Lau.*
 1692 before, l
 1693 *Bau.*
 1697 *Fie.*
 1708 youronely
 1736 *Ferio*
 invaine,
 1738 Boyeshaue
 1741, 1744, 1759 *Fi.*
 1743 *Doct.*
 Epil. l. 11 lf
 hearp] *really turned d*
 14 plandite
 Running-titles:
 A 3^v *woman.*
 A 4^v, D 1, E 3, F 4, G 3^v *woman*

A list of characters is printed on the second leaf. Several of the names are misprinted, but even apart from this the list is neither accurate nor complete. All attempt to construct a satisfactory list in its place has, however, failed. In the text names are persistently misprinted and speeches wrongly assigned. The fact is that the names of some characters cannot be ascertained and their relationship is uncertain throughout. Dorio, who is evidently one of the fathers in the printed list, appears quite incidentally in the last scene only. The rich citizen, Dives, who figures as Dano in the list, is evidently treated as one of the fathers in Sc. viii; so, in Sc. iii, is Giro, who either does not appear in the list at all or else is confused with 'Gero.', the vintner's boy of Sc. xvi. In the important stage direction to the final scene the four fathers are Ferio, Bario, the Lawyer, and the Doctor. But according to the list Ferio is the Lawyer. To attempt to disentangle the confusion would practically mean editing the play, while it is extremely doubtful whether even the most drastic editing would serve to straighten

matters out. The most helpful thing would appear to be to add some notes on the printed list of characters, indicating the first scene in which each appears and the subsequent passages which throw most light upon it. But the evidence of paternity is too intricate and contradictory to be worth collecting here.

BALIA. Sc. i, &c. In Sc. iii (l. 237) a speech is assigned to her presumably by error for the Doctor, since there is no reason to suppose that she is present.

BARIO. Sc. iii, &c., Sc. xvii.

NEMO. Sc. iii, &c., Sc. xvii. The name is almost certainly wrong. In the text he is apparently called Doctor Lino at l. 202, and possibly Doctor Lovers at l. 506. Elsewhere he is simply the Doctor. Lord Nemo is an imaginary character in l. 397, and one of the youths, when disguised as a physician, is called Doctor Nemo in a stage direction, l. 712.

FERIO. Sc. iii (l. 250), &c., Sc. xvii. The stage direction to the last scene implies that he is distinct from the Lawyer.

DORIO. Sc. xvii (ll. 1707, 1747, possibly 1742). Not recognized in any stage direction.

VERONTE. Sc. ii, &c., Scs. iv, x. His disguise is that of a writing master. Hence in ll. 539-40 'Painter' must be an error. His sweetheart is Erinta, as appears from Sc. x, though the list makes her his sister. There must also be an error in Sc. xii where he is coupled with Gianetta.

FILENIO. Sc. ii, &c., Scs. iv, x. His name is given both as Filenio, l. 361, and Fileno, l. 142; when he is disguised, as Niofell, l. 361, or Neofilo, l. 987. If a perfect anagram is intended we should expect Fileno and Niofel or Neofil. His disguise is that of a physician, and his sweetheart is Lodovica. In Sc. xvii the three speeches with the prefix Fi. (ll. 1741, 1744, 1759) belong not to him but to Ferio. He has a servant GOFFO, who only appears in disguise with the transposed name Foggio, and who is ignored by the list.

GERILLO. Sc. ii, &c., Scs. iv, x. His disguise is that of a dancing master, and he appears accompanied by a Fidler, who is a mute (l. 388). When disguised he once gives his name as Logire, l. 1008. The speech in Sc. iv assigned to Rinaldo (l. 390) clearly belongs to Gerillo. His sweetheart is Gianetta, as is plain from Sc. x; yet the list makes her his sister and he speaks of her as such in Sc. xii (l. 1251).

RINALDO. Sc. ii, &c., Scs. iv, x. His name appears both as Rinaldo, l. 142, and Rimaldo, l. 1415: it is most frequently abbreviated Rim. in the later scenes. His disguise is that of a painter. At the beginning of Sc. x, however, he is addressed as Doctor and a stage direction calls him Doctor Nemo. But here the action itself makes it plain that speeches by Neofilo and Lodovica have been erroneously assigned to Rinaldo and Isabella. Isabella is his sweetheart.

ERINTA. Sc. i, &c., Scs. x, xvii. Veronte's sweetheart.

LODOVICA. Sc. i, &c., Scs. x, xvii. In Sc. i she is named Merilla, elsewhere Lodovica. Filenio's sweetheart. In the list she is the daughter of 'Derio'. This is presumably a misprint for Ferio. If it is a misprint for Dorio, the list represents her as Filenio's sister, but see Isabella. In Sc. xi if Lodovica leaves the stage at l. 1187 the speeches at ll. 1193 and 1197 cannot be hers.

GIANETTA. Sc. i, &c., Scs. x, xvii. Gerillo's sweetheart.

ISABELLA. Sc. i, &c., Scs. x, xvii. Rinaldo's sweetheart. In the list she is the daughter of 'Borio', presumably Dorio.

BRAGARDO. Scs. x (l. 880), xv, xvi (l. 1662).

BIZARDO. Scs. x (l. 880), xv, xvi. He is the Boy of l. 1638.

Sir LAWRENCE. Scs. xiv, xvii. His speeches are marked Priest only, but he is addressed by name in ll. 1532 and 1557.

MISA. Scs. iv (l. 394), vi. Nowhere named.

BILLA. Scs. iv (l. 394), vi, viii (l. 581). The only place in which she is named is ll. 631-2, where she is called Figga, probably in jest.

DANO. Scs. iv (l. 395), viii. Nowhere named. In Sc. iv he is called a rich citizen merely, and the heading to his speech is omitted (l. 416); in Sc. viii he appears as Dives, calls himself a cousin of Balia's, and is evidently one of the four fathers. 'Dano' may possibly be a misprint for 'Diues'.

GIRO. (A) Sc. iii (l. 250). He enters with Ferio and is manifestly one of the four fathers.

(B) Sc. xvi. The vintner's boy who enters half drunk with Bizardo. The stage direction gives the name as 'Gero.' as if it were an abbreviation; his speeches have the prefix Boy merely.

The list does not mention the Servant and Maid of Balia's household who have speeches at ll. 1617 and 1672 respectively. There are also the speakers of the Prologue and Epilogue.

A
Pleasant Comoedie,

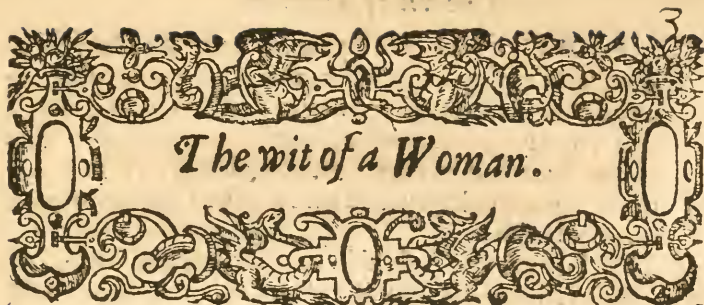
Wherein is merily shewen:

The wit of a Woman.



LONDON

Printed for Edward VVhite, and
are to be sold at the little North
doore of Pauls Church at the Signe
of the Gun. 1604.



The wit of a Woman.

Actus I. Scæ. I.

Enter Balia with the Wenches.

Balia, Merilla, Isabella, Gianetta,
Erinta.

Ba. Gentlewomen, in trueth I am sorry to see how you
G tryfle out the time, without either good to your
selues or credite to me: your parents thinke their charge lost:
I thinke my paines lost, and you will finde your time lost:
good Loid; what shall I saye to you? I know I shall haue
more anger for you, then ever I shall get good by you: nay,
it is too true, looke on me as you list: *Erinta*, let me stee hither
your worke: good stufte, is it not? in trueth not a true stitch
in it; in deed, I will haue it all pickte out: why, what doe yee
meane?

Er. Truly mistresse, I haue had such a paine in my head,
that I can scarce holde open mine eyes, and therefore blame
me not for my worke, when I am better it shall bee amen-
ded.

A 3

Ba. Well.

A
Pleasant Comoedie,

VVherein is merily shewen:

The wit of a Woman.



LONDON

Printed for Edward VVhite, *and*
are to be sold at the little North

doore of Pauls Church at the Signe
of the Gun. 1604.



The Interlocutors.

<i>Balia</i>	an olde Schoolemistris.	
<i>Bario</i>	an olde Merchant.	
<i>Nemo</i>	a Phifitian : and aged.	
<i>Ferio</i>	a Lawyer : and in yeares.	
<i>Dorio</i>	an olde Captaine.	
<i>Veronte</i>	a young Gentleman, Sonne to <i>Bario</i> .	
<i>Filenio</i>	Sonne to <i>Dorio</i> .	
<i>Gerillo</i>	Sonne to <i>Nemo</i> .	
<i>Rinaldo</i>	Sonne to <i>Ferio</i> .	10
<i>Erinta</i>	Daughter to <i>Bario</i> .	
<i>Lodouica.</i>	Daughter to <i>Derio</i> .	
<i>Gianetta</i>	Daughter to <i>Nemo</i> .	
<i>Isabella</i>	Daughter to <i>Borio</i> .	
<i>Bragardo</i>	a Ruffian.	
<i>Bizardo</i>	his man.	
<i>Sir Lawrence,</i>	a priest.	
<i>Misa</i>	an olde Sicke woman.	
<i>Billa</i>	a young wench.	
<i>Dano</i>	a ficke Marchant.	20
<i>Giro</i>	a Vinteners Boy.	

A 2.

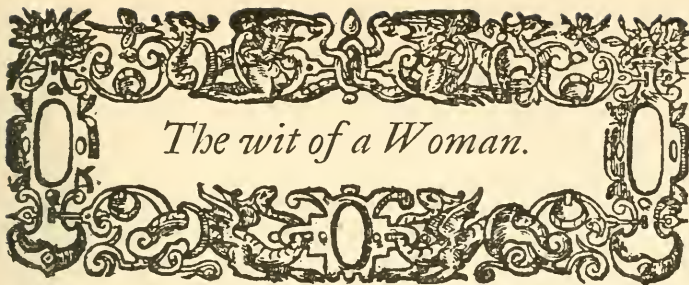




The Prologue.

YOUTH and Age were both in loue,
Either fought their haps to prooue :
When in fine, a womans wit :
Did in Reason, Nature fit.
Age was cofened, yet contented,
Youth was pleas'd, and not repented :
Loath I am to tell you all :
Ye shall see what will befall,
Merrie sporte without hurt ment,
Is the end of our intent.





The wit of a Woman.

ACTUS I. SCÆ. I.

Sc. i

Enter Balia with the Wenches.

Balia, Merilla, Ifabella, Gianetta,
Erinta.

Ba. **G**Entlewomen, in trueth I am fory to see how you
stryfle out the time, without either good to your
felues or credite to me: your parents thinke their charge lost:
I thinke my paines lost, and you will finde your time lost:
good Lord, what shall I saye to you? I know I shall haue
more anger for you, then euer I shall get good by you: nay, 10
it is too true, looke on me as you list: *Erinta*, let me see hither
your worke: good stufte, is it not? in trueth not a true stich
in it, in deed, I will haue it all pickte out: why, what doe yee
meane?

Er. Truely mistresse, I haue had such a paine in my head,
that I can scarce holde open mine eyes, and therefore blame
me not for my worke, when I am better it shall bee amen-
ded.

A 3

Ba. Well

The wit of a woman.

Ba. Well, it is an olde saying, I heard my Grand-mother speake it many a daie agoe, that good wordes makes a-²⁰ mendes for misdeedes: but in earnest, if you bee not well, I praie you lay by your worke, and take your pleasure, either at your Lute or dauncing, or what it please you: and if you thinke it not amisse, you shall haue maister Doctors opinion for your health?

Er. I thanke you forfooth, euen as it shall please you.

Ba. Well *Merilla*, let me see your Cushin-work: oh Lord, heere is a great fault, in trueth your colours are not wel mingled, besides it is not euen laid.

Ne. Truely forfooth, I had not enough of the white,³⁰ and therefore I was forced to take of the Carnation, as neere it as I could; which being of a bigger sort, could not lye so euen as I would haue had it, but truely I haue done my best in the working of it.

Ba. A sufficient excuse can not be refused, and therefore I will blame my selfe for this fault. But, *Isabella*, I pray you what flourish is this that you haue made heere?

Isa. Why? forfooth, such as you bad mee for the Coife: for there is not threed ynough for the kirtell, till you send for more.⁴⁰

Ba. Intruth you saie true: good Lord helpe mee, I see I grow olde, my memory doth so fayle me: but I praye you beare with me, and put me in minde to send for some in the morning.

Isa. Yes forfooth.

Ba. Now *Gianetta*, what haue you written? looke you, a faire maide, and make such foule blottes, and not a streight line? all awry, all awry, I pray you let it be mended.

Gia. Truely forfooth my pen is nought, and my schoole-maister will not mende it, besides my booke was not ruled, he⁵⁰ was in such haste that hee would scarce tary to write my copie.

Ba. Yes

The wit of a woman.

Ba. Yea, is the gentleman so lustie? marrie hee shall be talked with all; what doth he thinke to haue his money for nothing? wel, I am glad I know it: but gentlewomē, let me intreate you, euen for Gods sake, as you are together in my house, as sisters, you will liue, agree, and loue together as sisters. Your parents are friends, and so I hope will continue, and so I pray you, doe yee. I haue no children of mine owne, and therefore she that vseth me most kindly, shall not finde 60 me least thankfull: and to begin with a bonde of loue, let me intreat you to ioyne hands and hearts together, and let there be no name henceforth, but sister among yee; nor call me other then mother: For though in my person I am not worthy, in my loue I will deferue it.

They all ioyne hands with this word Sister.

We are content most willingly.

Balia. Well gentlewomen, I doubt not but this kindnes wil continue: I shall bee glad to see it, and for that I know yee would be glad to take the ayre, I will euen leaue ye awhile to 70 your selues: take your pleasures, and at your good times come in.

Exit Balia, maneut cæteri.

Erin. Sister *Isabella*, what ayles thy melancholly of late? come, put it off, it becomes thee not: I am sure you are not making of verses: And for State matters, let vs gouerne men, and men gouerne matters.

Isa. Yea, twere well if it could be so.

Mer. And why not?

Gi. Because we haue nothing but eyes and tongues, and they haue eares and hearts.

80

Er. Yea, but our Eyes may gouerne their hearts, and our tongues their eies.

Gia. Ha, ha, ha.

Mer. What laugh you at?

Gi. At your idle humors, to thinke that the will of a woman should rule the wit of a man.

Er. Of

The wit of a woman

Er. Of a man? yea a thousand and more to: for if euer thou hast red stories, or markt courses, then thou wilt finde that al the wit they haue, all the bookes they read, al the courses they take, is but to please vs.

90

Gie. Mary Buffe.

Mer. Why, when wee haue our wils, are we not at their wils? we laugh at a litle time of their suing, but thinke not of long time of our seruing.

Er. Seruing, what our selues? For doeth not the Lawyer pleade all his cases, to beautifie our cases? doe not the Glyents gold come to our golden Iewels? doeth not the soldiers perils maintaine our peace? the Physitians fees are they not our tribute? and the merchants aduenture our gaine? in briefe, who so stout as dare offend vs? who so rich but will be poore for vs? who so wise but will commend vs? who so noble, but will honour vs? and who so mad but will sweare to loue vs?

100

Gie. Oh, but when they flatter vs, they abuse vs, and whē we flatter our selues, they haue the hand of vs. But how doe they vse vs when they haue vs?

Er. How I pray you?

Gie. I will tell you as I haue heard: if we be wittie, they will play with vs like Apes: If foolish, they will skorne vs like Asses: if fayre, like pictures make vs gaye to looke vpon; if foule, keepe vs like Owles to laugh at: And the house must bee kept as a prison, or else called gazers, or gossips: cookes of their dyet, Lauanders for their linnen, seruants for charge, and companions but for idlenes.

110

Er. Who told thee this tale? but what saist thou? *Merilla,* art thou of her minde?

Me. No, we will be the treasures of their charge, the commanders of their seruice, the comfort of their hearts, the honour of their thoughts, and the ioy of their spirits: or els wee will none.

120

Gie. Then

The wit of a woman.

Gia. Then I feare yee will leade Apes in hell.

Ne. No, tush, thats but a iest of a deuill in the world?

Er. Well sisters, Let not vs disagree vpon husbandes, but, if there come any to our mindes, let vs haue a-bout with our witts, to fit our wils to the full.

Gre. I pray God it be not ill speede, to the foole.

Er. Tush, ware had I wift, and good enough : but harke Sirra, tell me one thing, if it fall out, as tis like enou gh, that we hap to light on some fuch creatures, as wee call louers: shall we playe the good girles, and aske, and keepe one an others 130 counsell.

Isa. The tone is easier then the tother.

Er. A forfeit in them that sayle.

Isa. What ?

Ner. Breach of friendshippe.

Er. Content ; but I doubt wee haue pratled too long, our mother will hange the lippe, or knit the brow, or deuife one dumpish countenance or other, and therefore let vs goe in, and keepe her in tune, while she is well.

Isa. Content, a good motion ; for in trueth I haue a litle 140 worke to doe, that I had almost forgotten. *Exeunt*

*Enter Fileno, and Veronte at one doore, and Rinaldo, Sc. ii
and Gerillo at an other doore.*

Fi. A matche :

Ri. At what ?

Ver. At Tennis.

Ger. Tis too hot.

Fi. What then, shall we be idle ?

Ri. No, twere better be well occupied.

Ver. About what ?

150

Ri. Will yee ioyne iffue, if I pleade the case ?

Ger. Wee two to yee two, at what ye vvill, and vvhen you vvill.

B

Ver. Nay

The wit of a woman.

Ver. Nay, we foure to other foure, at a match worth the making.

Rino. It shall bee a bad match that I will refuse my friend.

Fi. And I am for yee.

Ger. Come on, fet our feete together, crosse hands alofte: now let him lacke hands and feete, that with his heart faints, 160 or with his hand failes, the true duetie of a friend be it, life or death. Amen.

All say Amen.

Ver. Now my maisters, wee foure wagges to foure mad wenches, our crosse sifters, let vs to our wits, to laye them abroad for their Loues, and though some of our parents seeme not to fauour vs in such courses, let vs doe them as little offence, and our selues as much good as we can.

Fi. A good motion.

Rin. Ile make one, lay the plot and let me alone for my 170 part.

Ger. And I mine.

Ver. Then haue at ye for a double game, wel, we will be more our selues: and yet our selues: you are Sir *Nimble-heeles*, and you shall bee a dauncing schoole-maister to teach the wenches to daunce: so when you haue your mistress, hange your selfe, if you can not teach her a right hit it, both in time and place to iumpe euen with the instrument.

Ger. Well Sir, I vnderstand you, I am for you, and wil 180 be ruled by you.

Ver. For you Sir, you are *dominus literatus*, yee shall be maister Doctor of *Fi-ficke*, and now and then goe visite your patient, and as you feele your Pulse, so thinke of the disease, with the secrete of the Cure.

Fi. Sir, you are wise, I am not simple: but I can consider of those compounds, and how to apply them to the place

The wit of a woman.

place agrieved.

Ver. Now for you Sir, you are *Apelles* for your artificial spirit, and when you come to the mount of *Venus*, if your 190
Penfill fall, giue ouer your occupation: but in any wise be
sure of good stones for the grinding of your colours.

Rim. Well Sir: I haue instruction enough for the perfecting of my worke, which if it be not like my selfe, let me be counted a Bungler.

Ver. Now, for my selfe, I will be an odde prettie fellowe with a penne in mine care, in the shew of a Schoolemaster, that shall teach to read and write, and if I doe not learne my schollers kindly to spel, & put together, I wil loose my wages for my labour. But, let vs loose no time, but for now we know 200
what to do, be going about our busines. *Exeunt.*

Enter Bario and Doctor, Lino.

Sc. iii

Bar. Maister *Doctor*, in truth you haue a most sweet child vnto your daughter, & if it were not to make you too proud, I would tell you shee will need no great Dowry for her preferment in mariage.

Doc. Sir, you haue taught mee what to saie, if I could speake, but if she is a good foile to your Diamonde.

Bar. They saide, after the old prouerbe; that the *Crowe* thinkes her bird of a fayre feather: but truely it is not so with 210
me; for, I must confesse, though I can not thinke mine deformed; yet for complexion, you haue a Paragon: I can not tell whither your Art help any thing in the perfecting or preferring of it.

Doc. Well Sir, your commendation cannot misconceite mine opinion, I hold her fayre that is gracious, and wise that is thrifty, and honorable, that is vertuous; so may I liue to see my daughter, I shall be a glad father: if otherwife, what I cannot helpe, I must be sory for.

B. 2

Bar. In-

The wit of a woman.

Bar. Indeede patience is a remedy for many hurts, and 220
for my selfe, I will follow my wifes counsell, who oftentimes in her life time, would tell mee this touching my children: Nature is no brother, and youth is an age of imperfection, and labour without pleasure, is but a dulling of the spirit; and therefore haue an eye, but not a hand ouer them: for a good nature is rather awed with loue, then amended with feare: and, euen as she wished me, haue I done, and will doe; commende what I see good, and wincke at a litle fault; for loue is tender, and grieffe is sooner taken then remooued.

Doc. You speake like a kinde father, that may bee 230
ioyfull in such a daughter: But, what saye you of your sonne?

Bar. A wagge, a wagge, I rather praye for him, then loue him, and yet being mine owne, when I remember my youth, I can the better hope of his elder yeeres.

Bal. Why, indeede, hee is a gallant gentleman, of a noble spirite, and knoweth what he doth, how merrily soeuer hee make a countenance.

Bar. In trueth I hope so well of him, that though hee 240
were a feather, hee will not throwe awaye his hat, but I would wish that hee had a litle of your sonnes salt in his braynes.

Doct. My boyes, alas, hee is a meere fresh-man, and yet though I hope hee will be no knaue, I would be loath to see him a foole: but looke you who commeth yonder: Gentle-men, a fayre daie befall yee: no offence to your kindnesse: whence come yee? I will not aske whither goe yee.

Enter Giro and Ferio.

250

Gir. Well said Maister Doctor, take a scholler without
a tricke

The wit of a woman.

a trick, and set a fyre on his Library. But Sir, to leaue eloquence in plaine honestie: we came from mistresse *Balias* house, where if you had beene with vs, yee might haue heard some musicke: and for you mistresse *Bario*, let mee not make you proude, your daughter sings like a Nightingale; and maister Doctors daughter playes, it would do one good to heere her.

Bar. I thanke you Sir, for your good reporte wee will euen make a steppe to see howe they doe, and yours to: ²⁶⁰
For I am sure they are not behinde hande with defarts of commendations: What saie you Signior *Ferio*?

Fer. Faith mine, her mistresse sayeth, hath an excellent hande at her needle, and for an apt hand to writing: I must confesse, shee is worthy prayse: But I perceiue yee are going thither, and therefore we will leaue you to your iudgements of our reporters.

Bar. I thanke you maister Doctor, you will beare mee company.

Doc. Yea sir, with all my hart. *Exeunt Bar. & Doctor.* ²⁷⁰

Manent Ferio & Giro

Ferio. Maister *Giro*, truly mistresse *Balia* is a good old woman, howe carefull and how kinde, shee is rather like vnto a mother, then a mistresse: and truly me thinks the wenches loue like sisters, it were pittie that they should be parted.

Giro. For mine, shee shall not part from her mistresse, till shee haue a master that shee may be bold with, and for your daughter, I would shee had as good a husband as I could wish her. 280

Fer. I am sure you would wish her no bad one for her mothers sake: but I would that shee had no worse then your Wife had; though I saye it to your face: and
for

The wit of a woman.

for mine owne part, young fellowes are so light-headed, that it is twentie to one, to bee well bestowed, except he be eyther a foole, that will bee ruled, or a *Phœnix* that cannot bee found.

Gri. Nay softe, say not so, Some coltes are back to young and some at full age, a good rider doth much that can and will marke the nature of the horse. 290

Fe. So, some Mares may bee younger bellied then other, and then the Coltes will bee but Tittes, except the Sire bee the better, but let the Iades alone, and speake plainly to the purpose,

Gi. Then to the purpose, liberty is a way to will, and ease to wantonnes, and when wenches haue the head, a snaffle wil not holde them in.

Fe. Why then to be a bridell, and yet too much keeping in makes them the madder to get out, but as for ours we haue no neede to bee affraide of sparrow-blasting, their mistris 300 keepes them euer so well occupied, that they haue no time to be idle.

Gi. I cannot tell what you talke of occupying, this writing in a wench may make ill worke with a man, which letters may conuey more knauerie, then tongues may bee heard to speake of.

Fe. Yea but what thinke you of dauncing and finging ?

Gri. Pretty qualeties, the one to bee witche them that heare them, the other to heare such as will talke with them, and vnder the shape of a man, to heare a Deuill in a Maske. 310

Fe. Oh you are an old Colt, but yet, speake more charitably; the vsē is it that makes or marres, the qualities are decent, and necessary.

Gi. Yea but they marre hufwifery, they drawe companie, and aske cost.

Fe. Why, is it not better to honour wit, then to be troubled with folly ?

Gi. Oh

The wit of a woman.

Gi. Oh the cunning of nature needes no art, and what women, are we, men can tell.

Fe. Why, haue you ben so met with all? truely, I am per- 320
fwaded, that you are not yet so paste the worlde, that you
would cast your cappe at a sweete creature.

Gir. I am content to make you my iudge, because I will
be quittance with your conceite: but, mee thought I hard
you saie euen now, that you were to goe to the part about
your pinniffes, that is lately come in from the Straites: let not
me be a hinderance to your busines, wee shall meete againe,
and whensoever you will, I will beare you company to mi-
stresse *Balias*.

Fe. I thanke you Sir, with all my hart for putting mee in 330
remembrance, I had almost forgotten my selfe: you may see
how good companie passeth the time awaye: when I goe I
will fend you word.

Gi. I thanke you sir.

Exit Ferio.

Giro solus.

Well, I see wit goes not all by age, nor loue by reason: for
then should not I exceed my selfe in affecting that which
will increase my folly: but against death there is no medi-
cine, nor any argument to stand with loue: and therefore
since I am in by the weeke, let me looke to the yeere: *Ferios* 340
daughter is fayre, well, and beautie is worth the looking on,
so, and she is wittie: and that is worth the thinking on, true:
and she is kinde and that is worth the lighting on: well, but
I am olde, and that is not worth the looking on; true, and I
am foolish, and that is not worth the thinking on, so: and I
froward, and that is not worth the lighting on, right: so the
she is fayre, witty, and kinde, and I am old, foolish and fro-
ward: and how then shall wee come to the matter: no rea-
son to hope of it; yet fortune doth much in fansie, & wealth
pleades strongly with a wench: yea to make a foole of him 350
that hath it, and will part with it: well, I am rich, and will be
bountifull

The wit of a woman.

bountifull, for I am louing and so farre in loue, that I will be a foole to haue my fortune: and therefore *Gianetta* I will come to see my daughter, but it shall bee for thy sake, for tis thee I loue, thine eyes haue holde of my hart, and thy hand shall rule the whole world that I haue: but all this is nothing: I must, If I haue any wit, now worke it to her will, and so I will, my daughter shall be the meane, and mistris *Balia* shall not say me nay: crownes must flye, and they shall walke, for they neuer did me better seruice.

Exit 360

Enter Filenio now called Niofell, and his seruant Goffo, Sc. iv
now called Foggo.

Fi. Foggo, Set vp the Table, now sir, first secrezty for your life, not to reueale my trust, and for our better gaine to draw our patients.

Gof. You Sirs, for I am neither Phisitian nor Apothecary nor Surgen, but for a woman, and that for one disease.

Nio. What is that sir?

Fog. The vnila: putting vp of the vnila.

Niof. Go to sir knaue, no more rogy, but tend your bu- 370
sines, and marke what I tell you.

Fog. Well sir, mine eares, mine eyes, my minde and heart and all are prepared, to heare, note, remember and performe your commaund.

Niof. Then Sir waite without the doore, and talke with the patient of the disease, and tell me what they say before they come in, but bring in their Vrinalls.

Fog. Tis done Sir, he wayteth there.

Enter veronte with his Table.

Ver. Well heere will I hang vp my Table: and if my 380
hand faile me not, and my penne carry Inke, well, I belecue I will teach some such a lesson, as shall make them remember mee the better while they liue, but I long to heare of
Mistris

The wit of a woman.

misstris *Balia*, who I heard wanted one to teach a young Gentlewoman or two in her house, I wil stay within awhile it may be I shall haue better lucke then I looke for. *Exit. to his house.*

Enter Gerillo with a Fidler.

Rinaldo hanges out pictures.

Rin. Come let vs goe, the clocke hath strooke, & Misstris 390
Balia, will chide if we keepe not houres : play mee a galiard that I made last.

He plaies, the other daunceth, and so Exit.

Enter diuers patients : one neate Maiden, and an olde woman, one rich Cittizen, Foggo entertaine them.

Fog. Sister you are welcome : I pray you my maisters, stay a little, my maister is busie with my Lord *Nemo*, and is sent for to my Lady *Nulla* : yee did well to come betimes, hee had bin gone else before your comming, but harke you Sister, tell truely how long you haue bin ill, when your paine 400
tooke you first, and where it holdes you most ?

Maide. Truely sir a month agoe, it tooke mee with a stitch somewhat lower then my heart, and makes mee fall into qualmes many times, especially fasting.

Fog. Enough, you Granam what ayle you, the toothache ?

Olde wo. Oh sir you are a merrie man, no tis my head : I haue had it this fivie yeares and vpwards : I tooke it with a colde, and thereupon falles so in mine eyes, that I can scarce zee.

Fog. Oh you are almost blinde for age, and yet with the little owlight shee hath, she hath spyed some young knaue, that must rippe vp her gold bagges, to rumble her olde

C

bones,

The wit of a woman.

bones, well you shall speake with my Maister by and by, but stand by a little : now to you Sir, I pray, where is your most paine? lies in my left side, and somewhat stuffed in my stomacke, and a little swelling in my feete.

Fog. Well enough, he hath the Gout, the droppie and the pox, and yet all will not kill him : well I pray yee come in with me, I will bring ye to him one after an other. *Exeunt* 420

*Enter Bario and the Doctor from
Balias house.*

Sc. v

Bar. Now maister Doctor how thinke you of my daughter, hath shee not profited well for the little time that shee hath been heere at mistris *Balias* house? I hope to see her a fine girle : and her mistris tels mee of an excellent fine dancer, that teacheth verie well, if he be not to deere he shall goe to her.

Doc. Nay stand not vpon cost, for had my wench so good a grace, and such a person, I should thinke no cost to 430 much, to instruct her in any thing that might doe her good, yet indeede these dauncers, sometimes do teach them trickes, about trenchmore, yea & sometimes such la voltas, that they mount so high, that you may see their hey nony, nony, nony no.

Bar. Why how now, a Musitian Maister Doctor? what shall we haue a song?

Doc. You may see a man thinkes not alwaies of that which hee speakes : my minde to tell you truth was of an other matter : But Sir, I perceauē your daughter is somewhat 440 inclined towards the greene sicknes, and if it please you, I will see her now and then, & minister something vnto her, that shall bee for her health.

Ba. I thanke you sir, I pray you doe so : I will not bee vngratefull

The wit of a woman.

vngratefull for any good that you shall doe her, but for that I thinke you are going homeward, and I must to the State house about a little common-wealthes bufinesse, I will take my leaue of you, til wee meete againe, & thanke you for your good company. *Exit.*

Doc. Sol. I thanke you fir, well, is hee gon? nowe let mee 450
talke a little to the winde: for I hope there is no body heares mee: a hem, well I must cleere this same rough throate of mine, ah how age alters the condition of nature? I was when I was young, a fine fellowe, and had my spirit as full of life as a wagtayle, but now the case is altered, and yet me thinkes I am this day younger by twentie yeares then I tooke my selfe for: Why? God helpe me, I am not olde, and besides I hope I haue an Elixar, that shal restore strength to me at my pleasure: But let me see, there is a disease called loue, that is in many incurable: for eyes and harts and hands, & other parts 460
are much troubled, in the trying of meanes for the true curing Medicine: now the disease I haue, and what followes? *Medicus curæ teipsum.* Phisitian cure thy selfe: no it is *Erinta*, must helpe me, or els, *contra vim mortis non este medicamor in hortis*: When the eye hath wounded the heart the spirits must be pleased ere the minde can be at rest: Loue or death: there is but two pointes, and which is most fittest for age? I feare the Sonne can teach the father, but soft awhile, *proximus egomet mihi*: I loue my sonne, but I loue my selfe better, and *Erinta* best, who I hope thou dost perceiue it: but if I can, ere 470
long she shal better vnderstand it, for there is not a secret in nature, nor a tricke in Arte that I wil not trie for my loue: but I doubt I haue some patients staying for me at home, and therefore I will dispatch them, and then plot the best I can for my bufinesse. *Exit.*

Enter

The wit of a woman.

Enter the patients going home :

Sc. vi

Old wo. Daughter, how like you of this young doctor ?
truely hee is a great learned man : why, hee told mee my
paine, and when it tooke me, and how it holdes me, and e-
uery thing so right ; truely he is a wondrous fine man.

480

Maid. And so hee is, no man in the world could haue
gone finelyer to work with me : I had not scarce fiue wordes
with him, but hee told mee euery thing as true as I am heere,
and dispatcht me presently, and I thanke him of his kindnes:
hearing me saye I was but a poore wenche, would take no-
thing of me, but willed me to come to him in the morning,
and he would minister that to mee should helpe me ; I war-
rant him he is a kinde man, and if I liue I wil be with him be-
times.

Old wo. And he tooke not much of me, but that he had, I
gaue him with a good will: For, indeed he is a gentle person,
and a litle powder he hath giuen me to drinke with a cup of
Sacke to bedward: And I will follow his counsell truely,
that I will. Oh, these Outlandish-men are full of skill, I see
by them. I would I could get him home to my house, truely
I may hap trye whither he will taste of an olde Hen, as well as
a young Pullet, for in trueth he is a fine man.

Maid. Mother, I promise you, he no sooner had me by
the hand, and felt mee by the wrestes, but he made my heart
tickle in my belly. But mother, my way I thin ke lyeth not
your waie, and therefore I will take my leaue on you, till we
meete againe.

Old wo. I thanke you hartely for your kinde company,
God blesse you, and fend you well to doe.

Maid. And you to good mother.

Exeunt

Enter Doctor Louers with Sig. Bario.

Sc. vii

Bar. Maister Doctor, I heare that there is an excellent
Painter come lately to the Towne, & for that, fathers some-
time

The wit of a woman.

time loue to looke vpon their children, though it bee in a picture: I will see if I can agree with this new stranger for 510 the drawing of my daughters counterfeit.

Doc. A good motion, and if he be so good a workeman, as he hath the name for, he shall earne some money of me to for mine: Come I pray you, let vs goe to his house and enquire for him: and now I remember me, my girle told mee, that her mistresse promised to helpe her to a good schoole-master, shall wee see what this fellow doth that hangs out his Table?

Bari. Content: *They knock at the doore.*

Ri. You are welcome Sir: what is your pleasure? 520

Bar. Are you the writer of these hands?

Ri. For fault of a better.

Bar. And what take you for a head?

Ri. Ten crownes.

Doc. And in what time?

Ri. Three moneths.

Ba. Well, I haue a daughter, and so hath this gentleman my friend another, they are both heere at mistresse *Balias* house: if you will take paines, and that they profit, you shall haue fixeene Crownes for them both. 530

Ri. Sir, I sildome take lesse then my pryce: yet being together, I can the better attend them: I am content with your worships good will.

Bar. Then hold you, there is foure crownes, goe to mistresse *Balias*, and aske for mistresse *Isabella* and *Gianetta*, and saie you came from their fathers: I pray you do so.

Ri. I will Sir: I know the house, it is neere the Church.

Bar. The same; God be with you. *Exit.*

Now maister Doctor, I pray you let vs talke with the Painter. 540

Doc. With all my heart, by your leaue Sir: Who is with in heere?

The wit of a woman.

Enter Verante.

Ver. What would you Gentlemen?

Doc. Is this your worke?

Ver. It is Sir: if it please you to goe in, I will shew you better pieces.
Exeunt into his house.

Enter Neofilo, Diues, and Foggo.

Sc. viii

Di. Maister Doctor, I thanke you for your kindnesse, & I beseech you beare me company to my cosen *Balias* house, 550 where I know you shall be welcome: there is a yong gentlewoman, somewhat giuen to the greene sicknes, and if you can cure her, I tell you she hath a father that will foundly recompence your paines.

Neof. Sir, I will willingly beare you company, and doe my best endeuour to do you good, and for the gentlewomã, I will warrant you helpe her.

Di. I pray you Sir, then let vs be going, for I would euen bring you thither, and be going about a little earnest business: but after a day or two, I will see you againe. 560

Neof. At your pleasure Sir.

Fog. Master, will you leaue no body at home to talke with your patients? you may loose you know not what.

Neof. Thou sayest well, and therefore do you goe home and staie till I come, I will hasten home againe.

Exeunt Neofi and Diues, manet Foggo.

Fog. Oh, heere is no knauery, olde men may teach to spell, but young folkes will put together. My maister a phyfition for a wench that is sicke of the Rabbot: I thinke there was neuer such a wagge borne: oh, how hee can counterfeit 570 sobriety, talke so learnedly, and tell wonders so truely, that fooles admire him, wise men come to him, and wenches loue him out of all reason; hee hath gotten his wordes so fit for his

The wit of a woman.

his purpose, his complexions, and constitutions, and observations, the time of the moone, and the houre of the daye, and such a deale of tittle tattle, that who but maister doctor? but well, all this winde shakes no corne: he is gone to a patient, that if hee finde the right vaine, hee will helpe her of a greene sicknes: well, good fortune bee his guide: but who commeth yonder, a Patient? I must be wife. 580

Enter the Maide with an Vrinall.

Maid. By your leaue, good Maister *Foggo*: I pray you is your sweete maister within?

Fog. No indeed, but he will by and by: but here you me; your payne lyeth beneath your hart, you told me as I remember.

Maid. True Sir.

Foggo. And it holdes you by fits?

Maid. It is so.

Foggo. A quaming? 590

Maid. Right.

Foggo. And haue not you some-time a minde to many things?

Maid. Now and then, if a thing like me, I shall thinke of it, a good while after.

Fog. And you are not well till you haue it?

Maid. In trueth Sir, I thinke you haue some of your maisters skill; good Lord, how happie are you that can learne such cunning? you can neuer want money nor friends.

Fog. Indeed wee do not beg for money, though we praye 600 for the ill-health of rich people: for one mans hurt is an others good; it is an euill winde blowes no man to goods; but for friendes, a man may haue woney, and yet bee without a friend to his minde: for if I had a minde to such a friend, as your faire selfe, how should my cunning compasse your kindnesse?

Maid Oh

The wit of a woman.

Maid. Oh then, I perceiue your maister hath not yet taught you that poynt of his skill : But you are a merrie man that loues to iest.

Fog. Why? hang sorrow, twill not buy a Pipe, but if in ⁶¹⁰ earnest I might hope to haue but my loue accepted, which is more then I spake of before: I will learne so much of my maisters cunning, as shall ridde thee of all diseafes, and wee will liue as merrily as the day long.

Maid. What meane you? Winter or Summer?

Fog. Why, what skilles whither?

Maid. Oh yes, a winters night is long, and the daye is short.

Fog. And what then?

Ma. Oh, we may laugh at first, and weepe at last. 620

Fog. Tush, feare no foule weather, a faint heart neuer followed a fayre wench to the high wood, and she that will not venter her egges, shall neuer haue Chickens.

Maid. Good Lord, who would haue thought you had bene such a hufwife? a husband I would haue said : for indeed, sometime groomes will grope Hennes: but truely Sir, men are so full of mockes, that I knowe not what to saye.

Fog. Why saie as I bidde you.

Maid. Affe how I pray you? 630

Fog. I *Figga*, take thee *Foggo*,

Fig. I *Figga* take thee *Foggo*,

Fog. To my wedded husband,

Fig. What a priest to? in trueth you are a merry man indeed; but you haue nere a ring nor a booke; go to, go to, I see you do nothing but floute; I pray you will you helpe mee to your maister?

Fog. If you will stay his comming.

Fig. Yes with all my heart.

Fog. Come on your waies then, and wee will talke further ⁶⁴⁰
of

The wit of a woman

of the matter.

Exeunt.

*Enter Bario and Master Doctor
with the Painter.*

Sc. ix

Bar. I pray you Sir bring home that peice in your owne Chamber, to mee to my house, we will not breake for a little, and the perspective in your Hall to my friend Master Doctors, you shall haue ready money for them, but in any wife I pray you goe to mistris *Balias*, and looke vpon the Gentlewomen, and let them fit you out of hande, you shall bee pleased to your content.

650

Rin. I thanke you Sir.

Bar. What say you Maister Doctor? shall it be so?

Doct. With al my heart: I pray you doe so, and I pray you haue a care in your worke, it will not gaine you a little credit in this towne.

Rin. I warrant you fir, take mee for a shadowe if I touch not the substance of the life.

Exit.

Bar. Well maister Doctor, how goes the worlde that you are so melancholly?

Doc. An ill humor that I haue, a desire to haue any qual-
littie that is commendable in any man, I could wish that I
could drawe a counterfet as well as he.

Bar. Tush man you would not leaue your deerer studies for such idle Imaginations, you are for the life, and hee is for the death.

Doc. Nay we are for the death, and hee for the life, for poets and Painters, are euer bound to pleasing secrets: to me for the body, the tother for the minde, and we are bound to secrezie but tis when minde and body are both out of temper.

Ba. The more is your gaine.

670

Doc. Yea but that is not alwaies best pleasing.

Bar. Why so?

D

Doc. Because

The wit of a woman.

Doc. Because sometime we are like women, wee long for that wee see but cannot haue.

Bar. Go to Ifay, I see you are your selfestil, your wife would say you would not be pleased with one dish, but I pray you tell me in rules of Phisicke, haue you no medicine for the malady of the minde?

Doc. Yes, for any but loue, and for that nothing but the beloued: for it is an olde true verse before wee were borne. 680
Hec mihi quod nullis amor est medicabilis herbis.

Bar. No? yes they say there is an herbe called good speed, that laide vnder the beds-head all night, and carried in ones bosome in the morning,

Doc. Will make him a foole all day after, tush these are stale iestes: but what should we talke of these toyes? I am sure I am past it, and I hope you doe not so much as dreame of it: but *Bario* if you or any of yours bee at any time diseased, acquaint mee with it, and you shall finde mee your honest friend. 690

Ba. I knowe it Sir and will deserue it, but I doubt you haue some hast home, and therefore I will not holde you to long.

Doc. I thanke you sir, indeede I appointed a patient or two, to bee at my house about this houre, and therefore I will take my leaue.

Bar. Nay wee will goe to the Crosse and there wee will part. *Exeunt.*

*Enter Balia with the foure wenches, the Phisitian the Pain- Sc. x
ter, and Schoolemaister, and the
Dauncer.*

Bal. Master Doctor you are hartely welcome, I wil cause 702
her father to thanke you, indeede thee must bee stirring
about, and she must leaue eating of fower thinges: I pray
you

The wit of a woman.

you tell her so: and as you will haue me your friend, haste you hither with your medicine, for the longer it growes vpon her, the worse it will be.

Rim. I haue talked with her, and tolde her as much, and you shall see a speedie amendment. Lady I will but goe home and come againe to you presently. 710

Iffa. I thanke you sir, and I wil thanke you better, you shall be heartilie welcome. *Exit. Doctor Nemo.*

Bal. Gentlewomen, you see how carefull your parents are for yee: I pray you loose no time, fall to worke out of hand, you to your dauncing, you to your writing, and you set the Painter, and you to your worke: I pray you goe not out of the Hall, till I come againe, I will bee with you euen anon. *Exit Balio.*

Erinta. Now maister Schoolemaster what say you to the world? you haue taken your profission, but for some two 720 houres.

Ver. Yes Lady, many yeeres for your seruice, for onely for your sake, haue I taken this poore trade vpon mee to haue the better accessse vnto your person: and to creepe into your fauour.

Erin, Oh if you loue me speake not of creeping, for of all creatures, I can not abide them creepers, why creepers are wormes in the earth, todes in the ditches, Catterpillers in the trees, and Lice in the heads of poorer people. God bleesse me from al such vermin: I pray thee speake of no more 730 such figures, creepe not vp right man, and looke mee in the face, or neuer looke for fauour at my hands.

Ver. Then let mee tell you, that I haue taken this meane course to attaine the best meanes for my comfort.

Erin. Meane course, why is not the meane course the best course? the most quiet and safe? high climers may haue sore falls, if they sit not exceeding fast: & rich misers are most feard of theeuers: to much beautie is more followed then honoured,

The wit of a woman.

while louely browne is worthy, Gramercy, doth not the Iust
tice clarke, sometimes liue merier then his master? and is not 740
a penne, a profitable profession? Oh Sir count it not meane
that is honest: but what coppie will you fet me?

Ver. This that I haue written.

Er. I pray you reade it.

Ver. From your faire eyes, first sprang my sweet of Loue
And from sweet Loue, the sweet of my desire:
From sweet desire, the passions sweete I prooue.
And from sweet passion, sweete consuming fire.
Of which sweet fire, doth my sweet sorrow spring,
And sorrowe sweet, doth my sweet death procure: 750
Of whose sweet deathe, my sweet content doth sing,
That all is sweet, which I for you endure.

Er. Sweet and twenty, all sweet and sweet, why thou sweet
Schoolemaster, all my lesson is of Loue, a sweet Loue lesson,
but soft, let not vs haue all the talk, Sister *Isabella*, what saies
your Painter? doth he worke all by signes?

Issa. No, wee sat still to heare you talke, but now you shall
heare our chat, for I will not heare any thing but you shall
be priuie to it: and now Maister Painter what say you to me
for my drawing? 760

Rim. Lady I would craue your pleasure to let me know
how you will be drawne, either but a little below the brest
or at full length, and eyther as you came into the world, or as
you walke in the world, with the ornaments of nature, or
the furniture of Art: or as a Sunne in the clowde, with a
lawne ouer your Beautie.

Issa. How now Sir? what can you paint words as well as
faces? why, you will make your Arte admirable: but to draw
me at length, what part will you begin?

Rim. Lady my Maister began at the pointe called pray 770
you away, for the needle standing right in the middle, will
leade vs the better to our iust measure.

Issa. Well

The wit of a woman.

Iffa. Well said Sir, but though Appelles were your maister, your mistress is no Venus.

Rim. But if you will be drawne as shee was, I must doe as hee did.

Iffa. How I pray you?

Ri. First take my measure, and then fall to worke, and if you do not fit me with patience, I shal neuer touch the life kindly.

780

Iffa. Goe to goodman wagge: you are a Painter of the new fashion: but what saies maister Dancer, to my sister *Gianetta*?

Gia. Little yet, but I thinke hee will say something anon, for I thinke hee hath done as I did, harken to you awhile: but looke where comes maister Doctor, now truely welcome, Sister *Lodouica*, what saies your Phisitian? good maister Doctor be brieft for long diets kill the stomacke.

Lod. Maister Doctor, I pray you tell mee who is sicker you or I?

790

Neof. I thinke my selfe.

Lod. And in faith what is your disease?

Neof. Shall I tell you truelye.

Lod. True but not lie:

Neof. The name of it is loue.

Lod. I pray you how is it to be cured?

Neof. With nothing but Loue.

Lod. What, one disease driues out an other?

Neof. No, there is the disease loue, and the remedie Loue,

Lod. then there are two lous.

800

Neof. No but one loue in two natures.

Dod. Which are they?

Feof. The one in desire, the other in possession:

Loue to haue, and haue to loue.

Lod. Well this is too mysticall, but I pray you how tooke you it?

The wit of a woman.

Neof. By a looke.

Lod. Where?

Neof. In your eyes.

Lod. And how holdes it?

Neof. Continually burning.

Lod. Where?

Neof. In my heart.

Lod. And what will helpe you?

Neof. Your hand.

Lod. Good in faith, my hand must helpe your heart of the hurt mine eye hath done you: is this a receipt or conceite in your rules of loues Phificke?

Neof. From me a conceite, but from you a receite.

Iffa. Well said sifter, you are the Physitian, and hee is the patient, but if you be at a full point, holde your peace: there is an other sute to bee heard, what say you to your Maister Dauncer?

Gia. You are to hastie sifter, stay a little, wee will not haue many words before wee fall to our measure: Maister what daunce shall I begin with?

Ger. If it please you, a daunce that pleaseth the best spirits of the worlde, and pleaseth mee aboue all other.

Gia. Is it a fine daunce?

Ger. Without comparifon.

Gia. How doe you call it?

Ger. The eye.

Gia. Who followes?

Ger. The heart.

Gia. And how then?

Ger. Then when spirits ioyne handes, the mindes keepe true measure.

Gian. And howe manie may daunce?

Ger. Two may doe it alone, but the more the merrier, for thogh one Nightingale sing the sweet, yet when the wood is full,

The wit of a woman.

full, the harmony is the sweeter: so though a couple may kindly, yet manie couples giue loue the better grace.

Gia. Then I see tis loues measure: haue you it prickt, or can you play it? if you can come on, wee will daunce it all together, I am sure there is some kissing in it. Sisters leaue your prattle, and let vs bee merrie, and daunce all one daunce if our affections be pleased, take care for no worldes comfort: I haue a knacke in my head, that will put vs quicke-ly into crownes, as much as shall serue vs and all our friends?

850

Issa. Agreed.

Lod. And I.

Erin. I am for yee: come on Gentlemen, euen a turne and away.

They daunce: and take their leaues, with these words.

Gia. Gentlemen time makes vs briefe, our olde Mistris houre is at hand, your loues you haue vow'd: your Ladies you know: vertue be your intent, and honour your Triumph: be wife in kindnes, and happie in comfort, at your next com- 860 ming wee will talke further.

They take their leaues with these words: All honour, health and happines, to vertues beauties worthines.

*Exeunt Ladies to Balias house, Manent
youthes.*

Ver. Brethren, our subtilty found, our professiõ, wil be vn-profitable: pull downe your Tables, sute our selues, our parents will misse vs, but when they see vs, they will but kindly

The wit of a woman.

kindely frowne on vs, and there is all the hurt they will do vs: they will thinke we haue bin together playing the waggges, 870 and so leaue vs to our better courfes: shall we euerie one fute himfelfe and goe home? it is good pleasing of olde men, they will eyther bee kinde in their liues, or bountifull at their deathes.

Ger. Content is pleased I like your counsaile.

Ri. And I.

Neof. Away then, what stay wee euen for now? the wenches are gone, and yet stay a little: let vs take a little view of this gallant, what he may be for a man.

Enter Bragardo with his man Bizardo.

880

Bragardo and Bizardo.

Bizar. How hanges my raiper? point blanke, or falles it not to Lowe? I doubt my hangers are somewhat to short.

Bizar. No Sir, it hanges foole euen: but your Tailor hath abufed you in your apparell, hee hath not put in filke enough in drawing out.

Bra. Alas it is his trade, to faue a fhred to keepe for a patterne againft an other time, if the colour be enquired for.

Biz. Why fir? fhall hee take out of your garment to put into anothers?

890

Bar. Sir you are fo farre in hell, that thou wilt neuer come at heauen, but leaue you knaue-mary and come to a better reckening, and anfwer mee to that I aske you and nothing elfe.

Biz. I fhall Sir:

Bar. How hanges my cloake?

Biz. Careles like your felfe, as you fhould feeme, I meane for him that feemes carefull of his apparell, is counted a neate youth, or a sprufe Affe, but if hee buie it to day, weare it out

to

The wit of a woman.

to morrow, and giue it away, the next day then hee is a gal- 900
lant, right bred, of a true spirit, and a worthy fellow.

Brag. Why how nowe? I bad thee onely answere mee to
that I demaunded: and you are commenting vpon the text.

Biz. I crie you mercy fir: what say you?

Brag. How hang my garters?

Biz. Well fir, and if euerie taffell had a bell you might be
taken for a morris Dauncer: but that you want a Hobbie-
Horfe.

Bra. Whither now?

Biz. Oh fir: I had forgot my selfe,

910

Bra. What faist thou to my beard?

Biz. I feare some will say you haue robbed a *Muscovit*:
another will take your face for a vizard, some will call it a
lowzie bush, and some a beesome, or a broome, and some a
horse taile: but for my selfe, I thinke it is a goodly sight, and
sets out your face with such a Maiestie, that it makes you
looke like a man.

Bra. Like a man you rascall, what? no more?

Biza. Nay fir: I pray you be no more, for if you be a Gi-
ant, poore folkes, and women and children will bee affraide 920
of you?

Bra. Well fir, but what thinkest thou of the Ladies; will
not one of them fall tomy share?

Biz. Why fir? if they goe by lots, I know not how fortune
will faouere her good friendes.

Bra. Nay then, in despight of fortune, I wil lay one of them
aboord: and for Mistris *Balia*, I wil not make any great sute,
for if shee make the matter coy, I haue the vnguentum Au-
reum, the golden oyle, that once tickling her in the hand,
will make her worke for me like a Mole: But what are yon- 930
der fellowes? by your leaue my maisters, what are you?
whence come yee? wheither goe yee? and where dwell yee?

Ver. Sir, wee are men, men of qualitie, honest men, wee
E come

The wit of a woman.

come from a place, wee are going to a place, and wee dwell at a place.

Brag. Hah, *Bragardo* what thinkest thou of this cōpanie

Biz. It may bee hee is a Iester, but if hee be, hee is no foole: but him fir: trie him further, see what hee is.

Brag. Sir, by your nimble tongue it seemes our wit is at commaund, but may I bee beholding to you for your name, 940 and your profesfion?

Ver. Sir my name is *Ventero*, my profesfion the Arte of Charactering, writing and reading and so forthe.

Brag. So fir, then with al your finical eloquence, you wold be a piece of a Schoolemaster: but are you skilfull in Characters of loue?

Ver. Yes fir, and more then that, I can make you a Character, which if you haue a mistresse, as I doubt not but you haue many) if shee take but a view of it, it hath a vertue so to worke in her eyes, that her heart shall be yours for euer. 950

Brag. And what shall I giue you for one of them?

Brag. I pray you let mee see one? *Ver.* Ten crownes.

Ver. No Sir, for the first that lookes on it is drawne to the loue of them that send it: belecue it Sir, and as it workes the effect where you would haue it, come to me for other of more vertue, my house is but here by, my table hanges at my doore.

Brag. I thanke you fir, there is your money: and what profesfion are you of, Sir and your name.

Rim. Sir I am called, my qualitie is in the explaining of 960 *Physiognomy*: or in the drawing of a counterfet neere the life, & in pure colours, in brieffe I am a painter, at your seruice: and I sell complexion.

Brag. What saiest thou to this springall?

Biz. Why Sir, let him goe among the wenches, for there is his best market, and yet I heere say, wenching fellowes begin to play the fooles so out of crie, but I hope you will come.

The wit of a woman.

come.

Brag. Yes, but I will Sir, holde your peace, Maister painter, I will be better acquainted with you, one of these daies I 970 will haue you at my lodging, and you shall not finde your paines lost, but I pray you haue you any complexion heere about you?

Rim. Yes marry haue I fir, and that moſte pure of eight crownes a Boxe, heere is two Boxes, the one white, the other red, but I would not wiſh to open them, til you haue neede, & then in a cloſe chamber, for the ayre is very hurtfull to them.

Brag. I thanke you fir: as these prooue you shall haue more of my money, and perhaps I will not bee your worst cus- 980 tomer.

Rim. I thanke you fir, my house is in the high streete, euery body can shew you to it.

Brag. Well fir, but Maister Doctor, what are you? a Lawyer or a Phisitian, and how you are called of most men Maister Doctor.

Doc. My name *Neofilo*, my profesſion, lenning, my studdie the secrets of Nature, the cures of Malladies, and preferuatiues of healthes.

Brag. And fir, I pray you tell me haue yon any of those re- 990 ceipts about you, that may make a man seeme sweet when he comes to his mistresse, and strengthen his back, and settle his heate.

Neof. I haue fir heere a pill, and a balle: the pill you may take any time of the day, but it is best a little before meales, for it procures appetite, and sweetnes euery thing that is eaten or drunken, and giues the breath an *odoriferous* fauoure, the Bal if you hold it but a little, in your hand and after strok, your Beard, it will giue a sent, sweeter then a violet: but you must do it oftē that the sent may hold the better: heere is both 1000 the ball and the pil, the price at one worde, fourtie crownes.

The wit of a woman.

Bra. I know in deede things of fuch vertue are costly, you feeme not a man to difsemble, but as I finde the operation of thefe, I will bee further bountifull for your counfaile: in the meane time there is your demaund: and I thanke you but now laft of all, what may you bee Sir, your name, and your quallitie?

Ger. My name is *Logire*: my quallitie, the Inftitution of the Limmes, in the Lineal paffages, of the cõcords of mufick to fpeake more plainly I am a dauncer, and teach the Arte. 1010

Bra. Ha Sir: and what daunce is the eafieft to learne for one of my yeares?

Ger. Sir, if you like it, the woing daunce.

Bra. Mary with all my heart, what fhall I giue you to learne it mee?

Ger. Sir for fiue crownes I will teach it you prefently, and for fo much more by the month, I wil make you an excellent dauncer within a while, for you haue a noble body, and I am perfwaded your Iointes are not ftiffe.

Bra. No, that they doe not, there is thy money, giue mee 1020 thy hand.

Ger. Come on Sir, marke how I doe, you muft firft kiffe your hand, and then follow me.

He leades him a Lauolta, and strikes vp his heeles, and there leaues him.

Exeunt Ger. Ver. Neo. Rim. Manent Bragardo.

Bra. Oh, my backe, *Bizardo*, is the dauncer gone?

Biz. Yea fir, and all the reft, I feare me to, a thoufand to one they haue all plaide the knaues with vs.

Brag. Oh no, hope the beft, and come on, fince I haue no 1030 more hurt: let vs along to the Ladies.

Biz. Nay fofter maifter, firft looke to your wares that you haue bought: trye, you they will prouue, thefe pigges in the poakes

The wit of a woman

poakes, I haue no minde to.

Brag. Thou faiest well, come on first, for my pill, shall I put him downe?

Biza. It is no matter if yee doe, I thinke, for I hopethy bee not Deuils to poyson you for your money.

Brag. Come on then, there it goes, it is sweet in the mouth, we shall see anon what it will doe: now to the complexiõ, ha, 1040
what is here? black Soape? *Bizardo*, how likes thou this sent?

Biz. Foh, fswoundes Sir, tis a Sir reuerence.

Bra. Well, he is a villaine, the Doctor is an honest man, and therefore I will trie a little with his Ball: yea mary this is of a right sent, well, I will rub my hand with it a little, and then see the vertue of it: but let me see, shall I see my Character?

Biz. Doe Maister for I feare there is knauerie.

Brag. Oh coufning villaine, I will kill him.

Biz. Why Maister?

1050

Bra. Why, heeres nothing but a fooles cap with a cockescombe and a Bell.

Biza. Oh Roge, but what doe you meane maister?

Bra. Why dost thou aske? what aylest thou?

Baz. Why what ailes you to pull away your Beard? Oh Lord, looke maister, heere is a little glasse, looke how you are misused, this is your honest Phifitian, a poxe take him.

Bra. Oh *Bizardo*, thou faist true, I am vndone, goe to the Ladies, alas I may goe where I will, oh my belly, now the pill workes, go let vs begon, vntruffe, goe. *Exeunt.* 1060

Enter Balia with the foure Ladies.

Sc. xi

Bal. Gentlewomen, I am glad to see your kinde agreemēt God blesse it, and continue it, and Mistris *Erinta*, I pray you make haste of that handkercher, I know your father will bee glad to see you so good a work-woman, and I know it will be

The wit of a woman.

worth a double ruffe to you, and fomewhat elfe: befides an ell or two of fine Cambrick, for your croffe cloathes & night railes, & fuch other neceffaries, I heare he hath a fhip come home from *Holland*, if he haue ere an odde piece of ordinary fhephards *Holland*, I wil not beg it of him, but I pray you 1070
be my friend to him that I may haue a penny-worth in it.

Erin, Mother I dare vndertake, my Father will not ftand with you for a little thing, and for my felfe you are fure of my beft furtherance.

Ba. I thanke you Daughter, truely I fee you are your mothers daughter, franke and free hearted, oh fhe was a good creature as broke bread: but heere you Miftris *Lodouica*, for my houfe, haue you fpoken for my leafe? I am olde, and my life time is but a little: will hee take mine offer?

Lod. Why mother my father wil not take a pennie of you, 1080
hee hath promifed mee you fhall haue it for a bunch of *Apricokes*.

Ba. I thanke you good daughter, marry and hee fhall haue the faireft that I can get for loue or money and I will deferue his goodnes, if it lie in my power, and I will pray for him day and night, God fend many fuch Lawyers as will not onely take no forfeitures, nor racke no rents. I thanke you with all my heart, but Miftris *Erinta* and Miftris *Lodouica*, I pray you let mee intreate you two, to walk a little into the Garden, while I talke a fewe wordes will come 1090
with Miftris *Iffabella* and her fifter heere, by and by, wee to yee, yes forfooth

Exeunt Erinto and Lodouica, Manent, Balia and Iffabella Gianetta.

Ba. Now Miftris *Iffabella*, heere you are a fore your Sifter, & you know I loue you, as deerely as you were mine own, &
fo

The wit of a woman.

so I doe in truth, but I haue a secreet t o tell you, that if you wil conceale, and follow my counsaile, it will bee for your good another day.

Issa. Why indeede Mother I will.

1100

Gia. And I will be her surety.

Ba. Why then let me tell you, youth is fickle, and giddy-headed, and will sooner talke of loue, they meane it: olde men are wise and kinde and staied, and wealthie, and where they loue, they will suffer no lacke.

Issa. Why, what of this?

Ba. Is not a neate fine, comely, streigth old man that hath his head and his beard well combed, his ruffles well set, his doublet well buttoned, his pointes wel trussed, his gloues and his napkin vnder his Girdell, his hose well gartred, and his shooes black't til they shine againe, that cannot walk in the streete without cap and courtesie almost of euery one that meetes him, better then a swaggering gallant with a hayre like a Water-dogge, his band halfe in his necke, foule and wrinckled like a dish-cloute, his doublet vnbuttoned, his hose vngartered, his pointes vntrussed, and in his bootes for lacke of shooes, and a payre of gloues perfumed with sweate, and affraide to walke the streete, for the daunger of, whose suite, and haue at yee all, that comes, and shee haue a kerchiffe shee is corrant mettle? Oh thinke sweet Mistris, whether is the better choise?

1110

1120

Issa. What meanes all this?

Ba. I will tell you there is a Gentleman of some yeares, in playne tearmes, Maister *Bario*, as fine a man of his age, as liueth this day in this Cittie, who bee the other? and I dare sweare hee loues the ground the better where you goe: And if you can finde in your heart to loue him, you shall haue a life like a Lady, why there shall bee nothing

The wit of a woman.

nothing to deere for you, and you shal commaund euen what 1130
you will, you shall bee mistresse euen of all his lands, goods,
yea and himselfe and all: how say you mistresse?

Iffa. Yes, I thinke I could loue him a little, but if I should
cast my liking vpon him, what would the world say? a young
faire sweet wench, mary such a grimme, Sir she surely married
his purse and not himselfe, and she wil haue a gallant in a cor-
ner, that shall and so foorth: why he must bee but a counte-
nance: alas his date is out, hee may pray for them that may:
and for her it is pittie shee should bee put to such purgatorie,
and thus with a great deale of like stufte I should bee held a 1140
good minion. but yet I care not, Mother I knowe you are
wife, and therefore it is like enough I may followe your coun-
saile, and the rather for my sisters sake heere, whome I loue as
my selfe: and being her father I cannot like him the worse.

Bar. Say you mee so Daughter? well, it may bee an other
day when I meete you in your Coach abroad, or finde you
on your Couch at home, with your chaines and your pearles,
& your cophers full of gold, then you will thanke me for my
counsaile: but Daughter I know hee will be heere anon, and
therefore I pray you vse him well, and you shall see what will 1150
followe, but I leaue you heere with your sister a while, anon I
will come to you againe, in the meane time, I pray you thinke
on my speech, I pray you doe so.

Exit. Balia.

Iffa. Is not this a prettie world? *January* and *May* make
a match? it cannot be, the yeare will not suffer such vnna-
turall coniunctions, but what saiest thou to it?

Gia. I say as you saie, I haue no minde to bee married to
the Cough, the Rewme, the stone, the Strangurie, the Gowte
and the Dropsie, I loue not to bee a Nurse, to suckle such a
babie: why wench? I amas welcumbred, with inconuenience, 1160
my sister *Lodonicas* Father hath made her his spokes man to
me, and heere his wife worship will be by and bie: so perfu-
med with Tobacco, that my head will ake with the sent of
him

The wit of a woman.

him: but looke where they bee, Sisters come on let vs fit downe, and make a short haruest of a little corne.

Erin. Why how now? what is the matter?

Gia. Loue fauing your reuerence, Saturne is in loue with *Virgo*, but the planets will not agree to the match: Age is in loue with youth, and nature admits no reason for the Capulation: but how feele you your selues in that vaine? 1170

Er. Troubled to, for Maister Doctor would faine bee a patient in steede of a Phisitian, and I must bee his cure: but

Gia. And what say you *Lodouica*?

Lod. Why the Lawyer is become a Louer, and hath forgotten all his cafes, which stand of a loue case: but I neither care for his tittles, nor his tattles: but yet I giue him faire words, because he is my fathers friend.

Gia. Yea and doe so still, for if my wittes faile mee not, wee will consen them of their sonnes, of their wealth, and of their wits, ere wee haue done with them. and make them all 1180 pleased, in spight of their owne hearts.

Lod. Yea marrie Sir, that were to some purpose.

Gia. Well I will doe it: heere anon will my olde Maister and (Ithinke) my father bee: but how ere it bee, or how ere it come, my Sister shall heare all, and as I begin, follow you.

Lod. Content: but look where an old Fox is peering out of his hoole: wee will be gone. *Ezeunt. Lod. and Erin.*

Enter Bario.

Gentlewomen God speede you, a faire euening, how doe you? how doe you? what Daughter, how doe you with your 1190 short breath? haue you taken any thing for it, was Maister Doctor with you?

Lod. Yes forfooth, and hee gaue mee a *Iulappe*, that doth me much good.

Bar. I am glad of it, and how doth Mistris *Balia* and your
F good

The wit of a woman.

good company? all well?

Lod. Yea for sooth.

Ba. And mistress *Gianetta* how doe you? I am beholding to you for my Daughter heere: I would it lay in me to requite your kindenes, I wis I would.

1200

Gia. Oh Sir, it is your pleasure to say so, I thanke you for your acceptation of nothing: but I wold it were in me to pleasure you, for I know my father loues you.

Ba. And so doe I him, and haue done a long time, and truly I haue loued you of a little one, and I remember I haue said many times, oh that I could liue to haue such a wife.

Gia. Alas Sir then you were well sped indeede, nay giue mee leaue to be your seruant:

Ba. Nay marry will I not, I can tell you, if you will like of an olde mans loue you shall bee serued and not serue: you shall bee mistress of me and mine.

1210

Gia. Sir I doubt you speake merrily: though I must confesse my mistress beate such a matter vnto mee.

Bar. Oh, did shee, shee is an honest woman, and Daughter, you know what I saide to you, and so haue I said to your Brother, loue her if you loue me.

Gia. In deede sir, I doe know she loueth mee, and so doe I her, but if I should be glad to deserue your kindenes, I hope you would not haue me to doe any thing to my dishonour:

Ba. Not for a worlde.

1220

Gia. Then Sir for that the world shall not say that I come to rob your children of their portions, if you will make ouer such portions vnto them, as may be fit to giue them maintenance, if wee should chaunce to disagree, then perhaps you should finde mee kinder then I will promise till that bee done.

Ba. Kindely and wisely spoken: it shall bee done, what you will set downe I will performe.

Gia. To my Sister fife thousand crownes, and your sonne twentic

The wit of a woman.

twentie thousand: for you are reputed to be worth a hun- 1230
dredh.

Ba. I am so, and will dispatch speedily what you haue re-
quired; neither will I see you before it be done, in the meane
time, be kinde and true. *Exit Bar.*

Gia. Doubt you not fir.

Gia. *Iffabella* how likest thou this beginning?

Iffa. Excellent: but how shall we doe for our loues? howe
shall we come by them?

Gia. Let me alone: when his goods are giuen away, I will
make him giue thee away, but let vs goe in, least wee be mist 1240
to long, worke and then we will talke further of the matter.

Iffa. Content.

Exeunt.

Enter the youths.

Sc. xii

File. Now my Maisters this geere workes like waggles,
the wenches are our owne, but how shall wee doe for liuing
to maintaine our loues?

Ver. Take care for nothing: *Gianetta* wrote mee worde
to day, that if I would be honest I should be rich.

Rim. Oh Brother shee will make you beleue that if you
haue her, you haue enough. 1250

Ger. Nay let mee say for my Sister, I know her to haue a
most perilous wit, and therefore if there be not some intent of
good vnto vs more then we are aware of, I will neuer trust
my Iudgement.

Fil. What canst thou Imagine?

Ger. I will tell you when I knowe further, for I loue no
conceites.

Ver. Thus much I holde with him, some good Alethere
is a brewing, for as I heare by my sisters maide who was with
me this morning, she hath your father at her fingers endes. 1260

Rim, Nay that is true, and I am affraid my father bee as
farre in the foole with your sifter: but if there bee a plot,
God prosper the good meanings, in the meane time,

The wit of a woman.

let vs hope the best, the worst will helpe it selfe.

Fil. Nay for my selfe I am readie, for all fortunes, Ile take no thought, hap what will: but looke if the wenches come not abroad: some knauerie is in their heades, they are so merry: well let vs trie their patience if wee may bee priuie to their humors.

Enter the Ladies.

1270

Ver. Agreed.

Fil. Faire Laydies, faire fortune to your faire thoughts.

Er. Fine Gentlemen, fine wits haue fine words, you are as welcome as you can wish, but wee must craue your present absence, for there is a plot laide for your good, if you hinder not the proceeding: onely this to you all, as on to morrow in the eueing, bee yee all heere in your best apparell, for yee shall come to such a marriage as I hope you shall neuer see againe: stand not vpon questions, for time is pretious, and expectation must bee satisfied: get yee home to your parents 1280 and see what they will doe for yee. God bee with yee.

Fil. Wee goe.

Exeunt. Manent Ladies.

Issa. Sisters, what say you to this worlde? shall wee al studie olde Chronicles? bee bound prentizes to Age during life, and marry our selues to siluer heads, and snowie beardes: the Cough, the Rewme, the Palsie, and the Gowte? beside a deafe Eare, a bleere eye and a Iealious humor? in truth mee thinkes it goeth against the harie of a good wit, to giue nature to better pleasure.

Gia. Why haue we not be thought our selues, of a better 1290 course? haue wee not laide downe the way for our wills? there restes nothing now but the plot for the wedding: what saist thou *Erinta*?

Er. Marie I cannot tell what to say: but what you wil deuise, I will agree vnto.

Gia. What

The wit of a woman.

Gia. What saiest than *Lodouica*? what is in your braines that you are so still?

Lod. Marie I will tell thee, my olde woer is so far in good will, that I will commaund his wits, and doe you, as I will, and see what will fall out.

1300

Gia. Why what wilt thou doe?

Lod. Marie my Sifter shall confesse that shee is assured to her sweet heart, and that to morrowe the marriage is heere to bee solemnized, when, if hee will for my sake bring a Priest with him, and giue thee as his daughter the next weeke after I am his owne: or else,

Gia. Or else what?

Lod. I liue: and yet I will giue him my faith and troth vpon it.

Er. Nay I like not that, haue you not giuen it already to my brother?

Lod. Why yes, and therefore I cannot giue him that I haue not, hee must goe to your brother for it, if he will haue it.

Er. Oh vnhappy wench! but looke who comes yonder, it is your olde stout heart, away sisters, let vs two stay heere to dispatch our businesse. *Exeunt Gia. Issa. Manent Erint. Lod. Lodouica.*

Enter Ferio the olde Lawyer.

Feri. Mistrisse *Lodouica* all good fortune befall you, I am glad to see my Daughter & you such louing friends: I would it were in her fathers power, to deferue as much of your affection.

1320

Lod. Sir if I loue your Daughter, I cannot hate you, and knowing the home that you wish mee, I would hate my selfe to bee vnthankfull, but Sir: as I haue by my letter, which I hope you keepe secret, assured you of my good will, so if I

The wit of a woman.

may obtaine one kindenes at your handes, I wil seale my promise with my faith and troth to bee youres for euer.

Fer. One kindenes, nay my loue, if it were the losse of all 1330
my goods, and almost my life, and all the friends I haue for thy sake, forsake me, If I doe it not.

Lod. Sir, then thus it is, my Sister *Gianet.* is to be married to M. Doctors sonne: his father is not willing to the Marriage, but time will worke him kinde enough to his owne Sonne, and the Gentlewoman is a kinde creature being a scholler with you that may doe the deede: my mistresse hath a seruice-booke, and if you will bee a father in giuing her to her husband: he you know my brother, and in your kindenesse to him, you binde me for euer. 1340

Fer. Truely loue, your father is my friend, but I will loose him and all the world for thy loue, and let me tell thee this for thy comfort in his good, it shall be done: and whither his father take it wel, for his liuing it is no great matter, for I haue made him fet to his hand to a deede of my drawing where he hath passed, irreuoicable twentie thousand crownes to bee paide within one moneth, and fiue to thee: all which I will giue to thee to bestowe vpon him againe: for albeit I haue made my daughter and my Sonne an estate present of good, as is according to my late promise vnto it, my profession, & 1350
possession shall bee enough for our maintenance, I warrant you.

Lod. Sir I humbly thanke you, and therefore that al things may the sooner be dispatched, I pray you prouide this schollar, and bee heere to morrow in the euening, and I am yours,

Fir. it shall bee don, my deere, onely loue mee and lacke nothing.

Daughter vpon my blessing I charge you that you holde your Sister in as good regarde as if shee were your mother: for so I meane shee shall bee, and I tell 1360
you, if shee thinke well of you, it shall bee nere the worse

The wit of a woman

worfe for you, and fo God bee with you. I will fee you againe to morrowe, and if you lacke any thing, let mee knowe it. *Exit.*

Manent. Lodouica. Errinta.

Erin. How now sifter? how like you this geere? will it fadge or not? shall wee not laugh at large, to see the olde Coltes fetcht ouer in their kindes?

Lodouica. In truth I could smile to thinke what will fall out, but that I am sorry to see my Father one of the com- 1370
panie.

Er. Why peace foole, is not mine in too? why if they were not all alike, there were no sport, but let vs first pittie our selues, and then them: for if they were not madde they would not let vs runne away with their wittes as they doe.

Lod. Why how so?

Er. Why doe they thinke that wee can loue them for husbands?

Lod. And Why not?

1380

Er. Because it will not be: for if eyther for fashions sake, wee looke soberly, and so seeme twentie yeares elder then wee would bee, to counterfeit the young matron, it goes against the woll howsoeuer wee weare the cloth: and to bee matched to such a peice of flesh, as would choake in the going downe or bee neuer digested in the stomacke, were it not better be fasting from such a banquet?

Lod. Come, come, you speake idely: I doe not thinke but twere better be an old mas darling, thē a young mans worldling: and yet in truth they are so il to bee pleased when they 1390
are angrie.

Er. Go to sifter, to see a toothles chappes fit mumbling of a honie sop, a spectacle eye as red as a Fox run all day on the Rewme, a breath as sweet as garlicke, Belch after his Aquaticie, a gowtie legge with shroncke sinewes, and a stompe
foote,

The wit of a woman.

foote lapt vp in a load of clontes, with a palsie hand, and a malmesie nose sit at the Table like the Maister beggar of a spittle, and then at night before day-light, to leaue good companie with a watch-stock two truffles, at night a cap and two vndercapes of a warning-pan, after a good heat, to be laid in 1400 his bed like a log of the Indies: Oh were not this a fine comfort for a young wench? fie, fie, it is a Iest to thinke that young wenches can loue olde feathers, if they had wit, they would know their owne weakenes, and neuer trouble our patience: but let them alone sifter, doe as I doe, and wee will haue a day of it, that shall bee spoken on when wee are dead: ferue the father and loue the Sonne as I doe, and if they bee not both fitted, blame me.

Lod. I am content, leade the daunce and I will follow, but let vs goe in to lay our heads together for the speedier dif- 1410 patch, for *Gianetta* is a mad wench, and her counsaile will not doe amisse.

Er. Content but keepe all from our olde mistris.

Lod. I warrant thee. *Exeunt*

Enter the foure waggess: Filenio, Rinaldo, Gerillo, Sc. xiii
Veronte.

Fil. My maisters, now to the matter, what is to bee done? will our fathers bee made such olde men by the young wenches? what saist thou *Gerillo*?

Ger. I say women haue strange wits in these daies, for if 1420 they bee disposed to play the waggess, it is not almost to bee thought what they can bring to passe: how say you brother?

Rim. I say and knowe it, that nature hath taught them more subtilty, then our wits haue vnderstanding. I thinke *Veronte* you will say no lesse.

Ver. If I should say what I haue hearde, I thinke them moste happye, that haue last to doe with them.

Fil. And

The wit of a woman.

Fi. And why so brother?

Ver. For that as I haue heard, they haue eies to blind mens, tongues to enchaunt men, hands, to binde men, and some o- 1430
ther thinges, that vndoe men.

Rim. Ha, ha, ha!

Fil. Why brother what laugh you at?

Rim. At my brothers opinion of women.

Fil. Why? is hee not in the right?

Rim. Not rightly considered: aske *Gerillo*?

Ger. Indeede I haue heard they are starres to looke on,
Angells to heare Saintes to loue, Goddesfes to liuē with.

Ver. They Deuill the bee.

Fi. Whats that? a parentheifis? 1440

Ver. Better so then a foole point.

Ger. Well shal I speake a truth, they are as they are vfed:
wilfull, thats the best: couetous thats indifferent, and proude
and thats the worst.

Fi. Oh but theres a helpe for that.

Ver. As howe?

Fil. Why be as proude as shee, as couetous as shee, as wil-
full as shee: if shee frowne I would lowre: if she would scrape
I would scratch, and if she would bee gaie, I would bee as ga-
rith: for when shee saw her humor once equalled, she would 1450
bee quickly out of it.

Ger. Oh but if she (were vnquiet and out of aboundance
of little wit) will batten with brawling and scoulding, howe
then?

Rim. Oh my fathers lesson, either say nothing to, her that
will fret her: or out-scolde her, and that will mad her: or cud-
gell her, and that will tame her: or keepe her bare, and that
will kill her.

Ver. Peace man, then she will either payson thee, or
cut thy throate, or do some other mischiefe vnto thee, or make 1460
thy head like Cuckoldes hauen.

G

Fil. No

The wit of a woman.

Fi. No not a whit brother: for Ile tell you a short and a true tale of a fine Taming of a Bedlam queane who would neuer let her husband be at quiet: and after order taken with her, became the best wife in the world.

Ger. Yea but softe, wilt thou vse thy wife so when thou hast her? (if she put thee to it.)

Fil. Yea as sure as death.

Ver. Then come on, we will all to schoole to thee and haue thy lesson perfect by heart.

1470

Fil. I will tell yee: An honest kinde proper man, neither a beggar, nor of the best purse, but endued with many good qualities, married a wench poore enough, nothing faire and yet proud enough, but so wilfull and with so little wit, that it was out of reason to endure her clacke, if her humor were once crossed.

Vir. Mary God bleffe me from such a one.

Fil. She would scolde till she flauerd, and looked blacke in the face, sweare like a ruffin, and curse like a hel-hounde, frowne and leere like a Bearewhelpe, and sling that was next her at her husband, sweare shee loued him not, reuile him out of order: and so grieue him with bitter wordes, it had almost kild him ere hee was aware, but:

1480

Ger. But fie vpon her, but what meanes your, but:

Fil. But the goodman weary of his life, and minding either to mend her or leaue her, deuised this tricke for her, learning: one day in the midst of all her madnes, when shee would haue eaten the great Oyster, following her into her chamber, there with his people vpon the sodaine seized vpon her, and setting her in a chaire, bound her so fast that she could not get out: which done, caused her maides and seruants, & some of his next neighbors, to come into her chamber and to aduise her to patience, and to pray for her:

1490

Ver. Why this would madde her more?

Fil. Why so it did awhile: but, then hee caused the windows

dowes

The wit of a woman.

dowes to be shut, and the chamber to be kept darke, & with a little waxe-light, warme broathe and a manchet to be fet afore her, with a cruze of smal beere, & so fed her like a childe: then the clarke of the Church and his wife, whome she hated, came to giue her good counsaile, & now & than him-¹⁵⁰⁰ selfe, and now and than to looke into the Chamber and blesse himselfe and pray for her amendment.

Ver. And did not all this kill her?

Fil. No it brought her into the best life in the worlde: for seeing this resolouation to put her to it: either mende or mad, she grew so milde, that within a fewe monthes shee was an other woman: the winde of her tongue was so calme, that it would scarce haue moued an aspin leafe when it had blowen: and thus, what neither counsaile nor crossing could doe, this conclusion brought to passe: and she of a notable scoulde ¹⁵¹⁰ was a most sweet creature.

Ger. A good worke: but Brother *Filenio*, doth not the howre drawe on, that wee must be with our loues?

Fil. Yes indeede doth it, and therefore let vs vse our wenches as wee finde cause, and if we be made as good fooles as many are, say nothing as they doe: but ere wee goe, let vs see our ringes, what is your Inuention? and your woord?

Ger. My inuention is an eye without, and a hart within: my worde *vide, tene*: see and holde,

Fil. *Veronte* what is yours?

1520

Ver. A diall with a hande for the direction: my worde: *quo tendis*? where you leade mee?

Fi. And yours *Rimaldo*.

Ri. A Sunne: my worde, *Clavior Sol*, brighter then the Sunne. Now what is yours?

Fil. Mine is a world, my woord. *Hicmibi mundus*, heere is my world. *A bell ringes.*

Fil. But harke, the bell ringes, the houre is come let vs away least wee misse our market.

The wit of a woman.

Fer. Content, let vs goe.

Exeunt. 1530

Enter Ferio and a Priest with a booke.

Sc. xiv

Fer. Sir *Lawrence*: you know as wel as I, that heere is nothing so pleasing as fecrecie in matters of Loue, and therefore performing your care in this, you may happen doe somewhat for me that shall bee worth a tithe-pigge, and a goose to it.

Priest. *Teneo*, that is I vnderstand your intent, or I haue of hold your minde, or I haue you at my fingers endes: I am for you, sure and secret, and sufficient.

Fer. Then Sir: thus it is, you must ioyn the handes of two louing hearts: my neighbour *Barios* sonne, and Maister Doctors Daughter, to whom, for some priuat reasons: I must be a father. 1540

Prie. Bene dictum: Amicorum omnia Commune, one friend will doe for another, it is a *maxime*, in ciuill gouernement: I am willing and readie to doe the endeuour of my function.

Fer. I pray thee leaue thy latine, and in plaine mother-tongue, doe that I will entreate thee to, and be sure of thy rewarde.

Prie. Sir a Priest without Latine, mary then turne him to the Belferie, and make him a Sexton, but feare not any thing in *facultate mea*, I meane that is in mee: and Sir, for that walles haue cares, and windes whistle daungerously in these daies, I pray you let vs bee going about our businesse, where none may heare vs: but *necessarii*, that is the louers and their likers. 1550

Fer. You say well Sir *Lawrence*, I know we are expected.
Exeunt.

Enter Brigardo and Bizardo.

Sc. xv

Brag. *Bizardo*, is my beard growne to this proportion? 1560

Biz. Yes

The wit of a woman.

Biz. Yes Sir, if it were your naturall, I meane your owne, for it is like your hostesse face.

Brag. Why how is that? weares she not her owne face?

Biz. No Sir her owne is naturally fowle, and her borrow'd face is artificially faire.

Brag. Why then hath shee two faces?

Biz. Yea, shee hath two, for shee hath three:

Brag. Why, how I pray thee?

Biz. Shee hath first a foule ilfauourd face, then a faire vi-
zard, and then last a blacke face called a maske, which I hold 1570
her best face: for till that be off, there is some hope of her face to be in some good forme, but when that is off, oh her long nose, her yellow eies, her great lippes, and her horse Iawes, besides her worlde wide mouth makes such a face, as God bleesse me from such a face.

Brag. Goe to Sirra, leaue your rayling, shee is an honest wench and my friend, but what saiest thou of my hayre, is it spied?

Biz. No more then the nose on your face: a periwig, a pox on it: and yet I curse to late: for, but for the poxe, it 1580
had neuer been vsed, for I haue heard that in olde time, balde men were had in great reuerence, and now so many young fellows take them vp, that they are with: mary in Sir reuerence.

Brag. Hang rascall, thou art fet vpon villanie, but nowe what saiest thou to my perfumed gloues?

Biz. Oh they are but rubd ouer with Lauender, or else it may bee they smell of the paper that I bought the Pepper in, that you had for your vnala.

Brag. Peace slaue, and giue mee a pipe of Tobacco. 1590

Biz. You had neede Sir, for the garlicke you eate to bedward: for your colde is so strong, that you had neede haue somewhat else to kill it.

Brag. Well sir, but heare you mee: I hope you will sticke

The wit of a woman

to me, to bee reuenged on these gallants that haue missused me.

Biz. I Sir, mary God forbid, you are good enough for fiftene of them, and besides, the Law perhaps will light heaue vpon me, for breaking the peace, while you perhaps may weare out after awhile well enough. 1600

Brag. Thou saiest wel, and wisely, but yet thou wilt stand by for a witnesse howe I am vsed, and take thine oath vpon the quarrell.

Biz. Yes Sir that I will, and talke to them to.

Brag. Come on then, let vs to Mistris *Balias*, and boorde the wenches before their faces, that dare crosse vs, and if wee meete with any of our cheaters, Ile teach them a cheating trick as long as this cudgell will holde: but what is heere to doe? wine and cakes, and Rosemarie, and Nose-gaies, what? a wedding? 1610

*Enter seruants with Nose-gaies, cakes
and wine.*

Biz. Yea Sir, a wedding sure, but will you goe no further?

Brag. Yes marry will I, but I will first knowe what they bee, and whence they come. Sirra you with the pot and the bush, what are you? whence come you, and whither goe you?

Ser. Sir snuffe with your huffe, no offence to your ruffe, if you long for the cuffe, I am for you: my bush and my pot, cares not a groate, for such a lob-coate, farewell *Senior snot.*

Exit.

Brag. What a rascall is this? what are you Sirrah with the cakes? 1620

Ser. I am as you see Sir? what say you to me Sir? if my cakes doe offend you, goe farther and mende you?

Brag. What are the knaues madde?

Biz. No but perhappes, as you and I haue been somewhat

The wit of a woman.

what merrie in the head with the iuice of the grape: but who comes yonder?

Enter Mistris Balia.

Mist. *Balia.* Good Lord Sir, are you heere? in truth my 1630
folkes tould me there was a gallant gentelman at the doore
I pray you come in, you shall be my guest: I tell you, you
shall finde good company; & you shall be hartily welcome.

Brag. I thanke you heartily: I will waite vpon you. Sirra,
giue the gentelwomã a leashe of angells, to buy a fugar loafe:
and goe you to the Sunne, and fetch me a gallon of Ipo-
cras.

Boy. I will Sir.

Balia. Come Sir: in deed you are at to much cost; I know
not how to make you amends, but I will not be vnthankfull: 1640
will it please you leade the way?

Brag. I thanke you.

Exeunt.

Enter Bizardo, with the Vintners boy, Gero. halfe Sc. xvi
dronke, and the wine.

Biz. Boy is it right?

Boy. Right? Zblud I would you coulde goe right to the
houfe, a pox of your righting.

Biz. Boy it tastes of the Caske.

Boy. Caske? in faith you haue a caske, a rope of such a
caske, come will you goe along? 1650

Biz. Boy the pot runnes.

Boy. Come your wit runnes, and your tongue runnes, I
would your feete would either runne or goe, and leaue this
reeling running.

Bizardo. Boy, it tastes to much of the spice, and the
pepper.

Boy. A

The wit of a woman.

Boie. A vengeance pepper fuch braines, as cannot beare one draught of Ipcoras.

Biz. Boy let me see the pot.

Boy. Come will you walke? you haue pot enough, but 1660
looke who is this?

Enter Bragardo without hayre or beard. Solus.

Brag. Why how now flaue, what a cafe art thou in?

Biz. Such a cafe as you are I hope, what haue you bin in a birdes neste? why how scapt your eyes?

Brag. Oh *Bizardo* Miftris *Balia* hath betrayed me, there was a wedding: and the dogges that the tother day misused me were there, and fell vpon mee, and vsed me as you see, and but that I bestirred me with my curtilax, I had neuer come away aliuie, but I will be reuenged on this house. 1670

Enter a Maide with a broome.

Maid. What Rascall is this that keepe such a rayling at my miftris doore, what Captaine Swappes is it you? Ile be with you by and by, Ile haue a medicine for you. *Exit in a-gaine.*

Brag. *Bizardo* let vs be gone, wee shall be betrayed, boy get you home with your pot: Ile send to you anon, or come on with me to my lodging, Ile pay you: goe poore *Bizardo*, Ile beare with thee, for this is not often. *Exeunt.* 1679

Enter Balia with Ferio and the Doctors daughter, and her loue Sc. xvii
sets them to the Table: then she brings in Bario and Ferios daughter and her loue: then the Lawyer and Barios Daughter, and her Boy: and last the Doctor with the Lawyers Daughter and her loue, and the Priest, and sit all together.

Bal. Gentle men yee are all welcome, blessed bee the day that I haue seene you all together in my house: God bleffe
ye

The wit of a woman.

ye all and fend you ioy one of another. I pray God.

Priest. Amen.

Lau. Mistresse *Balia*, I thanke you, but by this meanes you are ridde of your guesse and wee of our children. 1690

Bal. Not a whit, not a whit, I hope I shal haue them heere many a faire day before, I die yet, If I liue to it.

Bau. Oh but mistris *Balia*, heere hath been double dealing, how fay you Maister Doctor?

Doct. Mary, I thinke heere hath been treble dealing, what fay you Maister *Ferio*?

Fie. Mary I thinke it hath been a song of foure parts: what fay you Maister *Bario*?

Bar. I fay I know not what to fay, but we sing all one tune, what fay you Mistris *Erinta*? 1700

Erin. Forsooth I thanke you father?

Bar. Well said wench, thou art sure enough, of the fathers side: I that got thee, hee that gaue thee, and hee by thy husband shall gouerne thee.

Erin. No forsooth father, I haue but one father: though three fathers: you are my onely father in loue, my husbands in loue, and maister *Dorio* for a church-father, and therefore I beseech you, as I am your onely Daughter, bee you still my onely father.

Bar. And I will wench, but what saieth Mistris *Iffabella*? 1710

Iffa. Aske my father if it please you, for he frownes so, that I feare to speake.

Doct. Speake Ape, I am not angrie, for I know your hand was in this pye.

Iffa. In truth Sir, the meate was drest ere I knew of the dinner, but I hope you will not bee angrie that I tooke my part of good cheere.

Doct. I will not wish no man choaked because I cannot eate, and I can the better eate, and I can the better fast, when my friendes beare mee companie: but what fay you Mistris *Gianetta*? 1720

H

Gia. Sir, I

The wit of a woman.

Gia. Sir I fay that age is kinde that pittieyth youth, aske Maister *Ferio*, if I fay true or not.

Fer. But youth is subtil that deceiueth age, and so are you mistresse, if I might say what I thinke: but what say you mistresse *Lodouica*?

Lod. I say that flowers and frostes cannot agree, but nature hath her pleasures and witt her deuises, and I hope where youth is kinde, age will be comfortable.

Fer. Like enough, but a frost in the spring may nip a ¹⁷³⁰ flower in the bud, and Nature without reason may haue wit without discrecion, and age being deceiued, may smile at youthe diseased: but doe you remember your faith and troth,

Lod. yes, I had giuen it my husband before, and he would not part with it in any wife.

Ferio Maister *Bario*, I see it is inuaine, to talk to the wenches, they wil haue it if they set on it: if they die for it, and they shall haue it for me: they hauetheir Loues, the Boyes haue our handes and we haue the whirlygige I gaue your Daughter to his sonne.

1740

Fi. And I yours to his.

Doct. And I yours

Doct. And I yours.

Fi. And this was my sonne and your daughter.

Bar. And this was my Daughter and your sonne.

Doct. And this shall bee my sonne and Daughter.

Dor. And this is my Daughter and my Sonne, and therefore since the wenches by their wits haue coufned vs of our wealthe, and our Boies, for shame let vs giue them somewhat, for they are not yet beholding to vs.

1750

Fer. Begin and ile followe.

Doct. And I.

Bario. And I.

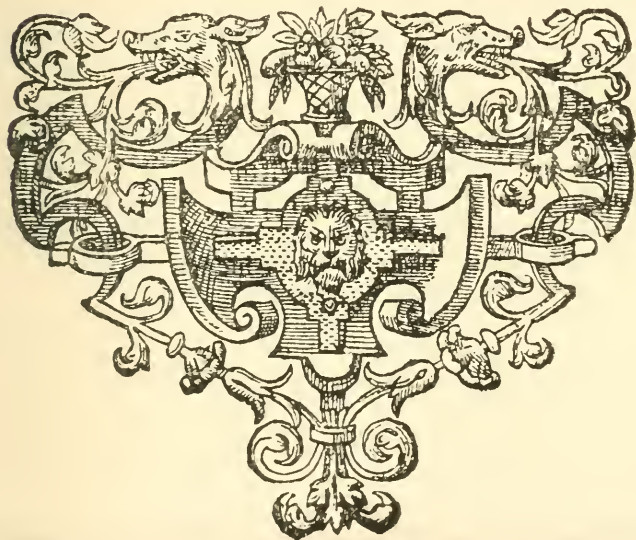
Doct. Come on then boyes and wenches, your handes are fast enough alreadie, now let vs holde handes together: when
wee

The wit of a woman.

wee die : they shall haue our Landes, and goods : and while
wee liue our kinde loues : and so God send them as their
hearts can wish, and vpon this, as many as clap handes.

Fi. Amen, Amen, this night, I well entreate you all to my
house, to morrow I am at your direction.

Exeunt. 1760





Enter Epilogus.

MY Maisters heere is a feast spoken of, and a company
biddē, but let me tel you, their houses are so farre hēce, &
their meate scarce : yet far from the market, so that I assure
you, I doe shrewdly doubt, that either your stomakes will be
gone ere the meate bee readie, or else there will bee so manie :
that their will not bee halfe enough for the third parte, that
will bee there, and therefore to auoide all inconueniences, I
would wish you all that either haue any meate at home or
are bidden to your better friendes, not to leaue your supper in ¹⁰
earnest for a banquet in iest, & yet If this that you haue hearp
haue anie thing pleased the taste of your kinde vnderstāding
that with a token of contentment, you will
giue a plandite to our conceites.

Exit.

F I N I S.



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