

(Sample)

2.

Opening: (Stage Play)  
(Version)

A PLAYHOUSE, LONDON, 1671.

(On the stage a table is surrounded by simple wooden chairs and candelabras. It is the 'Egyptian Coffee House'. Baroque music plays. The footlights are dim in this pre-show mode. Two ladies as masked 'Vizards' enter the house. They are 'Lady Mumble News' and 'Lady Long Tongue' the notorious town gossips. They are acting as 'Orange-Women' in the audience 'selling' their oranges and gossiping to any who will listen. They are our Greek Chorus, sharing news from London and the court of King Charles II. As they make their way to the stage, they start to light the many candles. As the music changes, the Ladies remove their masks, whip out their fans. Their powdered faces are garishly painted complete with patches. They flutter their eyelashes over their fans. One of them prologue as a rolled scroll. The other a billet doux. They curtsy to each other, play off each other and at times seem to be competing with each other. They address the audience. Actor note: all rhyming verse in BOLD.)

S

LADY MUMBLE-NEWS

Lady Long-Tongue! Do look at all these mutts!  
The men are rogues, and the women are sluts.  
From the pit tom the boxes, filled with butts.

A

LADY LONG-TONGUE

Lady Mumble News? They *smell...* of *something!* Coffee?  
Tobacco?... 'Tis perfume like the King!

M

LADY MUMBLE NEWS

They smell of each other-

LADY LONG-TONGUE

P

Are we rhyming?

LADY MUMBLE NEWS

We've talk o' the town, and talk of the street.  
Fair and balanced, our gossip is discrete.

LADY LONG-TONGUE

L

A tale of deceit which we make complete.

E