

Madam,

THE Hurry and Impertinence of receiving and paying Visits on Account of your Marriage being now Over, you are beginning to enter into a Course of Life, where you will want much Advice to direct you from falling into many Errors, Fopperies, and Follies to which your Sex is Subject; I have always born an intire Friendship to your Father & Mother, & the Person they have Chosen for your Husband hath been for some Years past, my particular Favourite; I have long wish'd you might come together, because I hop'd, that from the goodness of your disposition, and by following the Counsel of wife Friends, you might in time make your self worthy of him. Your Parents were so far in the right, that they did not produce you much into the World, where by you avoided many wrong steps which others have taken, and have fewer ill Impressions to be remov'd; but they fail'd, as 'tis generally the case, in too much neglecting to cultivate your Mind, without which it is Impossible to acquire or preserve the Friendship and Esteem of a Wife Man, who soon grows weary of Acting the Lover, and treating his Wife like a Mistress, but wants a reasonable Companion, and a TRUE FRIEND thro' every Stage of Life. It must be therefore your Business to Qualify your self with those Offices wherein I will not fail to be your director, as long as I think you shall deserve it, by letting you know how you are to Act, and what you ought to Avoid: and beware of despising or neglecting my Instructions, whereon will depend not only your making a good Figure in the World, but your own real Happiness, as well as that of the Person, who ought to be the dearest to you.

I must therefore desire you in the first place, to be very slow in changing the Modest Behaviour of a Virgin: it is usual in Young Wives, before they have been many Weeks Married, to Assume a bold forward Look and manner of Talking, as if they intended to signify in all Companies, that they were no longer Girls; and consequently that their whole demeanour before they got a Husband, was all but a countenance and constraint upon their Nature; whereas I suppose if the Votes of Wife Men were gathered, a very great Majority would be in favour of those Ladies, who after they were enter'd into that State, rather choose to double their Portion of Modesty and Reservedness.

I must likewise warn you strictly against the least degree of Fondness to your Husband before any Witness whatsoever, even before your nearest Relations, or the very Maids of your Chamber; this proceeding is so exceeding Odious and Disgustful, to all who have either good Breeding or good Sense, that they Assign two very unamiable reasons for it, the one is gross Hypocrisy, and the other has too bad a name to mention; if there is any difference to be made, your Husband is the lowest Person in Company, either at home or abroad, and every Gentleman present has a better claim to all marks of Civility and Distinction from you: Conceal your Esteem and Love in your own Breast, and reserve your kind Looks and Language for Private Hours, which are so many in the Twenty-four, that they will afford time to employ a Passion as Exalted as any that was ever described in a French Romance.

Upon this head, I should likewise advise you to differ in practice from those Ladies who Affect abundance of uneliness while their Husbands are abroad, start with every knock at the Door, and ring the Bell incessantly for the Servants to let in their Master; will not Eat a bit at Dinner or Supper if the Husband happens to stay out, and receive him at his return with such a Medley of Chiding, and Kindness, and Carechiving him where he has been, that a Shrew from Billingsgate would be a more easy and eligible Companion.

Of the same Leaven are those Wives who when their Husbands are gone a Journey, must have a Letter every Post upon pain of Fits and Hystericks, and a Day must be fixed for their return home, without the least allowance for Buliness, or Sickness, or Accidents, or Weather: upon which I can only say, that in my Observation, those Ladies who were apt to make the greatest clutter upon such Occasions, would Liberally have paid

a Messenger, for bringing them News that their Husbands had broken their Necks on the Road.

You will perhaps be Offended when I advise you to abate a little of that Violent Passion for Fine Cloaths so predominant in your Sex. It is a little hard that ours, for what sake you wear them, are not admitted to be of your Council; I may venture to assure you that we will make an abatement at any time of four Pounds a Yard in a Brocade, if the Ladies will but allow a suitable addition of care in the Cleanliness and Sweetness of their Persons; for the Satyrical part of Mankind will needs believe, that it is not impossible to be very fine and very fleshy, and that the Capacities of a Lady are sometimes apt to fall short in Cultivating Cleanliness and Finery together: I shall only add, upon so tender a Subject what a pleasant Gentleman said concerning a silly Woman of Quality; that nothing could make her Supportable but curbing off her Head, for his Ears were Offended by her Tongue, and his Nose by her Hair and Teeth.

I am wholly at a loss how to advise you in the Choice of your Company, which however is a point of as great Importance as any in Life: If your general Acquaintance be among Ladies who are your equals or Superiours; provided they have nothing of what is commonly called an ill Reputation, you think you are safe, and this in the stile of the World, will pass for good Company; whereas I am afraid it will be hard for you to pick out one Female acquaintance in the Town, from whom you will not be in manifest danger of contracting some Foppery, Affectation, Vanity, Folly or Vice, your only safe way of Converging with 'em, is by a firm resolution to proceed in your Practice and Behaviour, directly contrary to whatsoever they shall say or do, and this I take to be a good general Rule, with very few Exceptions, for instance, in the Doctrines they usually deliver to young Married Women for managing their Husbands; their several accounts of their own Conduct in that particular, to recommend it to your Imitation, the Reflections they make upon others of their Sex for Acting differently: their directions how to come off with Victory upon any dispute or quarrel you may have with your Husband; the Arts by which you may discover and practice upon his weak sides when to work by Flattery and Insinuation; when to melt him with Tears; and when to engage with a high hand; in these and a thousand other Cases it will be prudent to retain as many of their Lectures in your Memory as you can, and then determine to Act in full Opposition to them all.

I hope your Husband will interpose his Authority, to limit you in the Trade of Visiting, half a dozen Fools are in all Conscience as many as you should require, and it will be sufficient for you to see them twice a Year; for I think the Fashion does not exact that Visits should be paid to Friends: I advice that your Company at home should consist of Men rather than Women; to say the Truth, I never yet knew a tollerable Woman to be fond of her own Sex; I confess when both are mixt and well Chosen, and put their best Qualities forward, there may be an intercourse of Civility and good Will; which with the Addition of some degree of good Sense, can make Conversation on any Amusement agreeable; but a knot of Ladies got together by themselves, is a very School of Impertinence and Detraction; and it is well if those be the worst.

Let your Men Acquaintance be of your Husbands Choice, and not recommended to you by any She Companions, because they'll certainly fix a Coxcomb upon you, and it will cost you some time and pains before you can arrive at the knowledge of distinguishing such a one from a man of Sense.

Never take a Favourite waiting-maid into your Cabinet Council, to entertain you with histories of those Ladies whom she hath formerly served, of their diversions, and their dresses, to insinuate how great a Fortune you brought, and how little you are allow'd to squander; to Appeal from her to your Husband, and to be determined by her Judgment, because you are sure it will be always for you; to receive or discard Servants by her approbation or dislike, to engage you by her insinuations into misunderstandings with your best Friends, to represent all things in false Colours, and to be the common emissary of Scandal.

(The Remainder must be reserved for another time.)