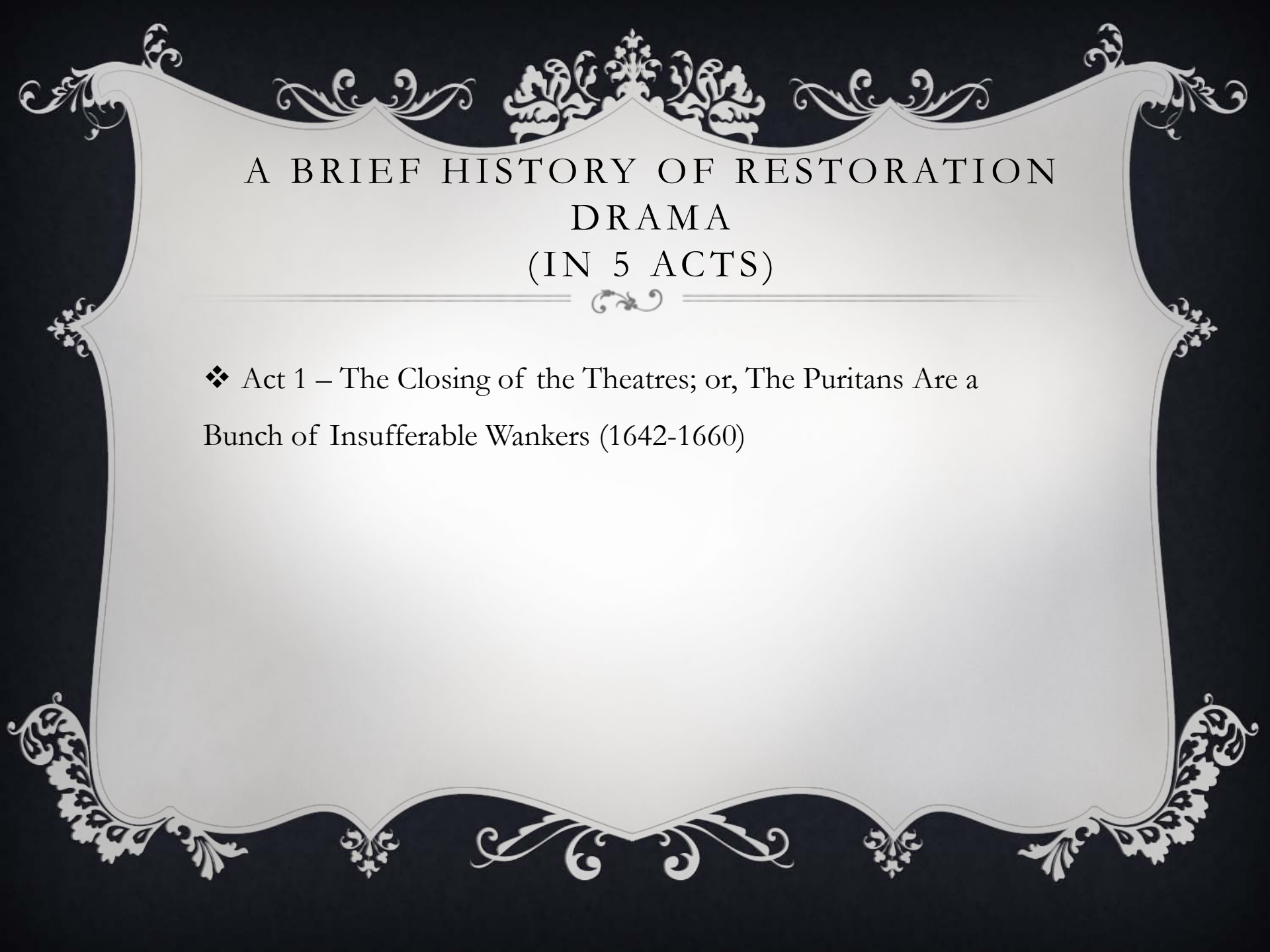




JOHN CROWNE'S
THE MARRIED BEAU

Marriage Comedies of the 1690s



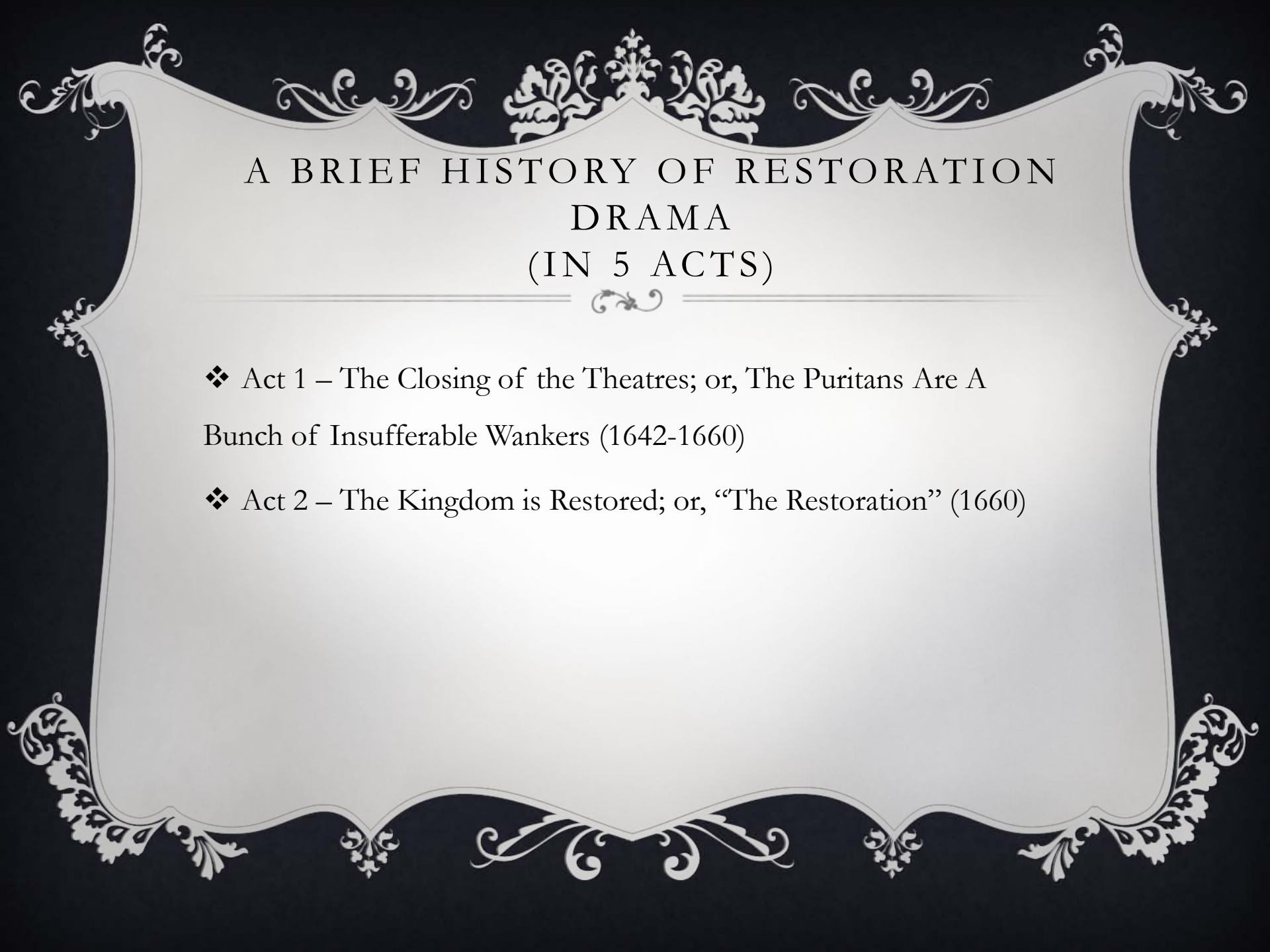
A BRIEF HISTORY OF RESTORATION
DRAMA
(IN 5 ACTS)

❖ Act 1 – The Closing of the Theatres; or, The Puritans Are a
Bunch of Insufferable Wankers (1642-1660)



THE CLOSING OF THE THEATRES

- ❖ The theatrical companies (there may have been as many as six) fled to Paris (along with the future kings Charles II and James II).
- ❖ Playwrights who remained created “closet drama” – the real precursor to the novel.
- ❖ The universities, who were outside the practical control of Parliament, continued to stage plays – some of them new (and pretty good).




A BRIEF HISTORY OF RESTORATION
DRAMA
(IN 5 ACTS)

- ❖ Act 1 – The Closing of the Theatres; or, The Puritans Are A Bunch of Insufferable Wankers (1642-1660)
- ❖ Act 2 – The Kingdom is Restored; or, “The Restoration” (1660)



THE RESTORATION

- ❖ The monarchy is restored and Charles becomes king in April 1660.
- ❖ The new monarch grants patents to William Davenant (the Duke's Company) and Thomas Killigrew (the King's Company).
- ❖ Charles is an enthusiastic supporter of the drama, as are most of the nobility – both Whigs and Tories, and the two companies flourish.
- ❖ The Unthinkable – females now play female roles



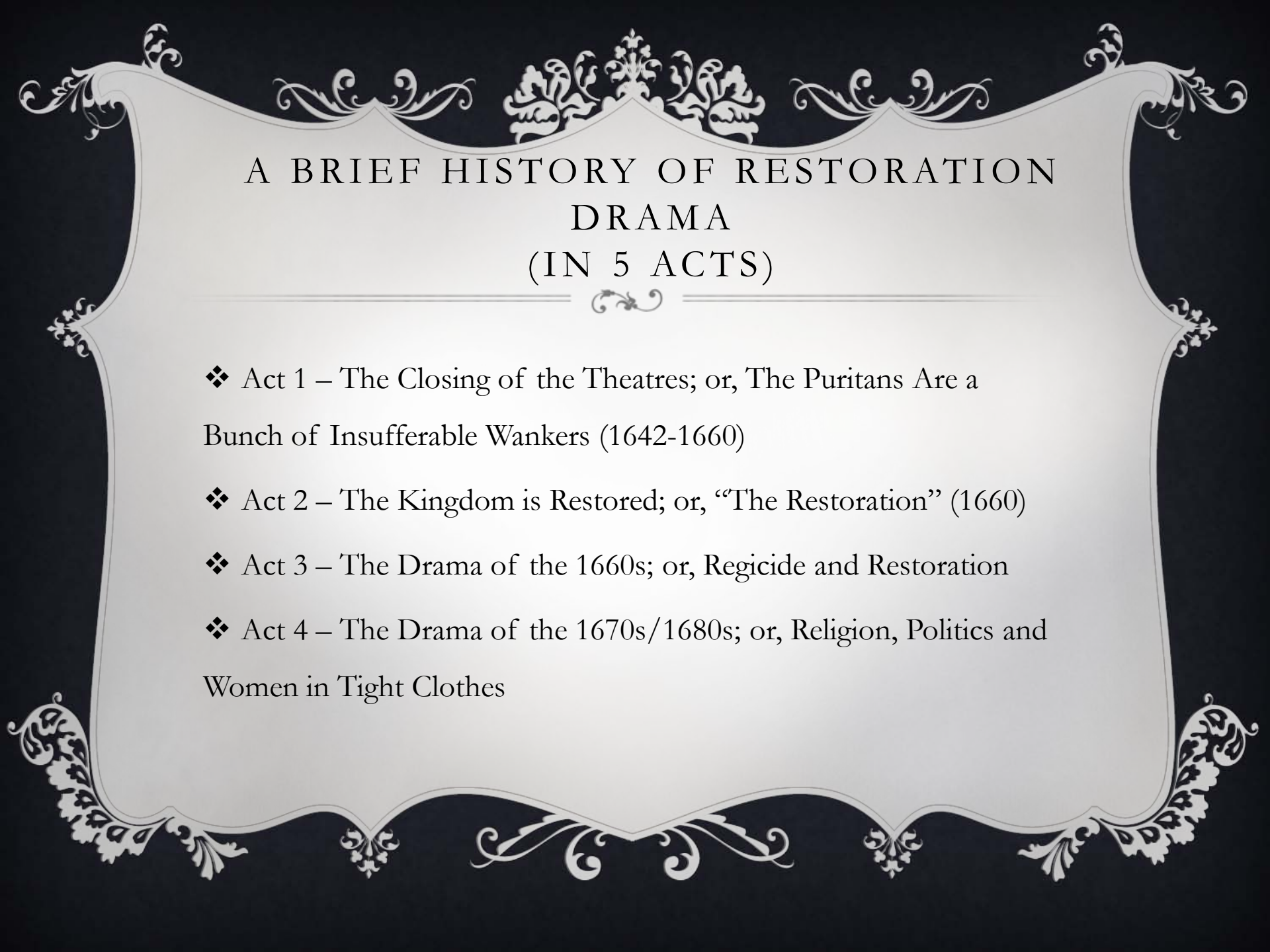
A BRIEF HISTORY OF RESTORATION
DRAMA
(IN 5 ACTS)

- ❖ Act 1 – The Closing of the Theatres; or, The Puritans Are a Bunch of Insufferable Wankers (1642-1660)
- ❖ Act 2 – The Kingdom is Restored; or, “The Restoration” (1660)
- ❖ Act 3 – The Drama of the 1660s; or, Regicide and Restoration

THE DRAMA OF THE 1660S

Nancy Klein Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration: English Tragicomedy, 1660-1671* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1992).

- ❖ Dominated by one genre – tragicomedy
- ❖ Nearly 65% of plays staged from 1661-1669 contained some reflection of a single plot device – a king (or duke or earl) is killed by rebels in act 1 and in act 5 his son has defeated them and re-established the kingdom/dukedom/earldom



A BRIEF HISTORY OF RESTORATION
DRAMA
(IN 5 ACTS)

- ❖ Act 1 – The Closing of the Theatres; or, The Puritans Are a Bunch of Insufferable Wankers (1642-1660)
- ❖ Act 2 – The Kingdom is Restored; or, “The Restoration” (1660)
- ❖ Act 3 – The Drama of the 1660s; or, Regicide and Restoration
- ❖ Act 4 – The Drama of the 1670s/1680s; or, Religion, Politics and Women in Tight Clothes

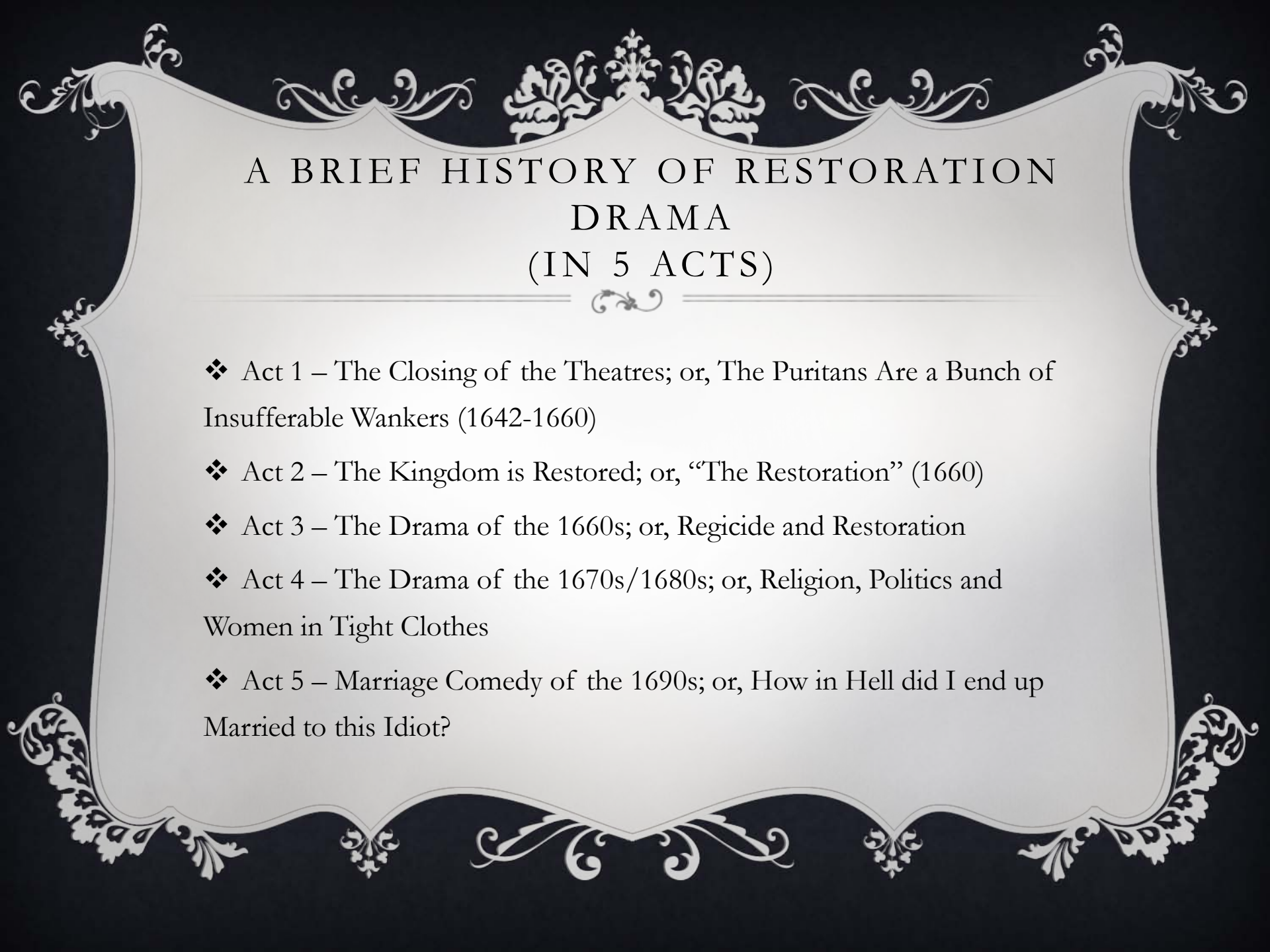
THE DRAMA OF THE 1670S

❖ Sex comedy

- Wychereley - *The Country Wife* (1675)
- Behn - *The Rover* (1677)

❖ Political drama

- Settle – *Pope Joan* (1680)
- Behn - *The Roundheads* (1681)
- Otway – *Venice Preserv'd* (1682)



A BRIEF HISTORY OF RESTORATION
DRAMA
(IN 5 ACTS)

- ❖ Act 1 – The Closing of the Theatres; or, The Puritans Are a Bunch of Insufferable Wankers (1642-1660)
- ❖ Act 2 – The Kingdom is Restored; or, “The Restoration” (1660)
- ❖ Act 3 – The Drama of the 1660s; or, Regicide and Restoration
- ❖ Act 4 – The Drama of the 1670s/1680s; or, Religion, Politics and Women in Tight Clothes
- ❖ Act 5 – Marriage Comedy of the 1690s; or, How in Hell did I end up Married to this Idiot?



MARRIAGE COMEDIES OF THE 1690S

- ❖ Southerne – *The Wives' Excuse; or, Cuckolds Make Themselves* (1692)
- ❖ Cibber – *Love's Last Shift* (1696)
- ❖ Vanbrugh – *The Relapse; or, Virtue in Danger* (1696)
- ❖ Crowne – *The Married Beau; or, The Curious Impertinent* (1694)

A decorative scrollwork border in white on a black background, framing the text. The border features intricate floral and scroll patterns at the top, bottom, and sides.

THE MARRIED BEAU; OR, THE CURIOUS IMPERTINENT

Plot Summary: Mr. Lovely wants to test his wife's virtue and enlists his friend, Polidore, to attempt to seduce his wife. He reluctantly agrees and makes a half-hearted attempt and is rebuffed. However, when Lovely derides him for his failure, he decides to make the attempt in earnest. When Mrs. Lovely learns of the set up, she agrees. (Plus, Polidore is hot.) She repents of her infidelity and vows to keep the knowledge of it from Mr. Lovely.

Subplot: – A couple of Restoration types – Thorneback (the old man looking for a young lover and Shittlecock (a young fop) – wander about to be made fun of.



CONCLUSIONS:

- ❖ Complex and sympathetic representation of the plight of women in bad marriages
- ❖ Mixes elements of comedy with domestic tragedy
- ❖ Connects *Measure for Measure* with *A Doll's House*