

Side 13 Archer and Scrub

[Discover Archer and Scrub sitting in front of the bar, arm in arm, with tankards in their hands. Cheerfully drunk.]

Scrub. Come, my dear boy, let'sh have that song once more!

Archer: No, no, we shall disturb the family.— But will you be sure to keep my master's secret?

Scrub. Upon my honor, I won't tell a soul.

Archer: Good enough! You must know, then, that my master is the famous English Lord Viscount Aimwell. He fought a duel the other day in Manhattan, and wounded his man so dangerously that he thinks fit to withdraw to the country till he hears whether the gentleman's wounds be mortal or not.

Scrub. And where were you when your master fought?

Archer: We never know of our masters' quarrels.

Scrub. No! if our masters in the country here receive a challenge, the first thing they do is to tell their wives; the wives tell the servants, the servants alarm the tenants, and in half an hour you shall have the whole county in arms.

Archer: To hinder two men from doing what they have no mind for.—But if you should chance to tell my master's secret?

Scrub. Talk! ay, sir, had I not learned the knack of holding my tongue, I had never lived so long in a great family.

Archer: Ay, to be sure there are secrets in all great families.

Scrub. Secrets! ay;—but I 'll say no more. Come, sit down, we 'll make an end of our tankard: here—

Archer: With all my heart! Here's your ladies' healths; you have three, I think, and to be sure there must be secrets among them. [Drinks.]

Scrub. Secrets! ay, friend.—I wish I had a friend!

Archer: I am your friend! come, you and I will be sworn brothers!

Scrub. [Lighting up] Will we?

Archer. From this minute! [They laugh, they hug]—

Scrub. And now, brother Martin, I will tell you a secret that will make your hair stand on end. You must know that Mrs. Sullen and the fair Dorinda are conspiring against Mr. Sullen! Their aim is to make him more amiable, and they propose finding Mrs. Sullen an admirer to make Mr. Sullen jealous.

Archer: A very hopeful family yours, brother Scrub! I suppose Miss Dorinda has a lover too?

Scrub. Not that I know: she's the best of 'em, that's the truth: but they take care to prevent my curiosity, by keeping me too busy to ask questions. What d' ye think is my place in this family?

Archer: Butler, I suppose?

Scrub. Ah, Lord help you! I 'll tell you. On Monday I drive the coach, on Tuesday I drive the plough, on Wednesday I follow the hounds, on Thursday I collect the tenants' rents, on Friday I go to market, on Saturday I draw warrants for people's arrests, and on Sunday I draw beer.

Archer: Ha! if variety be a pleasure in life, you have enough, my dear brother.