

# **Cadenus And Vanessa**

Jonathan Swift

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WRITTEN ANNO 1713.

THE shepherds and the nymphs were seen  
Pleading before the Cyprian Queen.  
The counsel for the fair began  
Accusing the false creature, man.  
The brief with weighty crimes was charged,  
On which the pleader much enlarged:  
That Cupid now has lost his art,  
Or blunts the point of every dart;  
His altar now no longer smokes;  
His mother's aid no youth invokes  
This tempts free-thinkers to refine,  
And bring in doubt their powers divine,  
Now love is dwindled to intrigue,  
And marriage grown a money-league.  
Which crimes aforesaid (with her leave)  
Were (as he humbly did conceive)  
Against our Sovereign Lady's peace,  
Against the statutes in that case,  
Against her dignity and crown:  
Then prayed an answer and sat down.

The nymphs with scorn beheld their foes:  
When the defendant's counsel rose,  
And, what no lawyer ever lacked,  
With impudence owned all the fact.  
But, what the gentlest heart would vex,  
Laid all the fault on t'other sex.  
That modern love is no such thing  
As what those ancient poets sing;  
A fire celestial, chaste, refined,  
Conceived and kindled in the mind,  
Which having found an equal flame,  
Unites, and both become the same,  
In different breasts together burn,  
Together both to ashes turn.  
But women now feel no such fire,

And only know the gross desire;  
Their passions move in lower spheres,  
Where'er caprice or folly steers.  
A dog, a parrot, or an ape,  
Or some worse brute in human shape  
Engross the fancies of the fair,  
The few soft moments they can spare  
From visits to receive and pay,  
From scandal, politics, and play,  
From fans, and flounces, and brocades,  
From equipage and park-parades,  
From all the thousand female toys,  
From every trifle that employs  
The out or inside of their heads  
Between their toilets and their beds.  
In a dull stream, which, moving slow,  
You hardly see the current flow,  
If a small breeze obstructs the course,  
It whirls about for want of force,  
And in its narrow circle gathers  
Nothing but chaff, and straws, and feathers:  
The current of a female mind  
Stops thus, and turns with every wind;  
Thus whirling round, together draws  
Fools, fops, and rakes, for chaff and straws.  
Hence we conclude, no women's hearts  
Are won by virtue, wit, and parts;  
Nor are the men of sense to blame  
For breasts incapable of flame:  
The fault must on the nymphs be placed,  
Grown so corrupted in their taste.  
The pleader having spoke his best,  
Had witness ready to attest,  
Who fairly could on oath depose,  
When questions on the fact arose,  
That every article was true;  
NOR FURTHER THOSE DEONENTS KNEW:  
Therefore he humbly would insist,  
The bill might be with costs dismissed.  
The cause appeared of so much weight,  
That Venus from the judgment-seat  
Desired them not to talk so loud,  
Else she must interpose a cloud:  
For if the heavenly folk should know  
These pleadings in the Courts below,  
That mortals here disdain to love,  
She ne'er could show her face above.  
For gods, their betters, are too wise  
To value that which men despise.  
"And then," said she, "my son and I  
Must stroll in air 'twixt earth and sky:

Or else, shut out from heaven and earth,  
Fly to the sea, my place of birth;  
There live with daggled mermaids pent,  
And keep on fish perpetual Lent."  
But since the case appeared so nice,  
She thought it best to take advice.  
The Muses, by their king's permission,  
Though foes to love, attend the session,  
And on the right hand took their places  
In order; on the left, the Graces:  
To whom she might her doubts propose  
On all emergencies that rose.  
The Muses oft were seen to frown;  
The Graces half ashamed look down;  
And 'twas observed, there were but few  
Of either sex, among the crew,  
Whom she or her assessors knew.  
The goddess soon began to see  
Things were not ripe for a decree,  
And said she must consult her books,  
The lovers' Fletas, Bractons, Cokes.  
First to a dapper clerk she beckoned,  
To turn to Ovid, book the second;  
She then referred them to a place  
In Virgil (VIDE Dido's case);  
As for Tibullus's reports,  
They never passed for law in Courts:  
For Cowley's brief, and pleas of Waller,  
Still their authority is smaller.  
There was on both sides much to say;  
She'd hear the cause another day;  
And so she did, and then a third,  
She heard it there she kept her word;  
But with rejoinders and replies,  
Long bills, and answers, stuffed with lies  
Demur, imparlance, and essoign,  
The parties ne'er could issue join:  
For sixteen years the cause was spun,  
And then stood where it first begun.  
Now, gentle Clio, sing or say,  
What Venus meant by this delay.  
The goddess, much perplexed in mind,  
To see her empire thus declined,  
When first this grand debate arose  
Above her wisdom to compose,  
Conceived a project in her head,  
To work her ends; which, if it sped,  
Would show the merits of the cause  
Far better than consulting laws.  
In a glad hour Lucina's aid  
Produced on earth a wondrous maid,

On whom the queen of love was bent  
To try a new experiment.  
She threw her law-books on the shelf,  
And thus debated with herself:—  
"Since men allege they ne'er can find  
Those beauties in a female mind  
Which raise a flame that will endure  
For ever, uncorrupt and pure;  
If 'tis with reason they complain,  
This infant shall restore my reign.  
I'll search where every virtue dwells,  
From Courts inclusive down to cells.  
What preachers talk, or sages write,  
These I will gather and unite,  
And represent them to mankind  
Collected in that infant's mind."  
This said, she plucks in heaven's high bowers  
A sprig of Amaranthine flowers,  
In nectar thrice infuses bays,  
Three times refined in Titan's rays:  
Then calls the Graces to her aid,  
And sprinkles thrice the now-born maid.  
From whence the tender skin assumes  
A sweetness above all perfumes;  
From whence a cleanliness remains,  
Incapable of outward stains;  
From whence that decency of mind,  
So lovely in a female kind.  
Where not one careless thought intrudes  
Less modest than the speech of prudes;  
Where never blush was called in aid,  
The spurious virtue in a maid,  
A virtue but at second-hand;  
They blush because they understand.  
The Graces next would act their part,  
And show but little of their art;  
Their work was half already done,  
The child with native beauty shone,  
The outward form no help required:  
Each breathing on her thrice, inspired  
That gentle, soft, engaging air  
Which in old times adorned the fair,  
And said, "Vanessa be the name  
By which thou shalt be known to fame;  
Vanessa, by the gods enrolled:  
Her name on earth shall not be told."  
But still the work was not complete,  
When Venus thought on a deceit:  
Drawn by her doves, away she flies,  
And finds out Pallas in the skies:  
Dear Pallas, I have been this morn

To see a lovely infant born:  
A boy in yonder isle below,  
So like my own without his bow,  
By beauty could your heart be won,  
You'd swear it is Apollo's son;  
But it shall ne'er be said, a child  
So hopeful has by me been spoiled;  
I have enough besides to spare,  
And give him wholly to your care.  
Wisdom's above suspecting wiles;  
The queen of learning gravely smiles,  
Down from Olympus comes with joy,  
Mistakes Vanessa for a boy;  
Then sows within her tender mind  
Seeds long unknown to womankind;  
For manly bosoms chiefly fit,  
The seeds of knowledge, judgment, wit,  
Her soul was suddenly endued  
With justice, truth, and fortitude;  
With honour, which no breath can stain,  
Which malice must attack in vain:  
With open heart and bounteous hand:  
But Pallas here was at a stand;  
She know in our degenerate days  
Bare virtue could not live on praise,  
That meat must be with money bought:  
She therefore, upon second thought,  
Infused yet as it were by stealth,  
Some small regard for state and wealth:  
Of which as she grew up there stayed  
A tincture in the prudent maid:  
She managed her estate with care,  
Yet liked three footmen to her chair,  
But lest he should neglect his studies  
Like a young heir, the thrifty goddess  
(For fear young master should be spoiled)  
Would use him like a younger child;  
And, after long computing, found  
'Twould come to just five thousand pound.  
The Queen of Love was pleased and proud  
To we Vanessa thus endowed;  
She doubted not but such a dame  
Through every breast would dart a flame;  
That every rich and lordly swain  
With pride would drag about her chain;  
That scholars would forsake their books  
To study bright Vanessa's looks:  
As she advanced that womankind  
Would by her model form their mind,  
And all their conduct would be tried  
By her, as an unerring guide.

Offending daughters oft would hear  
Vanessa's praise rung in their ear:  
Miss Betty, when she does a fault,  
Lest fall her knife, or spills the salt,  
Will thus be by her mother chid,  
"Tis what Vanessa never did."  
Thus by the nymphs and swains adored,  
My power shall be again restored,  
And happy lovers bless my reign  
So Venus hoped, but hoped in vain.  
For when in time the martial maid  
Found out the trick that Venus played,  
She shakes her helm, she knits her brows,  
And fired with indignation, vows  
To-morrow, ere the setting sun,  
She'd all undo that she had done.  
But in the poets we may find  
A wholesome law, time out of mind,  
Had been confirmed by Fate's decree;  
That gods, of whatso'er degree,  
Resume not what themselves have given,  
Or any brother-god in Heaven;  
Which keeps the peace among the gods,  
Or they must always be at odds.  
And Pallas, if she broke the laws,  
Must yield her foe the stronger cause;  
A shame to one so much adored  
For Wisdom, at Jove's council-board.  
Besides, she feared the queen of love  
Would meet with better friends above.  
And though she must with grief reflect  
To see a mortal virgin deck'd  
With graces hitherto unknown  
To female breasts, except her own,  
Yet she would act as best became  
A goddess of unspotted fame;  
She knew, by augury divine,  
Venus would fail in her design:  
She studied well the point, and found  
Her foe's conclusions were not sound,  
From premises erroneous brought,  
And therefore the deduction's nought,  
And must have contrary effects  
To what her treacherous foe expects.  
In proper season Pallas meets  
The queen of love, whom thus she greets  
(For Gods, we are by Homer told,  
Can in celestial language scold),  
"Perfidious Goddess! but in vain  
You formed this project in your brain,  
A project for thy talents fit,



With much deceit, and little wit;  
Thou hast, as thou shalt quickly see,  
Deceived thyself instead of me;  
For how can heavenly wisdom prove  
An instrument to earthly love?  
Know'st thou not yet that men commence  
Thy votaries, for want of sense?  
Nor shall Vanessa be the theme  
To manage thy abortive scheme;  
She'll prove the greatest of thy foes,  
And yet I scorn to interpose,  
But using neither skill nor force,  
Leave all things to their natural course."  
The goddess thus pronounced her doom,  
When, lo, Vanessa in her bloom,  
Advanced like Atalanta's star,  
But rarely seen, and seen from far:  
In a new world with caution stepped,  
Watched all the company she kept,  
Well knowing from the books she read  
What dangerous paths young virgins tread;  
Would seldom at the park appear,  
Nor saw the play-house twice a year;  
Yet not incurious, was inclined  
To know the converse of mankind.  
First issued from perfumers' shops  
A crowd of fashionable fops;  
They liked her how she liked the play?  
Then told the tattle of the day,  
A duel fought last night at two  
About a lady you know who;  
Mentioned a new Italian, come  
Either from Muscovy or Rome;  
Gave hints of who and who's together;  
Then fell to talking of the weather:  
Last night was so extremely fine,  
The ladies walked till after nine.  
Then in soft voice, and speech absurd,  
With nonsense every second word,  
With fustian from exploded plays,  
They celebrate her beauty's praise,  
Run o'er their cant of stupid lies,  
And tell the murders of her eyes.  
With silent scorn Vanessa sat,  
Scarce list'ning to their idle chat;  
Further than sometimes by a frown,  
When they grew pert, to pull them down.  
At last she spitefully was bent  
To try their wisdom's full extent;  
And said, she valued nothing less  
Than titles, figure, shape, and dress;

That merit should be chiefly placed  
In judgment, knowledge, wit, and taste;  
And these, she offered to dispute,  
Alone distinguished man from brute:  
That present times have no pretence  
To virtue, in the noble sense  
By Greeks and Romans understood,  
To perish for our country's good.  
She named the ancient heroes round,  
Explained for what they were renowned;  
Then spoke with censure, or applause,  
Of foreign customs, rites, and laws;  
Through nature and through art she ranged,  
And gracefully her subject changed:  
In vain; her hearers had no share  
In all she spoke, except to stare.  
Their judgment was upon the whole,  
That lady is the dullest soul  
Then tipped their forehead in a jeer,  
As who should say she wants it here;  
She may be handsome, young, and rich,  
But none will burn her for a witch.  
A party next of glittering dames,  
From round the purlieu of St. James,  
Came early, out of pure goodwill,  
To see the girl in deshabelle.  
Their clamour lighting from their chairs,  
Grew louder, all the way up stairs;  
At entrance loudest, where they found  
The room with volumes littered round,  
Vanessa held Montaigne, and read,  
Whilst Mrs. Susan combed her head:  
They called for tea and chocolate,  
And fell into their usual chat,  
Discoursing with important face,  
On ribbons, fans, and gloves, and lace:  
Showed patterns just from India brought,  
And gravely asked her what she thought,  
Whether the red or green were best,  
And what they cost? Vanessa guessed,  
As came into her fancy first,  
Named half the rates, and liked the worst.  
To scandal next What awkward thing  
Was that, last Sunday, in the ring?  
I'm sorry Mopsa breaks so fast;  
I said her face would never last,  
Corinna with that youthful air,  
Is thirty, and a bit to spare.  
Her fondness for a certain earl  
Began, when I was but a girl.  
Phyllis, who but a month ago

Was married to the Tunbridge beau,  
I saw coquetting t'other night  
In public with that odious knight.  
They rallied next Vanessa's dress;  
That gown was made for old Queen Bess.  
Dear madam, let me set your head;  
Don't you intend to put on red?  
A petticoat without a hoop!  
Sure, you are not ashamed to stoop;  
With handsome garters at your knees,  
No matter what a fellow sees.  
Filled with disdain, with rage inflamed,  
Both of herself and sex ashamed,  
The nymph stood silent out of spite,  
Nor would vouchsafe to set them right.  
Away the fair detractors went,  
And gave, by turns, their censures vent.  
She's not so handsome in my eyes:  
For wit, I wonder where it lies.  
She's fair and clean, and that's the most;  
But why proclaim her for a toast?  
A baby face, no life, no airs,  
But what she learnt at country fairs.  
Scarce knows what difference is between  
Rich Flanders lace, and Colberteen.  
I'll undertake my little Nancy,  
In flounces has a better fancy.  
With all her wit, I would not ask  
Her judgment, how to buy a mask.  
We begged her but to patch her face,  
She never hit one proper place;  
Which every girl at five years old  
Can do as soon as she is told.  
I own, that out-of-fashion stuff  
Becomes the creature well enough.  
The girl might pass, if we could get her  
To know the world a little better.  
(TO KNOW THE WORLD! a modern phrase  
For visits, ombre, balls, and plays.)  
Thus, to the world's perpetual shame,  
The queen of beauty lost her aim,  
Too late with grief she understood  
Pallas had done more harm than good;  
For great examples are but vain,  
Where ignorance begets disdain.  
Both sexes, armed with guilt and spite,  
Against Vanessa's power unite;  
To copy her few nymphs aspired;  
Her virtues fewer swains admired;  
So stars, beyond a certain height,  
Give mortals neither heat nor light.

Yet some of either sex, endowed  
With gifts superior to the crowd,  
With virtue, knowledge, taste, and wit,  
She condescended to admit;  
With pleasing arts she could reduce  
Men's talents to their proper use;  
And with address each genius hold  
To that wherein it most excelled;  
Thus making others' wisdom known,  
Could please them and improve her own.  
A modest youth said something new,  
She placed it in the strongest view.  
All humble worth she strove to raise;  
Would not be praised, yet loved to praise.  
The learned met with free approach,  
Although they came not in a coach.  
Some clergy too she would allow,  
Nor quarreled at their awkward bow.  
But this was for Cadenus' sake;  
A gownman of a different make.  
Whom Pallas, once Vanessa's tutor,  
Had fixed on for her coadjutor.  
But Cupid, full of mischief, longs  
To vindicate his mother's wrongs.  
On Pallas all attempts are vain;  
One way he knows to give her pain;  
Vows on Vanessa's heart to take  
Due vengeance, for her patron's sake.  
Those early seeds by Venus sown,  
In spite of Pallas, now were grown;  
And Cupid hoped they would improve  
By time, and ripen into love.  
The boy made use of all his craft,  
In vain discharging many a shaft,  
Pointed at colonels, lords, and beaux;  
Cadenus warded off the blows,  
For placing still some book betwixt,  
The darts were in the cover fixed,  
Or often blunted and recoiled,  
On Plutarch's morals struck, were spoiled.  
The queen of wisdom could foresee,  
But not prevent the Fates decree;  
And human caution tries in vain  
To break that adamant chain.  
Vanessa, though by Pallas taught,  
By love invulnerable thought,  
Searching in books for wisdom's aid,  
Was, in the very search, betrayed.  
Cupid, though all his darts were lost,  
Yet still resolved to spare no cost;  
He could not answer to his fame

The triumphs of that stubborn dame,  
A nymph so hard to be subdued,  
Who neither was coquette nor prude.  
I find, says he, she wants a doctor,  
Both to adore her, and instruct her:  
I'll give her what she most admires,  
Among those venerable sires.  
Cadenus is a subject fit,  
Grown old in politics and wit;  
Caressed by Ministers of State,  
Of half mankind the dread and hate.  
Whate'er vexations love attend,  
She need no rivals apprehend  
Her sex, with universal voice,  
Must laugh at her capricious choice.  
Cadenus many things had writ,  
Vanessa much esteemed his wit,  
And called for his poetic works!  
Meantime the boy in secret lurks.  
And while the book was in her hand,  
The urchin from his private stand  
Took aim, and shot with all his strength  
A dart of such prodigious length,  
It pierced the feeble volume through,  
And deep transfixed her bosom too.  
Some lines, more moving than the rest,  
Struck to the point that pierced her breast;  
And, borne directly to the heart,  
With pains unknown, increased her smart.  
Vanessa, not in years a score,  
Dreams of a gown of forty-four;  
Imaginary charms can find,  
In eyes with reading almost blind;  
Cadenus now no more appears  
Declined in health, advanced in years.  
She fancies music in his tongue,  
Nor farther looks, but thinks him young.  
What mariner is not afraid  
To venture in a ship decayed?  
What planter will attempt to yoke  
A sapling with a falling oak?  
As years increase, she brighter shines,  
Cadenus with each day declines,  
And he must fall a prey to Time,  
While she continues in her prime.  
Cadenus, common forms apart,  
In every scene had kept his heart;  
Had sighed and languished, vowed and writ,  
For pastime, or to show his wit;  
But time, and books, and State affairs,  
Had spoiled his fashionable airs,

He now could praise, esteem, approve,  
But understood not what was love.  
His conduct might have made him styled  
A father, and the nymph his child.  
That innocent delight he took  
To see the virgin mind her book,  
Was but the master's secret joy  
In school to hear the finest boy.  
Her knowledge with her fancy grew,  
She hourly pressed for something new;  
Ideas came into her mind  
So fast, his lessons lagged behind;  
She reasoned, without plodding long,  
Nor ever gave her judgment wrong.  
But now a sudden change was wrought,  
She minds no longer what he taught.  
Cadenus was amazed to find  
Such marks of a distracted mind;  
For though she seemed to listen more  
To all he spoke, than e'er before.  
He found her thoughts would absent range,  
Yet guessed not whence could spring the change.  
And first he modestly conjectures,  
His pupil might be tired with lectures,  
Which helped to mortify his pride,  
Yet gave him not the heart to chide;  
But in a mild dejected strain,  
At last he ventured to complain:  
Said, she should be no longer teased,  
Might have her freedom when she pleased;  
Was now convinced he acted wrong,  
To hide her from the world so long,  
And in dull studies to engage  
One of her tender sex and age.  
That every nymph with envy owned,  
How she might shine in the GRANDE-MONDE,  
And every shepherd was undone,  
To see her cloistered like a nun.  
This was a visionary scheme,  
He waked, and found it but a dream;  
A project far above his skill,  
For Nature must be Nature still.  
If she was bolder than became  
A scholar to a courtly dame,  
She might excuse a man of letters;  
Thus tutors often treat their betters,  
And since his talk offensive grew,  
He came to take his last adieu.  
Vanessa, filled with just disdain,  
Would still her dignity maintain,  
Instructed from her early years

To scorn the art of female tears.  
Had he employed his time so long,  
To teach her what was right or wrong,  
Yet could such notions entertain,  
That all his lectures were in vain?  
She owned the wand'ring of her thoughts,  
But he must answer for her faults.  
She well remembered, to her cost,  
That all his lessons were not lost.  
Two maxims she could still produce,  
And sad experience taught her use;  
That virtue, pleased by being shown,  
Knows nothing which it dare not own;  
Can make us without fear disclose  
Our inmost secrets to our foes;  
That common forms were not designed  
Directors to a noble mind.  
Now, said the nymph, I'll let you see  
My actions with your rules agree,  
That I can vulgar forms despise,  
And have no secrets to disguise.  
I knew by what you said and writ,  
How dangerous things were men of wit;  
You cautioned me against their charms,  
But never gave me equal arms;  
Your lessons found the weakest part,  
Aimed at the head, but reached the heart.  
Cadenus felt within him rise  
Shame, disappointment, guilt, surprise.  
He know not how to reconcile  
Such language, with her usual style:  
And yet her words were so expressed,  
He could not hope she spoke in jest.  
His thoughts had wholly been confined  
To form and cultivate her mind.  
He hardly knew, till he was told,  
Whether the nymph were young or old;  
Had met her in a public place,  
Without distinguishing her face,  
Much less could his declining age  
Vanessa's earliest thoughts engage.  
And if her youth indifference met,  
His person must contempt beget,  
Or grant her passion be sincere,  
How shall his innocence be clear?  
Appearances were all so strong,  
The world must think him in the wrong;  
Would say he made a treach'rous use.  
Of wit, to flatter and seduce;  
The town would swear he had betrayed,  
By magic spells, the harmless maid;

And every beau would have his jokes,  
That scholars were like other folks;  
That when Platonic flights were over,  
The tutor turned a mortal lover.  
So tender of the young and fair;  
It showed a true paternal care  
Five thousand guineas in her purse;  
The doctor might have fancied worst,  
Hardly at length he silence broke,  
And faltered every word he spoke;  
Interpreting her complaisance,  
Just as a man sans consequence.  
She rallied well, he always knew;  
Her manner now was something new;  
And what she spoke was in an air,  
As serious as a tragic player.  
But those who aim at ridicule,  
Should fix upon some certain rule,  
Which fairly hints they are in jest,  
Else he must enter his protest;  
For let a man be ne'er so wise,  
He may be caught with sober lies;  
A science which he never taught,  
And, to be free, was dearly bought;  
For, take it in its proper light,  
'Tis just what coxcombs call a bite.  
But not to dwell on things minute,  
Vanessa finished the dispute,  
Brought weighty arguments to prove,  
That reason was her guide in love.  
She thought he had himself described,  
His doctrines when she first imbibed;  
What he had planted now was grown,  
His virtues she might call her own;  
As he approves, as he dislikes,  
Love or contempt her fancy strikes.  
Self-love in nature rooted fast,  
Attends us first, and leaves us last:  
Why she likes him, admire not at her,  
She loves herself, and that's the matter.  
How was her tutor wont to praise  
The geniuses of ancient days!  
(Those authors he so oft had named  
For learning, wit, and wisdom famed).  
Was struck with love, esteem, and awe,  
For persons whom he never saw.  
Suppose Cadenus flourished then,  
He must adore such God-like men.  
If one short volume could comprise  
All that was witty, learned, and wise,  
How would it be esteemed, and read,



Although the writer long were dead?  
If such an author were alive,  
How all would for his friendship strive;  
And come in crowds to see his face?  
And this she takes to be her case.  
Cadenus answers every end,  
The book, the author, and the friend,  
The utmost her desires will reach,  
Is but to learn what he can teach;  
His converse is a system fit  
Alone to fill up all her wit;  
While ev'ry passion of her mind  
In him is centred and confined.  
Love can with speech inspire a mute,  
And taught Vanessa to dispute.  
This topic, never touched before,  
Displayed her eloquence the more:  
Her knowledge, with such pains acquired,  
By this new passion grew inspired.  
Through this she made all objects pass,  
Which gave a tincture o'er the mass;  
As rivers, though they bend and twine,  
Still to the sea their course incline;  
Or, as philosophers, who find  
Some fav'rite system to their mind,  
In every point to make it fit,  
Will force all nature to submit.  
Cadenus, who could ne'er suspect  
His lessons would have such effect,  
Or be so artfully applied,  
Insensibly came on her side;  
It was an unforeseen event,  
Things took a turn he never meant.  
Whoe'er excels in what we prize,  
Appears a hero to our eyes;  
Each girl, when pleased with what is taught,  
Will have the teacher in her thought.  
When miss delights in her spinnet,  
A fiddler may a fortune get;  
A blockhead, with melodious voice  
In boarding-schools can have his choice;  
And oft the dancing-master's art  
Climbs from the toe to touch the heart.  
In learning let a nymph delight,  
The pedant gets a mistress by't.  
Cadenus, to his grief and shame,  
Could scarce oppose Vanessa's flame;  
But though her arguments were strong,  
At least could hardly with them wrong.  
Howe'er it came, he could not tell,  
But, sure, she never talked so well.

His pride began to interpose,  
Preferred before a crowd of beaux,  
So bright a nymph to come unsought,  
Such wonder by his merit wrought;  
'Tis merit must with her prevail,  
He never know her judgment fail.  
She noted all she ever read,  
And had a most discerning head.  
'Tis an old maxim in the schools,  
That vanity's the food of fools;  
Yet now and then your men of wit  
Will condescend to take a bit.  
So when Cadenus could not hide,  
He chose to justify his pride;  
Construing the passion she had shown,  
Much to her praise, more to his own.  
Nature in him had merit placed,  
In her, a most judicious taste.  
Love, hitherto a transient guest,  
Ne'er held possession in his breast;  
So long attending at the gate,  
Disdain'd to enter in so late.  
Love, why do we one passion call?  
When 'tis a compound of them all;  
Where hot and cold, where sharp and sweet,  
In all their equipages meet;  
Where pleasures mixed with pains appear,  
Sorrow with joy, and hope with fear.  
Wherein his dignity and age  
Forbid Cadenus to engage.  
But friendship in its greatest height,  
A constant, rational delight,  
On virtue's basis fixed to last,  
When love's allurements long are past;  
Which gently warms, but cannot burn;  
He gladly offers in return;  
His want of passion will redeem,  
With gratitude, respect, esteem;  
With that devotion we bestow,  
When goddesses appear below.  
While thus Cadenus entertains  
Vanessa in exalted strains,  
The nymph in sober words intreats  
A truce with all sublime conceits.  
For why such raptures, flights, and fancies,  
To her who durst not read romances;  
In lofty style to make replies,  
Which he had taught her to despise?  
But when her tutor will affect  
Devotion, duty, and respect,  
He fairly abdicates his throne,

The government is now her own;  
He has a forfeiture incurred,  
She vows to take him at his word,  
And hopes he will not take it strange  
If both should now their stations change  
The nymph will have her turn, to be  
The tutor; and the pupil he:  
Though she already can discern  
Her scholar is not apt to learn;  
Or wants capacity to reach  
The science she designs to teach;  
Wherein his genius was below  
The skill of every common beau;  
Who, though he cannot spell, is wise  
Enough to read a lady's eyes?  
And will each accidental glance  
Interpret for a kind advance.  
But what success Vanessa met  
Is to the world a secret yet;  
Whether the nymph, to please her swain,  
Talks in a high romantic strain;  
Or whether he at last descends  
To like with less seraphic ends;  
Or to compound the bus'ness, whether  
They temper love and books together;  
Must never to mankind be told,  
Nor shall the conscious muse unfold.  
Meantime the mournful queen of love  
Led but a weary life above.  
She ventures now to leave the skies,  
Grown by Vanessa's conduct wise.  
For though by one perverse event  
Pallas had crossed her first intent,  
Though her design was not obtained,  
Yet had she much experience gained;  
And, by the project vainly tried,  
Could better now the cause decide.  
She gave due notice that both parties,  
CORAM REGINA PROX' DIE MARTIS,  
Should at their peril without fail  
Come and appear, and save their bail.  
All met, and silence thrice proclaimed,  
One lawyer to each side was named.  
The judge discovered in her face  
Resentments for her late disgrace;  
And, full of anger, shame, and grief,  
Directed them to mind their brief;  
Nor spend their time to show their reading,  
She'd have a summary proceeding.  
She gathered under every head,  
The sum of what each lawyer said;

Gave her own reasons last; and then  
Decreed the cause against the men.  
But, in a weighty case like this,  
To show she did not judge amiss,  
Which evil tongues might else report,  
She made a speech in open court;  
Wherein she grievously complains,  
"How she was cheated by the swains."  
On whose petition (humbly showing  
That women were not worth the wooing,  
And that unless the sex would mend,  
The race of lovers soon must end);  
"She was at Lord knows what expense,  
To form a nymph of wit and sense;  
A model for her sex designed,  
Who never could one lover find,  
She saw her favour was misplaced;  
The fellows had a wretched taste;  
She needs must tell them to their face,  
They were a senseless, stupid race;  
And were she to begin again,  
She'd study to reform the men;  
Or add some grains of folly more  
To women than they had before.  
To put them on an equal foot;  
And this, or nothing else, would do't.  
This might their mutual fancy strike,  
Since every being loves its like.  
But now, repenting what was done,  
She left all business to her son;  
She puts the world in his possession,  
And let him use it at discretion."  
The crier was ordered to dismiss  
The court, so made his last O yes!  
The goddess would no longer wait,  
But rising from her chair of state,  
Left all below at six and seven,  
Harnessed her doves, and flew to Heaven.