ACT Two, Scene 4

25

To end the misery that brought me here. 110

She starts to exit.

DORINE Wait! Wait! Come back! Please don't go out that door.

I'll help you. I'm not angry anymore.

MARIANE If I am forced into this martyrdom,

You see, I'll have to die, Dorine.

DORINE

Oh come,

Give up this torment. Look at me—I swear. 115 We'll find a way. Look, here's your love, Valère.

Scene 4

START

VALÈRE, MARIANE, DORINE

VALÈRE So I've just heard some news that's news to me, And very fine news it is, do you agree?

MARIANE What?

VALÈRE You have plans for marriage I didn't know.

You're going to marry Tartuffe. Is this so?

MARIANE My father has that notion, it is true.

VALÈRE Madame, your father promised—

MARIANE —me to you?

He changed his mind, announced this change to me,

Just minutes ago . . .

VALÈRE Quite seriously?

MARIANE It's his wish that I should marry this man.

VALÈRE And what do you think of your father's plan?

MARIANE I don't know.

VALÈRE Honest words—better than lies.

You don't know?

MARIANE No.

VALÈRE No?

MARIANE What do you advise?

I advise you to . . . marry Tartuffe. Tonight. VALÈRE

You advise me to . . . MARIANE

VALÈRE Yes.

MARIANE Really?

VALÈRE That's right.

Consider it. It's an obvious choice. 15

MARIANE I'll follow your suggestion and rejoice.

VALÈRE I'm sure that you can follow it with ease.

MARIANE Just as you gave it. It will be a breeze.

VALÈRE Just to please you was my sole intent.

MARIANE To please you, I'll do it and be content. DORINE I can't wait to see what happens next.

VALÈRE And this is love to you? I am perplexed.

Was it a sham when you-That's in the past MARIANE Because you said so honestly and fast That I should take the one bestowed on me. 25 I'm nothing but obedient, you see, So, yes, I'll take him. That's my declaration, Since that's your advice and expectation. VALÈRE I see, you're using me as an excuse, Any pretext, so you can cut me loose. 30 You didn't think I'd notice—I'd be blind To the fact that you'd made up your mind? MARIANE How true. Well said. And so it's plain to see, VALÈRE Your heart never felt a true love for me. MARIANE If you want to, you may think that is true. It's clear this thought has great appeal for you. VALÈRE If I want? I will, but I'm offended To my very soul. But your turn's ended, And I can win this game we're playing at: I've someone else in mind. I don't doubt that. **MARIANE** Your good points— Oh, let's leave them out of this. I've very few—in fact, I am remiss. I must be. Right? You've made that clear to me. But I know someone, hearing that I'm free, To make up for my loss, will eagerly consent. 45 MARIANE The loss is not that bad. You'll be content With your new choice, replacement, if you will. VALÈRE I will. And I'll remain contented still, In knowing you're as happy as I am. A woman tells a man her love's a sham. 50 The man's been fooled and his honor blighted. He can't deny his love is unrequited, Then he forgets this woman totally, And if he can't, pretends, because, you see, It is ignoble conduct and weak, too, 55 Loving someone one who does not love you. MARIANE What a fine, noble sentiment to heed. VALÈRE And every man upholds it as his creed. What? You expect me to keep on forever Loving you after you blithely sever 60 The bond between us, watching as you go Into another's arms and not bestow

This heart you've cast away upon someone

Who might welcome— MARIANE I wish it were done. That's exactly what I want, you see. 65 VALÈRE That's what you want? **MARIANE** Yes. VALÈRE Then let it be. I'll grant your wish. Please do. MARIANE **VALÈRE** Just don't forget, Whose fault it was when you, filled with regret, Realize that you forced me out the door. MARIANE True. VALÈRE You've set the example and what's more, I'll match you with my own hardness of heart. You won't see me again, if I depart. MARIANE That's good! [VALÈRE goes to exit, but when he gets to the door, he returns.] VALÈRE What? **MARIANE** What? **VALÈRE** You said . . . ? **MARIANE** Nothing at all. Well, I'll be on my way, then. VALÈRE [Goes, stops] Did you call? MARIANE Me? You must be dreaming. **VALÈRE** I'll go away. Good-bye, then. MARIANE Good-bye. DORINE I am here to say, You both are idiots! What's this about? I left you two alone to fight it out, To see how far you'd go. You're quite a pair In matching tit for tat—Hold on, Valère! Where are you going? VALÈRE What, Dorine? You spoke? DORINE Come here. VALÈRE I'm upset and will not provoke This lady. Do not try to change my mind. I'm doing what she wants. DORINE You are so blind. Just stop. No. It's settled. VALÈRE DORINE Oh, is that so?

MARIANE He can't stand to look at me, I know. He wants to go away, so please let him.

```
Where are you going?
    DORINE
                                   Leave me alone.
    MARIANE
             Come back here at once.
    DORINE
                                       No. Even that tone
    MARIANE
      Won't bring me. I'm not a child, you see.
    VALÈRE She's tortured by the very sight of me.
      It's better that I free her from her pain.
    DORINE What more proof do you need? You are insane!
      Now stop this nonsense! Come here both of you.
95
    VALÈRE
             To what purpose?
    MARIANE
                               What are you trying to do?
            Bring you two together! And end this fight.
    DORINE
      It's so stupid! Yes?
    VALÈRE
                         No. It wasn't right
      The way she spoke to me. Didn't you hear?
    DORINE Your voices are still ringing in my ear.
100
               The way he treated me-didn't you see?
    DORINE Saw and heard it all. Now listen to me.
       The only thing she wants, Valère, is you.
       I can attest to that right now. It's true.
       And Mariane, he wants you for his wife,
105
       And only you. On that I'll stake my life.
    MARIANE He told me to be someone else's bride!
            She asked for my advice and I replied!
     DORINE You're both impossible. What can I do?
       Give your hand—
                          What for?
     VALÈRE
                                   Come on, you.
    DORINE
110
       Now yours, Mariane, Don't make me shout.
       Come on!
                 All right. But what is this about?
     MARIANE
     DORINE Here. Take each other's hand and make a link.
       You love each other better than you think.
    VALÈRE Mademoiselle, this is your hand I took,
       You think you could give me a friendly look?
            [MARIANE peeks at VALÈRE and smiles.]
              It's true. Lovers are not completely sane.
              Mariane, haven't I good reason to complain?
       Be honest. Wasn't it a wicked ploy?
       To say---
                 You think I told you that with joy?
     MARIANE
       And you confronted me.
     DORINE
                                Another time.
       This marriage to Tartuffe would be a crime,
```

No, I shall leave so I can forget him.

We have to stop it.

MARIANE So, what can we do? Tell us.

It's all nonsense and your father's joking.
But if you play along, say, without choking,
And give your consent, for the time being,
He'll take the pressure off, thereby freeing
All of us to find a workable plan

To keep you from a marriage with this man.
Then you can find a reason every day
To postpone the wedding, in this way:
One day you're sick and that can take a week.
Another day you're better but can't speak,

And we all know you have to say "I do,"
Or the marriage isn't legal. And that's true.
Now bad omens—would he have his daughter
Married when she's dreamt of stagnant water,
Or broken a mirror or seen the dead?

He may not care and say it's in your head,
But you will be distraught in your delusion,
And require bed rest and seclusion.
I do know this—if we want to succeed,
You can't be seen together.
[To valere] With all speed,

Go, and gather all your friends right now,
Have them insist that Orgon keep his vow.
Social pressure helps. Then to her brother.
All of us will work on her stepmother.
Let's go.

VALÈRE Whatever happens, can you see?

My greatest hope is in your love for me.

MARIANE Though I don't know just what Father will do,
I do know I belong only to you.

VALÈRE You put my heart at ease! I swear I will...

DORINE It seems that lovers' tongues are never still.

Out, I tell you.

VALÈRE [Taking a step and returning] One last—

No more chat!

You go out this way, yes, and you go that.

End of Act Two

		•