

Love for Love

AUTHOR

Congreve, William

TITLE + SUBTITLE

Love for Love

PRINTED

1695

COMPANY + PLAYHOUSE

Betterton's Co., Lincoln's Inn Fields

PREMIERE

1695 Apr 30

ORIGINAL TITLE-PAGE:

Love for Love: / A Comedy.

Acted at the / Theatre in Lincolns-Inn Fields, / By / His Majesty's Servants.

Written by Mr. Congreve

Nudus agris, nudus nummis paternis, / Insanire parat certa ratione modoque. Hor.

London: / Printed for Jacob Tonson, at the Judge's-Head, near the Inner-Temple-Gate in Fleetstreet. 1695

MODERN EDITIONS:

1985. *The Comedies of William Congreve*. Ed. Eric S. Rump. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

1982. *Comedies of William Congreve*. Ed. Anthony G. Henderson. Cambridge: Cambridge U.P.

1969. *Love for Love*. Ed. Malcolm Kelsall. London: Benn. 2nd ed. 1999. (New Mermaids).

1967. *The Complete Plays of William Congreve*. Ed. Herbert J. Davis. Chicago: U. of Chicago P.

1967. *Love for Love*. Ed. Emmett L. Avery. Lincoln: U of Nebraska P.; London: Edward Arnold. (Regents Restoration Drama Series)

1967. *Love for Love*. Ed. A.N. Jeffares. London: Macmillan.

1948. *William Congreve. Comedies*. Ed. Norman Marshall. London: J. Lehmann.

1930. *The Works of Congreve*. Ed. F. W. Bateson. London: Peter Davies.

1929. *The Way of the World, and Love for love; Two Comedies*. With illustrations and decorations by John Kettelwell. London, J. Lane; New York, Dodd, Mead.

1927. *The Comedies of William Congreve*. Ed. Joseph Wood Krutch. New York: Macmillan.

1925. *Congreve's Comedies*. Ed. B. Dobrée. Oxford: Oxford UP.

1923. *The Complete Works of William Congreve*. Ed. Montague Summers. London: The Nonesuch P.

1912. *William Congreve. Dramatic Works*. Ed. William Archer. New York: American Book Co.

1903. *William Congreve*. Ed. Alex. Charles Ewald. London: Unwin. (The Mermaids Series).

EPISTLE DEDICATORY TO:

Charles Sackville, Earl of Dorset

EPISTLE CONTENTS:

It rejects the conventional purpose of poetical dedications (to praise the dedicatee); it also explains the additions to the play included in the printed version.

FIRST PROLOGUE AUTHOR

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FIRST PROLOGUE SPEAKER

Mrs. Bracegirdle in man's clothes.

FIRST PROLOGUE

"A Prologue for the opening of the new playhouse, proposed to be spoken by Mrs Bracegirdle in man's clothes."

She jokes upon her male costume and points out that city wives already make use of it to cuckold their husbands. She reflects upon the tyranny exercised by the managers of the United Company. She vindicates the freedom of players and mockingly remarks upon the means they have used to rebel against the patentees.

SECOND PROLOGUE AUTHOR

SECOND PROLOGUE SPEAKER

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Mr. Betterton.

SECOND PROLOGUE

"Prologue spoken at the opening of the New House."

As old trees needs new soil to bear better fruit, so the actors have left the United Company and sought new place. He also presents the play, and compares it to Wycherley's *The Plain Dealer*.

EPILOGUE AUTHOR

EPILOGUE SPEAKER

--

Mrs. Bracegirdle

EPILOGUE

"Spoken at the opening of the New House"

The new house is presented as a refuge for players. She glosses Pythagoras' theory of the transmigration of souls to make an ironic comparison with the other house.

CAST OF CHARACTERS:

Mr. Underhill.	Sir Sampson Legend. Father to Valentine and Ben.
Mr. Betterton.	Valentine. Fallen under his Father's Displeasure by his expensive way of living, in love with Angelica.
Mr. Smith.	Scandal. His Friend, a Free Speaker.
Mr. Boman.	Tattle. A half-witted Beau, vain of his Amours, yet valuing himself for Secresie.
Mr. Dogget.	Ben. Sir Samspon's Younger So, half home-bred, and half-Sea-bred, design'd to marry Miss Prue.
Mr. Sanford.	Foresight. An illiterate Old Fellow, peevish and positive, superstitious, and pretending to understand Astrology, Palmistry, Physiognomy, Omens, Dreams, &c. Uncle to Angelica.
Mr. Bowen.	Jeremy. Servant to Valentine.
Mr. Triffusis.	Trapland. A Scrivener.
Mr. Freeman.	Buckram. A Lawyer.
Mrs. Bracegirdle.	Angelica. Niece to Foresight, of a considerable Fortune in her own Hands.
Mrs. Bowman.	Mrs. Foresight. Second Wife to Foresight.
Mrs. Barry.	Mrs. Frail. Sister to Mrs. Foresight, a Woman of the Town.
Mrs. Ayliff.	Miss Prue. Daughter to Foresight by a former Wife, a silly, awkward, Country Girl.
Mrs. Leigh.	Nurse to Miss [Prue].
Mrs. Lawson.	Jenny. Maid to Angelica. A Steward, Officers, Sailers, and several Servants.

LOCATION:

London

PLOT SUMMARY:

Valentine Legend, a gentleman without means, tells his servant Jeremy about his desperate financial situation and his plans to become a playwright; he also confesses he intends to court Angelica. Scandal, his friend, mocks both resolutions. Then several creditors and Trapland enter; they demand to be paid but they only find Jeremy's false promises. At this point a message from Valentine's father offers a painful way out of his poverty: to hand over his rights of inheritance to his younger brother—who has recently returned from abroad—for four thousand pounds. He complains but finally accepts the deal as the only possible way to get rid of his creditors and to continue his courtship of Angelica. Then Tattle, a pretender to all ladies and a gossip, and Mrs. Frail, a relative of Angelica, enter; they all engage in a witty conversation about female reputation and marriage. Scandal closes act 1 by mocking Valentine's project of gaining back his mistress "with a losing hand".

The action moves to Foresight's house. His niece, Angelica, asks her uncle for his coach and horses only to find an angry refusal. He argues he must keep her at home on account of a prognostication he has read in the stars. Then Angelica threatens to expose him as a fake astrologer and runs away as Sir Sampson enters. He has come to pursue the marriage arrangements between his son Ben —now his official heir— and Foresight's daughter, Miss Prue. Valentine arrives expecting to find Angelica but meet, once more, his father's accusations. As they leave Mrs. Foresight and her sister, Mrs. Frail, arrive. They chide each other for their impudence but finally resolve to make peace and see to their real problems: Mrs. Frail wants to marry Ben Legend, now a suitable wealthy match, but first she will have to break up his engagement with Miss Prue. In order to do so she has been fostering the young girl's infatuation with Tattle. So as these two characters come on stage, the two ladies leave them alone. Tattle instructs Prue about the right attitudes of fashionable ladies when courted.

Still at Foresight's house, Valentine accuses Angelica of inconstancy and leaves as his friend Scandal promises to help him. When Ben Legend arrives he proves a rude fellow without manners but Mrs. Frail, who is ready to take advantage of the situation, praises his plain humour and flirts with him until Sir Sampson asks everybody to leave Ben and Prue alone. This interview proves a complete disaster: Prue rejects him and confesses she is in love with Tattle and Ben retaliates speaking of his admiration for Frail; after a strong argument they call off their marriage. Scandal enters to tell Sir Sampson and Foresight that Valentine has suddenly taken ill and has some secrets to reveal to both of them. Sir Sampson fears a trick but Foresight is too much intrigued by the prospect of Valentine's newly acquired visionary powers. As Mrs. Foresight enters, Scandal flirts with her and she arranges to meet him later in her room; in the meantime, Frail and Ben agree to marry but she asks him to keep it secret until he secures his estate.

Act four takes place at Valentine's lodgings. Angelica, who has heard news of his mental illness, feels guilty. Nevertheless she immediately suspects the truth and leaves. Sir Sampson comes in with a lawyer in order to make Valentine sign off his primogeniture rights; now Scandal's plan comes to the open: as Sir Sampson demands his signature, Valentine speaks and behaves madly. The lawyer consequently declares him *non compos mentis* and the legal transaction impossible. Sampson leaves in a rage as Foresight, his wife and Mrs. Frail enter to pay a visit to Valentine; as they learn the latest news Frail reconsiders her marriage to Ben. So when Ben tells her he has informed his father he will marry for love, she accuses him of ill-treating his father and calls off her love promises. But she is determined to marry an estate and Sir Sampson's fury against his two sons looks like a potential path to get the old gentleman to marry her. But Mrs. Foresight comes up with a better plan. Now that Valentine is insane but keeps his rights of inheritance, they will try to make him marry Frail. In the meantime, Tattle tries to court Angelica, but she manages to get rid of him and the rest of the company. When Valentine and Angelica are left alone, Valentine tells her the truth about his madness and about his renewed love for her, only to be challenged by Angelica's wit.

At Foresight's house, Angelica meets Sir Sampson and tells him she is ready to marry and asks his advice to find someone who is neither "an absolute wit nor a fool". She also confesses that Valentine is feigning his madness, and suggests a plan: to let Valentine know she and Sir Sampson are about to get married; this will force him to reveal the truth if he wants to stop them. Sir Sampson apparently agrees, but in fact has decided to marry her himself. Angelica asks him to provide a special settlement to secure an estate for her descendants instead of his two sons. In the meantime, Jeremy pretends to help Tattle meet Angelica and advises him to disguise himself as a friar since she will be dressed as a nun. Then Foresight enters and informs the company that his daughter Prue will not marry Ben and has chosen Tattle; but Tattle refuses to marry her. Angelica, Sir Sampson and the lawyer enter and announce their engagement. Then Tattle and Frail enter and complain that Jeremy has tricked them into marrying each other. Finally Valentine, Scandal and Jeremy come in, and Valentine declares he is ready to sign off his rights, as his counterfeited madness has proved useless to gain Angelica. At this point Angelica admits that she loves Valentine. Sir Sampson leaves in anger, while the rest of the cast join in a dance.

SCENE DIVISIONS AND LOCATIONS:

Each act takes places within a single location.

1. Valentine's chamber
2. A room in Foresight's house
3. At the door (A room in Foresight's house)
4. Valentine's lodging
5. A room in Foresight's house

STAGE DIRECTIONS:

Several stage directions mention one door, possibly one of the two stage doors to be found in most late Restoration playhouses:

- 3.1, p. 238: "Tattle and Miss Prue at the Door"
 3.1, p. 238: "(Tattle) Thrusts her (miss Prue) in, and shuts at the Door "
 3.1, p. 243: "(scandal) Goes to the Door"
 4.1, p. 283: "(Jeremy) Goes to the Door"

As someone (the Nurse) "peeps" in 3.1. 238, it might be assumed she does so from behind that very door.

Another interesting aspect of those direction is the constant allusion to noise heard offstage, as in:

- 1.1., p. 202: "One knocks"
 1.1. p. 203 " Knocking"
 3.1. p. 238: "(Nurse) Knocks"
 4.1. p. 283: "One Knocks"

REFERENCES TO PROPS AND COSTUME AND COSTUME

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- 1.1 p.197 Valentine in his Chamber, Reading. Jeremy waiting. Several Books upon the Table.
 1.1 p.198 (Jeremy) Aside and taking away the Books.
 1.1 p.203 (Valentine) Gives money.
 1.1 p.204 (Scandal) Gives money.
 2.1 p.223 Enter Sir Sampson Legend with a Paper.
 3.1 p.254 (Mrs. Foresight) She gives him (Scandal) the Glass...
 3.1 p.255 (Foresight) Looking in the Glass.
 4.1 p.266 (Jeremy) Goes to the Scene, which opens and discovers Valentine upon a Couch disorderly dressed...
 4.1 p.268 (Sir Sampson) Shows him (Valentine) the Paper, but holds it out of his reach.
 4.1 p.268 (Sir Sampson) Puts the Paper in his Pocket.
 5.1 p.299 Enter Valentine dressed, Scandal, and Jeremy.
 5.1 p.300 (Angelica) Tears the Paper.

SONGS AND DANCES:

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- 3.4. One [Pate] "A nymph and a swain to Apollo once prayed" (by John Eccles; a ballad)
 3.15. Ben "A soldier and a sailor" (by John Eccles; a ballad)
 3.1.p A dance
 4.1. Pate and Reading "I tell thee, Charmion" (set by Mr Finger)

REFERENCES TO REAL PLACES:

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REFERENCES TO CONTEMPORARY EVENTS:

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SOURCES:

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REVIEWER:

M Gomez L

CO-REVIEWER
