

Double Inconstancy by Pierre Carlet de Marivaux



Silvia is snatched from her lover, Harlequin, by a prince and his canny female servant, Flaminia. The prince is obliged by law to marry one of his subjects and so has disguised himself as a cavalry officer in order to woo Silvia, whom he loves. It is not long before Silvia realises that the prince is a better catch than Harlequin, and conveniently Flaminia discovers that she herself has feelings for Harlequin. The play ends in two marriages, brought about by games, deception and tomfoolery. First performed in 1723 in Italy, Marivaux's colourful and flippant play makes use of the stock characters from the Commedia dell'arte.

Double Inconstancy was first performed in 1723 by the Comédie Italienne.

'It's full of talk, of schemes, of attitudes and of love' *Onstage Scotland*

Genre:	Romantic comedy	Fee:	£40 plus VAT, per performance
Cast:	m4 f3	Scripts:	ISBN 9780413185600 £14.99
Set:	prince's palace	Length:	3 acts
Contact:	amateur-rights@bloomsbury.com		

EXTRACT

Silvia Ah, my dear Harlequin!

Harlequin Yes, my love?

Silvia We're so unhappy!

Harlequin Why don't we stay in love for ever? Then the present won't seem so bad.

Silvia But will our love survive it? That's what worries me.

Harlequin I'm trying to give you courage, but I've none myself. (He takes her hand.) My dearest treasure, it's a full three days since I last looked into your beautiful eyes: make up for it now.

Silvia I've such a lot to tell you. I'm afraid I'm losing you. I'm afraid they'll hurt you out of spite or envy. I'm afraid that now you've been away from me for three days you'll get used to it.

Harlequin My dearest, can a man get used to misery?

Silvia I don't want you to forget me, but I don't want you to miss me so much that it makes you unhappy. I'm so in love I can't say what I want, I'm lost in the way I feel. Everything makes me sad.

Harlequin (*cries*) Hi, hi, hi, hi.

Silvia (*sadly*) Don't cry, you'll make me cry as well.

Harlequin How can I stop when you're as sad as this? You wouldn't make me cry if you really loved me.

Silvia I do, I do. Stop doubting. If I feel unhappy I'll hide it.

Harlequin Hide it from me? I'll see through it at once. You've got to promise me you aren't unhappy.

If you enjoyed this, you might like:

- *A History of Falling Things* by James Graham (m5 f2)
 - *The Lucky Ones* by Charlotte Eilenberg (m3 f4)
 - *Albert's Boy* by James Graham (m2)
-