

~~SLY~~ These fifteen years, by my fay, a goodly nap,
But did I never speak of all that time?

~~FIRST SERVANT~~ O yes my Lord, but very idle words,
For though you lay here in this goodly chamber,
Yet would you say, ye were beaten out of door,
And rail upon the Hostess of the house,
And say you would present her at the Leet,
Because she brought stone-Jugs, and no seal'd quarts:
Sometimes you would call out for Cicely Hacket.

~~SLY~~ Ay, the woman's maid of the house.

~~THRID SERVANT~~ Why sir you know no house, nor no such maid
Nor no such men as you have reckon'd up.

~~SLY~~ Now Lord be thanked for my good amends.

~~ALL~~ Amen.

~~SLY~~ I thank thee, thou shalt not lose by it.

Enter the PAGE as a lady, with Attendants

PAGE How fares my noble Lord?

SLY Marry, I fare well, for here is cheer enough.
Where is my wife?

PAGE Here noble Lord, what is thy will with her?

SLY Are you my wife, and will not call me husband?
My men should call me Lord, I am your goodman.

PAGE My husband and my Lord, my Lord and husband
I am your wife in all obedience.

SLY I know it well. What must I call her?

LORD Madam.

SLY Alice Madam, or Joan Madam?

LORD Madam, and nothing else, so Lords call Ladies.

SLY Madam wife, they say that I have dream'd
And slept above some fifteen year or more.

PAGE Ay, and the time seems thirty unto me,
Being all this time abandon'd from your bed.

SLY 'Tis much, servants leave me and her alone:
Madam undress you, and come now to bed.

PAGE Thrice noble Lord, let me entreat of you
To pardon me yet for a night or two:
Or if not so, until the Sun be set.
For your Physicians have expressly charged,
In peril to incur your former malady,
That I should yet absent me from your bed:
I hope this reason stands for my excuse.

SLY Ay, it stands so that I may hardly tarry so long.
But I would be loath to fall into my dreams again:
I will therefore tarry in despite of the flesh and the blood.

Enter a MESSENGER

MESSENGER Your Honour's Players hearing your amendment,
Are come to play a pleasant Comedy,
For so your doctors hold it very meet,
Seeing too much sadness hath congeal'd your blood,
And melancholy is the Nurse of frenzy,
Therefore they thought it good you hear a play,
And frame your mind to mirth and merriment,
Which bars a thousand harms, and lengthens life.

SLY Marry, I will let them play, it is not a Comonty,
a Christmas gambold, or a tumbling-trick?

PAGE No my good lord, it is more pleasing stuff.