

A detailed oil painting portrait of Molière, showing him from the chest up. He has long, curly brown hair and is looking slightly to the right with a neutral expression. The background is dark and textured.

**Global Grey Ebooks**

**TARTUFFE**

**MOLIÈRE**

**TARTUFFE**

**MOLIÈRE**



**Tartuffe; Or, The Hypocrite by Molière.**

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The less a blessing is deserved, the less  
 We dare to hope for it; and words alone  
 Can ill assuage our love's desires. A fate  
 Too full of happiness, seems doubtful still;  
 We must enjoy it ere we can believe it.  
 And I, who know how little I deserve  
 Your goodness, doubt the fortunes of my daring;  
 So I shall trust to nothing, madam, till  
 You have convinced my love by something real.

ELMIRE

Ah! How your love enacts the tyrant's role,  
 And throws my mind into a strange confusion!  
 With what fierce sway it rules a conquered heart,  
 And violently will have its wishes granted!  
 What! Is there no escape from your pursuit?  
 No respite even?—not a breathing space?  
 Nay, is it decent to be so exacting,  
 And so abuse by urgency the weakness  
 You may discover in a woman's heart?

TARTUFFE

But if my worship wins your gracious favour,  
 Then why refuse me some sure proof thereof?

ELMIRE

But how can I consent to what you wish,  
 Without offending Heaven you talk so much of?

TARTUFFE

If Heaven is all that stands now in my way,  
 I'll easily remove that little hindrance;  
 Your heart need not hold back for such a trifle.

ELMIRE

But they affright us so with Heaven's commands!

TARTUFFE

I can dispel these foolish fears, dear madam;  
 I know the art of pacifying scruples  
 Heaven forbids, 'tis true, some satisfactions;  
 But we find means to make things right with Heaven.

('Tis a scoundrel speaking.)<sup>5</sup>

There is a science, madam, that instructs us  
 How to enlarge the limits of our conscience

<sup>5</sup> Molière's note, in the original edition.

















































