

Side 15 Mrs Sullen and Archer

[In this scene, Mrs. Sullen and Archer are flirting, the sexual tension is palpable, and Mrs. Sullen is genuinely trying to stay faithful to her idiot husband.]

Mrs. Sullen: [To Archer, showing him a painting on the fourth wall, above the audience's heads] Pray, sir, how d'ye like that painting?

Archer: O madam, 'tis poor Ovid in his exile.

Mrs. Sullen: What was he banished for?

Archer: His ambitious love, madam.— His misfortune touches me.

Mrs. Sullen: Was he successful in his lovemaking?

Archer: There he has left us in the dark. He was too much a gentleman to tell.

Mrs. Sullen: If he were secret, I pity him.

Archer: And if he were successful, I envy him.

Mrs. Sullen: If you would see my picture, there it is over that cabinet. How d' ye like it?

Archer: I must admire anything, madam, that has the least resemblance of you. But, methinks, madam —The picture, indeed, has your lips; but where's the carnation dew, the pouting ripeness that tempts the taste in the original?

Mrs. Sullen: [Aside] Had it been my lot to have matched with such a man!

Archer: Your breasts too—presumptuous man! what, paint Heaven! There's the finest bed in that painting, madam! I suppose 'tis your bedchamber.

Mrs. Sullen: And what then, sir?

Archer: I think the quilt is the richest that ever I saw. I can't at this distance, madam, distinguish the figures of the embroidery; will you give me leave, madam, to examine the original at length?

Mrs. Sullen: [Aside.] The devil take his impudence—I have a great mind to try.—'Sdeath, what am I doing?—