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ISABELLA from WOMEN BEWARE WOMEN by Thomas Middleton
ACT 1 SCENE 2

Character's age: Teens/20's

1 Marry a fool!
 Can there be greater misery to a woman
 That means to keep her days true to her husband,
 And know no other man, so virtue wills it!

5 Why, how can I obey and honour him,
 But I must needs commit idolatry?
 A fool is but the image of a man,
 And that but ill made neither. Oh the heartbreakings
 Of miserable maids, where love's enforced! :

10 The best condition is but bad enough:
 When women have their choices, commonly
 They do buy their thraldoms, and bring great portions
 To men to keep 'em in subjection:
 As if a fearful prisoner should bribe

15 The keeper to be good to him, yet lies in still.
 And glad of a good usage, a good look sometimes.
 By'r Lady, no misery surmounts a woman's.
 Men buy their slaves, but women buy their masters.
 Yet honesty and love makes all this happy

20 And, next to angels, the most blest estate.
 That Providence, that has made ev'ry poison

Good for some use, and sets four warring elements

At peace in man, can make a harmony

In things that are most strange to human reason.

25 Oh, but this marriage!

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