

price set upon me, like a lapdog—to be put into the market, like a horse, for a jockeying dame to speculate upon! But no, my aunt's conduct is even less pardonable. Were she openly to offer me for sale, like a Turkish slave, I might find some excuse for the act in an uncontrollable cupidity; but to be disposed of to a tawdry, flaunting, brainless fop, without one quality to recommend him to any person—unless, indeed, impudence is a virtue—is downright, wanton cruelty. And yet she will think,—and smile too so self-complacently at the thought—that I can be led to receive favourably the addresses of this swaggering ape. It is an insult to every better feeling of my nature, to every principle of common sense—it would be an insult to me if I were an idiot. And—what is worse than all—I must use dissimulation to free myself from her snares. I must pretend to favour the suit of my aunt, on behalf of this thing in whiskers.

*Enter Jemima.*

Oh, my Speedwell!

JEMIMA.—Mr. Speedwell? Yes, it is from him. (*Searching her pocket.*)

L.—What is it, Jemima? What do you mean?

J.—The letter that Mr. Dennis gave me. Oh, dear me! I forgot—he didn't give it to me after all—he said it was lost. It was very strange in Mr. Dennis too; he appears to be quite an affable, sociable, talkative sort of a young man, does Mr. Dennis.

L.—Dennis? Oh, that is Mr. Speedwell's servant. I am afraid, Jemima that Mr. Dennis, has lost his heart, as well as the letter.

J.—Oh, Luddy soul now, how you do talk! I am sure I never thought of the like.

L.—Ha, ha! Why, Jemima, I was not speaking of the nature of your thoughts; but I will now dare to say, judging from present appearances, that you soon must think of the like.

J.—Oh, mercy on me!

L.—Well, never mind that now. I want to speak a few words to you of other matters. I have always found you pretty faithful to me, Jemima—I wish to trust you a little further. I will be plain with you at once. My aunt wants me to marry Captain Dashley; but I wish Mr. Speedwell to be my husband. As the easiest way of evading Mrs. Topton's schemes, we are going to clope.

J.—Oh! Goodness—mercy! Slope with Mr. Speedwell?

L.—Yes, and as it cannot be done very well without your knowledge, I trust you will keep our secret, and, if necessary, assist us.

J.—Deary me, yes. That Captain is such a brute of a man! What do you think? Now it's too bad to tell—the ugly monster tried to kiss me, the other day. Mercy! Just think of it. I'm sure if Mr. Dennis know'd—

L.—Well?