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PRÉCIEUSE GALLANTRY

IN FARQUHAR'S PLAYS

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PRÉCIEUSE GALLANTRY  
IN FARQUHAR'S PLAYS

By

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MASTER OF ARTS

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## PREFACE

The purpose of this study is to elucidate the Restoration comedy of George Farquhar in terms of précieuse gallantry, a formal method of courtly love-making, which is now obscure. This thesis does not present an exhaustive study; but rather it is designed to offer a fair representation of the words, attitudes, and postures associated with préciosité. In order to show more clearly the extensive use made of précieuse gallantry by other dramatists whose plays preceded Farquhar's, I have cited examples from their works, as well as his.

Chapter I deals with the background of précieuse gallantry; Chapter II discusses the meanings and uses of précieuse words; and Chapters III, IV, and V present the distressed heroine, the whining lover, and the gentleman rake in some of their characteristic précieuse attitudes and postures. The conclusion which follows is designed to show that précieuse gallantry is still present in our own society in modified forms, and hence Farquhar's themes are not so ephemeral as the modern reader may have previously believed them to be.

For his invaluable advice and constructive criticism during the time spent in preparing this thesis, I wish to express my sincere appreciation to Doctor David S. Berkeley, adviser and contributor to the thesis. I am also deeply obligated to my wife Ruth Ann who typed the first and second drafts of the manuscript and offered sound advice on more than one occasion.

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## Chapter I

### The Background of Précieuse Gallantry

Although there has been a considerable amount of criticism concerning the position of George Farquhar in English Restoration comedy, i.e., whether he should be classified as a manners or a sentimental dramatist, there has been surprisingly little mention of his employment in his comedy of précieuse gallantry, a vogue which has since become obscure.<sup>1</sup> The fact is that Farquhar made extensive use of précieuse gallantry; and, therefore, it is doubtful whether the modern reader fully understands his plays. My thesis elucidates the obscure précieuse material which links Farquhar's plays with certain conventions of the Restoration stage, but which places this work out of the scope of our own present-day understanding.

In order to appreciate Farquhar's comedy, as well as that of other Restoration dramatists who also used préciosité, one must first know something of the background and growth of précieuse gallantry. It was termed préciosité in France and was synonymously called the "romantick stile" in England. The "romantic" style had been known as such from the early years of the Restoration and possibly earlier.<sup>2</sup> Englishmen associated it with the exhibition of such things as constancy in love, certain attitudes and postures, foreign settings in remote times, exotic costumes, royal or noble rank, and heroic couplets and blank verse. The sentimental style, which was a dilution of the romantic style, suggested much the same: its setting was usually in London, however, and its characters spoke in prose. The characters also were depicted as members of the lower classes, and

their costumes were suited to their social status. It follows, then, that wherever the romantic style was used, regardless of the types of comedy in which it occurs, its origins or models were ultimately the same. These were the romances.

The word "romance" itself has an interesting background: Edward Phillips, the leading lexicographer in the era of Charles II, defined it as "a feigned History...which hath heretofore been used to signify anything written Eloquently."<sup>3</sup> The French romances especially would fit this definition; and the French précieuses, those who practiced the forms of galantry, used the romances as guides in their courtships. When Queen Henrietta Marie came to England from France, she is said to have brought with her the taste for préciosité; and thence the vogue was adopted by English dramatists. Some of these poets, it is true, may have been influenced directly by the romances of Mlle. de Scudéry and La Calprenède, although in the case of Farquhar it would be difficult to press this point. Since his first play did not appear until 1698,<sup>4</sup> he was probably more directly influenced by his own English predecessors.<sup>5</sup> Farquhar shows at least a superficial knowledge of the romances in The Inconstant; or, The Way to Win Him (1702). In one scene of this play the heroine Oriana tells her maid Bizarre that she loves Mirabel in spite of his ill usage. Bizarre is furious at this and remarks, "O, the Devil take all your Cassandra's and Cleopatra's for me."<sup>6</sup> The allusion here, I think, is not to the ill-fated prophetess of the Iliad or to the Egyptian queen in Shakespeare's play, but rather to the heroines in two of La Calprenède's romances.<sup>7</sup> An even clearer example may be found of the use of "romance" by Farquhar in The Constant Couple; or, A Trip to the Jubilee (1699). Lady Lurewell admits to her maid Parly that as a credulously

innocent girl of fifteen she had found the "Romances moving" and "Love powerful." Her only reward, however, had been her seduction by a false lover; and she relates to Parly the "romantic" night and following morning she had enjoyed just shortly before being betrayed by him.

After Supper I went to my Chamber,  
and read Cassandra, then went to bed,  
and dreamt of him all Night, rose  
in the Morning, and made Verses;  
so fell desperately in Love—<sup>8</sup>

Not all lovers regarded the romances and "romantic" love with distrust. Restoration poets often coupled the words "romance" and "romantic" with the exhibition of serious love. The meanings of "romance" were imparted to "romantic" when this adjective was introduced into the English language, probably in the 1650's.<sup>9</sup> Bellmour, for example, in Mrs. Behn's Town-Fopp; or, Sir Timothy Tawdrey (1677) employs the word "romantick" favorably when he rhapsodizes to Diana.

What Bliss on me insensibly you throw!  
I'd rather hear thee swear thou art my Foe,  
And like some noble and romantick Maid  
With Poniards you'd my stubborn Heart invade;  
And whilst thou dost the faithful Relique tear,  
In every Vein Thoud'st find Celinda there.<sup>10</sup>

The distressed heroine Constance in Farquhar's The Twin Rivals (1702) also uses "romantic" seriously when her lover Hermes, whom she thinks dead, returns to her:

I never found the true Sweets  
of Love, till this Romantick turn,  
dead and alive! my Stars are Poetical.<sup>11</sup>

The romances were felt by many to be ridiculous, and therefore the words "romance" and "romantic" often became objects of contempt. Lacy's



Sir Hercules Buffoon; or, The Poetical Squire (1684) affords us a good example of the transfer of pejorative meanings of "romance" to "romantic."

Esquire Buffoon questions his father:

- But, father, which do you hold to be most honourable, your comic or heroic poet?
- Sir Herc. Oh, your heroic, without doubt, because he comes nearer the romantic strain than the other.
- Esquire B. Romantic! What signifies the word romantic?
- Sir Herc. Why, it comes from the word romance, and romance is the Arabic word for a swinger, and swinger is the Hebrew for a liar.
- Esquire B. By this do you prove the heroic poets to be liars?
- Sir Herc. No, no, by no means; romantically inclined only.<sup>12</sup>

The heroic poets had license to exhibit scenes of serious love, and there is reason to believe that the Restoration gallants and ladies were fond of these scenes, especially the ladies. Restoration ladies not only took pleasure in the pity arising from the misfortunes of young lovers, but also frequently had recourse to tears. Lyrick in Farquhar's Love and a Bottle (1698) gives his impression to Lovewell of the ladies' conduct at the tragedies.

- Lov. What, laugh at a Tragedy!
- Lyr. I laugh to see the Ladies cry. To see so many weep at the Death of the fabulous Hero, who would but laugh if the Poet were hang'd? On my Conscience, these Tragedies make the Ladies vent all their Love and Honour at their Eyes, when the same white Handkerchief that blows their Noses, must be a Winding-Sheet to the deceased Hero.<sup>13</sup>

The seriousness with which the ladies viewed précieuse themes in love-and-

honor tragedies seemed not to please Farquhar in the passage above, but one should note that he often treated précieuse gallantry with no suggestion of the mock-heroic impulse. One should also observe that the theme of love and honor became so popular that it was seriously developed in comedy as well as tragedy. Davenant, as early as 1669, treated "romance" and "romantic" with favor in association with love and honour. In his Man's the Master the distraught Lucilla pleads with Don Ferdinand, a friend of her father's:

Sir! Let me embrace your knees, and  
not rise from mine till I obtain that  
succour which I hope you will afford me.  
Don Ferd. This style is somewhat romantic. My  
foolish daughter never reads romances, but,  
for my part, I esteem Amadis and all such  
ancient and discreet records of love and  
honour. Madam, you seem not a person  
to whom a gentleman should refuse anything.<sup>14</sup>

Davenant's favorable treatment of love and honor was most certain to please the ladies; for from their reading of the romances and consequent adoption of précieuse attitudes, they would necessarily take an exceedingly solemn view of human virtue. Précieuse attitudes would further lead them to believe that woman was the superior of man; his effusive outpouring of words and his abject postures before her, as if she were on a pedestal, would be not only expected but demanded by the précieuse ladies.

On the other hand, Farquhar and other dramatists often connected the theme of love and honor comically with "romance" and "romantic." Roebuck in Love and a Bottle after hearing Lucinda's speech about the power of love and honor in former ages to advance the female cause, remarks to himself, "I must divert this plaguy Romantick humour."<sup>15</sup> In another speech, he tells Leathe, his lover who is disguised as a page, "O Child! Boys of your age are continually reading Romances, filling your Heads with that old

bombast of Love and Honour...."<sup>16</sup>

Précieuse gallantry, since it derived its origin from the romances, appeared by the same token to have had many admirers and detractors. It was ridiculed by Molière; and in at least one of his plays, Les Précieuses Ridicules (1659), l'esprit précieux is the sole object of his attack. Much of the unsympathetic treatment that was received by précieuse gallantry came from those who coupled "romance" and "romantic" with the adjective "whining." In Table-Talk (1689) Selden used "whine" in a way that suggested the romantic style, namely, a distinct tone of voice different from the tones of ordinary conversation:

If a Man should make love in an ordinary Tone, his Mistress would not regard him; and therefore he must whine.<sup>17</sup>

"Whining" became more than just a specialized vocal tone, however, when it became associated with "romance" and "romantic." It acquired also such connotations as sighing, kneeling, cringing, and "dying." Here "dying" is used in the sense of being prostrated at the feet of one's mistress. Although the art of "whining" made up only a part of the romantic style, it was, nevertheless, associated unfavorably with the précieuse gallant.

A fairly early example of postures and attitudes common to both "romantic" and "whining" may be seen in Bruce's speech to Clarinda in Shadwell's Virtuoso (1676).

Bruce. Come, I see this way will not do: I'll try another with you. Ah Madam! change your cruel intentions, or I shall become the most desolate Lover, that ever yet, with arms across, sigh'd to a murmuring Grove, or to a purling Stream complain'd. Savage! I'll wander up and down the Woods, and carve my Passion on the Barks of Trees, and vent my grief to the winds, that as they fly shall sigh and pity me.



Clarinda. How now! what foolish Fustian's  
this? you talk like an Heroick Poet.

Bruce. Since the common down-right way of  
speaking sense wou'd not please you,  
I had a mind to try what the Romantick  
way of whining Love cou'd do.<sup>18</sup>

Roebuck in Love and a Bottle conceives a similar plan for debauching  
Lucinda when he says, "...I'll first try the whining Addresses, and see  
if she'll bleed in the soft Vein." His only reward for all his whining,  
however, is a blow on the ear administered by Lucinda. His reaction to  
this unexpected treatment is voiced in the following retort: "—If ever  
I make Love like a Poetical fool again, may I never receive any favour  
but a Subject for a Copy of Verses."<sup>19</sup>

As the mention of romances in Restoration drama often suggested the  
French heroic writers, Mlle. de Scudéry and La Calprenède, so also did the  
terms "romantic" and "whining" suggest précieuse gallantry, which grew in  
turn out of the romances. With the romances for models préciosité not  
only became a studied and conscious mode of formal courtship in the love-  
and-honor tragedies, but also it was practiced by Restoration gallants  
and ladies. On the other hand, those who disliked the romances held every-  
thing connected with précieuse gallantry up to ridicule. Dramatists often  
satirized it in comedy, although some comic writers treated it sympathetic-  
ally. Out of the few illustrations presented thus far of "romance,"  
"romantic," and "whining," one will be unable, perhaps, to derive a clear  
picture of the words, attitudes, and postures which go to make up the  
romantic style of courtship. In the ensuing chapters, therefore, an  
elaboration of the meanings of précieuse words and illustrations of the  
attitudes of the hero and heroine and the postures of the whining lover  
will be presented.



## Notes to Chapter I

1. Very little has been written about précieuse gallantry. As far as I can learn, David S. Berkeley, in his unpublished dissertation, "Origins of Sentimental Comedy" (Harvard, 1948), is the first to treat fully the vogue of préciosité as it appeared on the stage and was practiced in Restoration England. Other writers have alluded to it, but Berkeley's approach is, I think, both original and accurate. The three writers and works which follow by no means make up an exhaustive list of précieuse references: Kathleen Lynch, in her Social Mode of Restoration Comedy (New York, 1926), gives a somewhat limited treatment of the précieuse tradition; J. H. Smith touches various aspects of précieuse gallantry in his Gay Couples in Restoration Comedy (Cambridge, Mass., 1948); and Montague Summers, in referring to the source of Shadwell's Bury-Fair, states that Molière's Les Précieuses Ridicules supplied English dramatists with material (The Complete Works of Thomas Shadwell, ed. Montague Summers, London, 1927, IV, 287.). Almost without exception I follow, in this text, Berkeley's work in my treatment of précieuse gallantry.

2. David S. Berkeley, "Origins of Sentimental Comedy" (Harvard, 1948), p. 136.

3. Edward Phillips, The New World of Words (London, 1678). The same definition appears in the earlier issues of this in 1658 and 1671.

4. Dates of plays are those of first acting. Farquhar's first comedy Love and a Bottle was produced about the middle of December, 1698, according to Charles Stonehill, whose edition of The Complete Works of George Farquhar (Bloomsbury, 1930), is used in this thesis. Allardyce Nicoll, however, dates the first production in 1699 in his History of Restoration Drama, 1660-1700 (Cambridge, 1928).

5. See Dudley H. Miles, The Influence of Molière on Restoration Comedy (New York, 1910), pp. 215-217. Miles asserts that Farquhar knew nothing directly of the spirit of Molière's comedies, nor was he saturated with the spirit of Restoration comedy. It is true that Farquhar's comedies show some divergence from the typical manners comedy of the period; but it is also true, I believe, that Farquhar received considerable précieuse influences directly from his own predecessors, perhaps slightly or indirectly from Molière. His plays exhibit too many examples of précieuse gallantry that can hardly be called accidental.

6. George Farquhar, The Inconstant; or, The Way to Win Him (1702), Act II, Scene i, The Complete Works of George Farquhar, ed. Charles Stonehill (Bloomsbury, 1930), I, 232. Subsequent notes to Farquhar's plays will refer to this edition, which will be cited as Complete Works.

7. Berkeley, p. 150.

8. George Farquhar, The Constant Couple; or, A Trip to the Jubilee (1699), Act III, Scene iii, Complete Works, I, 126.

9. Berkeley, p. 134.
10. Aphra Behn, The Town-Fopp; or, Sir Timothy Tawdrey (1677), Act III, Scene ii, The Works of Aphra Behn, ed. Montague Summers (London, 1915), III, 49. Subsequent notes to Behn's plays will refer to this edition, which will be cited as Works.
11. George Farquhar, The Twin Rivals (1702), Act III, Scene iii, Complete Works, I, 325.
12. John Lacy, Sir Hercules Buffoon; or, The Poetical Squire (1684), Act I, The Dramatic Works of John Lacy, ed. James Maidment and W. H. Logan (Edinburgh, 1875), p. 228.
13. George Farquhar, Love and a Bottle (1698), Act IV, Scene ii, Complete Works, I, 51.
14. Sir William Davenant, The Man's the Master (1669), Act II, Scene i, The Dramatic Works of William D'Avenant, ed. James Maidment and W. H. Logan (Edinburgh, 1874), V. 27.
15. George Farquhar, Love and a Bottle, Act V, Scene i, Complete Works, I, 62. See also Farquhar's The Constant Couple; or A Trip to the Jubilee, Act III, Scene iii, Complete Works, I, 108.
16. George Farquhar, Love and a Bottle, Act III, Scene i, Complete Works, I, 35.
17. John Selden, Table-Talk (London, 1689), reprinted in English Reprints, ed. Edward Arber, 1868, VI, 92. Cited by NED, "whine."
18. Thomas Shadwell, The Virtuoso (1676), Act III, The Complete Works of Thomas Shadwell, ed. Montague Summers (London, 1927), III, 134. Subsequent notes to Shadwell's plays will refer to this edition, which will be cited as Complete Works.
19. George Farquhar, Love and a Bottle, Act III, Scene i, Complete Works, I, 37.

## Chapter II

### Précieuse Words

When the Restoration gallants and ladies heard précieuse words and witnessed the attitudes and postures, which often accompanied them, they responded either with warm sympathy or with cold disdain. Précieuse gallantry was hardly ever treated with indifference; in the drawing rooms, as well as on the stage, one might find its adherents and its detractors. In Restoration tragedies, of course, précieuse gallantry was associated with serious love; but in the comedies it was treated with both seriousness and ridicule, often with both treatments in the same play. The mere mention of a précieuse word in a pejorative sense pleased certain members of the Restoration audience, for it suggested to them all the attitudes and postures which they despised, but enjoyed seeing discredited. Some of these précieuse words were "romantic," "whining," "canting," "dying," and "killing."

It has already been shown that the word "romantic" was used both favorably and pejoratively by Farquhar and others. Farquhar preferred to use the word pejoratively. This may be observed in The Recruiting Officer (1706) when Plume asks Worthy what is the matter with him. Worthy replies,

Come, I must out with it---  
Your once gay roving Friend  
is dwindled into an obsequious,  
thoughtful, romantick, constant  
Coxcomb.<sup>1</sup>

The words "thoughtful" and "constant" might be favorably associated with "romantick" by précieuse lovers, but "obsequious" and "Coxcomb" obviously



are not flattering associations.

The word "romantic," used unfavorably, acquired several shades of meaning in comedy. Banks, for example, in his Unhappy Favorite; or, The Earl of Essex (1682) associated "romantic" derisively with natural scenery. In a parting speech, Essex tells the Countess of Nottingham:

A longer and much happier life attend  
Both my good Queen and you. Exit Essex  
Nott. Farewell my Lord—  
Yes, a much longer Life than thine I hope,  
And if thou chance to dream of such strange things,  
Let it be there where lying Poets feign  
Elisium is, where Mirtles lovely spread,  
Trees of delicious Fruit invite the Tast,  
And sweet Arabian Plants delight the smell,  
Where pleasant Gardens drest with curious Care  
By Lovers Ghosts, shall recreate thy Fancy,  
And there perhaps thou soon shall meet again  
With amorous Rutland, for she cannot choose  
But be Romantick now, and follow thee—<sup>2</sup>

There is a derisive allusion to dreams of natural scenery in Farquhar's Inconstant; or, The Way to Win Him that parallels the passage from Banks. Oriana, who is feigning madness, calls Old Mirabel "Amadis de Gaul," then questions him: "And do you never Dream of Flowers and Gardens?—I Dream of Walking Fires and tall Gigantick Sighs."<sup>3</sup> Farquhar gives a much clearer and more amusing example of the derisive association of "romantic" with natural scenery in The Beaux Stratagem (1707). Aimwell is telling Archer of the beauties of Orinda.

...Call me Oroondates, Cesar, Amadis, all  
that Romance can in a Lover paint, and then I'll  
answer. O Archer, I read her thousands in her  
Looks, she look'd like Ceres in her Harvest, Corn,  
Wine and Oil, Milk and Honey, Gardens, Groves  
and Purling Streams play'd on her plenteous Face.  
Arch. Her Face! her Pocket, you mean; the Corn,  
Wine and Oil lies there. In short, she has  
ten thousand Pound, that's the English on't.  
Aim. Her Eyes—



Arch. Are Demi-Cannons to be sure, so I won't stand their Battery.

[Going.

Aim. Pray excuse me, my Passion must have vent.

Arch. Passion! what a plague, d'ee think these Romantick Airs will do our Business? Were my Temper as extravagant as yours, my Adventures have something more Romantick by half.<sup>4</sup>

Sometimes "romantic" was associated with things less pleasant than natural scenery, namely, madness, fools, and nonsense. A typical instance of madness occurs in Mrs. Behn's Emperor of the Moon (1687) when Doctor Daliardo's man Scaramouch, speaking to the doctor's daughter, says:

You must know, Madam, your Father  
(my Master, the Doctor) is a little  
whimsical, romantick or Don-Quicksottish  
or so.

Ela. Or rather mad.<sup>5</sup>

There is a parallel passage in Farquhar's Recruiting Officer in which Melinda calls Silvia a "poor Romantick Quixote."<sup>6</sup> Both playwrights used "romantic" in association with Cervantes' hero Don Quixote.

Archer, in Farquhar's Beaux Stratagem, considers a "romantic" soldier just a little less than mad in his speech to Mrs. Sullen.

—Look'ye, Madam, I'm none of your  
Romantick Fools, that fight Gyants and  
Monsters for nothing, my Valour is  
downright Swiss; I'm a Soldier of  
Fortune and must be paid.<sup>7</sup>

Archer, who seems imbued with dislike for anything "romantic" either in love or war, advises Aimwell how to get a wife.

No matter for my Adventure, yours is the principal.—  
Press her this Minute to marry you,—now while  
she's hurry'd between the Palpitation of her Fear, and

the Joy of her Deliverance, now while the Tide of her Spirits are at High-Flood—Throw yourself at her Feet; speak some Romantick Nonsense or other;—Address her like Alexander in the height of his Victory, confound her Senses, bear down her Reason, and away with her—<sup>8</sup>

Archer might as well have said "whining nonsense" as "Romantick Nonsense," for the people in the audience also associated "whining" unfavorably with the forms of "romantic" love. "Whining" came to be more than just a nasal tone, and in Congreve's Double-Dealer (1694) we see it employed by Careless when he is courting Lady Plyant.

[In a Whining Tone.] Ah Heavens,  
Madam, you ruin me with  
Kindness. Your Charming Tongue  
pursues the Victory of your Eyes,  
while at your Feet your poor Adorer  
dies.<sup>9</sup>

Here we see the "whining" address used to express the lover's "dying" at the feet of his mistress. The "whining" lover also prostrated himself at the feet of his mistress when he made his address. Lucinda's attendant Pindress, who regards with suspicion the précieuse addresses of Lovewell, asks Lucinda in Farquhar's Love and a Bottle,

If Mr. Lovewell shou'd with an  
amorous whine and suppliant cringe  
tell you a formal story, contrary  
to what we suspect, wou'd you  
not believe him?<sup>10</sup>

One may assume that if Lucinda were a "romantic" heroine she would cherish the postures and pleadings of her "whining" suitor. In Restoration tragedy, this was often the case. Lyrick in Farquhar's Love and a Bottle calls the hero of tragedy "a whining cringing Fool that's always a

stabbing himself...."<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, in the tragedy this "whining cringing Fool" was regarded by his mistress as a serious lover; in comedy, however, he was not required to do violence to himself, although he sometimes offered to stab himself. The rake in comedy had little regard for précieuse gallantry. Only in his attempts to seduce a woman or in his weaker moments did he remark like Roebuck, in Farquhar's Love and a Bottle:

I love her [Leante], witness, Heaven,  
I love her to that degree--Pshaw,  
I shall whine presently.<sup>12</sup>

The Restoration audience assumed, from Roebuck's intention to whine, that he was preparing to exercise a very definite set of formal attitudes, postures, and a sort of eloquence. Similarly, Aimwell in Farquhar's Beaux Stratagem makes known to Archer his intention to employ "whining" love as a means to an end.

Tho' the whining part be out of  
doors in Town, 'tis still in force with  
the Country Ladies;--And let me tell  
you Frank, the Fool in that Passion,  
shall outdoe the Knave at any time.<sup>13</sup>

"Whining" acquired other connotations besides cringing and "dying," such as canting, singing, languishing, lying, sighing. When Careless in Congreve's Double-Dealer addresses Lady Plyant in a "Whining Tone," she is impressed but has not yet yielded. Careless, who has memorized his formal address, begins to fear that he must repeat the same words over again.

(Zoons, I'm almost at the end of  
my Cant, if she does not yield  
quickly.)<sup>14</sup>

In Farquhar's Constant Couple; or, A Trip to the Jubilee Wildair also uses the word "cant" in his answer to Angelica, who has expressed the belief that she can bring out his "generous" nature.

[mimicking] Tall ti dum, ti dum,  
tall to didi, didum.  
A Million to one now, but this Girl is  
just come flush from reading the  
Rival Queen—I gad, I'll at her  
in her own cant—  
O my Statyra, O my Angry Dear, turn  
thy Eyes on me, behold thy Beau in  
Buskins.<sup>15</sup>

The word most frequently associated with the "whining" lover was perhaps "dying." Careless, as we have noted in Congreve's Double-Dealer, "whiningly" informs his mistress that he "dies" at her feet.<sup>16</sup> Plume in Farquhar's Recruiting Officer in a like manner offers to "die" at Silvia's feet.

Sil. I have often heard that Soldiers  
were sincere. Shall I venture  
to believe publick Report?  
Plume. You may, when 'tis back'd by  
private Insurance; for I swear  
Madam, by the Honour of my  
Profession, that whatever Dangers  
I went upon, it was with the Hope  
of making my self more worthy of  
your Esteem, and if ever I had  
Thoughts of preserving my Life, 'twas  
for the Pleasure of dying at your Feet.  
Sil. Well, well, you shall die at my Feet,  
or where you will....<sup>17</sup>

Plume, in other words, expresses his willingness to prostrate himself in abject humility at the feet of his mistress, although there are no stage directions to indicate that he has, while speaking, assumed the posture. Silvia seems unimpressed by his "whining" address.

In most cases the lover's offer to "die" produced the desired effect



on his mistress. Some females, however, with pretensions to modesty might react like Lucinda in Farquhar's Love and a Bottle, who tells Roebuck "that the dying Groans of thy whole Sex at my feet shou'd not extort an immodest thought from me."<sup>18</sup>

The word "killing" is also frequently used by Restoration dramatists in referring to the penetrating powers of a woman's eyes to hypnotise or charm a man. The words "kill" or "killing" are sometimes used in modern idiom in a derogatory way to denote pain, disgust, extreme discomfort, and so forth. For example, one might say, "My feet are killing me," or, "The price of eggs is enough to kill you." One seldom, if ever, hears of a woman with "killing beams." In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries these précieuse references were common. Doristeo, for instance, in Shadwell's Amorous Bigotte; with The Second Part of Tegue O Divelly (1690) speaks of Rosania's effect upon him:

...I ne'er knew Love before  
this day, these killing Beams  
have pierced me thro' and thro'.<sup>19</sup>

Archer in Farquhar's Beaux Stratagem is able to see strange powers even in the eyes of Cherry, an innkeeper's daughter.

Arch. —S'death, Child, you have a  
pair of delicate Eyes, and you  
don't know what to do with 'em.  
Cher. Why, Sir, don't I see everybody?  
Arch. Ay, but if some Women had  
'em, they wou'd kill everybody.<sup>20</sup>

A serving girl might not be expected to use her potential "killing" powers; but a lady like Mrs. Sullen in Farquhar's Beaux Stratagem can excite complaints like the following from a French Count Bellair, when he is asked by Mrs. Sullen if he wondered that she was not at church that afternoon:

Count. I more wonder, Madam, that  
 you go dere at all, or how you  
 dare to lift those eyes to Heaven <sup>21</sup>  
 that are guilty of so much killing.

The French and also the English précieuses cultivated other metaphorical terms. A chair was affectedly called, by French précieuses, une commodité de la conversation; the teeth, l'ameublement de la bouche; to dine, prendre les nécessités méridionales, and so forth. <sup>22</sup> Ma chère, a term by which French précieuses often addressed each other, finally became synonymous with précieuses. <sup>23</sup> An interesting case might be made in Farquhar's Recruiting Officer of Brazen's affected use of "my dear." The use there might well be ridicule of préciosité, for Brazen addresses others in the play as "my dear" at least twenty-eight times; <sup>24</sup> this repetition might be amusing to the audience if it saw a ridicule of French gallantry expressed in Brazen's affectation.

It is doubtful whether the modern reader comprehends the précieuse affectations which are found frequently in Farquhar's plays. He may appreciate the clever dialogue or the characterizations; but he will lose much of the meaning of the play unless he understands the connotations of précieuse words, such as "romantic," "killing," "whining," "canting," and "dying." Each term suggests the postures, attitudes, and eloquence which were a part of the formal courtship of the heroine and her lover, who will be discussed in the following chapters.

## Notes to Chapter II

1. George Farquhar, The Recruiting Officer (1706), Act I, Scene ii, Complete Works, II, 48.
2. John Banks, The Unhappy Favourite; or, The Earl of Essex (1682), ed. T. M. H. Blair (New York, 1939), Act V, pp. 59-60.
3. George Farquhar, The Inconstant; or, The Way to Win Him, Act IV, Scene iii, Complete Works, I, 260.
4. George Farquhar, The Beaux Stratagem (1707), Act III, Scene ii, Complete Works, II, 146.
5. Aphra Behn, The Emperor of the Moon (1687), Act I, Scene i, Works, III, 399.
6. George Farquhar, The Recruiting Officer, Act I, Scene iii, Complete Works, II, 53. See also George Farquhar, Sir Harry Wildair (1701, Act III, Scene ii, Complete Works, I, 189.
7. George Farquhar, The Beaux Stratagem, Act V, Scene ii, Complete Works, II, 183-184.
8. Ibid., Act V, Scene iii, p. 183.
9. William Congreve, The Double-Dealer (1694), Act IV, Scene i, The Complete Works of William Congreve, ed. Montague Summers (Soho, 1923), II, 51. Subsequent notes to Congreve's plays will refer to this edition, which will be cited as Complete Works.
10. George Farquhar, Love and a Bottle, Act IV, Scene i, Complete Works, I, 49.
11. Ibid., Act IV, Scene ii, p. 51.
12. Ibid., Act V, Scene i, p. 64.
13. George Farquhar, The Beaux Stratagem, Act I, Scene i, Complete Works, II, 130.
14. William Congreve, The Double-Dealer, Act IV, Scene i, Complete Works, II, 51.
15. George Farquhar, The Constant Couple; or, A Trip to the Jubilee, Act V, Scene i, Complete Works, I, 141. See also George Farquhar, The Beaux Stratagem, Act III, Scene iii, Complete Works, II, 159.
16. William Congreve, The Double-Dealer, Act IV, Scene i, Complete Works, II, 51.
17. George Farquhar, The Recruiting Officer, Act II, Scene i, Complete Works, II, 55-56

18. George Farquhar, Love and a Bottle, Act V, Scene i, Complete Works, I, 63.

19. Thomas Shadwell, The Amorous Bigotte; with the Second Part of Tegue O Divelly (1690), Act II, Scene i, Complete Works, V, 29.

20. George Farquhar, The Beaux Stratagem, Act I, Scene i, Complete Works, II, 132.

21. Ibid., Act III, Scene iii, p. 157.

22. See the introduction to Molière's Les Précieuses Ridicules, ed. Walter Dallam Toy (New York, 1899), p. xii.

23. Ibid., p. 56, n.

24. George Farquhar, The Recruiting Officer, Complete Works. Brazen uses "my dear" in the following places: Act III, Scene i, p. 69; Act III, Scene ii, pp. 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78; Act IV, Scene i, p. 84; Act IV, Scene ii, p. 92; Act V, Scene iv, pp. 99, 100; Act V, Scene vi, pp. 105, 106, 109.



### Chapter III

#### The Heroine in Distress

The dominant figure in Farquhar's comedy and in other Restoration comedy was the heroine. Usually she suffered varying degrees of distress over the misfortunes of serious love. Other female characters also appeared in Restoration comedy who made sport of love. There need be little said, however, concerning the female who ridiculed serious love; for she was ordinarily not the heroine in the play, but rather acted as a foil to the heroine who, in her periods of distress, served as a model of précieuse gallantry. If we turn our attention, then, to the heroine, as she generally appeared in Restoration comedy, we shall discover that in her distress she exhibited certain traits which set her apart from the people around her, traits which entitled her, in fact, to be deservedly called a précieuse heroine.<sup>1</sup>

The distressed heroine, since she was a stock-character in Restoration comedy, is rarely worth individual treatment; therefore, in most cases, generalizations about her will suffice. Ideally, she exhibited suffering passivity. She was distressed by the misfortunes of love which she encountered in a cruel world, but she resigned herself to her fate. She was buoyed up, however, by her consciousness that she was superior to those around her. Even her lover, for whom she repined, was a mere shadow beside her. His only function was to adore her in the most obsequious fashion. The heroine demanded, furthermore, that her lover approach her with only the most formal speeches and humble postures. In short, he too must be a model of précieuse gallantry. If his exhibitions pleased her, then the heroine responded with exhibitions of her own designed to capture his heart

forever. Even a rake like Roebuck in Farquhar's Love and a Bottle is temporarily diverted from his attempts to seduce Lucinda after she lectures to him. He is reduced by her to remark: "Her superior Vertue awes me into coldness."<sup>2</sup>

Coldness in her lover was not enough, though; the distressed heroine, in order to magnify her own superiority, must have her man completely submissive. Oriana in Farquhar's Inconstant; or, The Way to Win Him tells her brother Dugard that "there is something of a pride to see a fellow lye at our feet, that has triumphed over so many."<sup>3</sup> And later in the same play Oriana seems, at first, to scorn Mirabel's attempted repentance when she asks him:

Are all the Conquests of your wandring  
Sway, your Wit, your Humour, Fortune,  
all reduc'd to the base Cringing of a  
bended Knee? Servil and Poor! I—Love it. [Aside.<sup>4</sup>

Oriana, as well as the other distressed heroines, glories in the fact that she can reduce a man from a raging lion to a whining, cringing penitent.

Of course the heroine had her own special ways to bewitch the man of her choice. Often she could spin a tale of woe which might occasion a comment like Don Ferdinand's in the following passage from Davenant's The Man's the Master (1669). Lucilla speaks to him:

I would I could so express my griefs  
that you might find some excuse for  
my faults. But if you could number  
my tears perhaps you would confess  
my eyes have been sufficiently punisht  
by my crimes.  
D. F. This stranger has no ill behaviour.<sup>5</sup>

Tears were by no means the only weapons of the précieuse heroine. She might, like Leonora's aunt in Higden's Wary Widow; or, Sir Noisy Parrot

(1693), practice all the forms she can call forth.

I expect my Niece's Gallant here every moment,  
and I will try my utmost art to captivate  
his fancy in the mean while. I'll practise  
ore my Ayrs, and postures.

[She pulls out her Glass, makes faces  
and practises in it.]

That Smile was very taking and becoming--

That Glance was sharp and killing--Just like an arrow  
from a Parthian Bow--

That Rowling eye Surveys all at one Motion and Crys have  
at you all--

That inticing damnable Leer, is most ingaging, and  
serves to fly a Lover to a Mark--

That grave affected look with the feign'd accent of  
the Voice, is ravishing--

Those Languishing Eyes inchant a heart--

But when you would Inspire and shoot the

Spirit of Love, then Ogle him thus--

Steadfastly--look babys in his eyes, fetch a deep sigh,  
and gripe his hand; then leave and gaze upon him and say  
some fine soft thing, or use some toyish wagish Action--  
thus--that Palpitation of the brest is moving--

When a witty Smutty jeast is broke that admits of a  
double construction, Cover your Face with your Fan,  
stifle a laugh as forc'd by the Conceit--

So much for this time--[Puts up her Glass.]<sup>6</sup>

One probably does not often find so detailed a practice of airs and  
postures as that of Leonora's aunt; however, Duratete commands Diserre  
in Farquhar's Inconstant; or, The Way to Win Him to prove her love for  
him by her obedience in a parallel, but briefer exhibition.

Confirm it [your love] then by your Obedience. Stand  
there; and Ogle me now, as if your Heart,  
Blood, and Soul, were like to fly out at your  
Eyes--First the direct surprise. [She looks full  
upon him.] Right, next the Deux yeux par oblique.  
[She gives him the side Glance.] Right now depart,  
and Languish. [She turns from him, and looks over  
her Shoulder.] Very well, now Sigh. [She Sighs.]  
Now drop your Fan a purpose. [She drops her Fan.]  
Now take it up again.

And a few lines further he says:

Cry then Hansonly, cry like a Queen in a Tragedy. [She pretending to Cry, bursts out a Laughing.]<sup>7</sup>

Obviously many of the people in the audience also burst out "a laughing," except, of course, the précieuses who were present. This note was not appealing, especially to précieuse ladies, who believed in the powers of sighs, tears, side glances, and so forth, to charm a lover. The ladies also anticipated results from these airs and postures; for the lover was expected to laud his mistress to the skies, prostrate himself, and beg for a condescending glance from his mistress. Let us observe the difference in effect which whining love addresses have had upon Dorinda and Mrs. Sullen in Farquhar's Beaux Stratagem. It is not difficult to see that, in the following dialogue, the ladies who practiced préciosité would sympathize with Dorinda.

Dor. --What did your Fellow say to'ye?  
Mrs. Sull. My Fellow took the Picture of Venus for mine.  
Dor. But my Lover took me for Venus her self.  
Mrs. Sull. Common Cant! had my Spark call'd me a Venus directly, I shou'd have believ'd him a Footman in good earnest.  
Dor. But my Lover was upon his Knees to me.  
Mrs. Sull. And mine was upon his Tiptoes to me.  
Dor. Mine vow'd to die for me.  
Mrs. Sull. Mine swore to die with me.  
Dor. Mine spoke the softest moving things.  
Mrs. Sull. Mine had his moving things too.  
Dor. Mine kiss'd my Hand Ten thousand times.  
Mrs. Sull. Mine has all that Pleasure to come.  
Dor. Mine offer'd Marriage.  
Mrs. Sull. O lard! D'ye call that a moving thing?<sup>8</sup>

The ultimate goal of the distressed heroine was to marry the lover of her choice, but her précieuse standards complicated matters. Her lover must satisfy the qualifications of her refinement. His soul must be something above the average sort, for the distressed heroine regarded her own soul with pride and often exulted in comparing it with the common souls of

other people. Cloris, for example, in Mrs. Behn's Amorous Prince; or, The Curious Husband (1671) compares her soul with that of Guillian, a clown.

What a dull Soul this Fellow hath?  
 Sure it can never feel the generous Pains  
 Of Love, as mine does now; oh, how I glory  
 To find my Heart above the common rate!  
 Were not my Prince inconstant,  
 I would not envy what the Blessed do above:  
 But he is false, good Heaven!--[Weeps.<sup>9</sup>

The mere fact that her lover was a rake did not prevent the distressed heroine from finding in him a soul that corresponded to her own. His infidelity, however, often occasioned her distress; for her own refined soul gave her pretensions to nobility, if not in rank at least in temperament, and the very nobleness of her emotions made her scorn emotions of a baser sort. When Angelica in Farquhar's Constant Couple; or, A Trip to the Jubilee admits to Lady Darling that, of all men, Sir Harry Wildair is capable of pleasing her most, she is quick to add that his conduct endangers her nobility.

--but, Madam, in sight of Love I  
 must hate him, and curse those  
 Practices which taint our Nobility, and  
 rob all vertuous Women of the bravest  
 Men---<sup>10</sup>

The distressed heroine based her pretensions to nobility not only on her refinement of soul and her temperamental superiority, but also on her capacity to respond to the ennobling emotions of serious love. She could pick her lover-to-be from a crowd of total strangers with unerring accuracy. She might spot him any number of places--at a public gathering, along a footpath, in church; the result, nevertheless, was love at first



sight. Mrs. Sullen in Farquhar's Beaux Stratagem is able to see the effects of this sudden love on Dorinda after the two have returned from church. Dorinda has seen Aimwell there for the first time, and she says to Mrs. Sullen, "Your hand, Sister, I an't well." Then she rhapsodizes about his air "that shone...like Rays about his Person."<sup>11</sup> Dorinda is typical of the distressed heroine regarding the effects upon her of love at first sight; these effects took various forms, sometimes as a trembling or some other physical irritability. Under similar conditions Camilla in Maidwell's Loving Enemies (1680) sees Marcello in church and conceives a violent love for him. When they meet, she tells him:

My birth and fortune equal yours  
 My honour's yet unblemisht in a thought,<sup>12</sup>  
 If I can love a man on earth 'tis you.

The passage above illustrates still another précieuse attitude, common to the heroine who had fallen violently in love. She believed that in all this world there was only one lover destined to be hers. This idea may be expanded to indicate that for every mistress there was only one fitting mate designed by heaven. It would seem as if a difficulty would exist in getting all the couples together, since the world was such a large place; but lovers had a solution for this problem. Since any pair of predestined lovers must have souls of corresponding fineness, they imagined that, through some strange powers, their souls were tuned to the same pitch. Through "sympathy," as they called it, they were able to communicate with each other despite the obstacles of time and space. The power of "sympathy" is expressed in the following lines from Pordage's Herod and Marianne (1673) wherein Tyridates claims that he can feel Arsanes' distress, although she is at some distance from him.

The Trembling of my Soul her ills express.  
 By secret Concord Lutes when tun'd alike;  
 One trembling move, if you the other strike.  
 Thus my tun'd Heart by sympathy of Love  
 Does at those ills she feels, though distant, move.<sup>13</sup>

We might also observe a portion of a song which Leante, disguised as a page, addresses to Roebuck in Farquhar's Love and a Bottle (1698), the import of which is "sympathy."

Were you not false, you me wou'd know;  
For tho' your Eyes  
Cou'd not devise,  
Your heart had told you so.  
Your heart wou'd beat  
With eager heat,  
And me by Sympathy wou'd find;  
True Love might see  
One chang'd like me,  
False Love is only blind.<sup>14</sup>

Since each mistress was allotted only one lover in all the world, it follows that she turned all her energies toward him. The distressed heroine, for example, frequently made vows of eternal constancy to her mate. Constancy to her did not mean the chastity recommended for Christians by St. Paul. A Christian might remarry when one of the partners died, but the distressed heroine and her lover were bound to each other ad aeternitatem. In Farquhar's Constant Couple; or, A Trip to the Jubilee is found a good illustration of the vows and attitudes of two "romantic" lovers. Lady Lurewell tells her maid Parly of a former lover.

After all the binding Oaths of  
 Constancy, joyning Hands, exchanging  
 Hearts, I gave him a Ring with this  
 Motto, Love and Honour, then we  
 parted; but I never saw the dear  
 Deceiver more.<sup>15</sup>

As a matter of fact, Lady Lurewell did see her "deceiver" again. It turned out that he had not deserted her at all, but had merely been unable to find her. At the end of the play the two lovers' vows were reaffirmed, and they were presumably married. Usually, the heroine never lost faith in her vows of constancy. In fact she often prated of her constancy,<sup>16</sup> for she considered it to be another mark of her superiority.

The heroine also prated of other things, such as her innocence and the brightness of her mind. Both of these qualities and others like them stemmed from her firm belief that she was innately virtuous. Her virtue, she believed, was part of her make-up at birth. Even Lady Lurewell in Farquhar's Constant Couple; or, A Trip to the Jubilee, who has admittedly been led astray from virtue's path, tells her maid Parly that

...tho' a Woman swear, forswear, lie,  
dissemble, backbite, be proud, vain,  
malitious, any thing, if she secures  
the main Chance, she's still virtuous.  
That's a Maxim.<sup>17</sup>

The précieuse heroine, like Lady Lurewell, regarded her virtue as a "Maxim"; however, the précieuse heroine did not admit of any vain or malicious conduct. Her virtue was ever present as an integral part of her; consequently, she was conscious of certain powers which she possessed as a result of her moral perfection. She could, for example, cause a raging soldier to be transformed into a character of unspotted virtue like herself. Let us observe Angelica's high-flown speech in Farquhar's Constant Couple; or, A Trip to the Jubilee. She addresses Sir Harry Wildair:

What Madness, Sir Harry, what wild  
Dream of loose Desire could prompt you  
to attempt this Baseness? View me well.  
—The Brightness of my Mind, methinks,

should lighten outwards, and let you  
 see your Mistake in my Behaviour. I  
 think it shines with so much Innocence  
 in my Face, that it shou'd dazzle all  
 your vicious Thoughts: Think not  
 I am defenceless 'cause alone. Your very  
 self is Guard against your self: I'm sure  
 there's something generous in your Soul;  
 My Words shall search it out, and  
 Eyes shall fire it for my own Defence.<sup>18</sup>

Angelica, like other distressed heroines, takes the brightness of her mind and her innocence for granted. Even Wildair, a confirmed rake, is aware of the "commanding Innocence in her looks."<sup>19</sup> It is this same virtue which leads Standard, in the same play, to exclaim that his mistress has "Beauty to tempt all Mankind, and Virtue to beat off their Assaults."<sup>20</sup>

Her principles of virtue caused the distressed heroine to express herself on other occasions. Since she was truly "platonic" in her detestation of any physical irregularities, she quite naturally exclaimed against intemperance of any sort. Angelica in Farquhar's Constant Couple; or, A Trip to the Jubilee tells her lover:

Drunkenness, Sir Harry, is the  
 worst Pretence a Gentleman can make  
 for Rudeness: For the Excuse is as  
 scandalous as the Fault:—<sup>21</sup>

Angelica's lecture serves possibly two functions: it allows her to exhibit her own lofty scorn for Sir Harry's weakness, and it also gives her an opportunity to moralize. The distressed heroine was quite desirous to reform those around her or at least to lecture to them about their evil ways. Angelica further shows her zeal when she informs Alderman Smuggler that if he would reform the times, he should be less rigid in his precepts and more strict in his example.<sup>22</sup> Anyone, it is true, might abhor bad conduct, such as drunkenness or lust; but the distressed heroine had her

own special reasons. Her notions of superiority, her "platonic" idealism placed her above such gross actions.

Another mark of the distressed heroine was her conventionality. She conducted herself on all occasions in accordance with the highest and most approved social standards. Angelica shows her regard for modesty in Farquhar's Constant Couple; or, A Trip to the Jubilee when she tells her mother:

Tho Modesty, Madam, may Wink,  
It must not Sleep, when powerful  
Enemies are abroad--23

In the Restoration period the theme of love and honor extended from tragedy into comedy, and was there often associated with propriety. Leante in Farquhar's Love and a Bottle shows much concern for the honor of her virtue and her family when she apologizes to her brother Lovewell for her conduct.

I beg you to pardon the effects of  
violent passion, which has driven me  
into some imprudent Actions; But none  
such as may blot the honour of my  
Vertue, or Family.<sup>24</sup>

The distressed heroine was quite vociferous on the subject of honor, especially in regard to her reputation or that of her family. Angelica, therefore, in Farquhar's Constant Couple; or, A Trip to the Jubilee quite naturally transfers her own regard for honor and family reputation to Sir Harry Wildair's father and mother when she pleads with him:

I conjure you, Sir, by the sacred  
Name of Honour, by your dead Father's  
Name, and the fair Reputation of  
your Mother's Chastity, that you offer  
not the least Offence. —Already  
you have wrong'd me past Redress.<sup>25</sup>



The distressed heroine also showed a tender regard for the reputation of her own chastity. Perhaps the most dangerous trial to her chastity was her assuming the disguise of a boy to follow her lover incognito. The device of disguise was commonly accepted in Elizabethan romantic comedy,<sup>26</sup> and Restoration dramatists also frequently employed it. One should note, however, that Restoration dramatists, among whom Farquhar was no exception, were usually careful to show that the disguised heroine was chaperoned to bed by another female or in some other way protected from losing her maidenhead. The "romantic" heroine of Restoration comedy seldom hesitated to disguise herself; however, once the male clothing was donned, she was most anxious either to apologize for her lack of propriety or to defend her disguise. One should observe the association of the disguised heroine with "romantic" in the following passage from Farquhar's Recruiting Officer.

- Sil. Do you think it strange, Cousin,  
that a Woman should change? But,  
I hope, you'll excuse a Change that  
has proceeded from Constancy; I  
alter'd my Outside, because I was the  
same within, and only laid by the Woman  
to make sure of my Man; that's my History.  
Mel. Your History is a little romantick, Cousin....<sup>27</sup>

Often the heroine shows more concern than Silvia over the unfavorable attitude which others will take toward her disguise. Thus Celestina in Killigrew's Seege of Urbin (1666) expresses her fears to Fernando.

- I wish that I could die, thus  
happy, before the Duke does  
finde his Florio is a counter-  
feite! -- I feare. --  
--His honour will engage him to despise,  
A wandring woman, is so strange disguise.  
Fernando. Lay by thy fears, and put on  
such a hope as will become thy

Vertue, and thy Birth; this Romance  
will end well....<sup>28</sup>

Although the distressed heroine sometimes reverted to male disguise, she felt that it was not the proper thing to do. Leante, for instance, in Farquhar's Love and a Bettle shows self-reproach for the crime of wearing male costume. This was characteristic of the distressed heroine with pretensions to modesty and honor.

Enter Leante Sola, dress'd like a Page.  
Methinks this Livery suits ill my Birth; but  
slave to Love, I must not disobey; his service  
is the hardest Vassalage, forcing the Powers  
Divine to lay their Godships down, to be more  
Gods, more happy here below. Thus I, poor  
Wanderer, have left my Country, disguis'd my  
self so much, I hardly know whether this  
Habit or my Love be blindest; to follow  
one, perhaps, that loves me not, the every  
breath of his soft words was Passion,  
and every accent Love. Oh Reebuck! [Weeps.]<sup>29</sup>

Leante's tears express an overflow of emotion which is common to almost all distressed heroines. Their tears were expressions of self-pity caused by the misfortunes of love. Upon any occasion, the heroine was capable of lamenting her fate either with or without tears. In both cases, she was the victim of a relentless world. It is not worthwhile to count the tears in Restoration comedy; however, it is interesting to note some of the examples of the distressed heroine's self-pity. She felt somehow that her whole sex was mistreated. In Crowne's Courtrey Wit (1675) Christina importunes Ramble:

Oht use not that empire nature has  
given you over poor women's hearts  
too tyrannically. Consider we are  
poor, soft, loving things, and a  
little cruelty will kill us.<sup>30</sup>

Self-pity might lead the distressed heroine to go even further and blame heaven for all the ills of womankind. Thus Otrante in Rhodes' Flora's Vagaries (1670) laments:

O Heavens! how wretched have you made the  
state of Women, you make us fair but yet  
that Jewel Beauty, you set so deep on foils  
on misery, as if you strait were angry  
at your selves, that you had moulded  
those your features lovely, you make  
us subject to our Parents humours, when  
Maids, when marryed, to our Husband's  
wills, and yet in either State such  
your Decrees you plant in us a will  
to disobey

Vertue must bear me up, and thanks to Fate,  
I can be good, although unfortunate.<sup>31</sup>

We find a parallel example of woman's bemoaning the fate of all her sex in Farquhar's Constant Couple; or, A Trip to the Jubilee. Angelica is alone and seems almost overcome with self-pity, although she appears to lament the "State of Woman" rather than her own state.

Unhappy State of Woman! whose chief Virtue  
is but Ceremony, and our much boasted  
Modesty but a slavish Restraint. The  
strict confinement on our Words makes  
our Thoughts ramble more; and what  
preserves our outward Fame, destroys our  
inward Quiet. -- 'Tis hard that Love  
shou'd be deny'd the privilege of Hatred;  
that Scandal and Detraction shou'd  
be so much indulg'd, yet sacred Love  
and Truth debarr'd our Conversation.<sup>32</sup>

Self-pity is again the occasion for the following monologue of Leanthé in Farquhar's Love and a Bottle; however, Leanthé's complaint of misery is not offered this time for womankind but for her own personal misfortunes.

Hold, Fortune, hold; thou hast entirely  
won; for I am lost. Thus long I  
have been rock'd on thy tormenting  
Wheel, and now my Heart-strings

break. Discovering who I am exposes  
me to shame. Then what on Earth  
can help me?<sup>33</sup>

Perhaps the one thing which relieved the distressed heroine most in her pity was the pity itself. At first glance, this statement, no doubt, seems paradoxical. The fact is that the heroine found joy in grief; therefore, when she cultivated grief, she felt a corresponding sense of joy. When Mrs. Manly in The Mistaken Husband (1675) discovers that her father Learcutt is annoyed by her melancholy, she protests:

This is the height of Tyranny, to chase away  
My Comfort, and deny the pleasure of my Grief too.<sup>34</sup>

But perhaps the most typical attitudes of the grieving distressed heroine are found in Farquhar's Twin Rivals. Constance, accompanied by Aurelia, finds a picture, left by her lover Hermes, whom she believes to be dead. Her reaction is characteristic of the heroine who finds joy in grief.

Con. What's here: [Takes up the Picture]  
Ha! see Cousin -- the very Face  
and Features of the Man! Sure some  
officious Angel has brought me  
this for a Companion in my Solitude.  
--- Now I'm fitted out for Sorrow  
With this I'll sigh, with this converse,  
gaze on his Image till I grow blind  
with weeping.  
Au. I'm amaz'd! how came it here!  
Con. Whether by Miracle or humane Chance,  
'tis all alike; I have it here: Nor shall  
it ever separate from my Breast.--It  
is the only thing cou'd give me Joy;  
because it will increase my Grief.<sup>35</sup>

The distressed heroine showed little desire to be original. When she was in doubt concerning a point of conduct, she referred to the romances. The females of heroic romance furnished her with innumerable examples of

sighs, tears, side glances, attitudes, and postures. Her notions of superiority she also took from the heroines of romance. Her every move, in short, was prescribed for her either by the romances or by ladies who practiced préciosité. Her mediocre intelligence led her to depend upon fate and the ingenuity of others. One might say that the distressed heroine, for most practical purposes, was also a helpless heroine.

She was perfectly capable of talking, though; and she enjoyed hearing the sound of her own voice in her frequent laments of her misfortunes or in her lectures to others. Her lover's speeches she enjoyed also; he need not make sense so long as he spoke of love in a high-flown manner. The distressed heroine was impressionable, even gullible; she took for granted her lover's assurances that she was a "saint" and a "goddess." With this high praise in mind, it was quite easy for her to make other naive assumptions about her innocence, her virtue, the refinement of her soul, and particularly her ability to use her superior powers to convert evil men into new characters of shining virtue like her own. She also assumed that she was capable of reducing raging soldiers to the humble posture of whining lovers. Her power to convert is the primary theme of précieuse gallantry, which centers around the female character. She, in turn, is the principal figure in Restoration comedy. Her counterpart, the male lover, is but her satellite; and his subservient role as a précieuse lover is the subject of Chapter Four.



## Notes to Chapter III

1. The heroine may deviate from the strict forms of précieuse gallantry. If she does this to any great extent, it may be that she cannot be properly called a distressed heroine. I shall refer to the heroine as distressed only when I am reasonably sure of her status; otherwise, I shall call her only the heroine when citing examples wherein she does adhere to the forms of précieuse gallantry. For a full treatment of the distressed heroine see Berkeley's "Origins of Sentimental Drama," Chapter III.

2. George Farquhar, Love and a Bottle, Act V, Scene i, Complete Works, I, 63.

3. George Farquhar, The Inconstant; or, The Way to Win Him, Act I, Scene i, Complete Works, I, 227. See also George Farquhar, The Beaux Stratagem, Act III, Scene i, Complete Works, II, 144.

4. Ibid., Act IV, Scene ii, p. 255.

5. William Davenant, The Man's the Master, Act II, Scene i, Dramatic Works, V, 27.

6. Henry Higden, The Wary Widow; or, Sir Noisy Parrot (London, 1693), Act III, pp. 25-26.

7. George Farquhar, The Inconstant; or, The Way to Win Him, Act IV, Scene iii, Complete Works, I, 258.

8. George Farquhar, The Beaux Stratagem, Act IV, Scene i, Complete Works, II, 169-170.

9. Aphra Behn, The Amorous Prince; or, The Curious Husband, (1671), Act III, Scene ii, Works, IV, 167-168.

10. George Farquhar, The Constant Couple; or, A Trip to the Jubilee, Act V, Scene i, Complete Works, I, 139.

11. George Farquhar, The Beaux Stratagem, Act III, Scene i, Complete Works, II, 143-144.

12. Lewis Maidwell, The Loving Enemies (London, 1680), Act III, p. 34.

13. Samuel Pordage, Herod and Marianna (London, 1673), Act V, p. 57.

14. George Farquhar, Love and a Bottle, Act III, Scene i, Complete Works, I, 36.

15. George Farquhar, The Constant Couple; or, A Trip to the Jubilee, Act III, Scene iv, Complete Works, I, 127. See Also George Farquhar, Sir Harry Wildair, Act III, Scene ii, Complete Works, I, 189.

16. George Farquhar, Love and a Bottle, Act III, Scene i, Complete Works, I.
17. George Farquhar, The Constant Couple; or, A Trip to the Jubilee, Act I, Scene ii, Complete Works, I, 101.
18. Ibid., Act V, Scene i, pp. 140-141.
19. Ibid., Act II, Scene ii, p. 106. See also George Farquhar, Love and a Bottle, Act IV, Scene iv, Complete Works, I, 61.
20. George Farquhar, The Constant Couple; or, A Trip to the Jubilee, Act I, Scene i, Complete Works, I, 95.
21. Ibid., Act V, Scene i, p. 140.
22. Ibid., Act V, Scene iii, p. 151.
23. Ibid., Act V, Scene i, p. 139.
24. George Farquhar, Love and a Bottle, Act V, Scene iii, Complete Works, I, 70.
25. George Farquhar, The Constant Couple; or, A Trip to the Jubilee, Act V, Scene i, Complete Works, I, 140.
26. The disguised heroine in romantic comedy is a common occurrence. In Shakespeare, for example, we find Viola in Twelfth Night, Rosalind in As You Like It, and Portia in The Merchant of Venice, all appearing in disguise.
27. George Farquhar, The Recruiting Officer, Act V, Scene vi, Complete Works, II, 108-109.
28. William Killigrew, The Siege of Urbin, Act IV, Four New Plays (Oxford, 1666), p. 41.
29. George Farquhar, Love and a Bottle, Act III, Scene i, Complete Works, I, 33.
30. John Crowne, The Country Wit (1675), Act III, The Dramatic Works of John Crowne, ed. James Maidment and W. H. Logan (London, 1874), III, 61-62.
31. Richard Rhodes, Flora's Vagaries (London, 1670), Act I, p. 7.
32. George Farquhar, The Constant Couple; or, A Trip to the Jubilee, Act III, Scene ii, Complete Works, I, 119.
33. George Farquhar, Love and a Bottle, Act V, Scene i, Complete Works, I, 65.
34. Anon., The Mistaken Husband (London, 1675), Act I, p. 1.
35. George Farquhar, The Twin Rivals, Act III, Scene iii, Complete Works, I, 324-325.

## Chapter IV

### The Whining Lover

The hero in Restoration comedy, like the heroine, was a stock character. For our purpose we may say that he existed in two different forms: either as the whining lover who was a model of préciosité or as the rake or villain who ridiculed the forms of précieuse gallantry. Both types of lovers practiced précieuse gallantry, with the chief difference being that the whining lover used it with sincerity while the rake used it with open or underlying scorn, and usually as a tool to seduce lovely maidens. In this chapter our attention will be primarily focused on the whining lover.<sup>1</sup>

If one were to form a mental picture of the whining lover and his mistress in a typical scene, the general outline would probably resemble the following: The heroine stood proudly elevated on a pedestal, and her lover was prostrated before her in his typical whining fashion. She bestowed on him a glance of cold disdain; however, one senses in her look a certain pleasure, an almost exultant consciousness of unconquerable superiority mellowed only by her long suffering for love. What of the cringing fellow at her feet? Alas, he was consumed with love and with a sense of his own inadequacy. This beauty at whose feet he groveled he recognized as his "goddess," his "bright divinity." Let us concern ourselves with this précieuse gallant, insignificant though he appeared beside his female counterpart; for he exhibited a number of précieuse characteristics, such as kneeling, sighing, vowing, swearing, and so forth.

The whining lover, being thus prone to externalize his feelings, went into raptures on the subject of his love. Like his mistress, he was

inspired by the fineness of his soul to seek a lover, and by means of "sympathy" to determine whether her heart and soul were in tune with his own. The whining lover had little time, however, to glorify himself; for once in love, his conscious aim was to worship his mistress. He too studied the forms of love, which he found in the romances. Thus Gertrude in Shadwell's Bury-Fair (1689) anticipates Bellamy's précieuse address almost before he starts it.

Bell. I never lov'd Before; nor can I believe  
that any Man loves like me.

Gert. 'Tis all alike. "Madam, your Beauties!  
your excellent Accomplishments! your  
extraordinary Merits! Divine, etc.  
The lustre of "[sic] your Eyes! and  
the rest. The honour to kiss your  
fair hands! etc. All this we have  
in Romances, and Love and Honour Plays.  
Trust me, my Lord, 'tis tedious."<sup>2</sup>

The male lover had several of these stock phrases which he employed. His mistress's accomplishments, merits, eyes, and the rest, provided him with any number of possibilities for rapturing. Sometimes he indulged similitudes like the following used by Sir Harry Wildair to address Angelica in Farquhar's Constant Couple; or, A Trip to the Jubilee.

Angel. Hold, Sir,—one Question, Sir Harry, and  
pray answer plainly, d'ye love me?

Wild. Love you! Does Fire ascend? Do  
Hypocrites Dissemble? Usurers love  
Gold, or Great Men Flattery? Doubt  
these, then question that I Love.

Angel. This shows your Gallantry, Sir, but  
not your Love.<sup>3</sup>

The lover's frequent remarks about his mistress's eyes suggest that they were her chief weapons. We have previously noted that the heroine was said to have "killing" eyes. Roebuck in Farquhar's Love and a Bottle

claims to have been wounded by the "painted Darts" of Lucinda's eyes. He tells her of his love:

Love, like my Blood, circulates thro'  
my Veins, and at every pulse of my  
heart animates me with fresh  
Passion. --Wonder not, Madam, at  
the power of your Eyes, whose painted  
Darts have struck on a young and  
tender heart which they easily pierced,  
and which unacustom'd to such  
wounds finds the smart more painful.<sup>4</sup>

After the "glorious" eyes of his mistress had wounded him, the whining lover was then prepared to "die" at her feet. His wounded heart pained him to the extent that he often expressed himself as Osman typically does to Ismael in Mrs. Manley's Royal Mischief (1696).

Osman. What boots is thus to drag a wretched being,  
A Lifeless Lump, without one ray of hope;  
By Heav'n, I'll lay me down and breath my Soul  
In sighs, at my too cruel Sovereigns feet;  
There grasp with my cold hands her flying  
Beauties, till I have urg'd her glorious Eyes  
To shed some pitying Tears.

Ismael. Rouse up your self, and bear you like a Man,  
The Lord of Woman kind, born to Command  
That Sex which we intreat, but when we whine  
At your romantick rate, we move not love,  
But scorn, they like the forward and the  
bold....<sup>5</sup>

The whining lover's position, like Osman's, was typically at his "too cruel Sovereigns feet." There he must kneel and swear, both of which Lady Lurewell in Farquhar's Sir Harry Wildair termed "Unnatural Stuff!"<sup>6</sup> Farquhar also makes sport of the business of kneeling in his Recruiting Officer when he has Plume tell Worthy that he will make love like a platoon, meaning that he will fire a volley of postures at his mistress.<sup>7</sup> Worthy asks:



A Platoon! how's that?  
Plume. I'll kneel, stoop and stand,  
 Faith; most Ladies are gain'd  
 by Platooning.<sup>8</sup>

The "Platooning" technique, however, was not sufficient in itself. The lover must also be prepared to display his emotions throughout his whining address. He must, at least, offer to express his emotions as Count Bellair does in Farquhar's Beaux Stratagem when he kneels before his mistress.

--Here will I fix; [Kneels] With  
 Tears, Vows, and Prayers assault  
 your Heart, and never rise till  
 you surrender....<sup>9</sup>

Count Bellair assumes, of course, that his mistress will surrender shortly and release him from his promise never to rise. One can picture his discomfort if his pleas have no more effect than those of Worthy in the following passage from Farquhar's Recruiting Officer. He tells Melinda:

Sure, Madam, you won't dispute  
 your being in my Debt--  
 My Fears, Sighs, Vows, Promises,  
 Assiduities, Anxieties, Jealousies,  
 have run on for a whole Year,  
 without any Payment.<sup>10</sup>

Many Restoration people were offended by the antics of the whining lover. They labelled his sighs, vows, promises, and so forth, as a form of idolatry. In fact, the whole vogue of préciosité was indicted on the grounds of its idolatrous forms. Notable among writers who held this view was Jeremy Collier. The following quotation from his Short View penetrates to the heart of the styles of précieuse gallantry.

And then as for the General Strains of Courtship, there can be nothing more Profane and extravagant. The Heroe's Mistress is no less than his Deity. She disposes of his Reason, prescribes his Motions, and Commands his Interest. What Sovereign Respect, what Religious Address, what Idolizing Raptures are we pester'd with? Shrines and Offerings, and Adorations, are nothing upon such solemn Occasions. Thus Love and Devotion, Ceremony and Worship, are Confounded; And God, and his Creatures treated both alike! These Shreds of Distraction are often brought from the Play-House into Conversation: And thus the Sparks are taught to Court their Mistresses, in the same Language they say their Prayers.<sup>11</sup>

One need only to examine the forms of précieuse gallantry to see that Collier and others were justified in calling it "idolatry." In its formalized aspects, préciosité resembled papistry. Each had its saints: the précieuse saint was ennobled by love, and the Catholic saint was canonized. Each had its formal rules of worship: its prescribed postures, its oaths, promises, prayers, and vows. The précieuse lover's vows, as we have observed, were even more binding than the Christian vows. Each had also its penances and conversions. Précieuse gallantry, in short, was a religion in itself. If, therefore, one finds in Restoration drama or in earlier drama a reference to one's mistress as a "Saint," a "Goddess," or an "Angel," he will know that the author was associating précieuse gallantry with religion. In the following passage from Farquhar's Beaux Stratagem, for example, Archer treats Mrs. Sullen as he would a saint.

If this be Impudence [Kneels]  
I leave to your partial self; no  
panting Pilgrim after a tedious,  
painful Voyage e'er bow'd before  
his Saint with more Devotion.<sup>12</sup>

Hermes in Farquhar's Twin Rivals compares Constance in a similar manner to angels. He has just returned to her after a long absence.

[Goes to Constance, takes her Hand and kneels. Here let me worship that Perfection, whose Vertue might attract the listning Angels, and make 'em smile to see such Purity, so like themselves in humane shape.<sup>13</sup>

The lover's deification of his mistress did not always compare her to Christian saints or angels. The pagan goddesses served just as well. The name of the deity or the religion with which she was associated mattered little so long as the speech was eloquent and "romantic." Ainswell, for instance, in Farquhar's Deaux Stratagem raptures to Dorinda in purely pagan terms. He has pretended to faint in order to gain entrance to her house, and speaks as though just awakening:

Where am I? [Rising.  
 Sure I have pass'd the Gulph of silent Death,  
 And now I land on the Elisian Shore—  
 Behold the Goddess of those happy Plains,  
 Fair Proserpine—let me adore thy bright Divinity.  
[Kneels to Dorinda and kisses her Hand.<sup>14</sup>

The whining lover, like his distressed mistress, was not given to individualistic love-making. His idolatrous attitude toward his lover showed little or no originality; he accepted his précieuse role and that of his mistress without question. Only a genuine whining lover could remark like Lovewell in Farquhar's Love and a Bottle that his mistress's virtue is so sacred "that 'tis a piece of Atheism to distrust its Existence."<sup>15</sup> Roebuck, the rake, laughs at this "innate Principle of Vertue" in the same play.<sup>16</sup> One might conclude from the opposite attitudes taken toward virtue by Lovewell and Roebuck that the whining lover was essentially naive, or perhaps gullible, whereas the rake only appeared to be gullible to gain his ends. In general this is true, but one should observe that both whining lover and rake became cringing slaves and "whined at a

romantick rate" to please their female "charmer." The main difference between the two lay in the fact that the whining lover was consistently virtuous throughout the play, while the rake was debauched throughout the play, that is until the last act. Usually in the fifth act, the rake was converted; the circumstances leading to his transformation to virtue form the body of the following chapter.

## Notes to Chapter IV

1. The rake will be the center of attention in the next chapter entitled "Conversions." his greatest contribution to précieuse gallantry was his remarkable conversion to virtuous ways in the last act of the play. The passages quoted in this Chapter may be spoken either by rakes or by whining lovers. Each passage, however, exhibits some form of whining love regardless of speaker.

2. Thomas Shadwell, Bury-Fair (1689), Act III, Scene i, Complete Works, IV, 339.

3. George Farquhar, The Constant Couple; or, A Trip to the Jubilee, Act III, Scene ii, Complete Works, I, 120.

4. George Farquhar, Love and a Bottle, Act III, Scene i, Complete Works, I, 37.

5. Mary Manley, The Royal Mischief (London, 1696), Act II, Scene i, pp. 9-10.

6. George Farquhar, Sir Harry Wildair, Act III, Scene ii, Complete Works, I, 189.

7. WED states that Farquhar used "platoon" in the transferred sense meaning: "A number of shots fired simultaneously by a platoon or body of men; a volley."

8. George Farquhar, The Recruiting Officer, Act III, Scene ii, Complete Works, II, 74.

9. George Farquhar, The Beaux Stratagem, Act III, Scene iii, Complete Works, II, 157.

10. George Farquhar, The Recruiting Officer, Act V, Scene iii, Complete Works, II, 98. See also George Farquhar, The Constant Couple; or, A Trip to the Jubilee, Act III, Scene iv, Complete Works, I, 127.

11. Jeremy Collier, A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage (London, 1699), 4th ed., pp. 182-183.

12. George Farquhar, The Beaux Stratagem, Act V, Scene ii, Complete Works, II, 178.

13. George Farquhar, The Twin Rivals, Act III, Scene iii, Complete Works, I, 325. For an example of ridicule of the posturing of the whining lover see Ibid., Act V, Scene iv, p. 347.

14. George Farquhar, The Beaux Stratagem, Act IV, Scene i, Complete Works, II, 163-164.

15. George Farquhar, Love and a Bottle, Act IV, Scene iii, Complete Works, I, 56.

16. Ibid., p. 57.



## Chapter V

### Précieuse Conversions

The forms of précieuse gallantry are based on the "platonic" idea of conversion or, more specifically, the idea that virtuous and beautiful women have within themselves a power or a "charm" by which wild men might be tamed and villains reclaimed to virtue.<sup>1</sup> The general pattern was that the rake suddenly repented of his worldly ways, usually in the fifth act. Conversions were not a novelty in Restoration drama. Such fifth-act repentances frequently occurred in English domestic tragedy until the closing of the theatres in 1642, and were designed to dramatize popular religious views by showing a sinner seeking before his death to win not earthly but divine forgiveness.<sup>2</sup>

The penitent rake in Restoration comedy was also seeking forgiveness, but of an earthly sort. For a heavenly deity he substituted a mortal female "goddess," and at her feet he became in a trice a docile lamb. Usually he gave no warning for this sudden transformation. Perhaps the most startling conversion in Restoration comedy, which serves as an excellent example of the rake's "lightning switch," occurs in John Smith's Cytherea; or, The Enamouring Girdle (1677). Here we find Tibullus attempting in an eloquent manner to seduce Mariana. The heavy stage direction is worth noticing.

Tib. Now blushing thoughts of honor lay aside:  
For cursed time is imminent at hand  
When your sleek linen-covering call'd a Smock  
Will not invite a Student in loves morale  
To lay it on his Knee--then--now or never  
Hold fast the lock of time.--Will nothing move?  
Mar. Yes--if you banish lust, and sue for love.

Tib. Tempt me no more, voluptuous Appetite  
 Go—seek another mansion to inhabit  
 With thy licentious train, this room I vow  
 A dedicated fane to Mariana  
 For my conversion; penitence shall hallow  
 And expiate her Temple till it be  
 Within as innocent and white as she.<sup>3</sup>

His Courtship  
proves  
honourable  
on a  
sudden.

Although Tibullus' conversion is an extreme example, it is not inconsistent with préciosité. Ordinarily the reformed rake required more than nine words of advice from his mistress to melt his heart; but, nevertheless, his response was similar to that of Tibullus.

Farquhar in his comedies has five of these précieuse conversions and one quasi-conversion. His rakes are reformed by women, and more particularly by the influence of their goodness, virtue, love, or beauty. Qualities such as these set précieuse heroines above other people and caused repentent lovers like Alcippus in Mrs. Behn's Forc'd Marriage; or, The Jealous Bridegroom (1671) to soliloquize about their mistresses. In the following passage Alcippus regards Erminia as nothing less than sacred.

...She was all sacred; and that impious Hand  
 That had profanely touch'd her,  
 Had wither'd from the Body.  
 —I lov'd her—I ador'd her, and could I,  
 Could I approach her with unhallowed thoughts?  
 —No, no, I durst not—<sup>4</sup>

Aimwell in Farquhar's Beaux Stratagem, after a similar admission to himself that he cannot injure Dorinda, is converted by her goodness.

Such Goodness who cou'd injure; I find  
 my self unequal to the Task of Villain;  
 she has gain'd my Soul, and made  
 it honest like her own;—I cannot,  
 cannot hurt her. [Aside.]

He then speaks directly to Dorinda:

Madam, behold your Lover and your  
 Proselite, and judge of my Passion by  
 my Conversion.--I'm all a Lie, nor  
 dare I give a Fiction to your Arms;  
 I'm all Counterfeit except my Passion.<sup>5</sup>

It was characteristic of the reformed rake to confess to his former worthlessness, and he was perfectly honest in his admission of guilt. Such quasi-conversions as Mirabel's, therefore, in the fourth act of Farquhar's Inconstant; or, The Way to Win Him should be disregarded. In this play, Mirabel's lover Oriana has counterfeited a nun's role to bring about his conversion. He goes to her disguised as a priest, and upon discovering his true identity says:

No, my fair Angel, but let me Repent;  
 here on his knees behold the Criminal,  
 that vows Repentance his. Ha! No  
 concern upon her!<sup>6</sup>

Mirabel's final remark: "Ha! No concern upon her!" attests to the falseness of his repentance. He is made a genuine convert, however, in the fifth act, although his reasons are not all typical. Oriana, disguised as a page, has saved his life. He promises her anything she wishes as a reward, and she chooses him for a husband. After she discovers her true identity to him, he addresses her in the following manner:

Caught! I scorn the thought of Imposition,  
 the tricks and artful Cunning of the  
 Sex I have despis'd, and broke thro' all  
 Contrivance. Caught! No, 'tis my Voluntary  
 Act, this was no Humane Stratagem, But  
 by my providential Stars designed to  
 show the Dangers, wandring Youth  
 Incurs by the persuit of an unlawful  
 Love, to plunge me headlong in the  
 snares of Vice, and then to free me by  
 the hands of Virtue, here on my knees  
 I humbly beg my fair preservers pardon,  
 my thanks are needless, for my self I owe,  
 And now for ever do protest me yours.<sup>7</sup>



I have espous'd all Goodness with Leante,  
 And am divorc'd from all my former Follies.  
Woman's our Fate. Wild and Unlawful Flames  
Debauch us first and softer Love reclaims.  
Thus Paradise was lost by Woman's Fall; 10  
But Vertuous Woman thus restores it all.

To see Roebuck thus reduced to repentance in couplets after being immune to a "plaguy Romantick humour" earlier in the play seems to make him anything but the soldier he is supposed to be. We should remember, however, that the précieuse heroine was able to convert raging soldiers into "whining platronics." In the case of Plume in Farquhar's Recruiting Officer, we see a man giving up a promising career in the army for his mistress. Let us observe Plume's preference for Silvia, even without her twelve hundred pounds a year. He addresses Ballance, Silva's father:

--Sir, my Liberty and hopes of  
 being a General are much dearer  
 to me than your twelve hundred  
 Pound a Year, but to your Love,  
 Madam, I resign my Freedom,  
 and to your Beauty, my Ambition;  
 greater in obeying at your Feet,  
 than Commanding at the Head of an Army. 11

Then at the conclusion of the play he adds:

I gladly quit, with my fair Spouse to stay,  
And raise Recruits the Matrimonial Way. 12

This softening of the rake from a lion to a lamb, from folly to virtue in a matter of seconds may seem somewhat strained to the modern reader. One should remember, however, that précieuse conversions stem from the "platonic" idea that man's mind and soul are good, while his body is evil. Applied to the rake, as well as the whining lover and the distressed heroine, this "platonic" notion is very revealing. It accounts for the

belief of the whining lover and distressed heroine in the fineness of their souls and their scorn for physical love. It accounts for their idealism and their belief in "sympathy" between two equally fine souls. The "platonic" idea also accounts for the rake's fifth-act repentance.

After all, the rake's soul was good and his mind bright. His base body may have been in the ascendant for a time; but at any given moment, his superior faculties could assert themselves and thus transform him to a model of benevolence. Restoration playgoers understood these conversions, even though some did not accept them. The audience quite expected statements like Angelica's in Farquhar's Constant Couple; or, A Trip to the Jubilee wherein she says to the rake Sir Harry Wildair: "I'm sure there's something generous in your Soul; My Words shall search it out, and Eyes shall fire it for my own Defence."<sup>13</sup> Sir Harry's subsequent conversion, as well as the other conversions in Farquhar's comedies, are not so inconceivable when viewed in terms of their précieuse background as they might be otherwise. A knowledge of précieuse gallantry, therefore, is necessary to explain not only the conversion of the rake, but also his words, attitudes, and postures, as well as the words, attitudes, and postures of the whining lover and distressed heroine.



## Notes to Chapter V

1. For a full discussion of the cult of "platonic" love see the essay entitled "Precieuses at the Court of Charles I" in J. B. Fletcher's The Religion of Beauty in Woman (New York, 1911), pp. 166-205.
2. Berkeley, p. 310.
3. John Smith, Cytherea; or, The Enamouring Girdle (London, 1677), Act II, p. 20.
4. Aphra Behn, The Forc'd Marriage; or, The Jealous Bridegroom (1671), Act V, Scene ii, Works, III, p. 366.
5. George Farquhar, The Beaux Stratagem, Act V, Scene iv, Complete Works, II, 185.
6. George Farquhar, The Inconstant; or, The Way to Win Him, Act IV, Scene ii, Complete Works, I, 255.
7. Ibid., Act V, Scene iv, p. 275.
8. See George Farquhar's preface to The Inconstant; or, The Way to Win Him, Complete Works, I, 221. In his preface Farquhar states, "...I took the hint [for The Inconstant] from Fletcher's Wild Goose Chase; and to those who say, that I have spoilt'd the Original, I wish no other injury but that they would say it again." Farquhar's fifth act is based on an actual adventure which befell the Chevalier de Chastillon, and this act is Farquhar's own addition to the play.
9. George Farquhar, The Constant Couple; or, A Trip to the Jubilee, Act V, Scene iii, Complete Works, I, 152.
10. George Farquhar, Love and a Bottle, Act V, Scene iii, Complete Works, I, 73.
11. George Farquhar, The Recruiting Officer, Act V, Scene vi, Complete Works, II, 108.
12. Ibid., p. 110.
13. George Farquhar, The Constant Couple; or, A Trip to the Jubilee, Act V, Scene i, Complete Works, I, 140-141.

## Conclusion

It is not my purpose in this work to elevate George Farquhar above other English dramatists. He was neither the best nor the worst, but he was able to fill the theatres during his brief career as a comic writer. His popularity, as well as that of Restoration dramatists in general, diminished after 1700; and nowadays one seldom is privileged to see a staging of his plays. He frequently employed forms in his comedy which are now obscure. The removal of this obscurity is, I think, justification for this thesis; for after all one can neither appreciate nor judge a thing which he does not understand. It has, therefore, been my purpose to elucidate Farquhar by explaining the use of précieuse material which abounds in his plays.

If the reader has looked for close parallels in modern society of the précieuse characters with their stereotyped methods of courtship, he may have been disappointed. He is incorrect, however, if he has assumed that précieuse gallantry is dead. Préciosité still exists, but often in disguise. One would hardly expect in our present society to see a man prostrated before his sweetheart in humble petition for a word of kindness or encouragement. But only a few years ago, in the decade of the 1920's, moviegoers thrilled to the "romantic" courtship of Rudolph Valentino in films like The Sheik and Blood and Sand.

In more recent years, moving pictures are still using another form of précieuse gallantry, namely, the conversion of the rake or villain. In Western films, especially, the villain often decides to leave off robbing stagecoaches and killing people to embrace the law, all because

of his fierce love for a rancher's daughter. If moving picture attendance records are any indication, the theme of conversion is every bit as popular now as it was during the Restoration.

Even the more reputable films often exhibit a villain or a rake as the hero. His misfortunes are blamed on society or his environment. He, like the Restoration rake, is thought to possess a fine soul, which has not been allowed to develop. For similar reasons modern society has difficulty in deciding whether a criminal is actually evil or whether his crime is the result of bad environment. If the man had been given a chance, society reasons, his innate goodness would have made him a useful citizen. The idea of man's innate goodness is obviously linked with préciosité and "platonic" philosophy, in strong contrast with the philosophy of Augustine, Luther, and Calvin, who held that man is totally depraved.

Another form of précieuse gallantry that is popular today is the idea of depicting the heroine in a play as completely virtuous. Here reference is made to radio "soap opera" in which the woman is the center of attention. She, like her ancestor, the distressed heroine, is a "goddess" around whom men circle like satellites; and she too is distressed by the cruel misfortunes of love.

It is doubtful whether most people realize the influence which mediæval courtly love and seventeenth-century préciosité has had on modern society. We too have our précieuse gallant, our distressed heroine, and our reformed rake in modified forms. Our hero may not use such eloquent posturings; but he is, nevertheless, a throwback to his Restoration brother. Our distressed heroine may differ slightly from her Restoration sister, but essentially she is the same matchless, superior beauty. When the modern reader learns to read and understand the préciosité in

Farquhar's comedy, he will not perhaps discover therein a guide to better living; but he will discover the Restoration equivalent of many précieuse notions which exist in our society today.

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