

A Merry Dialogue Declaringe the Properties of Shrowde Shrews and Honest Wives eBook

A Merry Dialogue Declaringe the Properties of Shrowde Shrews and Honest Wives by Desiderius Erasmus

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Title: A Merry Dialogue Declaringe the Properties of Shrowde Shrewes and Honest Wives

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[Transcriber's Note: With the exception of hyphenation at the end of lines, the text version preserves the line breaks of the original; the html version has been treated similar to drama and starts a new paragraph for each change of speaker. An illustration of the title page is included to give an impression of the original.]

A mery Dia-
logue, declaringe the propertyes
of shrowde shrewes, and ho-
nest wyues, not onelie verie
pleasaunte, but also not a
lytle profitable: made
by ye famous clerke
D. Erasmus.
Roteroda-
mus.

Translated into
Englyshe.

Anno. M.CCCCC.
LVII.

Eulalia. God spede, & a thousand mine old acquaintance. xantippa. xan. As many
agayn, my dere hert. Eulalia. me semets ye ar waren much faire now of late. Eula.
Saye you so? gyue you me a mocke at the first dash. xan. Nay verily but I take you
so. Eula. Happely mi new gown maketh me to loke fayrer then I sholde doe. xan.
Sothe you saye, I haue not sene a mynioner this many dayes, I reken it Englishe cloth.
Eu. It is english stuff and dyed in Venis. xan. It is softer then sylke what an oriente



purpel colore here is who gaue you so rich a gift. Eu. How shoulde honeste women come by their gere? but by their husbandes. xan. Happy arte thou that hathe suche an husband, but I wolde to god for his passyon, that I had maryed an husband of clowts, when I had married col my good man. Eula. Why say ye so. I pray you, are you at oddes now. xan. I shal neuer be at one with him ye se how beggerly I go. I haue not an hole smock to put on my backe, and he is wel contente with all: I praye god I neuer come in heuen & I be not ashamed oftymes to shewe my head, when I se other wiues how net and trim they go that ar matched with farre porer men then he is. Eula. The apparell of honest wiues is not in the aray of the body, nor in the tirements of their head as saynte Peter the apostle teacheth vs (and that I learned a late at a sermon) but in good lyuyng and honest conuersacion and in the ornamentes of the soule, the common buenes ar painted up, to please manye mennes eies we ar trime ynough yf we please our husbands only. xan. But yet my good man so euyll wylling to bestow ought vpon his wyfe, maketh good chere, and lassheth out the dowrye that hee hadde with mee no small pot of wine. Eulaly, where vpon? xantipha, wheron hym lykethe beste, at the tauerne, at the stewes and at the

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dyce. Eulalia Peace saye not so. xan. wel yet thus it is, then when he commeth home to me at midnight, longe watched for, he lyeth rowtyng lyke a sloyne all the leue longe nyght, yea and now and then he all bespeweth his bed, and worse then I will say at this tyme. Eulali. Peace thou dyshonesteth thy self, when thou doest dishonesteth thy husband. xantip. The deuyl take me bodye and bones but I had leuer lye by a sow with pigges, then with suche a bedfelowe. Eulali. Doest thou not then take him vp, wel favoredly for stumbling. Xantip. As he deserueth I spare no tonge. Eulalia. what doth he then. xantip. At the first breake he toke me vp vengeably, trusting that he shoulde haue shaken me of and put me to scilence with his crabid wordes. Eula Came neuer your hote wordes vnto handstrokes. xantip. On a tyme we fel so farre at wordes that we wer almost by ye eares together. Eula what say you woman? xan. He toke vp a staffe wandryng at me, as the deuill had bene on hym ready to laye me on the bones. Eula. were thou not redye to ron in at the bench hole. xanti. Nay mary I warrant the. I gat me a thre foted stole in hand, & he had but ones layd his littell finger on me, he shulde not haue founde me lame. I woulde haue holden his nose to the grindstone Eulalia. A newe found shelde, ye wanted but youre dystaffe to haue made you a speare. xantip. And he shoulde not greatlye a laughed at his parte. Eulali. Ah my frynde. xantypa. that way is neither good nor godly, xantippa what is neither good nor godly. yf he wyll not vse me, as hys wyfe: I wil not take him for my husbände. Eulalya. But Paule sayeth that wyues shoulde bee boner and buxome vnto their husbändes with all humylytye, and Peter also bryngethe vs an example of Sara, that called her husbände Abrahame, Lorde. xantippa. I know that as well as you then ye same paule say that men shoulde loue theyr wyues, as Christ loues his spouse the churche let him do his duete I wil do myne. Eula. But for all that, when the matter is so farre that the one muste forber the other it is reason that the woman giue place vnto the man, xan. Is he meete to be called my husbände that maketh me his vnderlynge and his dryuel? Eula. But tel me dame xantip. Would he neuer offre the stripes after that xantip. Not a stripe, and therin he was the wyser man for & he had he should haue repented euery vayne in hys harte. Eulali. But thou offered him foule wordes plentie, xantip. And will do. Eula. What doth he ye meane season. xantip. What doth he sometyme cowcheth an hogeshed, sometime he doth nothing but stande and laughe at me, other whyle takethe hys Lute wheron is scarslie three strynges layenge on that as fast as he may dryue because he would not here me. Eula. Doeth that greue thee? xantippa. To beyonde home, manie a tyme I haue much a do to hold my handes. Eula. Neighbour. xantip. wylt thou gyue me leaue to be playn with the. xantippa Good leaue haue you. Eula. Be as bolde on me agayne our olde acquayntaunce and amite, euen

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from our chyldhode, would it should be so. xantippa. Trueth you saie, there was neuer woman kinde that I faouered more Elaly Whatsoeuer thy husband be, marke well this, chaunge thou canst not, In the olde lawe, where the deuill hadde cast aboone betwene the man and the wife, at the worste waye they myght be deuorsed, but now that remedie is past, euen till death depart you he must nedes be thy husbande, and thou hys wyfe, xan. Il mote they thryue & thei that taken away that liberty from vs Eulalia. Beware what thou sayest, it was christes act. Xan. I can euil beleue that Eula. It is none otherwyse, now it is beste that eyther of you one beyng with an other, ye laboure to liue at reste and peace. xantypa. Why? can I forgeue him a new, Eu. It lieth great parte in the women, for the orderinge of theyr husbandes. xan. Leadest thou a mery life with thine. Eula Now all is well. xan. Ergo ther was somewhat to do at your fyrste metying Eula. Neuer no greate busynes, but yet as it, happeneth now and than betwene man & woman, there was foule cloudes a loft, that might haue made a storme but that they were ouer blowen with good humanitie and wyse handlynge. Euery man hath hys maner and euery man hath his seueral aptite or mynde, and thinkes hys owne way best, & yf we list not to lie there liueth no man without faulte, which yf anie were elles, ywis in wedlocke they ought to know and not vtterly hated xan, you say well, Eulalya. It happeneth many times that loue dayes breketh betwene man and wife, before ye one be perfittly knowen vnto the other beware of that in any wife, for when malice is ones begon, loue is but barely redressed agayne, namely, yf the mater grow furthe unto bytter checkes, & shamfull raylinges such things as are fastened with glew, yf a manne wyll all to shake them strayght waye whyle the glew is warme, they soone fal in peces, but after ye glew is ones dried vp they cleue together so fast as anie thing, wherefore at the beginning a meanes must be made, that loue mai encrease and be made sure betwene ye man & the wife, & that is best brought aboute by gentillesse and fayre condycions, for the loue that beautie onelie causeth, is in a maner but a cheri faire Xan. But I praye you hartelye tell me, by what pollycy ye brought your good man to folow your daunce. Eula. I wyll tell you on this condicyon, that ye will folowe me. xan. I can. Eula, It is as easy as water if ye can find in your hart to do it, nor yet no good time past for he is a yong man, and you ar but agirle of age, and I trowe it is not a yere ful sins ye wer married. Xan All thys is true Eulalia. I wyll shew you then. But you must kepe it secret xantip. with a ryght good wyl. Eula. This was my chyefe care, to kepe me alwayes in my housbandes faouere, that there shulde nothyng angre him I obserued his appetite and pleasure I marked the tymes bothe whan he woulde be pleased and when he wold be all byshrwd, as they tameth the Elephantes and Lyons or suche beastes that can not be wonne

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by strength xantypa. Suche a beaste haue I at home. Eula. Thei that goth vnto the Elephantes weare no white garmentes, nor they that tame wylde bulles, weare no blasyng reedes, for experience teacheth, that suche beastes bee madde with those colours, like as the Tygers by the sound of tumbrels be made so wode, that thei plucke theymself in peces. Also thei that breake horses haue their termes and theyr soundes theyr hadlynges, and other knackes to breake their wyldnes, wyth all. Howe much more then is it oure duetyes that ye wyues to use suche craftes toward our husbandes with whom all our lyfe tyme wil we, nyl we is one house, and one bed. xantip. furthwith your tale. Eula, when I had ones marked there thynges. I applied my selfe unto hym, well ware not to displease him. xantip. How could thou do that. Eulalya. Fyrste in the ouerseyng my householde, which is the very charge and cure of wyues, I wayted euer, not onely gyuyng hede that nothing shoulde be forgotten or undoone, but that althynges should be as he woulde haue it, wer it euer so small a trifle. xan. wherin. Eulalia. As thus. Yf mi good man had a fantasye to this thyng, or to that thyng, or if he would haue his meate dressed on this fashion, or that fashion. xan. But howe couldest thou fashyon thye selfe after hys wyll and mynde, that eyther woulde not be at home or elles be as freshe as a saulte heryng. Elali. Abyde a while. I come not at that yet, yf my husband wer very sad at anye tyme, no time to speake to him. I laughed not nor tryfled him as many a woman doth but I looked rufully and heauyly, for as a glasse (if it be a true stone) representeth euer ye physnamy of hym that loketh in it, so lykewyse it becommeth a wedded woman alway to agre vnto the appetite of her husbände, that she be not mery when he murneth, nor dysposed to play when he is sad. And if that at any time he be waiward shrewshaken, either I pacyfye hym with faire wordes, or I let hym alone, vntyll the wynd be ouerblowen gyuing him neuer a word at al, vntil the time come that I may eyther excuse my faute, or tell hym of hys. In lyke wyse when he commeth home wel whitled, I gyue hym gentyll and fayre woordes, so with fayre entreatyng I gette hym to bed. xantypa, O careful state of wyues, when they muste be gladde and fayne to followe their husbandes mindes, be thei eluyshe, dronken, or doying what myschiefe they liste. Eula. As whoe saieth this gentill dealyng serueth not for bothe partyes, for they spyte of theyr berdes muste suffre many thynges in our demeanor, yet a time ther is, when in a weighty matter it is lafull that the wyfe tell the good man his faute, if that it be matter of substaunce, for at lyght trifles, it is best to play byll under wyng. xantip. what tune is that Eula. when he is ydle, neither angry, pensife, nor ouersen, then betwixt you two secretly he must be told his faute gently, or rather intreated, that in this thyng or that he play the better husbände to loke better

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to his good name and fame and to his helth and this tellyng must be myxt with mery conceites and pleasaunt wordes many times I make a meane to tel my tale after this fashyon, that he shall promise me, he shal take no displeasure wyth my thyng, that I a foolyshe woman shall breake vnto hym, that pertayneth eyther to hys helthe worshyppe or welth. When I haue sayde that I woulde, I chop cleane from that communication and falle into some other pastime, for this is all our fautes, neyghbour Xantippa, that when we begyn ones to chat our tounge neuer lie. Xantip. So men say Eulalia. Thus was I well ware on, that I neuer tell my husband his fautes before companie, nor I neuer caried any complaynte furthe a dores: the mendes is soner made when none knoweth it but two, and there were anie suche faute that myght not be wel borne nor amended by ye wyues tellige, it is more laudable that the wife make complaynte vnto the Parentes and kynsfolke of her husband, then vnto her own, and so to moderate her complaynte that she seme not to hate hym but hys vice nor let her play all the blabbe, that in some poynt vnuterred, he may know & loue his wiues curteysy. Xantip. She had nede be aswellerned woman, that would do all this. Eu. Mary through suche demeanoure, we shall sterre our husbandes vnto lyke gentylnesse. Xan: There be some that cannot be amended with all the gentyll handlyng in the worlde. Eula: In faith I thyncke nay, but case there be, marke this wel the good man must be for borne, howe soeuer the game goeth, then is it better to haue him alwayes at one point or ells more kinde and louing throw oure gentill handlinge, then to haue him worse and worse throwe our cursednesse, what wyll you say and I tell you of husbandes that hath won their wiues by suche curtesie, howe muche more are we bounde to use the same towarde our husbandes. Xantip. Than shall you tell of one farre vnlyke vnto thyne husband. Eula. I am aquented with a certayne gentelman well lerned and a veri honest man, he married a yonge wyfe, a mayden of. xvii. yeare olde brede and brought vp of a chylde in the countre vnder her fathers and mother wing (as gentilmen delite to dwel in the countre) to hunt & hawke This yong gentilman would haue one that were unbroken, because he might the soner breake her after hys owne mind, he began to entre her in learning syngynge, and playinge, and by lytle and lytle to vse here to repete suche thynges as she harde at sermons, and to instruct her with other things that myght haue doone her more good in time to come. This gere, because it was straunge vnto this young woman which at home was brought vp in all ydelnesse, and with the light communication of her fathers seruantes, and other pastimes, began to waxe greuouse & paynfull, vnto her. She withdrew her good mynde and dylygence and when her husband called vpon her she put ye finger in the eye, and wepte and many times she would fal downe on the grounde, beatynge her head agaynst the floure, as one that woulde be out of

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thys worlde. When there was no healepe for this gere, the good man as though he hadde bene wel asked his wyfe yf she woulde ryde into the countre with him a sporting vnto her fathers house, so that she graunted anone. When they were comen thyther, the gentilman left his wyfe with her mother & her sisters he went furth an huntynge with his father in lawe, there betwene theym two, he shewed al together, how that he hadde hoped to haue had a louynge companion to lead his lyfe withall, now he hath one that is alwaies blubberyng and pyninge her selfe awaye withoute anye remedie, he prayeth him to lay to hys hande in amendinge his doughters fautes her father answered that he had ones giuen hym his doughter, and yf that she woulde not be rewled by wordes (a goddes name take Stafforde lawe) she was his owne. Then the gentyman sayd agayne, I know that I may do but I had leuer haue her amended eyther by youre good counsell or commaundement, then to come vnto that extreme waies, her father promised that he would fynde a remedye. After a dai or two, he espied time and place when he might be alone with his doughter. Then he loked sourely vpon his doughter, as though he had bene horne woode with her, he began to reherse how foule a beaste she was, how he feared many tymes that she neuer haue bestowed her. And yet sayde he much a doe, vnto my great coste and charg, I haue gotten the one that moughte lye by any Ladyes syde, and she were a quene and yet thou not perceiuyng what I haue done for the nor knowynge that thou hast suche a man whiche but of his goodnes myghte thynke thee to euill to be stoye in his kytchen, thou contrariest al his mind to make a short tale he spake so sharpely to her, that she feared that he wold haue beaten her. It is a man of asubtyll and wylde wytte, whyche wythout a vysarde is ready to playe anye maner of parte. Then this yonge wife what for feare, and for trouthe of the matter, cleane stryken oute of countenaunce, fell downe at her fathers fete desyryng hym that he wolde forgette and forgiue her all that was past and euer after she woulde doe her duetye Her father forgaue her, and promised that she shoulde finde him a kynd and a louynge father, yf so be that she perfourmed her promyse. xantippa. How dyd she afterwarde? Eulalya, when she was departed from her father she came backe into a chaumber, and there by chaunce found her husband alone she fel on her knees to hym and said. Man in tymes paste, I neyther knewe you nor my selfe, from this daye froward ye shall se me cleane chaunged, onelye pardon that is past, with that her husbände toke her in his armes & kyssed her sayinge she should lacke nothyng yf she woulde holde her in that mind. xantip. Why did she continue so. Eulalya. Euen tyll her endynge daye, nor there was none so vyle a thyng but that she woulde laye handes on it redely with all her herte, if her husband wolde let her, so great loue was begon and assured betwene them and many a daye after, shee thanked god that euer she met with such

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a man. For yf she had not she sayd she had ben cleane caste awaye. xan. We haue as greate plentie of suche housbandes, as of white crowes. Eulalya. Now, but for werieng you? I coulde tell you a thyng that chaunced a late in this same cite. xantypa. I haue litell to doe, and I lyke your communicacyon very well. Eulalia. There was a certaine gentilman he as suche sort of men do, vsed much huntynge in the cuntre, where he happened on a younge damoyse, a very pore womans child on whom he doted a man well stryken in age, and for her sake he lay often out of his owne house his excuse was hunting. This mans wife an exceding honest woman, halfe deale suspecte the mater, tried out her husbandes falshed, on a tyme when he had taken his iourney fourth of the town vnto some other waies, she wente vnto that poore cotage and bouted out all the hoole matter, where he laye on nights, wheron he dranke, what thyng they had to welcom him withall. There was neither one thyng nor other, but bare walles. This good woman returned home, and sone after came againe brynginge with her a good soft bed, and al therto belongyng and certain plate besydes that she gaue them moneye, charynge them that if the Gentilman came agayne, they shold entreate him better not beyng knowen al this while that she was his wyfe, but fayued her to be her sister. Not long after her husband stale thether againe, he sawe the howse otherwyse decked, and better fare then he was wounte to haue. He asked, frome whence commeth al this goodly gere? They sayde that an honeste matrone, a kynsewoman of hys hadde broughte it thyther and commaunded them that he should be well cherished when so euer he came, by and by his hart gaue him that it was hys wiues dede, whan he came home he demaunded of her yf she hadde bene there or nay, she sayd yea. Then he asked her for what purpose she sente all that housholde stuffe thyther. Man (said she) ye haue ben tenderly brought vp. I perceiued that ye were but corslie handled there, me thought that it was my part, seing it was your wyll and pleasure to be there ye shoulde be better loked to. Xantippa. She was one of goddes fooles. I woulde rather for a bed haue layd vnder him a bundel of nettels: or a burden of thistels. Eula. But here the end her husbande perceyuyng the honeste of her great pacience neuer after laye from her, but made good cheare at home with his owne. I am sure ye knowe Gilberte the holander. Xan. Very well. Eu. He (as it is not vnknowne married an old wife in his flourishing youth. Xan. Per aduenture he married the good and notthe woman. Eulalia. There sayde ye well, setting lytell stoore by hys olde wife, hunted a callette, with whom he kept much companie abroad, he dined or supped litell at home. What wouldest thou haue sayd to ye gere. Xantip. What woulde I a said? I wolde haue flowen to the hores toppe and I wolde haue crowned myne husbande at hys oute goinge to her with a pysbowle, that he so embawld might haue gon vnto his souerayne ladie.

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Eula. But how much wiselier dyd this woman? She desyred that yonge woman home vnto her, and made her good chere, so by that meanes she brought home also her husband without ani witchcraft or sorserie, and yf that at anye season he supped abroad with her she would sende vnto them some good dayntie morsel, and byd him make good chere Xantippa. I had leuer be slayne then I woulde be bawde vnto myne owne husbände. Eulalia. Yea, but consyder all thynges well, was not that muche better, then she shoulde be her shrewyshnesse, haue putte her husbändes minde cleane of from her, and so haue ledde all her life in trouble and heuynesse. Xantippa. I graunte you well, that it was better so but I coulde not abyde it. Eulalya. I wyll tell you a prety story more, and so make an ende One of oure neyghboures, a well disposed and a goddes man, but that he is some what testie, on a day pomeld his wife well and thriftely aboute the pate and so good a woman as euer was borne, she picked her into an inner parler, and there weepyng and sobbyng, eased her heuye harte, anone after, by chaunce her husbände came into the same place, and founde hys wyfe wepyng. What sitest thou heare sayth he seighing & sobbing like a child Then she like a wise woman sayde. Is it not more honesty for me to lamente my dolours here in a secret place, then to make wondering and on oute crye in the strete, as other women do. At so wyfely and womanly a saing his hart melted, promysynge her faythfullye and truelie that he woulde neuer laye stroke on her afterwarde, nor neuer did. Xantippa. No more wil mine god thanke my selfe. Eulalya. But then ye are alwaies one at a nother, agreinge lyke dogges and cattes. Xan. What wouldest thou that I should do? Eu. Fyrst & formest, whatsoeuer thy husbände doeth sayde thou nothings, for his harte must be wonne by lytell and litel by fayre meanes, gentilnesse and forbearing at the last thou shalte eyther wynne him or at the least waie thou shalt leade a better life then thou doest now. Xantippa. He his beyonde goddes forbode, he wil neuer amende. Eulalia. Eye saye not so, there is no beest so wild but by fayre handling be tamed, neuer mistrust man then. Assay a moneth or two, blame me and thou findest not that my counsell dooeth ease. There be some fautes wyth you thoughe thou se them, be wyse of this especyall that thou neuer gyue hym foule wordes in the chambre, or inbed but be sure that all thynges there bee full of pastyme and pleasure. For yf that place which is ordeined to make amendes for all fautes and so to renew loue, be polluted, eyther with strife or grugynges, then fayre wel al hope of loue daies, or atonementes, yet there be some beastes so wayward and mischeuous, that when theyr husbändes hath them in their arms a bed, they scholde & chyde making that same plesure their lewd condicions (that expelseth all displeasures oute of their husbändes mynde unpleasaunt and lytell set bi corrupting the medecine that shuld haue cured

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al deadly greifes, & odible offences. xantip. That is no newes to me. Eula. Though the woman shulde be well ware and wyse that she shulde neuer be disobedient vnto her husband yet she ought to be most circumspect that at meting she shew her selfe redy and pleasaunt unto him. xantypa. Yea vnto a man, holde well withall but I am combred with a beast. Eula. No more of those wordes, most commonly our husbandes ar euyl through our owne faute, but to returne againe vnto our taile they that ar sene in the olde fables of Poetes sai that Venus whome they make chiefe lady of wedlocke (hath a girdle made by the handy worke of Vulcan her Lorde, and in that is thrust al that enforceth love and with that she girdeth her whan so ever she lyeth wyth her housbande xantippa. A tale of a tubbe. Eulalya. A taylor it is, but herken what the taile meaneth. xantippa. Tell me. Eulalia That techeth us that the wyfe ought to dyspose her selfe all the she maye that lieng by her husband she shew him al the plesure that she can; Wherby the honest love of matrimony may reuiue and be renewed, & that there with be clene dispatched al grudges & malice xant. But how shall we come by the thys gyrdle? Eula. We nede neyther wytcraft nor enchauntment, ther is non of them al, so sure as honest condicions accompayned with good feloshyp. xan. I can not fauoure suche an husbande as myne is. Eula, It is moste thy profyt that he be no longer suche. If thou couldest by thy Circes craft chaunge thin husband into an hogge, or a bore wouldest thou do it? xantip. God knoweth. Eu. Art thou in dout? haddest thou leauer marye an hogge than a man. Xantip. Mary I had leauer haue a manne. Eulalia. wel, what and thou coudest by sorcery make him of a dronkarde a soober man, of a vnthrift a good housbande of an ydell losell a towarde body, woldest thou not doe it? xantip. yes, hardely, woulde I doe it. But where shoulde I learne the cunnyng? Eula. For soth that conning hast thou in the if thou wouldest vtter it, thyn must he be, mauger thy head, the towarde ye makest him, the better it is for the, thou lokest on nothing but on his leude condicions, and thei make the half mad, thou wouldest amende hym and thou putttest hym farther oute of frame, loke rather on his good condicions, and so shalt thou make him better. It is to late calagayne yesterdaie before thou were maryed unto hym. It was tyme to consyder what his fautes were for a women shold not only take her husbande by the eyes but by the eares. Now it is more tyme to redresse fautes then to fynd fautes. xantt. What woman euer toke her gusband by the eares. Eulali. She taketh her husbande by the eyes that loketh on nothyng, but on the beautye and pulcritude of the body. She taketh him by the eares, that harkeneth diligently what the common voice sayth by him xantip. Thy counsaile is good, but it commeth a day after the faire. Eula. Yet it commeth time ynough to bringe thyne husbande to a greate furtheraunce to that shall bee yf God

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sende you anie frute together. xantippa. We are spede alreedy of that. Eulaly. How long ago. Xantip. A good whyle ago Eulalia. How many monethes old is it. Xantip. It lacketh lytle of. vii. Eula What a tale is this, ye reken the monethes by nightes and dayes double. Xantippa. Not so. Eula. It can not be none other wyse, yf ye reken from the mariage day. xantippa. yea, but what then, I spake with him before we were maried. Eulalia. Be children gotten by speakinge. xantip. It befell so that he mette me alone and begon to ticke at me, and tickled me vnder the arme holes and sydes to make me laugh. I might not awaie with ticklynge, but fell downe backwarde vpon a bedde and he a lofte, neuer leuinge kyssynge on me, what he did els I can not saye, but by sayncte Marie within a while after my bely beganne to swell. Eula. Go now and dispraise thine husbände whiche yf he gette children by playe, what wyll he do when he goeth to it in good earnest. xantippa, I fere me I am payed agayn. Eula. Good locke God hath sent a fruitfull grounde, a good tylman. Xantip. In that thing he might haue lesse laboure and more thanke. Eula. Few wyues finde at theyr husbändes in that behalf but were ye then sure together. xanti. yea that we were Eula. The offence is the lesse. Is it a man chylde. xantip. yea. Eula. He shal make you at one so that ye wil bow & forbere. What saieth other men by thin husband, they that be his companions, they delite with him abrode xan, They say that he is meruelous gentyl, redy to do euery man pleasure, liberal and sure to his frende. Eula. And that putteth me in good comfort that he wyll be ruled after our counsayll. xantip. But I fynde him not so. Eula. =Order thy selfe to him as I haue tolde thee, and cal me no more true sayer but a lier, if he be not so good vnto the as to anie creature liuinge Again considre this he is yet but a childe, I thinke he passethe not. xxiiij. the blacke oxe neuer trode on hys fote, nowe it is but loste laboure to recken vpon anye deuorse. xantippa. Yet manye a tyme and ofte I haue troubled my braynes withal Eulalia. As for that fantasye whensoever it commeth into your mynd first of all counte how naked a thyng woman is, deuorsed from man. It is the hyghest dignitie that longethe to the wyfe to obsequyous vnto her spouse. So hath natyre ordeined so god hath appoynted, that the woman shoulde be ruled al by the man loke onely vppon this whiche is trouthe, thine husbände he is, other canste thou none haue. Againe forgette not that swete babe be gotten of both your bodies what thin beste thou to do with that, wilte thou take it awaye with thee? Thou shalte bereue thyne husband his ryght wyll thou leue it with hym? thou shalt spoile thy self of thy chefaste Jewell thou haste. Beside all this tell me trueth hast thou none euyl wyllers, Besyde all thys tell me trueth, hast thou none euyl wyllers. xan. I haue a stepdame I warrant you, and myne husbändes mother euen such another.

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Eula. Do they hate the so deadly. xantip. They woulde se me hanged. Eula. Then forget not then what greater plesure couldest thou shew them then to se the deuorsed from thine husband and to led a wydowes lyfe. Yea and worse then a wydow, for wydowes be at their choise. xantippa. I holde well with youre counsell, but I can not awaye with the paynes. Eulalia. yet reckon what paines ye toke or ye colde teache your paret to speake. xantippa. Exceedynge much. Eu. And thinke you much to labour a lytel in reforming your husband with whom you may liue merely all the dayes of your lyfe. What busines doe men put them self to be wel & easly horsed & shal we think our selues to good to take paines that we mai haue our husbandes gentil & curteise vnto vs. xantip. What shal I do. Eu. I haue told you al redy, se that al thing be clene & trim at home, that no sluttish or vnclenlye syghtes dryue hym oute a dores. Be your selfe alwayes redy at a becke, berynge continuall in minde what reuerence the wife oweth vnto her husband. Be neyther in your dumpes, nor alwayes on your mery pinnes go nether to homely nor to nycely. Let your meat be cleane dressed, you know your husbandes diet. What he loueth best that dresse. Moreouer shewe your selfe louinge and fayre spoken vnto them where he loueth, call them now and then vnto your table. At meate, se that al thinges be well sauored, and make good there, And when that he is toppe heuy playing on his lute, sytte thou by and singe to him so shalte thou make hym keepe home, and lessen hys expences This shall he thynke at length, in faythe I am a fonde felowe that maketh suche chere with a strumpet abroode with greate lossee bothe of substance and name, seying that I haue a wyfe at home bothe muche fayrer, and one that loueth me ten times better, with whome I may be both clenlyer receiued and dayntelier cherisshed xantip. Beleuest thou that it will take and I put it into a profe. Eulali. Looke on me. I warrante it or ought longe I wyll in hande with thyne husbände, & I will tell hym his part. xantippa. ye marie that is well sayde. But be wyse that he espie not our casle, he would plaie his fages, all the house should be to lytle for hym. Eulalia. Take no thoughte. I shall so conuey my matters, that he shall dysclose all together hym selfe, what busynesse is betwene you, that done I wyll handell him pretelie as I thinke beste, and I truste to make him a new man for the and when I se my time I wyl make a lie for thee, how louinge thou hast spoken of him. xantippa. Chryst spede vs and bringe our pupose well aboute. Eulalia. He will not fayle the so thou do thy good wyll. There was a man that married a woman whiche hadde great riches and beawtye. Howe bee it she hadde suche an impedymnt of nature that she was domme and coulde not speake, whiche thyng made him ryghte pensyfe, and sayd, wherefore vpon a daye as he walked alone ryght heuye in hearte thynkyng vpon his wyfe. There came one to hym and asked him what was the cause of his heuynesse

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whiche answered that it was onely bycause his wife was borne domme. To whome this other said I shal shewe the soone a remedy and a medycyne (therfore that is thus) go tak an aspen leafe and lay it vnder her tonge this night shee beinge a sleape, and I warrant the that shee shall speake on the morowe whiche man beyng glad of thys medycyne prepared therfore and gathered aspen leaues, wherfore he layd thre of them vnder her tonge whan shee was a sleape. And on the morow when he him selfe awaked he Desyrous to know how hys medicine wrought being in bed with her, he demaunded of her how she did, and sodenly she answered and sayd, I beshrewe thy harte for waking me so early, and so by the vertue of that medycyne she was restored to her speche. But in conclusion her spech encresed day by day and she was so curst of condycyon that euery daie she brauled and chyd with her husbände, so muche at the laste he was more weped, and had much more trouble and disease wyth her shrewed wordes then he hadde before when she was dumme, wherfore as he walked another time alone he happened to mete agayne with the same personne that taught hym the sayde medycine and sayde to hym thys wyse. Syr ye taught me a medicin but late to make my domme wyfe to speake, byddyng me lay an aspen leafe vnder her tounge when she sleapte, and I layde three Aspen leaves there. Wherfore nowe she speaketh. But yet she speaketh soo much & so shrewdlye that I am more werier of her now, then I was when she was domme: Wherfore I praie you teache me a medycine to modyfye her that she speake not so muche. This other answered and sayd thus. Sir I am a deuyl of hel but I am one of them that haue least power there. Al be yet I haue power to make a woman to speake, but and yf a woman begin ones to speake, I nor al the deuyls in hel that haue the mooste power be not able to make a woman to be styll, nor to cause her to leue speakyng.

The end of this pleasant dialogue declaryng the seuerall properties of ye two contrary disposers of the wyues aforesayde.

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