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The Brothers: A Comedy.

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of that Island before the two destructive fires in 1766 consisted of about fifteen hundred dwelling-houses and stores, chiefly built of brick and stone and which were in general spacious, and elegantly decent: the rents of the houses amounted to about forty thousand pounds per annum. There are in that Island three other towns of smaller note, called Ostin's, St. James's and Speight's.

THE BROTHERS: A COMEDY.

Act. IV. Scene III-VII. *)

*Belfield junior. Sophia.**Belfield junior.*

Madam, madam, will you not vouchsafe to give me a hearing?

Sophia. Unless you cou'd recall an act, no earthly power can cancel, attempt at explanation is vain.

Belfield junior. Yet before we part for ever, obstinate, inexorable Sophia, tell me what is my offence.

Sophia. Answer yourself that question, Mr. Belfield; consult your own heart, consult your Violetta.

Belfield junior. Now on my life, she's meanly jealous of Violetta: that grateful woman has been warm in her commendations of me, and her distemper'd fancy turns that candour into criminality.

Sophia. Hah! he seems confounded! guilty beyond all doubt.

Belfield junior. By Heaven I'll no longer be the dupe to these bad humours: Lucy Waters, Violetta, every woman she sees or hears, alarms her jealousy, overthrows my hopes, and rouses every passion into fury. Well, Madam, at length I see what you allude to; I shall follow your advice, and consult my Violetta; nay, more, consult my happiness; for with her, at least, I shall find repose; with you, I plainly see, there can be none.

Sophia. 'Tis very well, Sir; the only favour you can now grant me, is never to let me see you again; for after what has pass'd between us, every time you intrude into my company, you will commit an insult upon good breeding and humanity.

Belfield junior. Madam, I'll take care to give you no further offence.

(Exit,

Sophia. Oh! my poor heart will break!

Sophia.

*) London, 1771. 8.

Sophia. *Sir Benjamin Dove.*

Sir Benjamin Dove. Hey-day, Sophia, what's the matter? What ails my child? Who has offended you? Do not I see the younger Belfield part from you just now?

Sophia. O, Sir! if you have any love for me, don't name that base treacherous wretch to me any more. (*Exit.*)

Sir Benjamin Dove. Upon my word, I am young Mr. Belfield's most obsequious servant: a very notable confusion truly has he been pleased to make in my family. Lady Dove raves; Sophia cries; my wife calls him a saucy impudent fellow, my daughter says he's a base treacherous wretch; from all which I am to conclude, that he has spoke too plain truths to the one, and told too many lies to the other; one lady is irritated because he has refus'd favours; the other, perhaps, is afflicted because he has obtain'd 'em. Lady Dove has peremptorily insisted upon my giving him a challenge; but, to say the truth, I had no great stomach to the business, till this fresh provocation: I perceive now, I am growing into a most unaccountable rage; 'tis something so different from what I ever felt before, that, for what I know, it may be courage and I mistake it for anger; I never did quarrel with any man, and hitherto no man ever quarrel'd with me: egad, if once I break the ice, it shan't stop here: if young Belfield doesn't prove me a coward, Lady Dove shall see that I am a man of spirit. Sure I see my gentleman coming hither again. (*Steps aside.*)

Enter Belfield junior.

Belfield junior. What meanness, what infatuation possesses me, that I should resolve to throw myself once more in her way! but she's gone, and yet I may espace with credit.

Sir Benjamin Dove. Ay, there he is, sure enough: by the mass I don't like him: I'll listen a while, and discover what sort of a humour he is in.

Belfield junior. I am ashamed of this weakness: I am determin'd to assume a proper spirit, and act as becomes a man upon this occasion.

Sir Benjamin Dove. Upon my soul I'm very sorry for it.

Belfield junior. Now am I so distracted between love, rage, disappointment, that I could find in my heart to sacrifice her, myself, and all mankind.

Sir Benjamin Dove. Lord ha' mercy upon us, I'd better steal off and leave him to himself.

Belfield

Belfield junior. And yet, perhaps, all this may proceed from an excess of fondness in my Sophia.

Sir Benjamin Dove. Upon my word you are blest with a most happy assurance.

Belfield junior. Something may have dropp'd from Violetta to alarm her jealousy; and, working upon the exquisite sensibility of her innocent mind, may have brought my sincerity into question.

Sir Benjamin Dove. I don't understand a word of all this.

Belfield junior. Now cou'd I fall at her feet for pardon, tho' I know not in what I have offended; I have not the heart to move. Fie upon it! What an errant coward has love made me!

Sir Benjamin Dove. A coward, does he say? I am heartily rejoic'd to hear it: if I must needs come to action, pray Heaven it be with a coward! I'll even take him while he is in the humour, for fear he shou'd recover his courage, and I lose mine. — So, Sir, your humble servant, Mr. Belfield! I'm glad I have found you. Sir.

Belfield junior. Sir Benjamin, your most obedient. Pray what are your commands now you have found me?

Sir Benjamin Dove. Hold! hold! don't come any nearer: don't you see I am in a most prodigious passion? Fire and fury, what's the reason you have made all this disorder in my house? my daughter in tears; my wife in fits; every thing in an uproar; and all your doing. Do you think I'll put up with this treatment? If you suppose you have a coward to deal with, you'll find yourself mistaken; greatly mistaken, let me tell you, Sir! Mercy upon me, what a passion I am in! In short, Mr. Belfield, the honour of my house is concern'd, and I must, and will, have satisfaction. — I think this is pretty well to set in with; I'm horribly out of breath; I sweat at every pore. What great fatigues do men of courage undergo!

Belfield junior. Look'e, Sir Benjamin, I don't rightly comprehend what you wou'd be at; but, if you think I have injur'd you, few words are best; disputes between men of honour are soon adjust'd; I'm at your service, in any way you think fit.

Sir Benjamin Dove. How you fly out now! Is that giving me the satisfaction I require? I am the person injur'd in this matter, and, as such, have a right to be in a passion; but I see neither right nor reason why you, who have done the wrong, should be as angry as I, who have receiv'd it.

Belfield

Belfield junior. I suspect I have totally mistaken this honest gentleman; he only wants to build some reputation with his wife upon this rencounter, and 'twould be inhuman not to gratify him.

Sir Benjamin Dove. What shall I do now? Egad I seem to have pos'd him: this plaguy sword sticks so hard in the scabbard—Well, come forth rapier, 'tis but one thrust; and what shou'd a man fear that has Lady Dove for his wife?

Belfield junior. Hey-day! Is the man mad? Put up your sword, Sir Benjamin; put it up, and don't expose yourself in this manner.

Sir Benjamin Dove. You shall excuse me, Sir; I have had some difficulty in drawing it, and am determin'd now to try what metal it's made of. So come on, Sir.

Belfield junior. Really this is too ridiculous; I tell you, Sir Benjamin, I am in no humour for these follies. I've done no wrong to you or yours: on the contrary, great wrong has been done to me; but I have no quarrel with you, so, pray, put up your sword.

Sir Benjamin Dove. And I tell you, Mr. Belfield, 'tis in vain to excuse yourself.—The less readiness you shew, so much the more resolution I feel.

Belfield junior. Well, Sir Knight, if such is your humour, I won't spoil your longing. So have at you.

Enter Lady Dove.

Lady Dove. Ah! (*Shrieks.*)

Belfield junior. Hold, hold, Sir Benjamin, I never fight in ladies company. Why, I protest you are a perfect Amadis de Gaul; a Don Quixote in heroism; and the presence of this your Dulcinea renders you invincible.

Sir Benjamin Dove. Oh! my Lady, is it you? don't be alarm'd, my dear; 'tis all over: a small fracas between this gentleman and myself; that's all; don't be under any surprize; I believe the gentleman has had enough; I believe he is perfectly satisfied with my behaviour, and I persuade myself you will have no cause for the future to complain of his. Mr. Belfield, this is Lady Dove.

Belfield junior. Madam, to a generous enemy, 'tis mean to deny justice, or withhold applause. You are happy in the most valiant of defenders; gentle as you may find him in the tender passions, to a man, Madam,
he

he acquits himself like a man. Sir Benjamin Dove, in justice to your merit, I am ready to make any submission to this lady you shall please to impose. — If you suffer her to bully you after this, you deserve to be henpeck'd all the days of your life.

Sir Benjamin Dove. Say no more, my dear Bob; I shall love you for this the longest hour I have to live.

Belfield junior. If I have done you any service, promise me only one hours conversation with your lovely daughter, and make what use of me you please.

Sir Benjamin Dove. Here's my hand, you shall have it; leave us. *(Exit. Belfield junior.)*

Lady Dove. What am I to think of all this? It can't well be a contrivance; and yet 'tis strange that you little animal shou'd have the assurance to face a man, and be so bashful at a rencounter with a woman.

Sir Benjamin Dove. Well, Lady Dove, what are you musing upon? you see you are obey'd, the honour of your family is vindicated: slow to enter into these affairs; being once engag'd, I pertinaciously conduct them to an issue.

Lady Dove. Sir Benjamin, — I — I —

Sir Benjamin Dove. Here, Jonathan, do you hear, set my things ready in the library; make haste.

Lady Dove. I say, Sir Benjamin, I think —

Sir Benjamin Dove. Well, let's hear what it is you think.

Lady Dove. Bless us all, why you snap one up so — I say, I think, my dear, you have acquitted yourself tolerably well, and I am perfectly satisfied.

Sir Benjamin Dove. Humph! you think I have done tolerably well, I think so too; do you apprehend me? Tolerably! for this business that you think tolerably well done, is but half concluded, let me tell you: nay, what some wou'd call the roughest part of the undertaking remains unfinish'd; but, I dare say, with your concurrence, I shall find it easy enough.

Lady Dove. What is it you mean to do with my concurrence; what mighty project does your wise brain teem with?

Sir Benjamin Dove. Nay, now I reflect on't again, I don't think there'll be any need of your concurrence; for, nolens or volens, I'm determin'd it shall be done. In short, this it is, I am unalterably resolv'd from this time forward, Lady Dove, to be sole and absolute in

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this

this house, master of my own servants, father to my own child, and sovereign lord and governor, Madam, over my own wife.

Lady Dove. You are?

Sir Benjamin Dove. I am. God's! what a pitiful contemptible figure does a man make under petticoat-government. Perish he that's mean enough to stoop to such indignities! I am determin'd to be free.—(*Paterfon enters and whispers Lady Dove.*)—Hah! how's this, Mr. Paterfon? What liberties are these you take with my wife, and before my face? No more of these freedoms, I beseech you, Sir, as you expect to answer it to a husband who will have no secrets whispered to his wife, to which he is not privy; nor any appointments made, in which he is not a party.

Paterfon. Hey-day! what a change of government is here! Egad, I'm very glad on't—I've no notion of a female administration. (*Exit.*)

Lady Dove. What insolence is this, Sir Benjamin; what ribaldry do you shock my ears with? Let me pass, Sir, I'll stay no longer in the same room with you.

Sir Benjamin Dove. Not in the same room, nor under the same roof, shall you long abide, unless you reform your manners; however, for the present, you must be content to stay where you are.

Lady Dove. What, Sir, will you imprison 'me in my own house? I'am sick: I'm ill; I'm suffocated; I want air; I must and will walk into the garden.

Sir Benjamin Dove. Then, Madam, you must find some better weapon than your fan to parry my sword with: this pass I defend: what, do'st thou think, after having encounter'd a man, I shall turn my back upon a woman! No, Madam, I have ventured my life to defend your honour; 'twould be hard if I wanted spirit to protect my own.

Lady Dove. You monster, would you draw your sword upon a woman?

Sir Benjamin Dove. Unless it has been your pleasure to make me a monster, Madam, I am none.

Lady Dove. Would you murder me, you inhuman brute? Would you murder your poor fond defenceless wife?

Sir Benjamin Dove. Nor! tears, nor threats, neither scolding nor soothing, shall shake me from my purpose: your yoke, Lady Dove, has laid too heavy upon my shoul-

shoulders; I can support it no longer: to-morrow, Madam, you leave this house.

Lady Dove. Will you break my heart, you tyrant? Will you turn me out of doors to starve, you barbarous man?

Sir Benjamin Dove. Oh! never fear; you will fare to the full as well as you did in your first husband's time; in your poor, dear, dead Mr. Searcher's time. You told me once you priz'd the paltry grey-hound that hung at his button-hole, more than all the jewels my folly had lavish'd upon you. I take you at your word; you shall have your bawble, and I will take back all mine; they'll be of no use to you hereafter.

Lady Dove. O! Sir Benjamin, Sir Benjamin, for mercy's sake, turn me not out of your doors! I will be obedient, gentle and complying, for the future; don't shame me; on my knees, I beseech you don't.

Enter Belfield senior.

Sir Benjamin Dove. Mr. Belfield, I am heartily glad to see you: don't go back, Sir; you catch us a little un-awares; but these situations are not uncommon in well-order'd families; rewards and punishments are the life of government, and the authority of a husband must be upheld.

Belfield senior. I confess, Sir Benjamin, I was greatly surpriz'd at finding Lady Dove in that attitude: but I never pry into family secrets; I had much rather suppose your Lady was on her knees to intercede with you in my behalf, than be told she was reduc'd to that humble posture for any reason that affects herself.

Sir Benjamin Dove. Sir, you are free to suppose what you please for Lady Dove; I'm willing to spare you that trouble on my account; and therefore, I tell you plainly, if you will sign and seal your articles this night, to-morrow morning Sophia shall be yours; I'm resolv'd that the self-same day, which consecrates the redemption of my liberty, shall confirm the surrender of yours.

Lady Dove. O! Mr. Belfield, I beseech you, intercede with this dear cruel man in my behalf; would you believe that he harbours a design of expelling me out of his house, on the day too when he purposes celebrating the nuptials of his daughter?

Belfield senior. Come, Sir Benjamin, I must speak to you now as a friend in the nearest connection; I beg

you will not damp our happiness with so melancholy an event: I will venture to pledge myself for her ladyship.

Sir Benjamin Dove. Well for your sake perhaps I may prolong her departure for one day; but I'm determin'd, if she does stay to-morrow, she shall set the first dish upon the table; if 'tis only to shew the company what a refractory wife in the hands of a man of spirit may be brought to submit to. Our wives, Mr. Belfield, may tease us and vex us, and still escape with impunity; but if once they thoroughly provoke us, the charm breaks, and they are lost for ever. (*Exeunt.*)

Scheme for a new Memorandum-Book for the use of the Ladies, with a specimen. *)

Among the many Pocket-Companions, New Memorandum-Books, Gentleman and Tradesman's Daily Assistants, and other productions of the like nature, calculated for the use of those who mix in the bustle of the world, I cannot but applaud those polite and elegant inventions, The *Ladies Memorandum-Books*, as these seem chiefly adapted to the more important businesses of pleasure and amusement. I shall not take upon me to determine which is the most preferable: each of them being, if you believe the solemn asseverations of their proprietors, "the best and most complete of its kind that has hitherto been published.,,"

The utility of these little books, with respect to the fair sex, is on the first view apparent; as they are divided for each day of the week into distinct columns, allotted to the several branches of *Engagements*, *Expences*, and *Occasional Memorandums*. These, indeed, comprehend every thing that can either attract their regard, or take up their time: I shall therefore point out some particular advantages that will arise from a right use and regulation of them.

With regard to *Engagements*, it is very well known, what embarrassments, jealousies, and quarrels, have arisen from an erroneous management in that most essential part of female transactions, the paying and receiving of visits. It has hitherto been usual to trust entirely

*) The Adventurer (by Mr. Hawkesworth) Lond. 1766. 4 Vol. 8.