

RESTORATION DRAMA

The School for Scandal

✚ In this lecture, we are going to finish the first play which is The School for Scandal by Richard Sheridan. So, in the next lecture, we are going to start talking about the second play, The Way of the World by William Congreve.

- **Notes:** Regarding Act III which contains 3 scenes, only scene iii are not required; however, you can read them at home in order to understand the play better.
- Regarding Act IV which also contains 3 scenes, only scene iii is required for the exam. Scene i and scene ii are both not required.

Some notes about Act IV, scene iii

1. Act IV, scene iii is so important that it has the climax of the play. In fact, the climax starts when Lady Teazle goes to see Joseph in order to ask him about the rumors spreading

about the relationship between her and Charles. Then Lady Teazle hides behind the screen when her husband comes to the house of Joseph. After that, she discovers the real character of Joseph.

2. We can notice that Lady Teazle goes to see Joseph in order to ask him about the rumors spreading about the relationship between Charles and herself. In fact, she pays a visit to Joseph because she somewhat suspects him. Moreover, this scene is called the **screen scene** because, in this scene, we see that Lady Teazle hides behind the screen when her husband comes to Joseph's house talking about the love affair between Charles and his wife.

3. There are 2 dramatic ironies in this scene.

Question: What is the dramatic irony?

The dramatic irony is to know something or an event which some characters in the play do not know.

So, here, in scene iii, we have 2 dramatic ironies:

- 1- We, as readers, know that both of Joseph and Lady Sneerwell plot against Maria and Charles. However, some real characters who are Maria, Charles and Sir Peter Teazle do not know this fact at all.
- 2- Another dramatic irony appears when Lady Teazle hides behind the screen and Sir Peter does not know that his wife is behind the screen.

Act IV, Scene iii

❖ P. 88+89

“JOS SURF No letter from Lady Teazle?”

SER No, sir.

JOS SURF [Aside.]

I am surprised she has not sent, if she is prevented from coming. Sir Peter certainly does not suspect me. Yet I wish I may not lose the heiress, through the scrape I have drawn myself into with the wife; however, Charles's imprudence and bad character are great points in my favour.

[Knocking without.]

SER Sir, I believe that must be Lady Teazle.

JOS SURF Hold! See whether it is or not, before you go to the door: I have a particular message for you if it should be my brother.”

➤ Here, we see that Joseph expects Lady Teazle to come.

❖ P. 90

*“LADY TEAZ Upon my word, you ought to pity me. Do you know Sir Peter is grown so ill-natured to me of late, and so jealous of Charles too- that’s the best of the story, isn’t it? **IMP.***

JOS SURF I am glad my scandalous friends keep that up. [Aside.

LADY TEAZ I am sure I wish he would let Maria marry him, and then perhaps he would be convinced; don’t you, Mr. Surface?

JOS SURF [Aside.] Indeed I do not. [Aloud.] Oh, certainly I do! for then my dear Lady Teazle would also be convinced how wrong her suspicions were of my having any design on the silly girl.”

- That’s the best of the story ➔ Here, we notice that **Lady Teazle** hints and refers to the rumors between **Charles** and herself. Also, this statement shows the real relationship between the couple, Lady Teazle and Sir Peter Teazle. We see that she always tries to tease (annoy) her husband even if there is a rumor between Charles and herself. In fact, she feels happy when she teases her husband and makes him jealous of Charles.

❖ P. 91

“LADY TEAZ No, to be sure, then I’d forgive their malice; but to attack me, who am really so innocent, and who never say an ill-natured thing of anybody- that is, of any friend; and then Sir Peter, too, to have him so peevish, and so suspicious, when I know the integrity of my own heart- indeed ‘tis monstrous!

***JOS SURF** But, my dear Lady Teazle, 'tis your own fault if you suffer it. When a husband entertains a groundless suspicion of his wife, and withdraws his confidence from her, the original compact is broken, and she owes it to the honour of her sex to endeavour to outwit him."*

➤ It is a conversation between **lady Teazle** and **Joseph surface**. Lady Teazle comes to see Joseph in order to talk about the rumors spreading about her relationship with Charles. It is obvious that she is annoyed because of these scandals and rumors. This passage reveals the good nature and good heart of Lady Teazle. In fact, she does not gossip and about others. She is not among the scandal mongers. Joseph blames her for being so innocent to allow others to talk about her. Then he tries to seduce her, but she refuses his seduction and attempts. This passage asserts the innocence, good nature and simplicity of Lady Teazle.

❖ P. 92

***JOS SURF** Now, my dear Lady Teazle, if you would but once make a trifling faux pas, you can't conceive how cautious you would grow, and how ready to humour and agree with your husband.*

***LADY TEAZ** Do you think so?*

***JOS SURF** Oh, I'm sure on't; and then you would find all scandal would cease at once, for- in short, your character at present is like a person in a plethora, absolutely dying from too much health.*

***LADY TEAZ** So, so then I perceive your prescription is, that I must sin in my own defence, and part with my virtue to preserve my reputation?"*

- All these quotations are about Joseph's attempts to seduce Lady Teazle: Joseph still seduces her trying to convince her to sin in order to prove her innocence.

❖ P. 94

“JOS SURF Oh, my dear Sir Peter, I beg your pardon. [Gaping, throws away the book.] I have been dozing over a stupid book. Well, I am much obliged to you for this call. You haven't been here, I believe, since I fitted up this room. Books, you know, are the only things I am a coxcomb in.”

- Here, Joseph addresses Sir Peter Teazle. Sir Peter pays a visit to Joseph in order to discuss the matter, which is affair between Charles and his wife, with him. When he enters, his wife hides behind the screen. Then Joseph pretends that he is reading a book, and he is an educated man who is very interested in books, not in rumors or courting other ladies. It is obvious that the main idea is the hypocrisy and manipulation of Joseph.

❖ P. 95

“SIR PET Well, now we are alone, there is a subject, my dear friend,

on which I wish to unburden my mind to you- a point of the greatest moment to my peace; in short, my good friend, Lady Teazle's conduct of late has made me very unhappy.

JOS SURF *Indeed! I am very sorry to hear it.*

SIR PET *Yes, 'tis but too plain she has not the least regard for me; but, what's worse, I have pretty good authority to suppose she has formed an attachment to another.*

JOS SURF *Indeed! you astonish me!*

SIR PET *Yes! and, between ourselves, I think I've discovered the person.*

JOS SURF *How! you alarm me exceedingly.*

SIR PET *Ay, my dear friend, I knew you would sympathize with me!*

JOS SURF *Yes, believe me, Sir Peter, such a discovery would hurt me just as much as it would you."*

- It is conversation between **Sir Peter** and **Joseph**. Indeed, Sir Peter is metaphorically blind of the truth; he does not know the true nature of Joseph. He wants to talk with him friendly opening his heart to him. In fact, Sir Peter wants speak with Joseph about the rumors spreading about Lady Teazle and Charles. Then Joseph's hypocrisy clearly appears through his speech. In fact, he wants to say that if the rumors are discovered and real relationship between Charles and Lady Teazle is opened, Joseph will be offended just like his brother, Charles, because other characters will know that this plot is made by both of Lady Sneerwell and Joseph. In

this passage, we see that Joseph is a hypocrite person because he says something and at the same time, he means something else.

❖ P. 97

“JOS SURF Oh, ‘tis not to be credited! There may be a man capable of such baseness, to be sure; but, for my part, till you can give me positive proofs, I cannot but doubt it. However, if it should be proved on him, he is no longer a brother of mine- I disclaim kindred with him: for the man who can break the laws of hospitality, and tempt the wife of his friend, deserves to be branded as the pest of society.”

- Here, **Joseph Surface** talks to **Sir Peter** about Charles. In fact, Joseph pretends before Sir Peter to be a moralistic person. Also, he attacks his brother, Charles, saying if the rumors about the love affair between Charles and Lady Teazle is true, he will not accept him as a brother because he will be the pest of society. The main idea is the hypocrisy of Joseph.

❖ P. 101+102

“CHAS. SURF Holla! brother, what has been the matter? Your fellow would not let me up at first. What! have you had a Jew or a wench with you?

JOS SURF Neither, brother, I assure you.

CHAS. SURF But what has made Sir Peter steal off? I thought he had been with you.

JOS SURF He was, brother; but, hearing you were coming, he did not choose to stay.

CHAS. SURF What! was the old gentleman afraid I wanted to borrow money of him!

JOS SURF No, sir: but I am sorry to find, Charles, you have lately given that worthy man grounds for great uneasiness.

CHAS. SURF Yes, they tell me I do that to a great many worthy men. But how so, pray?

JOS SURF To be plain with you, brother, he thinks you are endeavouring to gain Lady Teazle’s affections from him.

CHAS. SURF Who, I? O Lud! not I, upon my word.- Ha! ha! ha! ha! so the old fellow has found out that he has got a young wife, has he?- or, what is worse, Lady Teazle has found out she has an old husband?

JOS SURF This is no subject to jest on, brother. He who can laugh-

CHAS. SURF True, true, as you were going to say- then, seriously, I never had the least idea of what you charge me with, upon my honour.”

- There is a conversation between **Charles** and his brother, **Joseph**. Here, Charles comes to Joseph and they then start

to talk about the rumors spreading about the relationship between Charles and Lady Teazle. We can notice that Joseph suspects the relation between Charles and Lady Teazle. Then Charles starts laughing at his words. Also, Charles denies that love relationship, and at the same time he reveals lady Teazle's innocence. Since Sir Peter, as well as his wife, is hiding and hearing the whole conversation between the Surface brothers, Sir Peter starts to discover the real natures of both of Joseph and Charles. So, this passage reveals the innocence of Lady Teazle and the good nature of Charles who is unlike Joseph.

❖ P. 105

“SIR PET [Aside to JOSEPH SURFACE.]

I? Not for the world!- [Exit JOSEPH SURFACE.] Ah, Charles, if you associated more with your brother, one might indeed hope for your reformation. He is a man of sentiment. Well, there is nothing in the world so noble as a Man of Sentiment.”

- Here, **Sir peter** advises **Charles** to be good to his brother. He wants him to be a virtuous man like Joseph. So, we see, here, that Sir Peter is not convinced yet of what he hears when he hides in the closet.

❖ P. 106

“CHAS. SURF Lady Teazle, by all that’s wonderful!

SIR PET Lady Teazle, by all that’s damnable!

CHAS. SURF Sir Peter, this is one of the smartest French milliners I ever saw. Egad, you seem all to have been diverting yourselves here at hide and seek, and I don’t see who is out of the secret.”

- Here, when Charles throws down the screen, Lady Teazle appears. We have differences or oppositions between the attitudes of both of Charles and Sir Peter. In fact, when Charles says that is wonderful, it is pleasant to him to prove his innocence, whereas Sir Peter says that is damnable because being Lady Teazle in Joseph’s house gives him more reasons to accuse here. That is why he said that is damnable.

❖ P. 107

“JOS SURF Sir Peter- notwithstanding- I confess- that appearances are against me- if you will afford me your patience- I make no doubt- but I shall explain everything to your satisfaction.

SIR PET If you please, sir.

JOS SURF The fact is, sir, that Lady Teazle, knowing my pretensions to your ward Maria- I say, sir, Lady Teazle, being apprehensive of the jealousy of your temper- and knowing my friendship to the family- she, sir, I say- called here- in order that- I might explain these pretensions- but on your comingbeing apprehensive- as I said- of your jealousy- she withdrewand this, you may depend on it, is the whole truth of the matter.”

- It is a conversation between **Joseph** and **Sir Peter**. Here, after Charles throws down the screen and Lady Teazle appears, Sir Peter gets angry at his wife's presence at Joseph's house because this will give more reasons to accuse her of having an affair with another man. Therefore, Joseph tries to justify Lady Teazle's presence at his house. We see that even when Joseph justifies what happens, he still pretends before Sir Peter that he is a pure, innocent and good-natured man. The main idea is Joseph's hypocrisy.
- *The rest of this scene is so important that you have to read it at home.*

Act V, Scene i

❖ P. 111

“JOS SURF Dear sir, there needs no apology: he that is in distress,

though a stranger, has a right to claim kindred with the wealthy. I am sure I wish I was one of that class, and had it in my power to offer you even a small relief.”

- It is a conversation between **Joseph** and **Sir Oliver**. Here, Sir Oliver, Joseph’s uncle, goes to Joseph disguising as Mr. Stanley who needs a sum of money. We see that Joseph refuses to give him any money and says that he wishes to be a wealthy man to help him. The main idea is disguise.

Act V, Scene ii

It is about gossip; it **is not required**. Also, Act V, scene **i** is not important.

Act V, Scene iii

- ❖ In the last scene, Charles and Joseph both discover the real character of Mr. Stanley and Mr. Premium realizing that they are (the two masters) their uncle in disguise. So, Joseph seems to be very ashamed of himself because he threw him out and did not help him. However, because Charles helped him he passed the exam and became the heir.

❖ P. 131

“SIR OLIV Sir Peter, my friend, and Rowley too- look on that elder nephew of mine. You know what he has already received from my

bounty; and you also know how gladly I would have regarded half my fortune as held in trust for him? judge, then, my disappointment in discovering him to be destitute of truth, charity, and gratitude!

SIR PET *Sir Oliver, I should be more surprised at this declaration, if I had not myself found him to be mean, treacherous, and hypocritical.*

LADY TEAZ *And if the gentleman pleads not guilty to these, pray let him call me to his character.*

SIR PET *Then, I believe, we need add no more: if he knows himself, he will consider it as the most perfect punishment that he is known to the world."*

- There is a conversation between **Sir Oliver, Sir Peter Teazle, Lady Teazle** and **Mr. Rowley**. Here, after Sir Oliver reveals his real character to both of Joseph and Charles, he asserts his disappointment in discovering Joseph to be ungrateful man. He is so disappointed that Joseph let him down. In fact, Sir Oliver has already given Joseph a lot of money, but Joseph denies that. The main idea is revealing the real nature of Joseph before other characters.

❖ P. 133

MAR *Sir, I have little to say, but that I shall rejoice to hear that he is happy; for me, whatever claim I had to his attention. I willingly resign to one who has better title.*

CHAS. SURF *How, Maria!*

SIR PET Heyday! what's the mystery now? While he appeared an incorrigible rake, you would give your hand to no one else; and now that he is likely to reform I'll warrant you won't have him.

MAR His own heart and Lady Sneerwell know the cause.

CHAS. SURF Lady Sneerwell!

JOS SURF Brother, it is with great concern I am obliged to speak on this point, but my regard to justice compels me, and Lady Sneerwell's injuries can no longer be concealed."

- There is a conversation between **Maria, Charles, Sir Peter Teazle** and **Joseph**. Here, Sir Oliver and Rowley want to ask Maria's hand for marriage; they want to marry her to Charles. Then she says that she wants a better man who deserves her. In fact, she refers to Charles. Then Charles gets surprised at her attitude and Sir Peter gets angry at her changing of her mind. In fact, Sir Peter thinks that Maria does not want to marry Charles after he becomes a good man. Maria has reasons for saying that and she says that Lady Sneerwell know the reasons referring to the rumors and the relationship between Lady Sneerwell and Charles. The main idea is the relationship between love and marriage.

- **Note:** All the pages from 134 to 137 show the conclusion of the play.

“SNAKE I beg your ladyship ten thousand pardons: you paid me extremely liberally for the lie in question; but I unfortunately have been offered double to speak the truth.

LADY SNEER The torments of shame and disappointment on you all! [Going].

LADY TEAZ Hold, Lady Sneerwell- before you go, let me thank you for the trouble you and that gentleman have taken, in writing letters from me to Charles, and answering them yourself; and let me also request you to make my respects to the scandalous college, of which you are president, and inform them, that Lady Teazle, licentiate, begs leave to return the diploma they granted her, as she leaves off practice, and kills characters no longer.

LADY SNEER You too, madam!- provoking- insolent! May your husband live these fifty years! [Exit].

SIR PET Oons! what a fury!

LADY TEAZ A malicious creature, indeed!

SIR PET What! not for her last wish?

LADY TEAZ Oh, no!

SIR OLIV Well, sir, and what have you to say now?

JOS SURF Sir, I am so confounded, to find that Lady Sneerwell could be guilty of suborning Mr. Snake in this manner, to impose on us all, that I know not what to say: however, lest her revengeful spirit should prompt her to injure my brother, I had certainly better follow her directly. [Exit].

SIR PET Moral to the last drop!

SIR OLIV Ay, and marry her, Joseph, if you can. Oil and vinegar!- egad, you'll do very well together.

ROW I believe we have no more occasion for Mr. Snake at present?

SNAKE Before I go, I beg pardon once for all, for whatever uneasiness I have been the humble instrument of causing to the parties present.”

- Here, we see that Snake enters and reveals all the facts about the plot and rumors which offended Charles and Lady Teazle once. He says to Lady Sneerwell that there is someone gave him a sum of money, which is double what she used to give him, in order to tell other characters about the truth. In fact, we can see that Lady Sneerwell is broken. She is down because everything is clear right now.
- After the all characters know that Lady Sneerwell is behind these rumors and they discover that there is no relationship between Lady Teazle and Charles, Lady Teazle thanks her for writing letters and answering them as if these letters are sent from Lady Teazle to Charles and the opposite. It is obvious that Lady Teazle is angry with Sneerwell Teazle and Mr. Snake for their bad deeds. She thanks her angrily describing her as a good teacher who has a school to teach people how to scandalize others.
- Then Lady Sneerwell mocks Lady Teazle and her unsuccessful relationship with her husband. In fact, Lady Teazle's speech annoys her very much. Then the couple

decides to reconcile the marriage and to live happily after all what happened to them.

- Also, we see that Rowley and Sir Peter mocks Joseph and Lady Sneerwell. Sir Oliver asks Joseph to marry her because they are very much suitable together.

❖ P. 136+137

“SNAKE Ah, sir, consider- I live by the badness of my character; and, if it were once known that I had been betrayed into an honest action, I should lose every friend I have in the world.

SIR OLIV Well, well- we'll not traduce you by saying anything in your praise, never fear. [Exit SNAKE.]

SIR PET There's a precious rogue!

LADY TEAZ See, Sir Oliver, there needs no persuasion now to reconcile your nephew and Maria.

SIR OLIV Ay, ay, that's as it should be, and, egad, we'll have the wedding to-morrow morning.

CHAS. SURF Thank you, dear uncle.

SIR PET What, you rogue! don't you ask the girl's consent first?

□.

CHAS. SURF Oh, I have done that a long time- a minute ago- and she has looked yes.

MAR For shame, Charles!- I protest, Sir Peter, there has not been a word-

SIR OLIV Well, then, the fewer the better: may your love for each other never know abatement.

SIR PET And may you live as happily together as Lady Teazle and I

intend to do!

CHAS. SURF *Rowley, my old friend, I am sure you congratulate me; and I suspect that I owe you much.*

SIR OLIV *You do, indeed, Charles.*

ROW *If my efforts to serve you had not succeeded you would have been in my debt for the attempt- but deserve to be happy- and you over-repay me.*

SIR PET *Ay, honest Rowley always said you would reform.*

CHAS. SURF *Why as to reforming, Sir Peter, I'll make no promises, and that I take to be a proof that I intend to set about it. But here shall be my monitor- my gentle guide.- Ah! can I leave the virtuous path those eyes illumine? -"*

- Here, we see that Snake is a bad man; he used to act badly. He asserts that he did not use to offer honest actions at all. He also says that if their friends know that he once offers something good, they will leave him.

- تشارلز:

أوه، بالنسبة للإصلاح يا سيد بيتر فلن أعذك بشيء، وذلك سيكون دليلاً بأنني سأبدأ به. لكن يجب أن يكون مرشدي هنا، دليلي اللطيف. آه، هل يمكنني أن أترك صراط الفضيلة الذي تضيئه هاتان العينان؟

- Also, in this page, we see Sir Oliver asks Sir Peter

Teazle to wed Maria and Charles. Sir Peter also seems to accept Charles as a husband to Maria, and there is a change in his attitude towards the arranged marriage; he wants to know the girl's consent first.

- THE END -