

Petty Sport

笑府卷七
細娛部

墨憨子曰：樂極必悲，勝極必負，自然之數也。鬪客之後，流為閒漢；賭場之中，必有偷兒。君子亦何必硜硜然裝道學腔哉？妙在適興而已。集細娛部。

The Inky Simpleton Master says that extreme happiness leads to sorrow, extreme victory leads to defeat—the outcome is to be expected. He who frequents the pleasure quarters will father pimps.¹ He who frequents the casinos will father thieves. By the same logic, gentlemen are well advised not to put on the air of straight-laced moralists, lest their descendants go to the other extreme. Taking a few moral holidays would do us good indeed. So I compile the section “Petty Sport.”

鬪

客與妓宿，中夜，妓調客曰：「頗思量娘子否？」答曰：「他不思量我，我如何思量他？」妓曰：「汝何以知娘子不思量也？」答曰：「似我這一箇好鬪的，你道他思量我也不？」

(256) Whoring (7:1a-b)

A customer visits a prostitute. In the middle of the night, the prostitute teases the customer, “Do you miss your wife?” He answers, “Why would I miss her while she doesn’t miss me?” The prostitute asks him, “How do you know she

1 In Ming and Qing cities, there were parasites of society called *bangxian* 幫閒 or *xianhan* 閒漢, who made a living by pimping, procuring entertainments, or mediating business deals for wealthy patrons, especially those who were new to the locales. Because they ruthlessly seduced people to engage in financially ruinous activities, they incurred sharp criticism. I will translate them as pimps, entertainment brokers, or ne'er-do-wells alternately. For a study of this social group see Wang Hongtai 王鴻泰, “Liudong yu hudong—you Ming Qing jian chengshi shenghuo de texing tance gongong changyu de kaizhan 流動與互動—由明清間城市生活的特性探測公共場域的開展” (Ph.D. Diss., National Taiwan University, 1998), pp. 166–72.

doesn't miss you?" He answers, "Let's think about it: why would she miss a whoring man such as me?"

又

妓調客曰：「你便在此作耍，你娘子寡在家裡。」客曰：「他倒不寡。」妓驚問曰：「何以不寡？」答曰：「你試詳情：他若是寡在那裡，怎肯放我出來？」

有此虐謔，遂令醋婦藉口。

(256A) Also (Whoring) (7:1b)

A prostitute teases her patron, "You are having fun here, leaving your wife 'widowed' at home." The patron protests, "She's by no means 'widowed.'" The prostitute asks, "Why not?" The patron says, "Think about it. If she were really 'widowed' over there, how could she have released me to come here?"

(Comment) Such malicious jokes serve as excellent excuses for jealous wives to forbid their husbands to whore.

又

鬪客自妓館歸，妻問曰：「這些淫婦，經過了千萬箇人，此物一定寬了，有甚好處你歡喜他？」答曰：「不知怎麼緣故，但是名妓，越接得客多，此物越好。」妻曰：「原來如此，極易事。何不早說？」

(256B) Also (Whoring) (7:1b-2a)

When the husband comes home from the whorehouse, his wife asks, "Those lewd women, having been known by tens of thousands of men, must have very wide things (vagina). How can there be anything good about it, that you like them so much?" The husband answers, "I don't know why, but the things of famous prostitutes get better with each passing patron." His wife says, "Oh, I see. That's easy! Why didn't you tell me earlier?"

又

一鬪客鬪盡，遂留妓家服役，乃懸瓦一片，磚一塊，遮其前後。聞有徽客謀為妓造房者，因謂曰：「朝奉只出木頭罷！磚瓦都在我身上！」