

LÉLIE  
What could I say?

MASCARILLE  
Things worse that way.  
Trufaldin you must see.

LÉLIE

MASCARILLE

LÉLIE  
Too much for me;  
More than I can stand.

MASCARILLE  
Offered purse in hand,  
Tried us to fret and muse  
Led by some sly ruse:  
Buy the slave, and thus  
Forestalling us.  
Gypsy family  
As security  
That his loan won't be repaid.  
We'll sell the maid  
Through and through.  
Bought for half a sou,  
To which he kneels.

LÉLIE

MASCARILLE

That your father feels  
A like regard for money, so that his treasure  
Is nothing you can draw on at your pleasure.  
In fact, I know of no purse in the land  
Likely to open up at your command.  
But let us seek to talk now with Célie,  
And find out what her sentiments may be. →  
Right there's her window.

LÉLIE

Trufaldin, night and day,  
Keeps watch upon her in a hawk-like way.  
Take care.

MASCARILLE

Let's hide, then, in this corner here.  
But look! What luck, that she should now appear!

Scene 3

Célie, Lélie, Mascarille.

*STAND*

LÉLIE

Ah, how I thank high Heaven, when I view  
The heavenly charms it has bestowed on you!  
Though by those eyes I have been all but slain,  
What joy it is to see them once again!

CÉLIE

My heart, which hears your words with some alarm,  
Would never wish my eyes to do men harm,  
And if in some way they have made you grieve,  
Please know that it was done without my leave.

LÉLIE

So sweetly have they pierced me that, I swear,  
I glory in the precious wounds I bear,  
And . . .

MASCARILLE

Sir, all this is a little too high-flown;  
Our business here requires a brisker tone.  
Let's quickly ask, before it is too late,  
How she . . .

TRUFALDIN

*(Within the house:)*  
Célie!

MASCARILLE

You see?

LÉLIE

O cruel fate!  
Why must that old ape interrupt us now?

MASCARILLE

Go, hide yourself; I'll handle him somehow.

Scene 4

*Trufaldin, Célie, Lélie hiding in a corner, Mascarille.*

TRUFALDIN

*(To Célie:)*  
What are you doing outside? As I recall,  
I bade you speak to no one, no one at all.

CÉLIE

I met this honest fellow years ago,  
And you need have no fears of him, I know.

MASCARILLE

Is this the famous Trufaldin?

CÉLIE

The same.

MASCARILLE

Sir, I rejoice to meet a man whose name  
Is spoken everywhere with reverence.  
Pray you, accept my humble compliments.

TRUFALDIN

Your servant.

MASCARILLE

I intrude here, I'm afraid;  
But when I knew her earlier, she displayed  
Great powers of divination. I hope, now, that her  
Insight will help me solve a pressing matter.

TRUFALDIN

Hmm. You dabble in black magic. Is that so?

CÉLIE

My only magic is as white as snow.

MASCARILLE

Well, here's the problem. My master's heart's been captured  
By a certain person; he's utterly enraptured,  
And would long since have passionately expressed  
To her he loves the tumult in his breast,

Did not a sharp-eyed dragon fiercely guard  
That treasure, so that all approach is barred.  
What's more, it's just now grieved him to discover  
That a keen rival is enamored of her.  
Therefore his heart, with anxious eagerness,  
Asks if its love can hope for some success,  
And I have come here, confident that you  
Can give an answer sibylline and true.

CÉLIE

Under what star was he born, this master of yours?

MASCARILLE

The star of those whose truthful love endures.

CÉLIE

No need to name the maid who's won his heart;  
I know her intimately, through my art.  
She has much spirit, and though she must abide  
An adverse fate, retains a noble pride;  
She would not wish too freely to reveal  
The secret stirrings that her heart may feel,  
But I, who read her heart as well as she,  
And am less proud, shall tell you what I see.

MASCARILLE

Oh, but the powers of magic art are great!

CÉLIE

If your master is as constant as you state,  
And his intent is on the highest plane,  
He need not fear that he will love in vain.  
There's room for hope, and the fortress he would win  
Consents to parley, and may indeed give in.

MASCARILLE

Ah, good. But this fortress has a commandant  
Who's hard to handle.

CÉLIE

Yes, hard as adamant.

MASCARILLE

*(Aside, looking at Lélie, who has been peering around the corner.)*  
The Devil take that fool, who won't stop peeking!

CÉLIE

Here's what to do, to gain the prize you're seeking.

LÉLIE

*(Coming forth and joining the others.)*  
Don't let our visit disturb you, Trufaldin!  
At my behest this faithful servingman  
Has come to see you at your dwelling place  
To bring my compliments, and discuss the case  
Of this young lady, whose freedom I shall buy  
If we can find a just price, you and I.

MASCARILLE

The idiot!

TRUFALDIN

Well, now! Someone's deceiving me!  
The tales you've told me don't at all agree.

MASCARILLE

This gentleman's brain was damaged by a blow,  
As you may have heard, sir.