

***GEORGE
FARQUHAR***

A gold textured notebook with an orange pen and autumn leaves. The notebook is the central focus, with a textured gold cover. An orange pen lies diagonally across the bottom right corner of the notebook. Several autumn leaves in shades of orange, red, and yellow are scattered around the notebook on a white background.

***THE BEAUX-
STRATAGEM***

George Farquhar

The Beaux-Stratagem

A comedy in five acts

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By GEORGE FARQUHAR, Esq.

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A COMEDY,

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IN FIVE ACTS;

By GEORGE FARQUHAR, Esq.

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**AS PERFORMED AT THE THEATRES
ROYAL,**

DRURY LANE AND COVENT GARDEN.

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**PRINTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE
MANAGERS
FROM THE PROMPT BOOK.**

WITH REMARKS

BY MRS. INCHBALD.

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REMARKS.

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It is an honour to the morality of the present age, that this most entertaining comedy is but seldom performed; and never, except some new pantomime, or other gaudy spectacle, be added, as an afterpiece, for the attraction of an audience.

The well drawn characters, happy incidents, and excellent dialogue, in "The Beaux Stratagem," are but poor atonement for that unrestrained contempt of principle which pervades every scene. Plays of this kind are far more mischievous than those, which preserve less appearance of delicacy. Every auditor and reader shrinks from those crimes, which are recommended in unseemly language, and from libertinism united with coarse manners; but in adorning vice with wit, and audacious rakes with the vivacity and elegance of men of fashion, youth, at least, will be decoyed into the snare of admiration.

Charmed with the spirit of Archer and Aimwell, the reader may not, perhaps, immediately perceive, that those two fine gentlemen are but arrant impostors; and that the lively, though pitiable Mrs. Sullen, is no other than a deliberate violator of her marriage vow. Highly delighted with every character, he will not, perhaps, at first observe, that all the wise and witty persons of this comedy are knaves, and all the honest people fools.

It is said, that this play was written in six weeks—it is more surprising still, that it was written by a dying man!

Farquhar was a gentleman of elegant person and bewitching address, who, having experienced the vicissitudes of life, as a man of fashion, an actor, a captain in the army, an author, a lover, and a husband; and having encountered bitter disappointment in some of his adventures—though amply gratified by others—He, at the age of twenty-nine, sunk into a dejection of spirits and decline of health; and in this state, he wrote the present drama.—It had only been acted a night or two, when the author, in the midst of those honours, which he derived from its brilliant reception—died.

As a proof that Farquhar was perfectly sensible of his dangerous state, and that he regained cheerfulness as his end approached, the following anecdote is told:—

The famed actress, Mrs. Oldfield, performed the part of Mrs. Sullen, when the comedy was first produced; and being highly interested in its success, from the esteem she bore the author; when it drew near the last rehearsal, she desired Wilkes, the actor, to go to him, and represent—that she advised him to make some alteration in the catastrophe of the piece; for that she was apprehensive, the free manner in which he had bestowed the hand of Mrs. Sullen upon Archer, without first procuring a divorce from her husband, would offend great part of the audience. "Oh," replied Farquhar, gaily, when this message was delivered to him, "tell her, I wish she was married to me instead of Sullen; for then, without the trouble of a divorce, I would give her my bond, that she should be a widow within a few days."

In this allusion he was prophetic;—and the apparent joy, with which he expected his dissolution, may be accounted

for on the supposition—that the profligate characters, which he has pourtrayed in "The Beaux Stratagem," were such as he had uniformly met with in the world;—and he was rejoiced to leave them all behind.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

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	DRURY LANE.	COVENT GARDEN.
Aimwell	Mr. Holland.	Mr. Brunton.
Sir Charles Freeman	Mr. Bartley.	Mr. Claremont.
Archer	Mr. Elliston.	Mr. Lewis.
Sullen	Mr. Powell.	Mr. Murray.
Foigard	Mr. Johnstone.	Mr. Rock.
Boniface	Mr. Palmer.	Mr. Davenport.
Gibbet	Mr. Wewitzer.	Mr. Emery.
Hounslow	Mr. Maddocks.	Mr. Atkins.
Bagshot	Mr. Webb.	Mr. Abbot.
Scrub	Mr.	Mr. Munden.

Bannister.

Lady Bountiful	Mrs. Sparks.	Mrs. Emery.
Mrs. Sullen	Mrs. Jordan.	Mrs. Glover.
Dorinda	Miss Mellon.	Miss Brunton.
Cherry	Miss De Camp.	Mrs. Martyr.
Gipsey	Mrs. Scott.	Mrs. Beverly.

SCENE,—Litchfield.

THE

BEAUX STRATAGEM.

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ACT THE FIRST.

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SCENE I.

An Inn.

Enter Boniface, running.—Bar Bell rings.

Bon. Chamberlain! Maid! Cherry! Daughter Cherry! All asleep? all dead?

Enter Cherry, running.

Cher. Here! here! Why d'ye bawl so, father? d'ye think we have no ears?

Bon. You deserve to have none, you young minx:—The company of the Warrington coach has stood in the hall this hour, and nobody to show them to their chambers.

Cher. And let them wait, father;—there's neither red coat in the coach, nor footman behind it.

Bon. But they threaten to go to another inn to-night.

Cher. That they dare not, for fear the coachman should overturn them to-morrow—[*Ringing.*] Coming! coming!—Here's the London coach arrived.

Enter several People with Trunks, Bandboxes, and other Luggage, and cross the Stage.

Bon. Welcome ladies.

Cher. Very welcome, gentlemen——Chamberlain, show the lion and the rose.

[*Exit with the Company.*]

Enter Aimwell, in a Riding Habit, Archer as Footman, carrying a Portmanteau.

Bon. This way, this way, gentlemen.

Aim. Set down the things; go to the stable, and see my horses well rubbed.

Arch. I shall, sir.[*Exit.*]

Aim. You're my landlord, I suppose?

Bon. Yes, sir, I'm old Will Boniface, pretty well known upon this road, as the saying is.

Aim. O, Mr. Boniface, your servant.

Bon. O, sir,——what will your honour please to drink, as the saying is?

Aim. I have heard your town of Litchfield much famed for ale, I think: I'll taste that.

Bon. Sir, I have now in my cellar ten tun of the best ale in Staffordshire; 'tis smooth as oil, sweet as milk, clear as amber, and strong as brandy, and will be just fourteen years old the fifth day of next March.

Aim. You are very exact, I find, in the age of your ale.

Bon. As punctual, sir, as I am in the age of my children: I'll show you such ale—Here, tapster, broach number 1792, as the saying is:—Sir, you shall taste my Anno Domini— I have lived in Litchfield, man and boy, above eight and fifty years, and I believe have not consumed eight and fifty ounces of meat.

Aim. At a meal, you mean, if one may guess your sense by your bulk.

Bon. Not in my life, sir; I have fed purely upon ale: I have eat my ale, drank my ale, and I always sleep upon ale.

Enter Tapster, with a Tankard.

Now, sir, you shall see: your worship's health: ha! delicious, delicious—fancy it Burgundy, only fancy it, and 'tis worth ten shillings a quart.

Aim. [*Drinks.*] 'Tis confounded strong.

Bon. Strong! it must be so; or how would we be strong that drink it?