

Side 10 Dorinda and Mrs Sullen

Mrs. Sullen: My husband is a moron! O sister! I shall never have good of the beast till I get him to town; Manhattan is the place for managing and breaking a husband.

Dorinda: And has not a husband the same opportunities there for humbling a wife?

Mrs. Sullen: No, no, girl, it's a standing maxim in conjugal discipline, that when a man would enslave his wife, he hurries her into the country; and when a lady would train her husband, she wheedles her booby up to town. A man dare not play the tyrant in Manhattan, because there are so many examples to encourage his wife to rebel. O Dorinda! a fine woman may do anything in Manhattan: she may raise an army of forty thousand men.

Dorinda: I fancy, sister, you have a mind to be trying your power that way here in Lichfield; you have drawn a fair few admirers already.

Mrs. Sullen: Well, sister, since the truth must out, it may do as well now as hereafter; I think one way to rouse my dearly wedded sot is to give him a rival for my affections. Idiots are like lemmings. If you can get one to go somewhere, others will always follow.

Dorinda: This might do, sister, if my brother were to be convinced into a passion for you; but I fancy there's a natural aversion between you.

Mrs. Sullen: I own it, we are united contradictions, fire and water: but I could be contented, like a great many other wives, to humor the censorious mob, and give the world an appearance of living well with my husband, could I bring him but to dissemble a little kindness.

Dorinda: And if instead of rousing your husband by this artifice to a counterfeit kindness, he should awake in a real fury?

Mrs. Sullen: Let him: if I can't entice him to the one, I would provoke him to the other.

Dorinda: But how must I behave myself between you two?

Mrs. Sullen: You must assist me.

Dorinda: What, against my own brother?

Mrs. Sullen: He's but half your brother, and I 'm your entire friend. If I go a step beyond the bounds of honour, leave me; until then, I expect you should go along with me in everything. While I trust my honour in your hands, you may trust your brother's honour in mine.

Dorinda: 'Tis a strange thing, sister, that I can't like this plan.

Mrs. Sullen: You like nothing; your time is not come; Love and Death have their fatalities, and strike home one time or other: you 'll pay for all one day, same as the rest of us. But come, Mrs. Bountiful's tea is ready, and 'tis almost church time.