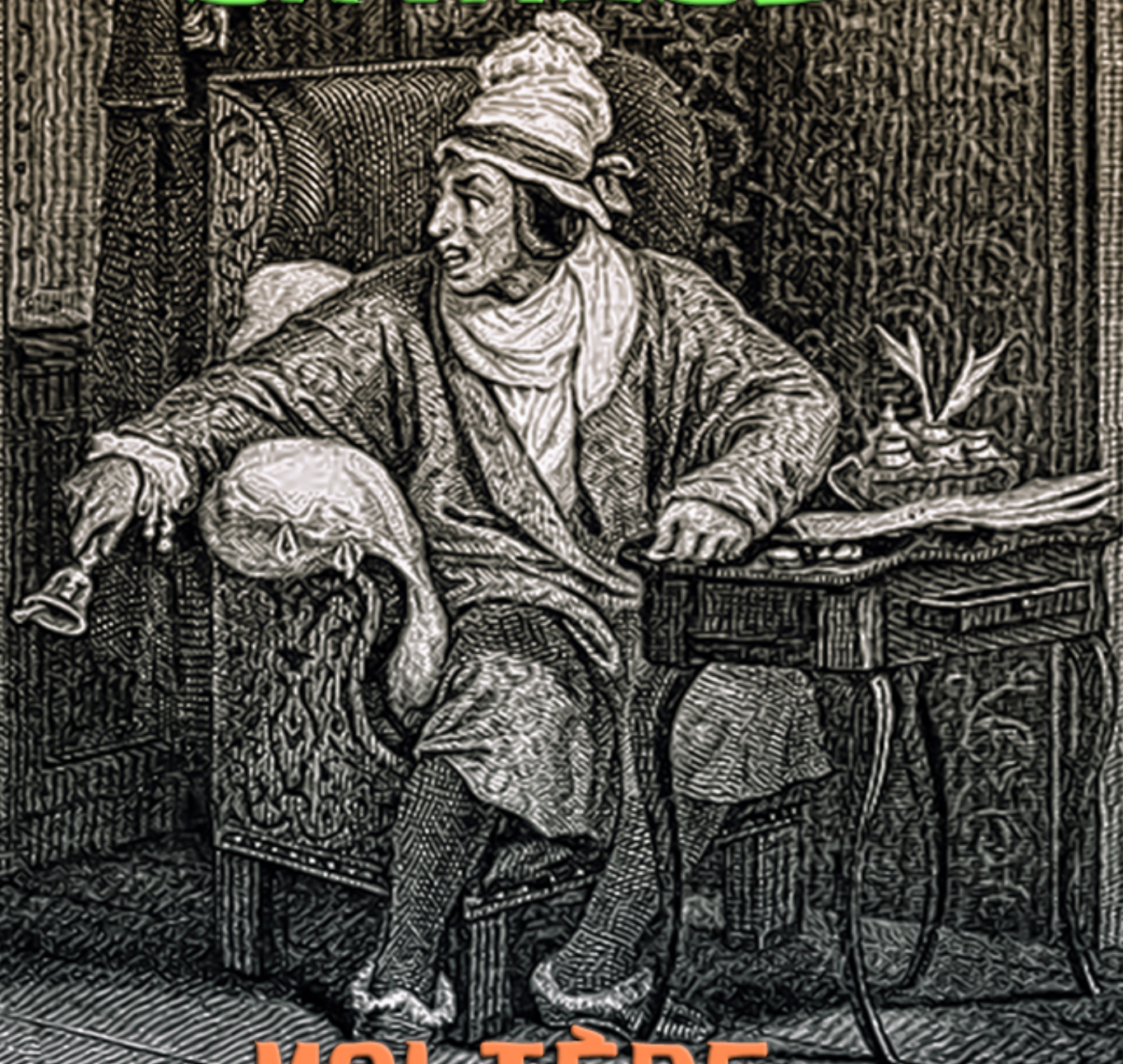


CLASSICS TO GO
**THE IMAGINARY
INVALID**



MOLIÈRE

The Imaginary Invalid

Molière

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

ARGAN, *an imaginary invalid.*

BÉLINE, *second wife to ARGAN.*

ANGÉLIQUE, *daughter to ARGAN, in love with CLÉANTE.*

LOUISON, *ARGAN'S young daughter, sister to*

ANGÉLIQUE.

BÉRALDE, *brother to ARGAN.*

CLÉANTE, *lover to ANGÉLIQUE.*

MR. DIAFOIRUS, *a physician.*

THOMAS DIAFOIRUS, *his son, in love with ANGÉLIQUE.*

MR. PURGON, *physician to ARGAN.*

MR. FLEURANT, *an apothecary.*

MR. DE BONNEFOI, *a notary.*

TOINETTE, *maid-servant to ARGAN.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.——ARGAN (*sitting at a table, adding up his apothecary's bill with counters*).

ARG. Three and two make five, and five make ten, and ten make twenty. "Item, on the 24th, a small, insinuating clyster, preparative and gentle, to soften, moisten, and refresh the bowels of Mr. Argan." What I like about Mr. Fleurant, my apothecary, is that his bills are always civil. "The bowels of Mr. Argan." All the same, Mr. Fleurant, it is not enough to be civil, you must also be reasonable, and not plunder sick people. Thirty sous for a clyster! I have already told you, with all due respect to you, that elsewhere you have only charged me twenty sous; and twenty sous, in the language of apothecaries, means only ten sous. Here they are, these ten sous. "Item, on the said day, a good detergent clyster, compounded of double catholicon rhubarb, honey of roses, and other ingredients, according to the prescription, to scour, work, and clear out the bowels of Mr. Argan, thirty sous." With your leave, ten sous. "Item, on the said day, in the evening, a julep, hepatic, soporiferous, and somniferous, intended to promote the sleep of Mr. Argan, thirty-five sous." I do not complain of that, for it made me sleep very well. Ten, fifteen, sixteen, and seventeen sous six deniers. "Item, on the 25th, a good purgative and corroborative mixture, composed of fresh cassia with Levantine senna and other ingredients, according to the prescription of Mr. Purgon, to expel Mr. Argan's bile, four francs." You are joking, Mr. Fleurant; you must learn to be reasonable with patients; Mr. Purgon never ordered you to put four francs. Tut! put three francs, if you please. Twenty; thirty sous. "Item, on the said day, a dose, anodyne and astringent, to make Mr. Argan

sleep, thirty sous." Ten sous, Mr. Fleurant. "Item, on the 26th, a carminative clyster to cure the flatulence of Mr. Argan, thirty sous." "Item, the clyster repeated in the evening, as above, thirty sous." Ten sous, Mr. Fleurant. "Item, on the 27th, a good mixture composed for the purpose of driving out the bad humours of Mr. Argan, three francs." Good; twenty and thirty sous; I am glad that you are reasonable. "Item, on the 28th, a dose of clarified andedulcorated whey, to soften, lenify, temper, and refresh the blood of Mr. Argan, twenty sous." Good; ten sous. "Item, a potion, cordial and preservative, composed of twelve grains of bezoar, syrup of citrons and pomegranates, and other ingredients, according to the prescription, five francs." Ah! Mr. Fleurant, gently, if you please; if you go on like that, no one will wish to be unwell. Be satisfied with four francs. Twenty, forty sous. Three and two are five, and five are ten, and ten are twenty. Sixty-three francs four sous six deniers. So that during this month I have taken one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight mixtures, and one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve clysters; and last month there were twelve mixtures and twenty clysters. I am not astonished, therefore, that I am not so well this month as last. I shall speak to Mr. Purgon about it, so that he may set the matter right. Come, let all this be taken away. (*He sees that no one comes, and that he is alone.*) Nobody. It's no use, I am always left alone; there's no way of keeping them here. (*He rings a hand-bell.*) They don't hear, and my bell doesn't make enough noise. (*He rings again.*) No one. (*He rings again.*) Toinette! (*He rings again.*) It's just as if I didn't ring at all. You hussy! you jade! (*He rings again.*) Confound it all! (*He rings and shouts.*) Deuce take you, you wretch!

SCENE II.——ARGAN, TOINETTE.

Toi. Coming, coming.

ARG. Ah! you jade, you wretch!

TOI. (*pretending to have knocked her head*). Bother your impatience! You hurry me so much that I have knocked my head against the window-shutter.

ARG. (*angry*). You vixen!

TOI. (*interrupting ARGAN*). Oh!

ARG. There is ...

TOI. Oh!

ARG. For the last hour I ...

TOI. Oh!

ARG. You have left me ...

TOI. Oh!

ARG. Be silent! you baggage, and let me scold you.

TOI. Well! that's too bad after what I have done to myself.

ARG. You make me bawl till my throat is sore, you jade!

TOI. And you, you made me break my head open; one is just as bad as the other; so, with your leave, we are quits.

ARG. What! you hussy....

TOI. If you go on scolding me, I shall cry.

ARG. To leave me, you ...

TOI. (*again interrupting ARGAN.*) Oh!

ARG. You would ...

TOI. (*still interrupting him*). Oh!

ARG. What! shall I have also to give up the pleasure of scolding her?

TOI. Well, scold as much as you please; do as you like.

ARG. You prevent me, you hussy, by interrupting me every moment.

TOI. If you have the pleasure of scolding, I surely can have that of crying. Let every one have his fancy; 'tis but right. Oh! oh!

ARG. I must give it up, I suppose. Take this away, take this away, you jade. Be careful to have some broth ready, for the other that I am to take soon.

TOI. This Mr. Fleurant and Mr. Purgon amuse themselves finely with your body. They have a rare milch-cow in you, I must say; and I should like them to tell me what disease it is you have for them to physic you so.

ARG. Hold your tongue, simpleton; it is not for you to control the decrees of the faculty. Ask my daughter Angélique to come to me. I have something to tell her.

TOI. Here she is, coming of her own accord; she must have guessed your thoughts.

SCENE III.——ARGAN, ANGÉLIQUE, TOINETTE.

ARG. You come just in time; I want to speak to you.

ANG. I am quite ready to hear you.

ARG. Wait a moment. (*To TOINETTE*) Give me my walking-stick; I'll come back directly.

TOI. Go, Sir, go quickly; Mr. Fleurant gives us plenty to do.

SCENE IV.——ANGÉLIQUE, TOINETTE.

ANG. Toinette!

TOI. Well! what?

ANG. Look at me a little.

TOI. Well, I am looking at you.

ANG. Toinette!

TOI. Well! what, Toinette?

ANG. Don't you guess what I want to speak about?

TOI. Oh! yes, I have some slight idea that you want to speak of our young lover, for it is of him we have been speaking for the last six days, and you are not well unless you mention him at every turn.

ANG. Since you know what it is I want, why are you not the first to speak to me of him? and why do you not spare me the trouble of being the one to start the conversation?

TOI. You don't give me time, and you are so eager that it is difficult to be beforehand with you on the subject.

ANG. I acknowledge that I am never weary of speaking of him, and that my heart takes eager advantage of every moment I have to open my heart to you. But tell me, Toinette, do you blame the feelings I have towards him?

TOI. I am far from doing so.

ANG. Am I wrong in giving way to these sweet impressions?

TOI. I don't say that you are.

ANG. And would you have me insensible to the tender protestations of ardent love which he shows me?

TOI. Heaven forbid!

ANG. Tell me, do you not see, as I do, Something providential, some act of destiny in the unexpected adventure from which our acquaintance originated?

TOI. Yes.

ANG. That it is impossible to act more generously?

TOI. Agreed.

ANG. And that he did all this with the greatest possible grace?

TOI. Oh! yes.

ANG. Do you not think, Toinette, that he is very handsome?

TOI. Certainly.

ANG. That he has the best manners in the world?

TOI. No doubt about it.

ANG. That there is always something noble in what he says and what he does?

TOI. Most certainly.

ANG. That there never was anything more tender than all he says to me?

TOI. True.

ARG. And that there can be nothing more painful than the restraint under which I am kept? for it prevents all sweet intercourse, and puts an end to that mutual love with which Heaven has inspired us.

TOI. You are right.

ANG. But, dear Toinette, tell me, do you think that he loves me as much as he says he does?

TOI. Hum! That's a thing hardly to be trusted at any time. A show of love is sadly like the real thing, and I have met with very good actors in that line.

ANG. Ah! Toinette, what are you saying there? Alas! judging by the manner in which he speaks, is it possible that he is not telling the truth?

TOI. At any rate, you will soon be satisfied on this point, and the resolution which he says he has taken of asking you in marriage, is a sure and ready way of showing you if what he says is true or not. That is the all-sufficient proof.

ANG. Ah! Toinette, if he deceives me, I shall never in all my life believe in any man.

TOI. Here is your father coming back.

SCENE V.——ARGAN, ANGÉLIQUE, TOINETTE.

ARG. I say, Angélique, I have a piece of news for you which, perhaps, you did not expect. You have been asked of me in