

Side 1 Mr Sullen and Archer

Mr. Sullen: [Glumly] Sir, I am an unfortunate man—I have three thousand dollars a year, and I can scarce get a man to drink a cup of ale with me. Tonight I've run through a constable, an accountant and a hunchbacked barber, before they went home to their wives. Ay, sir; and unless you have pity upon me, and smoke a pipe with me, I must go home to my wife, and I had rather go to the devil by half.

Archer: But I presume, sir, you won't see your wife to-night; she 'll be gone to bed. You don't mean to lie with your wife in that pickle?

Mr. Sullen: What! I not lie with my wife! why, sir, do you take me for an atheist or a rake?

Archer: If you hate her, sir, maybe you should lie elsewhere.

Mr. Sullen: I think so too, friend. But I'm the only policeman for thirty miles, and must do nothing against the law. If the law orders me to send you to jail, for example, you must lie there, my friend.

Archer: Not unless I commit a crime to deserve it.

Mr. Sullen: A crime? I live in a jail, and my only crime was getting married.

Archer: Sir, if you call a marriage a crime, and you're the local police, who's to say marriage is a law?

Mr. Sullen: [Gapes at Archer, having never thought of this before. Hangs on his every word.] Speak on, bright angel, for I have never thought of this. Marriage a crime...Are not man and wife one flesh?

Archer: You and your wife, Mr. Guts, may be one flesh, because you are all flesh; but rational creatures have minds that must be united.

Mr. Sullen: Minds! Who needs minds? No one in Lichfield. Zounds, marriage a crime! I always thought that man and wife were naturally one, and could not be rid of each other!

Archer: Sir, I know that my two hands are naturally one, because they help one another in all the actions of life; but I could not say so much if they were always at cuffs.

Mr. Sullen: Then 'tis plain that my wife and I are two.

Archer: Why don't you part with her, sir?

Mr. Sullen: Will you take her, sir?

Archer: With all my heart.

Mr. Sullen: You shall have her to-morrow morning, with a venison-pie into the bargain!

Archer: You 'll let me have her fortune too?

Mr. Sullen: Fortune! why, sir, I have no quarrel with her fortune: I only hate the woman, sir, and none but the woman shall go. Can you play at whist, sir?

Archer: No, truly, sir.

Mr. Sullen: Nor at all-fours?

Archer: Neither. You will not get me on all fours, sorry.

Mr. Sullen: [Aside.] Zounds! where was this man bred?— [Aloud.] Burn me, friend! I can't go home, 'tis but two o' clock.

Archer: For half an hour, sir, if you please; but you must consider 'tis late.