

12. Henry Fielding

Henry Fielding *Shamela* (1741)

A shy girl 41

*Shamela is sleeping when Mr Booby knocks at the door...
In this passage she is called Pamela, since she constructs a different identity.*

Thursday Night, Twelve o'Clock.

- Mrs. Jervis and I are just in Bed, and the Door unlocked; if my Master should come – Odsbobs! I hear him just coming in at the Door. You see I write in the present Tense, as Parson Williams says. Well, he is in Bed between us, we both shamming a Sleep, he steals his Hand into my Bosom, which
- 5 I, as if in my Sleep, press close to me with mine, and then pretend to awake. – I no sooner see him, but I scream out to Mrs. Jervis, she feigns likewise but just to come to herself; we both begin, she to becall, and I to bescratch very liberally. After having made a pretty free Use of my Fingers, without any great Regard to the Parts I attack'd, I counterfeit a Swoon. Mrs. Jervis then cries out, O, Sir, what have you done, you have murdered poor Pamela: she is gone, she is gone.
- 10 – *O what a Difficulty it is to keep one's Countenance, when a violent Laugh desires to burst forth.*
The poor Booby frightned out of his Wits, jumped out of Bed, and, in his Shirt, sat down by my Bed-Side, pale and trembling, for the Moon shone, and I kept my Eyes wide open, and pretended to fix them in my Head. Mrs. Jervis apply'd Lavender Water, and Hartshorn, and this, for a full half Hour; when thinking I had carried it on long enough, and being likewise unable to continue the
- 15 Sport any longer, I began by Degrees to come to my self.
The Squire who had sat all this while speechless, and was almost really in that Condition, which I feigned, the Moment he saw me give Symptoms of recovering my Senses, fell down on his Knees; and O Pamela, cried he, can you forgive me, my injured Maid? by Heaven, I know not whether you are a Man or a Woman, unless by your swelling Breasts. Will you promise to forgive me: I forgive
- 20 you! D–n you (says I) and d–n you says he, if you come to that. I wish I had never seen your bold Face, saucy Sow, and so went out of the Room.
O what a silly Fellow is a bashful young Lover!