

# The Works of Elizabeth Gaskell

*North and South* (1855)

Edited by  
Elisabeth Jay



*THE PICKERING MASTERS*

THE WORKS OF DANIEL DEFOE

General Editors:  
W. R. Owens and P. N. Furbank

## THE NOVELS OF DANIEL DEFOE

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# THE NOVELS OF DANIEL DEFOE

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General Editors: W. R. Owens and P. N. Furbank

Volume 9:

THE FORTUNATE MISTRESS (1724)

Edited by  
P. N. Furbank

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## INTRODUCTION

*The Fortunate Mistress*, the history of the making and the unmaking of a successful courtesan, is the last, and certainly not the least impressive, of Defoe's 'crime' novels. In its form and narrative strategy it is akin to *Moll Flanders*, though the 'crime' in this case is more problematic. It is a most imaginative and rational attempt on Defoe's part to think himself into the experience of a 'kept' woman:<sup>1</sup> a likely sequence of events leading to someone's becoming one; the appeal and high enjoyments of the role; its almost insuperable practical problems and moral dilemmas; and the secret anxieties with which it may plague a tender conscience. It is, you might say, a task for a Zola, carried off with much originality, and here and there able even to startle, if not shock, a twenty-first century reader. I shall refer to the novel by its original title, though in all editions since the first – that is to say all those appearing after Defoe's death – the title has been changed to '*Roxana*', for the change has its importance in the novel's history. I shall come on to this point later.

As is his usual method in these told-in-the-first-person novels, Defoe introduces us very quickly to his protagonist's ruling passion or character-trait. It is, in this case, a kind of ungainsayable obstinacy. The unnamed heroine, daughter of well-to-do Huguenot refugees – beautiful, accomplished, sharp-eyed and 'apt to be Satyrical' (her own phrase) – has the misfortune to be married, at the age of fifteen, to the heir to a prosperous brewing business. He is a 'jolly handsome Fellow', but – or so she soon decides – he turns out to be a hopeless fool.<sup>2</sup> The principled obduracy of

1 As hardly needs saying, a courtesan – who, in theory at least, is faithful to her protector – is an entirely different characterisation than that of a prostitute.

2 *The Fortunate Mistress*, below, pp. 24–6. All further references are to this edition, and are given in parentheses in the text.



her character comes out in the rousing sermon she delivers, or imagines herself delivering, to her fellow-women.

Never, Ladies, marry a Fool; any Husband rather than a Fool; with some other Husbands you may be unhappy, but with a Fool you will be miserable; with another Husband you *may*, I say, be unhappy, but with a Fool you *must*.  
(p. 25)

For good or evil this obduracy is the key to her character, for it is directed as much at herself as at other people. She is, as we soon notice, an indefatigable self-castigator. She cannot bear shams, and when she is forced to play the hypocrite, she despises her own hypocrisy. When her landlord the jeweller presses her to live with him, to all intents and purposes as man and wife though they cannot actually marry, his patent sincerity, and the pragmatic teasing of her loyal servant, Amy, make it impossible for her to refuse. But what she cannot and will not stomach is the fiction that it will be a kind of marriage (p. 53).

Nor does triumph as a courtesan – riches, the devotion of a princely lover, the acclaim of court circles – make her any less prone to self-castigation. The Prince makes great efforts to form her mind and widen her knowledge: an admirable idea, she says, had she been his wife or daughter – ‘but all this to a Whore!’ (p. 96). The brutal word ‘Whore’ is one she takes a sardonic pleasure in. She feels tempted to make confession to a Roman Catholic priest but finds she ‘could not be a Cheat in any thing that was esteem’d Sacred’ (p. 71). ‘In short’, she says, taking a leaf out of Nell Gwyn’s book, ‘tho’ I was a Whore, yet I was a Protestant Whore’ (p. 71).<sup>3</sup> It is a dramatic irony in the story that, eventually, she is confronted with a spirit even more obdurate than her own, that of her estranged and vengeful daughter Susan.

Critics, one sometimes feels, are surprisingly moralistic in their view of the ‘fortunate mistress’ and her career. David Blewett, in his in some other ways excellent edition of 1982, describes the heroine as ‘a woman who wilfully chooses the glamorous but immoral life of a courtesan over the honourable but duller life of a married woman’.<sup>4</sup> What an extremely unfair remark, one cannot help feeling! At what point of the story should we imagine her as making this choice? Her marriage does not break down because she chooses to become a courtesan, nor is there much in the way of choice open to her during the grim struggle for survival which follows. It

<sup>3</sup> The story goes that when an angry crowd gathered round Nell Gwyn’s coach, supposing her to be the King’s French lover the Duchess of Portsmouth, she cried to them out of the coach-window, ‘Good people, pray be silent! I am the Protestant whore.’

<sup>4</sup> *Roxana*, ed. David Blewett (London, 1982), p. 9.

is, indeed, up to her to choose whether or not to become the mistress of her kindly jeweller landlord, but nothing 'glamorous' attaches to this.

Rather similarly, John Mullan, in his edition of 1996, writes that 'as she strives to make her fortune, she lets go of her offspring easily enough'.<sup>5</sup> 'Easily enough'! On the contrary she is driven to it by one of humanity's greatest terrors, sheer starvation – not only for herself but her children. The ruse of palming-off the children on her husband's family is not even her own idea, it is the suggestion of two philanthropic ladies; but anyway, Defoe means us to regard this all-important incident as a *donnée*, an example of the sort of extreme situation, and extreme decision, that life can plunge us into. It is the source of all the future events, but it is not itself an invitation to us to moralise. We are in familiar Defoean ethical territory here, the sphere convincingly explored by Maximillian Novak in his *Defoe and the Nature of Man*,<sup>6</sup> where the prayer is 'Give me not poverty, lest I steal'. The 'fortunate mistress' frankly, and with good reason, blames what she thinks of as her life of 'crime' on the 'Devil of Poverty':

At first I yielded to the Importunity of my Circumstances, the Misery of which the Devil dismally aggravated, to draw me to comply; for I confess, I had strong Natural Aversions to the Crime at first, partly owing to a virtuous Education, and partly to a Sence of Religion; but the Devil, and that greater Devil of Poverty, prevail'd; and the Person who laid Siege to me, did it in such an obliging, and I may almost say, irresistible Manner that ... there was no withstanding it. (p. 170)

Even the sympathetically disposed Jane Jack, in her edition of 1964, writes severely: 'But then we hear of her [the heroine's] gratuitous wickedness in forcing her maidservant to lose her virtue to the jeweller'.<sup>7</sup> 'Gratuitous wickedness' makes her sound a monster and as if this had been the malice of a sadistic employer, instead of an outrageous but half-joking liberty taken by a friend. The heroine describes it as a 'Frolick' (p. 55), though certainly it is a terribly irresponsible one; but Amy only had to say 'No'. Nor did it really damage their great friendship, though it could very easily have done so. It seems a pity to let moral consternation obscure Defoe's luminous representation of sexual behaviour here. It is an essay in psychology outside the range of Fielding or Richardson, done partly from deep inside the heroine's own consciousness ('As I thought myself a Whore, I cannot say but that it was something design'd in my Thought, that my Maid

5 *Roxana*, ed. John Mullan (Oxford, 1996), p. xii.

6 See Maximillian E. Novak, *Defoe and the Nature of Man* (Oxford, 1963), pp. 65–88.

7 *Roxana*, ed. Jane Jack (Oxford, 1964), p. x.

should be a Whore too, and should not reproach me with it' (pp. 54–5)). How well imagined it is, moreover, that, after his enjoyable night with Amy, the landlord, an orthodox-minded man, begins positively to hate her – of course, really hating himself.

On the other hand, the 'fortunate mistress' herself certainly regards the Amy episode as a great crime, one that shows that she herself had 'cast off all Principle, and all Modesty' (p. 54). It is part of her character to do so, and the harshest moral judgements on her always come from herself. The critics who come down so heavily on Defoe's 'fortunate mistress' and her career are, too unquestioningly, listening to her. As is said in the novel's curious preface, the heroine 'makes frequent Excursions, in a just censuring and condemning her own Practice' (pp. 21–2). Nor are all these self-castigations merely retrospective. Many, and some of the most passionate ones, spring from the immediacy of the moment. Of her jeweller landlord's invitation to a pretended marriage, she says: 'I verily believe that he did nothing but what he thought was Lawful; and I must do that Justice upon myself, as to say, I did what my own Conscience convinc'd me at the very Time I did it, was horribly unlawful, scandalous and abominable' (p. 48). Her way of responding to conscience is intensely emotional. 'How did my Blood flush up into my Face!' she says of a later occasion, 'when I reflected how sincerely, how affectionately this good-humour'd Gentleman [her Dutch husband] embrac'd the most cursed Piece of Hypocrisie that ever came into the Arms of an honest Man' (p. 245). 'Let no-body conclude', she says, 'from the strange Success I met with in all my wicked Doings, and the vast Estate which I had rais'd by it, that therefore I either was happy or easie: No, no, there was a Dart struck into the Liver; there was a secret Hell within, even all the while, when our Joy was at the highest' (p. 215). At times her self-reproaching language grows positively apocalyptic. The review of their joint finances that she and her Dutch husband make, she says:

was chearful Work in the main, yet I trembled every Joint of me, worse for ought I know, than ever *Belsbazzar* did at the Hand-writing on the Wall, and the Occasion was every way as just: *Unhappy Wretch*, said I to myself, *shall my ill-got Wealth, the Product of prosperous Lust, and of a vile and vicious Life of Whoredom and Adultery, be intermingled with the honest well-gotten Estate of this innocent Gentleman, to be a Moth and a Caterpillar among it, and bring the Judgments of Heaven upon him, and upon what he has, for my sake! Shall my Wickedness blast his Comforts! Shall I be Fire in his Flax!* (p. 214)

All her self-reproaching emotion is, however, bottled up. This is skilfully conveyed by the friendship – an attraction of opposites – between the heroine and Amy. In matters of feeling Amy is frank and reckless, whereas the

heroine is confined, stifled and shut in upon herself. When their boat runs into a storm on their way from France to Holland, the heroine sees death in front of her as plainly as Amy, 'but my Thoughts got no Vent as Amy's did; I had a silent sullen kind of Grief, which cou'd not break out either in Words or Tears' (p. 116).

According to her critics she lacks all maternal feeling; and it is true she does not display any such feeling, but inwardly – this is the impression we get – it is seething. Regarding her first re-encounter with her daughter Susan, she tells us:

I cannot but take Notice here, that notwithstanding there was a secret Horror upon my Mind, and I was ready to sink when I came close to her, to salute her, yet it was a secret inconceivable Pleasure to me when I kiss'd her, to know that I kiss'd my own Child; my own Flesh and and Blood, born of my Body; and who I had never kiss'd since I took the fatal Farewel of them all, with a Million of Tears, and a Heart almost dead with Grief. (p. 227)

Paradoxically, those who will not grant her the feelings of a mother have to put her extravagant language down to mental disease.<sup>8</sup>

Let us count up her crimes. She is highly dishonest over her jeweller lover's diamonds, when he is murdered in Paris; and by her affair with the Prince she is (we must suppose) the cause of unhappiness to his long-suffering wife. It is not a very long or a very heinous list. Critics sometimes accuse her of complicity in her daughter's murder,<sup>9</sup> which would be a crime indeed, but there is nothing in the text to support this. And there is a good deal on the other side of the balance-sheet. She is never callous or cruel; she is warmly loved by her friends, for instance Amy and the Quaker landlady; and she makes a faithful and most companionable mistress. Further, she eventually goes to great lengths to trace her lost children and make amends to them.

Defoe's 'fortunate mistress' is, indeed, a complex and well imagined creation. She is very vain, as she freely admits to herself. On the other hand, it would shock her principles for it to be thought she sought sexual liaisons

8 I have in mind Raymond Stephanson's 'Defoe's "Malade Imaginaire": The Historical Foundation of Mental Illness in *Roxana*', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 45 (1982), pp. 99–118, and David Blewett in the introduction to his edition (London, 1982), where it forms his major theme ('As the novel advances Roxana becomes more and more mentally ill', p. 18).

9 See, for instance, Robert Hume, who writes of 'Her [the heroine's] reluctant complicity in the murder' ('The Conclusion of Defoe's *Roxana*: Fiasco or Tour de Force?', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 3 (1970), p. 489), and Maximillian Novak, who speaks of the heroine's 'partial complicity in the murder of her child' ('Crime and Punishment in Defoe's *Roxana*', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 65 (1966), p. 445).

for the sake of physical pleasure. Indeed, it would not be true. 'I had nothing of the Vice in my Constitution', she says, apropos of her landlord lover. 'My spirits were far from being high; my Blood had no Fire in it, to kindle the Flame of Desire' (p. 50). What excites her is the idea of social glory, high life, 'greatness', though she means to enjoy this without sacrificing her other great passion, which is for independence. If she is intensely mercenary, it is rather easy to see the reason why.

Her cult of independence is much to the fore in her dispute with the Dutch merchant over marriage. He is a wealthy and high-minded man, who has generously helped her with her financial affairs, and, out of gratitude, as well as liking for him, she – being now separated from her Prince – is sleeping with him. He wants her to marry him, which she is perfectly at liberty to do, since she believes her husband is by now dead. However, she refuses, with all her ingrained intransigence. We realise now that, though her dislike of her earlier lover's pretended 'marriage' arose from a hatred of shams, it also sprang from hostility to marriage itself. She is in fact a committed feminist (though the term itself had not yet been invented). Marriage, she maintains cogently enough, is a kind of betrayal for a woman, or at least one in her circumstances. Why should she want to exchange the authority of a mistress for the humble post of '*an Upper-servant*'? 'The very Nature of the Marriage-Contract was, in short, nothing but giving up Liberty, Estate, Authority and every-thing, to the Man, and the Woman was indeed, a meer Woman ever after, that is to say, a Slave'. The merchant, forgetting that he is speaking to a bold and ambitious woman, adopts a very ill-chosen line in reply. All the toil of life, he tells her, rests on a husband's shoulders; a wife 'had nothing to do, but to eat the Fat, and drink the Sweet; to sit still, and look round her; be waited on, and made much of; be serv'd, and made easie'. It prompts the heroine to powerful eloquence. 'Ay', she says,

*that is the Thing I complain of; the Pretence of Affection, takes from a Woman every thing that can be call'd herself; she is to have no Interest; no Aim; no View; but all is the Interest, Aim, and View, of the Husband; she is to be the passive Creature you spoke of ... she is to lead a Life of perfect Indolence, and living by Faith (not in God, but) in her Husband, she sinks or swims, as he is either Fool or wise Man.*

But indeed, she says, it is not her lover she quarrels with but the (purely man-made) laws of matrimony. It is these which

puts the Power into your Hands; bids you do it, commands you to command; and binds me, forsooth, to obey; you, that are now upon even Terms with me, and I with you ... are the next Hour set up upon the Throne, and

the humble Wife plac'd at your Footstool; all the rest, all that you call Oneness of Interest, Mutual Affection, *and the like*, is Curtesie and Kindness then, and a Woman is indeed, infinitely oblig'd where she meets with it; but can't help herself where it fails. (pp. 132–3)<sup>10</sup>

It is true, she has been lucky in her experiences as a 'kept' woman, first with her jeweller landlord and then with the Prince, both of them exemplary lovers. It has given her a taste for the sovereignty implied in the word 'mistress'. But after all, 'being kept', as she points out, does not exhaust the possibilities. While a woman was single, she says, 'she was a Masculine in her politick Capacity'; she was 'a Man in her separated Capacity', being 'as fit to govern and enjoy her own Estate, without a Man, as a Man was, without a Woman' (p. 131). So why, she boldly argues, should a woman not 'keep' a man – have, as it were, a male 'mistress'? (In real life, of course, it is quite common, although, except perhaps in aristocratic circles, it is not thought proper to admit it.) It requires two things. First, a capacity to act the male role in life generally, something that she could claim to possess; and, second, a lot of money. The 'fortunate mistress' is cheerfully frank with herself about her passion for money, and the reason why she so steadfastly refuses to marry her Dutch lover is, simply and quite reasonably, that she wants to keep control of her money – though, as she is forced to realise, this is not the sort of thing that can actually be said.

Her lover, a more conventionally-minded person, is dumbfounded at her refusal of marriage. It was never known in the world, he says in comical bewilderment, 'that any Woman refus'd to marry a Man that had first lain with her' (p. 136). But, to complicate matters further, both of them silently realise an uncomfortable fact: that by sleeping with the merchant she has lowered her own value. He is the last person to have the right to reproach her; nevertheless the fact glares at them, and he reveals that it is exactly what he had been calculating on. If he once got her to bed, so he had told himself, it would be an act of generosity if he still offered to marry her. (In short, he was playing a false game – which left him open to the question of why he was so eager for marriage. Was it, after all, for love of her, or was it, perhaps, for her money?) But she has an answer which entirely surprises and wrong-foots him. When a woman has been 'weak enough to yield up

<sup>10</sup> It is worth noticing that Defoe's contemporary, the proto-feminist Mary Astell, though an arch Tory and traditionalist and author of a tough rejoinder to his *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters*, takes a very similar line to that of the 'fortunate mistress', and is almost equally eloquent, over the purely man-made rules and prejudices under which women suffer. See *The First English Feminist: Reflections Upon Marriage and other Writings by Mary Astell*, ed. Bridget Hill (London, 1986), p. 90.

the last Point before Wedlock', she declares, 'it wou'd be adding one Weakness to another, to take the Man afterwards; to pin down the Shame of it upon herself all Days of her Life, and bind herself to live all her Time with the only Man that cou'd upbraid her with it'. The merchant is reduced by this to telling her, sheepishly, that 'he cou'd not say but I was right in the Main' and that 'I had started a new thing in the World; that however I might support it by subtle reasoning, yet it was a way of arguing that was contrary to the general Practice' (p. 134). Eventually she weakens and attempts to compromise, but it is too late, and she succeeds only in lowering her self-esteem. Defoe's handling of this duel is altogether subtle and imaginative.

What, then, is the theme of *The Fortunate Mistress*? It is not really, for the reader, the one that the heroine broods on in her most self-reviling moments: the self-fulfilling prophecy that a courtesan like herself, by disobeying the marriage laws, is doomed by Heaven to come to grief. It is, rather, much as in *Moll Flanders*, the sheer, near-impossible, difficulty of living, whether for a pickpocket or for a courtesan. It is a theme (you might call it 'female difficulties') that Defoe made his own in his novels, and perhaps no English writer has quite equalled him (Samuel Richardson and Frances Burney come the closest) in the rendering of dilemmas and enforced silences and ruses and insuperable embarrassments. The effect, for the reader, is sometimes amusing (as when the heroine finds the unvarnished truth just a shade 'too gross' actually to admit – see p. 130), and sometimes agonising – especially so, of course, in the implacable and nightmarish hounding she suffers from her daughter.

\* \* \* \* \*

The title *The Fortunate Mistress* might be thought to be a mischievous reflection on a novel, *Idalia: or The Unfortunate Mistress* by Defoe's rival Eliza Haywood, published the previous year. But in fact nothing very much emerges from the comparison. *Idalia* is a breathless and breathtaking narrative of the wanderings and sufferings of a Venetian beauty, comprising rape, oriental digressions, disguises, frequent poisonings and fortunate accidents, but it is not, what *The Fortunate Mistress* so signally is, an inward-looking novel.

Nevertheless, the change of title after Defoe's death, from *The Fortunate Mistress* to *Roxana*, is of some significance in the novel's history, when taken in connection with its curious subtitle, 'or, *A History of the Life and Vast Variety of Fortunes of Mademoiselle de Beleau, afterwards call'd the Countess de Wintelsheim, in Germany. Being the Person known by the Name of the Lady Roxana, in the time of King Charles II*'. Rodney Baine, in an article 'The Evidence

from Defoe's Title Pages', points out that in Defoe's day the title as appearing on the title-page, including any subtitle, was normally the work of the publisher rather than the author. It was the publisher's advertisement or 'bill of fare', the author very likely having no hand in it or even seeing it.<sup>11</sup> This, so Baine suggests, was fairly plainly the case with *The Fortunate Mistress*; and if he is right, it would not be hard to guess what was on the publisher's mind. For Defoe's novel features a King who is said to have 'several Mistresses' (p. 148) and with whom the protagonist, now a successful courtesan, believes she may have danced during a private masquerade in her lodgings in Pall Mall. Now, the King at the time of the novel's publication was George I, who was highly prone (or at least his ministers were) to take offence at any hint of scandal at his expense. This, it seems reasonable to suppose, was why Defoe made it so plain, as he does, that the Pall Mall scenes are taking place in the now-distant Restoration period. For instance he drops in the detail that the Queen, evidently meaning Charles's Queen, Catharine of Braganza, was not much seen in public. (But then, George I's divorced wife never set foot in England.) Again, he has the heroine put her financial affairs in the hands of the famous Sir Robert Clayton, who flourished in the Restoration period and died seven years before George I's accession. Nevertheless, the publisher might well have felt a lingering anxiety, for the authorities could deal even more savagely with publishers than with authors. Thus he may have composed the subtitle, which specifically refers to 'the time of Charles II', as an extra precaution. It can hardly, one feels, have been Defoe himself who composed it, for why would he have mentioned two names, 'Mademoiselle de Beleau' and 'the Countess de Wintelsheim', which never actually appear in the text?

This subtitle has had large – and, I would suggest, confusing – consequences. For it has led to the notion that the novel has a 'double time-scheme'. The theory is stated starkly by David Blewett in his *Defoe's Art of Fiction* – 'The masquerade in *Roxana* takes place simultaneously in the reign of Charles II and of George I' – and why Defoe should have played this game with history, he argues – as do Rodney Baine and Paul Alkon also – is because the novel is intended as satire. It is meant as an ironical demonstration that the social evils of the Restoration are happening all over again under King George.<sup>12</sup>

11 Rodney M. Baine, 'The Evidence from Defoe's Title Pages', *Studies in Bibliography*, 25 (1972), pp. 185–91.

12 See David Blewett, *Defoe's Art of Fiction* (Toronto, 1979), p. 126. See also Baine, 'The Evidence from Defoe's Title Pages', pp. 190–1, and Paul Alkon, *Defoe and Fictional Time* (Athens, Georgia, 1979), pp. 53–8.



Now the masquerade in the heroine's lodgings – attended, so at least she believes, by the King – was, of course, a private one; but round about 1718 public masquerades, as promoted by J. J. Heidegger the manager of the Haymarket Opera House, became all the rage, and they were still a talking-point when Defoe's novel was published, earning much disapproval from moralists. But any suggestion that a hit was intended at George I, as well as at Charles II, would seem to be out of the question. For that the pompous George could be imagined attending a public masquerade – or indeed attending a masquerade at all, seeing that, speaking no English, he could have had no conversation with his dancing-partners – would have struck Defoe's readers as wild.

Anyway, the word in question here is 'satire'. Paul Alkon writes of 'Defoe's formal intention of satirizing eighteenth-century society by showing ways in which it is no better than the court of Charles II'. If the scene is set entirely in the eighteenth century, he says, 'the satiric force of comparisons with a notoriously dissolute period vanish, although *Roxana* would still be a devastating picture of eighteenth-century high life. Conversely the implicit satirical meanings would either vanish or diminish in power if *Roxana* had been set entirely in the seventeenth century.'<sup>13</sup> But, artistically speaking, it is hard to make sense of this. For satire (at any rate post-classical satire) works by making the reader laugh – whether in joy at absurdity, or in fear, or in indignation. It has familiar techniques for ridiculing and wounding its victims, such as fantastic exaggeration, laughing up one's sleeve, comical understatement or false naivety. Defoe shows himself a master of the style in his political satires, for instance *The Secret History of the October Club* (1711) or *Memoirs of Count Tariff* (1713), but there is nothing of that nature, so far as one can see, in *The Fortunate Mistress*.

In fact, the theory of a 'double time-scheme' strikes one as a delusion, fostered by the assumption, a modern one, that a novel will necessarily be set in historical time. After learning that the heroine of *The Fortunate Mistress* first came to England, at the age of ten, 'about the Year 1683' (p. 23), one can read all the first half of the novel – everything till the heroine's arrival in Pall Mall – without once asking oneself what period the story is taking place in. Few writers of the reign of Queen Anne knew more about the War of the Spanish Succession (1702–13) than Defoe, who wrote tens of thousands of words on this absorbing topic; but it leaves no trace on *The Fortunate Mistress*.<sup>14</sup> The novel up to this middle point can hardly be said to be 'set' in any

<sup>13</sup> Alkon, *Defoe and Fictional Time*, p. 54.

<sup>14</sup> There is a tiny exception to this in that the first husband of the 'fortunate mistress' dies from wounds he suffers at the siege of Mons in 1709 (see pp. 193–4 below).

particular period; nor indeed – after the brief though memorable excursion into the days of Charles II – can the rest of it. Judith Sloman suggests that the heroine's life at the court of Charles II is only a fantasy or daydream: she calls it 'the escape from time'.<sup>15</sup> But one is more inclined to describe it as the novel's sole venture *into* recognisable (i.e. historical) time.

\* \* \* \* \*

In *The Post Boy* for 17 March 1720, and in several other journals, including Abel Boyer's *Political State*, it was reported that on the 9th of the month a mysterious 'lady of quality' had died at her lodgings in St James's Street, Covent Garden. She had evidently been wealthy, at least she possessed very rich clothes, and a day or two before her death she had given into safe keeping a great quantity of diamonds, plate and other precious objects – including a 'Lace Head', which she had been heard to say 'cost one hundred and ten Pounds'. *The Post Boy*'s chief informant was a certain John Ward of Hackney, who evidently knew her.<sup>16</sup> He described her as a good French speaker, experienced in foreign courts: sharp-eyed, soft-spoken, compassionate, but highly satirical in conversation. It was thought she was the daughter of a nobleman, now deceased; and she had come up to London in a coach-and-six from Mansfield in Nottinghamshire at about the time of the death of Queen Anne. (Apparently, in London, she had more than one lodging, for though she went out every evening in a hackney coach, she rarely returned in the same clothes as she had gone out in.) Recently she was heard to say she had been 'at a Masquerade in a *Dominy*, where she had an Opportunity of much Conversation with a VERY GREAT MAN'. She had a loyal maid-servant who had lived with her from eleven years of age and with whom she had desposited a letter, to be delivered to John Ward in case of her death. It was her belief that 'she might be said to have overcome such a Scene of Troubles, as no Woman before her had ever gone through'.

How vividly, one cannot help feeling, this evokes Defoe's 'fortunate mistress': the loyal servant, the 'Lace Head' (Defoe's heroine has one worth 200*l.* sterling (p. 73)), the superabundance of diamonds, the lady's arduous 'Scene of Troubles' – or, as one might say, 'Vast Variety of Fortunes' – above all, her

<sup>15</sup> Judith Sloman, 'The Time Scheme of Defoe's *Roxana*', *English Studies in Canada*, 4 (1979), pp. 406–19 (p. 410).

<sup>16</sup> John Ward of Hackney (1682–1755) was a Tory MP, and a navy contractor during the time of the Harley ministry. See G. Holmes, *British Politics in the Age of Anne* (3rd edn, London, 1987), p. 511, and Abel Boyer, *History of the Life and Reign of Queen Anne* (London, 1722), p. 696. He was to be convicted of forgery in 1726 and to stand in the pillory in the following year.

conversation at a masquerade with 'a VERY GREAT MAN'. No doubt one could find out more about her; it is even, of course, just conceivable that Defoe knew her or knew more of her story; but that is not why I bring her in. It is rather because of the possibility that the news items about her might have given Defoe, or helped to give him, the idea for his novel, *The Fortunate Mistress*: that it set him constructing a fictional life that could be imagined as leading to such an end. Thus I have thought it worth reprinting three of these intriguing news reports as [Appendix B](#) (pp. 275–8).

Whether by accident or not, the lady's conversation at the masquerade with 'a very great man' takes us to the heart of Defoe's novel. *The Fortunate Mistress* makes particular use of the suppression of names, hiding (or pretending to hide) them behind a dash ('The Prince de —', 'The Countess de —', etc.). Defoe is already exploiting this for fictional effect in his preface. 'The Scene', he writes, 'is laid so near the Place where the Main Part of it was transacted, that it was necessary to conceal Names and Persons; lest what cannot be yet entirely forgot in that Part of the Town, shou'd be remember'd', and this justification hangs in turn upon another claim, that the story is true, 'the Work is not a Story but a History' (p. 21). These interrelated ploys, we come to realise, have special work to do in the novel, in that, symbolically, they give it the character of a masquerade – an entertainment at which identities are hidden, but hinted at, under cover of a mask. The supposititious subtitle, in spelling out names ('Mademoiselle de Beleau', 'The Countess de Wintelsheim'), is going conspicuously against Defoe's own artistic strategy.

Defoe's handling of the business of the masquerades in *The Fortunate Mistress* is certainly masterly. It is plain that the heroine's idea that she may have danced with the King – at the second masquerade if not at the first – is what the other guests want her to think. But indeed, out of sheer desire for the gossipworthy, they even think, and want her to think, that she might become the King's mistress. The thought had entered her mind before ('having already been ador'd by Princes, I thought of nothing less than of being Mistress to the King himself' (p. 140)), but it thoroughly possesses her when one of the guests seems to be proposing it ('this Vanity was rais'd by some Words *let fall* by a Person I convers'd with, who was, perhaps, likely enough to have brought such a thing to pass' (p. 148)).

Strangely, critics of *The Fortunate Mistress* often assume that the protagonist does in fact have an affair with the King,<sup>17</sup> though some later words of hers explicitly deny it:

<sup>17</sup> See, for example, Novak, 'Crime and Punishment in Defoe's *Roxana*', p. 459; Sloman, 'The Time-Scheme of Defoe's *Roxana*', p. 406.

Necessity first debauch'd me, and Poverty made me a Whore at the Beginning; so excess of Avarice for getting Money, and excess of Vanity, continued me in the Crime, not being able to resist the Flatteries of Great Persons; being call'd the finest Woman in *France*: being caressed by a Prince; and afterwards I had Pride enough to expect, and Folly enough to believe, *tho' indeed, without ground* [my italics], by a Great Monarch. (p. 171)

The root of the error probably lies in the teasing passage in which the heroine tells how, soon after the masquerades, she lived in retirement for some three years, 'having been oblig'd to make an Excursion, in a Manner, and with a Person, which Duty and Private Vows, obliges her not to reveal, at least, not yet'. She calls it, enigmatically, 'the most glorious Retreat ... that ever Woman had' (p. 156), and we might guess that she means us to suppose it was with King Charles. However, whatever sense we take the word 'Retreat' in, this can hardly be right. The wording of her account, and the effect of this 'Excursion' on her reputation ('some People had got at least, a Suspicion of *where I had been, and who had had me all the while* [my italics]'), imply that she and her protector were sharing a secluded retreat, something a reigning king could hardly do. One's best guess is that she means the King's son, the Duke of Monmouth, whose name (as 'the D— of M—th') is broadly hinted at on the previous page.

\* \* \* \* \*

This brings us, indirectly, to the important question of the name 'Roxana'. Defoe's publishers, after his death, did something almost as radical as tampering with his subtitle, they changed the title itself – from *The Fortunate Mistress*, as it was in the first edition, to *Roxana: or, The Fortunate Mistress* (1742) or again to *The Life and Adventures of Roxana, the Fortunate Mistress: or Most Unhappy Wife* (1745), with the effect that ever since then the novel has been known to readers, rather misleadingly, as *Roxana*. Why I say 'misleadingly' is because it tends to blunt the sharp point about *naming* that Defoe is making. The consequences of the courtiers' imposing of the name 'Roxana' on the protagonist, in a novel in which otherwise there is such a ban on naming, can be understood as a grim warning. The point is cleverly made. She never likes or accepts the name, which she thinks of less as a name than as a definition, saying disparagingly: 'At the finishing the Dance [her performance in Turkish costume], the Company clapp'd, and almost shouted; and one of the Gentlemen cry'd out, *Roxana! Roxana!* by —, with an Oath; upon which foolish Accident I had the Name of *Roxana* presently fix'd upon me all over the Court End of Town, as effectually as if I had been Christen'd *Roxana*' (p. 151). In relating how she made her mysterious 'Retreat' with a great personage she remarks tartly, using the third

person, 'for three Years and about a Month, *Roxana* liv'd retir'd', and the consequence of her retreat was, that 'it began to be publick, that *Roxana* was, in short, a meer *Roxana* [i.e. woman of light morals]' (p. 156). Then in the final section of the book the name becomes an outright plague and incubus. It fills her with terror when she learns that her daughter Susan has 'got the Name of *Roxana* by the end' (p. 222) and is beginning to claim that it is 'the Lady *Roxana*', not Amy, who is her mother. The fatal name, together with the Turkish dress, seems doomed to be her undoing.

But what is significant is that unlike the name 'Roxana', which is foisted upon her, the Turkish costume is a whim of her own choosing. Defoe's treatment here is cunning. At masquerades, and in fancy dress generally, in the early eighteenth century, there was a great vogue for anything oriental, and especially for things supposedly Turkish. The fashion had been given impetus by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, who, newly returned from Constantinople in the early 1720s, had created quite a stir by appearing at court in Turkish dress. Now it so happened that during the fortunate mistress's 'grand tour' her princely lover had bought her a Turkish woman slave, rescued from the Barbary corsairs by a Maltese privateer. The slave taught her a smattering of Turkish and some Moorish songs, and with her encouragement the 'fortunate mistress' bought a magnificent Turkish dress. She describes it lovingly:

the Robe was fine *Persian*, or *India* Damask; the Ground white, and the Flowers blue and gold, and the Train held five Yards; the Dress under it, was a Vest of the same, embroider'd with Gold, and set with some Pearl in the Work, and some *Turquois* Stones; to the Vest, was a Girdle five or six Inches wide ... and on both Ends where it join'd, or hook'd, was set with Diamonds for eight Inches either way, only they were not true Diamonds, but no-body knew that but myself. (p. 150)

There went with it a towering headdress, to which she added a precious jewel 'on the Front, just over the Forehead', but – at least according to the novel's frontispiece – the heroine preserved propriety by wearing a large cross or crucifix on her bosom.<sup>18</sup> It becomes an amusement to her, every now and then, to dress up in this costume in private and get Amy to play the part of her slave-girl; and at her first masquerade, amid whispers that the King might be one of the maskers, she ventures to perform a solo dance in the dress, to great applause. It is on this occasion that she is hailed as 'Roxana'.

<sup>18</sup> See Rodney Baine, 'Roxana's Georgian Setting', *Studies in English Literature 1500–1900*, 15 (1975), pp. 459–71. According to Baine there was a satirical engraving of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu in Turkish dress, in which she, likewise, wore a crucifix.

The point, we perceive, is that she adores to be admired and for her wealth to be given palpable and glorious display. But what we also discover is that she is quite determined – it is in her character – that there shall be nothing whatever lascivious or indecent in her performance. Aileen Ribeiro remarks that the ‘tremor of indecorum’ associated with Turkish fancy dress made it an ideal costume for the masquerade;<sup>19</sup> but Defoe’s ‘fortunate mistress’ disallows even this tremor. When she has danced a stately *courant* with her distinguished partner, he asks her if now she will dance an ‘Antick’ with him, but she firmly refuses (p. 151). As for her solo, the other guests imagine that it is a Turkish affair, and to her amusement one of the gentlemen even claims to have seen such a dance in Constantinople (‘which was ridiculous enough’). What they are too naive to realise is that her whole performance is French and formal in the French manner. (The ‘figure’ of her solo dance was the invention of a Parisian dancing-master.) Defoe makes the point clear, for at her second masquerade two unknown ladies appear and perform a wild dance, evoking ‘the barbarous Country’ from which they are supposed to come; but the company prefer the seemly performance of the ‘fortunate mistress’ and ‘the *French* Behaviour under the *Mahometan* Dress’ (p. 154). Later the Turkish dress serves as an innocent entertainment for her Dutch husband and the Quaker. Her only objection to it is that it is rather too thin for the English climate. It is, as Defoe indicates, one of the paradoxes of the career of the ‘fortunate mistress’ that such an unimpeachably chaste, though public, display on her part, as transmuted by gossip, comes to haunt her as a fearful and scandalous secret.

\* \* \* \* \*

The conclusion of *The Fortunate Mistress* is abrupt and somewhat confusing. The heroine has left word that she wants Amy to come and join her in Holland, though only on one condition: that she will swear not to have murdered Susan, as she has sometimes threatened to do. But at this point all grows vague. Amy comes to Holland without, after all, taking the required vow, though we do not know how this comes about. There are facts which the relator dares not disclose; and the reader is left with many unanswered questions. Robert D. Hume argues that the extreme brevity of the concluding paragraphs indicates not failure but growing technical skill: ‘Defoe hints in two paragraphs at what we might expect to take thirty or forty pages of narration’.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Aileen Ribeiro, *Dress in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (London, 1984), p. 177.

<sup>20</sup> Hume, ‘The Conclusion of Defoe’s *Roxana*’, p. 490.

But what needs noticing is that ‘conclusion’ is not quite the right word, for the novel has two conclusions, which do not altogether square with each other. In the earlier one the heroine, as a rich Countess, is enjoying a life outwardly ‘fill’d with all humane Felicity’ but inwardly poisoned for her by guilt-feelings and terrible imaginings about her past career (p. 217). This state of mind lasts nearly two years, neither her husband nor Amy being able to help her much; and we are told that if Providence had not come to her rescue (but it is not explained how it did so) she would very soon have died. In the later conclusion, by contrast, she and Amy fall into ‘a deadful Course of Calamities’ (p. 267), a description suggesting external misfortunes, though again we are not told what exactly they consist in. These loose ends and semi-contradictions are bound to trouble us a little. But Hume’s instinct may at least have been right, that Defoe intended his ending to be unnerving and brief.

\* \* \* \* \*

Defoe’s novel proved popular, and there were a number of further editions by different publishers after his death. However, readers – and very possibly some of the publishers too – would have had no idea who its author was. The name ‘Defoe’ did not appear on the title-page until 1775, and even then in a wildly mangled version of the novel published by Francis Noble as *The History of Mademoiselle de Belean*. Moreover, the work would have belonged, in the eyes of the publishers, to a low class of literature, which gave them the liberty to adapt it, or even transmogrify it, to suit current taste. In particular they evidently decided the ending was too cryptic, and it became the practice to supply the novel with a continuation. These continuations supplied fresh incidents, on the whole fairly trivial and unexciting, in the journey to Holland of the heroine and her husband; and in addition they would often tack on large extracts filched from another author’s published work (or, in one case, from later editions of Defoe’s own *Tour thro’ the Whole Island of Great Britain*). There were at least six differing eighteenth-century continuations, and I have listed them, with a brief note on their contents, in [Appendix A](#) (below, pp. 269–73).

Then, in 1840, William Hazlitt the Younger brought out a three-volume edition of *The Works of Daniel Defoe*, and this gave the question of continuations a fresh turn. His text, so far as it went, was a faithful reproduction of the first edition, of 1724; but he followed this by a long sequel, still in the heroine’s own words, relating her decline into poverty and imprisonment for debt in a Dutch jail, and a note by her maid Isabel Johnson reporting her death in Amsterdam in 1742. Hazlitt has a footnote to the last sentence of the first edition:

The work, as originally published by De Foe in 1724, ends in this manner. The continuation of Roxana's life, which follows, was first printed in 1745, with a long explanation as to the author. It is impossible at this distance of time to say by whom it was written, but the style certainly bears a strong resemblance to that of De Foe.<sup>21</sup>

To this in a preface he adds a further comment, to the effect that in the second edition Defoe 'was persuaded by his friend, Southern, to leave out the whole of the story relating to Roxana's daughter Susannah'. This 'Hazlitt' continuation (as we may call it for convenience), which incorporates various fragments of its predecessors, came regularly to be included, together with his footnote, in editions of the novel throughout the rest of the nineteenth century, indeed as late as the Maynard edition of 1903. Nearly all the factual assertions made about it by Hazlitt are, however, false. It was first printed, not in 1745, but in 1765 (by J. Cooke); there was no 'long explanation as to the author'; and it is not true that the story about the heroine's daughter was left out in the second edition. These ideas, also entailing the theory of a 'lost' edition of 1745, are the relics of an intricate tangle of misunderstandings on the part of William Godwin (whose tragedy *Faulkener* was partly inspired by Defoe's *The Fortunate Mistress*), Walter Wilson (the author in 1830 of *Memoirs of the Life and Times of Daniel De Foe*) and Charles Lamb (who was Wilson's literary adviser), their confusions being a legacy of the lies and fabrications in the *History of Mademoiselle de Belean* mentioned above.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>21</sup> *The Works of Daniel De Foe, with a Memoir of His Life and Writings*, ed. William Hazlitt (3 vols, London, 1840), Vol. 1, p. 109.

<sup>22</sup> An attempt is made to unravel this curious imbroglio in two articles by W. R. Owens and the present editor: 'Defoe and Francis Noble', *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, 4 (1992), pp. 301–13 and 'The "Lost" Continuation of Defoe's *Roxana*', *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, 9 (1997), pp. 299–308.





*The Famous* ROXANA.

THE  
*Fortunate Mistress:*  
OR, A  
HISTORY  
OF THE  
L I F E  
AND  
Vast Variety of Fortunes  
OF  
*Mademoiselle de Belean,*  
AFTERWARDS CALL'D  
The Countess *de Wintelsheim*,<sup>1</sup>  
in *GERMANY*.

Being the Person known by the Name of the LADY ROXANA, in the  
Time of King *Charles* II.

---

LONDON:

*Printed for T. Warner at the Black-Boy in Pater-Noster-Row; W. Meadows at the Angel in Cornhil; W. Pepper at the Crown in Maiden-Lane, Covent-Garden; S. Harding at the Post-House in St. Martin's Lane; and T. Edlin at the Prince's-Arms against Exeter-Exchange in the Strand. 1724.*



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# THE P R E F A C E.

*THE History of this Beautiful Lady, is to speak for itself: If it is not as Beautiful as the Lady herself is reported to be; if it is not as diverting as the Reader can desire, and much more than he can reasonably expect; and if all the most diverting Parts of it are not adapted to the Instruction and Improvement of the Reader, the Relator says, it must be from the Defect of his Performance; dressing up the Story in worse Cloaths than the Lady, whose Words he speaks, prepar'd it for the World.*

*He takes the Liberty to say, That this Story differs from most of the Modern Performances of this Kind, tho' some of them have met with a very good Reception in the World: I say, It differs from them in this Great and Essential Article, Namely, That the Foundation of This is laid in Truth of Fact; and so the Work is not a Story, but a History.*

*The Scene is laid so near the Place where the Main Part of it was transacted, that it was necessary to conceal Names and Persons; lest what cannot be yet entirely forgot in that Part of the Town, shou'd be remember'd, and the Facts trac'd back too plainly, by the many People yet living, who wou'd know the Persons by the Particulars.*

*It is not always necessary that the Names of Persons shou'd be discover'd, tho' the History may be many Ways useful; and if we shou'd be always oblig'd to name the Persons, or not to relate the Story, the Consequence might be only this, That many a pleasant and delightful History wou'd be Buried in the Dark, and the World be depriv'd both of the Pleasure and the Profit of it.*

*The Writer says, He was particularly acquainted with this Lady's First Husband, the Brewer, and with his Father; and also, with his Bad Circumstances; and knows that first Part of the Story to be Truth.*

*This may, he hopes, be a Pledge for the Credit of the rest, tho' the Latter Part of her History lay Abroad, and cou'd not so well be vouch'd as the First; yet, as she has told it herself, we have the less Reason to question the Truth of that Part also.*

*In the Manner she has told the Story, it is evident she does not insist upon her Justification in any one Part of it; much less does she recommend her Conduct, or indeed, any Part of it, except her Repentance to our Imitation: On the contrary, she makes*

*frequent Excursions, in a just censuring and condemning her own Practice: How often does she reproach herself in the most passionate Manner; and guide us to just Reflections in the like Cases?*

*It is true, She met with unexpected Success in all her wicked Courses; but even in the highest Elevations of her Prosperity, she makes frequent Acknowledgments, That the Pleasure of her Wickedness was not worth the Repentance; and that all the Satisfaction she had, all the Joy in the View of her Prosperity, no, nor all the Wealth she rowl'd in; the Gayety of her Appearance; the Equipages, and the Honours, she was attended with, cou'd quiet her Mind, abate the Reproaches of her Conscience, or procure her an Hour's Sleep, when just Reflections kept her waking.*

*The Noble Inferences that are drawn from this one Part, are worth all the rest of the Story; and abundantly justify (as they are the profess'd Design of) the Publication.*

*If there are any Parts in her Story, which being oblig'd to relate a wicked Action, seem to describe it too plainly, the Writer says, all imaginable Care has been taken to keep clear of Indecencies, and immodest Expressions; and 'tis hop'd you will find nothing to prompt a vicious Mind, but every-where much to discourage and expose it.*

*Scenes of Crime can scarce be represented in such a Manner, but some may make a Criminal Use of them; but when Vice is painted in its Low-priz'd<sup>2</sup> Colours, 'tis not to make People in love with it, but to expose it; and if the Reader makes a wrong Use of the Figures,<sup>3</sup> the Wickedness is his own.*

*In the mean time, the Advantages of the present Work are so great, and the Virtuous Reader has room for so much Improvement, that we make no Question, the Story, however meanly told, will find a Passage to his best Hours; and be read both with Profit and Delight.*

THE  
*Fortunate Mistress:*  
OR, A  
H I S T O R Y  
OF  
The Life, &c.

I Was BORN, *as my Friends told me*, at the City of POICTIERS, in the Province, or County of POICTOU, in *France*, from whence I was brought to *England* by my Parents, who fled for their Religion about the Year 1683,<sup>4</sup> when the Protestants were Banish'd from *France* by the Cruelty of their Persecutors.

I, who knew little or nothing of what I was brought over hither for, was well enough pleas'd with being here; *London*, a large and gay City, took with me mighty well, who, from my being a Child, lov'd a Crowd, and to see a great many fine Folks.

I retain'd nothing of *France*, but the Language: My Father and Mother being People of better Fashion, than ordinarily the People call'd REFUGEES<sup>5</sup> at that Time were; and having fled early, while it was easie to secure their Effects, had, before their coming over, remitted considerable Sums of Money, or, *as I remember*, a considerable Value in *French* Brandy, Paper,<sup>6</sup> and other Goods; and these selling very much to Advantage here, my Father was in very good Circumstances at his coming over, so that he was far from applying to the rest of our Nation that were here, for Countenance and Relief: On the contrary, he had his Door continually throng'd with miserable Objects of the poor starving Creatures, who at that Time fled hither for Shelter, on Account of Conscience, *or something else*.

I have indeed, heard my Father say, That he was pester'd with a great many of those, who, *for any Religion they had*, might e'en have stay'd where they were, but who flock'd over hither in Droves, for what they call in *English*, a Livelihood; hearing with what Open Arms the REFUGEES were receiv'd in *England*, and how they fell readily into Business, being, by the

charitable Assistance of the People in *London*, encourag'd to Work in their Manufactures, in *Spittle-Fields*,<sup>7</sup> *Canterbury*, and other places; and that they had a much better Price for their Work, than in *France*, and the like.

My Father, *I say*, told me, That he was more pester'd with the Clamours of these People, than of those who were truly REFUGEES, and fled in Distress, merely for Conscience.

I was about ten Years old when I was brought over hither, where, *as I have said*, my Father liv'd in very good Circumstances, and died in about eleven Years more; in which time, as I had accomplish'd myself for the sociable Part of the World, so I had acquainted myself with some of our *English* Neighbours, as is the Custom in *London*; and as, while I was Young, I had pick'd up three or four Play-Fellows and Companions, suitable to my Years; so as we grew bigger, we learnt to call one-another Intimates and Friends; and this forwarded very much the finishing me for Conversation,<sup>8</sup> and the World.

I went to *English* Schools, and being young, I learnt the *English* Tongue perfectly well, with all the Customs of the *English* Young Women; so that I retain'd nothing of the *French*, but the Speech; nor did I so much as keep any Remains of the *French* Language tagg'd to my Way of Speaking, *as most Foreigners do*, but spoke what we call Natural *English*, as if I had been born here.

Being to give my own Character, I must be excus'd to give it as impartially as possible, and as if I was speaking of another body; *and the Sequel will lead you to judge whether I flatter myself or no*.

I was (*speaking of myself as about Fourteen Years of Age*) tall, and very well made; sharp as a Hawk in Matters of common Knowledge; quick and smart in Discourse; apt to be Satyrical; full of Repartee, and a little too forward in Conversation; or, as we call it in *English*, BOLD, tho' perfectly Modest in my Behaviour. Being *French* Born, I danc'd, *as some say*, naturally, lov'd it extremely, and sung well also, and so well, that, *as you will hear*, it was afterwards some Advantage to me: With all these Things, I wanted neither Wit, Beauty, or Money. In this Manner I set out into the World, having all the Advantages that any Young Woman cou'd desire, to recommend me to others, and form a Prospect of happy Living to myself.

At about Fifteen Years of Age, my Father gave me, *as he call'd it in French*, 25000 Livres,<sup>9</sup> *that is to say*, two Thousand Pounds Portion,<sup>10</sup> and married me to an Eminent Brewer in the City; *pardon me if I conceal his Name, for tho' he was the Foundation of my Ruin, I cannot take so severe a Revenge upon him*.

With this Thing call'd a Husband, I liv'd eight Years in good Fashion, and for some Part of the Time, kept a Coach, *that is to say*, a kind of Mock-