



The Societal Speculum of
SECRET, SHAME & SCANDAL
—○—
FEBRUARY 1813 SPECIAL EDITION

A Special Word from Your Humble Editor.

Dearest Readers,

As you know, we at the *Societal Speculum of Secret, Shame & Scandal* are people not only of honesty, but of very deep compassion. We would *never* make light of our dear colleagues in their time of misfortune, no matter how humorous we find it, no matter how strongly one might consider they brought it upon themselves by moving their very heavy printing presses onto the fragile Thames ice, and however unable they are to respond to anything we print due to the loss of all their equipment.

Perish the thought! For all of our colleagues are sunk so deep in misfortune of their own making already, we would never *dream* of adding to it.

And even if we did, what could we possibly say that would add to the woes of (for example) Miss Susanna Everett, editor of *Discourse on Natural Philosophy*, who habitually breaks into the Royal Academy like a thief to sneak peaks at specimens whenever they turn down her research

requests? How could our hearts bear it if we were to reveal that Mr. Alphonse Dacourt and the Hon. Miss Dorothy Wilder, co-editors of *Le Beau Diamant*, are (for all their public show of argumentation) quite clearly secretly trysting, that they don disguises as dreary city clerks on a night off to visit dodgy public houses at which they indulge in shameless osculation, disguises which are as unflattering as they are unconvincing? Surely any ridicule we would add would be redundant, for such people can sink no lower.

Yet, can you believe, dear reader, that some of our colleagues accuse *us* of hypocrisy? Lord Francis Cargill, editor of the *Literary Coterie*, for example, has allowed such accusations to pass his proudly dissipated and debauched lips. Perhaps he has discussed them with Ser Margaret Fawns, editor of the *Chronicle*, with whom he was seen drinking and carousing after Fawns was humiliated in the Deborah Murray affair.

Yet for all Lord Cargill's carefully cultivated reputation as a free spirit and a rake, did you

know he also heads a committee of correspondence for appreciators of Bishop Hannah More's strait-laced and blue-nosed novels and tracts? What business has he accusing others of hypocrisy!

No more than Solomon Mimir and Victor "Slick" McArty, the editors of *Rumor Occulatus*. Solomon Mimir credulously believes every ludicrous story printed in that wretched rag, while "Slick" knows them all to be ludicrous yet collects and propagates these fables in order to line his own pockets. What business have they accusing *us* of dishonesty, when they cannot even agree whether the *other* is honest? Then too, although they do not know it themselves, their business is paid for by Lord Carlyle, of all the ridiculous people! One wonders upon which side of the debate he falls.

Of course, the office of *Rumor Occulatus* is positively Utopian compared to those of *Common Prosperity*. This is well known, for we expect all of Fleet Street has come to expect their regular 11 O'Clock screaming row over some political issue or other. Do they not have anything better to do? Could they not talk, for example, about their Whig writer Bartholomew Campbell's secret affair with a former MP of the Tory party? Or their Tory writer Jacques C. Lyon's equally secret affair with a Whig pamphleteer? Or their columnist Ashleigh Wells-Ashleigh insatiable appetite for plagiarism?

But we have strayed for the topic; we were talking of our compassion for our unfortunate colleagues. Truly fortune can be so unkind! Our colleagues at *Guide to Sport* must think so, for they connive with each other to slip the bounds of Lady Fortune by cheating at cards. It is not that they are in debt, or even that they lose very often, they simply seem to enjoy the thrill of cheating.

What a very peculiar view they have of sport, and fortune!

Speaking of views, is Mr. Edward Townsend, editor of *Arts & Culture*, getting a good view of the Vauxhall performances from the back seats where he hides, swathed in scarves to conceal his identity? We would not want his snobbish desire to preserve his erudite reputation to spoil his enjoyment of those bawdy music-hall entertainments in which he so often indulges!

Yes, dear readers, you must see that we at the *Speculum* can only have the deepest and most heartfelt compassion for our colleagues in this, their hour of misfortune! They are so trapped in their various foibles, and rendered so pathetic by their vices: how could we do otherwise?

*The remainder of the
small edition of this
pamphlet is water stained
and illegible, with an
additional pamphlet struck
to the back...*