

And clever rogues with far less valid cause  
Have trapped their victims in a web of laws.  
I say again that to antagonize  
A man so strongly armed was most unwise.  
ORGON,

I know it; but the man's appalling cheek  
Outraged me so, I couldn't control my pique.  
CLÉANTE.

I wish to Heaven that we could devise  
Some truce between you, or some compromise.  
ELMIRE.

If I had known what cards he held, I'd not  
Have roused his anger by my little ploy.  
ORGON. (*To Dorine, as M. Loyal enters.*)  
What is that fellow looking for? Who is he?  
Go talk to him—and tell him that I'm busy.

## SCENE FOUR

MONSIEUR LOYAL, MADAME PERNELLE,  
ORGON, DAMIS, MARIANE, DORINE, ELMIRE,  
CLÉANTE

MONSIEUR LOYAL.

Good day, dear sister. Kindly let me see  
Your master.

DORINE.

He's involved with company,  
And cannot be disturbed just now, I fear.  
MONSIEUR LOYAL.

I hate to intrude; but what has brought me here  
Will not disturb your master, in any event  
Indeed, my news will make him most content

Loyal

DORINE.  
Your name?  
MONSIEUR LOYAL.

Just say that I bring greetings from  
Monsieur Taruffe, on whose behalf I've come.  
DORINE. (*To Orgon*)

Sir, he's a very gracious man, and bears  
A message from Taruffe, which, he declares,  
Will make you most content

CLÉANTE.

Open my word,

~~I think this man had best be seen and heard.~~  
ORGON.

~~Perhaps he has some settlement to suggest.  
How shall I treat him? What manner would be best?~~  
CLÉANTE.

~~Control your anger, and if he should mention  
Some fair adjustment, give him your full attention.~~  
MONSIEUR LOYAL.

Good health to you, good Sir. May Heaven confound  
Your enemies, and may your joys abound.

ORGON. (*Aside, to Cleante*)  
A gentle salutation: it confirms

My guess that he is here to offer terms.  
MONSIEUR LOYAL.

I've always held your family most dear;  
I served your father, Sir, for many a year.  
ORGON.

Sir, I must ask your pardon: to my shame,  
I cannot now recall your face or name.  
MONSIEUR LOYAL.

Loyal's my name; I come from Normandy,  
And I'm a bailiff, in all modesty.

For forty years, praise God, it's been my boast  
To serve with honor in that vital post.  
And I am here, Sir, if you will permit  
The liberty, to serve you with this writ...

ORGON.

To—*what?*

MONSIEUR LOYAL.

Now, please, Sir, let us have no friction:  
It's nothing but an order of eviction.

You are to move your goods and family out  
And make way for new occupants, without  
Delay or delay, and give the keys...

ORGON.

If I leave this house?

MONSIEUR LOYAL.

Why yes, Sir, if you please.

This house, Sir, from the cellar to the roof,  
Belongs now to the good Monsieur Taruffe,  
And he is lord and master of your estate

By virtue of a deed of present date,

Drawn in due form, with clearest legal phrasing...

DAMIS.

Your insolence is utterly amazing!

MONSIEUR LOYAL.

Young man, my business here is not with you,

But with your wise and temperate father, who,

Like every worthy citizen, stands in awe

Of justice, and would never obstruct the law.

ORGON.

But..

MONSIEUR LOYAL.

Not for a million, Sir, would you rebel

Against authority; I know that well.

You'll not make trouble, Sir, or interfere

With the execution of my duties here.

DAMIS.

Someone may execute a smart tattoo

On that black jacket of yours, before you're through.

MONSIEUR LOYAL.

Sir, bid your son be silent. I'd much regret.

Having to mention such a nasty threat  
Of violence, in writing my report

DORINE. *(Aside)*

This man Loyal's a most disloyal sort!

MONSIEUR LOYAL.

I love all men of upright character,

And when I agreed to serve these papers, Sir,

It was your feelings that I had in mind.

I couldn't bear to see the case assigned

To someone else, who might esteem you less

And so subject you to unpleasantness

ORGON.

What's more unpleasant than telling a man to leave

His house and home?

MONSIEUR LOYAL.

You'd like a short reprieve?

If you desire it, Sir, I shall not press you,

But wait until tomorrow to dispossess you.

Splendid. I'll come and spend the night here, then,

Most quietly, with half a score of men.

For form's sake, you might bring me, just before

You go to bed, the keys to the front door.

My men, I promise, will be on their best

Behavior, and will not disturb your rest.

But bright and early, Sir, you must be quick

And move out all your furniture, every stick.

The men I've chosen are both young and strong

And with their help it shouldn't take you long.

In short, I'll make things pleasant and convenient,

And since I'm being so extremely lenient,

Please show me, Sir, a like consideration,

And give me your entire cooperation.

ORGON. *(Aside)*

I may be all but bankrupt, but I vow

I'd give a hundred louis, here and now,

Just for the pleasure of landing one good clout

Right on the end of that complacent snout.