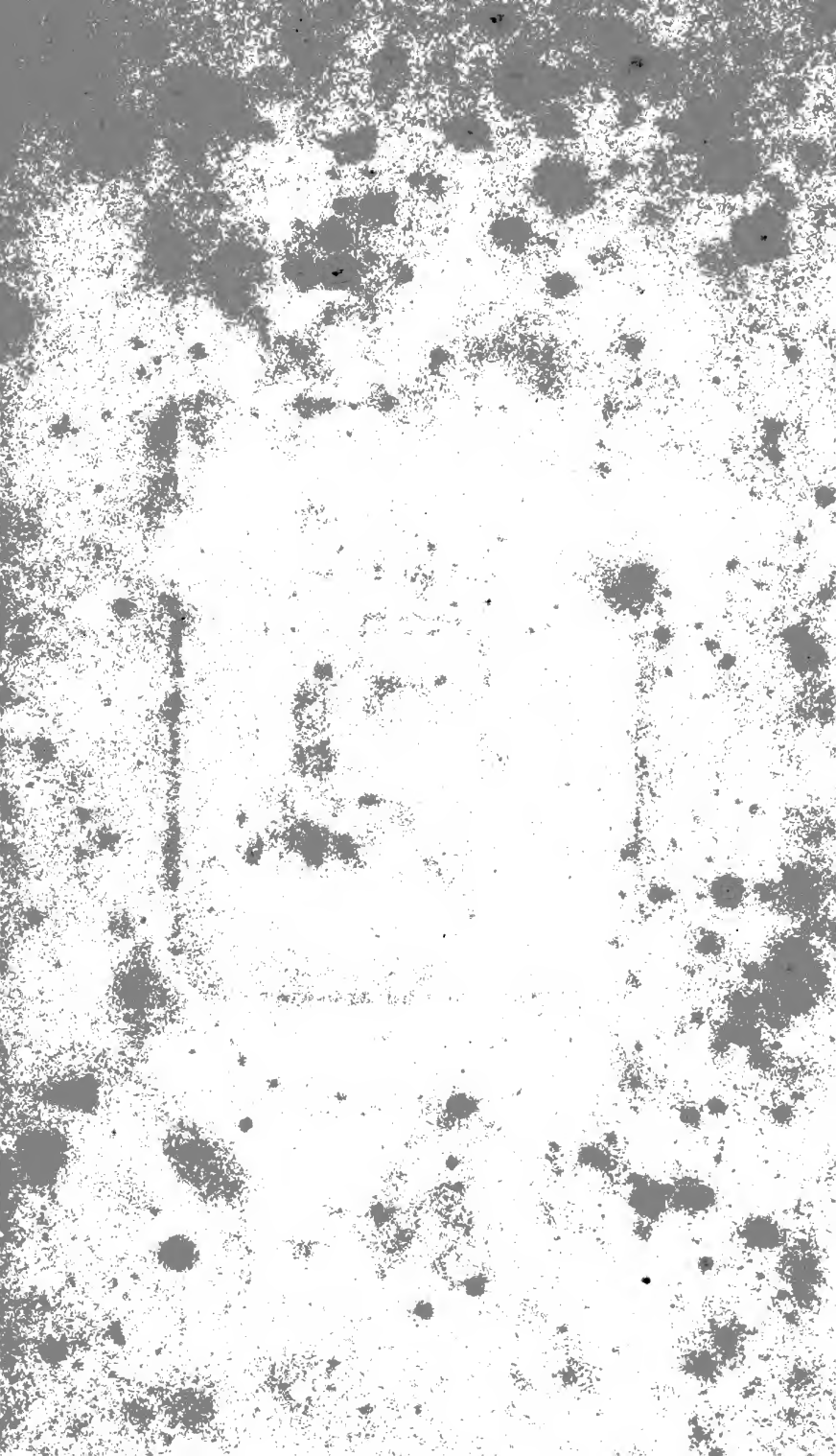


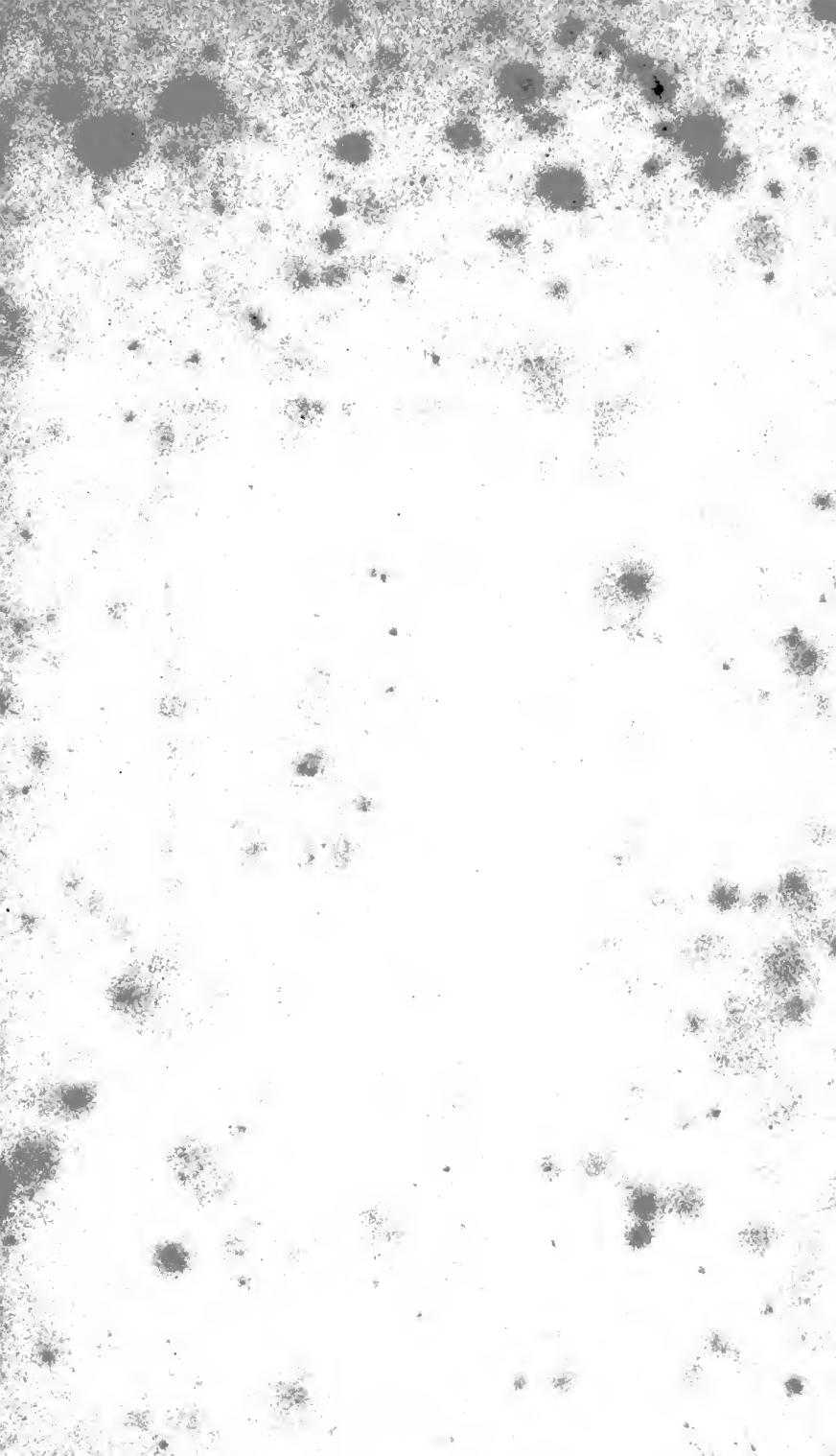
HENRY D'ESTERRE HEMSWORTH.



The Bancroft Library

University of California • Berkeley

Gift of
Prof. Steve Tollefson



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2008 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

THE
FAMILY SHAKSPEARE,

In Eight Volumes ;

IN WHICH
NOTHING IS ADDED TO THE ORIGINAL TEXT ;
BUT THOSE WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS ARE OMITTED
WHICH CANNOT WITH PROPRIETY BE READ
ALoud IN A FAMILY.

exemit labem, purumque reliquit
Æthereum sensum, atque aurai simplicis ignem. VIRGIL.

BY
THOMAS BOWDLER, Esq. F.R.S. & S.A.

THE FIFTH EDITION.

VOL. VIII.

CONTAINING
LEAR ;
ROMEO AND JULIET ;
HAMLET ;
OTHELLO.

LONDON :

PRINTED FOR
LONGMAN, REES, ORME, BROWN, AND GREEN,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1827.

Sportive Fancy round him flew,
Nature led him by the hand,
Instructed him in all she knew,
And gave him absolute command.

KING LEAR.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

LEAR, *king of Britain.*

KING OF FRANCE.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

DUKE OF CORNWALL.

DUKE OF ALBANY.

EARL OF KENT.

EARL OF GLOSTER.

EDGAR, *son to Gloster.*

EDMUND, *bastard son to Gloster.*

CURAN, *a courtier.*

Old Man, tenant to Gloster.

Physician.

Fool.

OSWALD, *steward to Goneril.*

An Officer, employed by Edmund.

Gentleman, attendant on Cordelia.

A Herald.

Servants to Cornwall.

GONERIL,
REGAN,
CORDELIA, } *daughters to Lear.*

*Knights attending on the king, Officers, Messengers,
Soldiers, and Attendants.*

SCENE, *Britain.*

KING LEAR.

ACT I.

SCENE I.— *A Room of State in King Lear's Palace.*

Enter KENT, GLOSTER, and EDMUND.

Kent.

I THOUGHT, the king had more affected the duke of Albany, than Cornwall.

Glo. It did always seem so to us: but now, in the division of the kingdom, it appears not which of the dukes he values most; for equalities are so weigh'd that curiosity¹ in neither can make choice of either's moiety.²

Kent. Is this your son, my lord?

Glo. His breeding, sir, hath been at my charge: I have so often blush'd to acknowledge him, that now I am brazed to it. Do you smell a fault?

Kent. I cannot wish the fault undone, the issue of it being so proper.

Glo. But I have, sir, a son by order of law, some year elder than this, who yet is no dearer in my account: — Do you know this noble gentleman, Edmund?

¹ Most scrupulous nicety.

² Part or division.

Edm. No, my lord.

Glo. My lord of Kent : remember him hereafter as my honourable friend.

Edm. My services to your lordship.

Kent. I must love you, and sue to know you better.

Edm. Sir, I shall study deserving.

Glo. He hath been out nine years, and away he shall again : — The king is coming.

[*Trumpets sound within.*]

Enter LEAR, CORNWALL, ALBANY, GONERIL,
REGAN, CORDELIA, and *Attendants.*

Lear. Attend the lords of France and Burgundy,
Gloster.

Glo. I shall, my liege.

[*Exeunt* GLOSTER and EDMUND.]

Lear. Meantime we shall express our darker purpose.

Give me the map there. — Know, that we have divided,

In three, our kingdom : and 'tis our fast intent
To shake all cares and business from our age :
Conferring them on younger strengths, while we
Unburden'd crawl toward death. — Our son of
Cornwall,

And you, our no less loving son of Albany,
We have this hour a constant will to publish
Our daughters' several dowers, that future strife
May be prevented now. The princes, France and
Burgundy,

Great rivals in our youngest daughter's love,
Long in our court have made their amorous sojourn,
And here are to be answer'd. — Tell me, my daughters,
ters,

(Since now we will divest us, both of rule,

Interest of territory, cares of state,) Which of you, shall we say, doth love us most? That we our largest bounty may extend Where merit doth most challenge it. — Goneril, Our eldest-born, speak first.

Gon.

Sir, I

Do love you more than words can wield the matter. Dearer than eye-sight, space and liberty; Beyond what can be valued, rich or rare; No less than life, with grace, health, beauty, honour :

As much as child e'er lov'd, or father found. A love that makes breath poor, and speech unable; Beyond all manner of so much I love you.

Cor. What shall Cordelia do? love and be silent.

[*Aside.*

Lear. Of all these bounds, even from this line to this,

With shadowy forests and with champains³ rich'd, With plenteous rivers and wide-skirted meads, We make thee lady: To thine and Albany's issue Be this perpetual. — What says our second daughter,

Our dearest Regan, wife to Cornwall? Speak.

Reg. I am made of that self metal as my sister, And prize me at her worth. In my true heart I find, she names my very deed of love; Only she comes too short, — that I profess Myself an enemy to all other joys, Which the most precious square⁴ of sense possesses; And find, I am alone felicitate⁵ In your dear highness' love.

Cor. Then poor Cordelia! [*Aside.*

And yet not so; since, I am sure, my love's More richer than my tongue.

Lear. To thee, and thine hereditary ever,

³ Open plains.

⁴ Comprehension.

⁵ Made happy.

Remain this ample third of our fair kingdom :
 No less in space, validity⁶, and pleasure,
 Than that confirm'd on Goneril. — Now, our joy,
 Although the last, not least ; to whose young love
 The vines of France, and milk of Burgundy,
 Strive to be interest'd : what can you say, to draw
 A third more opulent than your sisters ? Speak.

Cor. Nothing, my lord.

Lear. Nothing ?

Cor. Nothing.

Lear. Nothing can come of nothing : speak again.

Cor. Unhappy that I am, I cannot heave
 My heart into my mouth : I love your majesty
 According to my bond ; nor more nor less.

Lear. How, how, Cordelia ? mend your speech
 a little.

Lest it may mar your fortunes.

Cor.

Good, my lord,

You have begot me, bred me, lov'd me : I
 Return those duties back as are right fit,
 Obey you, love you, and most honour you.
 Why have my sisters husbands, if they say,
 They love you, all ? Haply, when I shall wed,
 That lord, whose hand must take my plight, shall
 carry

Half my love with him, half my care, and duty :
 Sure, I shall never marry like my sisters,
 To love my father all.

Lear. But goes this with thy heart ?

Cor.

Ay, good my lord.

Lear. So young, and so untender ?

Cor. So young, my lord, and true.

Lear. Let it be so, — Thy truth then be thy
 dower :

For, by the sacred radiance of the sun ;
 The mysteries of Hecate, and the night ;

⁶ Value.

By all the operations of the orbs,
 From whom we do exist, and cease to be ;
 Here I disclaim all my paternal care,
 Propinquity⁷, and property of blood,
 And as a stranger to my heart and me
 Hold thee, from this⁸ for ever. The barbarous
 Scythian,
 Or he that makes his generation⁹ messes
 To gorge his appetite, shall to my bosom
 Be as well neighbour'd, pitied, and reliev'd,
 As thou my sometime daughter.

Kent. Good my liege, —

Lear. Peace, Kent!

Come not between the dragon and his wrath :
 I lov'd her most, and thought to set my rest
 On her kind nursery. — Hence, and avoid my
 sight! — [To CORDELIA.
 So be my grave my peace, as here I give
 Her father's heart from her! — Call France; — Who
 stirs?

Call Burgundy. — Cornwall, and Albany,
 With my two daughters' dowers digest this third :
 Let pride, which she calls plainness, marry her.
 I do invest you jointly with my power,
 Pre-eminence, and all the large effects
 That troop with majesty. — Ourselves, by monthly
 course,

With reservation of an hundred knights,
 By you to be sustain'd, shall our abode
 Make with you by due turns. Only we still retain
 The name, and all the additions¹ to a king ;
 The sway,
 Revenue, execution of the rest,
 Beloved sons, be yours : which to confirm,
 This coronet part between you. [*Giving the Crown.*

⁷ Kindred.

⁹ His children.

⁸ From this time.

¹ Titles.

Kent. Royal Lear,
Whom I have ever honour'd as my king,
Lov'd as my father, as my master follow'd,
As my great patron thought on in my prayers, —

Lear. The bow is bent and drawn, make from
the shaft.

Kent. Let it fall rather, though the fork invade
The region of my heart : be Kent unmannerly,
When Lear is mad. What wouldst thou do, old
man ?

Think'st thou, that duty shall have dread to speak,
When power to flattery bows ? To plainness hon-
our's bound,

When majesty stoops to folly. Reverse thy doom ;
And, in thy best consideration, check

This hideous rashness : answer my life my judg-
ment,

Thy youngest daughter does not love thee least ;
Nor are those empty-hearted, whose low sound
Reverbs² no hollowness.

Lear. Kent, on thy life, no more.

Kent. My life I never held but as a pawn
To wage against thine enemies ; nor fear to lose it,
Thy safety being the motive.

Lear. Out of my sight !

Kent. See better, Lear ; and let me still remain
The true blank³ of thine eye.

Lear. Now, by Apollo, —

Kent. Now, by Apollo, king,
Thou swear'st thy gods in vain.

Lear. O, vassal, miscreant !

[*Laying his Hand on his Sword.*]

Alb. Corn. Dear sir, forbear.

Kent. Do ;
Kill thy physician, and the fee bestow
Upon the foul disease. Revoke thy gift ;

² Reverberates.

³ The mark to shoot at.

Or whilst I can vent clamour from my throat,
I'll tell thee, thou dost evil.

Lear. Hear me, recreant!

On thine allegiance hear me! —

Since thou hast sought to make us break our vow,
(Which we durst never yet,) and, with strain'd pride,
To come betwixt our sentence and our power;
(Which nor our nature nor our place can bear,)

Our potency make good, take thy reward.

Five days we do allot thee, for provision

To shield thee from diseases of the world:

And, on the sixth, to turn thy hated back

Upon our kingdom: if, on the tenth day following,

Thy banish'd trunk be found in our dominions,

The moment is thy death: Away! By Jupiter,

This shall not be revok'd.

Kent. Fare thee well, king: since thus thou wilt
appear,

Freedom lives hence, and banishment is here. —

The gods to their dear shelter take thee, maid,

[*To CORDELIA.*

That justly think'st, and hast most rightly said! —

And your large speeches may your deeds approve,

[*To REGAN and GONERIL.*

That good effects may spring from words of love. —

Thus Kent, O princes, bids you all adieu;

He'll shape his old course in a country new. [*Exit.*

*Re-enter GLOSTER; with FRANCE, BURGUNDY,
and Attendants.*

Glo. Here's France and Burgundy, my noble
lord.

Lear. My lord of Burgundy,

We first address towards you, who with this king
Hath rivall'd for our daughter; What, in the least,
Will you require in present dower with her,
Or cease your quest of love?

Bur. Most royal majesty,
I crave no more than hath your highness offer'd,
Nor will you tender less.

Lear. Right noble Burgundy,
When she was dear to us, we did hold her so ;
But now her price is fall'n : Sir, there she stands ;
If aught within that little, seeming substance,
Or all of it, with our displeasure piec'd,
And nothing more, may fitly like your grace,
She's there, and she is yours.

Bur. I know no answer.

Lear. Sir,
Will you, with those infirmities she owes, ⁴
Unfriended, new adopted to our hate,
Dower'd with our curse, and stranger'd with our
oath,
Take her, or leave her ?

Bur. Pardon me, royal sir ;
Election makes not up on such conditions.

Lear. Then leave her, sir ; for, by the power
that made me,
I tell you all her wealth. — For you, great king,
[To FRANCE.

I would not from your love make such a stray,
To match you where I hate ; therefore beseech you
To avert your liking a more worthier way,
Than on a wretch whom nature is asham'd
Almost to acknowledge hers.

France. This is most strange !
That she, that even but now was your best object,
The argument of your praise, balm of your age,
Most best, most dearest, should in this trice of time
Commit a thing so monstrous, to dismantle
So many folds of favour ! Sure, her offence
Must be of such unnatural degree,
That monsters it, or your fore-vouch'd affection

⁴ Owns, is possessed of.

Fall into taint : which to believe of her,
Must be a faith, that reason without miracle
Could never plant in me.

Cor. I yet beseech your majesty,
(If for ⁵ I want that glib and oily art,
To speak and purpose not; since what I well in-
tend,

I'll do't before I speak,) that you make known
It is no vicious blot, murder, or foulness,
No unchaste action or dishonour'd step,
That hath depriv'd me of your grace and favour :
But even for want of that, for which I am richer ;
A still-soliciting eye, and such a tongue
That I am glad I have not, though not to have it,
Hath lost me in your liking.

Lear. Better thou
Hadst not been born, than not to have pleas'd me
better.

France. Is it but this? a tardiness in nature,
Which often leaves the history unspoke,
That it intends to do? — My lord of Burgundy,
What say you to the lady? Love is not love,
When it is mingled with respects, that stand
Aloof from the entire point. Will you have her?
She is herself a dowry.

Bur. Royal Lear,
Give but that portion which yourself propos'd,
And here I take Cordelia by the hand,
Duchess of Burgundy.

Lear. Nothing : I have sworn ; I am firm.

Bur. I am sorry then, you have so lost a father,
That you must lose a husband.

Cor. Peace be with Burgundy !
Since that respects of fortune are his love,
I shall not be his wife.

⁵ Because.

France. Fairest Cordelia, thou art most rich,
 being poor ;
 Most choice, forsaken : and most lov'd, despis'd !
 Thee and thy virtues here I seize upon :
 Be it lawful, I take up what's cast away.
 Gods, gods ! 'tis strange, that from their cold'st
 neglect
 My love should kindle to inflam'd respect. —
 Thy dowerless daughter, king, thrown to my chance,
 Is queen of us, of ours, and our fair France :
 Not all the dukes of wat'rish Burgundy
 Shall buy this unpriz'd precious maid of me. —
 Bid them farewell, Cordelia, though unkind :
 Thou lovest here, a better where to find.

Lear. Thou hast her, France : let her be thine ;
 for we

Have no such daughter, nor shall ever see
 That face of her's again : — Therefore be gone,
 Without our grace, our love, our benison.⁶ —
 Come, noble Burgundy.

[*Flourish.* *Exeunt* LEAR, BURGUNDY, CORN-
 WALL, ALBANY, GLOSTER, and Attendants.

France. Bid farewell to your sisters.

Cor. The jewels of our father, with wash'd eyes
 Cordelia leaves you : I know you what you are ;
 And, like a sister, am most loath to call
 Your faults, as they are nam'd. Use well our
 father :

To your professed bosoms I commit him :
 But yet, alas ! stood I within his grace,
 I would prefer him to a better place.
 So farewell to you both.

Gon. Prescribe not us our duties.

Reg. Let your study
 Be, to content your lord ; who hath receiv'd you

⁶ Blessing.

At fortune's alms. You have obedience scanted,
And well are worth the want that you have wanted.

Cor. Time shall unfold what plaited cunning
hides;

Who cover faults, at last shame them derides.
Well may you prosper!

France.

Come, my fair Cordelia.

[*Exeunt* FRANCE and CORDELIA.]

Gon. Sister, it is not a little I have to say, of
what most nearly appertains to us both. I think,
our father will hence to-night.

Reg. That's most certain, and with you; next
month with us.

Gon. You see how full of changes his age is: the
observation we have made of it hath not been little:
he always loved our sister most; and with what
poor judgment he hath now cast her off, appears
too grossly.

Reg. 'Tis the infirmity of his age: yet he hath
ever but slenderly known himself.

Gon. The best and soundest of his time hath
been but rash; then must we look to receive from
his age, not alone the imperfections of long-en-
grafted condition⁷, but therewithal, the unruly
waywardness that infirm and cholerick years bring
with them.

Reg. Such unconstant starts are we like to have
from him, as this of Kent's banishment.

Gon. There is further compliment of leave-taking
between France and him. Pray you, let us hit
together: If our father carry authority with such
dispositions as he bears, this last surrender of his
will but offend us.

Reg. We shall further think of it.

Gon. We must do something, and i'the heat.

[*Exeunt.*]

⁷ Qualities of mind.

SCENE II.

A Hall in the Earl of Gloster's Castle.

Enter EDMUND, with a Letter.

Edm. Thou, nature, art my goddess ; to thy law
My services are bound : Wherefore should I
Stand in the plague of custom ; and permit
The curiosity⁸ of nations to deprive me,
For that I am some twelve or fourteen moon-shines
Lag of a brother ? Why bastard ? wherefore base ?
When my dimensions are as well compact,
My mind as generous, and my shape as true,
As honest madam's issue ? Why brand they us
With base ? with baseness ? bastardy ? Well then,
Legitimate Edgar, I must have your land :
Our father's love is to the bastard Edmund,
As to the legitimate : Fine word, — legitimate !
Well, my legitimate, if this letter speed,
And my invention thrive, Edmund the base
Shall top the legitimate. I grow ; I prosper : —
Now, gods, stand up for bastards !

Enter GLOSTER.

Glo. Kent banish'd thus ! And France in choler
parted !
And the king gone to-night ! subscrib'd⁹ his power !
Confin'd to exhibition !¹ All this done
Upon the gad !² — Edmund ! How now ? what
news ?

Edm. So please your lordship, none.

[*Putting up the Letter.*

⁸ The nicety of civil institution.

¹ Allowance.

⁹ Yielded, surrendered.

² Suddenly.

Glo. Why so earnestly seek you to put up that letter?

Edm. I know no news, my lord.

Glo. What paper were you reading?

Edm. Nothing, my lord.

Glo. No? What needed then that terrible despatch of it into your pocket? the quality of nothing hath not such need to hide itself. Let's see: Come, if it be nothing I shall not need spectacles.

Edm. I beseech you, sir, pardon me: it is a letter from my brother, that I have not all o'er read; for so much as I have perused, I find it not fit for your over-looking.

Glo. Give me the letter, sir.

Edm. I shall offend, either to detain or give it. The contents, as in part I understand them, are to blame.

Glo. Let's see, let's see.

Edm. I hope, for my brother's justification, he wrote this but as an essay³ or taste of my virtue.

Glo. [*Reads.*] *This policy, and reverence of age, makes the world bitter to the best of our times; keeps our fortunes from us, till our oldness cannot relish them. I begin to find an idle and fond⁴ bondage in the oppression of aged tyranny; who sways, not as it hath power, but as it is suffered. Come to me, that of this I may speak more. If our father would sleep till I waked him, you should enjoy half his revenue for ever, and live the beloved of your brother, Edgar. — Humph — Conspiracy! — Sleep till I waked him — you should enjoy half his revenue. — My son Edgar! Had he a hand to write this? a heart and brain to breed it in? — When came this to you? Who brought it?*

Edm. It was not brought me; my lord, there's the

³ Trial.

⁴ Weak and foolish.

cunning of it ; I found it thrown in at the casement of my closet.

Glo. You know the character to be your brother's ?

Edm. If the matter were good, my lord, I durst swear it were his ; but in respect of that, I would fain think it were not.

Glo. It is his.

Edm. It is his hand, my lord ; but, I hope, his heart is not in the contents.

Glo. Hath he never heretofore sounded you in this business ?

Edm. Never, my lord : But I have often heard him maintain it to be fit, that, sons at perfect age, and fathers declining, the father should be as ward to the son, and the son manage his revenue.

Glo. O villain, villain ! — His very opinion in the letter ! — Abhorred villain ! Unnatural, detested, brutish villain ! worse that brutish ! — Go, sirrah, seek him ; I'll apprehend him : — Abominable villain ! — Where is he ?

Edm. I do not well know, my lord. If it shall please you to suspend your indignation against my brother, till you can derive from him better testimony of his intent, you shall run a certain course ; where⁵, if you violently proceed against him, mistaking his purpose, it would make a great gap in your own honour, and shake in pieces the heart of his obedience. I dare pawn down my life for him, that he hath writ this to feel my affection to your honour, and to no other pretence of danger.

Glo. Think you so ?

Edm. If your honour judge it meet, I will place you where you shall hear us confer of this, and by an auricular assurance have your satisfaction ; and

⁵ Whereas.

that without any further delay than this very evening.

Glo. He cannot be such a monster.

Edm. Nor is not, sure.

Glo. To his father, that so tenderly and entirely loves him. — Heaven and earth! — Edmund, seek him out; wind me into him, I pray you: frame the business after your own wisdom: I would unstate myself, to be in a due resolution.

Edm. I will seek him, sir, presently; convey⁶ the business as I shall find means, and acquaint you withal.

Glo. These late eclipses in the sun and moon portend no good to us: Though the wisdom of nature can reason it thus and thus, yet nature finds itself scourged by the sequent⁷ effects: love cools, friendship falls off, brothers divide: in cities, mutinies; in countries, discord; in palaces, treason; and the bond cracked between son and father. This villain of mine comes under the prediction; there's son against father: the king falls from bias of nature; there's father against child. We have seen the best of our time: Machinations, hollowness, treachery, and all ruinous disorders, follow us disquietly to our graves! — Find out this villain, Edmund, it shall lose thee nothing; do it carefully: — And the noble and true-hearted Kent banished! his offence, honesty! Strange! strange! [*Exit.*]

Edm. This is the excellent foppery of the world! that when we are sick in fortune, (often the surfeit of our own behaviour,) we make guilty of our disasters, the sun, the moon, and the stars: as if we were villains by necessity: fools, by heavenly compulsion; knaves, thieves, and treachers⁸; by spherical predominance; drunkards, liars, and adulterers, by an enforced obedience of planetary in-

⁶ Manage.

⁷ Following.

⁸ Traitors.

fluence; and all that we are evil in, by a divine thrusting on: An admirable evasion of man, to lay his ill disposition to the charge of a star! Edgar —

Enter EDGAR.

and pat he comes, like the catastrophe of the old comedy: My cue is villainous melancholy, with a sigh like Tom o'Bedlam. — O, these eclipses do portend these divisions! *fa, sol, la, mi.*⁹

Edg. How now, brother Edmund? What serious contemplation are you in?

Edm. I am thinking, brother, of a prediction I read this other day, what should follow these eclipses.

Edg. Do you busy yourself with that?

Edm. I promise you, the effects he writes of, succeed unhappily; as of unnaturalness between the child and the parent; death, dearth, dissolutions of ancient amities; divisions in state, menaces and maledictions against king and nobles; needless diffidences, banishment of friends, dissipation of cohorts¹, nuptial breaches, and I know not what.

Edg. How long have you been a sectary astronomical?

Edm. Come, come; when saw you my father last?

Edg. Why, the night gone by.

Edm. Spake you with him?

Edg. Ay, two hours together.

Edm. Parted you in good terms? Found you no displeasure in him, by word or countenance?

Edg. None at all.

Edm. Bethink yourself, wherein you may have offended him: and at my entreaty, forbear his pre-

⁹ These sounds are unnatural and offensive in musick.

¹ For *cohorts* some editors read *courts*.

sence, till some little time hath qualified the heat of his displeasure; which at this instant so rageth in him, that with the mischief of your person it would scarcely allay.

Edg. Some villain hath done me wrong.

Edm. That's my fear. I pray you, have a continent² forbearance, till the speed of his rage goes slower; and, as I say, retire with me to my lodging, from whence I will fitly bring you to hear my lord speak: Pray you, go; there's my key: — If you do stir abroad, go armed.

Edg. Armed, brother?

Edm. Brother, I advise you to the best: go armed; I am no honest man, if there be any good meaning towards you: I have told you what I have seen and heard, but faintly; nothing like the image and horror of it: Pray you, away.

Edg. Shall I hear from you anon?

Edm. I do serve you in this business. —

[*Exit* EDGAR.]

A credulous father, and a brother noble,
Whose nature is so far from doing harms,
That he suspects none; on whose foolish honesty
My practices ride easy! — I see the business. —
Let me, if not by birth, have lands by wit:
All with me's meet, that I can fashion fit. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.

A Room in the Duke of Albany's Palace.

Enter GONERIL and Steward.

Gon. Did my father strike my gentleman for chiding of his fool?

² Temperate.

Stew. Ay, madam.

Gon. By day and night! he wrongs me; every hour

He flashes into one gross crime or other,
That sets us all at odds: I'll not endure it:
His knights grow riotous, and himself upbraids us
On every trifle: — When he returns from hunting,
I will not speak with him; say, I am sick: —
If you come slack of former services,
You shall do well; the fault of it I'll answer.

Stew. He's coming, madam; I hear him.

[*Horns within.*]

Gon. Put on what weary negligence you please,
You and your fellows; I'd have it come to question:
If he dislike it, let him to my sister,
Whose mind and mine, I know, in that are one,
Not to be over-rul'd. Idle old man,
That still would manage those authorities,
That he hath given away! — Now, by my life,
Old fools are babes again; and must be us'd
With checks, as flatteries, — when they are seen
abus'd.

Remember what I have said.

Stew. Very well, madam.

Gon. And let his knights have colder looks among
you;

What grows of it, no matter; advise your fellows
so:

I would breed from hence occasions, and I shall,
That I may speak. — I'll write straight to my sister,
To hold my very course: — Prepare for dinner.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.

A Hall in the same.

Enter KENT, disguised.

Kent. If but as well I other accents borrow,
That can my speech diffuse³, my good intent
May carry through itself to that full issue
For which I raz'd⁴ my likeness. — Now, banish'd
Kent,
If thou canst serve where thou dost stand con-
demn'd,
(So may it come!) thy master, whom thou lov'st,
Shall find thee full of labours.

*Horns within. Enter LEAR, Knights, and At-
tendants.*

Lear. Let me not stay a jot for dinner: go, get
it ready. [*Exit an Attendant.*] How now, what art
thou?

Kent. A man, sir.

Lear. What dost thou profess? What wouldst
thou with us?

Kent. I do profess to be no less than I seem; to
serve him truly, that will put me in trust; to love
him that is honest; to converse with him that is
wise, and says little; to fear judgment; to fight,
when I cannot choose; and to eat no fish.

Lear. What art thou?

Kent. A very honest-hearted fellow, and as poor
as the king.

Lear. If thou be as poor for a subject, as he is

³ Disorder, disguise.

⁴ Effaced.

for a king, thou art poor enough. What would'st thou?

Kent. Service.

Lear. Who wouldst thou serve?

Kent. You.

Lear. Dost thou know me, fellow?

Kent. No, sir; but you have that in your countenance, which I would fain call master.

Lear. What's that?

Kent. Authority.

Lear. What services canst thou do?

Kent. I can keep honest counsel, ride, run, mar a curious tale in telling it, and deliver a plain message bluntly: that which ordinary men are fit for, I am qualified in; and the best of me is diligence.

Lear. How old art thou?

Kent. Not so young, sir, to love a woman for singing; nor so old, to dote on her for any thing: I have years on my back forty-eight.

Lear. Follow me; thou shalt serve me: if I like thee no worse after dinner, I will not part from thee yet. — Dinner, ho, dinner! — Where's my knave? my fool? Go you, and call my fool hither:

Enter Steward.

You, you, sirrah, where's my daughter?

Stew. So please you, — [*Exit.*

Lear. What says the fellow there? Call the clot-poll back. — Where's my fool, ho? — I think the world's asleep. — How now, where's that mongrel?

Knight. He says, my lord, your daughter is not well.

Lear. Why came not the slave back to me, when I call'd him?

Knight. Sir, he answer'd me in the roundest manner, he would not.

Lear. He would not!

Knight. My lord, I know not what the matter is; but, to my judgment, your highness is not entertain'd with that ceremonious affection as you were wont; there's a great abatement of kindness appears, as well in the general dependants, as in the duke himself also, and your daughter.

Lear. Ha! say'st thou so?

Knight. I beseech you, pardon me, my lord, if I be mistaken; for my duty cannot be silent, when I think your highness is wrong'd.

Lear. Thou but remember'st me of mine own conception; I have perceived a most faint neglect of late; which I have rather blamed as mine own jealous curiosity⁵, than as a very pretence⁶ and purpose of unkindness: I will look further into't.— But where's my fool? I have not seen him this two days.

Knight. Since my young lady's going into France, sir, the fool hath much pin'd away.

Lear. No more of that; I have noted it well.— Go, you, and tell my daughter I would speak with her.— Go you, call hither my fool.—

Re-enter Steward.

O, you sir, you sir, come you hither: Who am I,
sir?

Stew. My lady's father.

Lear. My lady's father! my lord's knave: you slave! you cur!

Stew. I am none of this, my lord; I beseech you, pardon me.

Lear. Do you bandy looks with me, you rascal?
[*Striking him.*

Stew. I'll not be struck, my lord.

⁵ Punctilious jealousy.

⁶ Design.

Kent. Nor tripped neither; you base foot-ball player. [*Tripping up his Heels.*]

Lear. I thank thee, fellow; thou servest me, and I'll love thee.

Kent. Come, sir, arise, away; I'll teach you differences; away, away: If you will measure your lubber's length again, tarry: but away; go to: Have you wisdom? so. [*Pushes the Steward out.*]

Lear. Now, my friendly knave, I thank thee: there's earnest of thy service.

[*Giving KENT Money.*]

Enter Fool.

Fool. Let me hire him too; — Here's my coxcomb. [*Giving KENT his Cap.*]

Lear. How now, my pretty knave? how dost thou?

Fool. Sirrah, you were best take my coxcomb.

Kent. Why, fool?

Fool. Why, for taking one's part that is out of favour: Nay, an thou canst not smile as the wind sits, thou'lt catch cold shortly: There, take my coxcomb: Why, this fellow has banish'd two of his daughters, and did the third a blessing against his will; if thou follow him, thou must needs wear my coxcomb. — How now, nuncle? 'Would I had two coxcombs, and two daughters!

Lear. Why, my boy?

Fool. If I gave them all my living, I'd keep my coxcombs myself: There's mine; beg another of thy daughters.

Lear. Take heed, sirrah; the whip.

Fool. Truth's a dog that must to kennel; he must be whipp'd out, when Lady, the brach⁷, may stand by the fire.

⁷ Bitch hound.

Lear. A pestilent gall to me!

Fool. Sirrah, I'll teach thee a speech.

Lear. Do.

Fool. Mark it, nuncle : —

*Have more than thou showest,
Speak less than thou knowest,
Lend less than thou owest,⁸
Ride more than thou goest,
Learn more than thou trowest,⁹
Set less than thou throwest ;
And thou shalt have more
Then two tens to a score.*

Lear. This is nothing, fool.

Fool. Then 'tis like the breath of an unfee'd lawyer ; you gave me nothing for't : Can you make no use of nothing, nuncle ?

Lear. Why, no, boy ; nothing can be made out of nothing.

Fool. Pr'ythee, tell him, so much the rent of his land comes to ; he will not believe a fool.

[*To KENT.*

Lear. A bitter fool !

Fool. Dost thou know the difference, my boy, between a bitter fool and a sweet fool ?

Lear. No, lad ; teach me.

Fool. *That lord, that counsell'd thee*

*To give away thy land,
Come place him here by me, —
Or do thou for him stand :
The sweet and bitter fool
Will presently appear ;
The one in motley here,
The other found out there.*

Lear. Dost thou call me fool, boy ?

Fool. All thy other titles thou hast given away ; that thou wast born with.

⁸ Ownest, possessest.

⁹ Believeest.

Kent. This is not altogether fool, my lord.

Fool. No, 'faith, lords and great men will not let me; if I had a monopoly out, they would have part on't: and ladies too, they will not let me have all fool to myself; they'll be snatching. — Give me an egg, nuncle, and I'll give thee two crowns.

Lear. What two crowns shall they be?

Fool. Why, after I have cut the egg i'the middle, and eat up the meat, the two crowns of the egg. When thou clovest thy crown i'the middle and gavest away both parts, thou borest thine ass on thy back over the dirt: Thou hadst little wit in thy bald crown, when thou gavest thy golden one away. If I speak like myself in this, let him be whipp'd that first finds it so.

*Fools had ne'er less grace¹ in a year; [Singing.
For wise men are grown foppish;
And know not how their wits to wear,
Their manners are so apish.*

Lear. When were you wont to be so full of songs, sirrah?

Fool. I have used it, nuncle, ever since thou madest thy daughters thy mother.

*Then they for sudden joy did weep, [Singing.
And I for sorrow sung,
That such a king should play bo-peep,
And go the fools among.*

Pr'ythee, nuncle, keep a schoolmaster that can teach thy fool to lie; I would fain learn to lie.

Lear. If you lie, sirrah, we'll have you whipp'd.

Fool. I marvel, what kin thou and thy daughters are: they'll have me whipp'd for speaking true, thou'lt have me whipp'd for lying; and, sometimes, I am whipp'd for holding my peace. I had rather

¹ Favour.

be any kind of thing, than a fool: and yet I would not be thee, nuncle; thou hast pared thy wit o'both sides, and left nothing in the middle: Here comes one o'the parings.

Enter GONERIL.

Lear. How now, daughter! what makes that frontlet² on? Methinks, you are too much of late i'the frown.

Fool. Thou wast a pretty fellow, when thou hadst no need to care for her frowning; now thou art an O³ without a figure: I am better than thou art now; I am a fool, thou art nothing. — Yes, forsooth, I will hold my tongue; so your face [*to GON.*] bids me, though you say nothing. Mum, mum,

*He that keeps nor crust nor crum
Weary of all, shall want some. —*

That's a sheal'd peascod.⁴ [*Pointing to LEAR.*

Gon. Not only, sir, this your all-licens'd fool,
But other of your insolent retinue,
Do hourly carp and quarrel; breaking forth
In rank and not-to-be-endured riots. Sir,
I had thought, by making this well known unto
you,
To have found a safe redress; but now grow fearful,
By what yourself too late have spoke and done,
That you protect this course, and put it on
By your allowance⁵; which if you should, the
fault

Would not 'scape censure, nor the redresses sleep;
Which, in the tender of a wholesome weal,⁶

² Part of a woman's head-dress, to which Lear compares her frowning brow.

³ A cypher.

⁴ A mere husk which contains nothing.

⁵ Approbation.

⁶ Well governed state.

Might in their working do you that offence,
Which else were shame, that then necessity
Will call discreet proceeding.

Fool. For you trow, nuncle,

*The hedge-sparrow fed the cuckoo so long,
That it had its head bit off by its young.*

So, out went the candle, and we were left darkling.

Lear. Are you our daughter?

Gon. Come, sir, I would, you would make use of
that good wisdom whereof I know you are fraught⁷;
and put away these dispositions, which of late
transform you from what you rightly are.

Fool. May not an ass know when the cart draws
the horse?

Lear. Does any here know me? — Why this is
not Lear: does Lear walk thus? speak thus?
Where are his eyes? Either his notion weakens, or
his discernings are lethargied. — Sleeping or wak-
ing? — Ha! sure 'tis not so. — Who is it that can
tell me who I am? — Lear's shadow? I would
learn that; for by the marks of sovereignty, know-
ledge, and reason, I should be false persuaded I
had daughters. —

Fool. Which they will make an obedient father.

Lear. Your name, fair gentlewoman?

Gon. Come, sir;

This admiration is much o'the favour⁸

Of other your new pranks. I do beseech you
To understand my purposes aright:

As you are old and reverend, you should be wise;
Here do you keep a hundred knights and squires:
Men so disorder'd, so debauch'd, and bold,
That this our court, infected with their manners,
Shows like a riotous inn. The shame doth speak
For instant remedy: Be then desir'd

⁷ Stored.

⁸ Complexion.

By her, that else will take the thing she begs,
 A little to disquantity your train ;
 And the remainder, that shall still depend,⁹
 To be such men as may besort your age,
 And know themselves and you.

Lear. Darkness and devils! —
 Saddle my horses ; call my train together. —
 Degenerate bastard ! I'll not trouble thee ;
 Yet have I left a daughter.

Gon. You strike my people ; and your disorder'd
 rabble
 Make servants of their betters.

Enter ALBANY.

Lear. Woe, that too late repents, — O, sir, are
 you come ?
 Is it your will ? [*To ALB.*] Speak, sir. — Prepare
 my horses.

Ingratitude ! thou marble-hearted fiend,
 More hideous, when thou show'st thee in a child,
 Than the sea-monster !

Alb. Pray, sir, be patient.

Lear. Detested kite ! thou liest : [*To GONERIL.*
 My train are men of choice and rarest parts,
 That all particulars of duty know ;
 And in the most exact regard support
 The worships of their name. — O most small fault,
 How ugly didst thou in Cordelia show !
 Which, like an engine¹, wrench'd my frame of na-
 ture

From the fix'd place ; drew from my heart all love,
 And added to the gall. O Lear, Lear, Lear !
 Beat at this gate that let thy folly in,

[*Striking his Head.*
 And thy dear judgment out ! — Go, go, my people.

⁹ Continue in service.

¹ The rack.

Alb. My lord, I am guiltless, as I am ignorant
Of what hath mov'd you.

Lear. It may be so, my lord. — Hear, nature,
hear ;
Dear goddess, hear ! Suspend thy purpose, if
Thou didst intend to make this creature fruitful !
Into her womb convey sterility !
Dry up in her the organs of increase ;
And from her derogate² body never spring
A babe to honour her ! If she must teem,
Create her child of spleen ; that it may live,
And be a thwart disnatur'd torment to her !
Let it stamp wrinkles in her brow of youth ;
With cadent³ tears fret channels in her cheeks ;
Turn all her mother's pains, and benefits,
To laughter and contempt ; that she may feel
How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
To have a thankless child ! — Away, away ! [*Exit.*

Alb. Now, gods, that we adore, whereof comes
this ?

Gon. Never afflict yourself to know the cause ;
But let his disposition have that scope
That dotage gives it.

Re-enter LEAR.

Lear. What, fifty of my followers, at a clap !
Within a fortnight ?

Alb. What's the matter, sir ?

Lear. I'll tell thee ; — Life and death ! I am
asham'd
That thou hast power to shake my manhood thus :
[*To GONERIL.*
That these hot tears, which break from me per-
force,
Should make thee worth them. — Blasts and fogs
upon thee !

² Degraded.

³ Falling.

The untented⁴ woundings of a father's curse
 Pierce every sense about thee! — Old fond eyes,
 Beweep this cause again, I'll pluck you out;
 And cast you, with the waters that you lose,
 To temper clay. — Ha! is it come to this?
 Let it be so: — Yet have I left a daughter,
 Who, I am sure, is kind and comfortable;
 When she shall hear this of thee, with her nails
 She'll flay thy wolfish visage. Thou shalt find,
 That I'll resume the shape which thou dost think
 I have cast off for ever; thou shalt, I warrant thee.

[*Exeunt* LEAR, KENT, and *Attendants*.]

Gon. Do you mark that, my lord?

Alb. I cannot be so partial, Goneril,
 To the great love I bear you, —

Gon. Pray you, content. — What, Oswald, ho!
 You, sir, more knave than fool, after your master.

[*To the Fool*.]

Fool. Nuncle Lear, nuncle Lear, tarry, and take
 the fool with thee.

*A fox, when one has caught her,
 And such a daughter,
 Should sure to the slaughter,
 If my cap would buy a halter;
 So the fool follows after.*

[*Exit*.]

Gon. This man hath had good counsel: — A
 hundred knights!
 'Tis politick, and safe, to let him keep
 At point⁵, a hundred knights. Yes, that on every
 dream,

Each buz, each fancy, each complaint, dislike,
 He may enguard his dotage with their powers,
 And hold our lives in mercy. — Oswald, I say! —

Alb. Well, you may fear too far.

⁴ Undressed.

⁵ Armed.

Gon. Safer than trust :
 Let me still take away the arms I fear,
 Not fear still to be taken. I know his heart :
 What he hath utter'd, I have writ my sister ;
 If she sustain him and his hundred knights,
 When I have show'd the unfitness, — How now,
 Oswald?

Enter Steward.

What, have you writ that letter to my sister ?

Stew. Ay, madam.

Gon. Take you some company, and away to
 horse :

Inform her full of my particular fear ;
 And thereto add such reasons of your own,
 As may compact it more. Get you gone ;
 And hasten your return. [*Exit Stew.*] No, no, my
 lord,

This milky gentleness, and course of yours,
 Though I condemn it not, yet, under pardon,
 You are much more attack'd⁶ for want of wis-
 dom,

Than prais'd for harmful mildness.

Alb. How far your eyes may pierce, I cannot
 tell ;

Striving to better, oft we mar what's well.

Gon. Nay, then —

Alb. Well, well ; the event. [*Exeunt.*]

⁶ Liable to reprehension.

SCENE V.

Court before the same.

Enter LEAR, KENT, and Fool.

Lear. Go you before to Gloster with these letters: acquaint my daughter no further with any thing you know, than comes from her demand out of the letter: If your diligence be not speedy, I shall be there before you.

Kent. I will not sleep, my lord, till I have delivered your letter. [*Exit.*

Fool. If a man's brains were in his heels, were't not in danger of kibes?

Lear. Ay, boy.

Fool. Then, I pr'ythee, be merry; thy wit shall not go slip-shod.

Lear. Ha, ha, ha!

Fool. Shalt see, thy other daughter will use thee kindly: for though she's as like this as a crab is like an apple, yet I can tell what I can tell.

Lear. Why, what canst thou tell, my boy?

Fool. She will taste as like this, as a crab does to a crab. Thou canst tell, why one's nose stands i'the middle of his face?

Lear. No.

Fool. Why, to keep his eyes on either side his nose; that what a man cannot smell out, he may spy into.

Lear. I did her wrong:—

Fool. Canst tell how an oyster makes his shell?

Lear. No.

Fool. Nor I neither; but I can tell why a snail has a house.

Lear. Why?

Fool. Why, to put his head in; not to give it away to his daughters, and leave his horns without a case.

Lear. I will forget my nature. — So kind a father! — Be my horses ready?

Fool. Thy asses are gone about 'em. The reason why the seven stars are no more than seven, is a pretty reason.

Lear. Because they are not eight?

Fool. Yes, indeed: Thou wouldest make a good fool.

Lear. To take it again perforce! — Monster ingratitude!

Fool. If thou wert my fool, nuncle, I'd have thee beaten for being old before thy time.

Lear. How's that?

Fool. Thou shouldst not have been old, before thou hadst been wise.

Lear. O let me not be mad, not mad, sweet heaven! Keep me in temper; I would not be mad! —

Enter Gentleman.

How now! Are the horses ready?

Gent. Ready, my lord.

Lear. Come, boy.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I. — *A Court within the Castle of the Earl of Gloster.*

Enter EDMUND and CURAN, meeting.

Edm. Save thee, Curan.

Cur. And you, sir. I have been with your fa-

ther ; and given him notice, that the duke of Cornwall, and Regan his duchess, will be here with him to-night.

Edm. How comes that ?

Cur. Nay, I know not : You have heard of the news abroad ; I mean, the whispered ones, for they are yet but ear-kissing arguments ?

Edm. Not I ; 'Pray you, what are they ?

Cur. Have you heard of no likely wars toward, 'twixt the dukes of Cornwall and Albany ?

Edm. Not a word.

Cur. You may then, in time. Fare you well, sir.

[*Exit.*

Edm. The duke be here to-night ? The better !
Best !

This weaves itself perforce into my business !
My father hath set guard to take my brother ;
And I have one thing, of a queazy⁷ question,
Which I must act : — Briefness, and fortune,
work ! —

Brother, a word ; descend : — Brother, I say ;

Enter EDGAR.

My father watches : — O sir, fly this place ;
Intelligence is given where you are hid ;
You have now the good advantage of the night : —
Have you not spoken 'gainst the duke of Cornwall ?
He's coming hither ; now, i'the night, i'the haste,
And Regan with him ; Have you nothing said
Upon his party 'gainst the duke of Albany ?
Advise⁸ yourself.

Edg. I am sure on't, not a word.

Edm. I hear my father coming, — Pardon me : —
In cunning, I must draw my sword upon you : —
Draw : Seem to defend yourself : Now quit you
well.

⁷ Delicate.

⁸ Consider, recollect yourself.

Yield : — come before my father ; — Light, ho,
here ! —

Fly, brother ; — Torches ! torches ! — So farewell. —
[Exit EDGAR.]

Some blood drawn on me would beget opinion
[Wounds his Arm.]

Of my more fierce endeavour : I have seen drunk-
ards

Do more than this in sport. — Father ! father !
Stop, stop ! No help ?

Enter GLOSTER, and Servants with Torches.

Glo. Now, Edmund, where's the villain ?

Edm. Here stood he in the dark, his sharp sword
out,

Mumbling of wicked charms, conjuring the moon
To stand his auspicious mistress : —

Glo. But where is he ?

Edm. Look, sir, I bleed.

Glo. Where is the villain, Edmund ?

Edm. Fled this way, sir. When by no means he
could —

Glo. Pursue him, ho ! — Go after. — [Exit Serv.]
By no means, — what ?

Edm. Persuade me to the murder of your lord-
ship ;

But that I told him, the revenging gods
'Gainst parricides did all their thunders bend ;
Spoke, with how manifold and strong a bond
The child was bound to the father ; — Sir, in fine,
Seeing how loathly opposite I stood
To his unnatural purpose, in fell motion,
With his prepared sword, he charges home
My unprovided body, lanc'd mine arm :
But when he saw my best alarum'd spirits,
Bold in the quarrel's right, rous'd to the encounter,

Loyal and natural boy, I'll work the means
To make thee capable.⁴

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, and Attendants.

Corn. How now, my noble friend? since I came
hither,
(Which I can call but now,) I have heard strange
news.

Reg. If it be true, all vengeance comes too
short,
Which can pursue the offender. How dost, my
lord?

Glo. O, madam, my old heart is crack'd, is
crack'd!

Reg. What, did my father's godson seek your
life?

He whom my father nam'd? your Edgar?

Glo. O, lady, lady, shame would have it hid!

Reg. Was he not companion with the riotous
knights

That tend upon my father?

Glo. I know not, madam :
It is too bad, too bad. —

Edm. Yes, madam, he was.

Reg. No marvel then, though he were ill affected ;
'Tis they have put him on the old man's death,
To have the waste and spoil of his revenues.
I have this present evening from my sister
Been well inform'd of them ; and with such cautions,
That, if they come to sojourn at my house,
I'll not be there.

Corn. Nor I, assure thee, Regan. —
Edmund, I hear that you have shown your father
A child-like office.

⁴ *i. e.* Capable of succeeding to my land.

Edm. 'Twas my duty, sir.

Glo. He did bewray his practice⁵; and receiv'd
This hurt you see, striving to apprehend him.

Corn. Is he pursued?

Glo. Ay, my good lord, he is.

Corn. If he be taken, he shall never more
Be fear'd of doing harm: make your own purpose,
How in my strength you please. — For you, Ed-
mund,

Whose virtue and obedience doth this instant
So much commend itself, you shall be ours;
Natures of such deep trust we shall much need;
You we first seize on.

Edm. I shall serve you, sir,
Truly, however else.

Glo. For him, I thank your grace.

Corn. You know not why we came to visit you, —

Reg. Thus out of season; threading dark-ey'd
night.

Occasions, noble Gloster, of some poize,⁶
Wherein we must have use of your advice: —
Our father he hath writ, so hath our sister,
Of differences, which I best thought it fit
To answer from our home; the several messengers
From hence attend despatch. Our good old friend,
Lay comforts to your bosom; and bestow
Your needful counsel to our business,
Which craves the instant use.

Glo. I serve you, madam:
Your graces are right welcome. [*Exeunt.*]

⁵ Wicked purpose.

⁶ Weight.

SCENE II.

Before Gloster's Castle.

Enter KENT and Steward, severally.

Stew. Good dawning to thee, friend: Art of the house?

Kent. Ay.

Stew. Where may we set our horses?

Kent. I'the mire.

Stew. Pr'ythee, if thou love me, tell me.

Kent. I love thee not.

Stew. Why, then I care not for thee.

Kent. If I had thee in Lipsbury pinfold, I would make thee care for me.

Stew. Why dost thou use me thus? I know thee not.

Kent. Fellow, I know thee.

Stew. What dost thou know me for?

Kent. A knave; a rascal, an eater of broken meats; a base, proud, shallow, beggarly, three-suited, hundred-pound, worsted-stocking knave; a lily-liver'd, action-taking knave; a glass-gazing, superserviceable, finical rogue; one-trunk-inheriting slave; nothing but the composition of a knave, beggar, and coward: one whom I will beat into clamorous whining, if thou deny'st the least syllable of thy addition.⁷

Stew. Why, what a monstrous fellow art thou, thus to rail on one, that is neither known of thee, nor knows thee?

Kent. What a brazen-faced varlet art thou, to deny thou know'st me? Is it two days ago, since I tripp'd up thy heels, and beat thee, before the king?

⁷ Titles.

Draw, you rogue: for, though it be night, the moon shines; I'll make a sop o'the moonshine of you: Draw, you barber-monger, draw.

[*Drawing his Sword.*

Stew. Away; I have nothing to do with thee.

Kent. Draw, you rascal: you come with letters against the king; and take vanity^s the puppet's part, against the royalty of her father: Draw, you rogue, or I'll so carbonado your shanks:—draw, you rascal; come your ways.

Stew. Help, ho! murder! help!

Kent. Strike, you slave; stand, rogue, stand; you neat slave, strike. [*Beating him.*

Stew. Help, ho! murder! murder!

Enter EDMUND, CORNWALL, REGAN, GLOSTER, and Servants.

Edm. How now? What's the matter? Part.

Kent. With you, goodman boy, if you please; come, I'll flesh you; come on, young master.

Glo. Weapons! arms! What's the matter here?

Corn. Keep peace, upon your lives;

He dies, that strikes again: What is the matter?

Reg. The messengers from our sister and the king.

Corn. What is your difference? speak.

Stew. I am scarce in breath, my lord.

Kent. No marvel, you have so bestirr'd your valour. You cowardly rascal, nature disclaims in thee; a tailor made thee.

Corn. Thou art a strange fellow: a tailor make a man?

Kent. Ay, a tailor, sir; a stone-cutter, or a painter, could not have made him so ill, though they had been but two hours at the trade.

^s A character in the old moralities.

Corn. Speak yet, how grew your quarrel?

Stew. This ancient ruffian, sir, whose life I have spar'd,

At suit of his grey beard, —

Kent. Thou zed! thou unnecessary letter! — My lord, if you will give me leave, I will tread this unbolted⁹ villain into mortar, and daub the wall with him. — Spare my grey beard, you wagtail!

Corn. Peace, sirrah!

You beastly knave, know you no reverence?

Kent. Yes, sir; but anger has a privilege.

Corn. Why art thou angry?

Kent. That such a slave as this should wear a sword,

Who wears no honesty. Such smiling rogues as these,

Like rats, oft bite the holy cords atwain

Which are too intrinse¹ t'unloose: smooth every passion

That in the natures of their lords rebels;

Bring oil to fire, snow to their colder moods;

Renege², affirm, and turn their halcyon³ beaks

With every gale and vary of their masters,

As knowing nought, like dogs, but following. —

A plague upon your epileptic visage!

Smile you my speeches, as I were a fool?

Goose, if I had you upon Sarum plain,

I'd drive ye cackling home to Camelot.⁴

Corn. What, art thou mad, old fellow?

Glo.

How fell you out?

Say that.

Kent. No contraries hold more antipathy,
Than I and such a knave.

⁹ Unrefined.

¹ Perplexed.

² Disown.

³ The bird called the king-fisher, which, when dried and hung up by a thread, is supposed to turn his bill to the point from whence the wind blows.

⁴ In Somersetshire, where are bred great quantities of geese.

Corn. Why dost thou call him knave? What's his offence?

Kent. His countenance likes me not.

Corn. No more, perchance, does mine, or his, or hers.

Kent. Sir, 'tis my occupation to be plain; I have seen better faces in my time, Than stands on any shoulder that I see Before me at this instant.

Corn. This is some fellow, Who, having been prais'd for bluntness, doth affect A saucy roughness; and constrains the garb, Quite from his nature: He cannot flatter, he! — An honest mind and plain, — he must speak truth: And they will take it, so; if not, he's plain. These kind of knaves I know, which in this plainness

Harbour more craft, and more corrupter ends, Than twenty silly ducking observants, That stretch their duties nicely.

Kent. Sir, in good sooth, in sincere verity, Under the allowance of your grand aspect, Whose influence, like the wreath of radiant fire On flickering Phoebus' front, —

Corn. What mean'st by this?

Kent. To go out of my dialect, which you discommend so much. I know, sir, I am no flatterer: he that beguiled you, in a plain accent, was a plain knave; which, for my part, I will not be, though I should win your displeasure to entreat me to it.

Corn. What was the offence you gave him?

Stew. Never any: It pleas'd the king his master, very late, To strike at me, upon his misconstruction; When he, conjunct, and flattering his displeasure, Tripp'd me behind; being down, insulted, rail'd, And put upon him such a deal of man,

Reg. My sister may receive it much more worse,
To have her gentleman abus'd, assaulted,
For following her affairs. — Put in his legs. —

[*KENT is put in the Stocks.*

Come, my good lord; away.

[*Exeunt REGAN and CORNWALL.*

Glo. I am sorry for thee, friend; 'tis the duke's
pleasure,
Whose disposition, all the world well knows,
Will not be rubb'd, nor stopp'd: I'll entreat for
thee.

Kent. Pray, do not, sir; I have watch'd, and
travell'd hard;
Some time I shall sleep out, the rest I'll whistle.
A good man's fortune may grow out at heels:
Give you good morrow!

Glo. The duke's to blame in this: 'twill be ill
taken. [Exit.

Kent. Good king, that must approve the common
saw!⁶

Thou out of heaven's benediction com'st
To the warm sun!

Approach, thou beacon to this under globe,
That by thy comfortable beams I may
Peruse this letter!—Nothing almost sees miracles,
But misery; — I know 'tis from Cordelia;
Who hath most fortunately been inform'd
Of my obscured course; and shall find time
From this enormous state, — seeking to give
Losses their remedies: — All weary and o'er-
watch'd,

Take vantage, heavy eyes, not to behold
This shameful lodging.

Fortune, good night; smile once more; turn thy
wheel! [He sleeps.

⁶ Saying or proverb.

SCENE III.

*A Part of the Heath.**Enter EDGAR.*

Edg. I heard myself proclaim'd :
 And, by the happy hollow of a tree,
 Escap'd the hunt. No port is free ; no place,
 That guard, and most unusual vigilance,
 Does not attend my taking. While I may 'scape,
 I will preserve myself : and am bethought
 To take the basest and most poorest shape,
 That ever penury, in contempt of man,
 Brought near to beast : my face I'll grime with
 filth ;
 Blanket my loins : elf⁷ all my hair in knots ;
 And with presented nakedness outface
 The winds, and persecutions of the sky.
 The country gives me proof and precedent
 Of Bedlam beggars, who, with roaring voices,
 Strike in their numb'd and mortifi'd bare arms
 Pins, wooden pricks⁸, nails, sprigs of rosemary ;
 And with this horrible object, from low farms,
 Poor pelting villages, sheep-cotes and mills,
 Sometime with lunatic bans⁹, sometime with
 prayers,
 Enforce their charity. — Poor Turlygood ! poor
 Tom !
 That's something yet ; — Edgar I nothing am.

[*Exit.*]

⁷ Hair thus knotted, was supposed to be the work of elves and fairies in the night. ⁸ Skewers. ⁹ Curses.

SCENE IV.

Before Gloster's Castle.

Enter LEAR, Fool, and Gentleman.

Lear. 'Tis strange, that they should so depart
from home,

And not send back my messenger.

Gent. As I learn'd,
The night before there was no purpose in them
Of this remove.

Kent. Hail to thee, noble master!

Lear. How!
Mak'st thou this shame thy pastime?

Kent. No, my lord.

Fool. Ha, ha; look! he wears cruel¹ garters!
Horses are tied by the heads; dogs and bears, by
the neck; monkies by the loins, and men by the
legs; when a man is over-lusty at legs, then he
wears wooden nether stocks.²

Lear. What's he, that hath so much thy place
mistook
To set thee here?

Kent. It is both he and she,
Your son and daughter.

Lear. No.

Kent. Yes.

Lear. No, I say.

Kent. I say, yea.

Lear. No, no; they would not.

Kent. Yes, they have.

Lear. By Jupiter, I swear, no.

Kent. By Juno, I swear, ay.

¹ A quibble on *crewel*, *worsted*.

² The old word for stockings.

Lear. They durst not do't ;
They could not, would not do't ; 'tis worse than
murder,

To do upon respect such violent outrage :
Resolve me, with all modest haste, which way
Thou might'st deserve, or they impose, this usage,
Coming from us.

Kent. My lord, when at their home
I did commend your highness' letters to them,
Ere I was risen from the place that show'd
My duty kneeling, came there a reeking post,
Stew'd in his haste, half breathless, panting forth
From Goneril his mistress, salutations ;
Deliver'd letters, spite of intermission,
Which presently they read : on whose contents,
They summon'd up their meiny³, straight took
horse ;

Comanded me to follow, and attend
The leisure of their answer : gave me cold looks :
And meeting here the other messenger,
Whose welcome, I perceiv'd, had poison'd mine,
(Being the very fellow that of late
Display'd so saucily against your highness,)
Having more man than wit about me, drew :
He raised the house with loud and coward cries :
Your son and daughter found this trespass worth
The shame which here it suffers.

Fool. *Winter's not gone yet, if the wild geese fly
that way.*

*Fathers, that wear rags,
Do make their children blind ;
But fathers, that bear bags,
Shall see their children kind.*

But, for all this, thou shalt have as many dolours⁴
for thy daughters, as thou canst tell in a year.

³ People, train or retinue,

⁴ A quibble between *dolours* and *dollars*.

Lear. O, how this mother⁵ swells up to ward my heart!

Hysterica passio! down, thou climbing sorrow,
Thy element's below! — Where is this daughter?

Kent. With the earl, sir, here within.

Lear. Follow me not;
Stay here. [*Exit.*

Gent. Made you no more offence than what you speak of?

Kent. None.

How chance the king comes with so small a train?

Fool. An thou hadst been set i'the stocks for that question, thou hadst well deserved it.

Kent. Why, fool?

Fool. We'll set thee to school to an ant, to teach thee there's no labouring in the winter. Let go thy hold, when a great wheel runs down a hill, lest it break thy neck with following it; but the great one that goes up the hill, let him draw thee after. When a wise man gives thee better counsel, give me mine again: I would have none but knaves follow it, since a fool gives it.

*That, sir, which serves and seeks for gain,
And follows but for form,
Will pack, when it begins to rain.
And leave thee in the storm.*

*But I will tarry, the fool will stay,
And let the wise man fly,
The knave turns fool, that runs away;
The fool no knave, perdy.*

Kent. Where learned you this, fool?

Fool. Not i'the stocks, fool.

⁵ The disease called the *mother*.

Re-enter LEAR, *with* GLOSTER.

Lear. Deny to speak with me? They are sick?
they are weary?

They have travell'd hard to-night? Mere fetches;
The images of revolt and flying off!

Fetch me a better answer.

Glo. My dear lord,
You know the fiery quality of the duke;
How unremoveable and fix'd he is
In his own course.

Lear. Vengeance! plague! death! confusion! —
Fiery? what quality? Why Gloster, Gloster,
I'd speak with the duke of Cornwall, and his wife.

Glo. Well, my good lord, I have inform'd them so.

Lear. Inform'd them! Dost thou understand me,
man?

Glo. Ay, my good lord.

Lear. The king would speak with Cornwall; the
dear father
Would with his daughter speak, commands her
service:

Are they inform'd of this? — My breath and
blood! —

Fiery? the fiery duke? — Tell the hot duke that —
No, but not yet: — may be he is not well:

Infirmity doth still neglect all office,
Whereto our health is bound; we are not ourselves,
When nature, being oppress'd, commands the mind
To suffer with the body: I'll forbear;

And am fallen out with my more headier will,
To take the indispos'd and sickly fit

For the sound man.—Death on my state! wherefore

[*Looking on* KENT.]

Should he sit here? This act persuades me,

That this remotion⁶ of the duke and her
Is practice⁷ only. Give me my servant forth :
Go, tell the duke and his wife, I'd speak with
them,

Now, presently : bid them come forth and hear me,
Or at their chamber door I'll beat the drum,
Till it cry — *Sleep to death.*

Glo. I'd have all well betwixt you. [Exit.

Lear. O me, my heart, my rising heart ! — but,
down.

Fool. Cry to it, nuncle, as the cockney did to the
eels, when she put them i'the paste alive ; she
rapp'd 'em o'the coxcombs with a stick, and cry'd,
Down, wantons, down : 'Twas her brother, that in
pure kindness to his horse, butter'd his hay.

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, GLOSTER, and *Servants.*

Lear. Good morrow to you both.

Corn. Hail to your grace !
[KENT is set at liberty.

Reg. I am glad to see your highness.

Lear. Regan, I think you are ; I know what
reason

I have to think so : if thou shouldst not be glad,
I would divorce me from thy mother's tomb,
Sepulchring an adultrous. — O, are you free ?

[To KENT.

Some other time for that. — Beloved Regan,
Thy sister's naught : O, Regan, she hath tied
Sharp-tooth'd unkindness, like a vulture here. —

[Points to his Heart.

I can scarce speak to thee ; thou'lt not believe,
Of how deprav'd a quality. — O, Regan !

Reg. I pray you, sir, take patience ; I have hope,

⁶ Removing from their own house.

⁷ Artifice.

You less know how to value her desert,
Than she to scant her duty.

Lear. Say, how is that?

Reg. I cannot think, my sister in the least
Would fail her obligation: If, sir, perchance,
She have restrain'd the riots of your followers,
'Tis on such ground, and to such wholesome end,
As clears her from all blame.

Lear. My curses on her!

Reg. O, sir, you are old;
Nature in you stands on the very verge
Of her confine: you should be rul'd, and led
By some discretion, that discerns your state
Better than you yourself: Therefore, I pray you,
That to our sister you do make return;
Say, you have wrong'd her, sir.

Lear. Ask her forgiveness?
Do you but mark how this becomes the house:⁸
*Dear daughter, I confess that I am old;
Age is unnecessary: on my knees I beg, [Kneeling.
That you'll vouchsafe me raiment, bed, and food.*

Reg. Good sir, no more; these are unsightly
tricks:
Return you to my sister.

Lear. Never, Regan:
She hath abated me of half my train;
Look'd black upon me; struck me with her tongue,
Most serpent-like, upon the very heart:—
All the stor'd vengeance of heaven fall
On her ingrateful top! Strike her young bones,
You taking airs, with lameness!

Corn. Fye, fye, fye!

Lear. You nimble lightnings, dart your blinding
flames
Into her scornful eyes! Infect her beauty,

⁸ The order of families.

You fen-suck'd fogs, drawn by the powerful sun,
To fall and blast her pride!

Reg. O the blest gods!

So will you wish on me, when the rash mood's on.

Lear. No, Regan, thou shalt never have my
curse;

Thy tender-hefted nature shall not give
Thee o'er to harshness; her eyes are fierce, but
thine

Do comfort, and not burn: 'Tis not in thee
To grudge my pleasures, to cut off my train
To bandy hasty words, to scant my sizes,⁹
And, in conclusion, to oppose the bolt
Against my coming in: thou better know'st
The offices of nature, bond of childhood,
Effects of courtesy, dues of gratitude;
Thy half o'the kingdom hast thou not forgot,
Wherein I thee endow'd.

Reg. Good sir, to the purpose.
[*Trumpets within.*]

Lear. Who put my man i'the stocks?

Corn. What trumpet's that?

Enter Steward.

Reg. I know't, my sister's: this approves her
letter,

That she would soon be here.— Is your lady come?

Lear. This is a slave, whose easy-borrow'd pride
Dwells in the fickle grace of her he follows:—
Out, varlet, from my sight!

Corn. What means your grace?

Lear. Who stock'd my servant? Regan, I have
good hope

Thou didst not know of't.— Who comes here? O
heavens,

⁹ Contract my allowances.

Enter GONERIL.

If you do love old men, if your sweet sway
 Allow¹ obedience, if yourselves are old,
 Make it your cause; send down, and take my
 part! —

Art not asham'd to look upon this beard? —

[*To GONERIL.*

O, Regan, wilt thou take her by the hand?

Gon. Why not by the hand, sir? How have I
 offended?

All's not offence, that indiscretion finds,
 And dotage terms so.

Lear. O, sides, you are too tough!
 Will you yet hold? — How came my man i'the
 stocks?

Corn. I set him there, sir: but his own dis-
 orders

Deserv'd much less advancement.

Lear. You! did you?

Reg. I pray you, father, being weak, seem so.
 If, till the expiration of your month,
 You will return and sojourn with my sister,
 Dismissing half your train, come then to me;
 I am now from home, and out of that provision
 Which shall be needful for your entertainment.

Lear. Return to her, and fifty men dismiss'd?
 No, rather I abjure all roofs, and choose
 To wage against the enmity o'the air;
 To be a comrade with the wolf and owl, —
 Necessity's sharp pinch! — Return with her?
 Why, the hot-blooded France, that dowerless took
 Our youngest born, I could as well be brought
 To knee his throne, and, squire-like, pension beg
 To keep base life afoot: — Return with her?

¹ Approve.

Persuade me rather to be slave and sumpter²
To this detested groom. [*Looking on the Steward.*

Gon. At your choice, sir.

Lear. I pr'ythee, daughter, do not make me mad;
I will not trouble thee, my child; farewell:
We'll no more meet, no more see one another:—
But yet thou art my flesh, my blood, my daughter;
Or, rather, a disease that's in my flesh,
Which I must needs call mine: but I'll not chide;
Let shame come when it will, I do not call it:
I do not bid the thunder-bearer shoot,
Nor tell tales of thee to high-judging Jove:
Mend, when thou canst; be better at thy leisure:
I can be patient; I can stay with Regan,
I, and my hundred knights.

Reg. Not altogether so, sir;
I look'd not for you yet, nor am provided
For your fit welcome: Give ear, sir, to my sister;
For those that mingle reason with your passion,
Must be content to think you old, and so—
But she knows what she does.

Lear. Is this well spoken now?

Reg. I dare avouch it, sir: What, fifty followers?
Is it not well? What should you need of more?
Yea, or so many? sith³ that both charge and
danger

Speak 'gainst so great a number? How, in one
house,
Should many people, under two commands,
Hold amity? 'Tis hard; almost impossible.

Gon. Why might not you, my lord, receive at-
tendance
From those that she calls servants, or from mine?

Reg. Why not, my lord? If then they chanc'd
to slack you,
We could control them: If you will come to me,

² A horse that carries necessaries on a journey.

³ Since.

(For now I spy a danger,) I entreat you
To bring but five and twenty; to no more
Will I give place or notice.

Lear. I gave you all —

Reg. And in good time you gave it.

Lear. Made you my guardians, my depositaries;
But kept a reservation to be follow'd
With such a number: What, must I come to you
With five and twenty, Regan? said you so?

Reg. And speak it again, my lord; no more with
me.

Lear. Those wicked creatures yet do look well-
favour'd,

When others are more wicked; not being the
worst,

Stands in some rank of praise: — I'll go with thee

[To GONERIL.

Thy fifty yet doth double five and twenty,
And thou art twice her love.

Gon. Hear me, my lord;

What need you five and twenty, ten, or five,
To follow in a house, where twice so many
Have a command to tend you?

Reg. What need one?

Lear. O, reason not the need: our basest beg-
gars

Are in the poorest thing superfluous:

Allow not nature more than nature needs,

Man's life is cheap as beast's: thou art a lady;

If only to go warm were gorgeous,

Why, nature needs not what thou gorgeous wear'st,

Which scarcely keeps thee warm. — But, for true
need, —

You heavens, give me that patience, patience I
need!

You see me here, you gods, a poor old man,

As full of grief as age; wretched in both!

If it be you that stir these daughters' hearts
 Against their father, fool me not so much
 To bear it tamely; touch me with noble anger!
 O, let not women's weapons, water-drops,
 Stain my man's cheeks! No, you unnatural hags,
 I will have such revenges on you both,
 That all the world shall — I will do such things, —
 What they are yet, I know not; but they shall be
 The terrors of the earth. You think, I'll weep;
 No, I'll not weep: —
 I have full cause of weeping; but this heart
 Shall break into a hundred thousand flaws,
 Or ere I'll weep: — O, fool, I shall go mad!

[*Exeunt* LEAR, GLOSTER, KENT, and Fool.

Corn. Let us withdraw, 'twill be a storm.

[*Storm heard at a distance.*

Reg. This house
 Is little; the old man and his people cannot
 Be well bestow'd.

Gon. 'Tis his own blame; he hath put
 Himself from rest, and must needs taste his folly.

Reg. For his particular, I'll receive him gladly,
 But not one follower.

Gon. So am I purpos'd.
 Where is my lord of Gloster?

Re-enter GLOSTER.

Corn. Follow'd the old man forth; — he is re-
 turn'd.

Glo. The king is in high rage.

Corn. Whither is he going?

Glo. He calls to horse; but will I know not
 whither.

Corn. 'Tis best to give him way; he leads him-
 self.

Gon. My lord, entreat him by no means to stay.

Glo. Alack, the night comes on, and the bleak winds

Do sorely ruffle; for many miles about
There's scarce a bush.

Reg. O, sir, to wilful men,
The injuries that they themselves procure,
Must be their schoolmasters: Shut up your doors;
He is attended with a desperate train;
And what they may incense⁴ him to, being apt
To have his ear abus'd, wisdom bids fear.

Corn. Shut up your doors, my lord; 'tis a wild
night:

My Regan counsels well: come out o'the storm.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I. — *A Heath.*

A Storm is heard, with Thunder and Lightning.

Enter KENT, and a Gentleman, meeting.

Kent. Who's here, beside foul weather?

Gent. One minded like the weather, most un-
quietly.

Kent. I know you; Where's the king?

Gent. Contending with the fretful element:
Bids the wind blow the earth into the sea,
Or swell the curled waters 'bove the main,
That things might change, or cease: tears his white
hair:

Which the impetuous blasts, with eyeless rage,

⁴ Instigate.

Catch in their fury, and make nothing of:
 Strives in his little world of man to out-scorn
 The to-and-fro-conflicting wind and rain.
 This night, wherein the cub-drawn bear⁵ would
 couch,
 The lion and the belly-pinched wolf
 Keep their fur dry, unbonneted he runs,
 And bids what will take all.

Kent. But who is with him?

Gent. None but the fool; who labours to out-jest
 His heart-struck injuries.

Kent. Sir, I do know you;
 And dare, upon the warrant of my heart,
 Commend a dear thing to you. There is division,
 Although as yet the face of it be cover'd
 With mutual cunning, 'twixt Albany and Cornwall;
 Who have (as who have not, that their great stars
 Thron'd and set high?) servants, who seem no less;
 Which are to France the spies and speculations
 Intelligent of our state; what hath been seen,
 Either in snuffs and packings⁶ of the dukes;
 Or the hard rein which both of them have borne
 Against the old kind king: or something deeper,
 Whereof, perchance, these are but furnishings:⁷ —
 But, true it is, from France there comes a power
 Into this scatter'd kingdom; who already,
 Wise in our negligence, have secret feet
 In some of our best ports, and are at point
 To show their open banner. — Now to you:
 If on my credit you dare build so far
 To make your speed to Dover, you shall find
 Some that will thank you, making just report
 Of how unnatural and bemadding sorrow
 The king hath cause to 'plain.

⁵ Whose dugs are drawn dry by its young.

⁶ *Snuffs* are dislikes, and *packings* underhand contrivances.

⁷ Samples.

I am a gentleman of blood and breeding ;
 And from some knowledge and assurance, offer
 This office to you.

Gent. I will talk further with you.

Kent. No, do not.

For confirmation that I am much more
 Than my out wall, open this purse, and take
 What it contains : If you shall see Cordelia,
 (As fear not but you shall,) show her this ring ;
 And she will tell you who your fellow is
 That yet you do not know. Fye on this storm !
 I will go seek the king.

Gent. Give me your hand : Have you no more
 to say ?

Kent. Few words, but to effect, more than all
 yet ;
 That, when we have found the king, (in which your
 pain
 That way ; I'll this ;) he that first lights on him,
 Holla the other. [*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE II.

Another Part of the Heath. Storm continues.

Enter LEAR and Fool.

Lear. Blow, wind, and crack your cheeks !
 : rage ! blow !
 You cataracts, and hurricanoes, spout
 Till you have drench'd our steeples, drown'd the
 cocks !
 You sulphurous and thought-executing⁸ fires,
 Vaunt couriers⁹ to oak-cleaving thunder-bolts,
 Singe my white head ! And thou, all-shaking thun-
 der,

⁸ Quick as thought.

⁹ *Avant couriers*, French.

Strike flat the thick rotundity o'the world!
 Crack nature's moulds, all germens spill at once,
 That make ingrateful man!

Fool. O nuncle, court holy-water¹ in a dry house is better than this rain-water out o'door. Good nuncle, in, and ask thy daughter's blessing; here's a night pities neither wise men nor fools.

Lear. Rumble thy belly-full! Spit, fire! spout, rain!

Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire, are my daughters:
 I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness,
 I never gave you kingdom, call'd you children,
 You owe me no subscription²; why then let fall
 Your horrible pleasure; here I stand your slave,
 A poor infirm, weak, and despis'd old man:—
 But yet I call you servile ministers,
 That have with two pernicious daughters join'd
 Your high engender'd battles 'gainst a head
 So old and white as this. O! O! 'tis foul!

Fool. He that has a house to put his head in, has a good head-piece.

*The man that makes his toe
 What he his heart should make,
 Shall of a corn cry woe,
 And turn his sleep to wake.*

— for there was never yet fair woman, but she made mouths in a glass.

Enter KENT.

Lear. No, I will be the pattern of all patience, I will say nothing.

Kent. Alas, sir, are you here? things that love night,
 Love not such nights as these: the wrathful skies

¹ A proverbial phrase for *fair words*.

² Obedience.

Gallow³ the very wanderers of the dark,
 And make them keep their caves. Since I was man,
 Such sheets of fire, such bursts of horrid thunder,
 Such groans of roaring wind and rain, I never
 Remember to have heard: man's nature cannot
 carry

The affliction, nor the fear.

Lear. Let the great gods,
 That keep this dreadful pother o'er our heads,
 Find out their enemies now. Tremble, thou wretch,
 That hast within thee undivulged crimes,
 Unwhipp'd of justice: Hide thee, thou bloody
 hand;

Thou perjurd, and thou simular⁴ man of virtue
 Thou art incestuous: Caitiff, to pieces shake,
 That under covert and convenient seeming
 Hast practis'd on man's life:—Close pent-up guilts,
 Rive your concealing continents, and cry
 These dreadful summoners grace.⁵ — I am a man,
 More sinn'd against, than sinning.

Kent. Alack, bare-headed!
 Gracious my lord, hard by here is a hovel;
 Some friendship will it lend you 'gainst the tempest;
 Repose you there: while I to this hard house,
 (More hard than is the stone whereof 'tis rais'd;
 Which even but now, demanding after you,
 Denied me to come in,) return, and force
 Their scant'd courtesy.

Lear. My wits begin to turn, —
 Come on, my boy: How dost, my boy? Art cold?
 I am cold myself. — Where is this straw, my fellow?
 The art of our necessities is strange,
 That can make vile things precious. Come, your
 hovel,
 Poor fool and knave, I have one part in my heart
 That's sorry yet for thee.

³ Scare or frighten.

⁴ Counterfeit.

⁵ Favour.

Fool. *He that has a little tiny wit, —
With heigh, ho, the wind and the rain, —
Must make content with his fortunes fit ;
For the rain it raineth every day.*⁶

Lear. True, my good boy, — Come, bring us to
this hovel. [Exeunt LEAR and KENT.

Fool. I'll speak a prophecy ere I go :

*When priests are more in word than matter ;
When brewers mar their malt with water ;
When every case in law is right ;
No squire in debt, nor no poor knight ;
When slanders do not live in tongues ;
Nor cutpurses come not to throngs ;
Then shall the realm of Albion
Come to great confusion.
Then comes the time, who lives to see't,
That going shall be us'd with feet.*

This prophecy Merlin shall make ; for I live before
his time. [Exit.

SCENE III.

A Room in Gloster's Castle.

Enter GLOSTER and EDMUND.

Glo. Alack, alack, Edmund, I like not this unnatural dealing : When I desired their leave that I might pity him, they took from me the use of mine own house ; charged me on pain of their perpetual displeasure, neither to speak of him, entreat for him, nor any way sustain him.

Edm. Most savage, and unnatural !

⁶ Part of the Clown's song in *Twelfth Night*.

Glo. Go to ; say you nothing : There is division between the dukes ; and a worse matter than that : I have received a letter this night ; — 'tis dangerous to be spoken ; — I have locked the letter in my closet : these injuries the king now bears will be revenged home ; there is part of a power already footed : we must incline to the king. I will seek him, and privily relieve him : go you, and maintain talk with the duke, that my charity be not of him perceived : If he ask for me, I am ill, and gone to bed. If I die for it, as no less is threatened me, the king my old master must be relieved. There is some strange thing toward, Edmund ; pray you, be careful. [*Exit.*

Edm. This courtesy, forbid thee, shall the duke Instantly know ; and of that letter too : — This seems a fair deserving, and must draw me That which my father loses ; no less than all : The younger rises, when the old doth fall. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

A Part of the Heath, with a Hovel.

Enter LEAR, KENT, and Fool.

Kent. Here is the place, my lord ; good my lord, enter ;
The tyranny of the open night's too rough
For nature to endure. [*Storm still.*

Lear. Let me alone.

Kent. Good my lord, enter here.

Lear. Wilt break my heart ?

Kent. I'd rather break mine own : Good my lord, enter.

Lear. Thou think'st 'tis much, that this contentious storm

InvaDES us to the skin : so 'tis to thee ;
 But where the greater malady is fix'd,
 The lesser is scarce felt. Thou'dst shun a bear :
 But if thy flight lay toward the raging sea,
 Thou'dst meet the bear i'the mouth. When the
 mind's free,

The body's delicate : the tempest in my mind
 Doth from my senses take all feeling else,
 Save what beats there. — Filial ingratitude !
 Is it not as this mouth should tear this hand,
 For lifting food to't? — But I will punish home : —
 No, I will weep no more. — In such a night
 To shut me out ! — Pour on ; I will endure : —
 In such a night as this ! O Regan, Goneril ! —
 Your old kind father, whose frank heart gave
 all, —

O, that way madness lies ; let me shun that :
 No more of that. —

Kent. Good my lord, enter here.

Lear. Pr'ythee, go in thyself ; seek thine own
 ease ;

This tempest will not give me leave to ponder
 On things would hurt me more. — But I'll go in :
 In, boy ; go first. — [*To the Fool.*] You houseless
 poverty, —

Nay, get thee in. I'll pray, and then I'll sleep. —
 [*Fool goes in.*]

Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,
 That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
 How shall your houseless heads, and unfed sides,
 Your loop'd, and window'd raggedness, defend you
 From seasons such as these ? O, I have ta'en
 Too little care of this ! Take physick, pomp ;
 Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel ;
 That thou may'st shake the superflux to them,
 And show the heavens more just.

Edg. [*Within.*] Fathom and half, fathom and half! Poor Tom!

[*The Fool runs out from the Hovel.*]

Fool. Come not in here, nuncle, here's a spirit. Help me, help me!

Kent. Give me thy hand. — Who's there?

Fool. A spirit, a spirit; he says his name's poor Tom.

Kent. What art thou that dost grumble there i'the straw?

Come forth.

Enter EDGAR, disguised as a Madman.

Edg. Away! the foul fiend follows me! — Through the sharp hawthorn blows the cold wind. —

Humph! go to thy cold bed, and warm thee.

Lear. Hast thou given all to thy two daughters? And art thou come to this?

Edg. Who gives any thing to poor Tom? whom the foul fiend hath led through fire and through flame, through ford and whirlpool, over bog and quagmire; that hath laid knives under his pillow, and halters in his pew; set ratsbane by his porridge; made him proud of heart, to ride on a bay trotting-horse over four-inched bridges, to course his own shadow for a traitor: — Bless thy five wits! Tom's a-cold, — O, do de, do de, do de. — Bless thee from whirlwinds, star-blasting, and taking!⁷ Do poor Tom some charity, whom the foul fiend vexes: There could I have him now, — and there, — and there, — and there again, and there.

[*Storm continues.*]

⁷ To take is to blast, or strike with malignant influence.

Lear. What, have his daughters brought him to this pass? —

Could'st thou save nothing? Didst thou give them all?

Fool. Nay, he reserved a blanket, else we had been all shamed.

Lear. Now, all the plagues that in the pendulous air

Hang fated o'er men's faults, light on thy daughters!

Kent. He hath no daughters, sir.

Lear. Death, traitor! nothing could have subdued nature

To such a lowness, but his unkind daughters. —

Is it the fashion, that discarded fathers

Should have thus little mercy on their flesh?

Judicious punishment! 'twas this flesh begot

Those pelican daughters.

Edg. Pillicock sat on pillicock's hill; —

Halloo, halloo, loo, loo!

Fool. This cold night will turn us all to fools and madmen.

Edg. Take heed o'the foul fiend: Obey thy parents; keep thy word justly; swear not; commit not with man's sworn spouse; set not thy sweet heart on proud array: Tom's a-cold.

Lear. What hast thou been?

Edg. A serving-man, proud in heart and mind; that curled my hair; wore gloves in my cap⁸; swore as many oaths as I spake words, and broke them in the sweet face of heaven: Wine loved I deeply; dice dearly; False of heart, light of ear, bloody of hand: Hog in sloth, fox in stealth, wolf in greediness, dog in madness, lion in prey. Let not the creaking of shoes, nor the rustling of silks, betray thy poor heart to women: Keep thy pen from

⁸ It was the custom to wear gloves in the hat, as the favour of a mistress.

lenders' books, and defy the foul fiend. — Still through the hawthorn blows the cold wind: Says suum, mun, ha no nonny, dolphin my boy, my boy, sessa; let him trot by. [*Storm still continues.*]

Lear. Why, thou wert better in thy grave, than to answer with thy uncovered body this extremity of the skies. — Is man no more than this? Consider him well: Thou owest the worm no silk, the beast no hide, the sheep no wool, the cat no perfume: — Ha! here's three of us are sophisticated! — Thou art the thing itself: unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor, bare, forked animal as thou art. — Off, off, you lendings: — Come; unbutton here. [*Tearing off his Clothes.*]

Fool. Pry'thee, nuncle, be contented; this is a naughty night to swim in. — Look, here comes a walking fire.

Edg. This is the foul fiend Flibbertigibbet: he begins at curfew, and walks till the first cock; he gives the web and the pin⁹, squints the eye, and makes the hare-lip: mildews the white wheat, and hunts the poor creature of earth.

*Saint Withold*¹ footed thrice the wold;²
He met the night-mare, and her nine-fold;
Bid her alight,
And her troth plight,
*And, aroint thee*³, *witch, aroint thee!*

Kent. How fares your grace?

Enter GLOSTER, with a Torch.

Lear. What's he?

Kent. Who's there? What is't you seek?

⁹ Diseases of the eye.

¹ A saint said to protect his devotees from the disease called the *night-mare*.

² Wild downs, so called in various parts of England. ³ *Avaunt*.

Glo. What are you there? Your names?

Edg. Poor Tom; that eats the swimming frog, the toad, the tadpole, the wall-newt, and the water⁴; that in the fury of his heart, when the foul fiend rages, swallows the old rat, and the ditch-dog; drinks the green mantle of the standing-pool; who is whipped from tything to tything⁵, and stocked, punished, and imprisoned; who hath had three suits to his back, six shirts to his body, horse to ride, and weapon to wear.

*But mice, and rats, and such small deer,
Have been Tom's food for seven long year.*

Beware my follower: — Peace, Smolkin⁶; peace, thou fiend!

Glo. What, hath your grace no better company?

Edg. The prince of darkness is a gentleman; Modo he's call'd, and Mahu.⁷

Glo. Our flesh and blood, mylord, is grown so vile, That it doth hate what gets it.

Edg. Poor Tom's a-cold.

Glo. Go in with me; my duty cannot suffer To obey in all your daughter's hard commands: Though their injunction be to bar my doors, And let this tyrannous night take hold upon you; Yet have I ventur'd to come seek you out, And bring you where both fire and food is ready.

Lear. First let me talk with this philosopher. — What is the cause of thunder?

Kent. Good my lord, take his offer; Go into the house.

Lear. I'll talk a word with this same learned Theban. —

What is your study?

⁴ *i. e.* The water-newt. ⁵ A tything is a division of a county.

⁶ Name of a spirit.

⁷ The chief devil.

Edg. How to prevent the fiend, and to kill vermin.

Lear. Let me ask you one word in private.

Kent. Impórtune him once more to go, my lord ;

His wits begin to unsettle.

Glo. Can'st thou blame him ?
His daughters seek his death : — Ah, that good
Kent ! —

He said it would be thus : — Poor banish'd man ! —
Thou say'st, the king grows mad ; I'll tell thee,
friend,

I am almost mad myself : I had a son,
Now outlaw'd from my blood ; he sought my life,
But lately, very late ; I lov'd him, friend, —
No father his son dearer : true to tell thee,

[*Storm continues.*
The grief hath craz'd my wits. What a night's
this !

I do beseech your grace, —

Lear. O, cry you mercy :
Noble philosopher, your company.

Edg. Tom's a-cold.

Glo. In, fellow, there, to the hovel : keep thee
warm,

Lear. Come, let's in all.

Kent. This way, my lord.

Lear. With him ;

I will keep still with my philosopher.

Kent. Good my lord, sooth him ; let him take
the fellow :

Glo. Take him you on.

Kent. Sirrah, come on ; go along with us.

Lear. Come, good Athenian.

Glo. No words, no words :

Hush.

Edg. *Child*⁸ *Rowland to the dark tower came,
His word was still, — Fie, foh, and fum,
I smell the blood of a British man.*

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.

A Room in Gloster's Castle.

Enter CORNWALL and EDMUND.

Corn. I will have my revenge, ere I depart his house.

Edm. How, my lord, I may be censured, that nature thus gives way to loyalty, something fears me to think of.

Corn. I now perceive, it was not altogether your brother's evil disposition made him seek his death ; but a provoking merit, set a-work by a reproveable badness in himself.

Edm. How malicious is my fortune, that I must repent to be just ! This is the letter he spoke of, which approves him an intelligent party to the advantages of France. O heavens ! that this treason were not, or not I the detector !

Corn. Go with me to the duchess.

Edm. If the matter of this paper be certain, you have mighty business in hand.

Corn. True, or false, it hath made thee earl of Gloster. Seek out where thy father is, that he may be ready for our apprehension.

Edm. [*Aside.*] If I find him comforting the king, it will stuff his suspicion more fully. — I will persevere in my course of loyalty, though the conflict be sore between that and my blood.

Corn. I will lay trust upon thee ; and thou shalt find a dearer father in my love. [*Exeunt.*]

⁸ *Child* is an old term for knight.

SCENE VI.

A Chamber in a Farm-House, adjoining the Castle.

Enter GLOSTER, LEAR, KENT, Fool, and EDGAR.

Glo. Here is better than the open air ; take it thankfully ; I will piece out the comfort with what addition I can : I will not be long from you.

Kent. All the power of his wits has given way to his impatience : — The gods reward your kindness !

[*Exit GLOSTER.*

Edg. Frateretto calls me ; and tells me, Nero is an angler in the lake of darkness. Pray, innocent,⁹ and beware the foul fiend.

Fool. Pr'ythee, nuncle, tell me, whether a madman be a gentleman, or a yeoman ?

Lear. A king, a king !

Fool. No ; he's a yeoman, that has a gentleman to his son : for he's a mad yeoman, that sees his son a gentleman before him.

Lear. To have a thousand with red burning spits
Come hissing in upon them : —

Edg. The foul fiend bites my back.

Fool. He's mad, that trusts in the tameness of a wolf.

Lear. It shall be done, I will arraign them
straight : —

Come, sit thou here, most learned justicer ; —

[*To EDGAR.*

Thou, sapient sir, sit here. [*To the Fool.*] — Now,
you she foxes ! —

Edg. Look, where he stands and glares ! —
Wantest thou eyes at trial, madam ?

⁹ Addressed to the Fool, who were anciently called Innocents.

Come o'er the bourn¹, Bessy, to me : —

Fool. She dares not come over to thee.

Edg. The foul fiend haunts poor Tom in the voice of a nightingale. *Hopdance* cries in Tom's belly for two white herring. Croak not, black angel; I have no food for thee.

Kent. How do you, sir? Stand you not so amaz'd:

Will you lie down and rest upon the cushions?

Lear. I'll see their trial first: — Bring in the evidence. —

Thou robed man of justice, take thy place;

[*To EDGAR.*

And thou, his yoke-fellow of equity, [*To the Fool.*

Bench by his side : — You are of the commission, Sit you too.

[*To KENT.*

Edg. Let us deal justly.

Sleepest, or wakest thou, jolly shepherd?

Thy sheep be in the corn;

And for one blast of thy minikin mouth,

Thy sheep shall take no harm.

Pur! the cat is grey.

Lear. Arraign her first; 'tis Goneril. I here take my oath before this honorable assembly, she kicked the poor king her father.

Fool. Come hither, mistress; Is your name Goneril?

Lear. She cannot deny it.

Fool. Cry you mercy, I took you for a joint-stool.

Lear. And here's another, whose warp'd looks proclaim

What store her heart is made of. — Stop her there!

¹ Brook, or rivulet.

Arms, arms, sword, fire!—Corruption in the place!
False justicer, why hast thou let her 'scape?

Edg. Bless thy five wits!

Kent. O pity!—Sir, where is the patience now,
That you so oft have boasted to retain?

Edg. My tears begin to take his part so much,
They'll mar my counterfeiting. [*Aside.*]

Lear. The little dogs and all,
Tray, Blanch, and Sweet-heart, see, they bark at me.

Edg. Tom will throw his head at them:—
Avaunt, you curs!

*Be thy mouth or black or white,
Tooth that poisons if it bite;
Mastiff, greyhound, mongrel grim,
Hound, or spaniel, brach, or lym;²
Or bobtail tike, or trundle-tail;
Tom will make them weep and wail:
For, with throwing thus my head,
Dogs leap the hatch, and all are fled.*

Do de, do de. Sessa. Come, march to wakes and
fairs, and market towns:—Poor Tom, thy horn is
dry.

Lear. Then let them anatomize Regan, see what
breeds about her heart: Is there any cause in na-
ture that makes these hard hearts?—You, sir, I
entertain you for one of my hundred; only, I do
not like the fashion of your garments: you will
say, they are Persian attire; but let them be
changed. [*To EDGAR.*]

Kent. Now, good my lord, lie here, and rest
awhile.

Lear. Make no noise, make no noise; draw the
curtains: So, so, so: We'll go to supper i'the
morning: So, so, so.

Fool. And I'll go to bed at noon.

² A blood-hound.

Re-enter GLOSTER.

Glo. Come hither, friend : Where is the king my master ?

Kent. Here, sir ; but trouble him not, his wits are gone.

Glo. Good friend, I pr'ythee take him in thy arms ;

I have o'erheard a plot of death upon him :

There is a litter ready ; lay him in't,

And drive towards Dover, friend, where thou shalt meet

Both welcome and protection. Take up thy master :

If thou should'st dally half an hour, his life

With thine, and all that offer to defend him,

Stand in assured loss : Take up, take up ;

And follow me, that will with some provision

Give thee quick conduct.

Kent. Oppress'd nature sleeps : —

This rest might yet have balm'd thy broken senses,

Which, if convenience will not allow,

Stand in hard cure. — Come, help to bear thy

master ;

Thou must not stay behind.

[*To the Fool.*

Glo. Come, come, away.

[*Exeunt KENT, GLOSTER, and the Fool, bearing off the King.*

Edg. When we our betters see bearing our woes,
We scarcely think our miseries our foes.

Who alone suffers, suffers most i'the mind ;

Leaving free things, and happy shows, behind :

But then the mind much sufferance doth o'erskip,

When grief hath mates, and bearing fellowship.

How light and portable my pain seems now,

When that which makes me bend, makes the king

bow ;

Some five or six and thirty of his knights,
 Hot questrists⁵ after him, met him at gate ;
 Who, with some other of the lord's dependants,
 Are gone with him towards Dover, where they
 boast
 To have well armed friends.

Corn. Get horses for your mistress.

Gon. Farewell, sweet lord, and sister.

[*Exeunt GONERIL and EDMUND.*]

Corn. Edmund, farewell. — Go, seek the traitor
 Gloster,

Pinion him like a thief, bring him before us :

[*Exeunt other Servants.*]

Though well we may not pass upon his life
 Without the form of justice ; yet our power
 Shall do a courtesy⁶ to our wrath, which men
 May blame, but not control. Who's there ? The
 traitor.

Re-enter Servants, with GLOSTER.

Reg. Ingrateful fox ! 'tis he.

Corn. Bind fast his corky⁷ arms.

Glo. What mean your graces ? — Good my
 friends, consider

You are my guests : do me no foul play, friends.

Corn. Bind him, I say. [Servants bind him.]

Reg. Hard, hard : — O filthy traitor !

Glo. Unmerciful lady as you are, I am none.

Corn. To this chair bind him : — Villain, thou
 shalt find — [REGAN plucks his beard.]

Glo. By the kind gods 'tis most ignobly done
 To pluck me by the beard.

Reg. So white, and such a traitor !

Glo. Naughtly lady,
 These hairs, which thou dost ravish from my chin,

⁵ Enquirers.

⁶ Bend.

⁷ Dry, like cork.

Will quicken⁸ and accuse thee: I am your host;
 With robbers' hands, my hospitable favours⁹
 You should not ruffle thus. What will you do?

Corn. Come, sir, what letters had you late from
 France?

Reg. Be simple-answer'd, for we know the truth.

Corn. And what confederacy have you with the
 traitors

Late footed in the kingdom?

Reg. To whose hands have you sent the lunatick
 king?

Speak.

Glo. I have a letter guessingly set down,
 Which came from one that's of a neutral heart,
 And not from one oppos'd.

Corn.

Cunning.

Reg.

And false.

Corn. Where hast thou sent the king?

Glo.

To Dover.

Reg.

Wherefore

To Dover? Wast thou not charg'd at thy peril—

Corn. Wherefore to Dover? Let him first answer
 that.

Glo. I am tied to the stake, and I must stand the
 course.

Reg. Wherefore to Dover?

Glo. Because I would not see thy cruel nails
 Pluck out his poor old eyes; nor thy fierce sister
 In his anointed flesh stick boarish fangs.
 The sea, with such a storm as his bare head
 In hell-black night endur'd, would have buoy'd up,
 And quench'd the stelled¹ fires: yet, poor old
 heart,

He holp the heavens to rain.

If wolves had at thy gate howl'd that stern time,
 Thou should'st have said, *Good porter, turn the key;*

⁸ Live.

⁹ Features.

¹ Starred.

All cruels else subscrib'd ² : — But I shall see
The winged vengeance overtake such children.

Corn. See it shalt thou never : — Fellows, hold
the chair :

Upon these eyes of thine I'll set my foot.

[*GLOSTER is held down in his Chair, while
CORNWALL plucks out one of his Eyes,
and sets his Foot on it.*

Glo. He, that will think to live till he be old,
Give me some help : — O cruel ! O ye gods !

Reg. One side will mock another ; the other too.

Corn. If you see vengeance, —

Serv. Hold your hand, my lord :
I have serv'd you ever since I was a child :
But better service have I never done you,
Than now to bid you hold.

Reg. How now, you dog ?

Serv. If you did wear a beard upon your chin,
I'd shake it on this quarrel : What do you mean ?

Corn. My villain ! [Draws, and runs at him.]

Serv. Nay, then come on, and take the chance
of anger.

[Draws. They fight. CORNWALL is wounded.]

Reg. Give me thy sword. — [To another *Serv.*]
A peasant stand up thus !

[Snatches a Sword, comes behind, and stabs him.]

Serv. O, I am slain ! — My lord, you have one
eye left

To see some mischief on him : — O ! [Dies.]

Corn. Lest it see more, prevent it : — Out, vile
jelly !

Where is thy lustre now ?

[Tears out GLOSTER's other Eye, and throws it
on the Ground.]

Glo. All dark and comfortless. — Where's my
son Edmund ?

² Yielded, submitted to the necessity of the occasion.

Edmund, enkindle all the sparks of nature,
To quit³ this horrid act.

Reg. Out, treacherous villain!
Thou call'st on him that hates thee: it was he
That made the overture⁴ of thy treasons to us;
Who is too good to pity thee.

Glo. O my follies!
Then Edgar was abus'd —
Kind gods, forgive me that, and prosper him!

Reg. Go, thrust him out at gates, and let him
smell
His way to Dover. — How is't, my lord? How
look you?

Corn. I have receiv'd a hurt: — Follow me,
lady. —

Turn out that eyeless villain; — throw this slave
Upon the dunghill. — Regan, I bleed apace:
Untimely comes this hurt: Give me your arm.

[*Exit* CORNWALL, led by REGAN; — Servants
unbind GLOSTER, and lead him out.]

1 *Serv.* I'll never care what wickedness I do,
If this man comes to good.

2 *Serv.* If she live long,
And, in the end, meet the old course of death,
Women will all turn monsters.

1 *Serv.* Let's follow the old earl, and get the
Bedlam⁵
To lead him where he would; his roguish madness
Allows itself to any thing.

2 *Serv.* Go thou; I'll fetch some flax, and whites
of eggs,
To apply to his bleeding face. Now, heaven help
him! [Exeunt severally.]

³ Requite

⁴ Laid open.

⁵ Bedlamite, madman.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. — *The Heath.**Enter* EDGAR.

Edg. Yet better thus, and known to be con-
temn'd,

Than still contemn'd and flatter'd. To be worst,
The lowest and most dejected thing of fortune,
Stands still in esperance⁶, lives not in fear :
The lamentable change is from the best ;
The worst returns to laughter. Welcome then,
Thou unsubstantial air, that I embrace !
The wretch, that thou hast blown unto the worst,
Owes nothing to thy blasts. — But who comes
here ?

Enter GLOSTER, *led by an Old Man.*

My father, poorly led ? — World, world, O world !
But that thy strange mutations make us hate thee,
Life would not yield to age.

Old Man. O my good lord, I have been your
tenant, and your father's tenant, these fourscore
years.

Glo. Away, get thee away ; good friend, be
gone :

Thy comforts can do me no good at all,
Thee they may hurt.

Old Man. Alack, sir, you cannot see your way.

Glo. I have no way, and therefore want no eyes ;
I stumbled when I saw : Full oft 'tis seen,
Our mean secures us ; and our mere defects
Prove our commodities. — Ah, dear son Edgar,

⁶ In hope.

The food of thy abused father's wrath!
Might I but live to see thee in my touch,
I'd say, I had eyes again!

Old Man. How now? Who's there?

Edg. [*Aside.*] O gods! Who is't can say, *I am at the worst?*

I am worse than e'er I was.

Old Man. 'Tis poor mad Tom.

Edg. [*Aside.*] And worse I may be yet: The worst is not,

So long as we can say, *This is the worst.*

Old Man. Fellow, where goest?

Glo. Is it a beggar-man?

Old Man. Madman and beggar too.

Glo. He has some reason, else he could not beg.

I'the last night's storm I such a fellow saw;
Which made me think a man a worm: My son
Came then into my mind; and yet my mind
Was then scarce friends with him: I have heard
more since.

Edg. How should this be?—

Bad is the trade must play the fool to sorrow,
Ang'ring itself and others. [*Aside.*]— Bless thee,
master!

Glo. Is that the naked fellow?

Old Man. Ay, my lord.

Glo. Then, pr'ythee, get thee gone: If, for my
sake,

Thou wilt o'ertake us, hence a mile or twain,
I'the way to Dover, do it for ancient love;
And bring some covering for this naked soul,
Whom I'll entreat to lead me.

Old Man. Alack, sir, he's mad.

Glo. 'Tis the time's plague, when madmen lead
the blind.

Do as I bid thee, or rather do thy pleasure;
Above the rest, be gone.

Old Man. I'll bring him the best 'parel that I have,

Come on't what will. [*Exit.*

Glo. Sirrah, naked fellow.

Edg. Poor Tom's a-cold: — I cannot daub⁷ it further. [*Aside.*

Glo. Come hither, fellow.

Edg. [*Aside.*] And yet I must. — Bless thy sweet eyes, they bleed.

Glo. Know'st thou the way to Dover?

Edg. Both stile and gate, horse-way and foot-path. Poor Tom hath been scared out of his good wits: Bless the good man from the foul fiend! Five fiends have been in poor Tom at once. So, bless thee, master!

Glo. Here, take this purse, thou whom the heaven's plagues

Have humbled to all strokes: that I am wretched,
Makes thee the happier: — Heavens, deal so still!
Let the superfluous, and lust-dieted man,
That slaves your ordinance, that will not see
Because he doth not feel, feel your power quickly;
So distribution should undo excess,
And each man have enough. — Dost thou know
Dover?

Edg. Ay, master.

Glo. There is a cliff, whose high and bending head

Looks fearfully in the confined deep:
Bring me but to the very brim of it,
And I'll repair the misery thou dost bear,
With something rich about me: from that place
I shall no leading need.

Edg. Give me thy arm;

Poor Tom shall lead thee. [*Exeunt.*

⁷ Disguise.

SCENE II.

Before the Duke of Albany's Palace.

Enter GONERIL and EDMUND ; Steward meeting them.

Gon. Welcome, my lord: I marvel, our mild husband
Not met us on the way:— Now, where's your master?

Stew. Madam, within; but never man so chang'd:
I told him of the army that was landed;
He smil'd at it: I told him you were coming;
His answer was, *The worse*: of Gloster's treachery,
And of the loyal service of his son,
When I inform'd him, then he call'd me sot;
And told me, I had turn'd the wrong side out:—
What most he should dislike, seems pleasant to
him;
What like, offensive.

Gon. Then shall you go no further.
[*To EDMUND.*

It is the cowish terror of his spirit,
That dares not undertake: he'll not feel wrongs,
Which tie him to an answer; Our wishes, on the
way,
May prove effects.⁸ Back, Edmund, to my brother:
Hasten his musters, and conduct his powers:
I must change arms at home, and give the distaff
Into my husband's hands. This trusty servant
Shall pass between us: ere long you are like to hear,
If you dare venture in your own behalf,
A mistress's command. Wear this; spare speech;
[*Giving a Favour.*

⁸ *i. e.* Our wishes on the road may be completed.

Decline your head : this kiss, if it durst speak,
 Would stretch thy spirits up into the air ; —
 Conceive, and fare thee well.

Edm. Yours in the ranks of death.

Gon. My most dear Gloster !

[*Exit* EDMUND.]

O, the difference of man, and man ! To thee
 A woman's services are due ; my fool
 Usurps my bed.

Stew. Madam, here comes my lord.

[*Exit* Steward.]

Enter ALBANY.

Gon. I have been worth the whistle.⁹

Alb. O Goneril,

You are not worth the dust which the rude wind
 Blows in your face. — I fear your disposition :
 That nature, which contemns its origin,
 Cannot be border'd certain in itself ;
 She that herself will sliver¹ and disbranch
 From her material sap, perforce must wither,
 And come to deadly use.

Gon. No more ; the text is foolish.

Alb. Wisdom and goodness to the vile seem vile :
 Filths savour but themselves. What have you
 done ?

Tigers, not daughters, what have you perform'd ?
 A father, and a gracious aged man,
 Whose reverence the head-lugg'd bear would lick,
 Most barbarous, most degenerate ! have you madded.
 Could my good brother suffer you to do it ?
 A man, a prince, by him so benefited ?
 If that the heavens do not their visible spirits
 Send quickly down to tame these vile offences,
 'Twill come,

⁹ Worth calling for.

¹ Tear off.

Humanity must perforce prey on itself,
Like monsters of the deep.

Gon. Milk-liver'd man!

Thou bear'st a cheek for blows, a head for wrongs;
Who hast not in thy brows an eye discerning
Thine honour from thy suffering; that not know'st,
Fools do those villains pity, who are punish'd
Ere they have done their mischief. Where's thy
drum?

France spreads his banners in our noiseless land;
With plumed helm thy slayer begins threats;
Whilst thou, a moral fool, sit'st still, and cry'st,
Alack! why does he so?

Alb. See thyself, devil!

Proper deformity seems not in the fiend
So horrid, as in woman.

Gon. O vain fool!

Alb. Thou changed and self-cover'd thing, for
shame,

Be-monster not thy feature. Were it my fitness
To let these hands obey my blood,
They are apt enough to dislocate and tear
Thy flesh and bones: — Howe'er thou art a fiend,
A woman's shape doth shield thee.

Gon. Marry, your manhood now!

Enter a Messenger.

Alb. What news?

Mess. O, my good lord, the duke of Cornwall's
dead;

Slain by his servant, going to put out
The other eye of Gloster.

Alb. Gloster's eyes!

Mess. A servant that he bred, thrill'd with re-
morse,

Oppos'd against the act, bending his sword

To his great master ; who, thereat enrag'd,
Flew on him, and amongst them fell'd him dead :
But not without that harmful stroke, which since
Hath pluck'd him after.

Alb. This shows you are above,
You justicers, that these our nether crimes
So speedily can venge ! — But, O poor Gloster !
Lost he his other eye ?

Mess. Both, both, my lord. —
This letter, madam, craves a speedy answer ;
'Tis from your sister.

Gon. [*Aside.*] One way I like this well ;
But being widow, and my Gloster with her,
May all the building in my fancy pluck
Upon my hateful life : Another way,
The news is not so tart. — I'll read, and answer.

[*Exit.*
Alb. Where was his son, when they did take his
eyes ?

Mess. Come with my lady hither.

Alb. He is not here.

Mess. No, my good lord ; I met him back again.

Alb. Knows he the wickedness ?

Mess. Ay, my good lord ; 'twas he inform'd
against him ;

And quit the house on purpose, that their punish-
ment

Might have the freer course.

Alb. Gloster, I live
To thank thee for the love thou show'dst the king,
And to revenge thine eyes. — Come hither, friend :
Tell me what more thou knowest. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

The French Camp near Dover.

Enter KENT, and a Gentleman.

Kent. Why the king of France is so suddenly gone back know you the reason?

Gent. Something he left imperfect in the state, Which since his coming forth is thought of; which Imports to the kingdom so much fear and danger, That his personal return was most requir'd, And necessary.

Kent. Who hath he left behind him general?

Gent. The Mareschal of France, Monsieur le Fer.

Kent. Did your letters pierce the queen to any demonstration of grief?

Gent. Ay, sir; she took them, read them in my presence;

And now and then an ample tear trill'd down Her delicate cheek: it seem'd, she was a queen Over her passion; who, most rebel-like, Sought to be king o'er her.

Kent. O, then it mov'd her.

Gent. Not to a rage: patience and sorrow strove Who should express her goodliest. You have seen Sunshine and rain at once: her smiles and tears Were like a better day: Those happy smiles, That play'd on her ripe lip, seem'd not to know What guests were in her eyes; which parted thence, As pearls from diamonds dropp'd. — In brief,
sorrow

Would be a rarity most belov'd, if all Could so become it.

Kent. Made she no verbal question?²

² Discourse, conversation.

Gent. 'Faith, once, or twice, she heav'd the name
of *Father*

Pantingly forth, as if it press'd her heart;
Cried, *Sisters! sisters! — Shame of ladies! sisters!*
Kent! father! sisters! What? i'the storm? i'the
night?

*Let pity not be believed!*³ — There she shook
The holy water from her heavenly eyes,
And clamour moisten'd: then away she started
To deal with grief alone.

Kent. It is the stars,
The stars above us, govern our conditions;⁴
Else one self mate and mate could not beget
Such different issues. You spoke not with her
since?

Gent. No.

Kent. Was this before the king returned?

Gent.

No, since.

Kent. Well, sir; The poor distress'd Lear is
i'the town:

Who sometime, in his better tune, remembers
What we are come about, and by no means
Will yield to see his daughter.

Gent.

Why, good sir?

Kent. A sovereign shame so elbows him: his
own unkindness,

That stripp'd her from his benediction, turn'd her
To foreign casualties, gave her dear rights
To his dog-hearted daughters, — these things sting
His mind so venomously, that burning shame
Detains him from Cordelia.

Gent.

Alack, poor gentleman!

Kent. Of Albany's and Cornwall's powers you
heard not?

Gent. 'Tis so; they are afoot.

³ *i. e.* Let not pity be supposed to exist.

⁴ Dispositions.

Kent. Well, sir, I'll bring you to our master Lear,
 And leave you to attend him : some dear cause,
 Will in concealment wrap me up awhile ;
 When I am known aright, you shall not grieve
 Lending me this acquaintance. I pray you, go
 Along with me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

The same. A Tent.

Enter CORDELIA, Physician, and Soldiers.

Cor. Alack, 'tis he ; why, he was met even now
 As mad as the vex'd sea : singing aloud ;
 Crown'd with rank fumiter⁵, and furrow weeds,
 With harlocks⁶, hemlock, nettles, cuckoo-flowers,
 Darnel, and all the idle weeds that grow
 In our sustaining corn. — A century send forth ;
 Search every acre in the high grown field,
 And bring him to our eye. [*Exit an Officer.*] —

What can man's wisdom do,
 In the restoring his bereaved sense ?
 He, that helps him, take all my outward worth.

Phy. There is means, madam :
 Our foster-nurse of nature is repose,
 The which he lacks ; that to provoke in him,
 Are many simples operative, whose power
 Will close the eye of anguish.

Cor. All bless'd secrets,
 All you unpublish'd virtues of the earth,
 Spring with my tears ! be aidant, and remediate,
 In the good man's distress ! — Seek, seek for him ;
 Lest his ungovern'd rage dissolve the life
 That wants the means to lead it.

⁵ Fumitory.

⁶ Charlocks.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Madam, news ;
The British powers are marching hitherward.

Cor. 'Tis known before ; our preparation stands
In expectation of them. — O dear father,
It is thy business that I go about ;
Therefore great France
My mourning, and important⁷ tears, hath pitied.
No blown⁸ ambition doth our arms incite,
But love, dear love, and our ag'd father's right :
Soon may I hear, and see him. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.

A Room in Gloster's Castle.

Enter REGAN and Steward.

Reg. But are my brother's powers set forth ?

Stew. Ay, madam.

Reg. Himself

In person there ?

Stew. Madam, with much ado :

Your sister is the better soldier.

Reg. Lord Edmund spake not with your lord at
home ?

Stew. No, madam.

Reg. What might import my sister's letter to
him ?

Stew. I know not, lady.

Reg. 'Faith, he is posted hence on serious matter.
It was great ignorance, Gloster's eyes being out,
To let him live ; where he arrives, he moves

⁷ Importunate.

⁸ Inflated, swelling.

All hearts against us : Edmund, I think, is gone,
 In pity of his misery, to despatch
 His nighted life ; moreover, to descry
 The strength o'the enemy.

Stew. I must needs after him, madam, with my
 letter.

Reg. Our troops set forth to-morrow ; stay with us ;
 The ways are dangerous.

Stew. I may not, madam !
 My lady charg'd my duty in this business.

Reg. Why should she write to Edmund ? Might
 not you
 Transport her purposes by word ? Belike,
 Something — I know not what : — I'll love thee
 much,
 Let me unseal the letter.

Stew. Madam, I had rather —

Reg. I know, your lady does not love her
 husband ;
 I am sure of that : and, at her late being here,
 She gave strange œiliads⁹, and most speaking looks
 To noble Edmund : I know, you are of her bosom.

Stew. I, madam ?

Reg. I speak in understanding ; you are, I
 know it :

Therefore, I do advise you, take this note :¹
 My lord is dead ; Edmund and I have talk'd ;
 And more convenient is he for my hand,
 Than for your lady's : — You may gather more.
 If you do find him, pray you, give him this :
 And when your mistress hears thus much from you,
 I pray, desire her call her wisdom to her.
 So, fare you well.

If you do chance to hear of that blind traitor,
 Preferment falls on him that cuts him off.

⁹ A cast, or significant glance of the eye.

¹ Observe what I am saying.

Stew. 'Would I could meet him, madam; I would
 show
 What party I do follow.
Reg. Fare thee well. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI.

The Country near Dover.

Enter GLOSTER, and EDGAR dressed like a Peasant.

Glo. When shall we come to the top of that same
 hill?

Edg. You do climb up it now: look, how we
 labour.

Glo. Methinks, the ground is even.

Edg. Horrible steep;
 Hark, do you hear the sea?

Glo. No, truly.

Edg. Why, then your other senses grow imper-
 fect

By your eyes' anguish.

Glo. So may it be, indeed:
 Methinks, thy voice is alter'd; and thou speak'st
 In better phrase, and matter, than thou didst.

Edg. You are much deceiv'd; in nothing am I
 chang'd,

But in my garments.

Glo. Methinks, you are better spoken.

Edg. Come on, sir; here's the place:—stand
 still.—How fearful

And dizzy 'tis, to cast one's eyes so low!
 The crows, and choughs, that wing the midway air,
 Show scarce so gross as beetles: Half way down
 Hangs one that gathers samphire²; dreadful trade!

² A vegetable gathered for pickling.

Methinks, he seems no bigger than his head :
 The fishermen, that walk upon the beach,
 Appear like mice ; and you' tall anchoring bark,
 Diminish'd to her cock³ ; her cock, a buoy
 Almost too small for sight : The murmuring surge,
 That on the unnumber'd idle pebbles chafes,
 Cannot be heard so high : — I'll look no more ;
 Lest my brain turn, and the deficient sight
 Topple⁴ down headlong.

Glo. Set me where you stand.

Edg. Give me your hand : You are now within
 a foot

Of the extreme verge . for all beneath the moon
 Would I not leap upright.

Glo. Let go my hand.

Here, friend, is another purse ; in it a jewel
 Well worth a poor man's taking : Fairies, and gods,
 Prosper it with thee ! Go thou further off ;
 Bid me farewell, and let me hear thee going.

Edg. Now fare you well, good sir.

[*Seems to go.*

Glo. With all my heart.

Edg. Why I do trifle thus with his despair,
 Is done to cure it.

Glo. O you mighty gods !

This world I do renounce : and, in your sights,
 Shake patiently my great affliction off :

If I could bear it longer, and not fall

To quarrel with your great opposeless wills,

My snuff, and loathed part of nature, should

Burn itself out. If Edgar live, O, bless him ! —

Now fellow, fare thee well.

[*He leaps, and falls along.*

Edg. Gone, sir ? farewell. —

And yet I know not how conceit may rob
 The treasury of life, when life itself

³ Her cock-boat.

⁴ Tumble.

Yields to the theft: Had he been where he
 thought,
 By this, had thought been past. — Alive, or dead?
 Ho, you sir! friend! — Hear you, sir? — speak!
 Thus might he pass indeed⁵: — Yet he revives:
 What are you, sir?

Glo. Away, and let me die.

Edg. Hadst thou been aught but gossamer,
 feathers, air,
 So many fathom down precipitating,
 Thou hadst shiver'd like an egg: but thou dost
 breathe;
 Hast heavy substance; bleed'st not; speak'st: art
 sound.

Ten masts at each make not the altitude,
 Which thou hast perpendicularly fell;
 Thy life's a miracle: Speak yet again.

Glo. But have I fallen, or no?

Edg. From the dread summit of this chalky
 bourn;
 Look up a-height; — the shrill-gorg'd⁶ lark so far
 Cannot be seen or heard: do but look up.

Glo. Alack, I have no eyes. —
 Is wretchedness depriv'd that benefit,
 To end itself by death? 'Twas yet some comfort,
 When misery could beguile the tyrant's rage,
 And frustrate his proud will.

Edg. Give me your arm:
 Up: — So; — How is't? Feel you your legs? You
 stand.

Glo. Too well, too well.

Edg. This is above all strangeness.
 Upon the crown o'the cliff, what thing was that
 Which parted from you?

Glo. A poor unfortunate beggar.

Edg. As I stood here below, methought, his eyes

⁵ Thus might he die in reality.

⁶ Shrill-throated.

Were two full moons ; he had a thousand noses,
 Horns whelk'd⁷, and wav'd like the enridged sea ;
 It was some fiend : Therefore, thou happy father,
 Think that the clearest⁸ gods, who make them
 honours

Of men's impossibilities, have preserv'd thee.

Glo. I do remember now : henceforth I'll bear
 Affliction, till it do cry out itself,

Enough, enough, and die. That thing you speak of,
 I took it for a man ; often 'twould say,

The fiend, the fiend : he led me to that place.

Edg. Bear free and patient thoughts. — But who
 comes here ?

Enter LEAR, fantastically dressed up with Flowers.

The safer sense will ne'er accommodate
 His master thus.

Lear. No, they cannot touch me for coining ;
 I am the king himself.

Edg. O thou side-piercing sight !

Lear. Nature's above art in that respect. — There's
 your press-money. That fellow handles his bow
 like a crow-keeper : draw me a clothier's yard.⁹ —
 Look, look, a mouse ! Peace, peace ; — this piece
 of toasted cheese will do't. — There's my gauntlet ;
 I'll prove it on a giant. — Bring up the brown bills.¹
 — O, well flown, bird ! — i'the clout, i'the clout² :
 hewgh ! — Give the word.³

Edg. Sweet marjoram.

Lear. Pass.

Glo. I know that voice.

Lear. Ha ! Goneril ! — with a white beard ! — They
 flatter'd me like a dog ; and told me, I had white

⁷ Twisted, convolved.

⁸ The purest.

⁹ An arrow of a cloth yard long,

Battle-axes.

² The white mark for archers to aim at.

³ The watch word.

hairs in my beard, ere the black ones were there. To say *ay*, and *no*, to every thing I said! — *Ay* and *no* too was no good divinity. When the rain came to wet me once, and the wind to make me chatter; when the thunder would not peace at my bidding; there I found them, there I smelt them out. Go to, they are not men o'their words: they told me I was every thing; 'tis a lie; I am not ague-proof.

Glo. The trick⁴ of that voice I do well remember: Is't not the king?

Lear. Ay, every inch a king: When I do stare, see, how the subject quakes. I pardon that man's life: what was thy cause? — *Adultery.* —

Thou shalt not die: for Gloster's bastard son Was kinder to his father, than my daughters Born in the lawful bed.

Glo. O, let me kiss that hand!

Lear. Let me wipe it first; it smells of mortality.

Glo. O ruin'd piece of nature! This great world Shall so wear out to nought. — Dost thou know me?

Lear. I remember thine eyes well enough. Dost thou squiny⁵ at me? No, do thy worst, blind Cupid; I'll not love. — Read thou this challenge; mark but the penning of it.

Glo. Were all the letters suns, I could not see one.

Edg. I would not take this from report; — it is, And my heart breaks at it.

Lear. Read.

Glo. What, with the case of eyes?

Lear. O, ho, are you there with me? No eyes in your head, nor no money in your purse? Your eyes are in a heavy case, your purse in a light: Yet you see how this world goes.

Glo. I see it feelingly.

Lear. What, art mad? A man may see how this

⁴ Likeness, manner.

⁵ Look asquint.

world goes, with no eyes. Look with thine ears ; see how yon' justice rails upon yon' simple thief. Hark, in thine ear : Change places ; and, handy-dandy, which is the justice, which is the thief ? — Thou hast seen a farmer's dog bark at a beggar ?

Glo. Ay, sir.

Lear. And the creature run from the cur ? There thou might'st behold the great image of authority : a dog's obeyed in office.

Through tatter'd clothes small vices do appear ;
Robes, and furr'd gowns, hide all. Plate sin with
gold,

And the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks :
Arm it in rags, a pigmy's straw doth pierce it.
None does offend, none, I say, none ; I'll able 'em :
Take that of me, my friend, who have the power
To seal the accuser's lips. Get thee glass eyes ;
And, like a scurvy politician, seem
To see the things thou dost not. — Now, now, now,
now :

Pull off my boots : — harder, harder ; so.

Edg. O, matter and impertinency mix'd !
Reason in madness !

Lear. If thou wilt weep my fortunes, take my
eyes.

I know thee well enough ; thy name is Gloster :
Thou must be patient ; we came crying hither.
Thou know'st, the first time that we smell the air,
We wawl, and cry : — I will preach to thee ; mark
me.

Glo. Alack, alack the day !

Lear. When we are born, we cry, that we are
come
To this great stage of fools ; — This a good
block ?⁶

It were a delicate stratagem, to shoe

⁶ *Block* anciently signified the *head part* of a hat.

A troop of horse with felt : I'll put it in proof ;
And when I have stolen upon these sons-in-law,
Then kill, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill.

Enter a Gentleman, with Attendants.

Gent. O, here he is, lay hand upon him, — Sir,
Your most dear daughter. —

Lear. No rescue ? What, a prisoner ? I am even
The natural fool of fortune. — Use me well ;
You shall have ransome. Let me have a surgeon,
I am cut to the brains.

Gent. You shall have any thing.

Lear. No seconds ? All myself ?
Why, this would make a man, a man of salt,⁷
To use his eyes for garden water-pots,
Ay, and for laying autumn's dust.

Gent. Good sir, —

Lear. I will die bravely, like a bridegroom :
What ?

I will be jovial ; come, come ; I am a king,
My masters, know you that !

Gent. You are a royal one, and we obey you.

Lear. Then there's life in it. Nay, an you get it,
you shall get it by running. Sa, sa, sa, sa.

[Exit running ; Attendants follow.]

Gent. A sight most pitiful in the meanest wretch ;
Past speaking of in a king !.— Thou hast one
daughter,

Who redeems nature from the general curse
Which twain have brought her to.

Edg. Hail, gentle sir.

Gent. Sir, speed you : What's your will ?

Edg. Do you hear aught, sir, of a battle to-
ward ?

⁷ *i. e.* A man of tears.

Gent. Most sure, and vulgar; every one hears
that,
Which can distinguish sound.

Edg. But, by your favour,
How near's the other army?

Gent. Near, and on speedy foot; the main descry
Stands on the hourly thought.⁸

Edg. I thank you, sir: that's all.

Gent. Though that the queen on special cause is
here,
Her army is mov'd on.

Edg. I thank you, sir. [*Exit Gent.*]

Glo. You ever-gentle gods, take my breath from
me;

Let not my worser spirit⁹ tempt me again
To die before you please!

Edg. Well pray you, father.

Glo. Now, good sir, what are you?

Edg. A most poor man, made tame by fortune's
blows;

Who, by the art of known and feeling sorrows,
Am pregnant to good pity. Give me your hand,
I'll lead you to some bidding.

Glo. Hearty thanks:
The bounty and the benison¹ of heaven
To boot, and boot!²

Enter Steward.

Stew. A proclaim'd prize! Most happy!
That eyeless head of thine was first fram'd flesh
To raise my fortunes. — Thou old unhappy traitor,
Briefly thyself remember: — The sword is out
That must destroy thee.

⁸ The main body is expected to be descried every hour.

⁹ Evil genius.

¹ Blessing.

² Reward, recompence.

Glo. Now let thy friendly hand
Put strength enough to it. [*EDGAR opposes.*]

Stew. Wherefore, bold peasant;
Dar'st thou support a publish'd traitor? Hence;
Lest that the infection of his fortune take
Like hold on thee. Let go his arm.

Edg. Ch'll not let go, zir, without vurther
'casion.

Stew. Let go, slave, or thou diest.

Edg. Good gentleman, go your gait³, and let
poor volk pass. And ch'ud ha' been zwagger'd out
of my life, 'twould not ha' been zo long as 'tis by
a vortnight. Nay, come not near the old man;
keep out, che vor' ye, or ise try whether your cos-
tard⁴ or my bat⁵ be the harder: Ch'll be plain
with you.

Stew. Out, dunghill!

Edg. Ch'll pick your teeth, zir: Come; no mat-
ter vor your foins.⁶

[*They fight; and EDGAR knocks him down.*]

Stew. Slave, thou hast slain me: — Villain, take
my purse;
If ever thou wilt thrive, bury my body;
And give the letters, which thou find'st about me,
To Edmund earl of Gloster; seek him out
Upon the British party: — O, untimely death!

[*Dies.*]

Edg. I know thee well: A serviceable villain;
As duteous to the vices of thy mistress,
As badness would desire.

Glo. What, is he dead?

Edg. Sit you down, father; rest you. —
Let's see his pockets: these letters, that he speaks
of,

May be my friends. — He's dead: I am only sorry
He had no other death's man. — Let us see:

³ Go your way. ⁴ Head. ⁵ Club. ⁶ Thrusts.

Leave, gentle wax ; and, manners, blame us not :
To know our enemies' minds, we'd rip their hearts ;
Their papers, is more lawful.

[Reads.] *Let our reciprocal vows be remembered. You have many opportunities to cut him off: if your will want not, time and place will be fruitfully offered. There is nothing done, if he return the conqueror: Then am I the prisoner, and his bed my gaol; from which deliver me, and supply the place for your labour. Your wife, (so I would say,) and your affectionate servant,*

GONERIL.

O undistinguish'd space of woman's will! —
A plot upon her virtuous husband's life;
And the exchange, my brother! — Here, in the
sands,

Thee I'll rake up⁷, and, in the mature time,
With this ungracious paper strike the sight
Of the death-practis'd duke: For him 'tis well,
That of thy death and business I can tell.

[Exit EDGAR, dragging out the Body.]

Glo. The king is mad: How stiff is my vile
sense,

That I stand up, and have ingenious feeling
Of my huge sorrows! Better I were distract:
So should my thoughts be sever'd from my griefs;
And woes, by wrong imaginations, lose
The knowledge of themselves.

Re-enter EDGAR.

Edg. Give me your hand:
Far off, methinks, I hear the beaten drum.
Come, father, I'll bestow you with a friend.

[Exeunt.]

⁷ I'll cover thee (the dead steward) in the sands.

SCENE VII.

A Tent in the French Camp.

LEAR *on a Bed, asleep* : Physician, Gentleman, and others, attending. Enter CORDELIA and KENT.

Cor. O thou good Kent, how shall I live, and work,
To match thy goodness? My life will be too short,
And every measure fail me.

Kent. To be acknowledg'd, madam, is o'er-paid.
All my reports go with the modest truth;
Nor more, nor clipp'd, but so.

Cor. Be better suited :⁸
These weeds are memories of those worsen hours;
I pry'thee, put them off.

Kent. Pardon me, dear madam;
Yet to be known, shortens my made intent :
My boon I make it, that you know me not,
Till time and I think meet.

Cor. Then be it so, my good lord. — How does
the king? [To the Physician.

Phys. Madam, sleeps still.

Cor. O you kind gods,
Cure this great breach in his abused nature!
Th' untun'd and jarring senses, O, wind up,
Of this child-changed father!

Phys. So please your majesty,
That we may wake the king? he hath slept long.

Cor. Be govern'd by your knowledge, and proceed
I'the sway of your own will. Is he array'd?

Gent. Ay, madam; in the heaviness of his sleep,
We put fresh garments on him.

⁸ Dressed.

Phys. Be by, good madam, when we do awake him ;

I doubt not of his temperance.

Cor.

Very well.

Phys. Please you, draw near. — Louder the music there.

Cor. O my dear father ! Restoration, hang Thy medicine on my lips ; and let this kiss Repair those violent harms, that my two sisters Have in thy reverence made !

Kent.

Kind and dear princess !

Cor. Had you not been their father, these white flakes

Had challeng'd pity of them. Was this a face To be expos'd against the warring winds ? To stand against the deep dread-bolted thunder ? In the most terrible and nimble stroke Of quick, cross lightning ? to watch (poor perdu !⁹) With this thin helm ?¹ Mine enemy's dog, Though he had bit me, should have stood that night Against my fire ; And wast thou fain, poor father, To hovel thee with swine, and rogues forlorn, In short and musty straw ? Alack, alack ! 'Tis wonder, that thy life and wits at once Had not concluded all. — He wakes ; speak to him.

Phys. Madam, do you ; 'tis fittest.

Cor. How does my royal lord ? How fares your majesty ?

Lear. You do me wrong, to take me out o'the grave : —

Thou art a soul in bliss ; but I am bound Upon a wheel of fire, that mine own tears Do scald like molten lead.

Cor.

Sir, do you know me ?

⁹ The allusion is to the forlorn hope in an army, called in French, *enfants perdus*.

¹ Thin covering of hair.

Lear. You are a spirit, I know; When did you die?

Cor. Still, still, far wide!

Phy. He's scarce awake; let him alone awhile.

Lear. Where have I been? — Where am I? —
Fair day-light? —

I am mightily abus'd. — I should even die with
pity,

To see another thus. — I know not what to say. —
I will not swear, these are my hands: — let's see;
I feel this pin prick. 'Would I were assur'd
Of my condition.

Cor. O, look upon me, sir,
And hold your hands in benediction o'er me: —
No, sir, you must not kneel.

Lear. Pray do not mock me:
I am a very foolish fond old man,
Fourscore and upward; and, to deal plainly,
I fear, I am not in my perfect mind.
Methinks, I should know you, and know this man:
Yet I am doubtful: for I am mainly ignorant
What place this is; and all the skill I have
Remembers not these garments; nor I know not
Where I did lodge last night: Do not laugh at me;
For, as I am a man, I think this lady
To be my child Cordelia.

Cor. And so I am, I am.

Lear. Be your tears wet? Yes, 'faith. I pray,
weep not:

If you have poison for me, I will drink it.
I know, you do not love me; for your sisters
Have, as I do remember, done me wrong:
You have some cause, they have not.

Cor. No cause, no cause.

Lear. Am I in France?

Kent. In your own kingdom, sir.

Lear. Do not abuse me.

Phys. Be comforted, good madam : the great
rage,
You see, is cur'd in him : and yet it is danger
To make him even ² o'er the time he has lost.
Desire him to go in ; trouble him no more,
Till further settling.

Cor. Will't please your highness walk ?

Lear. You must bear with me :
Pray now, forget and forgive : I am old, and foolish.

[*Exeunt* LEAR, CORDELIA, Physician, and
Attendants.]

Gent. Holds it true, sir,
That the duke of Cornwall was so slain ?

Kent. Most certain, sir.

Gent. Who is conductor of his people ?

Kent. As 'tis said,
The bastard son of Gloster.

Gent. They say, Edgar,
His banish'd son, is with the earl of Kent
In Germany.

Kent. Report is changeable.
'Tis time to look about ; the powers o'the king-
dom

Approach apace.

Gent. The arbitrement ³ is like to be a bloody.
Fare you well, sir. [*Exit.*]

Kent. My point and period will be thoroughly
wrought,
Or well, or ill, as this day's battle's fought. [*Exit.*]

² To reconcile it to his apprehension.

³ Decision.

ACT V.

SCENE I. — *The Camp of the British Forces, near Dover.*

Enter, with Drums and Colours, EDMUND, REGAN, Officers, Soldiers, and others.

Edm. Know of the duke, if his last purpose hold ;
Or, whether since he is advis'd by aught
To change the course : He's full of alteration,
And self-reproving : — Bring his constant pleasure. ⁴

[*To an Officer, who goes out.*

Reg. Our sister's man is certainly miscarried.

Edm. 'Tis to be doubted, madam.

Reg. Now, sweet lord,
You know the goodness I intend upon you :
Tell me, — but truly, — but then speak the truth,
Do you not love my sister ?

Edm. In honour'd love.

Reg. I never shall endure her : Dear my lord,
Be not familiar with her.

Edm. Fear me not : —
She, and the duke her husband, —

Enter ALBANY, GONERIL, and Soldiers.

Gon. I had rather lose the battle, than that sister
Should loosen him and me. [*Aside.*

Alb. Our very loving sister, well be met. —
Sir, this I hear, — The king is come to his daughter,
With others, whom the rigour of our state,
Forc'd to cry out. Where I could not be honest,
I never yet was valiant : for this business,
It toucheth us as France invades our land,

⁴ His settled resolution.

Not bolds⁵ the king ; with others, whom, I fear,
Most just and heavy causes make oppose.⁶

Edm. Sir, you speak nobly.

Reg. Why is this reason'd ?

Gon. Combine together 'gainst the enemy :
For these domestick and particular broils
Art not to question here.

Alb. Let us then determine
With the ancient of war on our proceedings.

Edm. I shall attend you presently at your tent.

Reg. Sister, you'll go with us ?

Gon. No.

Reg. 'Tis most convenient ; pray you, go with us.

Gon. O, ho, I know the riddle : [*Aside.*] I will
go.

As they are going out, enter EDGAR, disguised.

Edg. If e'er your grace had speech with man so
poor,
Hear me one word.

Alb. I'll overtake you. — Speak.

[*Exeunt EDMUND, REGAN, GONERIL, Officers, Soldiers, and Attendants.*]

Edg. Before you fight the battle, ope this letter.
If you have victory, let the trumpet sound
For him that brought it : wretched though I seem,
I can produce a champion, that will prove
What is avouched there : If you miscarry,
Your business of the world hath so an end,
And machination ceases. Fortune love you !

Alb. Stay till I have read the letter.

Edg. I was forbid it.
When time shall serve, let but the herald cry,
And I'll appear again. [*Exit.*]

Alb. Why, fare thee well ; I will o'erlook thy paper.

⁵ *i. e.* Emboldens him.

⁶ Opposition.

Re-enter EDMUND.

Edm. The enemy's in view, draw up your powers.

Here is the guess of their true strength and forces
By diligent discovery; — but your haste
Is now urg'd on you.

Alb. We will greet the time.⁷ [*Exit.*

Edm. To both these sisters have I sworn my love;

Each jealous of the other, as the stung
Are of the adder. Which of them shall I take?
Both! one? or neither? Neither can be enjoy'd,
If both remain alive: To take the widow,
Exasperates, makes mad her sister Goneril;
And hardly shall I carry out my side,⁸
Her husband being alive. Now then we'll use
His countenance for the battle: which being done,
Let her, who would be rid of him, devise
His speedy taking off. As for the mercy
Which he intends to Lear, and to Cordelia, —
The battle done, and they within our power,
Shall never see his pardon: for my state
Stands on me to defend, not to debate. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

A Field between the two Camps.

Alarum within. Enter, with Drum and Colours,
LEAR, CORDELIA, and their Forces; and exeunt.

Enter EDGAR and GLOSTER.

Edg. Here, father, take the shadow of this tree
For your good host; pray that the right may thrive.

⁷ Be ready to meet the occasion. ⁸ *i. e.* Make my part good.

If ever I return to you again,
I'll bring you comfort.

Glo. Grace go with you, sir!
[*Exit* EDGAR.]

Alarums : afterwards a Retreat. Re-enter EDGAR.

Edg. Away, old man, give me thy hand, away ;
King Lear hath lost, he and his daughter ta'en :
Give me thy hand, come on.

Glo. No further, sir ; a man may rot even here.

Edg. What, in ill thoughts again ? Men must
endure
Their going hence, even as their coming hither :
Ripeness is all : Come on.

Glo. And that's true too.
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

The British Camp near Dover.

*Enter, in Conquest, with Drum and Colours,
EDMUND ; LEAR and CORDELIA, as Prisoners ;
Officers, Soldiers, &c.*

Edm. Some officers take them away : good
guard ;
Until their greater pleasures first be known
That are to censure⁹ them.

Cor. We are not the first,
Who, with best meaning, have incurr'd the worst.
For thee, oppressed king, am I cast down ;
Myself could else out-frown false fortune's frown.—
Shall we not see these daughters, and these sisters?

Lear. No, no, no, no ! Come, let's away to
prison :

⁹ Pass judgment on them.

We two alone will sing like birds i'the cage :
 When thou dost ask me blessing, I'll kneel down,
 And ask of thee forgiveness : So we'll live,
 And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh
 At gilded butterflies, and hear poor rogues
 Talk of court news ; and we'll talk with them too —
 Who loses, and who wins ; who's in, who's out ;—
 And take upon us the mystery of things,
 As if we were Heav'n's spies : And we'll wear out,
 In a wall'd prison, packs and sects of great ones,
 That ebb and flow by the moon.

Edm. Take them away.

Lear. Upon such sacrifices, my Cordelia,
 The gods themselves throw incense. Have I caught
 thee ?

He, that parts us, shall bring a brand from heaven,
 And fire us hence, like foxes. Wipe thine eyes ;
 They shall not make us weep : we'll see them starve
 first.

Come. [*Exeunt LEAR and CORDELIA, guarded.*]

Edm. Come hither, captain ; hark.

Take thou this note ; [*Giving a Paper.*] go, follow
 them to prison :

One step I have advanc'd thee ; if thou dost
 As this instructs thee, thou dost make thy way
 To noble fortunes : Know thou this, — that men
 Are as the time is : to be tender-minded
 Does not become a sword : — Thy great employ-
 ment

Will not bear question ; either say, thou'lt do't,
 Or thrive by other means.

Off. I'll do't, my lord.

Edm. About it ; and write happy, when thou
 hast done.

Mark, — I say, instantly ; and carry it so,
 As I have set it down.

Off. If it be man's work, I will do it.

[*Exit Officer.*]

Flourish. Enter ALBANY, GONERIL, REGAN,
Officers, and Attendants.

Alb. Sir, you have shown to-day your valiant strain,
And fortune led you well : You have the captives,
Who were the opposites of this day's strife :
We do require them of you ; so to use them,
As we shall find their merits and our safety
May equally determine.

Edm. Sir, I thought it fit
To send the old and miserable king
To some retention, and appointed guard ;
Whose age has charms in it, whose title more,
To pluck the common bosom on his side,
And turn our impress'd lances in our eyes
Which do command them. With him I sent the
queen ;

My reason all the same ; and they are ready
To-morrow, or at further space, to appear
Where you shall hold your session. At this time,
We sweat, and bleed ; the friend hath lost his
friend ;

And the best quarrels, in the heat, are curs'd
By those that feel their sharpness : —
The question of Cordelia, and her father,
Requires a fitter place.

Alb. Sir, by your patience,
I hold you but a subject of this war,
Not as a brother.

Reg. That's as we list to grace him.
Methinks, our pleasure might have been demanded,
Ere you had spoke so far. He led our powers ;
Bore the commission of my place and person ;
The which immediacy¹ may well stand up,
And call itself your brother.

¹ Authority to act on his own judgment.

Gon. Not so hot :
In his own grace he doth exalt himself,
More than in your advancement.

Reg. In my rights,
By me invested, he compeers the best.

Gon. That were the most, if he should husband
you.

Reg. Jesters do oft prove prophets.

Gon. Holloa, holloa !
That eye, that told you so, look'd but a-squint.²

Reg. Lady, I am not well ; else I should answer

From a full-flowing stomach. — General,
Take thou my soldiers, prisoners, patrimony ;
Dispose of them, of me ; the walls are thine :
Witness the world, that I create thee here
My lord and master.

Gon. Mean you to wed him ?

Alb. The let-alone lies not in your good will.

Edm. Nor in thine, lord.

Alb. Half-blooded fellow, yes.

Reg. Let the drum strike, and prove my title
thine. [To EDMUND.]

Alb. Stay yet ; hear reason : — Edmund, I arrest
thee

On capital treason ; and, in thy arrest,
This gilded serpent : [Pointing to GON.] — for your
claim, fair sister,

I bar it in the interest of my wife ;
'Tis she is sub-contracted to this lord,
And I, her husband, contradict your banns.
If you will marry, make your love to me,
My lady is bespoke.

Gon. An interlude !

² Alluding to the proverb : "Love being jealous makes a good eye look a-squint."

Alb. Thou art arm'd, Gloster: — Let the trumpet sound:

If none appear to prove upon thy person,
Thy heinous, manifest, and many treasons,
There is my pledge: [*Throwing down a Glove.*]
I'll prove it on thy heart,
Ere I taste bread, thou art in nothing less
Than I have here proclaim'd thee.

Reg. Sick, O, sick:

Gon. If not, I'll ne'er trust poison. [*Aside.*]

Edm. There's my exchange: [*Throwing down a Glove.*] what in the world he is

That names me traitor, villain-like he lies:
Call by thy trumpet: he that dares approach,
On him, on you, (who not?) I will maintain
My truth and honour firmly.

Alb. A herald, ho!

Edm. A herald, ho, a herald!

Alb. Trust to thy single virtue⁴; for thy soldiers,

All levied in my name, have in my name
Took their discharge.

Reg. This sickness grows upon me.

Enter a Herald.

Alb. She is not well; convey her to my tent.

[*Exit REGAN, led.*]

Come hither, herald, — Let the trumpet sound, —
And read out this.

Off. Sound trumpet. [*A Trumpet sounds.*]

Herald reads.

If any man of quality, or degree, within the lists of the army, will maintain upon Edmund, supposed

⁴ *i. e.* Valour.

Earl of Gloster, that he is a manifold traitor, let him appear at the third sound of the trumpet: He is bold in his defence.

Edm. Sound.

[1 Trumpet.

Her. Again.

[2 Trumpet.

Her. Again.

[3 Trumpet.

[Trumpet answers within.

Enter EDGAR, armed, preceded by a Trumpet.

Alb. Ask him his purposes, why he appears
Upon this call o'the trumpet.

Her. What are you?
Your name, your quality? and why you answer
This present summons?

Edg. Know, my name is lost;
By treason's tooth bare-gnawn, and canker-bit:
Yet am I noble, as the adversary
I come to cope withal.

Alb. Which is that adversary?

Edg. What's he, that speaks for Edmund earl of
Gloster?

Edm. Himself; — What say'st thou to him?

Edg. Draw thy sword;
That, if my speech offend a noble heart,
Thy arm may do thee justice: here is mine.
Behold, it is the privilege of mine honours,
My oath, and my profession: I protest, —
Maugre⁵ thy strength, youth, place, and eminence,
Despite thy victor sword, and fire-new fortune,
Thy valour, and thy heart, — thou art a traitor:
False to thy gods, thy brother, and thy father;
Conspirant 'gainst this high illustrious prince;
And, from the extremest upward of thy head,
To the descent and dust beneath thy feet,
A most toad-spotted traitor. Say thou, *No*,

⁵ Notwithstanding.

This sword, this arm, and my best spirits, are bent
To prove upon thy heart, whereto I speak,
Thou liest.

Edm. In wisdom, I should ask thy name :
But, since thy outside looks so fair and warlike,
And that thy tongue some 'say⁶ of breeding
breathes,

What safe and nicely I might well delay
By rule of knighthood, I disdain and spurn :
Back do I toss these treasons to thy head ;
With the hell-hated lie o'erwhelm thy heart ;
Which, (for they yet glance by, and scarcely
bruise,)

This sword of mine shall give them instant way,
Where they shall rest for ever. — Trumpets, speak.

[*Alarums. They fight. EDMUND falls.*]

Alb. O save him, save him !

Gon. This is mere practice⁷, Gloster :
By the law of arms, thou wast not bound to answer
An unknown opposite ; thou art not vanquish'd,
But cozen'd and beguil'd.

Alb. Shut your mouth, dame,
Or with this paper shall I stop it : — Hold, sir :
Thou worse than any name, read thine own evil : —
No tearing, lady : I perceive, you know it.

[*Gives the Letter to EDMUND.*]

Gon. Say, if I do ; the laws are mine, not thine :
Who shall arraign me for't ?

Alb. Most monstrous !
Know'st thou this paper ?

Gon. Ask me not what I know.

[*Exit GONERIL.*]

Alb. Go after her : she's desperate ; govern her.

[*To an Officer, who goes out.*]

Edm. What you have charg'd me with, that
have I done ;

⁶ Sample.

⁷ Stratagem.

And more, much more; the time will bring it out;
'Tis past, and so am I: But what art thou,
That hast this fortune on me? If thou art noble,
I do forgive thee.

Edg. Let's exchange charity.

I am no less in blood than thou art, Edmund;
If more, the more thou hast wrong'd me.

My name is Edgar, and thy father's son.

The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices

Make instruments to scourge us:

The dark and vicious place where thee he got,
Cost him his eyes.

Edm. Thou hast spoken right, 'tis true;

The wheel has come full circle; I am here.

Alb. Methought, thy very gait did prophesy

A royal nobleness: — I must embrace thee;

Let sorrow split my heart, if ever I

Did hate thee, or thy father!

Edg.

Worthy prince,

I know it well.

Alb.

Where have you hid yourself?

How have you known the miseries of your father?

Edg. By nursing them, my lord — List^s a brief
tale; —

And, when 'tis told, O, that my heart would
burst! —

The bloody proclamation to escape,

That follow'd me so near, (O, our lives' sweetness!

That with the pain of death we'd hourly die,

Rather than die at once!) taught me to shift

Into a mad-man's rags; to assume a semblance

That very dogs disdain'd: and in this habit

Met I my father with his bleeding rings,

Their precious stones new lost; became his guide,

Led him, begg'd for him, sav'd him from despair;

Never (O fault! reveal'd myself unto him,

^s Hear.

Until some half hour past, when I was arm'd
 Not sure, though hoping, of this good success,
 I ask'd his blessing, and from first to last
 Told him my pilgrimage : but his flaw'd heart,
 (Alack, too weak the conflict to support!)
 'Twixt two extremes of passion, joy and grief,
 Burst smilingly.

Edm. This speech of yours hath mov'd me,
 And shall, perchance, do good : but speak you on ;
 You look as you had something more to say.

Alb. If there be more, more woful, hold it in ;
 For I am almost ready to dissolve,
 Hearing of this.

Edg. This would have seem'd a period
 To such as love not sorrow ; but another,
 To amplify too much, would make much more,
 And top extremity.

Whilst I was big in clamour, came there a man,
 Who having seen me in my worst estate,
 Shunn'd my abhorr'd society ; but then, finding
 Who't was that so endur'd, with his strong arms
 He fasten'd on my neck, and bellow'd out
 As he'd burst heaven ; threw him on my father ;
 Told the most piteous tale of Lear and him,
 That ever ear receiv'd : which in recounting
 His grief grew puissant, and the strings of life
 Began to crack : Twice then the trumpet sounded,
 And there I left him tranc'd.

Alb. But who was this ?

Edg. Kent, sir, the banish'd Kent ; who in dis-
 guise
 Follow'd his enemy king, and did him service
 Improper for a slave.

Enter a Gentleman hastily, with a bloody Knife.

Gent. Help ! help ! O help !

Edg. What kind of help?

Alb. Speak, man.

Edg. What means that bloody knife?

Gent. 'Tis hot, it smokes;
It came even from the heart of—

Alb. Who, man? speak.

Gent. Your lady, sir, your lady: and her sister
By her is poison'd; she confesses it.

Edm. I was contracted to them both; all three
Now marry in an instant.

Alb. Produce their bodies, be they alive or
dead!—

This judgment of the heavens, that makes us
tremble,

Touches us not with pity. [*Exit Gentleman.*]

Enter KENT.

Edg. Here comes Kent, sir.

Alb. O! it is he.

The time will not allow the compliment,
Which very manners urges.

Kent. I am come
To bid my king and master aye⁹ good night;
Is he not here?

Alb. Great thing of us forgot!—
Speak, Edmund, where's the king? and where's
Cordelia?—

See'st thou this object, Kent?

[*The Bodies of GONERIL and REGAN are
brought in.*]

Kent. Alack, why thus?

Edm. Yet Edmund was belov'd:
The one the other poison'd for my sake,
And after slew herself.

Alb. Even so.— Cover their faces.

⁹ For ever.

Edm. I pant for life : — Some good I mean to do,
Despite of mine own nature. Quickly send, —
Be brief in it, — to the castle ; for my writ
Is on the life of Lear, and on Cordelia : —
Nay, send in time.

Alb. Run, run, O, run —

Edg. To whom, my lord ? — Who has the office ?
send

Thy token of reprieve.

Edm. Well thought on ; take my sword,
Give it the captain.

Alb. Haste thee, for thy life. [*Exit EDGAR.*]

Edm. He hath commission from thy wife and me
To hang Cordelia in the prison, and
To lay the blame upon her own despair,
That she fordid¹ herself.

Alb. The gods defend her ! Bear him hence
awhile. [*EDMUND is borne off.*]

*Enter LEAR, with CORDELIA dead in his Arms ;
EDGAR, Officer, and others.*

Lear. Howl, howl, howl, howl ! — O, you are
men of stones :
Had I your tongues and eyes, I'd use them so
That heaven's vault should crack : — O, she is gone
for ever ! —

I know when one is dead, and when one lives ;
She's dead as earth : — Lend me a looking glass ;
If that her breath will mist or stain the stone,
Why, then she lives.

Kent. Is this the promis'd end ?

Edg. Or image of that horror ?

Alb. Fall, and cease !

Lear. This feather stirs ; she lives ! if it be so,
It is a chance that does redeem all sorrows
That ever I have felt.

¹ Destroyed herself.

Kent. O my good master ! [*Kneeling.*

Lear. Pr'ythee, away.

Edg. 'Tis noble Kent, your friend.

Lear. A plague upon you, murderers, traitors,
all !

I might have sav'd her ; now she's gone for ever ! —
Cordelia, Cordelia, stay a little. Ha !

What is't thou say'st ? — Her voice was ever soft,
Gentle, and low ; an excellent thing in woman : —
I kill'd the slave that was a hanging thee.

Off. 'Tis true, my lords, he did.

Lear. Did I not, fellow ?

I have seen the day, with my good biting faulchion
I would have made them skip : I am old now,
And these same crosses spoil me. — Who are you ?
Mine eyes are none o'the best : — I'll tell you
straight.

Kent. If fortune brag of two she lov'd and hated,
One of them we behold.

Lear. This is a dull sight : Are you not Kent ?

Kent. The same ;
Your servant Kent : Where is your servant Caius ?

Lear. He's a good fellow, I can tell you that ;
He'll strike, and quickly too : — He's dead and
rotten.

Kent. No, my good lord ; I am the very man ; —

Lear. I'll see that straight.

Kent. That, from your first of difference and
decay,

Have follow'd your sad steps.

Lear. You are welcome hither.

Kent. Nor no man else ;

All's cheerless, dark, and deadly. —

Your eldest daughters have fore-doom'd them-
selves,

And desperately are dead.

Lear.

Ay, so I think.

Alb. He knows not what he says ; and vain it is
That we present us to him.

Edg. Very bootless.²

Enter an Officer.

Off. Edmund is dead, my lord.

Alb. That's but a trifle here. —

You lords and noble friends, know our intent.
What comfort to this great decay may come,
Shall be applied : For us, we will resign,
During the life of this old majesty,
To him our absolute power : — You to your rights ;
[To EDGAR and KENT.

With boot, and such addition as your honours
Have more than merited. — All friends shall taste
The wages of their virtue, and all foes
The cup of their deservings. — O, see, see !

Lear. And my poor fool is hang'd ! No, no, no
life :

Why should a dog, a horse, a rat, have life,
And thou no breath at all ? O, thou wilt come no
more,

Never, never, never, never, never ! —

Pray you, undo this button : Thank you, sir. —

Do you see this ? Look on her, — look, — her
lips, —

Look there, look there ! — [He dies.

Edg. He faints ! — My lord, my lord. —

Kent. Break, heart ; I pr'ythee break !

Edg. Look up, my lord.

Kent. Vex not his ghost : O, let him pass ! he
hates him,

That would upon the rack of this tough world
Stretch him out longer.

Edg. O, he is gone, indeed.

² Useless.

Kent. The wonder is, he hath endur'd so long :
He but usurp'd his life.

Alb. Bear them from hence. — Our present
business
Is general woe. Friends of my soul, you twain
[*To KENT and EDGAR.*
Rule in this realm, and the gor'd state sustain.

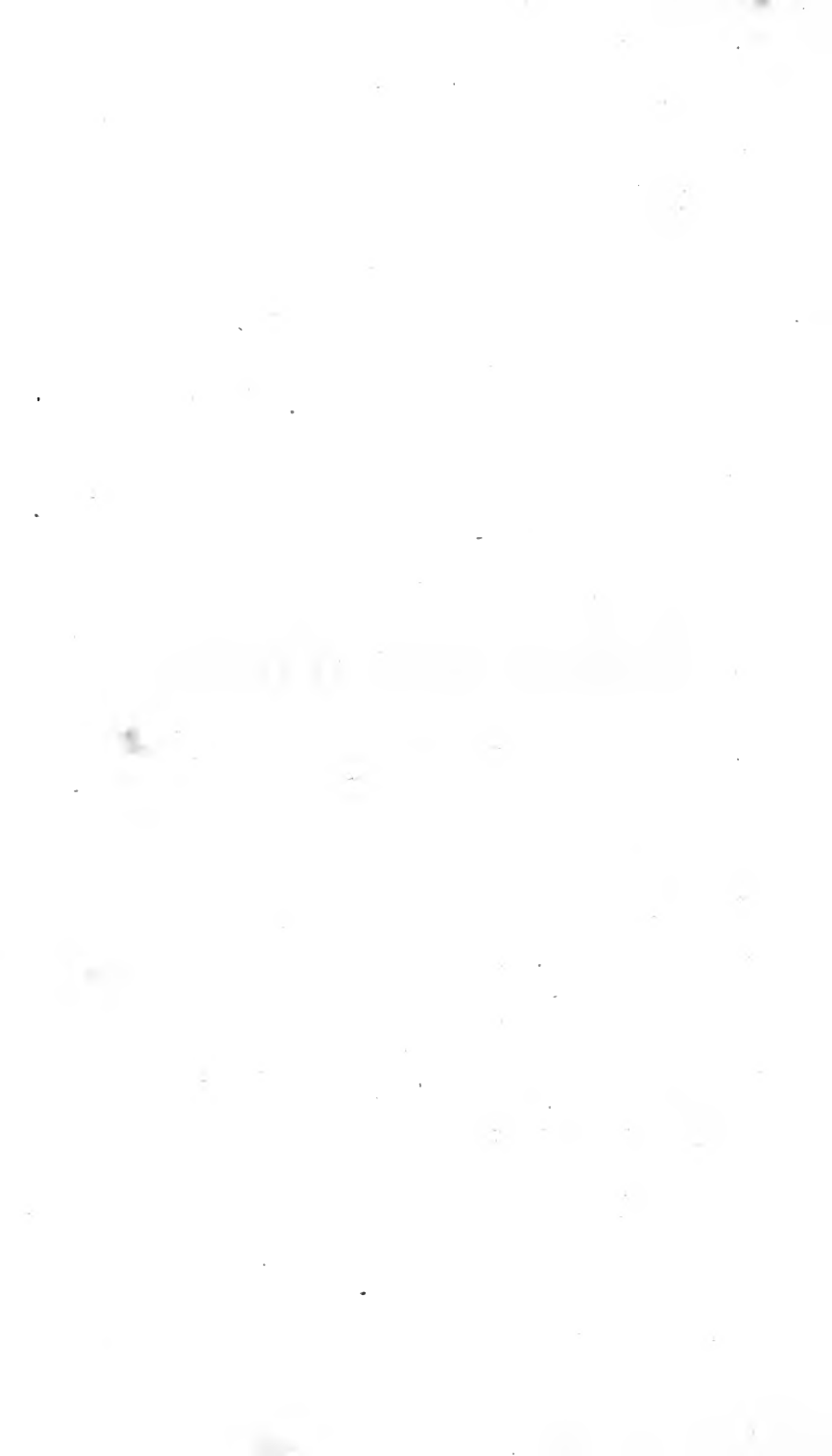
Kent. I have a journey, sir, shortly to go ;
My master calls, and I must not say, no.

Alb. The weight of this sad time we must obey ;
Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say.
The oldest hath borne most : we, that are young,
Shall never see so much, nor live so long.

[*Exeunt, with a dead March.*

The first part of the report is devoted to a description of the
 methods used in the investigation. The second part contains
 the results of the experiments. The third part is a discussion
 of the results and a comparison with the results of other
 investigators. The fourth part is a summary of the work
 done during the year.

ROMEO AND JULIET.



PROLOGUE.

Two households, both alike in dignity,
In fair Verona, where we lay our scene,
From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,
Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.
From forth the fatal loins of these two foes
A pair of star-cross'd lovers take their life ;
Whose misadventur'd piteous overthrows
Do, with their death, bury their parents' strife.
The fearful passage of their death-mark'd love,
And the continuance of their parents' rage,
Which, but their children's end, nought could re-
move,
Is now the two hours' traffick of our stage ;
The which if you with patient ears attend,
What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

ESCALUS, *Prince of Verona.*

PARIS, *a young nobleman, kinsman to the prince.*

MONTAGUE, } *heads of two houses at variance with*
CAPULET, } *each other.*

An old Man, uncle to Capulet.

ROMEO, *son to Montague.*

MERCUTIO, *kinsman to the Prince, and friend to*
Romeo.

BENVOLIO, *nephew to Montague, and friend to*
Romeo.

TYBALT, *nephew to Lady Capulet.*

Friar LAWRENCE, *a Franciscan.*

Friar JOHN, *of the same order.*

BALTHAZAR, *servant to Romeo.*

SAMPSON, } *servants to Capulet.*
GREGORY, }

ABRAM, *servant to Montague.*

An Apothecary.

Three Musicians.

Chorus. Boy ; page to Paris : PETER, *an Officer.*

LADY MONTAGUE, *wife to Montague.*

LADY CAPULET, *wife to Capulet.*

JULIET, *daughter to Capulet.*

Nurse to Juliet.

Citizens of Verona ; several Men and Women, relations to both houses ; Maskers, Guards, Watchmen, and Attendants.

SCENE, *during the greater part of the Play, in Verona ; once, in the fifth Act, at Mantua.*

ROMEO AND JULIET.

ACT I.

SCENE I. — *A Public Place.*

Enter SAMPSON and GREGORY, armed with Swords and Bucklers.

Sampson.

GREGORY, o' my word, we'll not carry coals.¹

Gre. No, for then we should be colliers.

Sam. I mean, an we be in choler, we'll draw.

Gre. Ay, while you live, draw your neck out of the collar.

Sam. I strike quickly, being moved.

Gre. But thou art not quickly moved to strike.

Sam. A dog of the house of Montague moves me.

Gre. To move, is — to stir; and to be valiant, is — to stand to it: therefore, if thou art mov'd, thou runn'st away.

Sam. A dog of that house shall move me to stand: I will take the wall of any man of Montague's.

Gre. That shows thee a weak slave; for the weakest goes to the wall. The quarrel is between our masters, and us their men.

¹ A phrase formerly in use, to signify the bearing injuries.

Sam. 'Tis all one, I will show myself a tyrant.

Gre. Draw thy sword : here comes two of the house of Montagues.

Enter ABRAM and BALTHASAR.

Sam. My naked weapon is out ; quarrel, I will back thee.

Gre. How ? turn thy back, and run ?

Sam. Fear me not.

Gre. No, marry : I fear thee !

Sam. Let us take the law of our sides ; let them begin.

Gre. I will frown as I pass by ; and let them take it as they list.

Sam. Nay, as they dare. I will bite my thumb at them ; which is a disgrace to them, if they bear it.

Abr. Do you bite your thumb at us, sir ?

Sam. I do bite my thumb, sir.

Abr. Do you bite your thumb at us, sir ?

Sam. Is the law on our side, if I say — ay ?

Gre. No.

Sam. No, sir ; I do not bite my thumb at you, sir : but I bite my thumb, sir.

Gre. Do you quarrel, sir ?

Abr. Quarrel, sir ? no, sir.

Sam. If you do, sir, I am for you ; I serve as good a man as you.

Abr. No better.

Sam. Well, sir.

Enter BENVOLIO, at a distance.

Gre. Say — better ; here comes one of my master's kinsmen.

Sam. Yes, better, sir.

Abr. You lie.

Sam. Draw, if you be men. — Gregory, remember thy swashing blow. [*They fight.*

Ben. Part, fools; put up your swords; you know not what you do. [*Beats down their Swords.*

Enter TYBALT.

Tyb. What, art thou drawn among these heartless hinds?

Turn thee, Benvolio, look upon thy death.

Ben. I do but keep the peace; put up thy sword,

Or manage it to part these men with me.

Tyb. What, drawn, and talk of peace? I hate the word,

As I hate hell, all Montagues, and thee;

Have at thee, coward. [*They fight.*

Enter several Partizans of both Houses, who join the Fray; then enter Citizens with Clubs.

Cit. Clubs², bills, and partizans! strike! beat them down!

Down with the Capulets! down with the Montagues!

Enter CAPULET, in his Gown; and Lady CAPULET.

Cap. What noise is this? — Give me my long sword, ho!

La. Cap. A crutch, a crutch! — Why call you for a sword?

Cap. My sword, I say! — Old Montague is come, And flourishes his blade in spite of me.

² Clubs! was the usual exclamation at an affray in the streets, as we now call Watch!

Enter MONTAGUE, and Lady MONTAGUE.

Mon. Thou villain, Capulet, — Hold me not, let me go.

La. Mon. Thou shalt not stir one foot to seek a foe.

Enter Prince, with Attendants.

Prin. Rebellious subjects, enemies to peace,
Profaners of this neighbour-stained steel, —
Will they not hear? — what, ho! you men, you
beasts, —

That quench the fire of your pernicious rage
With purple fountains issuing from your veins,
On pain of torture, from those bloody hands
Throw your mistemper'd³ weapons to the ground,
And hear the sentence of your moved prince. —
Three civil brawls, bred of an airy word,
By thee, old Capulet and Montague,
Have thrice disturb'd the quiet of our streets;
And made Verona's ancient citizens
Cast by their grave beseeming ornaments,
To wield old partizans⁴, in hands as old,
Canker'd with peace, to part your canker'd hate:
If ever you disturb our streets again,
Your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace.
For this time, all the rest depart away:
You, Capulet, shall go along with me;
And, Montague, come you this afternoon,
To know our further pleasure in this case,
To old Free-town, our common judgment-place.
Once more, on pain of death, all men depart.

[*Exeunt Prince, and Attendants; CAPULET,
Lady CAPULET, TYBALT, Citizens, and
Servants.*

³ Angry.

⁴ A kind of pike.

Mon. Who set this ancient quarrel new abroad?—
Speak, nephew, were you by, when it began?

Ben. Here were the servants of your adversary,
And yours, close fighting ere I did approach:
I drew to part them; in the instant came
The fiery Tybalt, with his sword prepar'd;
Which, as he breath'd defiance to my ears,
He swung about his head, and cut the winds,
Who, nothing hurt withal, hiss'd him in scorn:
While we were interchanging thrusts and blows,
Came more and more, and fought on part and part,
Till the prince came, who parted either part.

La. Mon. O, where is Romeo!—saw you him
to-day?
Right glad I am, he was not at this fray.

Ben. Madam, an hour before the worshipp'd sun
Peer'd⁵ forth the golden window of the east,
A troubled mind drove me to walk abroad;
Where,—underneath the grove of sycamore,
That westward rooteth from the city's side,—
So early walking did I see your son:
Towards him I made; but he was 'ware of me,
And stole into the covert of the wood:
I, measuring his affections by my own,—
That most are busied when they are most alone,—
Pursu'd my humour, not pursuing his,
And gladly shunn'd who gladly fled from me.

Mon. Many a morning hath he there been seen,
With tears augmenting the fresh morning's dew,
Adding to clouds more clouds with his deep sighs:
But all so soon as the all-cheering sun
Should in the furthest east begin to draw
The shady curtains from Aurora's bed,
Away from light steals home my heavy son,
And private in his chamber pens himself;
Shuts up his windows, locks fair daylight out,

⁵ Appeared.

And makes himself an artificial night :
 Black and portentous must this humour prove,
 Unless good counsel may the cause remove.

Ben. My noble uncle, do you know the cause ?

Mon. I neither know it nor can learn of him.

Ben. Have you impórtun'd him by any means ?

Mon. Both by myself, and many other friends :
 But he, his own affection's counsellor,
 Is to himself — I will not say, how true —
 But to himself so secret and so close,
 So far from sounding and discovery,
 As is the bud bit with an envious worm,
 Ere he can spread his sweet leaves to the air,
 Or dedicate his beauty to the sun.
 Could we but learn from whence his sorrows grow,
 We would as willingly give cure, as know.

Enter ROMEO, at a distance.

Ben. See, where he comes : So please you, step
 aside ;
 I'll know his grievance, or be much denied.

Mon. I would, thou wert so happy by thy stay,
 To hear true shrift. — Come, madam, let's away.

[*Exeunt MONTAGUE and Lady.*

Ben. Good morrow, cousin.

Rom. Is the day so young ?

Ben. But new struck nine.

Rom. Ah me ! sad hours seem long.
 Was that my father that went hence so fast ?

Ben. It was : — What sadness lengthens Romeo's
 hours ?

Rom. Not having that, which having, makes them
 short.

Ben. In love ?

Rom. Out —

Ben. Of love ?

Rom. Out of her favour, where I am in love.

Ben. Alas, that love, so gentle in his view,
Should be so tyrannous and rough in proof!

Rom. Alas, that love, whose view is muffled still,
Should, without eyes, see pathways to his will!
Where shall we dine? — O me! — What fray was
here?

Yet tell me not, for I have heard it all.

Here's much to do with hate, but more with
love: —

Why then, O brawling love! O loving hate!

O any thing, of nothing first create!

O heavy lightness! serious vanity!

Mis-shapen chaos of well-seeming forms!

Feather of lead, bright smoke, cold fire, sick health!

Still-waking sleep, that is not what it is! —

This love feel I, that feel no love in this.

Dost thou not laugh?

Ben. No, coz, I rather weep.

Rom. Good heart, at what?

Ben. At thy good heart's oppression.

Rom. Why, such is love's transgression. —

Griefs of mine own lie heavy in my breast;

Which thou wilt propagate, to have it prest

With more of thine: this love, that thou hast
shown,

Doth add more grief to too much of mine own.

Love is a smoke rais'd with the fume of sighs;

Being purg'd, a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes;

Being vex'd, a sea nourish'd with lovers' tears:

What is it else? a madness most discreet,

A choking gall, and a preserving sweet.

Farewell, my coz.

[*Going.*

Ben. Soft, I will go along;

And if you leave me so, you do me wrong.

Rom. Tut, I have lost myself; I am not here;

This is not Romeo, he's some other where.

Ben. Tell me in sadness who she is you love.

Rom. What, shall I groan, and tell thee?

Ben. Groan? why no?

But sadly tell me, who.

Rom. Bid a sick man in sadness make his will : —

Ah, word ill urg'd to one that is so ill! —

In sadness, cousin, I do love a woman.

Ben. I aim'd so near, when I suppos'd, you lov'd.

Rom. A right good marks-man! — And she's fair I love.

Ben. A right fair mark, fair coz, is soonest hit.

Rom. Well, in that hit, you miss : she'll not be hit

With Cupid's arrow, she hath Dian's wit ;
And, in strong proof of chastity well arm'd,
From love's weak childish bow she lives unharm'd.
She will not stay the siege of loving terms,
Nor bide the encounter of assailing eyes :

O, she is rich in beauty ; only poor,

That, when she dies, with beauty dies her store.

Ben. Then she hath sworn, that she will still live chaste?

Rom. She hath, and in that sparing makes huge waste ;

For beauty, starv'd with her severity,

Cuts beauty off from all posterity.

She is too fair, too wise ; wisely too fair,

To merit bliss by making me despair :

She hath forsworn to love ; and in that vow,

Do I live dead, that live to tell it now.

Ben. Be rul'd by me, forget to think of her.

Rom. O, teach me how I should forget to think.

Ben. By giving liberty unto thine eyes ;

Examine other beauties.

Rom. 'Tis the way

To call her's, exquisite, in question more :

These happy masks, that kiss fair ladies brows,

Being black, put us in mind they hide the fair ;
 He, that is stricken blind, cannot forget
 The precious treasure of his eyesight lost :
 Show me a mistress that is passing fair,
 What doth her beauty serve, but as a note
 Where I may read, who pass'd that passing fair ?
 Farewell ; thou canst not teach me to forget.

Ben. I'll pay that doctrine, or else die in debt.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

A Street.

Enter CAPULET, PARIS, *and* Servant.

Cap. And Montague is bound as well as I,
 In penalty alike ; and 'tis not hard, I think,
 For men so old as we to keep the peace.

Par. Of honourable reckoning⁶ are you both ;
 And pity 'tis, you liv'd at odds so long.
 But now, my lord, what say you to my suit ?

Cap. But saying o'er what I have said before :
 My child is yet a stranger in the world,
 She hath not seen the change of fourteen years ;
 Let two more summers wither in their pride,
 Ere we may think her ripe to be a bride.

Par. Younger than she are happy mothers made.

Cap. And too soon marr'd are those so early
 made.

The earth hath swallow'd all my hopes but she,
 She is the hopeful lady of my earth :
 But woo her, gentle Paris, get her heart,
 My will to her consent is but a part ;
 An she agree, within her scope of choice
 Lies my consent and fair according voice.

⁶ Account, estimation.

This night I hold an old accustom'd feast,
 Whereto I have invited many a guest,
 Such as I love; and you, among the store,
 One more, most welcome, makes my number more.
 At my poor house, look to behold this night
 Earth-treading stars, that make dark heaven light:
 Such comfort, as do lusty young men feel
 When well-apparell'd April on the heel
 Of limping winter treads, even such delight
 Among fresh female birds shall you this night
 Inherit⁷ at my house; hear all, all see,
 And like her most, whose merit most shall be:
 Such, amongst view of many, mine, being one,
 May stand in number, though in reckoning none.
 Come, go with me: — Go, sirrah, trudge about
 Through fair Verona; find those persons out,
 Whose names are written there, [*Gives a Paper.*]
 and to them say,

My house and welcome on their pleasure stay.

[*Exeunt* CAPULET and PARIS.]

Serv. Find them out, whose names are written here? It is written — that the shoemaker should meddle with his yard, and the tailor with his last, the fisher with his pencil, and the painter with his nets; but I am sent to find those persons, whose names are here writ, and can never find what names the writing person hath here writ. I must to the learned: — In good time.

Enter BENVOLIO and ROMEO.

Ben. Tut, man! one fire burns out another's
 burning,
 One pain is lessen'd by another's anguish;
 Turn giddy, and be holy by backward turning:
 One desperate grief cure with another's languish:

⁷ To inherit, in the language of Shakspeare, is to *possess*.

Take thou some new infection to thy eye,
And the rank poison of the old will die.

Rom. Your plantain leaf is excellent for that.

Ben. For what, I pray thee?

Rom. For your broken shin.

Ben. Why, Romeo, art thou mad?

Rom. Not mad, but bound more than a madman
is :

Shut up in prison, kept without my food,
Whipp'd, and tormented, and — Good-e'en, good
fellow.

Serv. Good e'en, sir. — I pray, sir, can you
read?

Rom. Ay, mine own fortune in my misery.

Serv. Perhaps you have learn'd it without book :
But I pray, can you read any thing you see?

Rom. Ay, if I know the letters, and the lan-
guage.

Serv. Ye say honestly : Rest you merry !

Rom. Stay, fellow ; I can read. [*Reads.*

*Signior Martino, and his wife and daughters ;
County Anselme, and his beauteous sisters ; The
lady widow of Vitruvio ; Signior Placentio, and his
lovely nieces ; Mercutio, and his brother Valentine ;
Mine uncle Capulet, his wife, and daughters ; My
fair niece Rosaline ; Livia ; Signior Valentio, and
his cousin Tybalt ; Lucio, and the lively Helena.*

A fair assembly ; [*Gives back the Note.*] Whither
should they come ?

Serv. Up.

Rom. Whither ?

Serv. To supper ; to our house.

Rom. Whose house ?

Serv. My master's.

Rom. Indeed, I should have asked you that
before.

Serv. Now I'll tell you without asking: My master is the great rich Capulet; and if you be not of the house of Montagues, I pray, come and crush a cup of wine.⁸ Rest you merry. [*Exit.*

Ben. At this same ancient feast of Capult's Sups the fair Rosaline, whom thou so lov'st; With all the admir'd beauties of Verona. Go thither; and, with unattainted eye, Compare her face with some that I shall show, And I will make thee think thy swan a crow.

Rom. When the devout religion of mine eye Maintains such falsehood, then turn tears to fires! And these, who, often drown'd, could never die, —

Transparent hereticks, be burnt for liars! One fairer than my love! the all-seeing sun Ne'er saw her match, since first the world begun.

Ben. Tut! you saw her fair, none else being by, Herself pois'd⁹ with herself in either eye: But in those crystal scales, let there be weigh'd Your lady's love against some other maid That I will show you, shining at this feast, And she shall scant¹ show well, that now shows best.

Rom. I'll go along, no such sight to be shown, But to rejoice in splendour of mine own. [*Exeunt.*

⁸ We still say in cant language — *crack a bottle.*

⁹ Weigh'd.

¹ Scarcely, hardly.

SCENE III.

*A Room in Capulet's House.**Enter Lady CAPULET and Nurse.*

La. Cap. Nurse, where's my daughter? call her forth to me.

Nurse. What, lamb! what, lady-bird! what, Juliet!

Enter JULIET.

Jul. How now, who calls?

Nurse. Your mother.

Jul. Madam, I am here,
What is your will?

La. Cap. This is the matter: — Nurse, give leave awhile,
We must talk in secret. — Nurse, come back again;
I have remember'd me, thou shalt hear our counsel.

Thou know'st, my daughter's of a pretty age.

Nurse. Yes, I can tell her age unto an hour.

La. Cap. She's not fourteen.

Nurse. I'll lay fourteen of my teeth,
And yet, to my teen² be it spoken, I have but four, —

She is not fourteen: How long is it now
To Lammas-tide?

La. Cap. A fortnight, and odd days.

Nurse. Even or odd, of all days in the year,
Come Lammas-eve at night, shall she be fourteen.

² To my sorrow.

Susan and she were of an age, — but Susan's
dead ;

She was too good for me : But as I said,
On Lammas-eve at night shall she be fourteen ;
That shall she, marry ; I remember it well.

'Tis since the earthquake now eleven years ;
And she was wean'd, — I never shall forget it, —
Of all the days in the year, upon that day :

For I had then laid wormwood to my teat,
Sitting in the sun under the dove-house wall,
My lord and you were then at Mantua : —

Nay, I do bear a brain³, — but, as I said,
When it did taste the wormwood on the nipple
And felt it bitter, O the pretty fool !

To see it tetchy, and fall out with the teat.

Shake, quoth the dove-house : 'twas no need, I
trow,

To bid me trudge.

And since that time it is eleven years :

For then she could stand alone ; nay, by the
rood,⁴

She could have run and waddled all about,

For even the day before, she broke her brow.

La. Cap. Enough of this ; I pray thee, hold thy
peace.

Jul. And hold thy peace, I pray thee nurse,
say I.

Nurse. Peace, I have done. Heaven mark thee
to its grace !

Thou wast the prettiest babe that e'er I nurs'd :

An I might live to see thee married once,

I have my wish.

La. Cap. Marry, that marry is the very theme
I came to talk of : — Tell me, daughter Juliet,
How stands your disposition to be married ?

³ *i. e.* I have a perfect remembrance or recollection.

⁴ The cross.

Jul. It is an honour that I dream not of.

Nurse. An honour! were not I thine only nurse,

I'd say, thou hadst suck'd wisdom from thy teat.

La. Cap. Well, think of marriage now; younger than you,

Here in Verona, ladies of esteem,

Are made already mothers: by my count,

I was your mother much upon these years

That you are now a maid. Thus then, in brief:—

The valiant Paris seeks you for his love.

Nurse. A man, young lady! lady, such a man, As all the world — Why, he's a man of wax.⁵

La. Cap. Verona's summer hath not such a flower.

Nurse. Nay, he's a flower; in faith, a very flower.

La. Cap. What say you? can you love the gentleman?

This night you shall behold him at our feast:

Read o'er the volume of young Paris' face,

And find delight writ there with beauty's pen;

Examine every married lineament,

And see how one another lends content:

And what obscur'd in this fair volume lies,

Find written in the margin of his eyes.⁶

This precious book of love, this unbound lover,

To beautify him only lacks a cover:

The fish lives in the sea⁷; and 'tis much pride,

For fair without the fair within to hide:

That book in many's eyes doth share the glory,

That in gold clasps locks in the golden story;

⁵ Well made, as if he had been modelled in wax.

⁶ The comments on ancient books were always printed in the margin.

⁷ *i. e.* Is not yet caught, whose skin was wanted to bind him.

So shall you share all that he doth possess,
By having him, making yourself no less. —
Speak briefly, can you like of Paris' love?

Jul. I'll look to like, if looking liking move :
But no more deep will I endart mine eye,
Than your consent gives strength to make it fly.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Madam, the guests are come, supper served up, you called, my young lady asked for, the nurse cursed in the pantry, and every thing in extremity. I must hence to wait ; I beseech you, follow straight.

La. Cap. We follow thee. — Juliet, the county stays. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

A Street.

Enter ROMEO, MERCUTIO, BENVOLIO, with five or six Maskers, Torch-bearers, and others.

Rom. What, shall this speech be spoke for our excuse ?

Or shall we on without apology ?

Ben. The date is out of such prolixity :
We'll have no Cupid hood-wink'd with a scarf,
Bearing a Tartar's painted bow of lath,
Scaring the ladies like a crow-keeper :⁸
Nor no without-book prologue, faintly spoke
After the prompter, for our entrance :
But, let them measure us by what they will,
We'll measure them a measure⁹, and be gone.

⁸ A scare-crow, a figure made up to frighten crows.

⁹ A dance.

Rom. Give me a torch¹, — I am not for this
ambling ;
Being but heavy, I will bear the light.

Mer. Nay, gentle Romeo, we must have you
dance.

Rom. Not I, believe me : you have dancing
shoes,
With nimble soles : I have a soul of lead,
So stakes me to the ground, I cannot move.

Mer. You are a lover ; borrow Cupid's wings,
And soar with them above a common bound.

Rom. I am too sore enpierced with his shaft
To soar with his light feathers ; and so bound,
I cannot bound a pitch above dull woe :
Under love's heavy burden do I sink.

Mer. And, to sink in it, should you burden love ;
Too great oppression for a tender thing.

Rom. Is love a tender thing ? it is too rough.

Mer. If love be rough with you, be rough with
love ;
Give me a case to put my visage in ;

[*Putting on a Mask.*

A visor for a visor ! — what care I,
What curious eye doth quote² deformities ?
Here are the beetle brows, shall blush for me.

Ben. Come, knock, and enter ; and no sooner
in,
But every man betake him to his legs.

Rom. A torch for me : let wantons, light of
heart,
Tickle the senseless rushes³ with their heels ;
For I am proverb'd with a grandsire phrase, —
I'll be a candle-holder, and look on, —
The game was ne'er so fair, and I am done.

¹ A torch-bearer was a constant appendage to every troop of maskers.

² Observe.

³ It was anciently the custom to strew rooms with rushes.

Mer. Tut! dun's the mouse, the constable's own word :

If thou art dun, we'll draw thee from the mire
Of this (save reverence) love, wherein thou stick'st
Up to the ears. — Come, we burn day-light, ho.

Rom. Nay, that's not so.

Mer. I mean, sir, in delay.
We waste our lights in vain, like lamps by day.
Take our good meaning : for our judgment sits
Five times in that, ere once in our five wits.

Rom. And we mean well, in going to this mask ;
But 'tis no wit to go.

Mer. Why, may one ask ?

Rom. I dreamt a dream to-night.

Mer. And so did I.

Rom. Well, what was yours ?

Mer. That dreamers often lie.

Rom. In bed, asleep, while they do dream things
true.

Mer. O, then, I see, queen Mab hath been with you.
She is the fairies' midwife ; and she comes
In shape no bigger than an agate-stone
On the fore-finger of an alderman,
Drawn with a team of little atomies⁴
Athwart men's noses as they lie asleep :
Her waggon-spokes made of long spinners' legs ;
The cover, of the wings of grasshoppers ;
The traces, of the smallest spider's web ;
The collars, of the moonshine's watery beams :
Her whip, of cricket's bone : the lash, of film :
Her waggoner, a small grey-coated gnat,
Not half so big as a round little worm
Prick'd from the lazy finger of a maid :
Her chariot is an empty hazel-nut,
Made by the joiner squirrel, or old grub,
Time out of mind the fairies' coach-makers.

⁴ Atoms.

And in this state she gallops night by night
Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love:
On courtiers' knees, that dream on court'sies
straight:

O'er lawyers' fingers, who straight dream on fees:
O'er ladies' lips, who straight on kisses dream;
Which oft the angry Mab with blisters plagues,
Because their breath with sweetmeats tainted are.
Sometime she gallops o'er a courtier's nose,
And then dreams he of smelling out a suit:⁵
And sometimes comes she with a tithe-pig's tail,
Tickling a parson's nose as 'a lies asleep,
Then dreams he of another benefice:
Sometime she driveth o'er a soldier's neck,
And then dreams he of cutting foreign throats,
Of breaches, ambuscadoes, Spanish blades,
Of healths five fathom deep; and then anon
Drums in his ear; at which he starts, and wakes;
And, being thus frightened, swears a prayer or two,
And sleeps again. This is that very Mab.
This, this is she —

Rom. Peace, peace, Mercutio, peace;
Thou talk'st of nothing.

Mer. True, I talk of dreams;
Which are the children of an idle brain,
Begot of nothing but vain fantasy;
Which is as thin of substance as the air;
And more inconstant than the wind, who woos
Even now the frozen bosom of the north,
And, being anger'd, puffs away from thence,
Turning his face to the dew-dropping south.

Ben. This wind you talk of, blows us from our-
selves;
Supper is done, and we shall come too late.

Rom. I fear, too early: for my mind misgives,
Some consequence, yet hanging in the stars,

⁵ A place in court.

Shall bitterly begin his fearful date
 With this night's revels; and expire the term
 Of a despised life, clos'd in my breast,
 By some vile forfeit of untimely death:
 But He, that hath the steerage of my course,
 Direct my sail! — On, gentlemen.

Ben. Strike, drum.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.

A Hall in Capulet's House.

Musicians waiting. Enter Servants.

1 *Serv.* Where's Potpan, that he helps not to take away? he shift a trencher! he scrape a trencher!

2 *Serv.* When good manners shall lie all in one or two men's hands, and they unwashed too, 'tis a foul thing.

1 *Serv.* Away with the joint stools, remove the court-cupboard⁶, look to the plate: — good thou, save me a piece of march-pane⁷; and, as thou lovest me, let the porter let in Susan and Nell. — Antony! and Potpan!

2 *Serv.* Ay, boy; ready.

1 *Serv.* You are looked for, and called for, asked for, and sought for, in the great chamber.

2 *Serv.* We cannot be here and there too. — Cheerly, boys; be brisk a while, and the longer liver take all. [They retire behind.]

Enter CAPULET, &c. with the Guests and the Maskers.

Cap. Gentlemen, welcome! ladies, that have their toes

⁶ A sideboard on which the plate was placed. ⁷ Almond cake.

Unplagu'd with corns, will have a bout with you : —
 Ah ha, my mistresses ! which of you all
 Will now deny to dance ? she that makes dainty, she
 I'll swear, hath corns ; Am I come near you now ?
 You are welcome, gentlemen ! I have seen the day,
 That I have worn a vizer ; and could tell
 A whispering tale in a fair lady's ear,
 Such as would please ; — 'tis gone, 'tis gone, 'tis
 gone :

You are welcome, gentlemen ! — Come, musicians,
 play,

A hall ; a hall !^s give room, and foot it, girls.

[*Musick plays, and they dance.*]

More light, ye knaves ; and turn the tables up,
 And quench the fire, the room is grown too hot. —
 Ah, sirrah, this unlook'd-for sport comes well.

Nay, sit, nay, sit, good cousin Capulet ;
 For you and I are past our dancing days :
 How long is't now, since last yourself and I
 Were in a mask ?

2 *Cap.* By'r lady, thirty years.

1 *Cap.* What, man ! 'tis not so much, 'tis not so
 much :

'Tis since the nuptial of Lucentio,
 Come Pentecost as quickly as it will,
 Some five and twenty years ; and then we mask'd.

2 *Cap.* 'Tis more, 'tis more : his son is elder, sir :
 His son is thirty.

1 *Cap.* Will you tell me that ?
 His son was but a ward two years ago.

Rom. What lady's that which doth enrich the hand
 Of yonder knight ?

Serv. I know not, sir.

Rom. O, she doth teach the torches to burn
 bright !

Her beauty hangs upon the cheek of night

^s *i. e.* Make room.

Like a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear :
 Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear !
 So shows a snowy dove trooping with crows,
 As yonder lady o'er her fellows shows,
 The measure⁹ done, I'll watch her place of stand,
 And, touching hers, make happy my rude hand.
 Did my heart love till now? forswear it, sight!
 For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night.

Tyb. This, by his voice, should be a Montague:—
 Fetch me my rapier, boy:—What! dares the slave
 Come hither, cover'd with an antick face,
 To flear and scorn at our solemnity?
 Now, by the stock and honour of my kin,
 To strike him dead I hold it not a sin.

1 Cap. Why, how now, kinsman? wherefore
 storm you so?

Tyb. Uncle, this is a Montague, our foe;
 A villain, that is hither come in spite,
 To scorn at our solemnity this night.

1 Cap. Young Romeo is't?

Tyb. 'Tis he, that villain Romeo.

1 Cap. Content thee, gentle coz, let him alone,
 He bears him like a portly gentleman;
 And, to say truth, Verona brags of him,
 To be a virtuous and well-govern'd youth:
 I would not for the wealth of all this town,
 Here in my house, do him disparagement:
 Therefore be patient, take no note of him,
 It is my will; the which if thou respect,
 Show a fair presence, and put off these frowns,
 An ill-beseeming semblance for a feast.

Tyb. It fits, when such a villain is a guest;
 I'll not endure him.

1 Cap. He shall be endur'd;
 What, Goodman boy!—I say, he shall;—Go to;—
 Am I the master here, or you? go to.

⁹ The dance.

You'll make a mutiny among my guests!
 You will set cock-a-hoop! you'll be the man!

Tyb. Why, uncle, 'tis a shame.

1 Cap.

Go to, go to,

You are a saucy boy: — Is't so, indeed? —

This trick may chance to scath¹ you; — I know
 what.

You must contráry me! marry, 'tis time —

Well said, my hearts: — You are a princox²; go: —

Be quiet, or — More light, more light, for shame! —

I'll make you quiet; What! — Cheerly, my hearts.

Tyb. Patience perforce with wilful choler meeting,

Makes my flesh tremble in their different greeting.

I will withdraw: but this intrusion shall,

Now seeming sweet, convert to bitter gall. [*Exit.*

Rom. If I profane with my unworthy hand

[*To JULIET.*

This holy shrine, the gentle fine is this, —

My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand

To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss.

Jul. Good pilgrim, you do wrong your hand too
 much,

Which mannerly devotion shows in this;

For saints have hands that pilgrims' hands do touch,

And palm to palm is holy palmers' kiss.

Rom. Have not saints lips, and holy palmers too?

Jul. Ay, pilgrim, lips that they must use in prayer.

Rom. O then, dear saint, let lips do what hands
 do;

They pray, grant thou, lest faith turn to despair.

Jul. Saints do not move, though grant for prayers'
 sake.

Rom. Then move not, while my prayer's effect
 I take.

Thus from my lips, by yours, my sin is purg'd.

[*Kissing her.*

¹ Do you an injury.

² A coxcomb.

Jul. Then have my lips the sin that they have took.

Rom. Sin from my lips? O trespass sweetly
urg'd!

Give me my sin again.

Jul. You kiss by the book.

Nurse. Madam, your mother craves a word with
you.

Rom. What is her mother?

Nurse. Marry, bachelor,
Her mother is the lady of the house,
And a good lady, and a wise, and virtuous :
I nurs'd her daughter, that you talk'd withal ;
I tell you, — he, that can lay hold of her,
Shall have the chinks.

Rom. Is she a Capulet ?
O dear account ! my life is my foe's debt.

Ben. Away, begone ; the sport is at the best.

Rom. Ay, so I fear ; the more is my unrest.

1 Cap. Nay, gentlemen, prepare not to be gone ;
We have a trifling foolish banquet towards. —
Is it e'en so ? Why, then I thank you all ;
I thank you, honest gentlemen ; good night : —
More torches here — Come on, then let's to bed.
Ah, sirrah, [*To 2 CAP.*] by my fay³, it waxes
late ;

I'll to my rest. [*Exeunt all but JULIET and Nurse.*]

Jul. Come hither, nurse : What is yon gentle-
man ?

Nurse. The son and heir of old Tiberio.

Jul. What's he, that now is going out of door ?

Nurse. Marry, that, I think, be young Petruchio.

Jul. What's he, that follows there, that would
not dance ?

Nurse. I know not,

Jul. Go, ask his name : — if he be married,
My grave is like to be my wedding bed.

³ Faith.

Nurse. His name is Romeo, and a Montague ;
The only son of your great enemy.

Jul. My only love sprung from my only hate !
Too early seen unknown, and known too late !
Prodigious birth of love it is to me,
That I must love a loathed enemy.

Nurse. What's this ? what's this ?

Jul. A rhyme I learn'd even now
Of one I danc'd withal. [*One calls within, Juliet !*

Nurse. Anon, anon : —

Come, let's away ; the strangers all are gone.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter CHORUS.

Now old desire doth in his death-bed lie,
And young affection gapes to be his heir ;
That fair, which love groan'd for, and would die,
With tender Juliet match'd is now not fair.
Now Romeo is belov'd, and loves again,
Alike bewitched by the charm of looks ;
But to his foe suppos'd he must complain,
And she steal love's sweet bait from fearful
hooks :
Being held a foe, he may not have access
To breathe such vows as lovers use to swear ;
And she as much in love, her means much less
To meet her new-beloved any where :
But passion lends them power, time means to meet,
Temp'ring extremities with extreme sweet. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. — *An open Place, adjoining Capulet's Garden.*

Enter ROMEO.

Rom. Can I go forward when my heart is here?
Turn back, dull earth, and find thy centre out.

[*He climbs the Wall, and leaps down within it.*]

Enter BENVOLIO and MERCUTIO.

Ben. Romeo! my cousin Romeo!

Mer. He is wise;
And, on my life, hath stolen him home to bed.

Ben. He ran this way, and leap'd this orchard
wall:

Call, good Mercutio.

Mer. Nay, I'll conjure too —
Romeo! humours! madman! passion! lover!
Appear thou in the likeness of a sigh,
Speak but one rhyme, and I am satisfied;
Cry but — Ah me! couple but — love and dove;
Speak to my gossip Venus one fair word,
One nick-name for her purblind son and heir,
Young Adam Cupid, he that shot so trim,
When king Cophetua lov'd the beggar-maid.⁴ —
He heareth not, stirreth not, he moveth not;
The ape⁵ is dead, and I must conjure him. —
I conjure thee by Rosaline's bright eyes,
By her high forehead, and her scarlet lip,
That in thy likeness thou appear to us.

Ben. An if he hear thee, thou wilt anger him.

⁴ Alluding to the old ballad of the king and the beggar.

⁵ This phrase in Shakspeare's time was used as an expression of tenderness.

Mer. This cannot anger him : my invocation
Is fair and honest, and, in his mistress' name,
I conjure only but to raise up him.

Ben. Come, he hath hid himself among those
trees,

To be consorted with the humorous⁶ night :
Blind is his love, and best befits the dark.

Mer. If love be blind, love cannot hit the mark.
Romeo, good night ; — I'll to my truckle-bed ;
This field-bed is too cold for me to sleep :
Come, shall we go ?

Ben. Go, then ; for 'tis in vain
To seek him here, that means not to be found.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Capulet's Garden.

Enter ROMEO.

Rom. He jests at scars, that never felt a wound. —

[*JULIET appears above, at a Window.*]

But, soft ! what light through yonder window
breaks !

It is the east, and Juliet is the sun ! —
Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,
Who is already sick and pale with grief,
That thou her maid art far more fair than she :
Be not her maid, since she is envious ;
Her vestal livery is but sick and green,
And none but fools do wear it ; cast it off. —
It is my lady ; O, it is my love :
O, that she knew she were ! —
She speaks, yet she says nothing : What of that ?
Her eye discourses, I will answer it. —

⁶ Humid, moist.

I am too bold, 'tis not to me she speaks :
 Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,
 Having some business, do entreat her eyes
 To twinkle in their spheres till they return.
 What if her eyes were there, they in her head ?
 The brightness of her cheek would shame those
 stars,

As daylight doth a lamp ; her eye in heaven
 Would through the airy region stream so bright,
 That birds would sing, and think it were not night.
 See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand !
 O, that I were a glove upon that hand,
 That I might touch that cheek !

Jul. Ah me !

Rom. She speaks : —

O, speak again, bright angel ! for thou art
 As glorious to this night, being o'er my head,
 As is a winged messenger of heaven
 Unto the white-upturned wond'ring eyes
 Of mortals, that fall back to gaze on him,
 When he bestrides the lazy-pacing clouds,
 And sails upon the bosom of the air.

Jul. O Romeo, Romeo ! wherefore art thou
 Romeo ?

Deny thy father, and refuse thy name :
 Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,
 And I'll no longer be a Capulet.

Rom. Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this ?
 [*Aside.*]

Jul. 'Tis but thy name, that is my enemy ; —
 Thou art thyself, though not a Montague.
 What's Montague ? it is nor hand, nor foot,
 Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part
 Belonging to a man. O, be some other name !
 What's in a name ? that which we call a rose,
 By any other name would smell as sweet ;
 So Romeo would, were he not Romeo call'd,

Retain that dear perfection which he owes,⁷
 Without that title : — Romeo, doff⁸ thy name ;
 And for that name which is no part of thee,
 Take all myself.

Rom. I take thee at thy word :
 Call me but love, and I'll be new baptiz'd ;
 Henceforth I never will be Romeo.

Jul. What man art thou, that, thus bescreen'd in
 night,
 So stumblest on my counsel ?

Rom. By a name
 I know not how to tell thee who I am :
 My name, dear saint, is hateful to myself,
 Because it is an enemy to thee ;
 Had I it written, I would tear the word.

Jul. My ears have not yet drunk a hundred
 words
 Of that tongue's utterance, yet I know the sound ;
 Art thou not Romeo, and a Montague ?

Rom. Neither, fair saint, if either thee dislike.

Jul. How cam'st thou hither, tell me ? and
 wherefore ?

The orchard walls are high, and hard to climb ;
 And the place death, considering who thou art,
 If any of my kinsmen find thee here.

Rom. With love's light wings did I o'er-perch
 these walls ;

For stony limits cannot hold love out :
 And what love can do, that dares love attempt,
 Therefore thy kinsmen are no let⁹ to me.

Jul. If they do see thee, they will murder thee.

Rom. Alack ! there lies more peril in thine eye,
 Than twenty of their swords ; look thou but sweet,
 And I am proof against their enmity.

Jul. I would not for the world they saw thee
 here.

⁷ Owns, possesses.

⁸ Do off, put off.

⁹ Hinderance.

Rom. I have night's cloak to hide me from their sight ;

And, but¹ thou love me, let them find me here :
My life were better ended by their hate,
Than death prorogued, wanting of thy love.

Jul. By whose direction found'st thou out this place ?

Rom. By love, who first did prompt me to inquire ;

He lent me counsel, and I lent him eyes.

I am no pilot ; yet wert thou as far

As that vast shore wash'd with the furthest sea,
I would adventure for such merchandise.

Jul. Thou know'st the mask of night is on my face ;

Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek,
For that which thou hast heard me speak to-night.

Fain would I dwell on form, fain, fain, deny

What I have spoke : But farewell compliment !

Dost thou love me ? I know thou wilt say — Ay ;

And I will take thy word : yet if thou swear'st,

Thou mayst prove false ; at lovers' perjuries,

They say, Jove laughs. O, gentle Romeo,

If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully :

Or, if thou think'st I am too quickly won,

I'll frown, and be perverse, and say thee nay,

So thou wilt woo ; but else, not for the world.

In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond ;

And therefore thou mayst think my 'haviour light :

But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove more true

Than those that have more cunning to be strange.²

I should have been more strange, I must confess,

But that thou over-heard'st, ere I was 'ware,

My true love's passion ; therefore, pardon me ;

And not impute this yielding to light love,

Which the dark night hath so discovered.

¹ Unless.

² Shy.

Rom. Lady, by yonder blessed moon I swear,
That tips with silver all these fruit-tree tops, —

Jul. O, swear not by the moon, the inconstant
moon

That monthly changes in her circled orb,
Lest that thy love prove likewise variable.

Rom. What shall I swear by?

Jul. Do not swear at all;
Or, if thou wilt, swear by thy gracious self,
Which is the god of my idolatry,
And I'll believe thee.

Rom. If my heart's dear love —

Jul. Well, do not swear: although I joy in thee,
I have no joy of this contract to-night:
It is too rash, too unadvis'd, too sudden;
Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be,
Ere one can say — It lightens. Sweet, good night!
This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,
May prove a beauteous flower when next we
meet.

Good night, good night! as sweet repose and rest
Come to thy heart, as that within my breast!

Rom. O, wilt thou leave me so unsatisfied?

Jul. What satisfaction canst thou have to-night?

Rom. The exchange of thy love's faithful vow
for mine.

Jul. I gave thee mine before thou didst request
it:

And yet I would it were to give again.

Rom. Wouldst thou withdraw it? for what pur-
pose, love?

Jul. But to be frank, and give it thee again.

And yet I wish but for the thing I have:

My bounty is as boundless as the sea,
My love as deep; the more I give to thee,
The more I have, for both are infinite.

[*Nurse calls within.*]

I hear some noise within : Dear love, adieu !
 Anon, good nurse ! — Sweet Montague, be true.
 Stay but a little, I will come again. [*Exit.*]

Rom. O blessed, blessed night ! I am afeard,
 Being in night, all this is but a dream,
 Too flattering-sweet to be substantial.

Re-enter JULIET, above.

Jul. Three words, dear Romeo, and good night,
 indeed.

If that thy bent³ of love be honourable,
 Thy purpose marriage, send me word to-morrow,
 By one that I'll procure to come to thee,
 Where, and what time, thou wilt perform the rite ;
 And all my fortunes at thy foot I'll lay,
 And follow thee, my lord, throughout the world :

Nurse. [*Within.*] Madam.

Jul. I come, anon : — But if thou mean'st not
 well,

I do beseech thee, —

Nurse. [*Within.*] Madam.

Jul. By and by, I come : —

To cease thy suit, and leave me to my grief :
 To-morrow will I send.

Rom. So thrive my soul, —

Jul. A thousand times good night ! [*Exit.*]

Rom. A thousand times the worse, to want thy
 light. —

Love goes toward love, as school-boys from their
 books ;

But love from love, toward school with heavy looks.
 [*Retiring slowly.*]

Re-enter JULIET, above.

Jul. Hist ! Romeo, hist ! — O, for a falconer's
 voice,

³ Inclination.

To lure this tassel-gentle⁴ back again !
 Bondage is hoarse, and may not speak aloud ;
 Else would I tear the cave where echo lies,
 And make her airy tongue more hoarse than mine
 With repetition of my Romeo's name.

Rom. It is my soul, that calls upon my name :
 How silver-sweet sound lovers' tongues by night,
 Like softest musick to attending ears !

Jul. Romeo !

Rom. My sweet !

Jul. At what o'clock to-morrow
 Shall I send to thee ?

Rom. At the hour of nine.

Jul. I will not fail ; 'tis twenty years till then.
 I have forgot why I did call thee back.

Rom. Let me stand here till thou remember it.

Jul. I shall forget, to have thee still stand there,
 Rememb'ring how I love thy company.

Rom. And I'll still stay, to have thee still forget,
 Forgetting any other home but this.

Jul. 'Tis almost morning, I would have thee
 gone :

And yet no further than a wanton's bird ;
 Who lets it hop a little from her hand,
 Like a poor prisoner in his twisted gyves,⁵
 And with a silk thread plucks it back again,
 So loving-jealous of his liberty.

Rom. I would, I were thy bird.

Jul. Sweet, so would I :
 Yet I should kill thee with much cherishing.

Good night, good night ! parting is such sweet sor-
 row,

That I shall say — good night, till it be morrow.

[*Exit.*]

⁴ The *teircel* is the male hawk, the *falcon* the female.

⁵ Fetters.

Rom. Sleep dwell upon thine eyes, peace in thy breast! —
 'Would I were sleep and peace, so sweet to rest!
 Hence will I to my ghostly father's cell;
 His help to crave, and my dear hap⁶ to tell. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.

Friar Laurence's Cell.

Enter Friar LAURENCE, with a Basket.

Fri. The grey-ey'd morn smiles on the frowning night,
 Checkering the eastern clouds with streaks of light;
 And flecked⁷ darkness like a drunkard reels
 From forth day's path-way, made by Titan's⁸
 wheels:
 Now ere the sun advance his burning eye,
 The day to cheer, and night's dank dew to dry,
 I must fill up this osier cage of ours,
 With baleful weeds, and precious-juiced flowers.
 The earth, that's nature's mother, is her tomb;
 What is her burying grave, that is her womb:
 And from her womb children of divers kind
 We sucking on her natural bosom find;
 Many for many virtues excellent,
 None but for some, and yet all different.
 O, mickle is the powerful grace, that lies
 In herbs, plants, stones, and their true qualities:
 For nought so vile that on the earth doth live,
 But to the earth some special good doth give;
 Nor aught so good, but, strain'd from that fair use,
 Revolts from true birth, stumbling on abuse:
 Virtue itself turns vice, being misapplied;
 And vice sometime's by action dignified.

⁶ Chance, fortune.

⁷ Spotted, streaked.

⁸ The sun.

Within the infant rind of this small flower
 Poison hath residence, and med'cine power :
 For this, being smelt, with that part cheers each
 part ;
 Being tasted, slays all senses with the heart.
 Two such opposed foes encamp them still
 In man as well as herbs, grace, and rude will ;
 And where the worser is predominant,
 Full soon the canker death eats up that plant.

Enter ROMEO.

Rom. Good morrow, father !

Fri. *Benedicite !*

What early tongue so sweet saluteth me ?
 Young son, it argues a distemper'd head,
 So soon to bid good morrow to thy bed :
 Care keeps his watch in every old man's eye,
 And where care lodges, sleep will never lie ;
 But where unbruised youth with unstuff'd brain
 Doth couch his limbs, there golden sleep doth
 reign ;
 Therefore thy earliness doth me assure,
 Thou art up-rous'd by some distemp'rature ;
 Or if not so, then here I hit it right —
 Our Romeo hath not been in bed to-night.

Rom. That last is true.

Fri. Wast thou with Rosaline ?

Rom. With Rosaline, my ghostly father ? no ;
 I have forgot that name, and that name's woe.

Fri. That's my good son : But where hast thou
 been then ?

Rom. I'll tell thee, ere thou ask it me again.
 I have been feasting with mine enemy ;
 Where, on a sudden, one hath wounded me,
 That's by me wounded ; both our remedies
 Within thy help and holy physick lies :

I bear no hatred, blessed man: for, lo,
My intercession likewise steads my foe.

Fri. Be plain, good son, and homely in thy
drift;

Riddling confession finds but riddling shrift.

Rom. Then plainly know, my heart's dear love
is set

On the fair daughter of rich Capulet:
As mine on hers, so hers is set on mine;
And all combin'd, save what thou must combine
By holy marriage: When, and where, and how,
We met, we woo'd, and made exchange of vow,
I'll tell thee as we pass; but this I pray,
That thou consent to marry us this day.

Fri. Holy saint Francis! what a change is
here!

Is Rosaline, whom thou didst love so dear,
So soon forsaken? young men's love then lies
Not truly in their hearts but in their eyes.
O, Romeo, what a deal of sorrow's brine
Hath wash'd thy sallow cheeks for Rosaline!
How much salt water thrown away in waste,
To season love, that of it doth not taste!
The sun not yet thy sighs from heaven clears,
Thy old groans ring yet in my ancient ears;
Lo, here upon thy cheek the stain doth sit
Of an old tear that is not wash'd off yet:
If e'er thou wast thyself, and these woes thine,
Thou and these woes were all for Rosaline;
And art thou chang'd? pronounce this sentence
then —

Women may fall, when there's no strength in men.

Rom. Thou chid'st me oft for loving Rosaline.

Fri. For doting, not for loving, pupil mine.

Rom. And bad'st me bury love.

Fri. Not in a grave,

To lay one in, another out to have.

Rom. I pray thee, chide not : she, whom I love
 now,
 Doth grace for grace, and love for love allow ;
 The other did not so.

Fri. O, she knew well,
 Thy love did read by rote, and could not spell.
 But come, young waverer, come go with me,
 In one respect I'll thy assistant be ;
 For this alliance may so happy prove,
 To turn your households' rancour to pure love.

Rom. O let us hence ; I stand on sudden haste.

Fri. Wisely, and slow ; they stumble, that run
 fast. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

A Street.

Enter BENVOLIO and MERCUTIO.

Mer. Where should this Romeo be ? —
 Came he not home to-night ?

Ben. Not to his father's ; I spoke with his man.

Mer. Ah, that same pale hard-hearted wench,
 that Rosaline,

Torments him so, that he will surè run mad.

Ben. Tybalt, the kinsman of old Capulet,
 Hath sent a letter to his father's house.

Mer. A challenge, on my life.

Ben. Romeo will answer it.

Mer. Any man, that can write, may answer a
 letter.

Ben. Nay, he will answer the letter's master,
 how he dares, being dared.

Mer. Alas, poor Romeo, he is already dead !
 stabbed with a white girl's black eye ! shot thorough
 the ear with a love-song : the very pin of his heart

cleft with the blind bow-boy's butt-shaft⁹; And is he a man to encounter Tybalt?

Ben. Why, what is Tybalt?

Mer. More than prince of cats¹, I can tell you. O, he is the courageous captain of compliments. He fights as you sing, keeps time, distance, and proportion; rests me his minim rest one, two, and the third in your bosom: the very butcher of a silk button, a duellest, a duellest; a gentleman of the very first house, — of the first and second cause: Ah, the immortal passado! the punto reverso! the hay!²

Ben. The what?

Mer. The plague of such antick, lispings, affecting fantasticoes; these new tuners of accents! — Why, is not this a lamentable thing, grandsire, that we should be thus afflicted with these strange flies, these fashion-mongers, these *pardonnez-moy's*, who stand so much on the new form, that they cannot sit at ease on the old bench? O, their *bons*, their *bons*!

Enter ROMEO.

Ben. Here comes Romeo, here comes Romeo.

Mer. Without his roe, like a dried herring: — O flesh, flesh, how art thou fishified! — Now is he for the numbers that Petrarch flow'd in: Laura, to his lady, was but a kitchen-wench; — marry, she had a better love to be-rhyme her: Dido, a dowdy; Cleopatra, a gipsy; Thisbé, a grey eye or so, but not to the purpose. — Signior Romeo, *bon jour*! there's a French salutation to your French slop.³ You gave us the counterfeit fairly last night.

⁹ Arrow.

¹ See the story of Reynard the fox.

² Terms of the fencing-school.

³ Trowsers or pantaloons, a French fashion in Shakspeare's time.

Rom. Good morrow to you both. What counterfeit did I give you?

Mer. The slip, sir, the slip⁴; Can you not conceive?

Rom. Pardon, good Mercutio, my business was great; and, in such a case as mine, a man may strain courtesy.

Mer. Nay, I am the very pink of courtesy.

Rom. Pink for flower.

Mer. Right.

Rom. Why, then is my pump⁵ well flowered.

Mer. Well said; Follow me this jest now, till thou hast worn out thy pump; that, when the single sole of it is worn, the jest may remain after the wearing, solely singular.

Rom. O single-soled jest, solely singular for the singleness!

Mer. Come between us, good Benvolio; my wits fail.

Rom. Switch and spurs, switch and spurs; or I'll cry a match.

Mer. Nay, if thy wits run the wild-goose chase, I have done: for thou hast more of the wild-goose in one of thy wits, than, I am sure, I have in my whole five: Was I with you there for the goose?

Rom. Thou wast never with me for any thing, when thou wast not there for the goose.

Mer. I will bite thee by the ear for that jest.

Rom. Nay, good goose, bite not.

Mer. Thy wit is a very bitter-sweeting⁶; it is a most sharp sauce.

Rom. And is it not well served in to a sweet goose?

Mer. O, here's a wit of cheverel⁷, that stretches from an inch narrow to an ell broad!

⁴ A pun on counterfeit money called slips.

⁵ Shoe.

⁶ An apple.

⁷ Soft stretching leather.

Rom. I stretch it out for that word — broad : which added to the goose, proves thee far and wide a broad goose.

Mer. Why, is not this better now than groaning for love ? now art thou sociable, now art thou Romeo ; now art thou what thou art, by art as well as by nature.

Rom. Here's goodly geer !

Enter Nurse and PETER.

Mer. A sail, a sail, a sail !

Nurse. Peter !

Peter. Anon ?

Nurse. My fan, Peter.

Mer. Pr'ythee, do, good Peter, to hide her face ; for her fan's the fairer of the two.

Nurse. Good morrow, gentlemen.

Mer. Good den ^s, fair gentlewoman.

Nurse. Is it good den ?

Mer. 'Tis no less, I tell you ; for the hand of the dial is now upon the point of noon.

Nurse. Gentlemen, can any of you tell me where I may find the young Romeo ?

Rom. I can tell you ; but young Romeo will be older when you have found him, than he was when you sought him : I am the youngest of that name, for 'fault of a worse.

Nurse. You say well.

Mer. Yea, is the worse well ? very well took, i'faith ; wisely, wisely.

Nurse. If you be he, sir, I desire some confidence with you.

Ben. She will indite him to some supper.

Mer. Romeo, will you come to your father's ? we'll to dinner thither.

^s Good even.

Rom. I will follow you.

Mer. Farewell, ancient lady; farewell, lady, lady, lady.

[*Exeunt MERCUTIO and BENVOLIO.*]

Nurse. Marry, farewell! — I pray you, sir, what saucy merchant⁹ was this, that was so full of his ropery?

Rom. A gentleman, nurse, that loves to hear himself talk; and will speak more in a minute, than he will stand to in a month.

Nurse. An 'a speak any thing against me, I'll take him down an 'a were lustier than he is, and twenty such Jacks; and if I cannot, I'll find those that shall. — Pray you, sir, a word: and, as I told you, my young lady bade me inquire you out; what she bade me say, I will keep to myself: but first let me tell ye, if ye should lead her into a fool's paradise, as they say, it were a very gross kind of behaviour, as they say: for the gentlewoman is young: and, therefore, if you should deal double with her, truly, it were an ill thing to be offered to any gentlewoman, and very weak dealing.

Rom. Nurse, commend me to thy lady and mistress. I protest unto thee, —

Nurse. Good heart! and, i'faith, I will tell her as much: She will be a joyful woman.

Rom. What wilt thou tell her, nurse? thou dost not mark me.

Nurse. I will tell her, sir, — that you do protest; which, as I take it, is a gentleman-like offer.

Rom. Bid her devise some means to come to shrift¹

This afternoon;

⁹ A term of disrespect, in contradistinction to gentleman.

¹ Confession.

And there she shall at friar Laurence' cell
Be shriv'd, and married. Here is for thy pains.

Nurse. No, truly, sir; not a penny.

Rom. Go to; I say you shall.

Nurse. This afternoon, sir; well, she shall be there.

Rom. And stay, good nurse, behind the abbey-wall:

Within this hour my man shall be with thee;
And bring thee cords made like a tackled stair,
Which to the high top-gallant² of my joy
Must be my convoy in the secret night.

Farewell! — Be trusty, and I'll quit³ thy pains.

Farewell! — Commend me to thy mistress.

Nurse. Now, heaven bless thee! — Hark you, sir.

Rom. What say'st thou, my dear nurse?

Nurse. Is your man secret? Did you ne'er hear say —

Two may keep counsel, putting one away?

Rom. I warrant thee; my man's as true as steel.

Nurse. Well, sir; my mistress is the sweetest lady: — when 'twas a little prating thing, — O, — there's a nobleman in town, one Paris, that would fain lay knife aboard; but she, good soul, had as lieve see a toad, a very toad, as see him. I anger her sometimes, and tell her that Paris is the properer man; but, I'll warrant you, when I say so, she looks as pale as any clout in the varsal world. Doth not rosemary and Romeo begin both with a letter?

Rom. Ay, nurse; What of that? both with an R.

Nurse. Ah, mocker! that's the dog's name, R. is for the dog. No; I know it begins with some

² The highest extremity of the mast of a ship.

³ Requite.

other letter ; and she hath the prettiest sententious of it, of you and rosemary, that it would do you good to hear it.

Rom. Commend me to thy lady. [*Exit.*

Nurse. Ay, a thousand times. — Peter !

Pet. Anon ?

Nurse. Peter, take my fan, and go before.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

Capulet's Garden.

Enter JULIET.

Jul. The clock struck nine, when I did send
the nurse ;

In half an hour she promis'd to return.

Perchance she cannot meet him : that's not so. —

O, she is lame ! love's heralds should be thoughts,
Which ten times faster glide than the sun's beams,
Driving back shadows over low'ring hills :

Therefore do nimble-pinion'd doves draw love,
And therefore hath the wind-swift Cupid wings.

Now is the sun upon the highmost hill

Of this day's journey ; and from nine till twelve

Is three long hours, — yet she is not come.

Had she affections, and warm youthful blood,

She'd be as swift in motion as a ball ;

My words would bandy⁴ her to my sweet love,

And his to me :

But old folks, many feign as they were dead ;

Unwieldy, slow, heavy and pale as lead.

⁴ Drive her, as a ball struck with a bandy, *i. e.* a batt or battledore.

Enter Nurse and PETER.

O here she comes! — O honey nurse, what news?
Hast thou met with him? Send thy man away.

Nurse. Peter, stay at the gate. [*Exit PETER.*

Jul. Now, good sweet nurse, — why look'st thou sad?

Though news be sad, yet tell them merrily;
If good, thou sham'st the musick of sweet news
By playing it to me with so sour a face,

Nurse. I am weary, give me leave a while; —
Fye, how my bones ake! What a jaunt have I had!

Jul. I would, thou hadst my bones, and I thy news:

Nay, come, I pray thee, speak; — good, good nurse, speak.

Nurse. What haste? can you not stay a while?
Do you not see that I am out of breath?

Jul. How art thou out of breath, when thou hast breath

To say to me — that thou art out of breath?
The excuse that thou dost make in this delay,
Is longer than the tale thou dost excuse.

Is thy news good, or bad? answer to that;
Say either, and I'll stay the circumstance:
Let me be satisfied, Is't good or bad?

Nurse. Well, you have made a simple choice;
you know not how to choose a man: Romeo! no,
not he; though his face be better than any man's,
yet his leg excels all men's; and for a hand and a
foot, they are past compare: He is not the flower
of courtesy, — but, I'll warrant him as gentle as a
lamb. What, have you dined at home?

Jul. No, no: But all this did I know before;
What says he of our marriage? what of that?

Nurse. O, how my head akes! what a head have I!

It beats as it would fall in twenty pieces.
My back o' t'other side. — O, my back, my back! —
Beshrew your heart, for sending me about,
To catch my death with jaunting up and down!

Jul. P'faith, I am sorry that thou art not well:
Sweet, sweet, sweet nurse, tell me, what says my love?

Nurse. Your love says, like an honest gentleman,
And a courteous, and a kind, and a handsome,
And, I warrant, a virtuous: — Where is your mother?

Jul. Where is my mother? — why, she is within;
Where should she be? How oddly thou reply'st;
Your love says like an honest gentleman, —
Where is your mother?

Nurse. Marry, come up, I trow:
Is this the poultice for my aking bones?
Henceforward do your messages yourself.

Jul. Here's such a coil⁵, — come, what says Romeo?

Nurse. Have you got leave to go to shrift to-day?

Jul. I have.

Nurse. Then hie you hence to friar Laurence's cell,

There stays a husband to make you a wife:
Now comes the wanton blood up in your cheeks,
They'll be in scarlet straight at any news.
Hie you to church; I must another way,
I must go fetch a ladder for your love:
I am the drudge, and toil in your delight.
Go, I'll to dinner; hie you to the cell.

Jul. Hie to high fortune! — honest nurse, farewell.

[*Exeunt.*]

⁵ Bustle.

SCENE VI.

*Friar Laurence's Cell.**Enter Friar LAURENCE and ROMEO.*

Fri. So smile the heavens upon this holy act,
That after-hours with sorrow chide us not.

Rom. Amen, amen! but come what sorrow can,
It cannot countervail the exchange of joy
That one short minute gives me in her sight :
Do thou but close our hands with holy words,
Then love-devouring death do what he dare,
It is enough I may but call her mine.

Fri. These violent delights have violent ends,
And in their triumph die ; like fire and powder,
Which, as they kiss, consume : The sweetest honey
Is loathsome in his own deliciousness,
And in the taste confounds the appetite :
Therefore, love moderately ; long love doth so ;
Too swift arrives as tardy as too slow.

Enter JULIET.

Here comes the lady : — O, so light a foot
Will ne'er wear out the everlasting flint :
A lover may bstride the gossamers⁶
That idle in the wanton summer air,
And yet not fall ; so light is vanity.

Jul. Good even to my ghostly confessor.

Fri. Romeo shall thank thee, daughter, for us
both.

Jul. As much to him, else are his thanks too
much.

Rom. Ah, Juliet, if the measure of thy joy
Be heap'd like mine, and that thy skill be more

⁶ The long white filament which flies in the air.

To blazon⁷ it, then sweeten with thy breath
 This neighbour air, and let rich musick's tongue,
 Unfold the imagin'd happiness that both
 Receive in either by this dear encounter.

Jul. Conceit⁸, more rich in matter than in
 words,

Braggs of his substance, not of ornament :
 They are but beggars that can count their worth ;
 But my true love is grown to such excess,
 I cannot sum up half my sum of wealth.

Fri. Come, come with me, and we will make
 short work ;

And holy church incorporate two in one. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I. — *A Public Place.*

Enter MERCUTIO, BENVOLIO, *Page, and Servants.*

Ben. I pray thee, good Mercutio, let's retire ;
 The day is hot, the Capulets abroad,
 And, if we meet, we shall not 'scape a brawl ;
 For now, these hot days, is the mad blood stirring.

Mer. Thou art like one of those fellows, that,
 when he enters the confines of a tavern, claps me
 his sword upon the table, and says, *Heaven send me
 no need of thee !* and, by the operation of the second
 cup, draws it on the drawer, when, indeed, there is
 no need.

Ben. Am I like such a fellow ?

Mer. Come, come, thou art as hot a Jack in thy

⁷ Paint, display.

⁸ Imagination.

mood as any in Italy ; and as soon moved to be moody, and as soon moody to be moved.

Ben. And what to ?

Mer. Nay, an there were two such, we should have none shortly, for one would kill the other. Thou ! why thou wilt quarrel with a man that hath a hair more, or a hair less, in his beard, than thou hast. Thou wilt quarrel with a man for cracking nuts, having no other reason but because thou hast hazel eyes ; What eye, but such an eye, would spy out such a quarrel ? Thy head is as full of quarrels as an egg is full of meat ; and yet thy head hath been beaten as addle as an egg, for quarrelling. Thou hast quarrelled with a man for coughing in the street, because he hath wakened thy dog that hath lain asleep in the sun. Didst thou not fall out with a tailor for wearing his new doublet before Easter ? with another, for tying his new shoes with old riband ? and yet thou wilt tutor me from quarrelling !

Ben. An I were so apt to quarrel as thou art, any man should buy the fee-simple of my life for an hour and a quarter.

Mer. The fee-simple ? O simple !

Enter TYBALT, and others.

Ben. By my head, here come the Capulets.

Mer. By my heel, I care not.

Tyb. Follow me close, for I will speak to them. — Gentlemen, good den ; a word with one of you.

Mer. And but one word with one of us ? Couple it with something ; make it a word and a blow.

Tyb. You will find me apt enough to that, sir, if you will give me occasion.

Mer. Could you not take some occasion without giving ?

Tyb. Mercutio, thou consortest with Romeo, —

Mer. Consort? what, dost thou make us minstrels? an thou make minstrels of us, look to hear nothing but discords: here's my fiddlestick; here's that shall make you dance. Consort!

Ben. We talk here in the publick haunt of men: Either withdraw into some private place, Or reason coldly of your grievances, Or else depart; here all eyes gaze on us.

Mer. Men's eyes were made to look, and let them gaze;
I will not budge for no man's pleasure, I.

Enter ROMEO.

Tyb. Well, peace be with you, sir! here comes my man.

Mer. But I'll be hanged, sir, if he wear your livery:

Marry, go before to field, he'll be your follower; Your worship, in that sense, may call him — man.

Tyb. Romeo, the hate I bear thee, can afford No better term than this — Thou art a villain.

Rom. Tybalt, the reason that I have to love thee

Doth much excuse the appertaining rage To such a greeting: — Villain am I none; Therefore, farewell; I see, thou know'st me not.

Tyb. Boy, this shall not excuse the injuries That thou hast done me; therefore turn, and draw.

Rom. I do protest I never injur'd thee; But love thee better than thou canst devise, Till thou shalt know the reason of my love: And so, good Capulet, — which name I tender As dearly as mine own, — be satisfied.

Mer. O calm, dishonourable, vile submission!
*A la stoccata*⁹ carries it away. [Draws.

Tybalt, you rat-catcher, will you walk?

Tyb. What wouldst thou have with me?

Mer. Good king of cats, nothing, but one of your nine lives; that I mean to make bold withal, and as you shall use me hereafter, dry-beat the rest of the eight. Will you pluck your sword out of his pilcher¹ by the ears? make haste, lest mine be about your ears ere it be out.

Tyb. I am for you. [Drawing.

Rom. Gentle Mercutio, put thy rapier up.

Mer. Come, sir, your passado. [They fight.

Rom. Draw, Benvolio;

Beat down their weapons:—Gentlemen, for shame;
 Forbear this outrage;—Tybalt—Mercutio—
 The prince expressly hath forbid this bandying
 In Verona streets:—hold, Tybalt;—good Mer-
 cutio. [Exeunt TYBALT and his Partizans.

Mer. I am hurt;—

A plague o'both the houses!—I am sped:—
 Is he gone, and hath nothing?

Ben. What, art thou hurt?

Mer. Ay, ay, a scratch, a scratch; marry, 'tis
 enough.—

Where is my page?—go, villain, fetch a surgeon.
 [Exit Page.

Rom. Courage, man; the hurt cannot be much.

Mer. No, 'tis not so deep as a well, nor so wide
 as a church door; but 'tis enough, 'twill serve:
 ask for me to-morrow, and you shall find me a grave
 man. I am peppered, I warrant, for this world:—
 A plague o'both your houses!—A dog, a rat, a
 mouse, a cat, to scratch a man to death! a brag-

⁹ The Italian term for a thrust or stab with a rapier.

¹ Case or scabbard.

gart, a rogue, a villain, that fights by the book of arithmetick! — Why, the devil, came you between us? I was hurt under your arm.

Rom. I thought all for the best.

Mer. Help me into some house, Benvolio, Or I shall faint. — A plague o'both your houses! They have made worm's meat of me: I have it, and soundly too: — Your houses!

[*Exeunt MERCUTIO and BENVOLIO.*]

Rom. This gentleman, the prince's near ally, My very friend, hath got his mortal hurt In my behalf; my reputation stain'd With Tybalt's slander, Tybalt, that an hour Hath been my kinsman: — O sweet Juliet, Thy beauty hath made me effeminate, And in my temper soften'd valour's steel.

Re-enter BENVOLIO.

Ben. O Romeo, Romeo, brave Mercutio's dead; That gallant spirit hath aspir'd the clouds, Which too untimely here did scorn the earth.

Rom. This day's black fate on more days doth depend; This but begins the woe, others must end.

Re-enter TYBALT.

Ben. Here comes the furious Tybalt back again.

Rom. Alive! in triumph! and Mercutio slain! Away to heaven, respective² lenity, And fire-ey'd fury be my conduct³ now! — Now, Tybalt, take the *villain* back again, That late thou gav'st, me; for Mercutio's soul Is but a little way above our heads, Staying for thine to keep him company; Either thou, or I, or both, must go with him.

² Considerate.

³ Conductor.

Tyb. Thou, wretched boy, that didst consort⁴
him here,
Shalt with him hence.

Rom. This shall determine that.
[*They fight*; *TYBALT falls.*]

Ben. Romeo, away, be gone!
The citizens are up, and Tybalt slain:
Stand not amaz'd: — the prince will doom thee
death,

If thou art taken: — hence! — be gone! — away!

Rom. O! I am fortune's fool!

Ben. Why dost thou stay? [*Exit ROMEO.*]

Enter Citizens, &c.

1 Cit. Which way ran he, that kill'd Mercutio?
Tybalt, that murderer, which way ran he?

Ben. There lies that Tybalt.

1 Cit. Up, sir, go with me;
I charge thee in the prince's name, obey.

Enter Prince, attended; MONTAGUE, CAPULET,
their Wives, and others.

Prin. Where are the vile beginners of this fray?

Ben. O noble prince, I can discover all
The unlucky manage of this fatal brawl:
There lies the man slain by young Romeo,
That slew thy kinsman, brave Mercutio.

La. Cap. Tybalt, my cousin! — O my brother's
child!

Unhappy sight! ah me, the blood is spill'd
Of my dear kinsman! — Prince, as thou art true,⁵
For blood of ours, shed blood of Montague. —
O cousin, cousin!

Prin. Benvolio, who began this bloody fray?

⁴ Accompany.

⁵ Just and upright.

Ben. Tybalt, here slain, whom Romeo's hand
did slay ;

Romeo that spoke him fair, bade him bethink
How nice⁶ the quarrel was, and urg'd withal
Your high displeasure : — All this — uttered
With gentle breath, calm look, knees humbly
bow'd, —

Could not take truce with the unruly spleen
Of Tybalt, deaf to peace, but that he tilts
With piercing steel at bold Mercutio's breast ;
Who, all as hot, turns deadly point to point,
And, with a martial scorn, with one hand beats
Cold death aside, and with the other sends
It back to Tybalt, whose dexterity
Retorts it : Romeo he cries aloud,
Hold, friends ! friends, part ! and, swifter than his
tongue,

His agile arm beats down their fatal points,
And 'twixt them rushes ; underneath whose arm
An envious thrust from Tybalt hit the life
Of stout Mercutio, and then Tybalt fled :
But by and by comes back to Romeo,
Who had but newly entertain'd revenge,
And to't they go like lightning ; for, ere I
Could draw to part them, was stout Tybalt slain ;
And, as he fell, did Romeo turn and fly :
This is the truth, or let Benvolio die.

La. Cap. He is a kinsman to the Montague,
Affection makes him false, he speaks not true :
Some twenty of them fought in this black strife,
And all those twenty could but kill one life :
I beg for justice, which thou, prince, must give ;
Romeo slew Tybalt, Romeo must not live.

Prin. Romeo slew him, he slew Mercutio ;
Who now the price of his dear blood doth owe ?

⁶ Slight, unimportant.

Mon. Not Romeo, prince, he was Mercutio's friend ;
His fault concludes but what the law should end,
The life of Tybalt.

Prin. And, for that offence,
Immediately we do exile him hence :
I have an interest in your hates' proceeding,
My blood for your rude brawls doth lie a bleeding ;
But I'll amerce⁷ you with so strong a fine,
That you shall all repent the loss of mine :
I will be deaf to pleading and excuses ;
Nor tears, nor prayers, shall purchase out abuses ;
Therefore use none : let Romeo hence in haste,
Else, when he's found, that hour is his last.
Bear hence this body, and attend our will :
Mercy but murders, pardoning those that kill.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Room in Capulet's House.

Enter JULIET.

Jul. Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds,
Towards Phœbus' mansion ; such a waggoner
As Phaeton would whip you to the west,
And bring in cloudy night immediately. —
Spread thy close curtain, and come, civil⁸ night,
Thou sober-suited matron, all in black :
Come, night ! — Come, Romeo ! come, thou day
in night !
For thou wilt lie upon the wings of night
Whiter than new snow on a raven's back. —
Come, gentle night ; come, loving, black-brow'd
night,

⁷ Punish by fine.

⁸ Grave, solemn.

Give me my Romeo: and when he shall die,
 Take him and cut him out in little stars,
 And he will make the face of heaven so fine,
 That all the world will be in love with night,
 And pay no worship to the garish⁹ sun. —

Enter Nurse, with Cords.

Here comes my nurse,
 And she brings news; and every tongue, that
 speaks
 But Romeo's name, speaks heavenly eloquence. —
 Now, nurse, what news? What hast thou there, the
 cords,
 That Romeo bade thee fetch?

Nurse. Ay, ay, the cords.
 [*Throws them down.*]

Jul. Ah me! what news! why dost thou wring
 thy hands?

Nurse. Ah well-a-day! he's dead, he's dead, he's
 dead!

We are undone, lady, we are undone! —
 Alack the day! — he's gone, he's kill'd, he's dead!

Jul. Can heaven be so envious?

Nurse. Romeo can,
 Though heaven cannot: — O Romeo! Romeo!
 Who ever would have thought it? — Romeo!

Jul. What devil art thou, that dost torment me
 thus?

Hath Romeo slain himself? say thou but *I*,¹
 And that bare vowel *I* shall poison more
 Than the death-darting eye of cockatrice:
 I am not *I*, if there be such an *I*:
 Or those eyes shut, that make thee answer, *I*.

⁹ Gaudy, showy

¹ In Shakspeare's time the affirmative particle *ay*, was usually written *I*, and here it is necessary to retain the old spelling.

If he be slain, say — *I* ; or if not, no :

Brief sounds determine of my weal, or woe.

Nurse. I saw the wound, I saw it with mine eyes, —

'Twas here, e'en here, upon his manly breast :

A piteous corse, a bloody piteous corse ;

Pale, pale as ashes, all bedaub'd in blood,

All in gore blood ; I swooned at the sight.

Jul. O break, my heart ! — poor bankrupt, break at once !

To prison, eyes ! ne'er look on liberty !

Vile earth, to earth resign ; end motion here ;

And thou, and Romeo, press one heavy bier !

Nurse. O Tybalt, Tybalt, the best friend I had !

O courteous Tybalt ! honest gentleman !

That ever I should live to see thee dead !

Jul. What storm is this, that blows so contrary ?

Is Romeo slaughter'd ; and is Tybalt dead ?

My dear-lov'd cousin, and my dearer lord ? —

Then, dreadful trumpet, sound the general doom !

For who is living, if those two are gone ?

Nurse. Tybalt is gone, and Romeo banished ;
Romeo, that kill'd him, he is banished.

Jul. O heaven ! — did Romeo's hand shed Tybalt's blood ?

Nurse. It did, it did ; alas the day ! it did.

Jul. O serpent heart, hid with a flow'ring face !

Did ever dragon keep so fair a cave ?

Beautiful tyrant ! fiend angelical !

Dove-feather'd raven ! wolfish-ravening lamb !

Despised substance of divinest show !

Just opposite to what thou justly seem'st :

Was ever book, containing such vile matter,

So fairly bound ? O, that deceit should dwell

In such a gorgeous palace !

Nurse. There's no trust,
No faith, no honesty in men ; all perjur'd,

All forsworn, all naught, all dissemblers. —

Ah, where's my man? give me some *aqua vitæ*: —
These griefs, these woes, these sorrows make me
old.

Shame come to Romeo!

Jul. Blister'd be thy tongue,
For such a wish! he was not born to shame:
Upon his brow shame is asham'd to sit;
For 'tis a throne where honour may be crown'd
Sole monarch of the universal earth.
O, what a beast was I to chide at him!

Nurse. Will you speak well of him that kill'd
your cousin?

Jul. Shall I speak ill of him that is my husband?
Ah, poor my lord, what tongue shall smooth thy
name,

When I, thy three-hours' wife, have mangled it? —
But, wherefore, villain, didst thou kill my cousin?
That villain cousin would have kill'd my husband:
Back, foolish tears, back to your native spring;
Your tributary drops belong to woe,
Which you, mistaking, offer up to joy.
My husband lives, that Tybalt would have slain;
And Tybalt's dead, that would have slain my hus-
band:

All this is comfort; Wherefore weep I then?
Some word there was, worser than Tybalt's death,
That murder'd me: I would forget it fain;
But, O! it presses to my memory,
Like horrid guilty deeds to sinners' minds:
Tybalt is dead, and Romeo — banished;
That — *banished*, that one word — *banished*,
Hath slain ten thousand Tybalts. Tybalt's death
Was woe enough, if it had ended there:
Or, — if sour woe delights in fellowship,
And needly will be rank'd with other griefs, —
Why follow'd not, when she said — Tybalt's dead,

Thy father, or thy mother, nay, or both,
 Which modern² lamentation might have mov'd?
 But, with a rear-ward following Tybalt's death,
Romeo is banished, — to speak that word,
 Is father, mother, Tybalt, Romeo, Juliet,
 All slain, all dead: — *Romeo is banished*, —
 There is no end, no limit, measure, bound,
 In that word's death; no words can that woe
 sound. —

Where is my father, and my mother, nurse?

Nurse. Weeping and wailing over Tybalt's corse:
 Will you go to them? I will bring you thither.

Jul. Wash they his wounds with tears? mine shall
 be spent,

When theirs are dry, for Romeo's banishment.

Take up those cords: — Poor ropes, you are be-
 guil'd,

Both you and I; for Romeo is exil'd.

Nurse. Hie to your chamber: I'll find Romeo
 To comfort you: — I wot³ well where he is.
 Hark ye, your Romeo will be here at night;
 I'll to him; he is hid at Laurence' cell.

Jul. O find him! give this ring to my true
 knight,
 And bid him come to take his last farewell.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

Friar Laurence's Cell.

Enter Friar LAURENCE and ROMEO.

Fri. Romeo, come forth; come forth, thou fear-
 ful man;
 Affliction is enamour'd of thy parts,
 And thou art wedded to calamity.

² Common.

³ Know.

Rom. Father, what news? what is the prince's doom?

What sorrow craves acquaintance at my hand,
That I yet know not?

Fri. Too familiar

Is my dear son with such sour company :
I bring thee tidings of the prince's doom.

Rom. What less than dooms-day is the prince's doom?

Fri. A gentler judgment vanish'd from his lips,
Not body's death, but body's banishment.

Rom. Ha! banishment? be merciful, say —
death :

For exile hath more terror in his look,
Much more than death : do not say — banishment.

Fri. Hence from Verona art thou banished :
Be patient, for the world is broad and wide.

Rom. There is no world without Verona walls,
Hence-banished is banish'd from the world,
And world's exile is death : — then banishment
Is death mis-term'd : calling death — banishment,
Thou cutt'st my head off with a golden axe,
And smil'st upon the stroke that murders me.

Fri. O deadly sin! O rude unthankfulness!
Thy fault our law calls death; but the kind prince,
Taking thy part, hath rush'd aside the law,
And turn'd that black word death to banishment :
This is dear mercy, and thou seest it not.

Rom. 'Tis torture, and not mercy: heaven is here,
Where Juliet lives; and every cat, and dog,
And little mouse, every unworthy thing,
Live here in heaven, and may look on her,
But Romeo may not. — More validity,⁴
More honourable state, more courtship lives
In carrion flies, than Romeo: they may seize

⁴ Worth, value.

On the white wonder of dear Juliet's hand,
 And steal immortal blessing from her lips ;
 Who, even in pure and vestal modesty,
 Still blush, as thinking their own kisses sin ;
 But Romeo may not ; he is banished :
 Flies may do this, when I from this must fly ;
 They are free men, but I am banished.
 And say'st thou yet, that exile is not death ?
 Hadst thou no poison mix'd, no sharp-ground knife,
 No sudden mean of death, though ne'er so mean,
 But, — banished — to kill me ; banished ?
 O cruel friar, how hast thou the heart,
 Being a divine, a ghostly confessor,
 A sin-absolver, and my friend profess'd,
 To mangle me with that word — banishment ?

Fri. Thou fond mad man, hear me but speak a word.

Rom. O, thou wilt speak again of banishment.

Fri. I'll give thee armour to keep off that word ;
 Adversity's sweet milk, philosophy,
 To comfort thee, though thou art banished.

Rom. Yet banished ? — Hang up philosophy !
 Unless philosophy can make a Juliet,
 Displant a town, reverse a prince's doom ;
 It helps not, it prevails not, talk no more.

Fri. O, then I see that madmen have no ears.

Rom. How should they, when that wise men
 have no eyes ?

Fri. Let me dispute with thee of thy estate.

Rom. Thou canst not speak of what thou dost
 not feel :

Wert thou as young as I, Juliet thy love,
 An hour but married, Tybalt murdered,
 Doting like me, and like me banished,
 Then mightst thou speak, then mightst thou tear
 thy hair,

And fall upon the ground as I do now,
Taking the measure of an unmade grave.

Fri. Arise; one knocks; good Romeo, hide
thyself. [*Knocking within.*]

Rom. Not I; unless the breath of heart-sick
groans,
Mist-like, infold me from the search of eyes.

[*Knocking.*]

Fri. Hark, how they knock! — Who's there? —
Romeo, arise:

Thou wilt be taken: — Stay a while: stand up;

[*Knocking.*]

Run to my study: — By and by: — I come!

What wilfulness is this? — I come, I come.

[*Knocking.*]

Who knocks so hard? whence come you? what's
your will?

Nurse. [*Within.*] Let me come in, and you shall
know my errand;

I come from lady Juliet.

Fri.

Welcome then.

Enter Nurse.

Nurse. O holy friar, O, tell me, holy friar,
Where is my lady's lord, where's Romeo?

Fri. There on the ground, with his own tears
made drunk.

Nurse. O, he is even in my mistress' case,
Just in her case!

Fri. O woeful sympathy!

Piteous predicament!

Nurse.

Even so lies she,

Blubbering and weeping, weeping and blubbering:—

Stand up, stand up; stand, an you be a man:

For Juliet's sake, for her sake, rise and stand;

Why should you fall into so deep an O?

Rom. Nurse!

Nurse. Ah sir! ah sir! — Well, death's the end of all.

Rom. Spak'st thou of Juliet? how is it with her? Does she not think me an old murderer, Now I have stain'd the childhood of our joy With blood remov'd but little from her own? Where is she? and how doth she? and what says My conceal'd lady to our cancell'd love?

Nurse. O, she says nothing, sir, but weeps and weeps;
And now falls on her bed; and then starts up,
And Tybalt calls; and then on Romeo cries,
And then down falls again.

Rom. As if that name,
Shot from the deadly level of a gun,
Did murder her; as that name's cursed hand
Murder'd her kinsman. — O tell me, friar, tell me,
In what vile part of this anatomy
Doth my name lodge? tell me, that I may sack
The hateful mansion. [*Drawing his Sword.*]

Fri. Hold thy desperate hand:
Art thou a man? thy form cries out, thou art;
Thy tears are womanish, thy wild acts denote
The unreasonable fury of a beast:
Unseemly woman, in a seeming man!
Or ill-beseeming beast, in seeming both!
Thou hast amaz'd me: by my holy order,
I thought thy disposition better temper'd.
Hast thou slain Tybalt? wilt thou slay thyself?
And slay thy lady too that lives in thee,
By doing violence upon thyself?
Why rail'st thou on thy birth, the heaven, and
earth?

Since birth, and heaven, and earth, all three do meet
In thee at once; which thou at once wouldst lose.
Eye, fye! thou sham'st thy shape, thy love, thy wit;

Which, like an usurer, abound'st in all,
And usest none in that true use indeed
Which should bedeck thy shape, thy love, thy wit.
Thy noble shape is but a form of wax,
Digressing from the valour of a man :
Thy dear love, sworn, but hollow perjury,
Killing that love which thou hast vow'd to cherish ;
Thy wit, that ornament to shape and love,
Mis-shapen in the conduct of them both,
Like powder in a skill-less soldier's flask,
Is set on fire by thine own ignorance,
And thou dismember'd with thine own defence.
What, rouse thee, man ! thy Juliet is alive,
For whose dear sake thou wast but lately dead ;
There art thou happy : Tybalt would kill thee,
But thou slew'st Tybalt ; there art thou happy too :
The law, that threaten'd death, becomes thy friend,
And turns it to exile ; there art thou happy :
A pack of blessings lights upon thy back :
Happiness courts thee in her best array ;
But, like a mis-behav'd and sullen wench,
Thou pout'st upon thy fortune and thy love :
Take heed, take heed, for such die miserable.
Go, get thee to thy love, as was decreed,
Ascend her chamber, hence and comfort her ;
But, look, thou stay not till the watch be set,
For then thou canst not pass to Mantua ;
Where thou shalt live, till we can find a time
To blaze your marriage, reconcile your friends,
Beg pardon of the prince, and call thee back
With twenty hundred thousand times more joy
Than thou went'st forth in lamentation. —
Go before, nurse : commend me to thy lady ;
And bid her hasten all the house to bed,
Which heavy sorrow makes them apt unto :
Romeo is coming.

Nurse. I could have staid all night,

To hear good counsel : O, what learning is ! —
My lord, I'll tell my lady you will come.

Rom. Do so, and bid my sweet prepare to chide.

Nurse. Here, sir, a ring she bid me give you,
sir :

Hie you, make haste, for it grows very late.

[*Exit Nurse.*]

Rom. How well my comfort is reviv'd by this !

Fri. Go hence : Good night : and here stands
all your state ;⁵

Either be gone before the watch be set,
Or by the break of day disguis'd from hence :
Sojourn in Mantua ; I'll find out your man,
And he shall signify from time to time
Every good hap to you, that chances here :
Give me thy hand ; 'tis late ; farewell ; good night.

Rom. But that a joy past joy calls out on me,
It were a grief, so brief to part with thee :
Farewell.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.

A Room in Capulet's House.

Enter CAPULET, Lady CAPULET, and PARIS.

Cap. Things have fallen out, sir, so unluckily,
That we have had no time to move our daughter :
Look you, she lov'd her kinsman Tybalt dearly,
And so did I ; — Well, we were born to die. —
'Tis very late, she'll not come down to-night :
I promise you, but for your company,
I would have been a-bed an hour ago.

Par. These times of woe afford no time to woo ;
Madam, good night ; commend me to your daughter.

⁵ The whole of your fortune depends on this.

La. Cap. I will, and know her mind early to-morrow ;

To-night she's mew'd⁶ up to her heaviness.

Cap. Sir Paris, I will make a desperate⁷ tender Of my child's love : I think, she will be rul'd In all respects by me ; nay more, I doubt it not. Wife, go you to her ere you go to bed ; Acquaint her here of my son Paris' love ; And bid her, mark you me, on Wednesday next — But, soft : What day is this ?

Par. Monday, my lord.

Cap. Monday ? ha ! ha ! Well, Wednesday is too soon,

O'Thursday let it be ; — o'Thursday, tell her, She shall be married to this noble earl : —

Will you be ready ? do you like this haste ?

We'll keep no great ado ; — a friend, or two :

For, hark you, Tybalt being slain so late,

It may be thought we held him carelessly,

Being our kinsman, if we revel much :

Therefore we'll have some half a dozen friends,

And there an end. But what say you to Thursday ?

Par. My lord, I would that Thursday were to-morrow.

Cap. Well, get you gone : — O'Thursday be it then : —

Go you to Juliet ere you go to bed,

Prepare her, wife, against this wedding-day. —

Farewell, my lord. — Light to my chamber, ho !

Afore me, it is so very late, that we

May call it early by and by : — Good night.

[*Exeunt.*]

⁶ Shut up.

⁷ Bold.

SCENE V.

*Juliet's Chamber.**Enter ROMEO and JULIET.*

Jul. Wilt thou be gone? it is not yet near day :
It was the nightingale, and not the lark,
That pierc'd the fearful hollow of thine ear ;
Nightly she sings on yon pomegranate tree :
Believe me, love, it was the nightingale.

Rom. It was the lark, the herald of the morn,
No nightingale : look, love, what envious streaks
Do lace the severing clouds in yonder east :
Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops ;
I must be gone and live, or stay and die.

Jul. Yon light is not day-light, I know it, I :
It is some meteor that the sun exhales,
To be to thee this night a torch-bearer,
And light thee on thy way to Mantua :
Therefore stay yet, thou need'st not to be gone.

Rom. Let me be ta'en, let me be put to death ;
I am content, so thou wilt have it so.
I'll say, yon grey is not the morning's eye,
'Tis but the pale reflex of Cynthia's brow!⁸
Nor that is not the lark, whose notes do beat
The vaulty heaven so high above our heads :
I have more care⁹ to stay, than will to go ; —
Come, death, and welcome ! Juliet wills it so.
How is't, my soul ? let's talk, it is not day.

Jul. It is, it is, hie hence, be gone, away ;
It is the lark that sings so out of tune,
Straining harsh discords, and displeasing sharps.

⁸ Reflection of the moon.⁹ Inclination.

Some say, the lark makes sweet division;¹
 This doth not so, for she divideth us:
 Some say, the lark and loathed toad change eyes;
 O, now I would they had chang'd voices too!
 O, now be gone; more light and light it grows.

Rom. More light and light?—more dark and
 dark our woes.

Enter Nurse.

Nurse. Madam!

Jul. Nurse?

Nurse. Your lady mother's coming to your
 chamber:

The day is broke; be wary, look about.

[*Exit Nurse.*

Jul. Then, window, let day in, and let life out.

Rom. Farewell, farewell! one kiss, and I'll de-
 scend. [ROMEO descends.

Jul. Art thou gone so? my love! my lord! my
 friend!

I must hear from thee every day i'the hour,
 For in a minute there are many days:
 O! by this count I shall be much in years,
 Ere I again behold my Romeo.

Rom. Farewell! I will omit no opportunity
 That may convey my greetings, love, to thee.

Jul. O, think'st thou, we shall ever meet
 again?

Rom. I doubt it not; and all these woes shall
 serve

For sweet discourses in our time to come.

Jul. Alas! I have an ill-divining soul:
 Methinks, I see thee, now thou art below,
 As one dead in the bottom of a tomb:
 Either my eye-sight fails, or thou look'st pale.

¹ Division was the technical phrase for musical composition.

Rom. And trust me, love, in mine eye so do you :
Dry sorrow drinks our blood. Adieu! adieu!

[*Exit* ROMEO.]

Jul. O fortune, fortune! all men call thee fickle :
If thou art fickle, what dost thou with him
That is renown'd for faith? Be fickle, fortune :
For then, I hope, thou wilt not keep him long,
But send him back.

La. Cap. [*Within.*] Ho, daughter! are you up!

Jul. Who is't that calls? is it my lady mother?
Is she not down so late, or up so early?
What unaccustom'd cause procures² her hither?

Enter Lady CAPULET.

La. Cap. Why, how now, Juliet?

Jul. Madam, I am not well.

La. Cap. Evermore weeping for your cousin's
death?

What, wilt thou wash him from his grave with
tears?

And if thou couldst, thou couldst not make him
live;

Therefore, have done: Some grief shows much of
love;

But much of grief shows still some want of wit.

Jul. Yet let me weep for such a feeling loss.

La. Cap. So shall you feel the loss, but not the
friend,

Which you weep for.

Jul. Feeling so the loss,

I cannot choose but ever weep the friend.

La. Cap. Well, girl, thou weep'st not so much
for his death,

As that the villain lives which slaughter'd him.

Jul. What villain, madam?

² Brings.

La. Cap. That same villain, Romeo.

Jul. Villain and he are many miles asunder.
Heaven pardon him! I do, with all my heart;
And yet no man, like he, doth grieve my heart.

La. Cap. That is, because the traitor murderer
lives.

Jul. Ay, madam, from the reach of these my
hands.

'Would, none but I might 'venge my cousin's death!

La. Cap. We will have vengeance for it, fear
thou not:

Then weep no more. I'll send to one in Man-
tua, —

Where that same banish'd runagate doth live, —
That shall bestow on him so sure a draught,
That he shall soon keep Tybalt company:
And then, I hope, thou wilt be satisfied.

Jul. Indeed, I never shall be satisfied
With Romeo, till I behold him — dead —
Is my poor heart so for a kinsman vex'd: —
Madam, if you could find out but a man
To bear a poison, I would temper it;
That Romeo should, upon receipt thereof,
Soon sleep in quiet. — O, how my heart abhors
To hear him nam'd, — and cannot come to him, —
To wreak the love I bore my cousin Tybalt
Upon his body that hath slaughter'd him!

La. Cap. Find thou the means, and I'll find such
a man.

But now, I'll tell thee joyful tidings, girl.

Jul. And joy comes well in such a needful time:
What are they, I beseech your ladyship?

La. Cap. Well, well, thou hast a careful father,
child;

One, who, to put thee from thy heaviness,
Hath sorted out a sudden day of joy,
That thou expect'st not, nor I look'd not for.

Jul. Madam, in happy time, what day is that?

La. Cap. Marry, my child, early next Thursday
morn,

The gallant, young, and noble gentleman,
The county Paris, at Saint Peter's church,
Shall happily make thee there a joyful bride.

Jul. Now, by Saint Peter's church, and Peter
too,

He shall not make me there a joyful bride.
I wonder at this haste : that I must wed
Ere he, that should be husband, comes to woo.
I pray you, tell my lord and father, madam,
I will not marry yet ; and when I do, I swear,
It shall be Romeo, whom you know I hate,
Rather than Paris : — These are news indeed !

La. Cap. Here comes your father : tell him so
yourself,

And see how he will take it at your hands.

Enter CAPULET and Nurse.

Cap. When the sun sets, the air doth drizzle dew ;
But for the sunset of my brother's son,
It rains downright. —

How now ? a conduit girl ? what, still in tears ?
Ever more showering ? in one little body
Thou counterfeit'st a bark, a sea, a wind :
For still thy eyes, which I may call the sea,
Do ebb and flow with tears ; the bark thy body is,
Sailing in this salt flood : the winds, thy sighs ;
Who, — raging with thy tears, and they with
them, —

Without a sudden calm, will overset
Thy tempest-tossed body. — How now, wife ?
Have you deliver'd to her our decree ?

La. Cap. Ay, sir ; but she will none, she gives
you thanks.

I would, the fool were married to her grave !

Cap. Soft, take me with you, take me with you,
wife.

How! will she none? doth she not give us thanks?
Is she not proud? doth she not count her bless'd,
Unworthy as she is, that we have wrought
So worthy a gentleman to be her bridegroom?

Jul. Not proud, you have; but thankful, that you
have:

Proud can I never be of what I hate;
But thankful even for hate, that is meant love.

Cap. How now! how now, chop-logick! What
is this?

Proud, — and, I thank you, — and, I thank you
not; —

And yet not proud; — Mistress minion, you,
Thank me no thankings, nor proud me no pouds,
But settle your fine joints 'gainst Thursday next,
To go with Paris to Saint Peter's church,
Or I will drag thee on a hurdle thither.

La. Cap. Fye, fye! what, are you mad?

Jul. Good father, I beseech you on my knees,
Hear me with patience but to speak a word.

Cap. Hang thee, young baggage! disobedient
wretch!

I tell thee what, — get thee to church o' Thursday,
Or never after look me in the face:

Speak not, reply not, do not answer me:

My fingers itch. — Wife, we scarce thought us
bless'd,

That heaven had sent us but this only child:

But now I see this one is one too much,

And that we have a curse in having her.

Nurse. You are to blame, my lord, to rate her so.

Cap. And why, my lady wisdom? hold your
tongue,

Good prudence; smatter with your gossips, go.

Nurse. May not one speak?

Cap. No: Peace, you mumbling fool!
Utter your gravity o'er a gossip's bowl,
For here we need it not.

La. Cap. You are too hot.

Cap. It makes me mad: Day, night, late, early,
At home, abroad, alone, in company,
Waking, or sleeping, still my care hath been
To have her match'd: and having now provided
A gentleman of princely parentage,
Of fair demesnes, youthful, and nobly train'd,
Stuff'd (as they say) with honourable parts,
Proportion'd as one's heart could wish a man, —
And then to have a wretched puling fool,
A whining mammet, in her fortune's tender,
To answer — *I'll not wed, — I cannot love,
I am too young, — I pray you, pardon me; —*
But, an you will not wed, I'll pardon you:
Graze where you will, you shall not house with me;
Look to't, think on't, I do not use to jest.
Thursday is near; lay hand on heart, advise:
And you be mine, I'll give you to my friend;
And you be not, hang, beg, starve, die i'the streets,
For, by my soul, I'll ne'er acknowledge thee,
Nor what is mine shall never do thee good:
Trust to't, bethink you, I'll not be forsworn. [*Exit.*]

Jul. Is there no pity sitting in the clouds,
That sees into the bottom of my grief?

O, sweet my mother, cast me not away?
Delay this marriage for a month, a week;
Or, if you do not, make the bridal bed
In that dim monument where Tybalt lies.

La. Cap. Talk not to me, for I'll not speak a
word:

Do as thou wilt, for I have done with thee. [*Exit.*]

Jul. O heaven! — O nurse! how shall this be
prevented?

My husband is on earth, my faith in heaven;

How shall that faith return again to earth,
 Unless that husband send it me from heaven
 By leaving earth? — Comfort me, counsel me. —
 Alack, alack, that heaven should practise strata-
 gems

Upon so soft a subject as myself! —
 What say'st thou? hast thou not a word of joy?
 Some comfort, nurse.

Nurse. Faith, here 'tis: Romeo
 Is banished; and all the world to nothing,
 That he dares ne'er come back to challenge you;
 Or, if he do, it needs must be by stealth.
 Then, since the case so stands as now it doth,
 I think it best you married with the county.
 O, he's a lovely gentleman!
 Romeo is naught to him; an eagle, madam,
 Hath not so green, so quick, so fair an eye,
 As Paris hath. Beshrew my very heart,
 I think you are happy in this second match,
 For it excels your first: or if it did not,
 Your first is dead; or 'twere as good he were,
 As living here and you no use of him.

Jul. Speakest thou from thy heart?

Nurse. From my soul too,
 Or else beshrew them both.

Jul. Amen!

Nurse. To what?

Jul. Well, thou hast comforted me marvellous
 much.

Go in; and tell my lady I am gone,
 Having displeas'd my father, to Laurence' cell,
 To make confession, and to be absolv'd.

Nurse. Marry, I will; and this is wisely done.

[*Exit.*]

Jul. Is it more sin — to wish me thus forsworn,
 Or to dispraise my lord with that same tongue
 Which she hath prais'd him with above compare

So many thousand times? — Go, counsellor ;
 Thou and my bosom henceforth shall be twain. —
 I'll to the friar, to know his remedy ;
 If all else fail, myself have power to die. [Exit.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. — *Friar Laurence's Cell.*

Enter Friar LAURENCE and PARIS.

Fri. On Thursday, sir? the time is very short.

Par. My father Capulet will have it so ;
 And I am nothing slow, to slack his haste.

Fri. You say, you do not know the lady's mind ;
 Uneven is the course, I like it not.

Par. Immoderately she weeps for Tybalt's death,
 And therefore have I little talk'd of love,
 For Venus smiles not in a house of tears.
 Now, sir, her father counts it dangerous,
 That she doth give her sorrow so much sway ;
 And, in his wisdom, hastes our marriage,
 To stop the inundation of her tears ;
 Which, too much minded by herself alone,
 May be put from her by society :
 Now do you know the reason of this haste.

Fri. I would I knew not why it should be slow'd.
 [Aside.
 Look, sir, here comes the lady towards my cell.

Enter JULIET.

Par. Happily met, my lady, and my wife!

Jul. That may be, sir, when I may be a wife.

Par. That may be, must be, love, on Thursday next.

Jul. What must be shall be.

Fri. That's a certain text.

Par. Come you to make confession to this father?

Jul. To answer that, were to confess to you.

Par. Do not deny to him, that you love me.

Jul. I will confess to you, that I love him.

Par. So will you, I am sure, that you love me.

Jul. If I do so, it will be of more price,
Being spoke behind your back, than to your face.

Par. Poor soul, thy face is much abus'd with tears.

Jul. The tears have got small victory by that ;
For it was bad enough, before their spite.

Par. Thou wrong'st it, more than tears, with that report.

Jul. That is no slander, sir, that is a truth ;
And what I spake, I spake it to my face.

Par. Thy face is mine, and thou hast slander'd it.

Jul. It may be so, for it is not mine own. —
Are you at leisure, holy father, now ;
Or shall I come to you at evening mass ?

Fri. My leisure serves me, pensive daughter,
now : —

My lord, we must entreat the time alone.

Par. Now heaven forbid, I should disturb devotion !

Juliet, on Thursday early will I rouse you :
Till then, adieu ! and keep this holy kiss.

[*Exit* PARIS.]

Jul. O, shut the door ! and when thou hast done so,
Come weep with me ; Past hope, past cure, past help !

Fri. Ah, Juliet, I already know thy grief ;

It strains me past the compass of my wits :
 I hear thou must, and nothing must prorogue it,
 On Thursday next be married to this county.

Jul. Tell me not, friar, that thou hear'st of this,
 Unless thou tell me how I may prevent it :
 If, in thy wisdom, thou canst give no help,
 Do thou but call my resolution wise,
 And with this knife I'll help it presently.
 Love join'd my heart and Romeo's, thou our hands ;
 And ere this hand, by thee to Romeo seal'd,
 Shall be the label to another deed,
 Or my true heart with treacherous revolt
 Turn to another, this shall slay them both :
 Therefore, out of thy long-experienc'd time,
 Give me some present counsel ; or, behold,
 'Twixt my extremes and me this bloody knife
 Shall play the umpire³ ; arbitrating that
 Which the commission⁴ of thy years and art
 Could to no issue of true honour bring.
 Be not so long to speak ; I long to die,
 If what thou speak'st speak not of remedy.

Fri. Hold, daughter ; I do spy a kind of hope,
 Which craves as desperate an execution
 As that is desperate which we would prevent.
 If, rather than to marry county Paris,
 Thou hast the strength of will to slay thyself,
 Then is it likely, thou wilt undertake
 A thing like death to chide away this shame,
 That cop'st with death himself to scape from it ;
 And, if thou dar'st, I'll give thee remedy.

Jul. O, bid me leap, rather than marry Paris,
 From off the battlements of yonder tower ;
 Or walk in thievish ways ; or bid me lurk
 Where serpents are ; chain me with roaring bears ;
 Or shut me nightly in a charnel-house,

³ Decide the struggle between me and my distresses.

⁴ Authority or power.

O'er-cover'd quite with dead men's rattling bones,
With reeky shanks, and yellow chapless skulls ;
Or bid me go into a new-made grave,
And hide me with a dead man in his shroud ;
Things that, to hear them told, have made me
tremble ;

And I will do it without fear or doubt,
To live an unstain'd wife to my sweet love.

Fri. Hold, then ; go home, be merry, give consent

To marry Paris : Wednesday is to-morrow ;
To-morrow night look that thou lie alone,
Let not thy nurse lie with thee in thy chamber :
Take thou this phial, being then in bed,
And this distilled liquor drink thou off :
When, presently, through all thy veins shall run
A cold and drowsy humour, which shall seize
Each vital spirit ; for no pulse shall keep
His natural progress, but surcease to beat :
No warmth, no breath, shall testify thou liv'st ;
The roses in thy lips and cheeks shall fade
To paly ashes ; thy eye's windows fall,
Like death, when he shuts up the day of life ;
Each part, depriv'd of supple government,
Shall stiff, and stark, and cold, appear like death :
And in this borrow'd likeness of shrunk death
Thou shalt remain full two and forty hours,
And then awake as from a pleasant sleep.
Now when the bridegroom in the morning comes
To rouse thee from thy bed, there art thou dead :
Then (as the manner of our country is,)
In thy best robes uncover'd on the bier,
Thou shalt be borne to that same ancient vault,
Where all the kindred of the Capulets lie.
In the mean time, against thou shalt awake,
Shall Romeo by my letters know our drift ;
And hither shall he come ; and he and I

Will watch thy waking, and that very night
 Shall Romeo bear thee hence to Mantua.
 And this shall free thee from this present shame ;
 If no inconstant toy, nor womanish fear,
 Abate thy valour in the acting it.

Jul. Give me, O give me ! tell me not of fear.

Fri. Hold ; get you gone, be strong and prosperous

In this resolve : I'll send a friar with speed
 To Mantua, with my letters to thy lord.

Jul. Love, give me strength ! and strength shall
 help afford.

Farewell, dear father !

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Room in Capulet's House.

Enter CAPULET, *Lady* CAPULET, *Nurse,* and
Servant.

Cap. So many guests invite as here are writ. —
 [*Exit* *Servant.*

Sirrah, go hire me twenty cunning cooks.

2 Serv. You shall have none ill, sir.

Cap. Go, begone. — [*Exit* *Servant.*

We shall be much unfurnish'd for this time. —

What, is my daughter gone to friar Laurence ?

Nurse. Ay, forsooth.

Cap. Well, he may chance to do some good on
 her :

A peevish self-will'd harlotry it is.

Enter JULIET.

Nurse. See, where she comes from shrift with
 merry look.

Cap. How now, my headstrong? where have you been gadding?

Jul. Where I have learn'd me to repent the sin Of disobedient opposition

To you, and your behests⁵; and am enjoind By holy Laurence to fall prostrate here, And beg your pardon: — Pardon, I beseech you! Henceforward I am ever rul'd by you.

Cap. Send for the county; go tell him of this; I'll have this knot knit up to-morrow morning.

Jul. I met the youthful lord at Laurence's cell; And gave him what becomed⁶ love I might, Not stepping o'er the bounds of modesty.

Cap. Why, I am glad on't; this is well, — stand up:

This is as't should be. — Let me see the county; Ay, marry, go, I say, and fetch him hither. — Now, by my life, this reverend holy friar, All our whole city is much bound to him.

Jul. Nurse, will you go with me into my closet, To help me sort such needful ornaments As you think fit to furnish me to-morrow?

La. Cap. No, not till Thursday; there is time enough.

Cap. Go, nurse, go with her: — we'll to church to-morrow. [*Exeunt JULIET and Nurse.*]

La. Cap. We shall be short in our provision; 'Tis now near night.

Cap. Tush! I will stir about, And all things shall be well, I warrant thee, wife: Go thou to Juliet, help to deck up her; I'll not to bed to-night; — let me alone; I'll play the housewife for this once. — What, ho! They are all forth: Well, I will walk myself To county Paris, to prepare him up

⁵ Commands.

⁶ Becoming.

Against to-morrow : my heart is wond'rous light,
 Since this same wayward girl is so reclaim'd.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

Juliet's Chamber.

Enter JULIET and Nurse.

Jul. Ay, those attires are best : — But, gentle nurse,
 I pray thee, leave me to myself to-night ;
 For I have need of many orisons⁷
 To move the heavens to smile upon my state,
 Which, well thou know'st, is cross and full of sin.

Enter Lady CAPULET.

La. Cap. What, are you busy? do you need my help?

Jul. No, madam ; we have cull'd such necessaries
 As are behoveful for our state to-morrow :
 So please you let me now be left alone,
 And let the nurse this night sit up with you ;
 For, I am sure, you have your hands full all,
 In this so sudden business.

La. Cap. Good night !
 Get thee to bed, and rest ; for thou hast need.

[*Exeunt Lady CAPULET and Nurse.*]

Jul. Farewell ! — Heaven knows, when we shall
 meet again.
 I have a faint cold fear thrills through my veins,
 That almost freezes up the heat of life :
 I'll call them back again to comfort me ;

⁷ Prayers.

Nurse! — What should she do here?

My dismal scene I needs must act alone. —

Come, phial. —

What if this mixture do not work at all?

Must I of force be married to the county? —

No, no; — this shall forbid it: — lie thou there. —

[*Laying down a Dagger.*]

What if it be a poison, which the friar

Subtly hath minister'd to have me dead;

Lest in this marriage he should be dishonour'd,

Because he married me before to Romeo?

I fear, it is: and yet, methinks, it should not,

For he hath still been tried a holy man:

I will not entertain so bad a thought. —

How if, when I am laid into the tomb,

I wake before the time that Romeo

Come to redeem me? there's a fearful point!

Shall I not then be stifled in the vault,

To whose foul mouth no healthsome air breathes in,

And there die strangled ere my Romeo comes?

Or, if I live, is it not very like,

The horrible conceit of death and night,

Together with the terror of the place, —

As in a vault, an ancient receptacle,

Where for these many hundred years, the bones

Of all my buried ancestors are pack'd;

Where bloody Tybalt, yet but green in earth,

Lies fest'ring in his shroud; where, as they say,

At some hours in the night spirits resort; —

Alack, alack! is it not like, that I,

So early waking, — what with loathsome smells;

And shrieks like mandrakes torn out of the earth,

That living mortals, hearing them, run mad;⁸ —

⁸ The fabulous accounts of the plant called a *mandrake* give it a degree of animal life, and when it is torn from the ground it groans, which is fatal to him that pulls it up.

O! if I wake, shall I not be distraught,⁹
 Environed with all these hideous fears?
 And madly play with my forefathers' joints?
 And pluck the mangled Tybalt from his shroud?
 And, in this rage, with some great kinsman's bone,
 As with a club, dash out my desperate brains?
 O, look! methinks, I see my cousin's ghost
 Seeking out Romeo, that did spit his body
 Upon a rapier's point: — Stay, Tybalt, stay! —
 Romeo, I come! this do I drink to thee.

[*She throws herself on the Bed.*]

SCENE IV.

Capulet's Hall.

Enter Lady CAPULET and Nurse.

La. Cap. Hold, take these keys, and fetch more
 spices, nurse.

Nurse. They call for dates and quinces in the
 pastry.¹

Enter CAPULET.

Cap. Come, stir, stir, stir! the second cock hath
 crow'd,
 The curfeu bell hath rung, 'tis three o'clock: —
 Look to the bak'd meats, good Angelica:
 Spare not for cost.

Nurse. Go, go, you cot-quean, go,
 Get you to bed; 'faith, you'll be sick to-morrow
 For this night's watching.

Cap. No, not a whit: What! I have watch'd ere
 now
 All night for lesser cause, and ne'er been sick.

⁹ Distracted. ¹ The room where pies were made.

La. Cap. Ay, you have been a mouse-hunt in
your time ;
But I will watch you from such watching now.

[*Exeunt Lady CAPULET and Nurse.*]

Cap. A jealous-hood, a jealous-hood ! — Now,
fellow,
What's there ?

Enter Servants, with Spits, Logs, and Baskets.

1 Serv. Things for the cook, sir ; but I know not
what.

Cap. Make haste, make haste. [*Exit 1 Serv.*] —
Sirrah, fetch drier logs ;

Call Peter, he will show thee where they are.

2 Serv. I have a head, sir, that will find out logs,
And never trouble Peter for the matter. [*Exit.*]

Cap. 'Mass, and well said : A merry fellow ! ha,
Thou shalt be logger-head. — Good faith, 'tis day :
The county will be here with musick straight,

[*Musick within.*]

For so he said he would. I hear him near : —
Nurse ! — Wife ! — what, ho ! — what, nurse, I say !

Enter Nurse.

Go, waken Juliet, go, and trim her up ;
I'll go and chat with Paris : — Hie, make haste,
Make haste ! the bridegroom he is come already :
Make haste, I say ! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.

Juliet's Chamber ; Juliet on the Bed.

Enter Nurse.

Nurse. Mistress! — what, mistress! — Juliet! —
 fast, I warrant her : —
 Why, lamb! — why, lady! — fye, you slug-a-
 bed! —
 Why, love, I say! — madam! sweetheart! — why,
 bride!
 What, not a word? — you take your pennyworths
 now ;
 Sleep for a week : how sound is she asleep!
 I needs must wake her : — Madam, madam, ma-
 dam!
 What, drest! and in your clothes! and down again!
 I must needs wake you : Lady! lady! lady!
 Alas! alas! — Help! help! my lady's dead! —
 O, well-a-day, that ever I was born! —
 Some aqua-vitæ, ho! — my lord! my lady!

Enter Lady CAPULET.

La. Cap. What noise is here?

Nurse. O lamentable day!

La. Cap. What is the matter?

Nurse. Look, look! O heavy day!

La. Cap. O me, O me! — my child, my only life,
 Revive, look up, or I will die with thee! —
 Help, help! — call help.

Enter CAPULET.

Cap. For shame, bring Juliet forth ; her lord is
 come.

Nurse. She's dead, deceas'd, she's dead ; alack
the day !

La. Cap. Alack the day ! she's dead, she's dead,
she's dead.

Cap. Ha ! let me see her : — Out, alas, she's
cold,

Her blood is settled ; and her joints are stiff ;
Life and these lips have long been separated :
Death lies on her, like an untimely frost
Upon the sweetest flower of all the field.
Accursed time ! unfortunate old man !

Nurse. O lamentable day !

La. Cap. O woeful time !

Cap. Death that hath ta'en her hence to make
me wail,

Ties up my tongue, and will not let me speak.

Enter Friar LAURENCE and PARIS, with Musicians.

Fri. Come, is the bride ready to go to church ?

Cap. Ready to go, but never to return :

O son, the night before thy wedding-day
Hath death lain with thy bride : — See, there she
lies,

Flower as she was, deflowered by him.

Death is my son-in-law, death is my heir ;

My daughter he hath wedded ! I will die,

And leave him all ; life leaving, all is death's.

Par. Have I thought long to see this morning's
face,

And doth it give me such a sight as this ?

La. Cap. Accurs'd, unhappy, wretched, hateful
day !

Most miserable hour, that e'er time saw

In lasting labour of his pilgrimage !

But one, poor one, one poor and loving child,

But one thing to rejoice and solace in,

And cruel death hath catch'd it from my sight.

Nurse. O woe! O woeful, woeful, woeful day!
 Most lamentable day! most woeful day,
 That ever, ever, I did yet behold!
 O day! O day! O day! O hateful day!
 Never was seen so black a day as this:
 O woeful day, O woeful day!

Par. Beguil'd, divorced, wronged, spited, slain!
 Most détestable death, by thee beguil'd,
 By cruel, cruel thee quite overthrown!
 O love! O life! — not life, but love in death!

Cap. Despis'd, distressed, hated, martyr'd,
 kill'd! —

Uncomfortable time! why cam'st thou now
 To murder, murder our solemnity? —
 O child! O child! — my soul, and not my child! —
 Dead art thou, dead! — alack! my child is dead;
 And with my child, my joys are buried!

Fri. Peace, ho, for shame! confusion's cure lives
 not

In these confusions. Heaven and yourself
 Had part in this fair maid; now heaven hath all,
 And all the better is it for the maid:
 Your part in her you could not keep from death;
 But heaven keeps his part in eternal life:
 The most you sought was — her promotion;
 For 'twas your heaven, she should be advanc'd:
 And weep ye now, seeing she is advanc'd,
 Above the clouds, as high as heaven itself?
 O, in this love, you love your child so ill,
 That you run mad, seeing that she is well:
 She's not well married, that lives married long;
 But she's best married, that dies married young.
 Dry up your tears, and stick your rosemary
 On this fair corse; and, as the custom is,
 In all her best array bear her to church:
 For though fond nature bids us all lament,
 Yet nature's tears are reason's merriment.

Cap. All things that we ordained festival,
Turn from their office to black funeral :
Our instruments, to melancholy bells ;
Our wedding cheer, to a sad burial feast ;
Our solemn hymns to sullen dirges change ;
Our bridal flowers serve for a buried corse,
And all things change them to the contrary.

Fri. Sir, go you in, — and, madam, go with him ; —

And go, sir Paris ; — every one prepare
To follow this fair corse unto her grave :
The heavens do lower upon you, for some ill ;
Move them no more, by crossing their high will.

[*Exeunt* CAPULET, *Lady* CAPULET, PARIS,
and Friar.

1 *Mus.* We may put up our pipes, and be gone.

Nurse. Honest good fellows, ah, put up ; put up ;
For, well you know, this is a pitiful case.

[*Exit* *Nurse.*

1 *Mus.* Ay, by my troth, the case may be amended.

Enter PETER.

Pet. Musicians, O, musicians, *Heart's ease, heart's ease* ; O, an you will have me live, play — *heart's ease*.

1 *Mus.* Why *heart's ease* ?

Pet. O, musicians, because my heart itself plays — *My heart is full of woe* : O, play me some merry dump³, to comfort me.

2 *Mus.* Not a dump we ; 'tis no time to play now.

Pet. You will not then ?

Mus. No.

Pet. I will then give it you soundly.

1 *Mus.* What will you give us ?

Pet. No money, on my faith ; but the glee⁴ : I will give you the minstrel.

³ *Dumps* were heavy mournful tunes.

⁴ To *gleek* is to scoff, and a *gleekman* signified a minstrel.

1 *Mus.* Then will I give you the serving-creature.

Pet. Then will I lay the serving-creature's dagger on your pate. I will carry no crotchets: I'll *re* you, I'll *fa* you; Do you note me?

1 *Mus.* An you *re* us, and *fa* us, you note us.

2 *Mus.* Pray you, put up your dagger, and put out your wit:

Pet. Then have at you with my wit; I will dry-beat you with an iron wit, and put up my iron dagger: — Answer me like men:

*When griping grief the heart doth wound,
And doleful dumps the mind oppress,
Then musick, with her silver sound;*

Why, *silver sound*? why, *musick with her silver sound*?

What say you, Simon Catling?

1 *Mus.* Marry, sir, because silver hath a sweet sound.

Pet. Pretty! What say you, Hugh Rebeck?

2 *Mus.* I say — *silver sound*, because musicians sound for silver.

Pet. Pretty too! — What say you, James Soundpost?

3 *Mus.* 'Faith, I know not what to say.

Pet. O, I cry you mercy! you are the singer: I will say for you. It is — *musick with her silver sound*, because such fellows as you have seldom gold for sounding: —

*Then musick with her silver sound,
With speedy help doth lend redress.*

[*Exit, singing.*]

1 *Mus.* What a pestilent knave is this same?

2 *Mus.* Hang him, Jack! Come, we'll in here; tarry for the mourners, and stay dinner. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I. — Mantua. *A Street.**Enter* ROMEO.

Rom. If I may trust the flattering eye of sleep,
 My dreams presage some joyful news at hand :
 My bosom's lord sits lightly in his throne ;
 And all this day, an unaccustom'd spirit
 Lifts me above the ground with cheerful thoughts.
 I dreamt, my lady came and found me dead ;
 (Strange dream ! that gives a dead man leave to
 think,)

And breath'd such life with kisses in my lips,
 That I reviv'd, and was an emperor.
 Ah me ! how sweet is love itself possess'd,
 When but love's shadows are so rich in joy ?

Enter BALTHASAR.

News from Verona ! — How now, Balthasar ?
 Dost thou not bring me letters from the friar ?
 How doth my lady ? is my father well ?
 How fares my Juliet ? That I ask again ;
 For nothing can be ill, if she be well.

Bal. Then she is well, and nothing can be ill ;
 Her body sleeps in Capel's monument,
 And her immortal part with angels lives ;
 I saw her laid low in her kindred's vault,
 And presently took post to tell it you :
 O pardon me for bringing these ill news,
 Since you did leave it for my office, sir.

Rom. Is it even so ? then I defy you, stars ! —
 Thou know'st my lodging : get me ink and paper,
 And hire post-horses ; I will hence to-night.

Bal. Pardon me, sir, I will not leave you thus :
Your looks are pale and wild, and do import
Some misadventure.

Rom. Tush, thou art deceiv'd ;
Leave me and do the thing I bid thee do :
Hast thou no letters to me from the friar ?

Bal. No, my good lord.

Rom. No matter : get thee gone,
And hire those horses ; I'll be with thee straight.

[*Exit* BALTHASAR.]

Well, Juliet, I will lie with thee to-night.
Let's see for means :— O, mischief thou art swift
To enter in the thoughts of desperate men !
I do remember an apothecary, —
And hereabouts he dwells, — whom late I noted
In tatter'd weeds, with overwhelming brows,
Culling of simples ; meagre were his looks,
Sharp misery had worn him to the bones :
And in his needy shop a tortoise hung,
An alligator stuff'd, and other skins
Of ill-shap'd fishes ; and about his shelves
A beggarly account of empty boxes,
Green earthen pots, bladders, and musty seeds
Remnants of packthread, and old cakes of roses,
Were thinly scatter'd, to make up a show.
Noting this penury, to myself I said —
And if a man did need a poison now,
Whose sale is present death in Mantua,
Here lives a caitiff wretch would sell it him.
O, this same thought did but fore-run my need ;
And this same needy man must sell it me.
As I remember, this should be the house :
Being holiday, the beggar's shop is shut.—
What, ho ! apothecary !

Enter Apothecary.

Ap.

Who calls so loud ?

Rom. Come hither, man. — I see, that thou art
poor ;

Hold, there is forty ducats : let me have
A dram of poison ; such soon-speeding gear⁵
As will disperse itself through all the veins,
That the life-weary taker may fall dead ;
And that the trunk may be discharg'd of breath
As violently, as hasty powder fir'd
Doth hurry from the fatal cannon's womb.

Ap. Such mortal drugs I have ; but Mantua's law
Is death, to any he that utters them.

Rom. Art thou so bare, and full of wretchedness,
And fear'st to die ? famine is in thy cheeks,
Need and oppression starveth in thine eyes,
Upon thy back hangs ragged misery,
The world is not thy friend, nor the world's law :
The world affords no law to make thee rich ;
Then be not poor, but break it, and take this.

Ap. My poverty, but not my will, consents.

Rom. I pay thy poverty, and not thy will.

Ap. Put this in any liquid thing you will,
And drink it off ; and, if you had the strength
Of twenty men, it would despatch you straight.

Rom. There is thy gold ; worse poison to men's
souls,

Doing more murders in this loathsome world,
Than these poor compounds that thou may'st not
sell :

I sell thee poison, thou hast sold me none.
Farewell ; buy food, and get thyself in flesh. —
Come, cordial, and not poison ; go with me
To Juliet's grave, for there must I use thee.

[*Exeunt.*

⁵ Stuff.

SCENE II.

Friar Laurence's Cell.

Enter Friar JOHN.

John. Holy Franciscan friar! brother, ho!

Enter Friar LAURENCE.

Lau. This same should be the voice of friar
John. —

Welcome from Mantua: What says Romeo?
Or, if his mind be writ, give me his letter.

John. Going to find a barefoot brother out,
One of our order to associate me,
Here in this city visiting the sick,
And finding him, the searchers of the town,
Suspecting that we both were in a house
Where the infectious pestilence did reign,
Seal'd up the doors, and would not let us forth;
So that my speed to Mantua there was stay'd.

Lau. Who bare my letter then to Romeo?

John. I could not send it, — here it is again, —
Nor get a messenger to bring it thee,
So fearful were they of infection.

Lau. Unhappy fortune! by my brotherhood,
The letter was not nice⁶, but full of charge,
Of dear import; and the neglecting it
May do much danger: Friar John, go hence;
Get me an iron crow, and bring it straight
Unto my cell.

John. Brother, I'll go and bring it thee. [*Exit.*]

Lau. Now must I to the monument alone;
Within these three hours will fair Juliet wake;

⁶ *i. e.* On a trivial or idle subject.

She will beshrew me much that Romeo
 Hath had no notice of these accidents :
 But I will write again to Mantua,
 And keep her at my cell till Romeo come ;
 Poor living corse, clos'd in a dead man's tomb !
[*Exit.*

SCENE III.

*A Church-Yard ; in it, a Monument belonging to the
 Capulets.*

*Enter PARIS, and his Page, bearing Flowers, and a
 Torch.*

Par. Give me thy torch, boy : Hence, and stand
 aloof ; —

Yet put it out, for I would not be seen.
 Under yon yew-trees lay thee all along,
 Holding thine ear close to the hollow ground ;
 So shall no foot upon the churchyard tread,
 (Being loose, unfirm, with digging up of graves,)
 But thou shalt hear it : whistle then to me,
 As signal that thou hear'st something approach.
 Give me those flowers. Do as I bid thee, go.

Page. I am almost afraid to stand alone
 Here in the churchyard ; yet I will adventure.

[*Retires.*

Par. Sweet flower, with flowers I strew thy bridal
 bed :

Sweet tomb, that in thy circuit dost contain
 The perfect model of eternity ;
 Fair Juliet, that with angels dost remain,
 Accept this latest favour at my hands ;
 That living honour'd thee, and, being dead,
 With funeral praises do adorn thy tomb !

[*The Boy whistles.*

The boy gives warning, something doth approach.
 What cursed foot wanders this way to-night,
 To cross my obsequies, and true-love's rites?
 What, with a torch! — muffle me, night, a while.
[Retires.

*Enter ROMEO and BALTHASAR, with a Torch,
 Mattock, &c.*

Rom. Give me that mattock, and the wrenching
 iron.

Hold, take this letter; early in the morning
 See thou deliver it to my lord and father.
 Give me the light: Upon thy life, I charge thee,
 Whate'er thou hear'st or see'st stand all aloof,
 And do not interrupt me in my course.
 Why I descend into this bed of death,
 Is, partly, to behold my lady's face,
 But, chiefly, to take thence from her dead finger
 A precious ring; a ring that I must use
 In dear employment⁷: therefore hence, begone:—
 But if thou, jealous, dost return to pry
 In what I further shall intend to do,
 By heaven, I will tear thee joint by joint,
 And strew this hungry churchyard with thy limbs:
 The time and my intents are savage-wild;
 More fierce, and more inexorable far,
 Than empty tigers, or the roaring sea.

Bal. I will be gone, sir, and not trouble you.

Rom. So shalt thou show me friendship. — Take
 thou that:

Live, and be prosperous; and farewell, good fellow.

Bal. For all this same, I'll hide me hereabout;
 His looks I fear, and his intents I doubt. [Retires.

Rom. Thou détestable maw, thou womb of death,

⁷ *i. e.* A matter of importance.

Gorg'd with the dearest morsel of the earth,
Thus I enforce thy rotten jaws to open,

[*Breaking open the Door of the Monument.*

And, in despite, I'll cram thee with more food!

Par. This is that banish'd haughty Montague,
That murder'd my love's cousin; — with which
grief,

It is supposed the fair creature died, —

And here is come to do some villainous shame
To the dead bodies: I will apprehend him. —

[*Advances.*

Stop thy unhallow'd toil, vile Montague;

Can vengeance be pursu'd further than death?

Condemned villain, I do apprehend thee:

Obey, and go with me; for thou must die.

Rom. I must, indeed; and therefore came I
hither. —

Good gentle youth, tempt not a desperate man,

Fly hence, and leave me; — think upon these gone;

Let them affright thee. — I beseech thee, youth,

Heap not another sin upon my head,

By urging me to fury: — O, be gone!

By heaven, I love thee better than myself:

For I come hither arm'd against myself:

Stay not, be gone; — live, and hereafter say —

A madman's mercy bade thee run away.

Par. I do defy thy conjurations,⁸

And do attach thee as a felon here.

Rom. Wilt thou provoke me? then have at thee,
boy. [They fight.

Page. O heaven! they fight, I will go call the
watch. [Exit Page.

Par. O, I am slain! [*Falls.*] — If thou be mer-
ciful,

Open the tomb, lay me with Juliet.

[Dies.

⁸ I refuse to do as thou *conjurest* me to do, *i. e.* depart.

Rom. In faith, I will : — Let me peruse this
face ;—

Mercutio's kinsman, noble county Paris : —
What said my man, when my betossed soul
Did not attend him as we rode ? I think,
He told me Paris should have married Juliet :
Said he not so ? or did I dream it so ?
Or am I mad, hearing him talk of Juliet,
To think it was so ? — O, give me thy hand,
One writ with me in sour misfortune's book !
I'll bury thee in a triumphant grave, —
A grave ? O, no ; a lantern, slaughter'd youth,
For here lies Juliet, and her beauty makes
This vault a feasting presence⁹ full of light.
Death, lie thou there, by a dead man interr'd.

[*Laying PARIS in the Monument.*

How oft when men are at the point of death,
Have they been merry, which their keepers call
A lightning before death ; — O, how may I
Call this a lightning ? — O, my love ! my wife !
Death, that hath suck'd the honey of thy breath,
Hath had no power yet upon thy beauty :
Thou art not conquer'd ; beauty's ensign yet
Is crimson in thy lips, and in thy cheeks,
And death's pale flag is not advanced there. —
Tybalt, liest thou there in thy bloody sheet ?
O, what more favour can I do to thee,
Than with that hand that cut thy youth in twain,
To sunder his that was thine enemy ?
Forgive me, cousin ! — Ah, dear Juliet,
Why art thou yet so fair ? Shall I believe
That unsubstantial death is amorous ;
And that the lean abhorred monster keeps
Thee here in dark to be his paramour ?
For fear of that, I will still stay with the e

⁹ Presence chamber.

And never from this palace of dim night
 Depart again ; here, here will I remain
 With worms that are thy chambermaids ; O, here
 Will I set up my everlasting rest ;
 And shake the yoke of inauspicious stars
 From this world-wearied flesh. — Eyes, look your
 last !

Arms, take your last embrace ! and lips, O you
 The doors of breath, seal with a righteous kiss
 A dateless bargain to engrossing death ! —
 Come, bitter conduct¹, come, unsavoury guide !
 Thou desperate pilot, now at once run on
 The dashing rocks thy sea-sick weary bark !
 Here's to my love ! — [*Drinks.*] O, true apothecary !
 Thy drugs are quick. — Thus with a kiss I die.
[*Dies.*

*Enter at the other end of the Churchyard, Friar
 LAURENCE, with a Lantern, Crow, and Spade.*

Fri. Saint Francis be my speed ! how oft to-night
 Have my old feet stumbled at graves ? — Who's
 there ?

Who is it that consorts, so late, the dead ?

Bal. Here's one, a friend, and one that knows
 you well.

Fri. Bliss be upon you ! Tell me, good my
 friend,

What torch is yond', that vainly lends his light
 To grubs and eyless skulls ? as I discern,
 It burneth in the Capels' monument.

Bal. It doth so, holy sir ; and there's my master,
 One that you love.

Fri. Who is it ?

Bal. Romeo.

Fri. How long hath he been there ?

¹ Conductor.

Bal. Full half an hour.

Fri. Go with me to the vault.

Bal. I dare not, sir :
My master knows not, but I am gone hence ;
And fearfully did menace me with death,
If I did stay to look on his intents.

Fri. Stay then, I'll go alone : — Fear comes
upon me :
O, much I feaf some ill unlucky thing.

Bal. As I did sleep under this yew-tree here,
I dreamt my master and another fought,
And that my master slew him.

Fri. Romeo ? [*Advances.*
Alack, alack, what blood is this, which stains
The stony entrance of this sepulchre ? —
What mean these masterless and gory swords
To lie discolour'd by this place of peace ?

[*Enters the Monument.*
Romeo ! O, pale ! — Who else ? what, Paris, too ?
And steep'd in blood ? — Ah, what an unkind hour
Is guilty of this lamentable chance ! —

The lady stirs. [*JULIET wakes and stirs.*

Jul. O, comfortable friar ! where is my lord ?
I do remember well where I should be,
And there I am : — Where is my Romeo ?

[*Noise within.*

Fri. I hear some noise. — Lady, come from that
nest
Of death, contagion, and unnatural sleep ;
A greater Power than we can contradict
Hath thwarted our intents ; come, come away :
Thy husband in thy bosom there lies dead ;
And Paris too : come, I'll dispose of thee
Among a sisterhood of holy nuns :
Stay not to question, for the watch is coming ;
Come, go, good Juliet, — [*Noise again.*] I dare
stay no longer. [*Exit.*

Jul. Go, get thee hence, for I will not away. —
 What's here? a cup, clos'd in my true love's hand?
 Poison, I see, hath been his timeless end: —
 O churl! drink all; and leave no friendly drop,
 To help me after? — I will kiss thy lips;
 Haply, some poison yet doth hang on them,
 To make me die with a restorative. [*Kisses him.*
 Thy lips are warm!

1 *Watch.* [*Within.*] Lead, boy: — Which way?

Jul. Yea, noise? — then I'll be brief. — O happy,
 dagger! [*Snatching ROMEO's Dagger.*
 This is thy sheath; [*Stabs herself.*] there rust, and
 let me die.

[*Falls on ROMEO's Body, and dies.*

Enter Watch, with the Page of PARIS.

Page. This is the place; there, where the torch
 doth burn.

1 *Watch.* The ground is bloody; Search about
 the churchyard:

Go, some of you, whoe'er you find, attach.

[*Exeunt some.*

Pitiful sight! here lies the county slain; —
 And Juliet bleeding; warm, and newly dead,
 Who here hath lain these two days buried. —
 Go, tell the prince, — run to the Capulets, —
 Raise up the Montagues, — some others search; —

[*Exeunt other Watchmen.*

We see the ground whereon these woes do lie;
 But the true ground of all these piteous woes,
 We cannot without circumstance descry.

Enter some of the Watch, with BALTHASAR.

2 *Watch.* Here's Romeo's man, we found him in
 the churchyard.

1 *Watch*. Hold him in safety, till the prince come hither.

Enter another Watchman, with Friar LAURENCE.

3 *Watch*. Here is a friar, that trembles, sighs, and weeps :

We took this mattock and this spade from him,
As he was coming from this churchyard side.

1 *Watch*. A great suspicion : Stay the friar too.

Enter the Prince and Attendants.

Prince. What misadventure is so early up,
That calls our person from our morning's rest?

Enter CAPULET, Lady CAPULET, and others.

Cap. What should it be, that they so shriek abroad?

La. Cap. The people in the street cry — Romeo,
Some — Juliet, and some — Paris ; and all run,
With open outcry toward our monument.

Prince. What fear is this, which startles in our ears?

1 *Watch*. Sovereign, here lies the county Paris slain ;
And Romeo dead ; and Juliet, dead before,
Warm and new kill'd.

Prince. Search, seek, and know how this foul murder comes.

1 *Watch*. Here is a friar, and slaughter'd Romeo's man ;
With instruments upon them, fit to open
These dead men's tombs.

Cap. O, heavens! — O, wife! look how our daughter bleeds!

This dagger hath mista'en, — for lo! his house²
Is empty on the back of Montague, —
And is mis-sheathed in my daughter's bosom.

La. Cap. O me! this sight of death is as a bell,
That warns my old age to a sepulchre.

Enter MONTAGUE and others.

Prince. Come, Montague; for thou art early up,
To see thy son and heir more early down.

Mon. Alas, my liege, my wife is dead to-night;
Grief of my son's exile hath stopp'd her breath:
What further woe conspires against mine age?

Prince. Look, and thou shalt see.

Mon. O thou untaught; what manners is in this,
To press before thy father to a grave?

Prince. Seal up the mouth of outrage for a
while,

Till we can clear these ambiguities,
And know their spring, their head, their true
descent;

And then will I be general of your woes,
And lead you even to death: Mean time forbear,
And let mischance be slave to patience. —
Bring forth the parties of suspicion.

Fri. I am the greatest, able to do least,
Yet most suspected, as the time and place
Doth make against me, of this direful murder;
And here I stand, both to impeach and purge
Myself condemned and myself excus'd.

Prince. Then say at once what thou dost know
in this.

Fri. I will be brief, for my short date of breath
Is not so long as is a tedious tale.
Romeo, there dead, was husband to that Juliet;
And she, there dead, that Romeo's faithful wife:

² *i. e.* The scabbard.

I married them ; and their stolen-marriage-day
 Was Tybalt's dooms-day, whose untimely death
 Banish'd the new-made bridegroom from this
 city ;

For whom, and not for Tybalt, Juliet pin'd.
 You — to remove that siege³ of grief from her, —
 Betroth'd, and would have married her perforce,
 To county Paris : — Then comes she to me ;
 And, with wild looks, bid me devise some means
 To rid her from this second marriage,
 Or, in my cell there would she kill herself.
 Then gave I her, so tutor'd by my art,
 A sleeping potion ; which so took effect
 As I intended, for it wrought on her
 The form of death : meantime I writ to Romeo,
 That he should hither come as this dire night,
 To help to take her from her borrow'd grave,
 Being the time the potion's force should cease.
 But he which bore my letter, friar John,
 Was staid by accident ; and yesternight
 Return'd my letter back : Then all alone,
 At the prefixed hour of her waking,
 Came I to take her from her kindred's vault ;
 Meaning to keep her closely at my cell,
 Till I conveniently could send to Romeo :
 But, when I came, (some minute ere the time
 Of her awakening,) here untimely lay
 The noble Paris, and true Romeo, dead.
 She wakes ; and I entreated her come forth,
 And bear this work of heaven with patience :
 But then a noise did scare me from the tomb ;
 And she, too desperate, would not go with me,
 But (as it seems,) did violence on herself.
 All this I know ; and to the marriage,
 Her nurse is privy : And, if aught in this
 Miscarried by my fault, let my old life

³ Seat.

Be sacrific'd, some hour before his time,
Unto the rigour of severest law.

Prince. We still have known thee for a holy
man. —

Where's Romeo's man? what can he say in this?

Bal. I brought my master news of Juliet's death;
And then in post he came from Mantua,
To this same place, to this same monument.
This letter he early bid me give his father;
And threaten'd me with death, going in the vault,
If I departed not, and left him there.

Prince. Give me the letter, I will look on it. —
Where is the county's page that rais'd the watch? —
Sirrah, what made your master in this place?

Page. He came with flowers to strew his lady's
grave;

And bid me stand aloof, and so I did:
Anon, comes one with light to ope the tomb;
And, by and by, my master drew on him;
And then I ran away to call the watch.

Prince. This letter doth make good the friar's
words,
Their course of love, the tidings of her death:
And here he writes — that he did buy a poison
Of a poor 'pothecary, and therewithal
Came to this vault to die, and lie with Juliet. —
Where be these enemies? Capulet! Montague!
See what a scourge is laid upon your hate,
That heaven finds means to kill your joys with love!
And I, for winking at your discords too,
Have lost a brace of kinsmen⁴: — All are punish'd.

Cap. O brother Montague, give me thy hand:
This is my daughter's jointure, for no more
Can I demand.

Mon. But I can give thee more:
For I will raise her statue in pure gold;

⁴ Mercutio and Paris.

That, while Verona by that name is known,
There shall no figure at such rate be set,
As that of true and faithful Juliet.

Cap. As rich shall Romeo by his lady lie ;
Poor sacrifices of our enmity !

Prince. A glooming peace this morning with it
brings ;

The sun for sorrow will not show his head :
Go hence, to have more talk of these sad things ;
Some shall be pardoned, and some punished :
For never was a story of more woe,
Than this of Juliet and her Romeo. [Exeunt.

HAMLET.



PREFACE TO HAMLET.

WHEN so great a writer as Johnson declares himself unable to perceive any satisfactory cause for Hamlet's counterfeiting madness, I fear I shall be accused of presumption, if I attempt to offer any solution of the problem; yet I really think that the difficulty is not as great as he supposes it to be. He says that Hamlet does nothing in the character of a lunatic, which he might not have done in his proper senses; but in this observation he appears to have overlooked what Hamlet intended to do, which ought to have been taken into consideration as well as what he actually did.

The state of the question I take to be as follows:

Hamlet being informed by the Ghost of the murder of his father, and being at the same time required to revenge it, forms the resolution of killing his uncle; but being sensible that he has no proof of the murder, except what was said by the Ghost to himself alone, which could have no weight with any other person; he feels conscious, that his killing the king would be considered as the act of a traitor and an assassin: he therefore determines to assume the appearance of madness, in order that the intended blow might be ascribed to distraction rather than to treason. Having formed this resolution, he requires the most solemn oaths from Horatio and Marcellus, that they will not, if he

“Perchance hereafter shall think meet,
To put an antick disposition on,”

allow any expression to escape them, which would

convey an idea of what might have occasioned the alteration in his behaviour.

Hamlet is nevertheless induced, by more mature reflection, to doubt the propriety of proceeding to extremities, till he has further proof of the king's guilt.

— “ The spirit that I have seen
 May be a devil ;
 I'll have grounds
 More relative than this.”

He therefore has recourse to the play. The stratagem succeeds ; and being now convinced of the truth of what was said by the Ghost, he determines to kill the king.

“ Now could I drink hot blood,” &c.

This resolution he would immediately afterwards have carried into effect, if a very extraordinary circumstance (the finding the king engaged in prayer) had not induced him to postpone it. I am happy that it is by no means necessary for me to say any thing respecting his horrid reflections on that occasion ; they do not affect the course of argument which I am pursuing, and in this, as in other instances, I attempt nothing more than to point out the motives of Hamlet's conduct, without entering into the propriety or impropriety of those motives, or of the actions to which they gave birth.

Hamlet now goes to his mother, and while he is with her, he does (as he supposes) what he had before resolved to do. He thinks he is killing the king, when he kills Polonius. That he supposed the person behind the arras to be the king, is evident from his words to his mother : “ Is it the king ?” and to the dead Polonius, “ I took thee for thy better.” After this, he entreats the queen by no means to disclose the secret of his madness being counterfeit, and not real distraction.

Here then, with all due submission to Dr. Johnson, is an act done by Hamlet while supposed to be mad, which would have been thought an unpardonable murder if he had been in his proper senses; and this is the use which Hamlet afterwards makes of his counterfeit madness. He excuses himself to Laertes on this very ground:

“ This presence knows, and you must needs have heard,
How I am punish'd with a sore distraction.
What I have done,
That might your nature, honour, and exception,
Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness,” &c.

It appears, then, that Hamlet resolved to counterfeit madness, that he might kill the king without being considered as a traitor and a murderer. He thought he was killing him when he killed Polonius, and if the person behind the arras had been the king, Hamlet would have excused his death, as he excused the death of Polonius, by saying,

“ What I have done,
I here proclaim was madness.”

I shall add one word in answer to a question which I have heard frequently asked: Why did Hamlet act the madman in a manner so distressing to the amiable Ophelia? The reason I take to be this: Ophelia was known to be the object of his affection. The queen hoped

“ She would have been her Hamlet's wife.”

If, then, it appeared that he acted as a madman in the presence of the object of his tenderest regard, he considered it as a certain consequence, that no doubt could be entertained of the reality of his distraction.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

CLAUDIUS, *king of Denmark.*

HAMLET, *son to the former, and nephew to the present king.*

POLONIUS, *lord chamberlain.*

HORATIO, *friend to Hamlet.*

LAERTES, *son to Polonius.*

VOLTIMAND,

CORNELIUS,

ROSENCRANTZ,

GUILDENSTERN,

OSRIC, *a courtier.*

Another Courtier.

A Priest.

MARCELLUS, } *officers.*

BERNARDO, }

FRANCISCO, *a soldier.*

REYNALDO, *servant to Polonius.*

A Captain. An Ambassador.

Ghost of Hamlet's father.

FORTINBRAS, *prince of Norway.*

GERTRUDE, *queen of Denmark, and mother of Hamlet.*

OPHELIA, *daughter of Polonius.*

Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers, Players, Grave-diggers, Sailors, Messengers, and other Attendants.

SCENE, *Elsinore.*

HAMLET,
PRINCE OF DENMARK.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Elsinore. *A Platform before the Castle.*

FRANCISCO *on his Post.* *Enter to him* BERNARDO.

Bernardo.

WHO'S there?

Fran. Nay, answer me: stand, and unfold
Yourself.

Ber. Long live the king!

Fran. Bernardo?

Ber. He.

Fran. You come most carefully upon your hour.

Ber. 'Tis now struck twelve; get thee to bed,
Francisco.

Fran. For this relief, much thanks; 'tis bitter
cold,

And I am sick at heart.

Ber. Have you had quiet guard?

Fran. Not a mouse stirring.

Ber. Well, good night.

If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,
The rivals¹ of my watch, bid them make haste.

Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS.

Fran. I think, I hear them. — Stand, ho! Who is there?

Hor. Friends to this ground.

Mar. And liegemen to the Dane.

Fran. Give you good night.

Mar. O, farewell, honest soldier :
Who hath reliev'd you?

Fran. Bernardo hath my place.
Give you good night. [*Exit FRANCISCO.*]

Mar. Holla! Bernardo!

Ber. Say,
What, is Horatio there?

Hor. A piece of him.

Ber. Welcome, Horatio; welcome, good Marcellus.

Hor. What, has this thing appear'd again to-night?

Ber. I have seen nothing.

Mar. Horatio says, 'tis but our fantasy,
And will not let belief take hold of him,
Touching this dreaded sight, twice seen of us;
Therefore I have entreated him, along
With us to watch the minutes of this night;
That, if again this apparition come,
He may approve² our eyes, and speak to it.

Hor. Tush! tush! 'twill not appear.

Ber. Sit down awhile;
And let us once again assail your ears,
That are so fortified against our story,
What we two nights have seen.

Hor. Well, sit we down,
And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.

¹ Partners.

² Make good or establish.

Ber. Last night of all,
When yon same star, that's westward from the pole,
Had made his course to illume that part of heaven
Where now it burns, Marcellus, and myself,
The bell then beating one, —

Mar. Peace, break thee off; look, where it comes
again!

Enter Ghost.

Ber. In the same figure, like the king that's
dead.

Mar. Thou art a scholar, speak to it, Horatio.

Ber. Looks it not like the king? mark it, Ho-
ratio.

Hor. Most like: — it harrows me with fear, and
wonder.

Ber. It would be spoke to:

Mar. Speak to it, Horatio.

Hor. What art thou, that usurp'st this time of
night,

Together with that fair and warlike form
In which the majesty of buried Denmark
Did sometimes march? By heaven I charge thee,
speak.

Mar. It is offended.

Ber. See! it stalks away.

Hor. Stay, speak: speak I charge thee, speak.

[*Exit Ghost.*]

Mar. 'Tis gone, and will not answer.

Ber. How now, Horatio? you tremble, and look
pale:

Is not this something more than fantasy?

What think you of it?

Hor. Before my God, I might not this believe,
Without the sensible and true avouch
Of mine own eyes.

Mar. Is it not like the king?

Hor. As thou art to thyself:

Such was the very armour he had on,
When he the ambitious Norway combated;
So frown'd he once, when, in an angry parle,³
He smote the sledged⁴ Polack⁵ on the ice.
'Tis strange.

Mar. Thus, twice before, and jump⁶ at this dead
hour,

With martial stalk hath he gone by our watch.

Hor. In what particular thought to work, I know
not;

But in the gross and scope of mine opinion,
This bodes some strange eruption to our state.

Mar. Good now, sit down, and tell me, he that
knows,

Why this same strict and most observant watch
So nightly toils the subject of the land;
And why such daily cast of brazen cannon,
And foreign mart for implements of war:
Why such impress of shipwrights, whose sore task
Does not divide the Sunday from the week:
What might be toward, that this sweaty haste
Doth make the night joint-labourer with the day;
Who is't, that can inform me?

Hor. That can I;
At least, the whisper goes so. Our last king,
Whose image even but now appear'd to us,
Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,
Thereto prick'd on by a most emulate pride,
Dar'd to the combat; in which our valiant Hamlet
(For so this side of our known world esteem'd him,)
Did slay this Fortinbras; who, by a seal'd compact,
Well ratified by law and heraldry,
Did forfeit, with his life, all those his lands,

³ Dispute.

⁴ Sledged.

⁵ Polander, an inhabitant of Poland.

⁶ Just.

Which he stood seis'd of, to the conqueror :
 Against the which, a moiety competent
 Was gaged by our king ; which had return'd
 To the inheritance of Fortinbras,
 Had he been vanquisher ; as, by the same co-
 mart,⁷

And carriage of the article design'd,⁸
 His fell to Hamlet : Now, sir, young Fortinbras,
 Of unimproved mettle hot and full,⁹
 Hath in the skirts of Norway, here and there,
 Shark'd¹ up a list of landless resolute,
 For food and diet, to some enterprize
 That hath a stomach² in't : which is no other
 (As it doth well appear unto our state,)
 But to recover of us, by strong hand,
 And terms compulsatory, those 'foresaid lands
 So by his father lost : And this, I take it,
 Is the main motive of our preparations ;
 The source of this our watch ; and the chief head
 Of this post-haste and romage³ in the land.

Ber. I think, it be no other, but even so :
 Well may it sort⁴, that this portentous figure
 Comes armed through our watch ; so like the king
 That was, and is the question of these wars.

Hor. A mote it is, to trouble the mind's eye.
 In the most high and palmy⁵ state of Rome,
 A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
 The graves stood tenantless, and the sheeted dead
 Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets.
 Stars shone with trains of fire ; dews of blood fell ;
 Disasters veil'd the sun ; and the moist star,⁶
 Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands,
 Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse.

⁷ Joint bargain. ⁸ The covenant to confirm that bargain.

⁹ Full of spirit without experience. ¹ Pick'd.

² Resolution. ³ Search. ⁴ Suit. ⁵ Victorious.

⁶ The moon.

And even the like precurse of fierce events, —
 As harbingers preceding still the fates,
 And prologue to the omen⁷ coming on, —
 Have heaven and earth together démonstrated
 Unto our climatures and countrymen. —

Re-enter Ghost.

But, soft ; behold ! lo, where it comes again !
 I'll cross it, though it blast me. — Stay, illusion !
 If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,
 Speak to me :

If there be any good thing to be done,
 That may to thee do ease, and grace to me,
 Speak to me :

If thou art privy to thy country's fate,
 Which, happily, foreknowing, may avoid,
 O speak !

Or, if thou hast uphoarded in thy life
 Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,
 For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death,

Speak of it : — stay, and speak. — Stop it, Mar-
 cellus. [Cock crows.

Mar. Shall I strike at it with my partizan ?⁸

Hor. Do, if it will not stand.

Ber.

'Tis here !

Hor.

'Tis here !

Mar. 'Tis gone !

[*Exit Ghost.*

We do it wrong, being so majestic,al,
 To offer it the show of violence ;
 For it is, as the air, invulnerable,
 And our vain blows malicious mockery.

Ber. It was about to speak, when the cock crew.

Hor. And then it started like a guilty thing
 Upon a fearful summons. I have heard,

⁷ Event.

⁸ A sort of pike.

The cock, that is the trumpet of the morn,
 Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat
 Awake the god of day ; and, at his warning,
 Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,
 The extravagant and erring⁹ spirit hies
 To his confine : and of the truth herein
 This present object made probation.¹

Mar. It faded on the crowing of the cock.
 Some say, that ever 'gainst that season comes
 Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
 This bird of dawning singeth all night long :
 And then they say no spirit dares stir abroad ;
 The nights are wholesome ; then no planets
 strike.

No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,
 So hallow'd and so gracious is the time.

Hor. So have I heard, and do in part believe it.
 But, look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,
 Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill :
 Break we our watch up ; and, by my advice,
 Let us impart what we have seen to-night
 Unto young Hamlet : for, upon my life,
 This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him :
 Do you consent we shall acquaint him with it,
 As needful in our loves, fitting our duty ?

Mar. Let's do't, I pray ; and I this morning
 know
 Where we shall find him most convenient. [*Exeunt.*

⁹ Wandering.

¹ Proof.

SCENE II.

A Room of State in the same.

Enter the King, Queen, HAMLET, POLONIUS, LAERTES, VOLTIMAND, CORNELIUS, Lords, and Attendants.

King. Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death

The memory be green ; and that it us befitted
To bear our hearts in grief, and our whole kingdom
To be contracted in one brow of woe ;
Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature,
That we with wisest sorrow think on him,
Together with remembrance of ourselves.
Therefore our sometime sister, now our queen,
The imperial jointress of this warlike state,
Have we, as 'twere, with a defeated joy, —
With one auspicious, and one dropping eye ;
With mirth in funeral, and with dirge in marriage,
In equal scale weighing delight and dole, ² —
Taken to wife : nor have we herein barr'd
Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
With this affair along : — For all, our thanks.

Now follows, that you know, young Fortinbras,
Holding a weak supposal of our worth ;
Or thinking, by our late dear brother's death,
Our state to be disjoint and out of frame,
Collegued with this dream of his advantage,
He hath not fail'd to pester us with message,
Importing the surrender of those lands
Lost by his father, with all bands ³ of law,
To our most valiant brother. — So much for him.

² Grief.

³ Bonds.

Now for ourself, and for this time of meeting.
 Thus much the business is : We have here writ
 To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras, —
 Who impotent and bed-rid, scarcely hears
 Of this his nephew's purpose, — to suppress
 His further gait⁴ herein ; in that the levies,
 The lists, and full proportions, are all made
 Out of his subject : — and we here despatch
 You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltimand,
 For bearers of this greeting to old Norway ;
 Giving to you no further personal power
 To business with the king, more than the scope
 Of these dilated articles allow.

Farewell ; and let your haste commend your duty.

Cor. Vol. In that, and all things, will we show
 our duty.

King. We doubt it nothing ; heartily farewell.

[*Exeunt* VOLTIMAND and CORNELIUS.]

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you ?
 You told us of some suit : What is't, Laertes ?
 You cannot speak of reason to the Dane,
 And lose your voice : What wouldst thou beg,
 Laertes,

That shall not be my offer, not thy asking ?
 The head is not more native to the heart,
 The hand more instrumental to the mouth,
 Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.
 What wouldst thou have, Laertes ?

Laer. My dread lord,
 Your leave and favour to return to France ;
 From whence though willingly I came to Den-
 mark,

To show my duty in your coronation ;
 Yet now I must confess, that duty done,
 My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France,
 And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.

⁴ Way, path.

King. Have you your father's leave? What says Polonius?

Pol. He hath, my lord, wrung from me my slow leave,

By laboursome petition; and, at last,
Upon his will I seal'd my hard consent:
I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

King. Take thy fair hour, Laertes; time be thine,

And thy best graces: spend it at thy will. —

But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son, —

Ham. A little more than kin, and less than kind.

[*Aside.*

King. How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

Ham. Not so, my lord, I am too much i'the sun.

Queen. Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.

Do not, for ever, with thy veiled lids⁵

Seek for thy noble father in the dust:

Thou know'st 'tis common; all, that live, must die,

Passing through nature to eternity.

Ham. Ay, madam, it is common.

Queen.

If it be,

Why seems it so particular with thee?

Ham. Seems, madam! nay, it is; I know not seems.

'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
Nor customary suits of solemn black,
Nor windy suspiration of forc'd breath,
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
Nor the dejected haviour of the visage,
Together with all forms, modes, shows of grief,
That can denote me truly: These, indeed, seem,
For they are actions that a man might play:
But I have that within, which passeth show;
These, but the trappings and the suits of woe.

⁵ Lowering eyes.

King. 'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet,
 To give these mourning duties to your father :
 But, you must know, your father lost a father ;
 That father lost his ; and the survivor bound
 In filial obligation, for some term
 To do obsequious sorrow : But to perséver
 In obstinate condolément, is a course
 Of impious stubbornness ; 'tis unmanly grief :
 It shows a will most incorrect to heaven,
 A heart unfortified, or mind impatient ;
 An understanding simple and unschool'd :
 For what, we know, must be, and is as common
 As any the most vulgar thing to sense,
 Why should we, in our peevish opposition,
 Take it to heart? Fye! 'tis a fault to heaven,
 A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,
 To reason most absurd ; whose common theme
 Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,
 From the first corse, till he that died to-day,
This must be so. We pray you, throw to earth
 This unprevailing woe ; and think of us
 As of a father : for let the world take note,
 You are the most immediate to our throne ;
 And, with no less nobility of love,
 Than that which dearest father bears his son,
 Do I impart toward you. For your intent
 In going back to school in Wittenberg,
 It is most retrograde⁶ to our desire :
 And, we beseech you, bend you to remain
 Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye,
 Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

Queen. Let not thy mother lose her prayers,
 Hamlet ;

I pray thee stay with us, go not to Wittenberg.

Ham. I shall in all my best obey you, madam.

⁶ Contrary.

King. Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply ;
 Be as ourself in Denmark. — Madam, come ;
 This gentle and unforc'd accord of Hamlet
 Sits smiling to my heart : in grace whereof,
 No jocund health, that Denmark drinks to-day,
 But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell ;
 And the king's rouse⁷ the heaven shall bruit⁸ again,
 Re-speaking earthly thunder. Come away.

[*Exeunt King, Queen, Lords, &c. POLONIUS,
 and LAERTES.*]

Ham. O, that this too too solid flesh would melt,
 Thaw, and resolve⁹ itself into a dew !
 Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
 His canon¹ 'gainst self-slaughter ! O God ! O
 God !

How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
 Seem to me all the uses of this world !
 Fye on't ! O fye ! 'tis an unweeded garden,
 That grows to seed ; things rank, and gross in
 nature,
 Possess it merely. That it should come to this !
 But two months dead ! — nay, not so much, not
 two :

So excellent a king ; that was, to this,
 Hyperion² to a satyr : so loving to my mother,
 That he might not beteem³ the winds of heaven
 Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth !
 Must I remember ? why, she would hang on him
 As if increase of appetite had grown
 By what it fed on : And yet, within a month, —
 Let me not think on't ; — Frailty, thy name is
 woman ! —

A little month ; or ere those shoes were old,
 With which she follow'd my poor father's body,
 Like Niobe, all tears ; — why she, even she, —

⁷ Draught.

⁸ Report.

⁹ Dissolve.

¹ Law.

² Apollo.

³ Suffer.

O heaven! a beast, that wants discourse of reason,
 Would have mourn'd longer, — married with my
 uncle,
 My father's brother; but no more like my father,
 Than I to Hercules: Within a month;
 Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears
 Had left the flushing in her galled eyes,
 She married: — O most wicked speed, to post
 With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!
 It is not, nor it cannot come to, good;
 But break, my heart: for I must hold my tongue!

Enter HORATIO, BERNARDO, and MARCELLUS.

Hor. Hail to your lordship?

Ham. I am glad to see you well:
 Horatio, — or I do forget myself.

Hor. The same, my lord, and your poor servant
 ever.

Ham. Sir, my good friend; I'll change that name
 with you.

And what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio? —
 Marcellus?

Mar. My good lord, —

Ham. I am very glad to see you; good even,
 sir. —

But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg?

Hor. A truant disposition, good my lord.

Ham. I would not hear your enemy say so:
 Nor shall you do mine ear that violence,
 To make it truster of your own report
 Against yourself: I know, you are no truant.
 But what is your affair in Elsinore?
 We'll teach you to drink deep ere you depart.

Hor. My lord, I came to see your father's
 funeral.

Ham. I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow-student ;

I think, it was to see my mother's wedding.

Hor. Indeed, my lord, it follow'd hard upon.

Ham. Thrift, thrift, Horatio! the funeral bak'd meats

Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.

'Would I had met my dearest⁴ foe in heaven

Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio! —

My father, — Methinks, I see my father.

Hor. Where,

My lord ?

Ham. In my mind's eye, Horatio.

Hor. I saw him once, he was a goodly king.

Ham. He was a man, take him for all in all,

I shall not look upon his like again.

Hor. My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.

Ham. Saw! who?

Hor. My lord, the king your father.

Ham. The king my father!

Hor. Season your admiration for a while

With an attent⁵ ear ; till I may deliver,

Upon the witness of these gentlemen,

This marvel to you.

Ham. For Heaven's love, let me hear.

Hor. Two nights together had these gentlemen,

Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,

In the dead waist and middle of the night,

Been thus encounter'd. A figure like your father,

Armed at point, exactly cap-à-pé,

Appears before them, and, with solemn march,

Goes slow and stately by them : thrice he walk'd,

By their oppress'd and fear-surprized eyes,

Within his truncheon's length ; whilst they, distill'd

Almost to jelly with the act of fear,

⁴ Chiefest.

⁵ Attentive.

Stand dumb, and speak not to him. This to me
 In dreadful secrecy impart they did ;
 And I with them, the third night kept the watch :
 Where, as they had deliver'd, both in time,
 Form of the thing, each word made true and good,
 The apparition comes : I knew your father :
 These hands are not more like.

Ham. But where was this ?

Mar. My lord, upon the platform where we
 watch'd.

Ham. Did you not speak to it ?

Hor. My lord, I did ;
 But answer made it none : yet once, methought,
 It lifted up its head, and did address
 Itself to motion, like as it would speak :
 But, even then, the morning cock crew loud ;
 And at the sound it shrunk in haste away,
 And vanish'd from our sight.

Ham. 'Tis very strange.

Hor. As I do live, my honour'd lord, 'tis true ;
 And we did think it writ down in our duty,
 To let you know of it.

Ham. Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this troubles me.
 Hold you the watch to-night ?

All. We do, my lord.

Ham. Arm'd, say you ?

All. Arm'd, my lord.

Ham. From top to toe ?

All. My lord, from head to foot.

Ham. Then saw you not
 His face ?

Hor. O, yes, my lord ! he wore his beaver⁶ up.

Ham. What, look'd he frowningly ?

Hor. A countenance more
 In sorrow than in anger.

⁶ That part of the helmet which protects the lower part of the face, and may be lifted up.

Ham. Pale, or red?

Hor. Nay, very pale.

Ham. And fix'd his eyes upon you?

Hor. Most constantly.

Ham. I would, I had been there.

Hor. It would have much amaz'd you.

Ham. Very like,

Very like: Stay'd it long?

Hor. While one with moderate haste might tell
a hundred.

Mar. Ber. Longer, longer.

Hor. Not when I saw it.

Ham. His beard was grizzl'd? no?

Hor. It was, as I have seen it in his life,
A sable silver'd.

Ham. I will watch to-night;
Perchance, 'twill walk again.

Hor. I warrant, it will.

Ham. If it assume my noble father's person,
I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape,
And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,
If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,
Let it be tenable in your silence still:
And whatsoever else shall hap to-night,
Give it an understanding, but no tongue;
I will requite your loves: So, fare you well:
Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,
I'll visit you.

All. Our duty to your honour.

Ham. Your loves, as mine to you: Farewell.

[*Exeunt HOR. MAR. and BER.*]

My father's spirit in arms! all is not well;
I doubt some foul play: 'would, the night were
come!

Till then sit still, my soul: Foul deeds will rise,
Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's
eyes. [Exit.]

SCENE III.

*A Room in Polonius's House.**Enter LAERTES and OPHELIA.*

Laer. My necessaries are embark'd; farewell:
And, sister, as the winds give benefit,
And convoy is assistant, do not sleep,
But let me hear from you.

Oph. Do you doubt that?

Laer. For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favour,
Hold it a fashion, and a toy in blood;
A violet in the youth of primy nature,
Forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting,
The perfume and suppliance of a minute;
No more.

Oph. No more but so?

Laer. Think it no more:
For nature, crescent⁷, does not grow alone
In thews⁸, and bulk; but, as this temple waxes,
The inward service of the mind and soul
Grows wide withal. Perhaps, he loves you now;
And now no soil, nor cautel⁹, doth besmirch¹
The virtue of his will: but, you must fear,
His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own;
For he himself is subject to his birth:
He may not, as unvalued persons do,
Carve for himself; for on his choice depends
The safety and the health of the whole state;
And therefore must his choice be circumscrib'd
Unto the voice and yielding of that body,
Whereof he is the head: Then if he says he loves
you,

⁷ Increasing.

⁹ Subtlety, deceit.

⁸ Sinews.

¹ Discolour.

It fits your wisdom so far to believe it,
 As he in his particular act and place
 May give his saying deed; which is no further,
 Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal,
 Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain,
 If with too credent² ear you list³ his songs:
 Or lose your heart; or your chaste treasure open
 To his unmaster'd⁴ importunity.

Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister;
 And keep you in the rear of your affection,
 Out of the shot and danger of desire.

The chariest maid is prodigal enough,
 If she unmask her beauty to the moon:
 Virtue itself scapes not calumnious strokes:

The canker galls the infants of the spring,
 Too oft before their buttons be disclos'd;
 And in the morn and liquid dew of youth
 Contagious blastments are most imminent.

Be wary then: best safety lies in fear;
 Youth to itself rebels, though none else near.

Oph. I shall the effect of this good lesson keep,
 As watchman to my heart: But, good my brother,
 Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,
 Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven;
 Whilst, like a puff'd and restless libertine,
 Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,
 And recks not his own read.⁵

Laer. O fear me not.
 I stay too long; — But here my father comes.

Enter POLONIUS.

A double blessing is a double grace;
 Occasion smiles upon a second leave.

Pol. Yet here, Laertes! aboard, aboard, for shame;

² Believing.

³ Listen to.

⁴ Licentious.

⁵ Regards not his own lessons.

The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,
And you are staid for : There, — my blessing with
you ;

[*Laying his Hand on LAERTES' Head.*

And these few precepts in thy memory
Look thou charácter.⁶ Give thy thoughts no
tongue,

Nor any unproportion'd thought his act.
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.
The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
Grapple them to thy soul with hooks of steel :
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
Of each new-hatch'd, unfledg'd comrade. Beware
Of entrance to a quarrel : but, being in,
Bear it, that the opposer may beware of thee.
Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice :
Take each man's censure⁷, but reserve thy judgement.

Costly thy habit, as thy purse can buy,
But not express'd in fancy ; rich, not gaudy :
For the apparel oft proclaims the man ;
And they in France of the best rank and station,
Are most select and generous⁸, chief⁹ in that.
Neither a borrower, nor a lender be :
For loan oft loses both itself and friend ;
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
This above all, — To thine ownself be true ;
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.
Farewell ; my blessing season¹ this in thee !

Laer. Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.

Pol. The time invites you ; go, your servants
tend.²

Laer. Farewell, Ophelia ; and remember well
What I have said to you.

⁶ Write.

⁹ Chiefly.

⁷ Opinion.

¹ Infix.

⁸ Noble.

² Wait.

Oph. 'Tis in my memory lock'd,
And you yourself shall keep the key of it.

Laer. Farewell! [*Exit* LAERTES.]

Pol. What is't, Ophelia, he hath said to you?

Oph. So please you, something touching the lord
Hamlet.

Pol. Marry, well bethought:
'Tis told me, he hath very oft of late
Given private time on you: and you yourself
Have of your audience been most free and boun-
teous:

If it be so, (as so 'tis put on me,
And that in way of caution,) I must tell you,
You do not understand yourself so clearly,
As it behoves my daughter, and your honour:
What is between you? give me up the truth.

Oph. He hath my lord, of late, made many
tenders,
Of his affection to me.

Pol. Affection? Puh! you speak like a green girl,
Unsifted³ in such perilous circumstance.
Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?

Oph. I do not know, my lord, what I should
think.

Pol. Marry, I'll teach you; think yourself a
baby;
That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay
Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more
dearly;

Or (not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,
Wronging it thus,) you'll tender me a fool.

Oph. My lord, he hath impórtun'd me with love,
In honourable fashion.

Pol. Ay, fashion you may call it; go to, go to.

Oph. And hath given countenance to his speech,
my lord,
With almost all the holy vows of heaven.

³ Untempted.

Pol. Ay, springes to catch woodcocks. I do know,
 When the blood burns; how prodigal the soul
 Lends the tongue vows: these blazes, daughter,
 Giving more light than heat, — extinct in both,
 Even in their promise, as it is a making; —
 You must not take for fire. From this time,
 Be somewhat scater of your maiden presence;
 Set your entreatments⁴ at a higher rate,
 Than a command to parley. For lord Hamlet,
 Believe so much in him, That he is young;
 And with a larger tether may he walk,
 Than may be given you: In few, Ophelia,
 Do not believe his vows, for they are brokers,
 Not of that die which their investments show,
 But mere implorators⁵ of unholy suits,
 Breathing like sanctified and pious bonds,
 The better to beguile. This is for all, —
 I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,
 Have you so slander any moment's leisure,
 As to give words or talk with the lord Hamlet.
 Look to't, I charge you; come your ways.

Oph. I shall obey, my lord. [Exeunt.]

SCENE IV.

The Platform.

Enter HAMLET, HORATIO, and MARCELLUS.

Ham. The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold.

Hor. It is a nipping and an eager⁶ air.

Ham. What hour now?

Hor. I think, it lacks of twelve.

Mar. No, it is struck.

⁴ Company.

⁵ Implorers.

⁶ Sharp.

Hor. Indeed? I heard it not; it then draws near
the season,
Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.

[*A Flourish of Trumpets, and Ordnance shot off,
within.*]

What does this mean, my lord?

Ham. The king, doth wake to-night, and takes
his rouse,⁷

Keeps wassel⁸, and the swaggering up-spring⁹
reels;

And, as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,
The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out
The triumph of his pledge.

Hor. Is it a custom?

Ham. Ay, marry, is't:

But to my mind, — though I am native here,
And to the manner born, — it is a custom
More honour'd in the breach, than the observance.
This heavy-headed revel, east and west,
Makes us traduc'd and tax'd of other nations:
They clepe¹ us drunkards, and with swinish phrase
Soil our addition; and, indeed, it takes
From our achievements, though perform'd at height,
The pith and marrow of our attribute.

So oft it chanceth in particular men,
That for some vicious mode of nature in them,
As, in their birth, (wherein they are not guilty,
Since nature cannot choose his origin,)
By the o'ergrowth of some complexion,²
Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason;
Or by some habit, that too much o'er-leavens
The form of plausible manners; — that these men, —
Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect;
Being nature's livery, or fortune's star, —
Their virtues else (be they as pure as grace,

⁷ Jovial draught.

⁸ Jollity.

⁹ A dance.

¹ Call.

² Humour.

As infinite as man may undergo,) Shall in the general censure take corruption From that particular fault: The dram of base Doth all the noble substance often dout,³ To his own scandal.

Enter Ghost.

Hor. Look, my lord, it comes!

Ham. Angels and ministers of grace defend us!—
Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd,
Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blasts from
hell,

Be thy intents wicked, or charitable,
Thou com'st in such a questionable⁴ shape,
That I will speak to thee; I'll call thee, Hamlet,
King, father, royal Dane: O, answer me:
Let me not burst in ignorance! but tell,
Why thy canoniz'd bones, hearsed in death,
Have burst their cerements! why the sepulchre,
Wherein we saw thee quietly in-urn'd,
Hath op'd his ponderous and marble jaws,
To cast thee up again! What may this mean,
That thou, dead corse, again, in complete steel
Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,
Making night hideous; and we fools of nature,
So horribly to shake our disposition,
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?
Say, why is this? wherefore? what should we do?

Hor. It beckons you to go away with it,
As if it some impartment did desire
To you alone.

Mar. Look, with what courte
It waves you to a more removed ground:
But do not go with it.

Hor. No, by no means.

³ Do out.

⁴ Conversable.

Ham. It will not speak ; then I will follow it.

Hor. Do not, my lord.

Ham. Why, what should be the fear ?
I do not set my life at a pin's fee ;⁵
And, for my soul, what can it do to that,
Being a thing immortal as itself ?
It waves me forth again ; — I'll follow it.

Hor. What, if it tempt you toward the flood, my
lord,
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff,
That beetles⁶ o'er his base into the sea !
And there assume some other horrible form,
Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason,
And draw you into madness ? think of it :
The very place puts toys⁷ of desperation,
Without more motive, into every brain,
That looks so many fathoms to the sea,
And hears it roar beneath.

Ham. It waves me still : —
Go on, I'll follow thee.

Mar. You shall not go, my lord.

Ham. Hold off your hands.

Hor. Be rul'd, you shall not go.

Ham. My fate cries out,
And makes each petty artery in this body
As hardy as the Némean lion's nerve. —

[*Ghost beckons.*
Still am I call'd ; — unhand me, gentlemen ; —

[*Breaking from them.*
By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets⁸
me : —

I say, away : — Go on, I'll follow thee.

[*Exeunt Ghost and HAMLET.*

Hor. He waxes desperate with imagination.

Mar. Let's follow ; 'tis not fit thus to obey him.

Hor. Have after : — To what issue will this
come ?

⁵ Value.

⁶ Hangs.

⁷ Whims.

⁸ Hinders.

Mar. Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.

Hor. Heaven will direct it.

Mar. Nay, let's follow him.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.

A more remote Part of the Platform.

Re-enter Ghost and HAMLET.

Ham. Whither wilt thou lead me? Speak, I'll go no further.

Ghost. Mark me.

Ham. I will.

Ghost. My hour is almost come,
When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.

Ham. Alas, poor ghost!

Ghost. Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing
To what I shall unfold.

Ham. Speak, I am bound to hear.

Ghost. So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.

Ham. What?

Ghost. I am thy father's spirit;
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night;
And, for the day, confin'd to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes, done in my days of nature,
Are burnt and purg'd away. But that I am forbid
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,
I could a tale unfold, whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul; freeze thy young blood;
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their
spheres;

Thy knotted and combined locks to part,

And each particular hair to stand on end
 Like quills upon the fretful porcupine :
 But this eternal blazon⁹ must not be
 To ears of flesh and blood : — List, list, O list ! —
 If thou didst ever thy dear father love, ——

Ham. O heaven !

Ghost. Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.

Ham. Murder ?

Ghost. Murder most foul, as in the best it is ;
 But this most foul, strange, and unnatural.

Ham. Haste me to know it ; that I, with wings
 as swift

As meditation, or the thoughts of love,
 May sweep to my revenge.

Ghost. I find thee apt ;
 And duller shouldst thou be than the fat weed
 That rots itself in ease on Lethe wharf,
 Wouldst thou not stir in this. Now, Hamlet, hear :
 'Tis given out, that sleeping in mine orchard,
 A serpent stung me ; so the whole ear of Denmark
 Is by a forged process of my death
 Rankly abus'd ; but know, thou noble youth,
 The serpent that did sting thy father's life,
 Now wears his crown.

Ham. O, my prophetick soul ! my uncle.

Ghost. Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,
 With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts,
 (O wicked wit, and gifts, that have the power
 So to seduce !) won to his shameful lust
 The will of my most seeming virtuous queen :
 O, Hamlet, what a falling-off was there !
 From me, whose love was of that dignity,
 That it went hand in hand even with the vow
 I made to her in marriage ; and to decline
 Upon a wretch, whose natural gifts were poor

⁹ Display.

To those of mine! —

But, soft! methinks, I scent the morning air;
 Brief let me be: — Sleeping within mine orchard,
 My custom always of the afternoon,
 Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,
 With juice of cursed hebenon¹ in a vial,
 And in the porches of mine ears did pour
 The leperous distilment: whose effect
 Holds such an enmity with blood of man,
 That, swift as quicksilver, it courses through
 The natural gates and alleys of the body;
 And, with a sudden vigour, it doth posset
 And curd, like eager droppings into milk,
 The thin and wholesome blood: so did it mine;
 And a most instant tetter bark'd about,
 Most lazar-like², with vile and loathsome crust,
 All my smooth body.

Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand,
 Of life, of crown, of queen, at once despatch'd:³
 Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,
 Unhousel'd⁴, disappointed⁵, unanel'd;⁶
 No reckoning made, but sent to my account
 With all my imperfections on my head:
 O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible!
 If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not;
 Let not the royal bed of Denmark be
 A couch for luxury and horrid incest.
 But, howsoever thou pursu'st this act,
 Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive
 Against thy mother aught; leave her to heaven,
 And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,
 To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once!
 The glow-worm shows the matin to be near,

¹ Henbane.

² Leprous.

³ Bereft.

⁴ Without having received the Sacrament.

⁵ Unappointed, unprepared.

⁶ Without extreme unction.

And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire :

Adieu, adieu, adieu ! remember me. [*Exit.*

Ham. O all you host of heaven ! O earth ! What else ?

And shall I couple hell ? — O fye ! — Hold, hold, my heart ;

And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,
But bear me stiffly up ! — Remember thee ?

Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe.⁷ Remember thee ?

Yea, from the table of my memory

I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,

All saws⁸ of books, all forms, all pressures past,

That youth and observation copied there ;

And thy commandment all alone shall live

Within the book and volume of my brain,

Unmix'd with baser matter : yes, by heaven.

O most pernicious woman !

O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain !

My tables⁹, — meet it is, I set it down,

That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain ;

At least, I am sure, it may be so in Denmark :

[*Writing.*

So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word ;

It is, *Adieu, adieu ! remember me.*

I have sworn't.

Hor. [*Within.*] My lord, my lord, —

Mar. [*Within.*] Lord Hamlet, —

Hor. [*Within.*] Heaven secure him.

Ham. So be it !

Mar. [*Within.*] Illo, ho, ho, my lord !

Ham. Hillo, ho, ho, boy ! come, bird, come.

⁷ Head.

⁸ Sayings, sentences.

⁹ Memorandum book.

Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS.

Mar. How is't, my noble lord?

Hor. What news, my lord?

Ham. O wonderful!

Hor. Good my lord, tell it.

Ham. No;
You will reveal it.

Hor. Not I, my lord, by heaven.

Mar. Nor I, my lord.

Ham. How say you then: would heart of man
once think it? —

But you'll be secret, —

Hor. Mar. Ay, by heaven, my lord.

Ham. There's ne'er a villain, dwelling in all
Denmark,

But he's an arrant knave.

Hor. There needs no ghost, my lord, come from
the grave,

To tell us this.

Ham. Why, right; you are in the right;
And so, without more circumstance at all,
I hold it fit, that we shake hands, and part:
You, as your business, and desire, shall point
you; —

For every man hath business, and desire,
Such as it is, — and, for my own poor part,
Look you, I will go pray.

Hor. These are but wild and whirling words, my
lord.

Ham. I am sorry they offend you, heartily; yes,
'Faith, heartily.

Hor. There's no offence, my lord.

Ham. Yes, by Saint Patrick, but there is, Hora-
tio,

And much offence too. Touching this vision here,
It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you;

For your desire to know what is between us,
O'er-master it as you may. And now, good friends,
As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers,
Give me one poor request.

Hor. What is't, my lord?

We will.

Ham. Never make known what you have seen
to-night.

Hor. Mar. My lord, we will not.

Ham. Nay, but swear't.

Hor. In faith,

My lord, not I.

Mar. Nor I, my lord, in faith.

Ham. Upon my sword.

Mar. We have sworn, my lord, already.

Ham. Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

Ham. Ha, ha, boy! say'st thou so? art thou
there, true-penny?

Come on, — you hear this fellow in the cellarage, —
Consent to swear.

Hor. Propose the oath, my lord.

Ham. Never to speak of this that you have seen,
Swear by my sword.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

Ham. *Hic & ubique?*¹ then we'll shift our
ground: —

Come hither, gentlemen,
And lay your hands again upon my sword:
Swear by my sword:

Never to speak of this that you have heard.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear by his sword.

Ham. Well said, old mole! canst work i'the
earth so fast?

A worthy pioneer! — Once more remove, good
friends.

¹ Here and every where.

Hor. O day and night, but this is wondrous strange!

Ham. And therefore as a stranger give it welcome. There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

But come ; —

Here, as before, never, so help you mercy !

How strange or odd soe'er I bear myself,

As I, perchance, hereafter shall think meet

To put an antick disposition on, —

That you, at such times seeing me, never shall,

With arms encumber'd thus, or this head-shake,

Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,

As, *Well, well, we know* ; — or, *We could, an if we*

would ; — or, *If we list to speak* ; — or, *There be, an*

if they might ;

Or such ambiguous giving out, to note

That you know aught of me : — This do you swear,

So grace and mercy at your most need help you !

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

Ham. Rest, rest, perturbed spirit ! So gentlemen,

With all my love I do commend me to you :

And what so poor a man as Hamlet is

May do, to express his love and friending to you,

Heaven willing, shall not lack. Let us go in to-

gether ;

And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.

The time is out of joint ; — O cursed spite !

That ever I was born to set it right !

Nay, come, let's go together.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I. — *A Room in Polonius's House.**Enter* POLONIUS *and* REYNALDO.

Pol. Give him this money, and these notes,
Reynaldo.

Rey. I will, my lord.

Pol. You shall do marvellous wisely, good Reynaldo,

Before you visit him, to make inquiry
Of his behaviour.

Rey. My lord, I did intend it.

Pol. Marry, well said : very well said. Look
you, sir,

Inquire me first what Danskers² are in Paris ;
And how, and who, what means, and where they
keep,

What company, at what expence ; and finding,
By this encompassment and drift of question,
That they do know my son, come you more nearer
Than your particular demands will touch it :

Take you, as 'twere, some distant knowledge of him ;
As thus, — *I know his father, and his friends,*
And, in part, him ; — Do you mark this, Reynaldo ?

Rey. Ay, very well, my lord.

Pol. *And, in part, him ;* — *but,* you may say, *not*
well :

But, if't be he I mean, he's very wild ;

Addicted so and so ; — and there put on him

What forgeries you please ; marry, none so rank

As may dishonour him ; take heed of that ;

But, sir, such wanton, wild, and usual slips,

² Danes.

As are companions noted and most known
To youth and liberty.

Rey. As gaming, my lord.

Pol. Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing, quarrelling.

Rey. My lord, that would dishonour him.

Pol. 'Faith, no; as you may season it in the charge.

You must not put another scandal on him,
That he is open to incontinency;
That's not my meaning: but breathe his faults so quaintly,

That they may seem the taints of liberty:
The flash and out-break of a fiery mind;
A savageness in unreclaimed blood,
Of general assault.

Rey. But, my good lord, —

Pol. Wherefore should you do this?

Rey. Ay, my lord,

I would know that.

Pol. Marry, sir, here's my drift;
And, I believe, it is a fetch of warrant:
You laying these slight sullies on my son,
As 'twere a thing a little soil'd i'the working,
Mark you,
Your party in converse, him you would sound,
Having ever seen in the prenominate³ crimes,
The youth you breathe of, guilty, be assur'd,
He closes with you in this consequence;
Good sir, or so; or, *friend*, or *gentleman*, —
According to the phrase, or the addition,
Of man, and country.

Rey. Very good, my lord.

Pol. And then, sir, does he this, — He does —
What was I about to say? — By the mass, I was
about to say something: — Where did I leave?

³ Already named.

Rey. At, closes in the consequence.

Pol. At, closes in the consequence, — *Ay, marry;*
He closes with you thus: — *I know the gentleman;*
I saw him yesterday, or t'other day,
Or then, or then; with such, or such; and, as you
say,

There was he gaming; there o'ertook in his rouse;
There falling out at tennis: or so forth. —

See you now;

Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth:

And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,

With windlaces, and with assays of bias,

By indirections find directions out;

So, by former lecture and advice,

Shall you, my son: You have me, have you not?

Rey. My lord, I have.

Pol. Then, fare you well.

Rey. Good my lord, —

Pol. Observe his inclination in yourself.

Rey. I shall, my lord.

Pol. And let him ply his musick.

Rey. Well, my lord. [*Exit.*]

Enter OPHELIA.

Pol. Farewell! — How now, Ophelia? what's the matter?

Oph. O, my lord, my lord, I have been so affrighted!

Pol. With what, in the name of heaven?

Oph. My lord, as I was sewing in my closet,
Lord Hamlet, — with his doublet all unbrac'd;
No hat upon his head; his stockings foul'd,
Ungarter'd, and down-gyved⁴ to his ankle;
Pale as his shirt; his knees knocking each other;
And with a look so piteous in purport,

⁴ Hanging down like fetters.

As if he had been loosed out of hell,
To speak of horrors, — he comes before me.

Pol. Mad for thy love?

Oph. My lord, I do not know;
But, truly, I do fear it.

Pol. What said he?

Oph. He took me by the wrist, and held me
hard;

Then goes he to the length of all his arm;
And with his other hand thus o'er his brow,
He falls to such perusal of my face,
As he would draw it. Long stay'd he so;
At last, — a little shaking of mine arm,
And thrice his head thus waving up and down, —
He rais'd a sigh so piteous and profound,
As it did seem to shatter all his bulk,
And end his being: That done, he lets me go:
And, with his head over his shoulder turn'd,
He seem'd to find his way without his eyes;
For out of doors he went without their helps,
And, to the last, bended their light on me.

Pol. Come, go with me; I will go seek the king.
This is the very ecstasy of love;
Whose violent property foredoes⁵ itself,
And leads the will to desperate undertakings,
As oft as any passion under heaven,
That does afflict our natures. I am sorry, —
What, have you given him any hard words of late?

Oph. No, my good lord: but, as you did com-
mand,
I did repel his letters, and denied
His access to me.

Pol. That hath made him mad.
I am sorry, that with better heed and judgment,
I had not quoted⁶ him: I fear'd, he did but trifle,

⁵ Destroys.

⁶ Observed.

And meant to wreck thee; but, beshrew my jealousy!

It seems, it is as proper to our age
To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions,
As it is common for the younger sort
To lack discretion. Come, go we to the king;
This must be known; which, being kept close,
might move

More grief to hide, than hate to utter love.

Come.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

A Room in the Castle.

Enter King, Queen, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and Attendants.

King. Welcome, dear Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern!

Moreover that we much did long to see you,
The need, we have to use you, did provoke
Our hasty sending. Something have you heard
Of Hamlet's transformation; so I call it,
Since not the exterior nor the inward man
Resembles that it was: What it should be,
More than his father's death, that thus hath put him
So much from the understanding of himself,
I cannot dream of: I entreat you both,
That, — being of so young days brought up with
him:

And, since, so neighbour'd to his youth and humour, —

That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court
Some little time: so by your companies
To draw him on to pleasures; and to gather,
So much as from occasion you may glean,

Whether aught, to us unknown, afflicts him thus,
That, open'd, lies within our remedy.

Queen. Good gentlemen, he hath much talk'd of
you ;

And, sure I am, two men there are not living,
To whom he more adheres. If it will please you
To show us so much gentry, and good will,
As to expend your time with us awhile,
For the supply and profit of our hope,
Your visitation shall receive such thanks
As fits a king's remembrance.

Ros. Both your majesties
Might, by the sovereign power you have of us,
Put your dread pleasures more into command
Than to entreaty.

Guil. But we both obey ;
And here give up ourselves, in the full bent ;⁷
To lay our service freely at your feet,
To be commanded.

King. Thanks, Rosencrantz, and gentle Guilden-
stern.

Queen. Thanks, Guildenstern, and gentle Rosen-
crantz :

And I beseech you instantly to visit
My too much changed son. — Go, some of you,
And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.

Guil. Heavens make our presence, and our
practices,
Pleasant and helpful to him !

Queen. Ay, amen !

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN,
and some Attendants.]

⁷ Utmost exertion.

Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. The ambassadors from Norway, my good lord,
Are joyfully return'd.

King. Thou still hast been the father of good news.

Pol. Have I, my lord? Assure you, my good liege,
I hold my duty, as I hold my soul,
Both to my God, and to my gracious king :
And I do think, (or else this brain of mine
Hunts not the trail⁸ of policy so sure
As it hath us'd to do,) that I have found
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

King. O, speak of that : that do I long to hear.

Pol. Give first admittance to the ambassadors ;
My news shall be the fruit to that great feast.

King. Thyself do grace to them, and bring them in. [*Exit* POLONIUS.

He tells me, my dear Gertude, he hath found
The head and source of all your son's distemper.

Queen. I doubt it is no other but the main ;
His father's death, and our o'erhasty marriage.

Re-enter POLONIUS, *with* VOLTIMAND *and* CORNELIUS.

King. Well, we shall sift him. — Welcome, my good friends !

Say, Voltimand, what from our brother Norway ?

Volt. Most fair return of greetings, and desires.
Upon our first, he sent out to suppress
His nephew's levies ; which to him appear'd
To be a preparation 'gainst the Polack ;⁹

⁸ Scent.

⁹ Poland.

But, better look'd into, he truly found
 It was against your highness : Whereat griev'd, —
 That so his sickness, age, and impotence,
 Was falsely borne in hand¹, — sends out arrests
 On Fortinbras ; which he, in brief, obeys ;
 Receives rebuke from Norway ; and, in fine,
 Makes vow before his uncle, never more
 To give the assay of arms against your majesty.
 Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,
 Gives him three thousand crowns in annual fee ;
 And his commission to employ those soldiers,
 So levied as before, against the Polack :
 With an entreaty, herein further shown,

[*Gives a Paper.*]

That it might please you to give quiet pass
 Through your dominions for this enterprize ;
 On such regards of safety, and allowance,
 As therein are set down.

King. It likes us well :
 And, at our more consider'd time, we'll read,
 Answer, and think upon this business.
 Mean time, we thank you for your well-took labour :
 Go to your rest ; at night we'll feast together :
 Most welcome home !

[*Exeunt VOLTIMAND and CORNELIUS.*]

Pol. This business is well ended.
 My liege, and madam, to expostulate²
 What majesty should be, what duty is,
 Why day is day, night, night, and time is time,
 Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time.
 Therefore, — since brevity is the soul of wit,
 And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,
 I will be brief : Your noble son is mad :
 Mad call I it : for, to define true madness,
 What is't, but to be nothing else but mad ?
 But let that go.

¹ Imposed on.

² Discuss.

Queen. More matter with less art.

Pol. Madam, I swear I use no art at all,
That he is mad, 'tis true: 'tis true, 'tis pity;
And pity 'tis 'tis true: a foolish figure;
But farewell it, for I will use no art.
Mad let us grant him then: and now remains,
That we find out the cause of this effect;
Or, rather say, the cause of this defect;
For this effect, defective, comes by cause:
Thus it remains, and the remainder thus.
Perpend.

I have a daughter; have, while she is mine;
Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,
Hath given me this: Now gather and surmise.
— *To the celestial, and my soul's idol, the most
beautified Ophelia,* —

That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase; *beautified* is a
vile phrase; but you shall hear. — Thus:

In her excellent white bosom, these, &c.

Queen. Came this from Hamlet to her?

Pol. Good madam, stay awhile; I will be faith-
ful. —

Doubt thou, the stars are fire; [Reads.

Doubt, that the sun doth move:

Doubt truth to be a liar;

But never doubt, I love.

*O dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers; I
have not art to reckon my groans; but that I love
thee best, O most best, believe it. Adieu.*

*Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst
this machine is to him, Hamlet.*

This, in obedience, hath my daughter shown me:
And more above, hath his solicitings,
As they fell out by time, by means, and place,
All given to mine ear.

King. But how hath she
Receiv'd his love?

Pol. What do you think of me?

King. As of a man faithful and honourable:

Pol. I would fain prove so. But what might you
think,

When I had seen this hot love on the wing,
(As I perceiv'd it, I must tell you that,
Before my daughter told me,) what might you,
Or my dear majesty your queen here, think,
If I had play'd the desk, or table-book;
Or given my heart a working, mute and dumb;
Or look'd upon this love with idle sight;
What might you think? no, I went round³ to work,
And my young mistress thus did I bespeak:
Lord Hamlet is a prince out of thy sphere;
This must not be: and then I precepts gave her,
That she should lock herself from his resort,
Admit no messengers, receive no tokens.
Which done, she took the fruits of my advice;
And he, repulsed, (a short tale to make,)
Fell into a sadness; then into a fast;
Thence to a watch; thence into weakness;
Thence to a lightness; and, by this declension,
Into the madness wherein now he raves,
And all we mourn for.

King. Do you think, 'tis this?

Queen. It may be, very likely.

Pol. Hath there been such a time, (I'd fain know
that,)

That I have positively said, 'Tis so,
When it prov'd otherwise?

King. Not that I know.

Pol. Take this from this, if this be otherwise:

[*Pointing to his Head and Shoulder.*

If circumstances lead me, I will find

³ Roundly, without reserve.

Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed
Within the centre.

King. How may we try it further?

Pol. You know, sometimes he walks four hours
together,
Here in the lobby.

Queen. So he does, indeed.

Pol. At such a time I'll loose my daughter to
him ;
Be you and I behind an arras then ;
Mark the encounter : if he love her not,
And be not from his reason fallen thereon,
Let me be no assistant for a state,
But keep a farm, and carters.

King. We will try it.

Enter HAMLET, reading.

Queen. But, look, where sadly the poor wretch
comes reading.

Pol. Away, I do beseech you, both away ;
I'll board him presently : — O, give me leave. —

[*Exeunt King, Queen, and Attendants.*]

How does my good lord Hamlet?

Ham. Well, god-'a-mercy.

Pol. Do you know me, my lord?

Ham. Excellent well ; you are a fishmonger.

Pol. Not I, my lord.

Ham. Then I would you were so honest a man.

Pol. Honest, my lord?

Ham. Ay, sir ; to be honest, as this world goes,
is to be one man picked out of ten thousand.

Pol. That's very true, my lord.

Ham. For if the sun breed maggots in a dead
dog, being a god, kissing carrion, — Have you a
daughter?

Pol. I have, my lord.

Ham. Let her not walk i'the sun : conception is a blessing ; but not as your daughter may conceive — friend, look to't.

Pol. How say you by that ? [*Aside.*] Still harping on my daughter : — yet he knew me not at first ; he said, I was a fishmonger : He is far gone, far gone : and, truly in my youth I suffered much extremity for love : very near this. I'll speak to him again. — What do you read, my lord ?

Ham. Words, words, words !

Pol. What is the matter, my lord ?

Ham. Between who ?

Pol. I mean, the matter that you read, my lord.

Ham. Slanders, sir : for the satirical rogue says here, that old men have grey beards ; that their faces are wrinkled ; their eyes purging thick amber, and plumb-tree gum ; and that they have a plentiful lack of wit : all of which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down ; for yourself, sir, shall be as old as I am, if, like a crab, you could go backward.

Pol. Though this be madness, yet there's method in it. [*Aside.*] Will you walk out of the air, my lord ?

Ham. Into my grave ?

Pol. Indeed, that is out o'the air. — How pregnant⁴ sometimes his replies are ! a happiness that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be delivered of. I will leave him, and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter. — My honourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you.

Ham. You cannot, sir, take from me any thing that I will more willingly part withal ; except my life, except my life, except my life.

⁴ Ready, apt.

Pol. Fare you well, my lord.

Ham. These tedious old fools!

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Pol. You go to seek the lord Hamlet; there he is.

Ros. God save you, sir! [*To* POLONIUS.

[*Exit* POLONIUS.]

Guil. My honour'd lord! —

Ros. My most dear lord! —

Ham. My excellent good friends! How dost thou, Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz! Good lads, how do ye both?

Ros. As the indifferent children of the earth.

Guil. Happy, in that we are not over happy; On fortune's cap we are not the very button.

Ham. Nor the soles of her shoe?

Ros. Neither, my lord.

Ham. Then you live in the middle of her favours? Well, what news?

Ros. None, my lord: but that the world is grown honest.

Ham. Then is doomsday near: But your news is not true. Let me question more in particular: What have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of fortune, that she sends you to prison hither?

Guil. Prison, my lord!

Ham. Denmark's a prison.

Ros. Then is the world one.

Ham. A goodly one; in which there are many confines, wards, and dungeons; Denmark being one of the worst.

Ros. We think not so, my lord.

Ham. Why, then 'tis none to you; for there is

nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so : to me it is a prison.

Ros. Why then your ambition makes it one ; 'tis too narrow for your mind.

Ham. O heaven ! I could be bounded in a nutshell, and count myself a king of infinite space ; were it not that I have bad dreams.

Guil. Which dreams, indeed, are ambition ; for the very substance of the ambitious is merely the shadow of a dream.

Ham. A dream itself is but a shadow.

Ros. Truly, and I hold ambition of so airy and light a quality, that it is but a shadow's shadow.

Ham. Then are our beggars, bodies ; and our monarchs, and outstretched heroes, the beggars' shadows : Shall we to the court ? for, by my fay, I cannot reason.

Ros. Guil. We'll wait upon you.

Ham. No such matter : I will not sort you with the rest of my servants ; for, to speak to you like an honest man, I am most dreadfully attended. But, in the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinore ?

Ros. To visit you, my lord ; no other occasion.

Ham. Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks ; but I thank you : and sure, dear friends, my thanks are too dear at a halfpenny. Were you not sent for ? Is it your own inclining ? Is it a free visitation ? Come, come ; deal justly with me : come, come ; nay, speak.

Guil. What should we say, my lord ?

Ham. Any thing — but to the purpose. You were sent for ; and there is a kind of confession in your looks, which your modesties have not craft enough to colour : I know the good king and queen have sent for you.

Ros. To what end my lord ?

Ham. That you must teach me. But let me conjure you by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for, or no ?

Ros. What say you ? [To GUILDENSTERN.]

Ham. Nay, then I have an eye of you ; [*Aside.*] — if you love me, hold not off.

Guil. My lord, we were sent for.

Ham. I will tell you why ; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the king and queen moult no feather. I have of late, (but, wherefore, I know not,) lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises : and, indeed, it goes so heavily with my disposition, that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory : this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me, than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is a man ! How noble in reason ! how infinite in faculties ! in form, and moving, how express and admirable ! in action, how like an angel ! in apprehension, how like a god ! the beauty of the world ! the paragon of animals ! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust ? man delights not me, — nor woman either ; though, by your smiling, you seem to say so.

Ros. My lord, there is no such stuff in my thoughts.

Ham. Why did you laugh then, when I said, *Man delights not me ?*

Ros. To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what lenten⁵ entertainment the players shall receive from you: we coted⁶ them on the way: and hither are they coming, to offer you service.

Ham. He that plays the king, shall be welcome; his majesty shall have tribute of me; the adventurous knight shall use his foil, and target: the lover shall not sigh gratis; the humorous man shall end his part in peace: the clown shall make those laugh, whose lungs are tickled o'the sere: and the lady shall say her mind freely, or the blank verse shall halt for't. — What players are they?

Ros. Even those you were wont to take such delight in, the tragedians of the city.

Ham. How chances it, they travel? their residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways.

Ros. I think, their inhibition comes by the means of the late innovation.

Ham. Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city? Are they so followed?

Ros. No, indeed, they are not.

Ham. How comes it? Do they grow rusty?

Ros. Nay, their endeavour keeps in the wonted pace: But there is, sir, an aiery of children, little eyases⁷, that cry out on the top of question⁸, and are most tyrannically clapp'd for't: these are now the fashion; and so berattle the common stages, (so they call them) that many, wearing rapiers, are afraid of goose quills, and dare scarce come thither.

Ham. What, are they children? who maintains them? how are they escoted?⁹ Will they pursue the quality¹ no longer than they can sin? will they not say afterwards, if they should grow them-

⁵ Spare.

⁶ Overtook.

⁷ Young nestlings.

⁸ Dialogue.

⁹ Paid.

¹ Profession.

selves to common players, (as it is most like, if their means are no better,) their writers do them wrong, to make them exclaim against their own succession?

Ros. 'Faith, there has been much to do on both sides; and the nation holds it no sin, to tarre² them on to controversy: there was, for a while, no money bid for argument, unless the poet and the player went to cuffs in the question.

Ham. Is it possible?

Guil. O, there has been much throwing about of brains.

Ham. Do the boys carry it away?

Ros. Ay, that they do, my lord; Hercules and his load too.³

Ham. It is not very strange: for my uncle is king of Denmark, and those, that would make mouths at him while my father lived, give twenty, forty, fifty, an hundred ducats-a-piece, for his picture in little. There is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out.

[*Flourish of Trumpets within.*

Guil. There are the players.

Ham. Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. Your hands. Come then: the appurtenance of welcome is fashion and ceremony: let me comply⁴ with you in this garb; lest my extent to the players, which, I tell you, must show fairly outward, should more appear like entertainment than yours. You are welcome; but my uncle-father, and aunt-mother, are deceived.

Guil. In what, my dear lord?

Ham. I am but mad north-north west: when the wind is southerly, I know a hawk from a hand-saw.

² Provoke.

³ *i. e.* The globe, the sign of Shakspeare's Theatre.

⁴ Compliment.

Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. Well be with you, gentlemen!

Ham. Hark you, Guildenstern; — and you too: — at each ear a hearer: that great baby, you see there, is not yet out of his swaddling-clouts.

Ros. Happily, he's the second time come to them; for they say, an old man is twice a child.

Ham. I will prophesy, he comes to tell me of the players; mark it. — You say right, sir: o'Monday morning; 'twas then, indeed.

Pol. My lord, I have news to tell you.

Ham. My lord, I have news to tell you; When Roscius was an actor in Rome, —

Pol. The actors are come hither, my lord.

Ham. Buz, buz!

Pol. Upon my honour, —

Ham. *Then came each actor on his ass,* —

Pol. The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, [tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral,] scene individable, or poem unlimited: Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light. For the law of writ⁵ and the liberty, these are the only men.

Ham. *O Jephthah, judge of Israel,* — what a treasure hadst thou!

Pol. What a treasure had he, my lord?

Ham. Why — *One fair daughter, and no more,
The which he loved passing well.*

Pol. Still on my daughter. [Aside.

Ham. Am I not i'the right, old Jephthah?

Pol. If you call me Jephthah, my lord, I have a daughter, that I love passing well.

Ham. Nay, that follows not.

Pol. What follows then, my lord?

⁵ Writing.

Ham. Why, *As by lot, God wot*, and then you know, *It came to pass, As most like it was*, — The first row of the pious chanson⁶ will show you more; for look, my abridgment comes.

Enter four or five Players.

You are welcome, masters: welcome, all; — I am glad to see thee well: — welcome, good friends: — O, old friend! Why, thy face is valanced⁷ since I saw thee last; Com'st thou to beard me in Denmark? — What! my young lady and mistress! your ladyship is nearer to heaven, than when I saw you last, by the altitude of a chopine.⁸ Pray heaven, your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not cracked within the ring. — Masters, you are all welcome. We'll e'en to't like French falconers, fly at any thing we see: We'll have a speech straight: Come, give us a taste of your quality; come, a passionate speech.

1 *Play.* What speech, my lord?

Ham. I heard thee speak me a speech once, — but it was never acted; — or, if it was, not above once: for the play, I remember, pleased not the million; 'twas caviare⁹ to the general¹: but it was (as I received it, and others, whose judgments, in such matters, cried in the top² of mine,) an excellent play; well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning. I remember, one said, there were no salads in the lines, to make the matter savoury; nor no matter in the phrase, that might indite³ the author of affection⁴: but called it, an honest method, as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more handsome than fine.

⁶ Christmas carols.

⁷ Fringed.

⁸ Clog.

⁹ An Italian dish made of the roes of fishes. ¹ Multitude.

² Above.

³ Convict.

⁴ Affectation.

One speech in it I chiefly loved: 'twas Æneas' tale to Dido; and thereabout of it especially, where he speaks of Priam's slaughter: If it live in your memory, begin at this line: let me see, let me see; —

The rugged Pyrrhus, like the Hyrcanian beast, — 'tis not so; it begins with Pyrrhus.

*The rugged Pyrrhus, — he, whose sable arms,
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble
When he lay couched in the ominous horse,
Hath now this dread and black complexion smear'd
With heraldry more dismal; head to foot
Now is he total gules⁵; horridly trick'd⁶
With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons;
Bak'd and impasted with the parching streets,
That lend a tyrannous and a fearful light
To their lord's murder: Roasted in wrath, and fire,
And thus o'er-sized with coagulate gore,
With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus
Old grandsire Priam seeks; — So proceed you.*

Pol. My lord, well spoken; with good accent, and good discretion.

*1 Play. Anon he finds him
Striking too short at Greeks; his antique sword,
Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,
Repugnant to command: Unequal match'd,
Pyrrhus at Priam drives; in rage, strikes wide;
But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword
The unnerved father falls. Then senseless Ilium,
Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top
Stoops to his base; and with a hideous crash
Takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear; for, lo! his sword
Which was declining on the milky head
Of reverend Priam, seem'd i' the air to stick:
So, as a painted tyrant, Pyrrhus stood;*

⁵ Red, a term in heraldry.

⁶ Blazoned.

*And, like a neutral to his will and matter,
Did nothing.*

*But, as we often see, against some storm,
A silence in the heavens, the rack⁷ stand still,
The bold winds speechless, and the orb below
As hush as death : anon the dreadful thunder
Doth rend the region : So, after Pyrrhus' pause,
A roused vengeance sets him new a work ;
And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall
On Mars's armour, forg'd for proof eterne⁸
With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword
Now falls on Priam. —*

*Out, out, thou strumpet, Fortune ! All you gods,
In general synod, take away her power ;
Break all the spokes and fellies from her wheel,
And bowl the round nave down the hill of heaven,
As low as to the fiends !*

Pol. This is too long.

Ham. It shall to the barber's with your beard. —
Pr'ythee, say on : — He's for a jig, or he sleeps : —
say on : come to Hecuba.

1 Play. *But who, ah woe ! had seen the mobled⁹
queen —*

Ham. The mobled queen ?

Pol. That's good ; mobled queen is good.

1 Play. *Run barefoot up and down, threat'ning
the flames*

*With bisson¹ rheum ; a clout upon that head,
Where late the diadem stood ; and, for a robe,
About her lank and all o'erteemed loins,
A blanket, in the alarm of fear caught up ;
Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steep'd,
'Gainst fortune's state would treason have pro-
nounc'd :*

*But if the gods themselves did see her then,
When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport*

⁷ Light clouds. ⁸ Eternal. ⁹ Muffled. ¹ Blind.

*In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs ;
The instant burst of clamour that she made,
(Unless things mortal move them not at all,)
Would have made milch² the burning eye of heaven,
And passion in the gods.*

Pol. Look, whether he has not turn'd his colour, and has tears in's eyes. — Pr'ythee, no more.

Ham. 'Tis well : I'll have thee speak out the rest of this soon. — Good my lord, will you see the players well bestowed ? Do you hear, let them be well used ; for they are the abstract, and brief chronicles, of the time : After your death you were better have a bad epitaph, than their ill report while you live.

Pol. My lord, I will use them according to their desert.

Ham. Much better, man : Use every man after his desert, and who shall 'scape whipping ? Use them after your own honour and dignity : The less they deserve, the more merit is your bounty. Take them in.

Pol. Come, sirs.

[*Exit* POLONIUS, with some of the Players.

Ham. Follow him, friends : we'll hear a play to-morrow. — Dost thou hear me, old friend ; can you play the murder of Gonzago ?

1 *Play.* Ay, my lord.

Ham. We'll have it to-morrow night. You could, for a need, study a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines, which I would set down, and insert in't : could you not ?

1 *Play.* Ay, my lord.

Ham. Very well. — Follow that lord ; and look you mock him not. [*Exit* Player.] My good friends, [*To Ros. and GUIL.*] I'll leave you till night : you are welcome to Elsinore.

² Milky.

Ros. Good my lord!

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.]

Ham. Ay, so adieu, and, — Now I am alone.

O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!
Is it not monstrous, that this player here,
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
Could force his soul so to his own conceit,
That from her working, all his visage wann'd;
Tears in his eyes, distraction in's aspect,
A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
With forms to his conceit? And all for nothing!
For Hecuba!

What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,
That he should weep for her? What would he do,
Had he the motive and the cue for passion,
That I have? He would drown the stage with tears,
And cleave the general ear with horrid speech;
Make mad the guilty, and appal the free,
Confound the ignorant; and amaze, indeed,
The very faculties of eyes and ears.

Yet I,

A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,
Like John a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,
And can say nothing; no, not for a king,
Upon whose property, and most dear life,
A vile defeat³ was made. Am I a coward?
Who calls me villain? breaks my pate across?
Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face?
Tweaks me by the nose? gives me the lie i'the
throat,

As deep as to the lungs? Who does me this?

Ha!

Why, I should take it: for it cannot be,
But I am pigeon-liver'd, and lack gall
To make oppression bitter; or, ere this,
I should have fatted all the region kites

³ Destruction.

With this slave's offal : Bloody, murd'rous villain !
 Remorseless, treacherous, unnatural villain !
 Why, what an ass am I ? This is most brave ;
 That I, the son of a dear father murder'd,
 Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,
 Must, like a drab, unpack my heart with words,
 And fall a cursing !

Fye upon't ! foh ! About my brains ! Humph ! I
 have heard,

That guilty creatures, sitting at a play,
 Have by the very cunning of the scene
 Been struck so to the soul, that presently
 They have proclaim'd their malefactions ;
 For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak
 With most miraculous organ. I'll have these
 players

Play something like the murder of my father,
 Before mine uncle : I'll observe his looks ;
 I'll tent him ⁴ to the quick ; if he do blench, ⁵
 I know my course. The spirit, that I have seen,
 May be a devil : and the devil hath power
 To assume a pleasing shape ; yea, and, perhaps,
 Out of my weakness, and my melancholy,
 (As he is very potent with such spirits,)
 Abuses me to damn me : I'll have grounds
 More relative than this : The play's the thing,
 Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king.

[*Exit.*

⁴ Search his wounds.

⁵ Shrink or start.

ACT III.

SCENE I. — *A Room in the Castle.*

*Enter King, Queen, POLONIUS, OPHELIA,
ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.*

King. And can you, by no drift of conference
Get from him, why he puts on this confusion ;
Grating so harshly all his days of quiet
With turbulent and dangerous lunacy ?

Ros. He does confess, he feels himself distracted ;
But from what cause he will by no means speak.

Guil. Nor do we find him forward to be sounded ;
But with a crafty madness, keeps aloof,
When we would bring him on to some confession
Of his true state.

Queen. Did he receive you well ?

Ros. Most like a gentleman.

Guil. But with much forcing of his disposition.

Ros. Niggard of question ; but, of our demands,
Most free in his reply.

Queen. Did you assay him
To any pastime ?

Ros. Madam, it so fell out, that certain players
We o'er-raught⁶ on the way : of these we told him ;
And there did seem in him a kind of joy
To hear of it : They are about the court ;
And, as I think, they have already order
This night to play before him.

Pol. 'Tis most true :
And he beseech'd me to entreat your majesties,
To hear and see the matter.

⁶ Overtook.

King. With all my heart ; and it doth much content me
To hear him so inclin'd.
Good gentlemen, give him a further edge,
And drive his purpose on to these delights.

Ros. We shall, my lord.

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.]

King. Sweet Gertrude, leave us too :
For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither ;
That he, as 'twere by accident, may here
Affront⁷ Ophelia :
Her father, and myself (lawful espials⁸)
Will so bestow ourselves, that, seeing, unseen,
We may of their encounter frankly judge ;
And gather by him, as he is behav'd,
If't be the affliction of his love, or no,
That thus he suffers for.

Queen. I shall obey you :
And, for your part, Ophelia, I do wish,
That your good beauties be the happy cause
Of Hamlet's wildness : so shall I hope, your virtues
Will bring him to his wonted way again,
To both your honours.

Oph. Madam, I wish it may.

[*Exit* Queen.]

Pol. Ophelia, walk you here : — Gracious, so
please you,
We will bestow ourselves : — Read on this book ;
[*To* OPHELIA.]
That show of such an exercise may colour
Your loneliness. — We are oft to blame in this, —
'Tis too much prov'd⁹, — that, with devotion's
visage,
And pious action, we do sugar o'er
The devil himself.

King. O, 'tis too true ! how smart

⁷ Meet.

⁸ Spies.

⁹ Too frequent.

A lash that speech doth give my conscience!
 The harlot's cheek, beautied with plastering art,
 Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it,
 Than is my deed to my most painted word:

O heavy burden! [*Aside.*

Pol. I hear him coming; let's withdraw, my lord.

[*Exeunt King and POLONIUS.*

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. To be, or not to be, that is the question:—
 Whether 'tis nobler in the mind, to suffer
 The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune;
 Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
 And, by opposing, end them?—To die,—to
 sleep,—

No more;—and, by a sleep, to say we end
 The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks
 That flesh is heir to,—'tis a consummation
 Devoutly to be wish'd. To die;—to sleep:—
 To sleep! perchance to dream;—ay, there's the
 rub;

For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
 When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,¹
 Must give us pause: There's the respect,²
 That makes calamity of so long life:

For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
 The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's con-
 tumely,³

The pangs of despis'd love, the law's delay,
 The insolence of office, and the spurns
 That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
 When he himself might his quietus⁴ make
 With a bare bodkin?⁵ Who would fardels⁶ bear,

¹ Stir, bustle. ² Consideration. ³ Rudeness.

⁴ Quiet. ⁵ The ancient term for a small dagger.

⁶ Pack, burden.

To grunt and sweat under a weary life!
 But that the dread of something after death, —
 The undiscover'd country, from whose bourn⁷
 No traveller returns, — puzzles the will;
 And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
 Than fly to others that we know not of?
 Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;
 And thus the native hue of resolution
 Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought;
 And enterprizes of great pith and moment,
 With this regard, their currents turn awry,
 And lose the name of action. — Soft you, now!
 The fair Ophelia: — Nymph, in thy orisons⁸
 Be all my sins remember'd.

Oph. Good my lord,
 How does your honour for this many a day?

Ham. I humbly thank you; well.

Oph. My lord, I have remembrances of yours,
 That I have longed long to re-deliver;
 I pray you, now receive them.

Ham. No, not I;
 I never gave you aught.

Oph. My honour'd lord, you know right well,
 you did;
 And, with them, words of so sweet breath compos'd
 As made the things more rich: their perfume lost,
 Take these again; for to the noble mind,
 Rich gifts wax poor, when givers prove unkind.
 There, my lord.

Ham. Ha, ha! are you honest?

Oph. My lord?

Ham. Are you fair?

Oph. What means your lordship?

Ham. That if you be honest and fair, you should
 admit no discourse to your beauty.

⁷ Boundary, limits.

⁸ Prayers.

Oph. Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce than with honesty?

Ham. Ay, truly; for the power of beauty will sooner debase honesty from what it is, than the force of honesty can translate beauty into his likeness; this was some time a paradox, but now the time gives it proof. I did love you once.

Oph. Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

Ham. You should not have believed me: for virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock, but we shall relish of it: I lov'd you not.

Oph. I was the more deceived.

Ham. Get thee to a nunnery; Why wouldst thou be a breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent honest; but yet I could accuse me of such things, that it were better my mother had not borne me: I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious; with more offences at my beck, than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in: What should such fellows as I do crawling between earth and heaven! We are arrant knaves, all; believe none of us: Go thy ways to a nunnery. Where's your father?

Oph. At home, my lord.

Ham. Let the doors be shut upon him; that he may play the fool no where but in's own house. Farewell.

Oph. O, help him, you sweet heavens!

Ham. If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague for thy dowry; Be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery; farewell: Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool; for wise men know well enough, what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go; and quickly too. Farewell.

Oph. Heavenly powers, restore him!

Ham. I have heard of your paintings too, well enough ; Nature hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another : you jig, you amble, and you lisp, and nick-name God's creatures, and make your wantonness your ignorance : Go to ; I'll no more of't ; it hath made me mad. I say, we will have no more marriages : those that are married already, all but one, shall live ; the rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go. [*Exit HAMLET.*]

Oph. O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown !
The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue,
sword :

The expectancy and rose of the fair state,
The glass of fashion, and the mould of form,
The observ'd of all observers ! quite, quite down !
And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,
That suck'd the honey of his musick vows,
Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,
Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh ;
That unmatch'd form and feature of blown youth,
Blasted with ecstasy⁹ : O, woe is me !
To have seen what I have seen, see what I see !

Re-enter King and POLONIUS.

King. Love ! his affections do not that way tend ;
Nor what he spake, though it lack'd form a little,
Was not like madness. There's something in his
soul,

O'er which his melancholy sits on brood ;
And, I do doubt, the hatch, and the disclose,
Will be some danger : Which for to prevent,
I have, in quick determination,
Thus set it down ; He shall with speed to England,
For the demand of our neglected tribute :
Haply, the seas, and countries different,

⁹ Alienation of mind.

With variable objects, shall expel
 This something-settled matter in his heart ;
 Whereon his brains still beating, puts him thus
 From fashion of himself. What think you on't ?

Pol. It shall do well : But yet I do believe,
 The origin and commencement of his grief
 Sprung from neglected love. — How now, Ophelia,
 You need not tell us what lord Hamlet said ;
 We heard it all. — My lord, do as you please ;
 But, if you hold it fit, after the play,
 Let his queen mother all alone entreat him
 To show his grief ; let her be round¹ with him ;
 And I'll be plac'd, so please you in the ear,
 Of all their conference : If she find him not,
 To England send him : or confine him, where
 Your wisdom best shall think.

King. It shall be so :
 Madness in great ones must not unwatch'd go.
 [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

A Hall in the same.

Enter HAMLET, and certain Players.

Ham. Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue : but if you mouth it, as many of our players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus ; but use all gently ; for in the very torrent, tempest, and (as I may say) whirlwind of your passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance, that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul, to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear

¹ Reprimand him with freedom.

a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings²; who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb shows, and noise: I would have such a fellow whipt for o'er-doing Termagant; it out-herods Herod³: Pray you, avoid it.

1 *Play*. I warrant your honour.

Ham. Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor: suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special observance, that you o'er-step not the modesty of nature: for any thing so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first, and now, was, and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirrour up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time, his form and pressure.⁴ Now this, overdone, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of which one, must, in your allowance⁵, o'er-weigh a whole theatre of others. O, there be players, that I have seen play, — and heard others praise, and that highly, — not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the accent of Christians, nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted, and bellowed, that I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made men, and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

1 *Play*. I hope, we have reformed that indifferently with us.

Ham. O, reform it altogether. And let those, that play your clowns, speak no more than is set down for them: for there be of them, that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren

² The meaner people then seem to have sat in the pit.

³ Herod's character was always violent.

⁴ Impression, resemblance.

⁵ Approbation.

spectators to laugh too ; though, in the mean time, some necessary question of the play be then to be considered : that's villainous ; and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready. — [*Exeunt* Players.]

Enter POLONIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

How now, my lord ? will the king hear this piece of work ?

Pol. And the queen too, and that presently.

Ham. Bid the players make haste. —

[*Exit* POLONIUS.]

Will you two help to hasten them ?

Both. Ay, my lord.

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.]

Ham. What, ho ; Horatio !

Enter HORATIO.

Hor. Here, sweet lord, at your service.

Ham. Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man
As e'er my conversation cop'd withal.

Hor. O, my dear lord, —

☞ *Ham.* Nay, do not think I flatter :
For what advancement may I hope from thee,
That no revenue hast, but thy good spirits,
To feed, and clothe thee ? Why should the poor be
flatter'd ?

No, let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp ;
And crook the pregnant⁶ hinges of the knee,
Where thrift may follow fawning. Dost thou hear ?
Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice,
And could of men distinguish her election,
She hath seal'd thee for herself : for thou hast been

⁶ Quick, ready.

As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing ;
 A man, that fortune's buffets and rewards
 Hast ta'en with equal thanks : and bless'd are those,
 Whose blood and judgment are so well co-mingled,
 That they are not a pipe for fortune's finger
 To sound what stop she please : Give me that man
 That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
 In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,
 As I do thee. — Something too much of this. —
 There is a play to-night before the king ;
 One scene of it comes near the circumstance,
 Which I have told thee of my father's death.
 I pr'ythee, when thou seest that act afoot,
 Even with the very comment of thy soul
 Observe my uncle : if his occulted⁷ guilt
 Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
 It is a damned ghost that we have seen ;
 And my imaginations are as foul
 As Vulcan's stithy.⁸ Give him heedful note :
 For I mine eyes will rivet to his face :
 And, after, we will both our judgments join
 In censure⁹ of his seeming.

Hor.

Well, my lord :

If he steal aught, the whilst this play is playing,
 And 'scape detecting, I will pay the theft.

Ham. They are coming to the play ; I must be
 idle :

Get you a place.

*Danish March. A Flourish. Enter King, Queen,
 POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDEN-
 STERN, and others.*

King. How fares our cousin Hamlet ?

Ham. Excellent, i'faith ; of the camelion's dish :

⁷ Secret.

⁸ A stithy is a smith's shop.

⁹ Opinion.

I eat the air, promise-crammed : You cannot feed capons so.

King. I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet; these words are not mine.

Ham. No, nor mine now. My lord, — you played once in the university, you say? [*To* POLONIUS.

Pol. That did I, my lord : and was accounted a good actor.

Ham. And what did you enact?

Pol. I did enact Julius Cæsar ; I was kill'd i'the Capitol ; Brutus killed me.

Ham. It was a brute part of him, to kill so capital a calf there. — Be the players ready?

Ros. Ay, my lord ; they stay upon your patience.

Queen. Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me.

Ham. No, good mother, here's metal more attractive.

[*Lying down at* OPHELIA'S Feet.

Pol. O ho ! do you mark that? [*To the King.*

Oph. You are merry, my lord.

Ham. Who, I?

Oph. Ay, my lord.

Ham. O ! your only jig-maker. What should a man do, but be merry? for, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within these two hours.

Oph. Nay, 'tis twice two months, my lord.

Ham. So long? Nay, then let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of sables.¹ O heavens ! die two months ago, and not forgotten yet? Then there's hope, a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year : But he must build churches then : or else shall he suffer not thinking on, with the hobby-horse ; whose epitaph is, *For, O, for, O, the hobby-horse is forgot.*

¹ The richest dress.

Trumpets sound. The dumb Show follows.

Enter a King and a Queen, very lovingly; the Queen embracing him, and he her. She kneels, and makes show of protestation unto him. He takes her up, and declines his head upon her neck; lays him down upon a bank of flowers; she, seeing him asleep, leaves him. Anon comes in a fellow, takes off his crown, kisses it, and pours poison in the King's ears, and exit. The Queen returns; finds the king dead, and makes passionate action. The poisoner, with some two or three Mutes, comes in again, seeming to lament with her. The dead body is carried away. The poisoner wooes the Queen with gifts; she seems loath and unwilling awhile, but, in the end, accepts his love. [Exeunt.

Oph. What means this, my lord?

Ham. Marry, this is miching mallecho²; it means mischief.

Oph. Belike, this show imports the argument of the play.

Enter Prologue.

Ham. We shall know by this fellow: the players cannot keep counsel; they'll tell all.

Oph. Will he tell us what this show meant?

Ham. Ay.

Oph. I'll mark the play.

Pro. For us, and for our tragedy,
Here stooping to your clemency,
We beg your hearing patiently.

Ham. Is this a prologue, or the posy of a ring?

Oph. 'Tis brief, my lord.

Ham. As woman's love.

² Secret wickedness.

Enter a King and a Queen.

P. King. Full thirty times hath Phœbus' cart
gone round
Neptune's salt wash, and Tellus'³ orb'd ground ;
And thirty dozen moons, with borrow'd sheen,⁴
About the world have times twelve thirties been ;
Since love our hearts, and Hymen did our hands,
Unite commutual in most sacred bands.

P. Queen. So many journeys may the sun and
moon
Make us again count o'er, ere love be done !
But, woe is me, you are so sick of late,
So far from cheer, and from your former state,
That I distrust you. Yet, though I distrust,
Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must :
For women fear too much, even as they love ;
And women's fear and love hold quantity ;
In neither aught, or in extremity.
Now, what my love is, proof hath made you know ;
And as my love is siz'd⁵, my fear is so,
Where love is great, the littlest doubts are fear ;
Where little fears grow great, great love grows
there.

P. King. 'Faith, I must leave thee, love, and
shortly too ;
My operant⁶ powers their functions leave to do :
And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,
Honour'd, belov'd ; and, haply one as kind
For husband shalt thou —

P. Queen. O, confound the rest !
Such love must needs be treason in my breast :
In second husband let me be accurst !
None wed the second, but who kill'd the first.

Ham. That's wormwood.

³ The earth.

⁴ Shining, lustre.

⁵ In proportion to the extent of my love.

⁶ Active.

P. Queen. The instances⁷, that second marriage
move,
Are base respects of thrift, but none of love ;
A second time I kill my husband dead,
When second husband wins me to his bed.

P. King. I do believe, you think what now you
speak ;
But, what we do determine, oft we break.
Purpose is but the slave to memory :
Of violent birth, but poor validity :
Which now like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree :
But fall, unshaken, when they mellow be.
Most necessary 'tis, that we forget
To pay ourselves what to ourselves is debt :
What to ourselves in passion we propose,
The passion ending, doth the purpose lose.
The violence of either grief or joy
Their own enactures⁸ with themselves destroy :
Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament ;
Grief joys, joy grieves, on slender accident.
This world is not for aye ; nor 'tis not strange,
That even our loves should with our fortunes change ;
For 'tis a question left us yet to prove,
Whether love lead fortune, or else fortune love.
The great man down, you mark his favourite flies ;
The poor-advanc'd makes friends of enemies.
And hitherto doth love on fortune tend :
For who not needs, shall never lack a friend ;
And who in want a hollow friend doth try,
Directly seasons him his enemy.
But, orderly to end where I begun, —
Our wills, and fates, do so contráry run
That our devices still are overthrown ;
Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own :
So think thou wilt no second husband wed ;
But die thy thoughts, when thy first lord is dead.

⁷ Motives.⁸ Determinations.

P. Queen. Nor earth to give me food, nor heaven
light!
Sport and repose lock from me, day and night!
To desperation turn my trust and hope!
An anchor's⁹ cheer in prison be my scope!
Each opposite, that blanks the face of joy,
Meet what I would have well, and it destroy!
Both here, and hence, pursue me, lasting strife,
If, once a widow, ever I be wife!

Ham. If she should break it now, —

[*To OPHELIA.*

P. King. 'Tis deeply sworn. Sweet, leave me
here a while;
My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile
The tedious day with sleep. [*Sleeps.*

P. Queen. Sleep rock thy brain;
And never come mischance between us twain!

[*Exit.*

Ham. Madam, how like you this play?

Queen. The lady doth protest too much, methinks.

Ham. O, but she'll keep her word.

King. Have you heard the argument? Is there
no offence in't?

Ham. No, no, they do but jest, poison in jest;
no offence i'the world.

King. What do you call the play?

Ham. The mouse-trap. Marry, how? Tropi-
cally. This play is the image of a murder done in
Vienna: Gonzago is the duke's name; his wife,
Baptista: you shall see anon; 'tis a knavish piece
of work: But what of that? your majesty, and we
that have free souls, it touches us not: Let the
galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung. —

Enter LUCIANUS.

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

⁹ Anchoret.

Oph. You are as good as a chorus, my lord.

Ham. Begin, murderer; — leave thy horrible faces, and begin. Come; —

— The croaking raven

Doth bellow for revenge.

Luc. Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing;

Confederate season, else no creature seeing;

Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,

With Hecat's ban¹ thrice blasted, thrice infected,

Thy natural magick and dire property,

On wholesome life usurp immediately.

[*Pours the Poison into the Sleeper's Ears.*]

Ham. He poisons him i'the garden for his estate. His name's Gonzago: the story is extant, and written in very choice Italian: You shall see anon, how the murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

Oph. The king rises.

Ham. What! frightened with false fire!

Queen. How fares my lord?

Pol. Give o'er the play.

King. Give me some light: — away!

Pol. Lights, lights, lights!

[*Exeunt all but HAMLET and HORATIO.*]

Ham. Why, let the stricken deer go weep,

The hart ungalled play:

For some must watch, while some must sleep;

Thus runs the world away. —

Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers, (if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me,) with two Provencial roses on my razed² shoes, get me a fellowship in a cry³ of players, sir?

Hor. Half a share.

Ham. A whole one, I.

For thou dost know, O Damon dear,

This realm dismantled was

¹ Curse.

² Slashed.

³ Pack, company.

Of Jove himself; and now reigns here

A very, very — peacock.

Hor. You might have rhymed.

Ham. O good Horatio, I'll take the ghost's word for a thousand pound. Didst perceive?

Hor. Very well, my lord.

Ham. Upon the talk of the poisoning, ——

Hor. I did very well note him.

Ham. Ah, ha! — Come, some musick; come, the recorders.⁴ —

For if the king like not the comedy,

Why then, belike, — he likes it not, perdy.⁵ —

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Come, some musick.

Guil. Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

Ham. Sir, a whole history.

Guil. The king, sir, ——

Ham. Ay, sir, what of him?

Guil. Is, in his retirement, marvellous distempered.

Ham. With drink, sir?

Guil. No, my lord, with choler.

Ham. Your wisdom should show itself more richer, to signify this to the doctor; for, for me to put him to his purgation, would, perhaps, plunge him into more choler.

Guil. Good my lord, put your discourse into some frame, and start not so wildly from my affair.

Ham. I am tame, sir: — pronounce.

Guil. The queen, your mother, in most great affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you.

Ham. You are welcome.

Guil. Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of

⁴ A kind of flute.

⁵ *Par Dieu.*

the right breed. If it shall please you to make me a wholesome answer, I will do your mother's commandment: if not, your pardon, and my return, shall be the end of my business.

Ham. Sir, I cannot.

Guil. What, my lord?

Ham. Make you a wholesome answer; my wit's diseased: But, sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command: or, rather, as you say, my mother: therefore no more, but to the matter: My mother, you say, ——

Ros. Then thus she says; Your behaviour hath struck her into amazement and admiration.

Ham. O wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother! — But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration? impart.

Ros. She desires to speak with you in her closet, ere you go to bed.

Ham. We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any further trade with us?

Ros. My lord, you once did love me.

Ham. And do still, by these pickers and stealers.

Ros. Good my lord, what is your cause of distemper? you do, surely, but bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

Ham. Sir, I lack advancement.

Ros. How can that be, when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark?

Ham. Ay, sir, but *While the grass grows*, — the proverb is something musty.

Enter the Players, with Recorders.

O, the recorders: — let me see one. — To with-

draw with you : — Why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil ?

Guil. O, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

Ham. I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe ?

Guil. My lord, I cannot.

Ham. I pray you.

Guil. Believe me, I cannot.

Ham. I do beseech you.

Guil. I know no touch of it, my lord.

Ham. 'Tis as easy as lying : govern these ventages⁶, with your fingers and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent musick. Look you, these are the stops.

Guil. But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony ; I have not the skill.

Ham. Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me ? You would play upon me ; you would seem to know my stops ; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery ; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass : and there is much musick, excellent voice, in this little organ ; yet cannot you make it speak. Do you think, I am easier to be played on than a pipe ? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, you cannot play upon me.

Enter POLONIUS.

Bless you, sir !

Pol. My lord, the queen would speak with you, and presently.

Ham. Do you see yonder cloud, that's almost in shape of a camel ?

⁶ Holes.

Pol. By the mass, and 'tis like a camel, indeed.

Ham. Methinks, it is like a weasel.

Pol. It is backed like a weasel.

Ham. Or, like a whale?

Pol. Very like a whale.

Ham. Then will I come to my mother by and by. — They fool me to the top of my bent.⁷ — I will come by and by.

Pol. I will say so. [*Exit* POLONIUS.]

Ham. By and by is easily said. — Leave me, friends. [*Exeunt* ROS. GUIL. HOR. &c.]
'Tis now the very witching time of night;
When churchyards yawn, and hell itself breathes
out

Contagion to this world: Now could I drink hot
blood,

And do such bitter business as the day
Would quake to look on. Soft; now to my mo-
ther. —

O, heart, lose not thy nature; let not ever

The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom:

Let me be cruel, not unnatural:

I will speak daggers to her, but use none;

My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites:

How in my words soever she be shent,⁸

To give them seals⁹ never, my soul, consent!

[*Exit.*]

SCENE III.

A Room in the same.

Enter King, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

King. I like him not; nor stands it safe with us,

⁷ Utmost stretch.

⁸ Reproved.

⁹ Authority to put them in execution.

To let his madness range. Therefore, prepare
you ;

I your commission will forthwith despatch,
And he to England shall along with you :
The terms of our estate may not endure
Hazard so near us, as doth hourly grow
Out of his lunes.¹

Guil. We will ourselves provide :
Most holy and religious fear it is,
To keep those many many bodies safe,
That live, and feed, upon your majesty.

Ros. The single and peculiar life is bound,
With all the strength and armour of the mind,
To keep itself from 'noyance ; but much more
That spirit, upon whose weal depend and rest
The lives of many. The cease of majesty
Dies not alone ; but, like a gulf, doth draw
What's near it, with it : it is a massy wheel,
Fix'd on the summit of the highest mount,
To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things
Are mortis'd and adjoin'd ; which, when it falls,
Each small annexment, petty consequence,
Attends the boist'rous ruin. Never alone
Did the king sigh, but with a general groan.

King. Arm you, I pray you, to this speedy
voyage ;
For we will fetters put upon this fear,
Which now goes too free-footed.

Ros. Guil. We will haste us.
[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.]

Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. My lord, he's going to his mother's closet :
Behind the arras I'll convey myself,
To hear the process ; I'll warrant, she'll tax him
home :

¹ Lunacies.

And, as you said, and wisely was it said,
 'Tis meet that some more audience, than a mother,
 Since nature makes them partial, should o'erhear
 The speech, of vantage. Fare you well, my liege ;
 I'll call upon you ere you go to bed,
 And tell you what I know.

King.

Thanks, dear my lord.

[*Exit* POLONIUS.]

O, my offence is rank, it smells to heaven ;
 It hath the primal eldest curse upon't,
 A brother's murder ! — Pray can I not,
 Though inclination be as sharp as will ;
 My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent ;
 And, like a man to double-business bound,
 I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
 And both neglect. What if this cursed hand
 Were thicker than itself with brother's blood ?
 Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens,
 To wash it white as snow ? Whereto serves mercy,
 But to confront the visage of offence ?
 And what's in prayer, but this two-fold force, —
 To be forestalled, ere we come to fall,
 Or pardon'd, being down ? Then I'll look up ;
 My fault is past. But, O, what form of prayer
 Can serve my turn ? Forgive me my foul murder ! —
 That cannot be ; since I am still possess'd
 Of those effects for which I did the murder,
 My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.
 May one be pardon'd, and retain the offence ?
 In the corrupted currents of this world,
 Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice ;
 And oft 'tis seen, the wicked prize itself
 Buys out the law : But 'tis not so above :
 There is no shuffling, there the action lies
 In his true nature ; and we ourselves compell'd,
 Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,

To give in evidence. What then? what rests?
Try what repentance can: What can it not?
Yet what can it, when one cannot repent?
O wretched state! O bosom, black as death!
O limed² soul; that struggling to be free,
Art more engag'd! Help, angels, make assay!
Bow, stubborn knees! and, heart, with strings of
steel;
Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe;
All may be well! [*Retires and kneels.*]

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. Now might I do it, pat, now he is praying;
And now I'll do't; and so he goes to heaven:
And so am I reveng'd? That would be scann'd:³
A villain kills my father; and, for that,
I, his sole son, do this same villain send
To heaven.
Why, this is hire and salary, not revenge.
He took my father grossly, full of bread;
With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May;
And, how his audit stands, who knows, save Heaven?
But in our circumstance and course of thought,
'Tis heavy with him: And am I then reveng'd,
To take him in the purging of his soul,
When he is fit and season'd for his passage?
No.
Up, sword; and know thou a more horrid hent:⁴
When he is drunk, asleep; or in his rage;
At gaming, swearing; — or about some act
That has no relish of salvation in't. —
My mother stays:
This physick but prolongs thy sickly days. [*Exit.*]

² Caught as with bird-lime.

³ Should be considered.

⁴ Hold, *i. e.* purpose.

The King rises and advances.

King. My words fly up, my thoughts remain
below :

Words, without thoughts, never to heaven go.

[*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

Another Room in the same.

Enter Queen and POLONIUS.

Pol. He will come straight. Look, you lay home
to him :

Tell him, his pranks have been too broad to bear
with ;

And that your grace hath screen'd and stood
between

Much heat and him. I'll silence me e'en here.

Pray you, be round with him.

Queen.

I'll warrant you ;

Fear me not : — withdraw, I hear him coming.

[*POLONIUS hides himself.*

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. Now, mother ; what's the matter ?

Queen. Hamlet, thou hast thy father much of-
fended.

Ham. Mother, you have my father much of-
fended.

Queen. Come, come, you answer with an idle
tongue.

Ham. Go, go, you question with a wicked
tongue.

Queen. Why, how now, Hamlet ?

Ham. What's the matter now?

Queen. Have you forgot me?

Ham. No, by the rood⁵, not so:
You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife;
And, — would it were not so! — you are my mother.

Queen. Nay, then I'll set those to you that can speak.

Ham. Come, come, and sit you down; you shall not budge;

You go not, till I set you up a glass
Where you may see the inmost part of you.

Queen. What wilt thou do? thou wilt not murder me?

Help, help, ho!

Pol. [*Behind.*] What, ho! help!

Ham. How now! a rat?
[*Draws.*]

Dead, for a ducat, dead.

[*HAMLET makes a pass through the Arras.*]

Pol. [*Behind.*] O, I am slain.

[*Falls, and dies.*]

Queen. O me, what hast thou done?

Ham. Nay, I know not:

Is it the king?

[*Lifts up the Arras, and draws forth POLONIUS.*]

Queen. O, what a rash and bloody deed is this!

Ham. A bloody deed; — almost as bad, good mother,

As kill a king, and marry to his brother.

Queen. As kill a king!

Ham. Ay, lady, 'twas my word. —
Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!

[*To POLONIUS.*]

I took thee for thy better: take thy fortune:

Thou find'st, to be too busy, is some danger. —

Leave wringing of your hands: Peace; sit you down,

⁵ Cross.

And let me wring your heart : for so I shall,
 If it be made of penetrable stuff ;
 If horrid custom have not braz'd it so,
 That it be proof and bulwark against sense.

Queen. What have I done, that thou dar'st wag
 thy tongue
 In noise so rude against me ?

Ham. Such an act,
 That blurs the grace and blush of modesty ;
 Calls virtue, hypocrite ; takes off the rose
 From the fair forehead of an innocent love,
 And sets a blister there ; makes marriage vows
 As false as dicers' oaths : O, such a deed
 As from the body of contraction ⁶ plucks
 The very soul ; and sweet religion makes
 A rhapsody of words : Heaven's face doth glow ;
 Yea, this solidity and compound mass,
 With tristful ⁷ visage, as against the doom,
 Is thought-sick at the act.

Queen. Ah me, what act,
 That roars so loud, and thunders in the index ? ⁸

Ham. Look here, upon this picture, and on this ;
 The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.
 See, what a grace was seated on this brow :
 Hyperion's ⁹ curls ; the front of Jove himself ;
 An eye like Mars, to threaten and command ;
 A station ¹ like the herald Mercury,
 New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill ;
 A combination, and a form, indeed,
 Where every god did seem to set his seal,
 To give the world assurance of a man :
 This was your husband. — Look you now, what
 follows :

Here is your husband ; like a mildew'd ear,

⁶ Marriage contract.

⁷ Sorrowful.

⁸ Index of contents prefixed to a book.

⁹ Apollo's.

¹ The act of standing.

Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes?
 Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
 And batten² on this moor? Ha! have you eyes?
 You cannot call it, love: for, at your age,
 The hey-day in the blood is tame, it's humble,
 And waits upon the judgment; And what judgment

Would step from this to this? Sense³, sure, you
 have,

Else, could you not have motion: But, sure, that
 sense

Is apoplex'd: for madness would not err;
 Nor sense to ecstasy⁴ was ne'er so thrall'd,
 But it reserv'd some quantity of choice,
 To serve in such a difference. What devil was't,
 That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind?⁵
 Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,
 Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans⁶ all,
 Or but a sickly part of one true sense
 Could not so mope.⁷

O shame! where is thy blush?

Queen. O Hamlet, speak no more:
 Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul;
 And there I see such black and grained spots,
 As will not leave their tinct.⁸

Ham. Nay, but to live
 In an incestuous bed, ——

Queen. O, speak to me no more;
 These words, like daggers, enter in mine ears:
 No more, sweet Hamlet.

Ham. A murder, and a villain:
 A slave, that is not twentieth part the tythe
 Of your precedent lord: — a vice⁹ of kings:
 A cutpurse of the empire and the rule;

² Grow fat.

⁵ Blindman's buff.

⁸ Colour.

³ Sensation.

⁶ Without.

⁹ Mimick.

⁴ Frenzy.

⁷ Be so stupid.

That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,
And put it in his pocket!

Queen.

No more.

Enter Ghost.

Ham.

A king

Of shreds and patches : —

Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,
You heavenly guards! — What would your gracious
figure?

Queen. Alas, he's mad.

Ham. Do you not come your tardy son to chide,
That, laps'd in time and passion, lets go by
The important acting of your dread command;
O, say!

Ghost. Do not forget: This visitation
Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.
But, look! amazement on thy mother sits:
O, step between her and her fighting soul;
Conceit¹ in weakest bodies strongest works;
Speak to her, Hamlet.

Ham.

How is it with you, lady?

Queen. Alas, how is't with you?

That you do bend your eye on vacancy,
And with the incorporal air do hold discourse?
Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep;
And, as the sleeping soldiers in the alarm,
Your bedded hair starts up. O gentle son,
Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper
Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?

Ham. On him! on him! — Look you, how pale
he glares!

His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones,
Would make them capable.² — Do not look upon
me;

¹ Imagination.

² Intelligent.

Lest with this piteous action, you convert
My stern effects³: then what I have to do
Will want true colour; tears, perchance, for
blood.

Queen. To whom do you speak this?

Ham. Do you see nothing there?

Queen. Nothing at all; yet all, that is, I see.

Ham. Nor did you nothing hear?

Queen. No nothing, but ourselves.

Ham. Why, look you there! look, how it steals
away!

My father, in his habit as he liv'd!

Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal!

[*Exit Ghost.*]

Queen. This is the very coinage of your brain:
This bodiless creation ecstasy⁴
Is very cunning in.

Ham. Ecstasy!

My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,
And makes as healthful musick: It is not mad-
ness,

That I have utter'd: bring me to the test,
And I the matter will re-word; which madness
Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace,
Lay not that flattering unction to your soul,
That not your trespass but my madness speaks:
It will but skin and film the ulcerous place;
Whiles rank corruption, mining all within,
Infects unseen. Confess yourself to heaven;
Repent what's past; avoid what is to come;
And do not spread the compost⁵ on the weeds,
To make them ranker. Forgive me this my vir-
tue:

For in the fatness of these pury times,
Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg:
Yea, curb⁶ and woo, for leave to do him good.

³ Actions.

⁴ Frenzy.

⁵ Manure.

⁶ Bend.

Queen. O Hamlet! thou hast cleft my heart in twain.

Ham. O, throw away the worser part of it,
And live the purer with the other half.
Good night: but go not to my uncle's bed;
Assume a virtue, if you have it not.
That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat
Of habit's devil, is angel yet in this;
That to the use of actions fair and good
He likewise gives a frock, or livery,
That aptly is put on: Refrain to-night;
And that shall lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence: the next more easy:
For use almost can change the stamp of nature,
And either curb the devil, or throw him out
With wondrous potency. Once more, good night!
And when you are desirous to be bless'd,
I'll blessing beg of you. — For this same lord,
[*Pointing to POLONIUS.*
I do repent: But heaven hath pleas'd it so, —
To punish me with this, and this with me,
That I must be their scourge and minister.
I will bestow him, and will answer well
The death I gave him. So, again, good night! —
I must be cruel, only to be kind:
Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind. —
But one word more, good lady.

Queen. What shall I do?

Ham. Not this, by no means, that I bid you do:
Let the bloat king tempt you again to bed;
And let him for a pair of wanton kisses,
Make you to ravel all this matter out,
That I essentially am not in madness,
But mad in craft. 'Twere good, you let him
know:
For who, that's but a queen, fair, sober, wise,

Would from a paddock⁷, from a bat, a gib,⁸
 Such dear concernings hide? who would do so?
 No, in despite of sense, and secrecy,
 Unpeg the basket on the house's top,
 Let the birds fly; and, like the famous ape,
 To try conclusions⁹, in the basket creep,
 And break your own neck down.

Queen. Be thou assur'd, if words be made of
 breath,
 And breath of life, I have no life to breathe
 What thou hast said to me.

Ham. I must to England; you know that?

Queen. Alack,
 I had forgot; 'tis so concluded on.

Ham. There's letters seal'd: and my two school-
 fellows, —

Whom I will trust, as I will adders fang'd,¹ —
 They bear the mandate; they must sweep my way,
 And marshal me to knavery: Let it work;
 For 'tis the sport to have the engineer
 Hoist with his own petar²: and it shall go hard;
 But I will delve one yard below their mines,
 And blow them at the moon: O, 'tis most sweet,
 When in one line two crafts directly meet. —
 This man shall set me packing.
 I'll lug the body to the neighbour room: —
 Mother, good night. — Indeed, this counsellor
 Is now most still, most secret, and most grave,
 Who was in life a foolish prating knave.
 Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you: —
 Mother, good night.

[*Exeunt severally; HAMLET dragging in*
 POLONIUS.]

⁷ Toad.

⁸ Cat.

⁹ Experiments.

¹ Having their teeth.

² Blown up with his own bomb.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. — *A Room in the Castle.**Enter King, Queen, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.*

King. There's matter in these sighs ; these profound heaves ;
You must translate : 'tis fit we understand them :
Where is your son ?

Queen. Bestow this place on us a little while. —
[*To ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN,*
who go out.

Ah, my good lord, what have I seen to-night !

King. What, Gertrude ? How does Hamlet ?

Queen. Mad as the sea, and wind, when both contend

Which is the mightier : In his lawless fit,
Behind the arras hearing something stir,
Whips out his rapier, cries, *A rat ! a rat !*
And, in this brainish apprehension, kills
The unseen good old man.

King. O heavy deed !
It had been so with us, had we been there :
His liberty is full of threats to all ;
To you yourself, to us, to every one.
Alas ! how shall this bloody deed be answer'd ?
It will be laid to us, whose providence
Should have kept short, restrain'd, and out of
haunt,³

This mad young man : but, so much was our love,
We would not understand what was most fit ;
But, like the owner of a foul disease,

³ Company.

To keep it from divulging, let it feed
Even on the pith of life. Where is he gone?

Queen. To draw apart the body he hath kill'd ;
O'er whom his very madness, like some ore,
Among a mineral ⁴ of metals base,
Shows itself pure ; he weeps for what is done.

King. O, Gertrude, come away !
The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch,
But we will ship him hence : and this vile deed
We must, with all our majesty and skill,
Both countenance and excuse. — Ho ! Guilden-
stern !

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Friends both, go join you with some further aid :
Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,
And from his mother's closet hath he dragged
him :

Go seek him out : speak fair, and bring the body
Into the chapel. I pray you haste in this.

[*Exeunt* ROS. and GUIL.]

Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends :
And let them know, both what we mean to do,
And what's untimely done : so, haply, slander, —
Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,
As level as the cannon to his blank, ⁵
Transports his poison'd shot, — may miss our name,
And hit the woundless air. — O come away !
My soul is full of discord, and dismay. [*Exeunt.*]

⁴ Mine.

⁵ Mark.

SCENE II.

Another Room in the same.

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. — Safely stowed, — [*Ros. &c. within.*
Hamlet! lord Hamlet!] But soft! — what noise?
who calls on Hamlet? O, here they come.

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Ros. What have you done, my lord, with the
dead body?

Ham. Compounded it with dust, whereto 'tis kin.

Ros. Tell us where 'tis; that we may take it
thence,

And bear it to the chapel.

Ham. Do not believe it.

Ros. Believe what?

Ham. That I can keep your counsel, and not
mine own. Besides, to be demanded of a sponge! —
what replication should be made by the son of a
king?

Ros. Take you me for a sponge, my lord?

Ham. Ay, sir; that soaks up the king's counte-
nance, his rewards, his authorities. But such officers
do the king best service in the end: He keeps them,
like an ape, in the corner of his jaw; first mouthed,
to be last swallowed: When he needs what you have
gleaned, it is but squeezing you, and, sponge, you
shall be dry again.

Ros. I understand you not, my lord.

Ham. I am glad of it: A knavish speech sleeps
in a foolish ear.

Ros. My lord, you must tell us where the body
is, and go with us to the king.

Ham. The body is with the king, but the king is not with the body. The king is a thing —

Guil. A thing, my lord?

Ham. Of nothing: bring me to him. Hide fox,
and all after.⁶ [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

Another Room in the same.

Enter King, attended.

King. I have sent to seek him, and to find the body.

How dangerous is it, that this man goes loose?
Yet must not we put the strong law on him:
He's lov'd of the distracted multitude,
Who like not in their judgment, but their eyes;
And, where 'tis so, the offender's scourge is weigh'd,
But never the offence. To bear all smooth and even,

This sudden sending him away must seem
Deliberate pause: Diseases, desperate grown,
By desperate appliance are reliev'd,

Enter ROSENCRANTZ.

Or not at all. — How now? what hath befallen?

Ros. Where the dead body is bestow'd, my lord,
We cannot get from him.

King. But where is he?

Ros. Without, my lord; guarded, to know your pleasure.

King. Bring him before us.

Ros. Ho, Guildenstern? bring in my lord.

⁶ A sport among children.

Enter HAMLET and GUILDENSTERN.

King. Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius?

Ham. At supper.

King. At supper? Where?

Ham. Not where he eats, but where he is eaten: a certain convocation of politick worms are e'en at him. Your worm is your only emperor for diet: we fat all creatures else, to fat us: and we fat ourselves for maggots: Your fat king, and your lean beggar, is but variable service; two dishes, but to one table; that's the end.

King. Alas, alas!

Ham. A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a king; and eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm.

King. What dost thou mean by this?

Ham. Nothing, but to show you how a king may go a progress through the body of a beggar.

King. Where is Polonius?

Ham. In heaven; send thither to see: if your messenger find him not there, seek him i'the other place yourself. But, indeed, if you find him not within this month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.

King. Go seek him there. [*To some Attendants.*

Ham. He will stay till you come.

[*Exeunt Attendants.*

King. Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety, —

Which we do tender, as we dearly grieve

For that which thou hast done, — must send thee hence

With fiery quickness: Therefore, prepare thyself;
The bark is ready, and the wind at help.

The associates tend, and every thing is bent
For England.

Ham. For England?

King. Ay, Hamlet.

Ham. Good.

King. So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes.

Ham. I see a cherub, that sees them. — But, come, for England! — Farewell, dear mother.

King. Thy loving father, Hamlet.

Ham. My mother: Father and mother is man and wife; man and wife is one flesh; and so, my mother. Come, for England! — [*Exit.*]

King. Follow him at foot: tempt him with speed aboard;

Delay it not, I'll have him hence to-night:

Away; for every thing is seal'd and done

That else leans on the affair: Pray you, make haste.

[*Exeunt Ros. and GUIL.*]

And, England, if my love thou hold'st at aught,
(As my great power thereof may give thee sense;
Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red
After the Danish sword, and thy free awe
Pays homage to us,) thou may'st not coldly set⁷
Our sovereign process; which imports at full,
By letters conjuring to that effect,
The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England;
For like the hectic in my blood he rages,
And thou must cure me: Till I know 'tis done,
Howe'er my haps, my joys will ne'er begin. [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.

A Plain in Denmark.

Enter FORTINBRAS, and Forces, marching.

For. Go, captain, from me greet the Danish king;
Tell him, that, by his licence, Fortinbras

⁷ Value, estimate.

Craves the conveyance of a promis'd march
 Over his kingdom. You know the rendezvous.
 If that his majesty would aught with us,
 We shall express our duty in his eye,⁸
 And let him know so.

Cap. I will do't, my lord.

For. Go softly on.

[*Exeunt FORTINBRAS and Forces.*]

Enter HAMLET, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, &c.

Ham. Good sir, whose powers are these?

Cap. They are of Norway, sir.

Ham. How purpos'd, sir,
 I-pray you?

Cap. Against some part of Poland.

Ham. Who
 Commands them, sir?

Cap. The nephew to old Norway, Fortinbras.

Ham. Goes it against the main of Poland, sir,
 Or for some frontier?

Cap. Truly to speak, sir, and with no addition,
 We go to gain a little patch of ground,
 That hath in it no profit but the name,
 To pay five ducats, five, I would not farm it;
 Nor will it yield to Norway, or the Pole,
 A ranker rate, should it be sold in fee.

Ham. Why, then the Polack never will defend
 it.

Cap. Yes, 'tis already garrison'd.

Ham. Two thousand souls, and twenty thousand
 ducats,

Will not debate the question of this straw:
 This is the imposthume of much wealth and peace;
 That inward breaks, and shows no cause without
 Why the man dies. — I humbly thank you, sir.

⁸ Presence.

Cap. God be wi' you, sir. [*Exit Captain.*]

Ros. Will't please you go, my lord?

Ham. I will be with you straight. Go a little before. [*Exeunt Ros. and GUIL.*]

How all occasions do inform against me,
 And spur my dull revenge! What is a man,
 If his chief good, and market of his time,
 Be but to sleep, and feed? a beast, no more.
 Sure, He, that made us with such large discourse,⁹
 Looking before, and after, gave us not
 That capability and godlike reason
 To fust¹ in us unus'd. Now, whether it be
 Bestial oblivion, or some craven² scruple
 Of thinking too precisely on the event, —
 A thought, which quarter'd, hath but one part
 wisdom,

And, ever, three parts coward, — I do not know
 Why yet I live to say, *This thing's to do* ;
 Sith³ I have cause, and will, and strength, and
 means,

To do't. Examples, gross as earth, exhort me :
 Witness, this army of such mass, and charge,
 Led by a delicate and tender prince :
 Whose spirit, with divine ambition puff'd,
 Makes mouths at the invisible event ;
 Exposing what is mortal, and unsure,
 To all that fortune, death, and danger, dare,
 Even for an egg-shell. Rightly to be great,
 Is not to stir without great argument ;
 But greatly to find quarrel in a straw,
 When honour's at the stake. How stand I then,
 That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd,
 Excitements of my reason, and my blood,
 And let all sleep? while, to my shame, I see
 The imminent death of twenty thousand men,

⁹ Power of comprehension.

² Cowardly.

¹ Grow mouldy.

³ Since.

That, for a fantasy, and trick of fame,
 Go to their graves like beds ; fight for a plot
 Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,
 Which is not tomb enough, and continent,
 To hide the slain ? — O, from this time forth
 My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth !

[*Exit.*

SCENE V.

Elsinore. *A Room in the Castle.*

Enter Queen and HORATIO.

Queen. — I will not speak with her.

Hor. She is importunate ; indeed, distract ;
 Her mood will needs be pitied.

Queen. What would she have ?

Hor. She speaks much of her father ; says, she
 hears,
 There's tricks i'the world ; and hems, and beats her
 heart ;

Spurns enviously at straws : speaks things in doubt,
 That carry but half sense : her speech is nothing,
 Yet the unshaped use of it doth move

The hearers to collection : they aim at it,
 And botch the words up fit to their own thoughts ;
 Which, as her winks, and nods, and gestures yield
 them,

Indeed would make one think, there might be
 thought,

Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily.

Queen. 'Twere good, she were spoken with ; for
 she may strew

Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds :

Let her come in.

[*Exit HORATIO.*

To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,
 Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss :
 So full of artless jealousy is guilt,
 It spills itself in fearing to be spilt.

Re-enter HORATIO, *with* OPHELIA.

Oph. Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark ?

Queen. How now, Ophelia ?

Oph. *How should I your true love know
 From another one ?
 By his cockle hat and staff,
 And his sandle shoon.*⁴ [Singing.]

Queen. Alas, sweet lady, what imports this song ?

Oph. Say you ? nay, pray you, mark.

He is dead and gone, lady, [Sings.]
He is dead and gone :
At his head a grass-green turf,
At his heels a stone.

O, ho !

Queen. Nay, but Ophelia, —

Oph. Pray you, mark.

White his shroud as the mountain snow,
 [Sings.]

Enter King.

Queen. Alas, look here, my lord.

Oph. *Larded all with sweet flowers ;
 Which bewept to the grave did go,
 With true-love showers.*

King. How do you, pretty lady ?

⁴ Shoes.

Oph. Well! they say, the owl was a baker's daughter. We know what we are, but know not what we may be.

King. Conceit upon her father.

Oph. Pray, let us have no words of this; but when they ask you, what it means, say you this:

*Good morrow, 'tis Saint Valentine's day,
All in the morning betime,
And I a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine.*

King. How long hath she been thus?

Oph. I hope, all will be well. We must be patient: but I cannot choose but weep, to think, they should lay him i'the cold ground: My brother shall know of it, and so I thank you for your good counsel. Come, my coach! Good night, ladies; good night, sweet ladies: good night, good night.

[*Exit.*]

King. Follow her close; give her good watch,
I pray you. [Exit HORATIO.]

O, this is the poison of deep grief; it springs
All from her father's death: And now behold,
O Gertrude, Gertrude,

When sorrows come, they come not single spies,
But in battalions! First, her father slain;
Next, your son gone; and he most violent author
Of his own just remove: The people muddied,
Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and
whispers;

For good Polonius' death; and we have done but
greenly,

In hugger-mugger to inter him: Poor Ophelia
Divided from herself, and her fair judgment;
Without the which we are pictures, or mere beasts.
Last, and as much containing as all these,

Her brother is in secret come from France :
 Feeds on his wonder, keeps himself in clouds,
 And wants not buzzers to infect his ear
 With pestilent speeches of his father's death ;
 Wherein necessity, of matter beggar'd,
 Will nothing stick our person to arraign
 In ear and ear. O my dear Gertrude, this,
 Like to a murdering piece, in many places
 Gives me superfluous death ! *[A Noise within.*
Queen. Alack ! what news is this ?

Enter a Gentleman.

King. Attend.

Where are my Switzers ! Let them guard the door :
 What is the matter ?

Gent. Save yourself, my lord ;
 The ocean, overpeering of his list,⁵
 Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste,
 Than young Laertes, in a riotous head,
 O'erbears your officers ! The rabble call him lord ;
 And, as the world were now but to begin,
 Antiquity forgot, custom not known,
 The ratifiers and props of every word,
 They cry, *Choose we ; Laertes shall be king !*
 Caps, hands, and tongues, applaud it to the clouds,
Laertes shall be king, Laertes king !

Queen. How cheerfully on the false trail⁶ they
 cry !
 O, this is counter⁷, you false Danish dogs.

King. The doors are broke. *[Noise within.*

Enter LAERTES, armed ; Danes following.

Laer. Where is this king ?—Sirs, stand you all
 without.

⁵ Bounds.

⁶ Scent.

⁷ Hounds run counter when they trace the scent backwards.

Dan. No, let's come in.

Laer. I pray you give me leave.

Dan. We will, we will.

[*They retire without the door.*]

Laer. I thank you: — keep the door. O thou vile king,

Give me my father.

Queen. Calmly, good Laertes.

Laer. That drop of blood, that's calm, proclaims me bastard.

King. What is the cause, Laertes, That thy rebellion looks so giant-like? — Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person; There's such divinity doth hedge a king, That treason can but peep to what it would, Acts little of his will. — Tell me, Laertes, Why thou art thus incens'd; — Let him go, Gertrude; —

Speak, man.

Laer. Where is my father?

King. Dead.

Queen. But not by him.

King. Let him demand his fill.

Laer. How came he dead? I'll not be juggled with:

To hell, allegiance! To this point I stand, — That both the worlds I give to negligence, Let come what comes; only I'll be reveng'd Most thoroughly for my father.

King. Who shall stay you?

Laer. My will, not all the world's:

And, for my means, I'll husband them so well, They shall go far with little.

King. Good Laertes,

If you desire to know the certainty Of your dear father's death, is't writ in your rev'enge, That, sweepstake, you will draw both friend and foe, Winner and loser?

Laer. None but his enemies.

King. Will you know them then?

Laer. To his good friends thus wide I'll ope my arms ;

And, like the kind life-rend'ring pelican,
Repast them with my blood.

King. Why, now you speak
Like a good child, and a true gentleman.

That I am guiltless of your father's death,
And am most sensibly in grief for it,
It shall as level to your judgment 'pear,
As day does to your eye.

Danes. [*Within.*] Let her come in.

Laer. How now ! what noise is that ?

*Enter OPHELIA, fantastically dressed with Straws
and Flowers.*

O heat, dry up my brains ! tears seven times salt,
Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye ! —
By heaven, thy madness shall be paid with weight,
Till our scale turn the beam. O rose of May !
Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia !
O heavens ! is't possible, a young maid's wits
Should be as mortal as an old man's life ?
Nature is fine^s in love : and, where 'tis fine,
It sends some precious instance of itself
After the thing it loves.

Oph. *They bore him barefac'd on the bier ;
Hey no nonny, nonny hey nonny :
And in his grave rain'd many a tear ; —*

Fare you well, my dove !

Laer. Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade
revenge,
It could not move thus.

^s Artful.

Oph. You must sing, *Down-a-down, an you call him a-down-a.* O, how the wheel⁹ becomes it! It is the false steward, that stole his master's daughter.

Laer. This nothing's more than matter.

Oph. There's rosemary, that's for remembrance; pray you, love, remember: and there is pansies, that's for thoughts.

Laer. A document in madness; thoughts and remembrance fitted.

Oph. There's fennel for you, and columbines: — there's rue for you; and here's some for me: — we may call it, herb of grace o'Sundays: — you may wear your rue with a difference.¹ — There's a daisy: — I would give you some violets; but they withered all, when my father died: — They say, he made a good end, —

For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy, —

[Sings.

Laer. Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself, She turns to favour, and to prettiness.

Oph. *And will he not come again?*

[Sings.

And will he not come again?

No, no, he is dead,

Go to thy death-bed,

He never will come again.

His beard was as white as snow,

All flaxen was his poll:

He is gone, he is gone,

And we cast away moan;

Gramercy on his soul!

And of all Christian souls! Adieu.

[Exit OPHELIA.

⁹ The burthen.

¹ *i. e.* By its Sunday-name, "herb of grace," mine is merely rue, *i. e.* sorrow.

Laer. Do you see this, O God?

King. Laertes, I must commune with your grief,

Or you deny me right. Go but apart.

Make choice of whom your wisest friends you will,
And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me:
If by direct or by collateral hand

They find us touch'd, we will our kingdom give,

Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,

To you in satisfaction; but, if not,

Be you content to lend your patience to us,

And we shall jointly labour with your soul

To give it due content.

Laer. Let this be so;

His means of death, his obscure funeral, —

No trophy, sword, nor hatchment, o'er his bones,

No noble rite, nor formal ostentation, —

Cry to be heard, as 'twere from heaven to earth,

That I must call't in question.

King. So you shall,

And where the offence is, let the great axe fall.

I pray you, go with me.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI.

Another Room in the same.

Enter HORATIO, and a Servant.

Hor. What are they, that would speak with me?

Serv. Sailors, sir;

They say, they have letters for you.

Hor. Let them come in: —

[*Exit Servant.*]

I do not know from what part of the world

I should be greeted, if not from lord Hamlet.

Enter Sailors.

1 *Sail.* God bless you, sir.

Hor. Let him bless thee too.

1 *Sail.* He shall, sir, an't please him. There's a letter for you, sir; it comes from the ambassador that was bound for England; if your name be Horatio, as I am let to know it is.

Hor. [*Reads.*] Horatio, when thou shalt have overlooked this, give these fellows some means to the king; they have letters for him. Ere we were two days old at sea, a pirate of very warlike appointment gave us chase: Finding ourselves too slow of sail, we put on compelled valour; and in the grapple I boarded them: on the instant, they got clear of our ship; so I alone became their prisoner. They have dealt with me, like thieves of mercy; but they knew what they did; I am to do a good turn for them. Let the king have the letters I have sent; and repair thou to me with as much haste as thou wouldst fly death. I have words to speak in thine ear will make thee dumb; yet are they much too light for the bore of the matter. These good fellows will bring thee where I am. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their course for England: of them I have much to tell thee. Farewell.

He that thou knowest thine, Hamlet.

Come, I will give you way for these your letters;
And do't the speedier, that you may direct me
To him from whom you brought them. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII.

Another Room in the same.

Enter King and LAERTES.

King. Now must your conscience my acquittance
seal,

And you must put me in your heart for friend ;
Sith you have heard, and with a knowing ear,
That he, which hath your noble father slain,
Pursu'd my life.

Laer. It well appears : — But tell me,
Why you proceeded not against these feats,
So crimeful and so capital in nature,
As by your safety, greatness, wisdom, all things
else,
You mainly were stirr'd up.

King. O, for two special reasons :
Which may to you, perhaps, seem much unsinew'd,
But yet to me they are strong. The queen his
mother,

Lives almost by his looks ; and for myself,
(My virtue, or my plague, be it either which,)
She is so conjunctive to my life and soul,
That, as the star moves not but in his sphere,
I could not but by her. The other motive,
Why to a public count I might not go
Is, the great love the general gender² bear him ;
Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,
Work like the spring that turneth wood to stone,
Convert his gyves³ to graces ; so that my arrows,
Too slightly timber'd for so loud a wind,
Would have reverted to my bow again,
And not where I had aim'd them.

² Common people.

³ Chains.

Laer. And so have I a noble father lost ;
A sister driven into desperate terms ;
Whose worth, if praises may go back again,
Stood challenger on mount of all the age
For her perfections : — But my revenge will come.

King. Break not your sleeps for that : you must
not think,
That we are made of stuff so flat and dull,
That we can let our beard be shook with danger,
And think it pastime. You shortly shall hear more :
I loved your father, and we love ourself ;
And that, I hope, will teach you to imagine, —
How now ? what news ?

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Letters, my lord, from Hamlet :
This to your majesty ; this to the queen.

King. From Hamlet ? who brought them ?

Mess. Sailors, my lord, they say : I saw them
not ;
They were given me by Claudio, he receiv'd them
Of him that brought them.

King. Laertes, you shall hear them : —
Leave us. [Exit Messenger.]

[Reads.] *High and mighty, you shall know, I am
set naked on your kingdom. To-morrow, shall I beg
leave to see your kingly eyes ; when I shall, first ask-
ing your pardon thereunto, recount the occasion of
my sudden and more strange return.* Hamlet.

What should this mean ! Are all the rest come
back ?

Or is it some abuse, and no such thing ?

Laer. Know you the hand ?

King. 'Tis Hamlet's character. *Naked,* —
And, in a postscript here, he says, *alone* :
Can you advise me ?

Laer. I am lost in it, my lord. But let him
come ;

It warms the very sickness in my heart,
That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,
Thus diddest thou.

King. If it be so, Laertes,
As how should it be so? how otherwise?—
Will you be rul'd by me?

Laer. Ay, my lord ;
So you will not o'er-rule me to a peace.

King. To thine own peace. If he be now re-
turn'd, —

As checking⁴ at his voyage, and that he means
No more to undertake it, — I will work him
To an exploit, now ripe in my device,
Under the which he shall not choose but fall :
And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe ;
But even his mother shall uncharge the practice,
And call it, accident.

Laer. My lord, I will be rul'd ;
The rather, if you could devise it so,
That I might be the organ.

King. It falls right.
You have been talk'd of since your travel much,
And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a quality
Wherein, they say, you shine : your sum of parts
Did not together pluck such envy from him,
As did that one ; and that, in my regard,
Of the unworthiest siege.⁵

Laer. What part is that, my lord ?

King. A very riband in the cap of youth,
Yet needful too ; for youth no less becomes
The light and careless livery that it wears,
Than settled age his sables, and his weeds,
Importing health and graveness. — Two months
since,

⁴ Objecting to.

⁵ Seat, place.

Here was a gentleman of Normandy, —
 I have seen myself, and serv'd against, the French,
 And they can well on horseback : but this gallant
 Had witchcraft in't ; he grew unto his seat ;
 And to such wond'rous doing brought his horse,
 As he had been incorp's'd and demi-natur'd
 With the brave beast : so far he topp'd my thought,
 That I, in forgery of shapes and tricks,
 Come short of what he did.

Laer. A Norman, was't ?

King. A Norman.

Laer. Upon my life, Lamord.

King. The very same.

Laer. I know him well : he is the brooch⁶ indeed,

And gem of all the nation.

King. He made confession of you ;
 And gave you such a masterly report,
 For art and exercise in your defence,
 And for your rapier most especial,
 That he cried out, 'twould be a sight indeed,
 If one could match you : the scrimers⁷ of their nation,

He swore, had neither motion, guard, nor eye,
 If you oppos'd them : Sir, this report of his
 Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy,
 That he could nothing do, but wish and beg
 Your sudden coming o'er, to play with you.
 Now, out of this, —

Laer. What out of this, my lord ?

King. Laertes, was your father dear to you ?
 Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,
 A face without a heart ?

Laer. Why ask you this ?

King. Not that I think, you did not love your father ;

⁶ Ornament.

⁷ Fencers.

But that I know, love is begun by time ;
 And that I see, in passages of proof, ⁸
 Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.
 There lives within the very flame of love
 A kind of wick, or snuff, that will abate it ;
 And nothing is at a like goodness still ;
 For goodness, growing to a pleurisy,
 Dies in his own too-much : That we would do,
 We should do when we would ; for this *would*
 changes,
 And hath abatements and delays as many,
 As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents ;
 And then this *should* is like a spendthrift sigh,
 That hurts by easing. But, to the quick o'the
 ulcer :

Hamlet comes back ; What would you undertake,
 To show yourself in deed your father's son
 More than in words ?

Laer. To cut his throat i'the church.

King. No place, indeed, should murder sanctua-
 rize ;

Revenge should have no bounds. But, good
 Laertes,

Will you do this, keep close within your chamber ?
 Hamlet, return'd, shall know you are come home :
 We'll put on those shall praise your excellence,
 And set a double varnish on the fame
 The Frenchman gave you ; bring you, in fine, to-
 gether,

And wager o'er your heads : he, being remiss,
 Most generous, and free from all contriving,
 Will not peruse the foils ; so that, with ease,
 Or with a little shuffling, you may choose
 A sword unbated ⁹, and, in a pass of practice,
 Requite him for your father.

Laer.

I will do't :

⁸ Daily experience.

⁹ Not blunted as foils are.

And, for the purpose, I'll anoint my sword.
 I bought an unction of a mountebank,
 So mortal, that but dip a knife in it,
 Where it draws blood no cataplasm so rare,
 Collected from all simples that have virtue
 Under the moon, can save the thing from death,
 That is but scratch'd withal : I'll touch my point
 With this contagion ; that, if I gall him slightly,
 It may be death.

King. Let's further think of this ;
 Weigh, what convenience, both of time and means,
 May fit us to our shape : if this should fail,
 And that our drift look through our bad perform-
 ance,

'Twere better not essay'd : therefore this project
 Should have a back, or second, that might hold,
 If this should blast in proof.¹ Soft ; — let me
 see : —

We'll make a solemn wager on your cunnings,² —
 I ha't :

When in your motion you are hot and dry,
 (As make your bouts more violent to that end,)
 And that he calls for drink, I'll have preferr'd him
 A chalice for the nonce³ ; whereon but sipping,
 If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck,⁴
 Our purpose may hold there. But stay, what noise?

Enter Queen.

How now, sweet Queen ?

Queen. One woe doth tread upon another's heel,
 So fast they follow : — Your sister's drown'd,
 Laertes.

Laer. Drown'd ! O, where ?

Queen. There is a willow grows ascaunt the brook,

¹ As fire-arms sometimes burst in proving their strength.

² Skill.

³ A cup for the purpose.

⁴ Thrust.

ACT V.

SCENE I.— *A Church Yard.*

Enter two Clowns, with Spades, &c.

1 *Clo.* Is she to be buried in Christian burial, that wilfully seeks her own salvation?

2 *Clo.* I tell thee, she is; therefore make her grave straight⁶: the crowner hath set on her, and finds it Christian burial.

1 *Clo.* How can that be, unless she drowned herself in her own defence?

2 *Clo.* Why, 'tis found so.

1 *Clo.* It must be *se offendendo*; it cannot be else. For here lies the point: If I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act: and an act hath three branches; it is, to act, to do, and to perform: Argal, she drowned herself wittingly.

2 *Clo.* Nay, but hear you, Goodman delver.

1 *Clo.* Give me leave. Here lies the water; good: here stands the man; good: If the man go to this water, and drown himself, it is, will he, nill he, he goes; mark you that: but if the water come to him, and drown him, he drowns not himself: Argal, he, that is not guilty of his own death, shortens not his own life.

2 *Clo.* But is this law?

1 *Clo.* Ay, marry is't; crowner's quest law.

2 *Clo.* Will you ha' the truth on't? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out of Christian burial.

1 *Clo.* Why, there thou say'st: And the more pity; that great folks shall have countenance in

⁶ Immediately.

this world to drown or hang themselves, more than their even⁷ Christian. Come, my spade. There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and grave-makers; they hold up Adam's profession.

2 *Clo.* Was he a gentleman?

1 *Clo.* He was the first that ever bore arms.

2 *Clo.* Why, he had none.

1 *Clo.* What, art a heathen? How dost thou understand the Scripture? The Scripture says, Adam digged: Could he dig without arms? I'll put another question to thee: if thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself —

2 *Clo.* Go to.

1 *Clo.* What is he, that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

2 *Clo.* The gallows-maker; for that frame outlives a thousand tenants.

1 *Clo.* I like thy wit well, in good faith; the gallows does well: but how does it well? it does well to those that do ill: now thou dost ill, to say, the gallows is built stronger than the church; argal, the gallows may do well to thee. To't again; come.

2 *Clo.* Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?

1 *Clo.* Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.⁸

2 *Clo.* Marry, now I can tell.

1 *Clo.* To't.

2 *Clo.* Mass, I cannot tell.

Enter HAMLET and HORATIO, at a distance.

1 *Clo.* Cudgel thy brains no more about it; for your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating: and, when you are asked this question next, say, a grave-maker; the houses that he makes, last till

⁷ Fellow.

⁸ Give over.

doomsday. Go, get thee to Yaughan and fetch me
a stoup of liquor. [Exit 2 Clown.

1 Clown digs, and sings.

*In youth, when I did love, did love,⁹
Methought, it was very sweet,
To contract, O, the time, for, ah, my behove
O, methought, there was nothing meet.*

Ham. Has this fellow no feeling of his business? he sings at grave-making.

Hor. Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

Ham. 'Tis e'en so: the hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.

1 Clo. *But age, with his stealing steps,
Hath claw'd me in his clutch,
And hath shipped me into the land,
As if I had never been such.*

[Throws up a skull.

Ham. That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing once: How the knave jowls it to the ground, as if it were Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first murder! This might be the pate of a politician, which this ass now o'er-reaches; one that would circumvent any body, might it not?

Hor. It might, my lord.

Ham. Or of a courtier; which could say, *Good morrow, sweet lord! How dost thou, good lord?* This might be my lord such-a-one, that praised my lord such-a-one's horse, when he meant to beg it; might it not?

Hor. Ay, my lord.

⁹ The song entire is printed in Percy's Reliques of ancient English Poetry, Vol. I.: it was written by Lord Vaux.

Ham. Why, e'en so : and now my lady Worm's ; chapless, and knocked about the mazzard with a sexton's spade : Here's fine revolution, an we had the trick to see't. Did these bones cost no more the breeding, but to play at loggats¹ with them ? mine ache to think on't.

1 Clo. *A pix-axe, and a spade, a spade, [Sings.
For — and a shrouding sheet :
O, a pit of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet.*

[Throws up a skull.

Ham. There's another : Why may not that be the skull of a lawyer ? Where be his quiddits² now, his quillets³, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks ? why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery ? Humph ! This fellow might be in's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes, his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries : Is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries, to have his fine pate full of fine dirt ? will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the length and breadth of a pair of indentures ? The very conveyances of his lands will hardly lie in this box ; and must the inheritor himself have no more ? ha ?

Hor. Not a jot more, my lord.

Ham. Is not parchment made of sheep-skins ?

Hor. Ay, my lord, and of calves' skins too. ;

Ham. They are sheep, and calves, which seek out assurance in that. I will speak to this fellow :— Whose grave's this, sirrah ?

1 Clo. Mine, sir. —

¹ An ancient game played as *quoits* are at present.

² Subtilties.

³ Frivolous distinctions.

O, a pit of clay for to be made [Sings.
For such a guest is meet.

Ham. I think it be thine, indeed; for thou liest in't.

1 *Clo.* You lie out on't, sir, and therefore it is not yours: for my part, I do not lie in't, yet it is mine.

Ham. Thou dost lie in't, to be in't, and say it is thine: 'tis for the dead, not for the quick; therefore thou liest.

1 *Clo.* 'Tis a quick lie, sir; 'twill away again, from me to you.

Ham. What man dost thou dig it for?

1 *Clo.* For no man, sir,

Ham. What woman then?

1 *Clo.* For none neither.

Ham. Who is to be buried in't?

1 *Clo.* One, that was a woman, sir; but, rest her soul, she's dead.

Ham. How absolute the knave is! we must speak by the card⁴, or equivocation will undo us. By the lord, Horatio, these three years I have taken note of it; the age is grown so picked⁵, that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier, he galls his kibe. How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

1 *Clo.* Of all the days i'the year, I came to't that day that our last king Hamlet overcame Fortinbras.

Ham. How long's that since?

1 *Clo.* Cannot you tell that? every fool can tell that: It was that very day that young Hamlet was born: he that is mad, and sent into England.

Ham. Ay, marry, why was he sent into England?

⁴ By the compass.

⁵ Spruce, affected.

1 *Clo.* Why, because he was mad : he shall recover his wits there ; or, if he do not, 'tis no great matter there.

Ham. Why ?

1 *Clo.* 'Twill not be seen in him there ; there the men are as mad as he.

Ham. How came he mad ?

1 *Clo.* Very strangely, they say.

Ham. How strangely ?

1 *Clo.* 'Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

Ham. Upon what ground ?

1 *Clo.* Why, here in Denmark ; I have been sexton here, man, and boy, thirty years.

Ham. How long will a man lie i'the earth ere he rot ?

1 *Clo.* If he be not rotten before he die, (as we have many now-a-days, that will scarce hold the laying in,) he will last you some eight year, or nine year : a tanner will last you nine year.

Ham. Why he more than another ?

1 *Clo.* Why, sir, his hide is so tanned with his trade, that he will keep out water a great while ; and water is a sore decayer of your dead body. Here's a skull now hath lain you i'the earth three-and-twenty years.

Ham. Whose was it ?

1 *Clo.* A mad fellow's it was ; Whose do you think it was ?

Ham. Nay, I know not.

1 *Clo.* A pestilence on him for a mad rogue ! he poured a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same skull, sir, was Yorick's skull, the king's jester.

Ham. This ? [Takes the Skull.]

1 *Clo.* E'en that.

Ham. Alas ! poor Yorick !—I knew him, Horatio ; a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy : he hath borne me on his back a thousand times ; and

now how abhorred in my imagination it is! my gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips, that I have kissed I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? not one now, to mock your own grinning? quite chap-fallen? Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour⁶ she must come: make her laugh at that. — Pr'ythee, Horatio, tell me one thing.

Hor. What's that, my lord?

Ham. Dost thou think, Alexander looked o'this fashion i'the earth?

Hor. E'en so.

Ham. And smelt so? pah!

[*Throws down the Skull.*]

Hor. E'en so, my lord.

Ham. To what base uses we may return, Horatio!

Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander, till he find it stopping a bunghole?

Hor. 'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so.

Ham. No, faith, not a jot: but to follow him thither with modesty enough, and likelihood to lead it: As thus; Alexander died, Alexander was buried, Alexander returneth to dust; the dust is earth; of earth we make loam: And why of that loam, whereto he was converted, might they not stop a beer-barrel?

Imperious⁷ Cæsar, dead, and turn'd to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away:

O, that the earth, which kept the world in awe,
Should patch a wall to expel the winter's flaw!⁸
But soft! but soft! aside: — Here comes the king.

⁶ Countenance, complexion.

⁷ Imperial.

⁸ Blast.

Enter Priests, &c. in Procession; the Corpse of OPHELIA, LAERTES, and Mourners following; King, Queen, their Trains, &c.

The queen, the courtiers: Who is this they follow?
And with such maimed rites! This doth betoken,
The corse, they follow, did with desperate hand
Fordo⁹ its own life. 'Twas of some estate:
Couch me a while and mark.

[Retiring with HORATIO.]

Laer. What ceremony else?

Ham. That is Laertes,
A very noble youth: Mark.

Laer. What ceremony else?

1 *Priest.* Her obsequies have been as far enlarg'd
As we have warranty: Her death was doubtful;
And, but that great command o'ersways the order,
She should in ground unsanctified have lodg'd
Till the last trumpet; for charitable prayers,
Shards¹, flints, and pebbles, should be thrown on
her,

Yet here she is allow'd her virgin crants,²
Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home
Of bell and burial.

Laer. Must there no more be done?

1 *Priest.* No more be done!
We should profane the service of the dead,
To sing a *requiem*³, and such rest to her
As to peace-parted souls.

Laer. Lay her i'the earth; —
And from her fair and unpolluted flesh,
May violets spring! — I tell thee, churlish priest,
A minist'ring angel shall my sister be,
When thou liest howling.

⁹ Undo, destroy.

² Garlands.

¹ Broken pots or tiles.

³ A mass for the dead.

Ham. What, the fair Ophelia!

Queen. Sweets to the sweet: Farewell!

[*Scattering Flowers.*

I hop'd, thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife;
I thought, thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,
And not have strew'd thy grave.

Laer. O treble woe

Fall ten times treble on that cursed head,
Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense
Depriv'd thee of! — Hold off the earth a while,
Till I have caught her once more in mine arms:

[*Leaps into the Grave.*

Now pile your dust upon the quick⁴ and dead;
Till of this flat a mountain you have made
To o'ertop old Pelion, or the skyish head
Of blue Olympus.

Ham. [*Advancing.*] What is he, whose grief
Bears such an emphasis? whose phrase of sorrow
Conjures the wand'ring stars, and makes them
stand

Like wonder-wounded hearers? this is I,

Hamlet the Dane.

[*Leaps into the Grave.*

Laer.

The devil take thy soul!

[*Grappling with him.*

Ham. Thou pray'st not well.

I pr'ythee, take thy fingers from my throat;
For, though I am not splenetic and rash,
Yet have I in me something dangerous,
Which let thy wisdom fear: hold off thy hand.

King. Pluck them asunder.

Queen.

Hamlet, Hamlet!

All. Gentlemen, —

Hor.

Good my lord, be quiet.

[*The Attendants part them, and they come out
of the Grave.*

⁴ Living.

Ham. Why, I will fight with him upon this theme,
Until my eyelids will no longer wag.

Queen. O my son! what theme?

Ham. I lov'd Ophelia: forty thousand brothers
Could not, with all their quantity of love,
Make up my sum. — What wilt thou do for her?

King. O, he is mad, Laertes.

Queen. For love of God, forbear him.

Ham. Show me what thou'lt do:
Woul't weep? woul't fight? woul't fast? woul't tear
thyself?

Woul't drink up Esil?⁵ eat a crocodile?
I'll do't. — Dost thou come here to whine?
To outface me with leaping in her grave?
Be buried quick with her, and so will I:
And, if thou prate of mountains, let them throw
Millions of acres on us; till our ground,
Singeing his pate against the burning zone,
Make Ossa like a wart! Nay, an thou'lt mouth,
I'll rant as well as thou.

Queen. This is mere madness;
And thus a while the fit will work on him;
Anon, as patient as the female dove,
When that her golden couplets are disclos'd,⁶
His silence will sit drooping.

Ham. Hear you, sir,
What is the reason that you use me thus?
I lov'd you ever: But it is no matter;
Let Hercules himself do what he may,
The cat will mew, and dog will have his day. [*Exit.*

King. I pray thee, good Horatio, wait upon
him. — [*Exit HORATIO.*

⁵ *Eisel* is vinegar; but Mr. Steevens conjectures the word should be *Weisel*, a river which falls into the Baltic ocean.

⁶ Hatched.

My fears forgetting manners, to unseal
 Their grand commission ; where I found, Horatio,
 A royal knavery ; an exact command, —
 Larded with many several sorts of reasons,
 Importing Denmark's health, and England's too,
 With, ho ! such bugs¹ and goblins in my life,
 That, on the supervise, no leisure bated,
 No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,
 My head should be struck off.

Hor. Is't possible ?

Ham. Here's the commission ; read it at more
 leisure.

But wilt thou hear now how I did proceed ?

Hor. Ay, 'beseech you.

Ham. Being thus benetted round with villainies,
 Or² I could make a prologue to my brains,
 They had begun the play ; — I sat me down ;
 Devis'd a new commission ; wrote it fair :
 I once did hold it, as our statist³ do,
 A baseness to write fair, and labour'd much
 How to forget that learning ; but, sir, now
 It did me yeoman's service : Wilt thou know
 The effect of what I wrote ?

Hor. Ay, good my lord.

Ham. An earnest conjuration from the king, —
 As England was his faithful tributary ;
 As love between them like the palm might flourish ;
 As peace should still her wheaten garland wear,
 And stand a comma⁴ 'tween their amities ;
 And many such like as's of great charge, —
 That, on the view and knowing of these contents,
 Without debatement further, more, or less,
 He should the bearers put to sudden death,
 Not shriving⁵ time allow'd.

Hor. How was this seal'd ?

¹ Bugbears.

² Before.

³ Statesmen.

⁴ A note of connection.

⁵ Confessing.

Ham. Why, even in that was heaven ordinant ;
 I had my father's signet in my purse,
 Which was the model of that Danish seal :
 Folded the writ up in form of the other ;
 Subscrib'd it ; gave't the impression ; plac'd it
 safely,
 The changeling never known : Now the next day
 Was our sea-fight ; and what to this was sequent
 Thou know'st already.

Hor. So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to't.

Ham. Why man, they did make love to this em-
 ployment ;
 They are not near my conscience ; their defeat
 Does by their own insinuation grow :
 'Tis dangerous, when the baser nature comes
 Between the pass and fell incensed points
 Of mighty opposites.

Hor. Why, what a king is this !

Ham. Does it not, think thee, stand me now upon?
 He that hath kill'd my king, seduc'd my mother ;
 Popp'd in between the election and my hopes ;
 Thrown out his angle for my proper life,
 And with such cozenage ; is't not perfect con-
 science,
 To quit him with this arm ? and not to let
 This canker of our very nature come
 In further evil ?

Hor. It must be shortly known to him from Eng-
 land,

What is the issue of the business there.

Ham. It will be short : the interim is mine ;
 And a man's life no more than to say, one.
 But I am very sorry, good Horatio,
 That to Laertes I forgot myself ;
 For by the image of my cause, I see
 The portraiture of his : I'll count ⁶ his favours :

⁶ Make account of, value.

But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me
Into a towering passion.

Hor. Peace; who comes here?

Enter OSRIC.

Osr. Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

Ham. I humbly thank you, sir. — Dost know this water-fly?

Hor. No, my good lord.

Ham. Thy state is the more gracious; for 'tis a vice to know him: He hath much land, and fertile: let a beast be lord of beasts, and his crib shall stand at the king's mess: 'Tis a chough⁷; but, as I say, spacious in the possession of dirt.

Osr. Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure, I should impart a thing to you from his majesty.

Ham. I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of spirit: Your bonnet to his right use; 'tis for the head.

Osr. I thank your lordship, 'tis very hot.

Ham. No, believe me, 'tis very cold; the wind is northerly.

Osr. It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

Ham. But yet, methinks it is very sultry and hot; or my complexion —

Osr. Exceedingly, my lord: it is very sultry — as 'twere, — I cannot tell how — My lord, his majesty bade me signify to you, that he has laid a great wager on your head: Sir, this is the matter, —

Ham. I beseech you, remember —

[HAMLET moves him to put on his Hat.

Osr. Nay, good my lord; for my ease, in good faith.⁸ Sir, here is newly come to court, Laertes: believe me, an absolute gentleman, full of most ex-

⁷ A bird like a jackdaw. ⁸ The affected phrase of the time.

cellent differences⁹, of very soft society, and great showing: Indeed to speak feelingly of him, he is the card¹ or calendar of gentry, for you shall find in him the continent² of what part a gentleman would see.

Ham. Sir, his definement suffers no perdition in you; — though, I know, to divide him inventorially, would dizzy the arithmetick of memory; and yet but raw neither, in respect of his quick sail. But, in the verity of extolment, I take him to be a soul of great article; and his infusion of such dearth and rareness, as, to make true diction of him, his semblable is his mirrour; and, who else would trace him, his umbrage, nothing more.³

Osr. Your lordship speaks most infallibly of him.

Ham. The concernancy, sir? why do we wrap the gentleman in our more rawer breath?

Osr. Sir?

Hor. Is't not possible to understand in another tongue? You will do't, sir, really.

Ham. What imports the nomination of this gentleman?

Osr. Of Laertes?

Hor. His purse is empty already; all his golden words are spent.

Ham. Of him, sir.

Osr. I know, you are not ignorant —

Ham. I would, you did, sir; yet, in faith, if you did, it would not much approve⁴ me; — Well, sir.

Osr. You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is —

Ham. I dare not confess that, lest I should com-

⁹ Distinguishing excellencies.

¹ Compass or chart.

² The country and pattern for imitation.

³ This speech is a ridicule of the court jargon of that time.

⁴ Recommend.

pare with him in excellence; but, to know a man well, were to know himself.

Osr. I mean, sir, for his weapon; but in the imputation laid on him by them, in his meed⁵ he's unfellowed.

Ham. What's his weapon?

Osr. Rapier and dagger.

Ham. That's two of his weapons: but, well.

Osr. The king, sir, hath wagered with him six Barbary horses: against the which he has impawned⁶, as I take it, six French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hangers⁷, and so; Three of the carriages, in faith, are very dear to fancy, very responsive to the hilts, most delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit.

Ham. What call you the carriages.

Hor. I knew you must be edified by the margin⁸, ere you had done.

Osr. The carriages, sir, are the hangers.

Ham. The phrase would be more german⁹ to the matter, if we could carry a cannon by our sides; I would, it might be hangers till then. But, on: Six Barbary horses against six French swords, their assigns, and three liberal conceited carriages that's the French bet against the Danish: Why, is this impawned, as you call it?

Osr. The king, sir, hath laid, that in a dozen passes between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you three hits; he hath laid, on twelve for nine; and it would come to immediate trial, if your lordship would vouchafe the answer.

Ham. How, if I answer, no?

⁵ Praise.

⁶ Staked.

⁷ That part of the belt by which the sword was suspended.

⁸ Margin of a book which contains explanatory notes.

⁹ A-kin.

Osr. I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in trial.

Ham. Sir, I will walk here in the hall : If it please his majesty, it is the breathing time of day with me : let the foils be brought, the gentleman willing and the king hold his purpose, I will win for him, if I can ; if not, I will gain nothing but my shame, and the odd hits.

Osr. Shall I deliver you so ?

Ham. To this effect, sir ; after what flourish your nature will.

Osr. I commend my duty to your lordship. [*Exit.*

Ham. yours, yours. — He does well to commend it himself ; there are no tongues else for's turn.

Hor. This lapwing¹ runs away with the shell on his head.

Ham. He did comply² with his dug, before he sucked it. Thus has he (and many more of the same breed, that, I know, the drossy³ age dotes on,) only got the tune of the time, and outward habit of encounter ; a kind of yesty collection, which carries them through and through the most fond⁴ and winnowed opinions ; and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out.

Enter a Lord.

Lord. My lord, his majesty commended him to you by young Osric, who brings back to him, that you attend him in the hall : He sends to know, if your pleasure hold to play with Laertes, or that you will take longer time.

Ham. I am constant to my purposes, they follow the king's pleasure : if his fitness speaks, mine is ready ; now, or whensoever, provided I be so able as now.

¹ A bird which runs about immediately it is hatched.

² Compliment. ³ Worthless. ⁴ For *fond*, read *fann'd*.

Lord. The king, and queen, and all are coming down.

Ham. In happy time.

Lord. The queen desires you, to use some gentle entertainment to Laertes, before you fall to play.

Ham. She well instructs me. [*Exit Lord.*]

Hor. You will lose this wager, my lord.

Ham. I do not think so; since he went into France, I have been in continual practice; I shall win at the odds. But thou wouldst not think, how ill all's here about my heart: but it is no matter.

Hor. Nay, good my lord, —

Ham. It is but foolery; but it is such a kind of gain-giving⁵, as would, perhaps, trouble a woman.

Hor. If your mind dislike any thing, obey it: I will forestal their repair hither, and say, you are not fit.

Ham. Not a whit, we defy augury; there is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all: Since no man, of aught he leaves, knows, what is't to leave betimes? Let be.

Enter King, Queen, LAERTES, Lords, OSRIC, and Attendants, with Foils, &c.

King. Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me.

[*The King puts the Hand of LAERTES into that of HAMLET.*]

Ham. Give me your pardon, sir: I have done you wrong;

But pardon it, as you are a gentleman.

This presence⁶ knows, and you must needs have heard,

⁵ Misgiving.

⁶ The king and queen's presence.

How I am punish'd with a sore distraction.
 What I have done,
 That might your nature, honour, and exception,
 Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.
 Was't Hamlet wrong'd Laertes? Never, Hamlet:
 If Hamlet from himself, be ta'en away,
 And, when he's not himself, does wrong Laertes,
 Then Hamlet does it not, Hamlet denies it.
 Who does it then? His madness: If't be so,
 Hamlet is of the faction that is wrong'd;
 His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.
 Sir, in this audience,
 Let my disclaiming from a purpos'd evil
 Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,
 That I have shot my arrow o'er the house,
 And hurt my brother.

Laer. I am satisfied in nature,
 Whose motive, in this case, should stir me most
 To my revenge: but in my terms of honour,
 I stand aloof; and will no reconciliation,
 Till by some elder masters of known honour,
 I have a voice and precedent of peace,
 To keep my name ungor'd⁷: But till that time,
 I do receive your offer'd love like love,
 And will not wrong it.

Ham. I embrace it freely;
 And will this brother's wager frankly play. —
 Give us the foils; come on.

Laer. Come, one for me.

Ham. I'll be your foil, Laertes; in mine ig-
 norance
 Your skill shall, like a star i'the darkest night,
 Stick fiery off indeed.

Laer. You mock me, sir.

Ham. No, by this hand.

⁷ Unwounded.

King. Give them the foils, young Osric. — Cousin Hamlet,
You know the wager?

Ham. Very well, my lord;
Your grace hath laid the odds o'the weaker side.

King. I do not fear it: — I have seen you both: —
But since he's better'd, we have therefore odds.

Laer. This is too heavy, let me see another.

Ham. This likes me well: These foils have all a
length? [*They prepare to play.*]

Os. Ay, my good lord.

King. Set me the stoups⁸ of wine upon that
table: —

If Hamlet give the first or second hit,
Or quit in answer of the third exchange,
Let all the battlements their ordnance fire;
The king shall drink to Hamlet's better breath;
And in the cup an union⁹ shall he throw,
Richer than that which four successive kings
In Denmark's crown have worn; Give me the cups;
And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,
The trumpet to the cannoneer without,
The cannons to the heavens, the heaven to earth,
Now the king drinks to Hamlet. — Come, begin; —
And you, the judges, bear a wary eye.

Ham. Come on, sir.

Laer. Come, my lord. [*They play.*]

Ham. One.

Laer. No.

Ham. Judgment.

Os. A hit, a very palpable hit.

Laer. Well, — again.

King. Stay, give me drink: Hamlet, this pearl
is thine;

Here's to thy health. — Give him the cup.

[*Trumpets sound; and Cannon shot off within.*]

⁸ Large jugs.

⁹ A precious pearl.

Ham. I'll play this bout first, set it by a while.
Come. — Another hit; What say you? [*They play.*]

Laer. A touch, a touch, I do confess.

King. Our son shall win.

Queen. He's fat, and scant of breath. —
Here, Hamlet, take my napkin, rub thy brows:
The queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet.

Ham. Good madam, —

King. Gertrude, do not drink.

Queen. I will, my lord; — I pray you, pardon
me.

King. It is the poison'd cup; it is too late.

[*Aside.*]

Ham. I dare not drink yet, madam; by and by.

Queen. Come, let me wipe thy face.

Laer. My lord, I'll hit him now.

King. I do not think it.

Laer. And yet it is almost against my conscience.

[*Aside.*]

Ham. Come, for the third, Laertes: You do but
dally;

I pray you, pass with your best violence;

I am afeard, you make a wanton¹ of me.

Laer. Say you so? come on. [*They play.*]

Osr. Nothing neither way.

Laer. Have at you now.

[*LAERTES wounds HAMLET; then, in scuffling, they change Rapiers, and HAMLET wounds LAERTES.*]

King. Part them, they are incens'd.

Ham. Nay, come again. [*The Queen falls.*]

Osr. Look to the queen there, ho!

Hor. They bleed on both sides: — How is it, my
lord?

Osr. How is't, Laertes?

¹ Boy.

Laer. Why, as a woodcock to my own springe,
Osric;
am justly kill'd with mine own treachery.

Ham. How does the queen?

King. She swoons to see them bleed.

Queen. No, no, the drink, the drink, — O my
dear Hamlet!

The drink, the drink; — I am poison'd! [*Dies.*

Ham. O villainy! — Ho! let the door be lock'd:
Treachery! seek it out. [*LAERTES falls.*

Laer. It is here, Hamlet: Hamlet, thou art
slain;

No medicine in the world can do thee good,
In thee there is not half an hour's life;
The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,
Unbated², and envenom'd: the foul practice
Hath turned itself on me; lo, here I lie,
Never to rise again: Thy mother's poison'd;
I can no more; the king, the king's to blame.

Ham. The point
Envenom'd too! — Then, venom, to thy work.

[*Stabs the King.*

Osr. & Lords. Treason! treason!

King. O, yet defend me, friends, I am but hurt.

Ham. Here thou incestuous, murd'rous, damned
Dane,

Drink off this potion: — Is thy union here?

Follow my mother. [*King dies.*

Laer. He is justly serv'd;
It is a poison temper'd³ by himself. —

Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet:
Mine and my father's death come not upon thee;
Nor thine on me! [*Dies.*

Ham. Heaven make thee free of it! I follow thee.
I am dead, Horatio: — Wretched queen, adieu! —

² Not blunted, without a button.

³ Mixed.

You that look pale and tremble at this chance,
That are but mutes or audience to this act,
Had I but time, (as this fell sergeant⁴, death,
Is strict in his arrest,) O, I could tell you, —
But let it be: — Horatio, I am dead;
Thou liv'st; report me and my cause aright
To the unsatisfied.

Hor. Never believe it;
I am more an antique Roman than a Dane,
Here's yet some liquor left.

Ham. As thou'rt a man, —
Give me the cup; let go; by heaven I'll have it. —
O good Horatio, what a wounded name,
Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind
me?

If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee from felicity awhile,
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,
To tell my story. —

[*March afar off, and Shot within.*

What warlike noise is this?

Osr. Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from
Poland,
To the ambassadors of England gives
This warlike volley.

Ham. O, I die, Horatio;
The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit;
I cannot live to hear the news from England;
But I do prophesy the election lights
On Fortinbras; he has my dying voice;
So tell him, with the occurrents⁵, more or less,
Which have solicited⁶, — the rest is silence. [*Dies.*

Hor. Now cracks a noble heart; — Good night,
sweet prince;
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!
Why does the drum come hither? [*March within.*

⁴ A sergeant is a sheriff's officer. ⁵ Occurrences. ⁶ Incited.

Enter FORTINBRAS, the English Ambassadors, and others.

Fort. Where is this sight?

Hor. What is it you would see?
If aught of woe, or wonder, cease your search.

Fort. This quarry⁷ cries on havock!⁸ — O proud death!

What feast is toward in thine eternal cell,
That thou so many princes, at a shot,
So bloodily hast struck?

1 Amb. The sight is dismal;
And our affairs from England come too late:
The ears are senseless, that should give us hearing,
To tell him, his commandment is fulfill'd,
That Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead:
Where should we have our thanks?

Hor. Not from his mouth,
Had it the ability of life to thank you;
He never gave commandment for their death.
But since, so jump⁹ upon this bloody question,
You from the Polack¹ wars, and you from England,
Are here arriv'd; give order, that these bodies
High on a stage be placed to the view;
And let me speak, to the yet unknowing world,
How these things come about: So shall you hear
Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts;
Of accidental judgments, casual slaughters;
Of deaths put on by cunning, and forc'd cause;
And in this upshot, purposes mistook
Fall'n on the inventors' heads: all this can I
Truly deliver.

Fort. Let us haste to hear it,

⁷ Heap of dead game.

⁸ A word of censure when more game was destroyed than was reasonable.

⁹ So exactly at the time.

¹ Polish.

And call the noblest to the audience.
 For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune ;
 I have some rights of memory in this kingdom,
 Which now to claim my vantage doth invite me.

Hor. Of that I shall have also cause to speak,
 And from his mouth whose voice will draw on
 more :

But let this same be presently perform'd,
 Even while men's minds are wild ; lest more mis-
 chance,

On plots and errors, happen.

Fort. Let four captains

Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage ;
 For he was likely, had he been put on,
 To have prov'd most royally : and, for his passage,
 The soldier's musick, and the rites of war,
 Speak loudly for him. —

Take up the bodies : — Such a sight as this
 Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss.

Go, bid the soldiers shoot. [*A dead March.*

[*Exeunt, bearing off the dead Bodies ; after
 which, a Peal of Ordnance is shot off.*



OTHELLO.

CHRYSLER

PREFACE TO OTHELLO.

THIS tragedy is justly considered as one of the noblest efforts of dramatic genius that has appeared in any age or in any language; but the subject is unfortunately little suited to family reading. The arguments which are urged, and the facts which are adduced as proofs of adultery, are necessarily of such a nature as cannot be expressed in terms of perfect delicacy; yet neither the arguments, nor the facts, can be omitted; for although every reader must “weep

“O'er gentle Desdemona's woes,”¹

yet I believe there is no person who would wish to aggravate the guilt of Othello, by leaving out any of those circumstances which give an appearance of truth to the suggestions of Iago.

From the multitude of indecent expressions which abound in the speeches of the inferior characters, I have endeavoured to clear the play; but I cannot erase all the bitter terms of reproach and execration with which the transports of jealousy and revenge are expressed by the Moor, without altering his character; losing sight of the horror of those passions; and, in fact, destroying the Tragedy. I find myself, therefore, reduced to the alternative of either departing in some degree from the principle on which this publication is undertaken, or materially injuring a most invaluable exertion of the

Scott's Rokeby.

genius of Shakspeare. I have adopted the former part of the alternative, and, in making this decision, I have been much influenced by an opinion which I have long entertained, that this play, in its present form, is calculated to produce an excellent effect on the human mind: by exhibiting a most forcible and impressive warning against the admission of that baneful passion, which, when once admitted, is the inevitable destroyer of conjugal happiness.

That adultery is a crime which is deservedly placed next to murder, will be allowed, not only by the Christian, but by every being whose mind is not wholly insensible to the most obvious principles of virtue. But in proportion to the enormity of the offence, should be the caution with which the suspicion is permitted to be entertained; for besides the injury which is thus done to the person accused, the jealous accuser will assuredly exclaim with Othello: —

“ O now for ever,
Farewell the tranquil mind — farewell content.”

Shakspeare appears to have been particularly desirous of warning mankind against the indulgence of this fatal passion; for, independent of various observations in different parts of his works, he has made it the principal subject of no less than four of his best plays: exerting his matchless powers in painting it with every variety of colouring that was calculated to warn the human mind against its admission. It is laughably ridiculous in *Ford*; it is justly odious in *Leontes*; we tremble for its consequences in *Posthumus*; and we view them in their utmost horror in *Othello*.

After the foregoing observations, I shall only add, that I have endeavoured to erase the objection-

able expressions which so frequently occur in the original text, whenever it could be done consistently with the character and situation of the speaker; but if, after all that I have omitted, it shall still be thought that this inimitable tragedy is not sufficiently correct for family reading, I would advise the transferring of it from the parlour to the cabinet, where the perusal will not only delight the poetic taste, but convey useful and important instruction both to the heart and the understanding of the reader.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

DUKE OF VENICE.

BRABANTIO, *a Senator.*

Two other Senators.

GRATIANO, *brother to Brabantio.*

LODÓVICO, *kinsman to Brabantio.*

OTHELLO, *the Moor.*

CASSIO, *his lieutenant.*

IAGO, *his ancient.*

RODERIGO, *a Venetian gentleman.*

MONTANO, *Othello's predecessor in the government
of Cyprus.*

Clown, servant to Othello.

Herald.

DESDEMONA, *daughter to Brabantio, and wife to
Othello.*

EMILIA, *wife to Iago.*

BIANCA, *a courtesan, mistress to Cassio.*

*Officers, Gentlemen, Messengers, Musicians, Sailors,
Attendants, &c.*

SCENE, *for the first Act, in Venice ; during the
rest of the Play, at a Sea-port in Cyprus.*

OTHELLO
THE MOOR OF VENICE.

ACT I.

SCENE I. — Venice. *A Street.*

Enter RODERIGO and IAGO.

Roderigo.

TUSH, never tell me, I take it much unkindly,
That thou, Iago, — who hast had my purse,
As if the strings were thine, — shouldst know of
this.

Iago. But you will not hear me : —
If ever I did dream of such a matter,
Abhor me.

Rod. Thou told'st me, thou didst hold him in
thy hate.

Iago. Despise me, if I do not. Three great ones
of the city,
In personal suit to make me his lieutenant,
Oft capp'd¹ to him ; — and, by the faith of man,
I know my price, I am worth no worse a place :

¹ Saluted.

But he, as loving his own pride and purposes,
 Evades them, with a bombast circumstance,²
 Horribly stuff'd with epithets of war ;
 And, in conclusion, nonsuits
 My mediators ; *for certes*³, says he,
I have already chose my officer.
 And what was he ?
 Forsooth, a great arithmetician,
 One Michael Cassio, a Florentine,
 That never set a squadron in the field,
 Nor the division of a battle knows
 More than a spinster ; unless the bookish theorick,
 Wherein the toged consuls can propose
 As masterly as he : mere prattle, without practice,
 Is all his soldiership. But he, sir, had the election :
 And I, — of whom his eyes had seen the proof,
 At Rhodes, at Cyprus ; and on other grounds
 Christian and heathen, — must be be-lee'd and
 calm'd

By debtor and creditor, this counter-caster ;⁴
 He, in good time, must his lieutenant be,
 And I, sir, (bless the mark!) his Moorship's ancient.

Rod. By heaven, I rather would have been his
 hangman.

Iago. But there's no remedy, 'tis the curse of
 service ;

Preferment goes by letter, and affection,
 Not by the old gradation, where each second
 Stood heir to the first. Now, sir, be judge yourself,
 Whether I in any just term am affin'd⁵
 To love the Moor.

Rod. I would not follow him then.

Iago. O, sir, content you ;
 I follow him to serve my turn upon him :

² Circumlocution.

³ Certainly.

⁴ It was anciently the practice to reckon up sums with
 counters.

⁵ Related.

We cannot all be masters, nor all masters
 Cannot be truly follow'd. You shall mark
 Many a duteous and knee-crooking knave,
 That, doting on his own obsequious bondage,
 Wears out his time, much like his master's ass,
 For nought but provender; and, when he's old,
 cashier'd;

Whip me such honest knaves: Others there are,
 Who, trimm'd in forms and visages of duty,
 Keep yet their hearts attending on themselves;
 And, throwing but shows of service on their lords,
 Do well thrive by them, and when they have lin'd
 their coats,

Do themselves homage: these fellows have some
 soul;

And such a one do I profess myself.

For, sir,

It is as sure as you are Roderigo,
 Were I the Moor, I would not be Iago:
 In following him, I follow but myself;
 Heaven is my judge, not I for love and duty,
 But seeming so, for my peculiar end:
 For when my outward action doth demonstrate
 The native act and figure of my heart
 In compliment extern, 'tis not long after
 But I will wear my heart upon my sleeve
 For daws to peck at: I am not what I am.

Rod. What a full fortune does the thick-lips owe,⁶
 If he can carry't thus!

Iago. Call up her father,
 Rouse him: make after him, poison his delight,
 Proclaim him in the streets; incense her kinsmen,
 And, though he in a fertile climate dwell,
 Plague him with flies: though that his joy be joy,
 Yet throw such changes of vexation on't,
 As it may lose some colour.

⁶ Own, possess.

Rod. Here is her father's house ; I'll call aloud.

Iago. Do ; with like timorous accent, and dire yell,

As when, by night and negligence, the fire
Is spied in populous cities.

Rod. What ho ! Brabantio ! signior Brabantio, ho !

Iago. Awake ! what ho ! Brabantio ! thieves !
thieves ! thieves !

Look to your house, your daughter, and your bags !
Thieves ! thieves !

BRABANTIO, *above, at a Window.*

Bra. What is the reason of this terrible summons?
What is the matter there ?

Rod. Signior, is all your family within ?

Iago. Are your doors lock'd ?

Bra. Why ? wherefore ask you this ?

Iago. Sir, you are robb'd ; for shame, put on
your gown ;

Your heart is burst, you have lost half your soul ;
Awake the snorting citizens with the bell :
Arise, I say.

Bra. What, have you lost your wits ?

Rod. Most reverend signior, do you know my
voice ?

Bra. Not I : What are you ?

Rod. My name is — Roderigo.

Bra. The worse welcome ;
I have charg'd thee, not to haunt about my doors :
In honest plainness thou hast heard me say,
My daughter is not for thee ; and now, in madness,
Being full of supper, and distempering draughts,
Upon malicious bravery, dost thou come
To start my quiet.

Rod. Sir, sir, sir, sir, —

Bra. But thou must needs be sure,

My spirit, and my place, have in them power
To make this bitter to thee.

Rod. Patience, good sir.

Bra. What tell'st thou me of robbing? this is
Venice?

My house is not a grange.⁷

Rod. Most grave Brabantio,
In simple and pure soul I come to you.

Iago. Then, sir, because we come to do you service,
you think we are ruffians.

Bra. What wretch art thou?

Iago. I am one, sir, that comes to tell you, your
daughter and the Moor are now together.

Bra. Thou art a villain.

Iago. You are — a senator.

Bra. This thou shalt answer: I know thee, *Roderigo*.

Rod. Sir, I will answer any thing. But I beseech
you,

If't be your pleasure, and most wise consent,
(As partly, I find, it is,) that your fair daughter,
At this odd-even⁸ and dull watch o'the night,
Transported — with no worse nor better guard,
But with a knave of common hire, a gondolier, —
To the embrace of a lascivious Moor, —
If this be known to you, and your allowance,⁹
We then have done you bold and saucy wrongs;
But, if you know not this, my manners tell me,
We have your wrong rebuke. Do not believe,
That, from the sense of all civility,
I thus would play and trifle with your reverence:
Your daughter, — if you have not given her leave, —
I say, again, hath made a gross revolt;
Tying her duty, beauty, wit, and fortunes,
In an extravagant¹ and wheeling stranger,

⁷ A lone farm-house.

⁸ Midnight.

⁹ Approbation.

¹ Wandering.

How didst thou know 'twas she? O, thou deceiv'st
 me
 Past thought! — What said she to you? — Get
 more tapers;
 Raise all my kindred. — Are they married, think
 you?

Rod. Truly, I think, they are.

Bra. O heaven, how got she out! — O treason
 of the blood! —

Fathers, from hence trust not your daughters'
 minds

By what you see them act. — Are there not charms,
 By which the property of youth and maidhood
 May be abus'd? Have you not read, Roderigo,
 Of some such thing?

Rod. Yes, sir; I have indeed.

Bra. Call up my brother. — O, that you had had
 her! —

Some one way, some another. — Do you know
 Where we may apprehend her and the Moor?

Rod. I think, I can discover him: if you please
 To get good guard, and go along with me.

Bra. Pray you, lead on. At every house I'll call;
 I may command at most; — Get weapons, ho!
 And raise some special officers of night. —
 On, good Roderigo: — I'll deserve your pains.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Another Street.

Enter OTHELLO, IAGO, and Attendants.

Iago. Though in the trade of war I have slain
 men,
 Yet do I hold it very stuff o'the conscience,

To do no contriv'd murder ; I lack iniquity
 Sometimes, to do me service : Nine or ten times
 I had thought to have yerk'd him here under the
 ribs.

Oth. 'Tis better as it is.

Iago. Nay, but he prated,
 And spoke such scurvy and provoking terms
 Against your honour,
 That, with the little godliness I have,
 I did full hard forbear him. But, I pray, sir,
 Are you fast married ? for, be sure of this, —
 That the magnifico³ is much beloved ;
 And hath, in his effect, a voice potential
 As double as the duke's ; he will divorce you ;
 Or put upon you what restraint and grievance
 The law (with all his might, to enforce it on,)
 Will give him cable.

Oth. Let him do his spite :
 My services, which I have done the signiory,
 Shall out-tongue his complaints. 'Tis yet to
 know,
 (Which when I know that boasting is an honour,
 I shall promulgate,) I fetch my life and being
 From men of royal siege⁴ ; and my demerits⁵
 May speak, unbonneted, to as proud a fortune
 As this that I have reach'd : For know, Iago,
 But that I love the gentle Desdemona,
 I would not my unhoused free condition
 Put into circumscription and confine
 For the sea's worth. But, look ! what lights come
 yonder ?

³ Brabantio, magnifico is his title as a senator.

⁴ Seat or throne.

⁵ Demerits has the same meaning in Shakspeare as merits.

Enter CASSIO, at a distance, and certain Officers with Torches.

Iago. These are the raised father, and his friends :

You were best go in.

Oth. Not I: I must be found ;
My parts, my title, and my perfect soul,
Shall manifest me rightly. Is it they ?

Iago. By Janus, I think no.

Oth. The servants of the duke, and my lieutenant.
The goodness of the night upon you, friends !
What is the news ?

Cas. The duke does greet you, general ;
And he requires your haste, post-haste appearance,
Even on the instant.

Oth. What is the matter, think you ?

Cas. Something from Cyprus, as I may divine ;
It is a business of some heat: the gallies
Have sent a dozen sequent messengers
This very night at one another's heels ;
And many of the consuls, rais'd, and met,
Are at the duke's already: You have been hotly
call'd for ;

When, being not at your lodging to be found,
The senate hath sent about three several quests,
To search you out.

Oth. 'Tis well I am found by you.
I will but spend a word here in the house,
And go with you. [*Exit.*]

Cas. Ancient, what makes he here ?

Iago. He hath to-night boarded a land carack;⁶
If it prove lawful prize, he's made for ever.

Cas. I do not understand.

Iago. He's married.

Cas. To who ?

⁶ A rich vessel.

Re-enter OTHELLO.

Iago. Marry, to — Come, captain, will you go?

Oth. Have with you.

Cas. Here comes another troop to seek for you.

Enter BRABANTIO, RODERIGO, and Officers of night, with Torches and Weapons.

Iago. It is Brabantio: — general, be advis'd ;
He comes to bad intent.

Oth. Hola! stand there!

Rod. Signior, it is the Moor.

Bra. Down with him, thief!

[*They draw on both sides.*

Iago. You, Roderigo! come, sir, I am for you.

Oth. Keep up your bright swords, for the dew
will rust them. —

Good signior, you shall more command with years,
Than with your weapons.

Bra. O thou foul thief, where hast thou stow'd
my daughter?

Wretch that thou art, thou hast enchanted her :

For I'll refer me to all things of sense,

If she in chains of magick were not bound,

Whether a maid — so tender, fair, and happy ;

So opposite to marriage, that she shunn'd

The wealthy curled darlings of our nation,

Would ever have, to incur a general mock,

Run from her guardage to the sooty bosom

Of such a thing as thou : to fear, not to delight.

Judge me the world, if 'tis not gross in sense,

That thou hast practis'd on her with foul charms ;

Abus'd her delicate youth with drugs, or minerals,

'Tis probable, and palpable to thinking.

I therefore apprehend and do attach thee,

For an abuser of the world, a practiser

Of arts inhibited and out of warrant : —
Lay hold upon him ; if he do resist,
Subdue him at his peril.

Oth. Hold your hands,
Both you of my inclining, and the rest :
Were it my cue to fight, I should have known it
Without a prompter. — Where will you that I go
To answer this your charge ?

Bra. To prison : till fit time
Of law, and course of direct session,
Call thee to answer.

Oth. What if I do obey ?
How may the duke be therewith satisfied ;
Whose messengers are here about my side,
Upon some present business of the state,
To bring me to him ?

Off. 'Tis true, most worthy signior,
The duke's in council ; and your noble self,
I am sure, is sent for.

Bra. How ! the duke in council !
In this time of the night ! — Bring him away :
Mine's not an idle cause : the duke himself,
Or any of my brothers of the state,
Cannot but feel this wrong, as 'twere their own :
For if such actions may have passage free,
Bond-slaves, and pagans, shall our statesmen be.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

A Council Chamber.

The Duke, and Senators, sitting at a Table ; Officers attending.

Duke. There is no composition⁷ in these news,
That gives them credit.

⁷ Consistency.

1 *Sen.* Indeed, they are disproportion'd ;
My letters say, a hundred and seven gallies.

Duke. And mine, a hundred and forty.

2 *Sen.* And mine, two hundred :
But though they jump not on a just account,
(As in these cases, where the aim⁸ reports,
'Tis oft with difference,) yet do they all confirm
A Turkish fleet, and bearing up to Cyprus.

Duke. Nay, it is possible enough to judgment ;
I do not so secure me in the error,
But the main article I do approve
In fearful sense.

Sailor. [*Within.*] What ho ! what ho ! what ho !

Enter an Officer, with a Sailor.

Off. A messenger from the gallies.

Duke. Now ? the business ?

Sailor. The Turkish preparation makes for
Rhodes :

So was I bid report here to the state,
By signior Angelo.

Duke. How say you by this change ?

1 *Sen.* This cannot be,
By no assay of reason ; 'tis a pageant,
To keep us in false gaze : When we consider
The importancy of Cyprus to the Turk ;
And let ourselves again but understand,
That, as it more concerns the Turk than Rhodes,
So may he with more facile question⁹ bear it,
For that it stands not in such warlike brace,¹
But altogether lacks the abilities
That Rhodes is dress'd in : — if we make thought
of this,

We must not think, the Turk is so unskilful,
To leave that latest which concerns him first ;

⁸ Conjecture.

⁹ Easy dispute.

¹ State of defence.

Neglecting an attempt of ease, and gain,
To wake and wage², a danger profitless.

Duke. Nay, in all confidence, he's not for
Rhodes.

Off. Here is more news.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. The Ottomites, reverend and gracious,
Steering with due course toward the isle of Rhodes,
Have there injointed them with an after fleet.

1 Sen. Ay, so I thought: — How many, as you
guess?

Mess. Of thirty sail: and now do they re-stem
Their backward course, bearing with frank appear-
ance

Their purposes toward Cyprus. — Signior Montano,
Your trusty and most valiant servitor,
With his free duty recommends you thus,
And prays you to believe him.

Duke. 'Tis certain then for Cyprus. —
Marcus Lucchesé, is he not in town?

1 Sen. He's now in Florence.

Duke. Write from us; wish him post post-haste:
despatch.

1 Sen. Here comes Brabantio, and the valiant
Moor.

*Enter BRABANTIO, OTHELLO, IAGO, RODERIGO,
and Officers.*

Duke. Valiant Othello, we must straight employ
you
Against the general enemy Ottoman.
I did not see you; welcome, gentle signior;

[*To BRABANTIO.*
We lack'd your counsel and your help to-night.

² Combat.

Bra. So did I yours : Good your grace, pardon me ;
 Neither my place, nor aught I heard of business,
 Hath rais'd me from my bed ; nor doth the general
 care
 Take hold on me ; for my particular grief
 Is of so flood-gate and o'erbearing nature,
 That it engluts and swallows other sorrows,
 And it is still itself.

Duke. Why, what's the matter ?

Bra. My daughter ! O, my daughter !

Sen. Dead ?

Bra. Ay, to me ;
 She is abus'd, stol'n from me, and corrupted
 By spells and medicines bought of mountebanks :
 For nature so preposterously to err,
 Being not deficient, blind, or lame of sense,
 Sans³ witchcraft could not —

Duke. Whoe'er he be, that, in this foul proceed-
 ing,
 Hath thus beguil'd your daughter of herself,
 And you of her, the bloody book of law
 You shall yourself read in the bitter letter,
 After your own sense ; yea, though our proper son
 Stood in your action.⁴

Bra. Humbly I thank your grace.
 Here is the man, this Moor ; whom now, it seems,
 Your special mandate, for the state affairs,
 Hath hither brought.

Duke & Sen. We are very sorry for it.

Duke. What, in your own part, can you say to
 this? [To OTHELLO.

Bra. Nothing but this is so.

Oth. Most potent, grave, and reverend signiors,
 My very noble and approv'd good masters,
 That I have ta'en away this old man's daughter,

³ Without.

⁴ Accusation.

It is most true; true, I have married her;
 The very head and front of my offending
 Hath this extent, no more. Rude am I in my
 speech,

And little bless'd with the set phrase of peace,
 For since these arms of mine had seven years' pith,
 Till now some nine moons wasted, they have us'd
 Their dearest action⁵ in the tented field:

And little of this great world can I speak,
 More than pertains to feats of broil and battle;
 And therefore little shall I grace my cause,
 In speaking for myself: Yet, by your gracious pa-
 tience,

I will a round unvarnish'd tale deliver
 Of my whole course of love; what drugs, what
 charms,

What conjuration, and what mighty magick,
 (For such proceeding I am charg'd withal,)
 I won his daughter with.

Bra. A maiden never bold;
 Of spirit so still and quiet, that her motion
 Blush'd at herself; and she, — in spite of nature,
 Of years, of country, credit, every thing, —
 To fall in love with what she fear'd to look on?
 It is a judgment maim'd, and most imperfect,
 That will confess — perfection so could err
 Against all rules of nature, and must be driven
 To find out practices of cunning hell,
 Why this should be. I therefore vouch again,
 That with some mixtures powerful o'er the blood,
 Or with some dram conjur'd to this effect,
 He wrought upon her.

Duke. To vouch this is no proof;
 Without more certain and more overt test,⁶
 Than these thin habits, and poor likelihoods
 Of modern seeming⁷, do prefer against him.

⁵ Best exertion.⁶ Open proof.⁷ Weak show.

1 *Sen.* But, Othello, speak ; —
 Did you by indirect and forced courses
 Subdue and poison this young maid's affections ?
 Or came it by request, and such fair question
 As soul to soul affordeth ?

Oth. I do beseech you,
 Send for the lady to the Sagittary, ⁸
 And let her speak of me before her father :
 If you do find me foul in her report,
 The trust, the office, I do hold of you,
 Not only take away, but let your sentence
 Even fall upon my life.

Duke. Fetch Desdemona hither.

Oth. Ancient, conduct them ; you best know the
 place. — [*Exeunt IAGO, and Attendants.*]
 And, till she come, as truly as to heaven
 I do confess the vices of my blood,
 So justly to your grave ears I'll present
 How I did thrive in this fair lady's love,
 And she in mine.

Duke. Say it, Othello.

Oth. Her father lov'd me, oft invited me ;
 Still question'd me the story of my life,
 From year to year ; the battles, sieges, fortunes,
 That I have pass'd.
 I ran it through, even from my boyish days,
 To the very moment that he bade me tell it.
 Wherein I spoke of most disastrous chances,
 Of moving accidents, by flood and field ;
 Of hair-breadth scapes i'the imminent deadly
 breach ;
 Of being taken by the insolent foe,
 And sold to slavery ; of my redemption thence,
 And portance ⁹ in my travel's history :
 Wherein of antres ¹ vast, and desarts idle,

⁸ The sign of the fictitious creature so called.

⁹ My behaviour.

¹ Caves and dens.

Rough quarries, rocks, and hills whose heads touch
heaven,

It was my hint to speak, such was the process ;
And of the Cannibals that each other eat,
The Anthropophagi, and men whose heads
Do grow beneath their shoulders. These things to
hear,

Would Desdemona seriously incline :
But still the house affairs would draw her thence ;
Which ever as she could with haste despatch,
She'd come again, and with a greedy ear
Devour up my discourse : Which I observing,
Took once a pliant hour ; and found good means
To draw from her a prayer of earnest heart,
That I would all my pilgrimage dilate,
Whereof by parcels she had something heard,
But not intently² : I did consent ;
And often did beguile her of her tears,
When I did speak of some distressful stroke,
That my youth suffer'd. My story being done,
She gave me for my pains a world of sighs :
She swore, — In faith, 'twas strange, 'twas passing
strange ;

'Twas pitiful, 'twas wondrous pitiful :
She wish'd, she had not heard it ; yet she wish'd
That heaven had made her such a man : she
thank'd me ;

And bade me, if I had a friend that lov'd her,
I should but teach him how to tell my story,
And that would woo her. Upon this hint, I spake ;
She lov'd me for the dangers I had pass'd ;
And I lov'd her, that she did pity them.
This only is the witchcraft I have us'd ;
Here comes the lady, let her witness it.

² Intention and attention were once synonymous.

Enter DESDEMONA, IAGO, and Attendants.

Duke. I think, this tale would win my daughter too. —

Good Brabantio,
Take up this mangled matter at the best :
Men do their broken weapons rather use,
Than their bare hands.

Bra. I pray you, hear her speak ;
If she confess, that she was half the wooer,
Destruction on my head, if my bad blame
Light on the man ! — Come hither, gentle mistress ;
Do you perceive in all this noble company,
Where most you owe obedience ?

Des. My noble father,
I do perceive here a divided duty :
To you I am bound for life and education ;
My life, and education, both do learn me
How to respect you ; you are the lord of duty,
I am hitherto your daughter : But here's my
husband ;
And so much duty as my mother show'd
To you, preferring you before her father,
So much I challenge that I may profess
Due to the Moor, my lord.

Bra. Then I have done : —
Please it your grace, on to the state affairs :
I had rather to adopt a child, than get it. —
Come hither, Moor :
I here do give thee that with all my heart,
Which, but thou hast already, with all my heart
I would keep from thee. — For your sake, jewel,
I am glad at soul I have no other child ;
For thy escape would teach me tyranny,
To hang clogs on them. — I have done, my lord.

Duke. Let me speak like yourself, and lay a
sentence,

Which, as a grise³, or step, may help these lovers
Into your favour.

When remedies are past, the griefs are ended,
By seeing the worst, which late on hopes depended.
To mourn a mischief that is past and gone,
Is the next way to draw new mischief on.

What cannot be preserv'd when fortune takes,
Patience her injury a mockery makes.

The robb'd, that smiles, steals something from the
thief;

He robs himself, that spends a bootless grief.

Bra. So let the Turk of Cyprus us beguile;
We lose it not, so long as we can smile.

He bears the sentence well, that nothing bears
But the free comfort which from thence he hears:
But he bears both the sentence and the sorrow,
That, to pay grief, must of poor patience borrow.

These sentences, to sugar, or to gall,

Being strong on both sides are equivocal:

But words are words; I never yet did hear,
That the bruis'd heart was pierced through the ear.
I humbly beseech you, proceed to the affairs of state.

Duke. The Turk with a most mighty preparation
makes for Cyprus: — Othello, the fortitude of the
place is best known to you: And though we have
there a substitute of most allowed sufficiency, yet
opinion, a sovereign mistress of effects, throws a
more safer voice on you: you must therefore be
content to slubber⁴ the gloss of your new fortunes
with this more stubborn and boisterous expedition.

Oth. The tyrant custom, most grave senators,
Hath made the flinty and steel couch of war

My thrice-driven bed of down: I do agnize⁵

A natural and prompt alacrity,

I find in hardness, and do undertake

These present wars against the Ottomites.

³ *Grise* from degrees.

⁴ Obscure.

⁵ Acknowledge.

Most humbly therefore bending to your state,
 I crave fit disposition for my wife ;
 Due reference of place, and exhibition,⁶
 With such accommodation, and besort,
 As levels with her breeding.

Duke. If you please,
 Be't at her father's.

Bra. I'll not have it so.

Oth. Nor I.

Des. Nor I ; I would not there reside,
 To put my father in impatient thoughts,
 By being in his eye. Most gracious duke,
 To my unfolding lend a gracious ear ;
 And let me find a charter in your voice,
 To assist my simpleness.

Duke. What would you, Desdemona ?

Des. That I did love the Moor to live with him,
 My downright violence and storm of fortunes
 May trumpet to the world ; my heart's subdued
 Even to the very quality of my lord :
 I saw Othello's visage in his mind ;
 And to his honours, and his valiant parts,
 Did I my soul and fortunes consecrate.
 So that, dear lords, if I be left behind,
 A moth of peace, and he go to the war,
 I shall a heavy interim support
 By his dear absence : Let me go with him.

Oth. Your voices, lords : — 'beseech you, let her
 will

Have a free way.

Vouch with me, heaven ; I therefore beg it not
 For my distinct and proper satisfaction ;

But to be free and bounteous to her mind :

And heaven defend⁷ your good souls, that you
 think

I will your serious and great business scant,

⁶ Allowance.

⁷ Forbid.

For ⁸ she is with me : No, when light-wing'd toys
 Of feather'd Cupid seel ⁹ with wanton dulness
 My speculative and active instruments,
 That my disports corrupt and taint my business,
 Let housewives make a skillet ¹ of my helm,²
 And all indign and base adversities
 Make head against my estimation !

Duke. Be it as you shall privately determine,
 Either for her stay, or going : the affair cries —
 haste,

And speed must answer it ; you must hence to-
 night,

Des. To-night, my lord ?

Duke. This night,

Oth. With all my heart.

Duke. At nine i'the morning here we'll meet
 again.

Othello, leave some officer behind,
 And he shall our commission bring to you ;
 With such things else of quality and respect,
 As doth import you.

Oth. Please your grace, my ancient ;
 A man he is of honesty and trust :
 To his conveyance I assign my wife,
 With what else needful your good grace shall think
 To be sent after me.

Duke. Let it be so. —
 Good night to every one. — And, noble signior,
 [To BRABANTIO.

If virtue no delighted beauty lack,
 Your son-in-law is far more fair than black.

¹ *Sen.* Adieu, brave Moor ! use Desdemona well.

Bra. Look to her, Moor ; have a quick eye to
 see ;

She has deceiv'd her father, and may thee.

[*Exeunt* Duke, Senators, Officers, &c.

⁸ Because. ⁹ Blind. ¹ A small kettle. ² Helmet.

Oth. My life upon her faith, — Honest Iago,
My Desdemona must I leave to thee ;
I pr'ythee, let thy wife attend on her ;
And bring them after in the best advantage. —
Come, Desdemona ; I have but an hour
Of love, of worldly matters and direction,
To spend with thee : we must obey the time.

[*Exeunt* OTHELLO and DESDEMONA.]

Rod. Iago.

Iago. What say't thou, noble heart ?

Rod. What will I do, thinkest thou ?

Iago. Why, go to bed, and sleep.

Rod. I will incontinently³ drown myself.

Iago. Well, if thou dost, I shall never love thee
after it. Why, thou silly gentleman !

Rod. It is silliness to live, when to live is a tor-
ment : and then have we a prescription to die, when
death is our physician.

Iago. O villainous ! I have looked upon the world
for four times seven years ! and since I could dis-
tinguish between a benefit and an injury, I never
found a man that knew how to love himself. Ere
I would say, I would drown myself for the love of
a Guinea-hen, I would change my humanity with
a baboon.

Rod. What should I do ? I confess it is my
shame to be so found ; but it is not in my virtue to
amend it.

Iago. Virtue ? a fig ! 'tis in ourselves, that we
are thus, or thus. We have reason to cool our
raging passions ; whereof I take this, that you call
— love, to be one.

Rod. It cannot be.

Iago. Come, be a man : Drown thyself ? drown
cats, and blind puppies. I have professed me thy
friend, and I confess me knit to thy deserving with

³ Immediately.

cables of perdurable toughness; I could never better stead thee than now. Put money in thy purse; follow these wars; defeat thy favour with an usurped beard!⁴ I say, put money in thy purse. It cannot be, that Desdemona should long continue her love to the Moor, — put money in thy purse; — nor he his to her: it was a violent commencement, and thou shalt see an answerable sequestration; — put but money in thy purse. — These Moors are changeable in their wills; — fill thy purse with money: drowning thyself is clean out of the way: seek thou rather to be hanged in compassing thy joy, than to be drowned and go without it.

Rod. Wilt thou be fast to my hopes, if I depend on the issue?

Iago. Thou art sure of me; — Go, make money: — I have told thee often, and I re-tell thee again and again, I hate the Moor; My cause is hearted: thine hath no less reason: Let us be conjunctive in our revenge against him: go; provide thy money. We will have more of this to-morrow. Adieu.

Rod. Where shall we meet i'the morning?

Iago. At my lodging.

Rod. I'll be with thee betimes.

Iago. Go to; farewell. Do you hear, Roderigo?

Rod. What say you?

Iago. No more of drowning, do you hear?

Rod. I am changed. I'll sell all my land.

Iago. Go to; farewell; put money enough in your purse. [Exit RODERIGO.

Thus do I ever make my fool my purse:
For I mine own gain'd knowledge should profane,
If I would time expend with such a snipe,
But for my sport and profit. I hate the Moor;
And it is thought abroad, that in my bed

⁴ Change your countenance with a false beard.

If it hath ruffian'd so upon the sea,
 What ribs of oak, when mountains melt on them,
 Can hold the mortise? what shall we hear of this?

2 *Gent.* A segregation⁵ of the Turkish fleet:
 For do but stand upon the foaming shore,
 The chiding billow seems to pelt the clouds;
 The wind-shak'd surge, with high and monstrous
 main,

Seems to cast water on the burning bear⁶
 And quench the guards of the ever-fixed pole:
 I never did like molestation view
 On th' enchafed flood.

Mon. If that the Turkish fleet
 Be not inshelter'd and embay'd, they are drown'd:
 It is impossible they bear it out.

Enter a third Gentleman.

3 *Gent.* News, lords! our wars are done;
 The desperate tempest hath so bang'd the Turks,
 That their designment halts: A noble ship of
 Venice

Hath seen a grievous wreck and sufferance
 On most part of their fleet.

Mon. How! is this true?

3 *Gent.* The ship is here put in,
 A Veronesé; Michael Cassio,
 Lieutenant to the warlike Moor, Othello,
 Is come on shore: the Moor himself's at sea,
 And is in full commission here for Cyprus.

Mon. I am glad on't; 'tis a worthy governor.

3 *Gent.* But this same Cassio,—though he speak
 of comfort,
 Touching the Turkish loss,—yet he looks sadly,
 And prays the Moor be safe; for they were parted
 With foul and violent tempest.

⁵ Separation. ⁶ The constellation near the polar star.

Mon. 'Pray heaven he be ;
 For I have serv'd him, and the man commands
 Like a full soldier. Let's to the sea-side, ho !
 As well to see the vessel that's come in,
 As throw out our eyes for brave Othello ;
 Even till we make the main, and the aërial blue,
 An indistinct regard.

3 Gent. Come, let's do so ;
 For every minute is expectancy
 Of more arrivance.

Enter CASSIO.

Cas. Thanks to the valiant of this warlike isle,
 That so approve the Moor ; O, let the heavens
 Give him defence against the elements,
 For I have lost him on a dangerous sea !

Mon. Is he well shipp'd ?

Cas. His bark is stoutly timber'd, and his pilot
 Of very expert and approv'd allowance :⁷
 Therefore my hopes, not surfeited to death,
 Stand in bold cure.

[*Within.*] A sail, a sail, a sail !

Enter another Gentleman.

Cas. What noise ?

4 Gent. The town is empty ; on the brow o'the
 sea
 Stand ranks of people, and they cry—a sail.

Cas. My hopes do shape him for the governour.

2 Gent. They do discharge their shot of courtesy:
 [*Guns heard.*

Our friends, at least.

Cas. I pray you, sir, go forth,
 And give us truth who 'tis that is arriv'd.

2 Gent. I shall.

[*Exit.*

⁷ Allow'd and approv'd expertness.

Mon. But, good lieutenant, is your general wiv'd?

Cas. Most fortunately : he hath achiev'd a maid
That paragon's description, and wild fame ;
One that excels the quirks of blazoning pens,
And in the essential vesture of creation,
Does bear all excellency. — How now ? who has
put in ?

Re-enter second Gentleman.

2 Gent. 'Tis one Iago, ancient to the general.

Cas. He has had most favourable and happy
speed :

Tempests themselves, high seas, and howling winds,
The gutter'd rocks, and congregated sands, —
Traitors ensteep'd to clog the guiltless keel,
As having sense of beauty, do omit
Their mortal⁸ natures, letting go safely by
The divine Desdemona.

Mon. What is she ?

Cas. She that I spake of, our great captain's
captain,
Left in the conduct of the bold Iago ;
Whose footing here anticipates our thoughts,
A se'nnight's speed. — Great Jove, Othello guard,
And swell his sail with thine own powerful breath ;
That he may bless this bay with his tall ship,
Give renew'd fire to our extincted spirits,
And bring all Cyprus comfort ! — O, behold,

*Enter DESDEMONA, EMILIA, IAGO, RODERIGO, and
Attendants.*

The riches of the ship is come on shore !
Ye men of Cyprus, let her have your knees ; —

⁸ Deadly, destructive.

Hail to thee, lady! and the grace of heaven,
Before, behind thee, and on every hand,
Enwheel thee round!

Des. I thank you, valiant Cassio.
What tidings can you tell me of my lord?

Cas. He is not yet arriv'd; nor know I aught
But that he's well, and will be shortly here.

Des. O, but I fear; — How lost you company?

Cas. The great contention of the sea and skies
Parted our fellowship: But, hark! a sail.

[*Cry within, A sail, a sail! Then Guns heard.*

2 Gent. They give their greeting to the citadel;
This likewise is a friend.

Cas. See for the news. —

[*Exit Gentleman.*

Good ancient, you are welcome; — Welcome,
mistress: — [To EMILIA.

Let it not gall your patience, good Iago,
That I extend my manners; 'tis my breeding
That gives me this bold show of courtesy.

[*Kissing her.*

Iago. Sir, would she give you so much of her lips,
As of her tongue she oft bestows on me,
You'd have enough.

Des. Alas, she has no speech.

Iago. In faith, too much:
Marry, before your ladyship, I grant,
She puts her tongue a little in her heart,
And chides with thinking.

Emil. You have little cause to say so.

Iago. Come on, come on; you are pictures out of
doors,

Bells in your parlours, wild cats in your kitchens,
Saints in your injuries, devils being offended.

Des. O, fye upon thee, slanderer!

Iago. Nay, it is true, or else I am a Turk.

Emil. You shall not write my praise.

Iago. No, let me not.

Des. What wouldst thou write of me, if thou shouldst praise me?

Iago. O gentle lady, do not put me to't; For I am nothing, if not critical.

Des. Come on, assay:— There's one gone to the harbour?

Iago. Ay, madam.

Des. I am not merry; but I do beguile The thing I am, by seeming otherwise.— Come, how wouldst thou praise me?

Iago. I am about it; but, indeed, my invention Comes from my pate, as birdlime does from frize; It pluck out brains and all: But now my muse, If she be fair and wise, — fairness, and wit, The one's for use, the other useth it.

Des. Well prais'd! How if she be black and witty?

Iago. If she be black, and thereto have a wit, She'll find a white that shall her blackness fit.

Des. Worse and worse. These are old fond⁹ paradoxes, to make fools laugh i'the alehouse. But what praise couldst thou bestow on a deserving woman indeed! one, that, in the authority of her merit, did justly put on the vouch of very malice itself?

Iago. She that was ever fair, and never proud; Had tongue at will, and yet was never loud; She that, being anger'd, her revenge being nigh, Bade her wrong stay, and her displeasure fly: She that could think, and ne'er disclose her mind, See suitors following, and not look behind; She was a wight, — if ever such wight were, —

Des. To do what?

Iago. To suckle fools, and chronicle small beer.

Des. O most lame and impotent conclusion! —

⁹ Foolish.

Do not learn of him, Emilia, though he be thy husband. — How say you, Cassio? is he not a most profane and liberal counsellor.

Cas. He speaks home, madam; you may relish him more in the soldier, than in the scholar.

Iago. [*Aside.*] He takes her by the palm: Ay, well said, whisper: with as little a web as this will I ensnare as great a fly as Cassio. Ay, smile upon her, do: I will gyve¹ thee in thine own courtship. You say true; 'tis so, indeed: if such tricks as these strip you out of your lieutenantry, it had been better you had not kissed your three fingers so oft. Very good; an excellent courtesy! 'tis so, indeed. [*Trumpet.*] The Moor, I know his trumpet.

Cas. 'Tis truly so.

Des. Let's meet him, and receive him.

Cas. Lo, where he comes!

Enter OTHELLO, and Attendants.

Oth. O my fair warrior!

Des. My dear Othello?

Oth. It gives me wonder great as my content,
To see you here before me. O my soul's joy!
If after every tempest come such calms,
May the winds blow till they have waken'd death!
And let the labouring bark climb hills of seas,
Olympus-high; and duck again as low
As hell's from heaven! If it were now to die,
'Twere now to be most happy; for, I fear,
My soul hath her content so absolute,
That not another comfort like to this
Succeeds in unknown fate.

Des. The heavens forbid,
But that our loves and comforts should increase,
Even as our days do grow!

¹ Shackle, fetter.

Oth. Amen to that, sweet powers! —
 I cannot speak enough of this content,
 It stops me here; it is too much of joy:
 And this, and this the, greatest discords be,
[Kissing her.
 That e'er our hearts shall make!

Iago. O you are well tun'd now!
 But I'll set down the pegs that make this musick,
 As honest as I am. [Aside.

Oth. Come, let's to the castle. —
 News, friends; our wars are done, the Turks are
 drown'd.

How do our old acquaintance of this isle? —
 Honey, you shall be well desir'd² in Cyprus,
 I have found great love amongst them. O my sweet,
 I prattle out of fashion, and I dote
 In mine own comforts. — I pr'ythee, good Iago,
 Go to the bay, and disembark my coffers:
 Bring thou the master to the citadel;
 He is a good one, and his worthiness
 Does challenge much respect. — Come, Desdemona,
 Once more well met at Cyprus.

[*Exeunt* OTHELLO, DESDEMONA, and
Attendants.

Iago. Do thou meet me presently at the harbour.
 Come hither. If thou be'st valiant as (they say)
 base men, being in love, have then a nobility
 in their natures more than is native to them, — list
 me.³ The lieutenant to-night watches on the court
 of guard: — First, I must tell thee this — Desde-
 mona is directly in love with him.

Rod. With him! why, 'tis not possible.

Iago. Lay thy finger — thus, and let thy soul be
 instructed. Mark me with what violence she first
 loved the Moor, but for bragging, and telling her
 fantastical lies: And will she love him still for

² Much solicited by invitation.

³ Listen to me.

prating? let not thy discreet heart think it. Her eye must be fed; and what delight shall she have to look on the devil? There should be, — loveliness in favour; sympathy in years, manners, and beauties; all which the Moor is defective in: Now, for want of these, her delicate tenderness will find herself abused, and begin to disrelish and abhor the Moor; very nature will compel her to some second choice. Now, sir, this granted, (as it is a most pregnant and unforced position,) who stands so eminently in the degree of this fortune, as Cassio does? a knave very voluble; no further conscionable, than in putting on the mere form of civil and humane seeming, for the better compassing of his hidden affection? why, none; why, none: A subtle knave: besides, the knave is handsome, young; and hath all those requisites in him, that folly and green minds look after: A pestilent complete knave; and the woman hath found him already.

Rod. I cannot believe that in her; she is full of most blessed condition.⁴

Iago. Blessed nonsense! if she had been blessed, she would never have loved the Moor: Didst thou not see her touch the palm of his hand? didst not mark that?

Rod. Yes, that I did; but that was but courtesy.

Iago. By this hand; an index to villainous thoughts. — But, sir, be you ruled by me: I have brought you from Venice. Watch you to-night; for the command, I'll lay't upon you: Cassio knows you not; — I'll not be far from you: Do you find some occasion to anger Cassio, either by speaking too loud, or tainting his discipline; or from what other course you please, which the time shall more favourably minister.

Rod. Well.

⁴ Qualities, disposition of mind.

Iago. Sir, he is rash, and very sudden in choler; and, haply, with his truncheon may strike at you: Provoke him, that he may: for, even out of that, will I cause these of Cyprus to mutiny; whose qualification shall come into no true taste again, but by the displanting of Cassio. So shall you have a shorter journey to your desires, by the means I shall then have to prefer them; and the impediment most profitably removed, without the which there were no expectation of our prosperity.

Rod. I will do this, if I can bring it to any opportunity.

Iago. I warrant thee. Meet me by and by at the citadel: I must fetch his necessaries ashore. Farewell.

Rod. Adieu.

Iago. That Cassio loves her, I do well believe it; That she loves him, 'tis apt, and of great credit: The Moor, — howbeit that I endure him not, — Is of a constant, loving, noble nature; And, I dare think, he'll prove to Desdemona A most dear husband. Now I do love her too; Not out of absolute lust, (though, peradventure, I stand accountant for as great a sin,) But partly led to diet my revenge, For that I do suspect the Moor Othello Hath wrong'd me in my bed: the thought whereof Doth, like a poisonous mineral, gnaw my inwards; And nothing can or shall content my soul, Till I am even with him, wife for wife; Or, failing so, yet that I put the Moor At least into a jealousy so strong That judgment cannot cure. Which thing to do, — If this poor trash⁵ of Venice, whom I trace; For his quick hunting, stand the putting on,

⁵ Worthless hound.

I'll have our Michael Cassio on the hip ;
 Abuse him to the Moor in the rank garb,⁷ —
 For I fear Cassio with my night-cap too ;
 Make the Moor thank me, love me, and reward me,
 For making him egregiously an ass,
 And practising upon his peace and quiet
 Even to madness. 'Tis here, but yet confus'd ;
 Knavery's plain face is never seen, till us'd. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

A Street.

Enter a Herald, with a Proclamation, People following.

Her. It is Othello's pleasure, our noble and valiant general, that, upon certain tidings now arrived, importing the mere⁸ perdition of the Turkish fleet, every man put himself into triumph ; some to dance, some to make bonfires, each man to what sport and revels his addiction leads him ; for, besides these beneficial news, it is the celebration of his nuptials : So much was his pleasure should be proclaimed. All offices⁹ are open ; and there is full liberty of feasting, from this present hour of five, till the bell hath told eleven. Heaven bless the isle of Cyprus, and our noble general, Othello.

[*Exeunt.*

⁷ In the grossest manner.

⁸ Entire.

⁹ Rooms, or places in the castle.

SCENE III.

*A Hall in the Castle.**Enter OTHELLO, DESDEMONA, CASSIO, and Attendants.**Oth.* Good Michael, look you to the guard to-night :Let's teach ourselves that honourable stop,
Not to out-sport discretion.*Cas.* Iago hath direction what to do ;
But, notwithstanding, with my personal eye
Will I look to't.*Oth.* Iago is most honest.
Michael, good night : To-morrow, with our earliest,
Let me have speech with you. — Come, my dear
love. [To DESDEMONA.[Exeunt OTH. DES. and Attend.*Enter IAGO.**Cas.* Welcome, Iago : We must to the watch.*Iago.* Not this hour, lieutenant ; 'tis not yet ten
o'clock : Our general cast¹ us thus early, for the
love of his Desdemona ; whom let us not therefore
blame.*Cas.* She's a most exquisite lady.*Iago.* Come, lieutenant, I have a stoop of wine ;
and here without are a brace of Cyprus gallants,
that would fain have a measure to the health of the
black Othello.*Cas.* Not to-night, good Iago ; I have very poor
and unhappy brains for drinking : I could well wish¹ Dismissed.

courtesy would invent some other custom of entertainment.

Iago. O, they are our friends ; but one cup ; I'll drink for you.

Cas. I have drunk but one cup to-night, and that was craftily qualified² too, and, behold, what innovation it makes here : I am unfortunate in the infirmity, and dare not task my weakness with any more.

Iago. What, man ! 'tis a night of revels ; the gallants desire it.

Cas. Where are they ?

Iago. Here at the door ; I pray you, call them in.

Cas. I'll do't ; but it dislikes me. [*Exit CASSIO.*]

Iago. If I can fasten but one cup upon him,
With that which he hath drunk to-night already,
He'll be as full of quarrel and offence

As my young mistress' dog. Now, my sick fool,
Roderigo,

Whom love has turn'd almost the wrong side out-
ward,

To Desdemona hath to-night carous'd
Potations pottle deep ; and he's to watch :
Three lads of Cyprus, — noble swelling spirits,
That hold their honours in a wary distance,
The very elements of this warlike isle, —
Have I to-night fluster'd with flowing cups,
And they watch too. Now, 'mongst this flock of
drunkards,

Am I to put our Cassio in some action
That may offend the isle : — But here they come :
If consequence do but approve my dream,
My boat sails freely, both with wind and stream.

² Slily mixed with water.

*Re-enter CASSIO, with him MONTANO, and
Gentlemen.*

Cas. 'Fore heaven, they have given me a rouse³ already.

Mon. Good faith, a little one; not past a pint, as I am a soldier.

Iago. Some wine, ho!

And let me the canakin clink, clink; [Sings.

And let me the canakin clink:

A soldier's a man;

A life's but a span;

Why then, let a soldier drink.

Some wine, boys! [*Wine brought in.*

Cas. That's an excellent song.

Iago. I learned it in England, where (indeed) they are most potent in potting: your Dane, your German, and your Hollander, — Drink, ho! — are nothing to your English.

Cas. Is your Englishman so expert in his drinking?

Iago. Why, he drinks you, with facility, your Dane dead drunk; and can overthrow both your Almain and your Hollander.

Cas. To the health of our general.

Mon. I am for it, lieutenant; and I'll do you justice.⁴

Iago. O sweet England!

King Stephen was a worthy peer,⁵

His breeches cost him but a crown;

He held them sixpence all too dear,

With that he call'd the tailor — lown.⁶

³ A little more than enough.

⁴ Drink as much as you do.

⁵ A worthy fellow.

⁶ Clown.

*He was a wight of high renown,
 And thou art but of low degree:
 'Tis pride that pulls the country down,
 Then take thine auld cloak about thee.*

Some wine, ho!

Cas. Why, this is a more exquisite song than the other.

Iago. Will you hear it again?

Cas. No; for I hold him to be unworthy of his place, that does those things. — Well, — Heaven's above all; and there be souls that must be saved, and there be souls must not be saved.

Iago. It's true, good lieutenant.

Cas. For mine own part, — no offence to the general, or any man of quality, — I hope to be saved.

Iago. And so do I too, lieutenant.

Cas. Ay, but, by your leave, not before me; the lieutenant is to be saved before the ancient. Let's have no more of this; let's to our affairs. — Forgive us our sins! — Gentlemen, let's look to our business. Do not think, gentlemen, I am drunk; this is my ancient; — this is my right hand, and this is my left hand: — I am not drunk now; I can stand well enough, and speak well enough.

All. Excellent well.

Cas. Why, very well, then: you must not think then that I am drunk. [*Exit.*

Mon. To the platform, masters; come, let's set the watch.

Iago. You see this fellow that is gone before; — He is a soldier, fit to stand by Cæsar
 And give direction: and do but see his vice;
 'Tis to his virtue a just equinox,
 The one as long as the other: 'tis pity of him.
 I fear, the trust Othello puts him in,
 On some odd time of his infirmity
 Will shake this island.

Mon. But is he often thus ?

Iago. 'Tis evermore the prologue to his sleep :
He'll watch the horologe a double set,⁷
If drink rock not his cradle.

Mon. It were well,
The general were put in mind of it.
Perhaps, he sees it not ; or his good nature
Prizes the virtue that appears in Cassio,
And looks not on his evils : Is not this true ?

Enter RODERIGO.

Iago. How now, Roderigo? [*Aside.*
I pray you, after the lieutenant ; go.

[*Exit* RODERIGO.]

Mon. And 'tis great pity, that the noble Moor
Should hazard such a place, as his own second,
With one of an ingraft⁸ infirmity :
It were an honest action, to say
So to the Moor.

Iago. Not I, for this fair island :
I do love Cassio well ; and would do much
To cure him of this evil. But hark ! what noise ?
[*Cry within.* — Help ! help !

Re-enter CASSIO, driving in RODERIGO.

Cas. You rogue ! you rascal !

Mon. What's the matter, lieutenant ?

Cas. A knave ! — teach me my duty !

I'll beat the knave into a twiggen⁹ bottle.

Rod. Beat me !

Cas. Dost thou prate, rogue ?

[*Striking* RODERIGO.]

Mon. Nay, good lieutenant ; [*Staying him.*
I pray you, sir, hold your hand.

⁷ While the clock strikes two rounds, or four-and-twenty hours.

⁸ Rooted, settled.

⁹ A wicker'd bottle.

Cas. Let me go, sir,
Or I'll knock you o'er the mazzard.

Mon. Come, come, you're drunk.

Cas. Drunk! [*They fight.*]

Iago. Away, I say! go out, and cry — a mutiny.

[*Aside to ROD. who goes out.*]

Nay, good lieutenant, — alas, gentlemen, —
Help, ho! — Lieutenant, — sir, — Montano, —
sir, —

Help, masters! — Herè's a goodly watch, indeed!
[*Bell rings.*]

Who's that that rings the bell? The town will
rise.

Lieutenant, hold, you will be sham'd for ever.

Enter OTHELLO, and Attendants.

Oth. What is the matter here?

Mon. I bleed still, I am hurt to the death; — he
dies.

Oth. Hold, for your lives.

Iago. Hold, hold, lieutenant, sir, Montano, —
gentlemen, —

Have you forgot all sense of place and duty?
Hold, hold! the general speaks to you; hold, for
shame!

Oth. Why, how now, ho! from whence ariseth
this?

Are we turn'd Turks; and to ourselves do that,
Which heaven hath forbid the Ottomites?
For Christian shame, put by this barbarous brawl:
He that stirs next to carve for his own rage,
Holds his soul light; he dies upon his motion. —
Silence that dreadful bell, it frights the isle
From her propriety. — What is the matter, mas-
ters? —

Honest Iago, that look'st dead with grieving,
Speak, who began this? on thy love, I charge thee.

Iago. I do not know ; — friends all but now,
 even now,
 In quarter, and in terms : and then, but now,
 (As if some planet had unwitting men,)
 Swords out, and tilting one at other's breast,
 In opposition bloody. I cannot speak
 Any beginning to this peevish odds ;
 And 'would in action glorious I had lost
 These legs, that brought me to a part of it !

Oth. How comes it, Michael, you are thus forgot ?

Cas. I pray you pardon me, I cannot speak.

Oth. Worthy Montano, you were wont be civil ;
 The gravity and stillness of your youth
 The world hath noted, and your name is great
 In mouths of wisest censure ; What's the matter,
 That you unlace your reputation thus,
 And spend your rich opinion, for the name
 Of a night brawler ? give me answer to it.

Mon. Worthy Othello, I am hurt to danger ;
 Your officer, Iago, can inform you —
 While I spare speech, which something now offends
 me ; —

Of all that I do know : nor know I aught
 By me that's said or done amiss this night ;
 Unless self-charity be sometime a vice ;
 And to defend ourselves it be a sin,
 When violence assails us.

Oth. Now, by heaven,
 My blood begins my safer guides to rule ;
 And passion, having my best judgment collid,¹
 Assays to lead the way : If once I stir,
 Go do but lift this arm, the best of you
 Shall sink in my rebuke. Give me to know
 How this foul rout began, who set it on ;
 And he that is approv'd² in this offence,

¹ Darkened.

² Convicted by proof.

Though he hath twinn'd with me, both at a birth,
 Shall lose me. — What! in a town of war,
 Yet wild, the people's hearts brimful of fear,
 To manage private and domestick quarrel,
 In night, and on the court and guard of safety!
 'Tis monstrous. — Iago, who began it?

Mon. If partially affin'd³, or leagu'd in office,
 Thou dost deliver more or less than truth,
 Thou art no soldier.

Iago. Touch me not so near :
 I had rather have this tongue cut from my mouth,
 Than it should do offence to Michael Cassio ;
 Yet, I persuade myself, to speak the truth
 Shall nothing wrong him. — Thus it is, general.
 Montano and myself being in speech,
 There comes a fellow, crying out for help ;
 And Cassio following him with determin'd sword,
 To execute upon him : Sir, this gentleman
 Steps in to Cassio, and entreats his pause ;
 Myself the crying fellow did pursue,
 Lest, by his clamour, (as it so fell out,)
 The town might fall in fright : he, swift of foot,
 Outran my purpose ; and I return'd the rather
 For that I heard the clink and fall of swords,
 And Cassio high in oath ; which, till to-night,
 I ne'er might say before : when I came back,
 (For this was brief,) I found them close together,
 At blow, and thrust ; even as again they were,
 When you yourself did part them.
 More of this matter can I not report : —
 But men are men ; the best sometimes forget : —
 Though Cassio did some little wrong to him, —
 As men in rage strike those that wish them best ; —
 Yet, surely, Cassio, I believe, receiv'd,
 From him that fled, some strange indignity,
 Which patience could not pass.

³ Related by nearness of office.

Oth. I know, Iago,
Thy honesty and love doth mince this matter,
Making it light to Cassio : — Cassio, I love thee :
But never more be officer of mine. —

Enter DESDEMONA, attended.

Look, if my gentle love be not rais'd up ; —
I'll make thee an example.

Des. What's the matter, dear ?

Oth. All's well now, sweeting ; Come away to
bed.

Sir, for your hurts,
Myself will be your surgeon : Lead him off.

[*To MONTANO, who is led off.*

Iago, look with care about the town ;
And silence those whom this vile brawl distracted. —
Come, Desdemona ; 'tis the soldier's life,
To have their balmy slumbers wak'd with strife.

[*Exeunt all but IAGO and CASSIO.*

Iago. What, are you hurt, lieutenant ?

Cas. Ay, past all surgery.

Iago. Marry, heaven forbid !

Cas. Reputation, reputation, reputation ! O, I
have lost my reputation ! I have lost the immortal
part, sir, of myself, and what remains is bestial. —
My reputation, Iago, my reputation.

Iago. As I am an honest man, I thought you had
received some bodily wound ; there is more offence
in that, than in reputation. Reputation is an idle
and most false imposition ; oft got without merit,
and lost without deserving : You have lost no repu-
tation at all, unless you repute yourself such a loser.
What, man ! there are ways to recover the general
again : You are but now cast in his mood⁴, a
punishment more in policy than in malice ; even

⁴ Dismissed in his anger.

so as one would beat his offenceless dog, to affright an imperious lion : sue to him again, and he's yours.

Cas. I will rather sue to be despised, than to deceive so good a commander, with so slight, so drunken, and so indiscreet an officer. Drunk? and speak parrot?⁵ and squabble? swagger? swear? and discourse fustian with one's own shadow? — O thou invisible spirit of wine, if thou hast no name to be known by, let us call thee — devil!

Iago. What was he that you followed with your sword? What had he done to you?

Cas. I know not.

Iago. Is it possible?

Cas. I remember a mass of things, but nothing distinctly; a quarrel, but nothing wherefore. — O, that men should put an enemy in their mouths, to steal away their brains! that we should, with joy, revel, pleasure, and applause, transform ourselves into beasts!

Iago. Why, but you are now well enough: How came you thus recovered?

Cas. It hath pleased the devil, drunkenness, to give place to the devil, wrath: one unperfectness shows me another, to make me frankly despise myself.

Iago. Come, you are too severe a moraler: As the time, the place, and the condition of this country stands, I could heartily wish this had not befallen; but, since it is as it is, mend it for your own good.

Cas. I will ask him for my place again; he shall tell me, I am a drunkard! Had I as many mouths as Hydra, such an answer would stop them all. To be now a sensible man, by and by a fool, and presently a beast! O strange! — Every inordinate cup is unblessed, and the ingredient is a devil.

⁵ Talk idly.

Iago. Come, come, good wine is a good familiar creature, if it be well used; exclaim no more against it. And, good lieutenant, I think, you think I love you.

Cas. I have well approved it, sir. — I drunk!

Iago. You, or any man living, may be drunk at some time, man. I'll tell you what you shall do. Our general's wife is now the general: — I may say so in this respect, for that he hath devoted and given up himself to the contemplation, mark, and denotement of her parts and graces: — confess yourself freely to her; importune her; she'll help to put you in your place again: she is of so free, so kind, so apt, so blessed a disposition, that she holds it a vice in her goodness, not to do more than she is requested: This broken joint, between you and her husband, entreat her to splinter; and, my fortunes against any lay⁶ worth naming, this crack of your love shall grow stronger than it was before.

Cas. You advise me well.

Iago. I protest, in the sincerity of love, and honest kindness.

Cas. I think it freely; and, betimes in the morning, I will beseech the virtuous Desdemona to undertake for me: I am desperate of my fortunes, if they check me here.

Iago. You are in the right. Good night, lieutenant; I must to the watch.

Cas. Good night, honest Iago. [*Exit CASSIO.*]

Iago. And what's he then, that says, — I play the villain?

When this advice is free, I give, and honest,
 Probal to thinking, and (indeed) the course
 To win the Moor again? For, 'tis most easy

⁶ Bet or wager.

The inclining Desdemona to subdue
 In any honest suit : she's fram'd as fruitful ⁷
 As the free elements. And then for her
 To win the Moor, — were't to renounce his baptism,
 His soul is so enfetter'd to her love,
 That she may make, unmake, do what she list,
 With his weak function. How am I then a villain,
 To counsel Cassio to this parallel ⁸ course,
 Directly to his good? Divinity of hell!
 When devils will their blackest sins put on,
 They do suggest at first with heavenly shows,
 As I do now : For while this honest fool
 Plies Desdemona to repair his fortunes,
 And she for him pleads strongly to the Moor,
 I'll pour this pestilence into his ear, —
 That she repeals ⁹ him for her love of him?
 And, by how much she strives to do him good,
 She shall undo her credit with the Moor.
 So will I turn her virtue into pitch ;
 And out of her own goodness make the net,
 That shall enmesh them all. — How now, Roderigo?

Enter RODERIGO.

Rod. I do follow here in the chase, not like a hound that hunts, but one that fills up the cry. My money is almost spent ; I have been to-night exceedingly well cudgelled ; and, I think, the issue will be — I shall have so much experience for my pains : and so, with no money at all, and a little more wit, return to Venice.

Iago. How poor are they, that have not patience! —
 What wound did ever heal, but by degrees?

⁷ Liberal, bountiful.

⁸ Even.

⁹ Recalls.

Thou know'st we work by wit, and not by witch-
craft ;
And wit depends on dilatory time.
Does't not go well? Cassio hath beaten thee,
And thou, by that small hurt, hast cashier'd Cassio :
Though other things grow fair against the sun,
Yet fruits, that blossom first, will first be ripe :
Content thyself a while : 'tis almost morn :
Pleasure, and action, make the hours seem short. —
Retire thee ; go where thou art billeted :
Away, I say ; thou shalt know more hereafter :
Nay, get thee gone. [*Exit* ROD.] Two things are
to be done, —
My wife must move for Cassio to her mistress ;
I'll set her on ;
Myself, the while, to draw the Moor apart,
And bring him jump¹ when he may Cassio find
Soliciting his wife : — Ay, that's the way ;
Dull not device by coldness and delay. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. — *Before the Castle.*

Enter CASSIO, and some Musicians.

Cas. Masters, play here, I will content your
pains,
Something that's brief; and bid — good-morrow,
general. [*Musick.*

¹ Just at the time.

Enter Clown.

Clo. Masters, here's money for you : and the general so likes your musick, that he desires you, of all loves, to make no more noise with it.

1 Mus. Well, sir, we will not.

Clo. If you have any musick that may not be heard, to't again : but, as they say, to hear musick, the general does not greatly care.

1 Mus. We have none such, sir.

Clo. Then put up your pipes in your bag, for I'll away : Go ; vanish into air ; away.

[*Exeunt Musicians.*]

Cas. Dost thou hear, my honest friend ?

Clo. No, I hear not your honest friend ; I hear you.

Cas. Pr'ythee, keep up thy quillets.² There's a poor piece of gold for thee : if the gentlewoman that attends the general's wife be stirring, tell her there's one Cassio entreats her a little favour of speech : Wilt thou do this ?

Clo. She is stirring, sir ; if she will stir hither, I shall seem to notify unto her. [*Exit.*]

Enter IAGO.

Cas. Do, good my friend. — In happy time, Iago.

Iago. You have not been a-bed then ?

Cas. Why, no ; the day had broke
Before we parted. I have made bold, Iago,
To send in to your wife : My suit to her
Is, that she will to virtuous Desdemona
Procure me some access.

Iago. I'll send her to you presently ;
And I'll devise a mean to draw the Moor

² Nice distinctions.

Out of the way, that your converse and business
May be more free. [*Exit.*

Cas. I humbly thank you for't. I never knew
A Florentine more kind and honest.

Enter EMILIA.

Emil. Good-morrow, good lieutenant: I am
sorry
For your displeasure; but all will soon be well.
The general, and his wife, are talking of it;
And she speaks for you stoutly: The Moor replies,
That he, you hurt, is of great fame in Cyprus,
And great affinity; and that, in wholesome wisdom,
He might not but refuse you: but, he protests, he
loves you;
And needs no other suitor, but his likings,
To take the saf'st occasion by the front,
To bring you in again.

Cas. Yet, I beseech you, —
If you think fit, or that it may be done,
Give me advantage of some brief discourse
With Desdemona alone.

Emil. Pray you, come in;
I will bestow you where you shall have time
To speak your bosom freely.

Cas. I am much bound to you.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Room in the Castle.

Enter OTHELLO, IAGO, and Gentlemen.

Oth. These letters give, Iago, to the pilot;
And, by him, do my duties to the state:

That done, I will be walking on the works.
Repair there to me.

Iago. Well, my good lord, I'll do't.

Oth. This fortification, gentlemen, — shall we see't?

Gent. We'll wait upon your lordship. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

Before the Castle.

Enter DESDEMONA, CASSIO, *and* EMILIA.

Des. Be thou assur'd, good Cassio, I will do
All my abilities in thy behalf.

Emil. Good madam, do ; I know it grieves my
husband,
As if the case were his.

Des. O, that's an honest fellow. — Do not doubt,
Cassio,
But I will have my lord and you again
As friendly as you were.

Cas. Bounteous madam,
Whatever shall become of Michael Cassio,
He's never any thing but your true servant.

Des. O, sir, I thank you : You do love my lord :
You have known him long ; and be you well
assur'd,

He shall in strangeness stand no further off
Than in a politic distance.

Cas. Ay, but lady,
That policy may either last so long,
Or feed upon such nice and waterish diet,
Or breed itself so out of circumstance,
That, I being absent, and my place supplied,
My general will forget my love and service.

Des. Do not doubt that; before Emilia here,
 I give thee warrant of thy place: assure thee,
 If I do vow a friendship, I'll perform it
 To the last article: my lord shall never rest;
 I'll watch him tame³, and talk him out of patience;
 His bed shall seem a school, his board a shrift;
 I'll intermingle every thing he does
 With Cassio's suit: Therefore be merry, Cassio;
 For thy solicitor shall rather die,
 Than give thy cause away.

Enter OTHELLO, and IAGO, at a distance.

Emil. Madam, here comes
 My lord.

Cas. Madam, I'll take my leave.

Des. Why, stay,
 And hear me speak.

Cas. Madam, not now; I am very ill at ease,
 Unfit for mine own purposes.

Des. Well, well,
 Do your discretion. [*Exit CASSIO.*]

Iago. Ha! I like not that.

Oth. What dost thou say?

Iago. Nothing, my lord: or if—I know not
 what.

Oth. Was not that Cassio, parted from my wife?

Iago. Cassio, my lord? No, sure, I cannot think
 it,

That he would steal away so guilty-like,
 Seeing you coming.

Oth. I do believe 'twas he.

Des. How, now, my lord?

I have been talking with a suitor here,
 A man that languishes in your displeasure.

Oth. Who is't, you mean?

³ Hawks are tamed by keeping them from sleep.

Des. Why, your lieutenant Cassio. Good my lord,

If I have any grace, or power to move you,
His present reconciliation take :
For, if he be not one that truly loves you,
That errs in ignorance, and not in cunning,
I have no judgment in an honest face :
I pr'ythee, call him back.

Oth. Went he hence now ?

Des. Ay, sooth ; so humbled,
That he hath left part of his grief with me ;
I suffer with him. Good love, call him back.

Oth. Not now, sweet Desdemona ; some other time.

Des. But shall't be shortly ?

Oth. The sooner, sweet, for you.

Des. Shall't be to-night at supper ?

Oth. No, not to-night.

Des. To-morrow dinner then ?

Oth. I shall not dine at home ;
I meet the captains at the citadel.

Des. Why then, to-morrow night ; or Tuesday morn ;

Or Tuesday noon, or night ; or Wednesday morn ;—
I pray thee, name the time ; but let it not
Exceed three days : in faith he's penitent ;
And yet his trespass, in our common reason,
(Save that, they say, the wars must make examples
Out of their best⁴,) is not almost a fault
To incur a private check : When shall he come ?
Tell me, Othello. I wonder in my soul,
What you could ask me, that I should deny,
Or stand so mammering⁵ on. What ! Michael
Cassio,

That came a wooing with you ; and many a time,
When I have spoke of you dispraisingly,

⁴ Best men.

⁵ Hesitating.

Hath ta'en your part ; to have so much to do
To bring him in ! Trust me, I could do much. —

Oth. Pr'ythee, no more : let him come when he
will ;

I will deny thee nothing.

Des. Why this is not a boon ;
'Tis as I should entreat you wear your gloves,
Or feed on nourishing dishes, or keep you warm ;
Or sue to you to do peculiar profit
To your own person : Nay, when I have a suit,
Wherein I mean to touch your love indeed,
It shall be full of poise⁶ and difficulty,
And fearful to be granted.

Oth. I will deny thee nothing :
Whereon, I do beseech thee, grant me this,
To leave me but a little to myself.

Des. Shall I deny you ? no : Farewell, my lord.

Oth. Farewell, my Desdemona : I will come to
thee straight.

Des. Emilia, come : — Be it as your fancies teach
you ;

Whate'er you be, I am obedient.

[*Exit, with EMILIA.*]

Oth. Excellent wretch ! Perdition catch my soul,
But I do love thee ! and when I love thee not,
Chaos is come again.

Iago. My noble lord, —

Oth. What dost thou say, Iago ?

Iago. Did Michael Cassio, when you woo'd my
lady,

Know of your love ?

Oth. He did, from first to last : Why dost thou
ask ?

Iago. But for a satisfaction of my thought ;
No further harm.

Oth. Why of thy thought, Iago ?

⁶ Weight.

Iago. I did not think, he had been acquainted
with her.

Oth. O, yes; and went between us very oft.

Iago. Indeed?

Oth. Indeed! ay, indeed: — Discern'st thou aught
in that?

Is he not honest?

Iago. Honest, my lord?

Oth. Ay, honest.

Iago. My lord, for aught I know.

Oth. What dost thou think?

Iago. Think, my lord?

Oth. Think, my lord!

By heaven, he echoes me,
As if there were some monster in his thought
Too hideous to be shown. — Thou dost mean some-
thing:

I heard thee say but now, — Thou lik'dst not that,
When Cassio left my wife; What didst not like?
And, when I told thee — he was of my counsel
In my whole course of wooing, thou cry'dst,
Indeed?

And didst contract and purse thy brow together,
As if thou then hadst shut up in thy brain
Some horrible conceit: If thou dost love me,
Show me thy thought.

Iago. My lord, you know I love you.

Oth. I think, thou dost:

And, — for I know thou art full of love and
honesty,
And weigh'st thy words before thou giv'st them
breath, —

Therefore these stops of thine fright me the more:
For such things, in a false disloyal knave,
Are tricks of custom; but, in a man that's just,
They are close denotements, working from the heart,
That passion cannot rule.

Iago. For Michael Cassio, —
I dare be sworn, I think that he is honest.

Oth. I think so too.

Iago. Men should be what they seem ;
Or, those that be not, 'would they might seem
none !

Oth. Certain, men should be what they seem.

Iago. Why then,
I think that Cassio is an honest man.

Oth. Nay, yet there's more in this :
I pray thee, speak to me as to thy thinkings,
As thou dost ruminatè ; and give thy worst of
thoughts
The worst of words.

Iago. Good my lord, pardon me ;
Though I am bound to every act of duty,
I am not bound to that all slaves are free to.
Utter my thoughts ? Why, say, they are vile and
false, —

As where's that palace, whereinto foul things
Sometimes intrude not ? Who has a breast so pure,
But some uncleanly apprehensions
Keep leets⁷, and law-days, and in session sit
With meditations lawful ?

Oth. Thou dost conspire against thy friend,
Iago,
If thou but think'st him wrong'd, and mak'st his ear
A stranger to thy thoughts.

Iago. I do beseech you, —
Though I, perchance, am vicious in my guess,
As, I confess, it is my nature's plague
To spy into abuses ; and, oft, my jealousy
Shapes faults that are not, — I entreat you then,
From one that so imperfectly conjects,⁸
You'd take no notice ; nor build yourself a trouble

⁷ Courts of enquiry.

⁸ Conjectures.

Out of his scattering and unsure observance : —
 It were not for your quiet, nor your good,
 Nor for my manhood, honesty, or wisdom,
 To let you know my thoughts.

Oth. What dost thou mean ?

Iago. Good name, in man, and woman, dear my
 lord,

Is the immediate jewel of their souls :
 Who steals my purse, steals trash ; 'tis something,
 nothing ;
 'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thou-
 sands ;

But he that filches from me my good name,
 Robs me of that, which not enriches him,
 And makes me poor indeed.

Oth. By heaven, I'll know thy thought.

Iago. You cannot, if my heart were in your hand ;
 Nor shall not, whilst 'tis in my custody.

Oth. Ha !

Iago. O, beware, my lord, of jealousy ;
 It is the green-ey'd monster, which doth mock
 The meat it feeds on : That cuckold lives in bliss,
 Who, certain of his fate, loves not his wronger ;
 But, O, what dreadful minutes tells he o'er,
 Who dotes, yet doubts ; suspects, yet strongly loves !

Oth. O misery !

Iago. Poor, and content, is rich, and rich enough ;
 But riches, fineless⁹, is as poor as winter,
 To him that ever fears he shall be poor : —
 Good heaven, the souls of all my tribe defend
 From jealousy !

Oth. Why ? why is this ?
 Think'st thou, I'd make a life of jealousy,
 To follow still the changes of the moon
 With fresh suspicions ? No : to be once in doubt,

⁹ Endless, unbounded.

To seel¹ her father's eyes up close as oak, —
 He thought 'twas witchcraft: — But I am much
 to blame;

I humbly do beseech you of your pardon,
 For too much loving you.

Oth. I am bound to thee for ever.

Iago. I see, this hath a little dash'd your spirits.

Oth. Not a jot, not a jot.

Iago. Trust me, I fear it has.
 I hope, you will consider, what is spoke
 Comes from my love; — But, I do see, you are
 mov'd: —

I am to pray you, not to strain my speech
 To grosser issues², nor to larger reach,
 Than to suspicion.

Oth. I will not.

Iago. Should you do so, my lord,
 My speech should fall into such vile success
 As my thoughts aim not at. Cassio's my worthy
 friend:

My lord, I see you are mov'd.

Oth. No, not much mov'd: —
 I do not think but Desdemona's honest.

Iago. Long live she so! and long live you to
 think so!

Oth. And yet, how nature, erring from itself, —

Iago. Ay, there's the point: — As, — to be bold
 with you, —

Not to affect many proposed matches,
 Of her own clime, complexion, and degree;
 Whereto, we see, in all things nature tends:
 But, pardon me: I do not, in position,
 Distinctly speak of her: though I may fear,
 Her will, recoiling to her better judgment,

¹ An expression from falconry: to seel a hawk is to sew up his eye-lids.

² Conclusions.

May fall to match you with her country forms,
And (happily) repent.

Oth. Farewell, farewell :

If more thou dost perceive, let me know more ;
Set on thy wife to observe : Leave me, Iago.

Iago. My lord, I take my leave. [*Going.*]

Oth. Why did I marry ? — This honest creature,
doubtless,

Sees and knows more, much more, than he unfolds.

Iago. My lord, I would, I might entreat your
honour

To scan this thing no further ; leave it to time :

And though it be fit that Cassio have his place,

(For, sure, he fills it up with great ability,)

Yet, if you please to hold him off a while,

You shall by that perceive him and his means :

Note, if your lady strain his entertainment³

With any strong or vehement importunity ;

Much will be seen in that. In the mean time,

Let me be thought too busy in my fears,

(As worthy cause I have, to fear — I am,)

And hold her free, I do beseech your honour.

Oth. Fear not my government.

Iago. I once more take my leave. [*Exit.*]

Oth. This fellow's of exceeding honesty,

And knows all qualities, with a learned spirit,

Of human dealings : If I do prove her haggard,⁴

Though that her jesses⁵ were my dear heartstrings,

I'd whistle her off, and let her down the wind,

To prey at fortune. Haply, for I am black ;

And have not those soft parts of conversation

That chamberers have : — Or, for I am declin'd

Into the vale of years ; — yet that's not much ;

³ Press hard his re-admission to his office.

⁴ A species of hawk, also a term of reproach applied to a wanton.

⁵ Straps of leather by which a hawk is held on the fist.

She's gone; I am abus'd; and my relief
 Must be — to loath her. O curse of marriage,
 That we can call these delicate creatures ours
 And not their appetites! I had rather be a toad,
 And live upon the vapour of a dungeon,
 Than keep a corner in the thing I love,
 For other's uses. Yet, 'tis the plague of great ones;
 Prerogativ'd are they, less than the base;
 'Tis destiny unshunnable, like death.
 But Desdemona comes! If she be false,

Enter DESDEMONA and EMILIA.

O, then heaven mocks itself! — I'll not believe it.

Des. How now, my dear Othello?
 Your dinner, and the generous islanders
 By you invited, do attend your presence.

Oth. I am to blame.

Des. Why is your speech so faint? are you not
 well?

Oth. I have a pain upon my forehead here.

Des. Why that's with watching; 'twill away again,
 Let me but bind it hard, within this hour
 It will be well.

Oth. Your napkin is too little;

*[He puts the Handkerchief from him, and it
 drops.]*

Let it alone. Come, I'll go in with you.

Des. I am very sorry that you are not well.

[Exeunt OTH. and DES.]

Emil. I am glad I have found this napkin;
 This was her first remembrance from the Moor:
 My wayward husband hath a hundred times
 Woo'd me to steal it; but she so loves the token,
 (For he conjur'd her, she would ever keep it,)
 That she reserves it ever more about her,
 To kiss and talk to. I'll have the work ta'en out,

And give it Iago :
 What he'll do with it, heaven knows, not I ;
 I nothing, but to please his fantasy.

Enter IAGO.

Iago. How now ! what do you here alone ?

Emil. Do not you chide ; I have a thing for you.

Iago. A thing for me ? — it is a common thing.

Emil. Ha !

Iago. To have a foolish wife.

Emil. O, is that all ? What will you give me now
 For that same handkerchief ?

Iago. What handkerchief !

Emil. What handkerchief ?

Why, that the Moor first gave to Desdemona ;
 That which so often you did bid me steal.

Iago. Hast stolen it from her ?

Emil. No, faith ; she let it drop by negligence ;
 And to the advantage, I, being here, took't up.
 Look, here it is.

Iago. A good wench ; give it me.

Emil. What will you do with it, that you have
 been so earnest
 To have me filch it ?

Iago. Why, what's that to you ?

[*Snatching it.*]

Emil. If it be not for some purpose of import,
 Give it me again : Poor lady ! she'll run mad,
 When she shall lack it.

Iago. Be not you known of't ; I have use for it.
 Go, leave me. [*Exit EMILIA.*]

I will in Cassio's lodging lose this napkin,
 And let him find it : Trifles, light as air,
 Are, to the jealous, confirmations strong
 As proofs of holy writ. This may do something.
 The Moor already changes with my poison : —

Dangerous conceits are, in their natures, poisons,
Which, at the first, are scarce found to distaste;
But, with a little act upon the blood,
Burn like the mines of sulphur. — I did say so: —

Enter OTHELLO.

Look, where he comes! Not poppy, nor mandra-
gora,⁶
Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world,
Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep
Which thou ow'dst⁷ yesterday.

Oth. Ha! ha! false to me?
To me?

Iago. Why, how now, general? no more of that.

Oth. Avaunt! be gone! thou hast set me on the
rack:

I swear, tis better to be much abus'd,
Than but to know't a little.

Iago. How now, my lord?

Oth. What sense had I of her stolen hours of
guilt?

I saw it not, thought it not, it harm'd not me:
I slept the next night well, was free and merry;
I found not Cassio's kisses on her lips:
He that is robb'd, not wanting what is stolen,
Let him not know it, and he's not robb'd at all.
I had been happy had I nothing known.

Iago. I am sorry to hear this.

Oth. O now, for ever,
Farewell the tranquil mind! farewell content!
Farewell the plumed troop, and the big wars,
That make ambition virtue! O, farewell!
Farewell the neighing steed, and the shrill trump,
The spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing fife,

⁶ The mandrake has a soporifick quality.

⁷ Possessedst.

The royal banner ; and all quality,
 Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war !
 And O you mortal engines, whose rude throats
 The immortal Jove's dread clamours counterfeit,
 Farewell ! Othello's occupation's gone !

Iago. Is it possible ! — My lord, —

Oth. Villain, be sure thou prove my love a whore ;
 Be sure of it ; give me the ocular proof ;

[*Taking him by the Throat.*

Or, by the worth of mine eternal soul,
 Thou hadst been better have been born a dog,
 Than answer my wak'd wrath.

Iago.

Is it come to this ?

Oth. Make me to see it ; or (at the least) so
 prove it,

That the probation bear no hinge, nor loop,
 To hang a doubt on : or, woe upon thy life !

Iago. My noble lord, —

Oth. If thou dost slander her, and torture me,
 Never pray more : abandon all remorse,
 On horror's head horrors accumulate :
 Do deeds to make heaven weep, all earth amaz'd,
 For nothing can'st thou to damnation add,
 Greater than that.

Iago.

O grace ! O heaven defend me !

Are you a man ? have you a soul, or sense ? —

God be wi' you ; take mine office. — O wretched
 fool,

That liv'st to make thine honesty a vice ! —

O monstrous world ! Take note, take note, O world,
 To be direct and honest, is not safe. —

I thank you for this profit ; and, from hence,
 I'll love no friend, since love breeds such offence.

Oth. Nay, stay : — Thou shouldst be honest.

Iago. I should be wise ; for honesty's a fool,
 And loses that it works for.

Oth.

By the world,

I think my wife be honest, and think she is not.
 I think that thou art just, and think thou art not ;
 I'll have some proof: Her name, that was as fresh
 As Dian's visage, is now begrim'd and black
 As mine own face. — If there be cords, or knives,
 Poison, or fire, or suffocating streams,
 I'll not endure it. — Would, I were satisfied!

Iago. I see, sir, you are eaten up with passion :
 I do repent me, that I put it to you.
 You would be satisfied ?

Oth. Would ? nay, I will.

Iago. And may : But, how ? how satisfied, my
 lord ?

Would you, the supervisor, see their crime ?

Oth. Death and damnation ! O !

Iago. It were a tedious difficulty, I think,
 To bring them to that prospect : Damn them then,
 If ever mortal eyes do see their guilt,
 More than their own ! What then ? How then ?
 What shall I say ? Where's satisfaction ?

It is impossible you should see this,
 Impossible, though they were fools as gross
 As ignorance made drunk. But yet, I say,
 If imputation, and strong circumstances,
 Which lead directly to the door of truth,
 Will give you satisfaction, you may have it.

Oth. Give me a living⁹ reason she's disloyal.

Iago. I do not like the office :

But, sith I am enter'd in this cause so far, —
 Prick'd to it by foolish honesty and love, —
 I will go on. I lay with Cassio lately ;
 And, being troubled with a raging tooth,
 I could not sleep.

There are a kind of men so loose of soul,
 That in their sleeps will mutter their affairs ;
 One of this kind is Cassio :

⁹ Speaking, manifest.

In sleep I heard him say, — *Sweet Desdemona,*
Let us be wary, let us hide our loves ;
 And then, sir, would he wring my hand and cry,
O cursed fate ! that gave thee to the Moor !

Oth. O monstrous ! monstrous !

Iago. Nay, this was but his dream.

Oth. But this denoted a foregone conclusion ;
 'Tis a shrewd doubt, though it be but a dream.

Iago. And this may help to thicken other proofs,
 That do demonstrate thinly.

Oth. I'll tear her all to pieces.

Iago. Nay, but be wise : yet we see nothing done ;
 She may be honest yet. Tell me but this, —
 Have you not sometimes seen a handkerchief,
 Spotted with strawberries, in your wife's hand ?

Oth. I gave her such a one ; 'twas my first gift.

Iago. I know not that : but such a handkerchief,
 (I am sure it was your wife's,) did I to-day
 See Cassio wipe his beard with.

Oth. If it be that, —

Iago. If it be that, or any that was hers,
 It speaks against her with the other proofs.

Oth. O, that the slave had forty thousand lives ;
 One is too poor, too weak for my revenge !
 Now do I see 'tis true. — Look here, Iago ;
 All my fond love thus I do blow to heaven :
 'Tis gone. —

Arise, black vengeance, from thy hollow cell !
 Yield up, O love, thy crown, and hearted throne,¹
 To tyrannous hate ! swell, bosom, with thy fraught,²
 For 'tis of aspicks' tongues !

Iago. Pray, be content.

Oth. O, blood, Iago, blood !

Iago. Patience, I say ; your mind, perhaps, may
 change.

¹ The heart on which thou wast enthroned.

² Freight, load.

Oth. Never, Iago. Like to the Pontick sea,
Whose icy current and compulsive course
Ne'er feels retiring ebb, but keeps due on
To the Propontick, and the Hellespont ;
Even so my bloody thoughts, with violent pace,
Shall ne'er look back, ne'er ebb to humble love,
Till that a capable³ and wide revenge
Swallow them up. — Now, by yond' marble heaven,
In the due reverence of a sacred vow [*Kneels.*
I here engage my words.

Iago. Do not rise yet. — [*Kneels.*
Witness, you ever-burning lights above !
You elements that clip⁴ us round about !
Witness, that here Iago doth give up
The execution of his wit, hands, heart,
To wrong'd Othello's service ! let him command,
And to obey shall be in me remorse,⁵
What bloody work soever.

Oth. I greet thy love,
Not with vain thanks, but with acceptance boun-
teous,
And will upon the instant put thee to't :
Within these three days let me hear thee say,
That Cassio's not alive.

Iago. My friend is dead ; 'tis done, at your
request ;
But let her live.

Oth. Damn her, lewd minx ! O, damn her !
Come, go with me apart ; I will withdraw,
To furnish me with some swift means of death
For the fair devil. Now art thou my lieutenant.

Iago. I am your own for ever. [*Exeunt.*

³ Capacious.

⁴ Embrace.

⁵ Not of malice to others, but of tenderness for him.

SCENE IV.

*The same.**Enter* DESDEMONA, EMILIA, *and* Clown.*Des.* Do you know where lieutenant Cassio lodges?*Clo.* I know not where he lodges.*Des.* Can you enquire him out, and be edified by report?*Clo.* I will catechize the world for him; that is, make questions, and by them answer.*Des.* Seek him, bid him come hither: tell him, I have moved my lord in his behalf, and hope, all will be well.*Clo.* To do this, is within the compass of man's wit; and therefore I will attempt the doing it.[*Exit.**Des.* Where should I lose that handkerchief, Emilia?*Emil.* I know not, madam.*Des.* Believe me, I had rather have lost my purse Full of cruzadoes.⁶ And, but my noble Moor Is true of mind, and made of no such baseness As jealous creatures are, it were enough To put him to ill-thinking.*Emil.* Is he not jealous?*Des.* Who, he? I think, the sun, where he was born, Drew all such humours from him.*Emil.* Look, where he comes.*Des.* I will not leave him now, till Cassio Be call'd to him. — How is't with you, my lord?⁶ A Portuguese coin.

Enter OTHELLO.

Oth. Well, my good lady : — [*Aside.*] O, hardness to dissemble ! —

How do you, Desdemona ?

Des. Well, my good lord.

Oth. Give me your hand : This hand is moist, my lady.

Des. It yet has felt no age, nor known no sorrow.

Oth. 'Tis a good hand, a frank one.

Des. You may indeed say so ;

For 'twas that hand that gave away my heart.

Oth. A liberal hand : The hearts of old, gave hands ;

But our new heraldry is — hands, not hearts.

Des. I cannot speak of this. Come now, your promise.

Oth. What promise, chuck ?

Des. I have sent to bid Cassio come speak with you.

Oth. I have a salt and sullen rheum offends me ; Lend me thy handkerchief.

Des. Here, my lord.

Oth. That which I gave you.

Des. I have it not about me.

Oth. Not ?

Des. No, indeed, my lord.

Oth. That is a fault :

That handkerchief

Did an Egyptian to my mother give ;

She was a charmer⁷, and could almost read

The thoughts of people : she told her, while she kept it,

'Twould make her amiable, and subdue my father

⁷ Enchantress.

Entirely to her love ; but if she lost it,
 Or made a gift of it, my father's eye
 Should hold her loathly, and his spirits should hunt
 After new fancies : She, dying, gave it me ;
 And bid me, when my fate would have me wive,
 To give it her. I did so : and take heed of't,
 Make it a darling like your precious eye ;
 To lose or give't away, were such perdition,
 As nothing else could match.

Des. Is it possible ?

Oth. 'Tis true : there's magic in the web of it :
 A sibyl, that had number'd in the world
 The sun to make two hundred compasses,
 In her prophetick fury sew'd the work :
 The worms were hallow'd that did breed the silk ;
 And it was died in mummy, which the skilful
 Conserv'd of maidens' hearts.

Des. Indeed ! is't true ?

Oth. Most veritable ; therefore look to't well.

Des. Then 'would to heaven, that I had never
 seen it.

Oth. Ha ! wherefore ?

Des. Why do you speak so startingly and rash ?⁸

Oth. Is't lost ? is't gone ? speak, is it out of the
 way ?

Des. Heaven bless us !

Oth. Say you ?

Des. It is not lost ; But what an if it were ?

Oth. Ha !

Des. I say, it is not lost.

Oth. Fetch't, let me see it.

Des. Why, so I can, sir, but I will not now ;
 This is a trick, to put me from my suit ;
 I pray, let Cassio be receiv'd again.

Oth. Fetch me that handkerchief : my mind mis-
 gives.

⁸ Vehemently, violently.

Des. Come, come ;
You'll never meet a more sufficient man.

Oth. The handkerchief, —

Des. I pray, talk me of Cassio.

Oth. The handkerchief, —

Des. A man that, all his time,
Hath founded his good fortune on your love ;
Shar'd dangers with you ; —

Oth. The handkerchief, —

Des. In sooth,
You are to blame.

Oth. Away! [*Exit OTHELLO.*]

Emil. Is not this man jealous?

Des. I ne'er saw this before.
Sure, there's some wonder in this handkerchief :
I am most unhappy in the loss of it.

Emil. 'Tis not a year or two shows us a man ;
But look you ! Cassio, and my husband, come.

Enter IAGO and CASSIO.

Iago. There is no other way ; 'tis she must do't ;
And, lo, the happiness ! go, and impórtune her.

Des. How now ? good Cassio ? what's the news
with you ?

Cas. Madam, my former suit : I do beseech you,
That, by your virtuous means, I may again
Exist, and be a member of his love,
Whom I, with all the duty of my heart,
Entirely honour ; I would not be delay'd :
If my offence be of such mortal kind,
That neither service past, nor present sorrows,
Nor purpos'd merit in futurity,
Can ransom me into his love again,
But to know so must be my benefit ;
So shall I clothe me in a forc'd content,
And shut myself up in some other course,
To fortune's alms.

Des. Alas! thrice gentle Cassio,
 My advocacy is not now in tune;
 My lord is not my lord; nor should I know him,
 Were he in favour⁹ as in humour alter'd.
 So help me, every spirit sanctified,
 As I have spoken for you all my best;
 And stood within the blank of his displeasure,¹
 For my free speech! You must a while be patient:
 What I can do, I will; and more I will,
 Than for myself I dare: let that suffice you.

Iago. Is my lord angry?

Emil. He went hence but now,
 And, certainly, in strange unquietness.

Iago. Can he be angry? I have seen the cannon,
 When it hath blown his ranks into the air;
 And, like the devil, from his very arm
 Puff'd his own brother; — And can he be angry?
 Something of moment, then: I will go meet him;
 There's matter in't indeed, if he be angry.

Des. I pr'ythee do so. — Something, sure of
 state, — [Exit IAGO.]

Either from Venice; or some unhatch'd practice,²
 Made démonstrable here in Cyprus to him, —
 Hath puddled his clear spirit: and, in such cases,
 Men's natures wrangle with inferior things,
 Though great ones are their object. 'Tis even so;
 For let our finger ache, and it endues
 Our other healthful members ev'n to that sense
 Of pain: Nay, we must think, men are not gods;
 Nor of them look for such observances
 As fit the bridal.³ — Beshrew me much, Emilia,
 I was (unhandsome warrior as I am,)
 Arraigning his unkindness with my soul;
 But now I find, I had suborn'd the witness,
 And he's indited falsely.

⁹ In countenance.

¹ Within the shot of his anger.

² Treason.

³ The nuptial feast.

Emil. Pray heaven, it be state matters, as you think;
And no conception, nor no jealous toy,
Concerning you.

Des. Alas, the day! I never gave him cause.

Emil. But jealous souls will not be answer'd so;
They are not ever jealous for the cause,
But jealous for they are jealous: 'tis a monster,
Begot upon itself, born on itself.

Des. Heaven keep that monster from Othello's
mind!

Emil. Lady, amen.

Des. I will go seek him. — Cassio walk here-
about:

If I do find him fit, I'll move your suit,
And seek to effect it to my uttermost.

Cas. I humbly thank your ladyship.

[*Exeunt* DESDEMONA and EMILIA.]

Enter BIANCA.

Bian. Save you, friend Cassio!

Cas. What make you from home?
How is it with you, my most fair Bianca?
I'faith, sweet love, I was coming to your house.

Bian. And I was going to your lodging, Cassio.
What! keep a week away! seven days and nights?
Eight score eight hours? and lovers' absent hours,
More tedious than the dial eight score times?
O weary reckoning!

Cas. Pardon me, Bianca;
I have this while with leaden thoughts been press'd;
But I shall, in a more continue time,⁴
Strike off this score of absence. Sweet Bianca,

[*Giving her* DESDEMONA's *Handkerchief.*
Take me this work out.⁵

⁴ Time less interrupted.

⁵ The meaning is, not pick out the work, but copy this work
in another handkerchief.

Bian. O, Cassio, whence came this?
This is some token from a newer friend.
To the felt absence now I feel a cause:
Is it come to this? Well, well.

Cas. Woman, go to!
Throw your vile guesses in the devil's teeth,
From whence you have them. You are jealous
now,
That this is from some mistress, some remem-
brance;
No, in good troth, Bianca.

Bian. Why, whose is it?

Cas. I know not, sweet: I found it in my cham-
ber.

I like the work well; ere it be demanded,
(As like enough, it will,) I'd have it copied:
Take it, and do't; and leave me for this time.

Bian. Leave you! wherefore?

Cas. I do attend here on the general;
And think it no addition, nor my wish,
To have him see me woman'd.

Bian. Why, I pray you?

Cas. Not that I love you not.

Bian. But that you do not love me.
I pray you, bring me on the way a little;
And say, if I shall see you soon again.

Cas. 'Tis but a little way, that I can bring you,
For I attend here: but I'll see you soon.

Bian. 'Tis very good; I must be circumstanc'd.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I. — *The same.**Enter OTHELLO and IAGO.**Iago.* Will you think so?*Oth.* Think so, Iago?*Iago.* But if I give my wife a handkerchief, —*Oth.* What then?*Iago.* Why then 'tis hers, my lord; and, being hers,

She may, I think, bestow't on any man.

Oth. She is protectress of her honour too;
May she give that?*Iago.* Her honour is an essence that's not seen;
They have it very oft, that have it not:
But, for the handkerchief, —*Oth.* By heaven I would most gladly have forgot
it: —Thou said'st, — O, it comes o'er my memory,
As doth the raven o'er the infected house,
Boding to all⁶ — he had my handkerchief.*Iago.* Ay, what of that?*Oth.* That's not so good, now.*Iago.* What, if I had said, I had seen him do you
wrong?Or heard him say, — As knaves be such abroad,
Who having, by their own importunate suit,
Or voluntary dotage of some mistress,
Convinced or supplied⁷ them, cannot choose
But they must blab —*Oth.* Hath he said any thing?⁶ The raven was thought to be a constant attendant on a house infected with the plague.⁷ Old spelling of supplied, *i. e.* softened.

Iago. He hath, my lord ; but be you well assur'd,
No more than he'll unswear.

Oth. What hath he said ?

Iago. 'Faith, that he did, — I know not what he did.

Oth. What ? what ? — confessions, — handkerchief. — I tremble at it. Nature would not invest herself in such shadowing passion, without some instruction. It is not words, that shake me thus : — Is it possible ? — Confess ! — Handkerchief ! — O, devil ! —
[*Falls in a Trance.*]

Iago. Work on,
My medicine, work ! Thus credulous fools are caught ;
And many worthy and chaste dames, even thus,
All guiltless meet reproach. — What, ho ! my lord !

Enter CASSIO.

My lord, I say ! Othello ! — How now, Cassio ?

Cas. What is the matter ?

Iago. My lord is fallen into an epilepsy ;
This is his second fit ; he had one yesterday.

Cas. Rub him about the temples.

Iago. No, forbear :
The lethargy must have his quiet course :
If not, he foams at mouth ; and, by and by,
Breaks out to savage madness. Look, he stirs.
Do you withdraw yourself a little while,
He will recover straight ; when he is gone,
I would on great occasion speak with you. —

[*Exit CASSIO.*]

How is it, general ? have you not hurt your head ?

Oth. Dost thou mock me ?

Iago. I mock you ! no, by heaven :
'Would you would bear your fortunes like a man.

Oth. A horned man's a monster, and a beast.

Iago. There's many a beast then in a populous city,

And many a civil monster.

Oth. Did he confess it?

Iago. Good sir, be a man.

This is the spite of hell. But let me know ;
And, knowing what I am, I know what she shall be.

Oth. O, thou art wise ; 'tis certain.

Iago. Stand you awhile apart ;

Confine yourself but in a patient list.⁸
Whilst you were here, ere while mad with your grief,
(A passion most unsuited such a man,)

Cassio came hither : I shifted him away,
And laid good 'scuse upon your ecstasy ;
Bade him anon return, and here speak with me ;
The which he promis'd. Do but encave⁹ yourself,
And mark the fleers, the gibes, and notable scorns,
That dwell in every region of his face ;

For I will make him tell the tale anew, —
And say when he's again to meet your wife ;
I say, but mark his gesture. Marry, patience ;
Or I shall say, you are all in all in spleen,
And nothing of a man.

Oth. Dost thou hear, Iago ?

I will be found most cunning in my patience ;
But (dost thou hear ?) most bloody.

Iago. That's not amiss ;

But yet keep time in all. Will you withdraw ?

[OTHELLO *withdraws.*

Now will I question Cassio of Bianca,
A housewife, that, by selling her desires,
Buys herself bread and clothes : it is a creature,
That dotes on Cassio, — as 'tis the strumpet's plague,
To beguile many, and be beguil'd by one ;
He, when he hears of her, cannot refrain
From the excess of laughter : — Here he comes : —

⁸ Within the bounds of patience.

⁹ Hide.

Re-enter CASSIO.

As he shall smile, Othello shall go mad ;
And his unbookish ¹ jealousy must construe
Poor Cassio's smiles, gestures, and light behaviour
Quite in the wrong. — How do you now, lieutenant?

Cas. The worser, that you give me the addition, ²
Whose want even kills me.

Iago. Ply Desdemona well, and you are sure of't.
Now, if this suit lay in Bianca's power,

[Speaking lower.

How quickly should you speed ?

Cas. Alas, poor caitiff!

Oth. Look, how he laughs already ! *[Aside.*

Iago. I never knew a woman love man so.

Cas. Alas, poor rogue ! I think indeed she loves
me.

Oth. Now he denies it faintly, and laughs it out.

[Aside.

Iago. Do you hear, Cassio ?

Oth. Now he importunes him

To tell it o'er : Go to : well said, well said. *[Aside.*

Iago. She gives it out, that you shall marry her :
Do you intend it ?

Cas. Ha, ha, ha !

Oth. Do you triumph, Roman ? do you triumph ?

[Aside.

Cas. I marry her ! — what ? a customer ! ³ I pr'y-
thee, bear some charity to my wit ; do not think it
so unwholesome. Ha, ha, ha !

Oth. So, so, so, so : They laugh that win. *[Aside.*

Iago. Why, the cry goes, that you shall marry
her.

Cas. Pr'ythee, say true.

Iago. I am a very villain else.

¹ Ignorant. ² Title of lieutenant. ³ A comman woman.

Cas. This is the monkey's own giving out: she is persuaded I will marry her, out of her own love and flattery, not out of my promise.

Oth. Iago beckons me; now he begins the story.
[*Aside.*]

Cas. She was here even now: she haunts me in every place. I was, the other day, talking on the sea-bank with certain Venetians; and thither comes this bauble; by this hand, she falls thus about my neck: —

Oth. Crying, O dear Cassio! as it were: his gesture imports it.
[*Aside.*]

Cas. So hangs, and lolls, and weeps upon me; ha, ha, ha!

Oth. Now he tells, how she invited him to my chamber: O, I see that nose of yours, but not that dog I shall throw it to.
[*Aside.*]

Cas. Well, I must leave her company.

Iago. Before me! look where she comes.

Enter BIANCA.

Cas. What do you mean by this haunting of me?

Bian. What did you mean by that same handkerchief, you gave me even now? I was a fine fool to take it. I must take out the whole work? — A likely piece of work, that you should find it in your chamber, and not know who left it there! This is some minx's token, and I must take out the work? There, — give it where you had it, I'll take out no work on't.

Cas. How now, my sweet Bianca? how now? how now?

Oth. By heaven, that should be my handkerchief!
[*Aside.*]

Bian. An you'll come to supper to-night, you may: an you will not, come when you are next prepared for.
[*Exit.*]

Iago. After her, after her.

Cas. I must, she'll rail in the street else.

Iago. Will you sup there?

Cas. I intend so.

Iago. Well, I may chance to see you; for I would very fain speak with you.

Cas. Pr'ythee, come; will you?

Iago. Go to; say no more. [*Exit CASSIO.*]

Oth. How shall I murder him, Iago?

Iago. Did you perceive how he laughed at his vice?

Oth. O, Iago!

Iago. And did you see the handkerchief?

Oth. Was that mine?

Iago. Yours, by this hand: and to see how he prizes the foolish woman, your wife! she gave it him, and he hath given it his mistress.

Oth. I would have him nine years a killing: — A fine woman! a fair woman! a sweet woman!

Iago. Nay, you must forget that.

Oth. Ay, let her perish to-night; for she shall not live: No, my heart is turned to stone; I strike it, and it hurts my hand. O, the world hath not a sweeter creature: she might lie by an emperor's side.

Iago. Nay, that's not your way.

Oth. Hang her! I do but say what she is: — So delicate with her needle! — An admirable musician! O, she will sing the savageness out of a bear! — Of so high and plenteous wit and invention! —

Iago. She's the worse for all this.

Oth. O, a thousand, a thousand times: — And then, of so gentle a condition!⁴

Iago. Ay, too gentle.

Oth. Nay, that's certain: But yet the pity of it, Iago! — O, Iago, the pity of it, Iago!

⁴ Of so sweet a disposition.

Iago. If you are so fond over her iniquity, give her patent to offend ; for, if it touch not you, it comes near nobody.

Oth. I will chop her into messes : — Cuckold me !

Iago. O, 'tis foul in her.

Oth. With mine officer !

Iago. That's fouler.

Oth. Get me some poison, Iago ; this night : — I'll not expostulate with her, lest her beauty unprovide my mind again : this night, Iago.

Iago. Do it not with poison, strangle her in her bed, even the bed she hath contaminated.

Oth. Good, good : the justice of it pleases ; very good.

Iago. And, for Cassio, — let me be his undertaker :

You shall hear more by midnight.

[*A Trumpet within.*]

Oth. Excellent good. — What trumpet is that same ?

Iago. Something from Venice, sure. 'Tis Lodovico,

Come from the duke : and, see, your wife is with him.

Enter LODOVICO, DESDEMONA, *and Attendants.*

Lod. 'Save you, worthy general !

Oth. With all my heart, sir.

Lod. The duke and senators of Venice greet you.

[*Gives him a Packet.*]

Oth. I kiss the instrument of their pleasures.

[*Opens the Packet and reads.*]

Des. And what's the news, good cousin Lodovico ?

Iago. I am very glad to see you, signior ; Welcome to Cyprus.

Lod. I thank you ; How does lieutenant Cassio ?

Iago. Lives, sir.

Des. Cousin, there's fallen between him and my lord

An unkind breach : but you shall make all well.

Oth. Are you sure of that ?

Des. My lord ?

Oth. *This fail you not to do, as you will —*
[*Reads.*

Lod. He did not call ; he's busy in the paper.
Is there division 'twixt my lord and Cassio ?

Des. A most unhappy one ; I would do much
To atone⁵ them, for the love I bear to Cassio.

Oth. Fire and brimstone !

Des. My lord ?

Oth. Are you wise ?

Des. What, is he angry ?

Lod. 'May be, the letter mov'd him ;
For, as I think, they do command him home,
Deputing Cassio in his government.

Des. By my troth, I am glad on't.

Oth. Indeed ?

Des. My lord ?

Oth. I am glad to see you mad.

Des. How, sweet Othello ?

Oth. Devil ! [Striking her.

Des. I have not deserv'd this.

Lod. My lord, this would not be believ'd in
Venice,

Though I should swear I saw it : 'Tis very much ;
Make her amends, she weeps.

Oth. O devil, devil !

If that the earth could teem with woman's tears,
Each drop she falls would prove a crocodile : —
Out of my sight !

Des. I will not stay to offend you.

[*Going.*

⁵ Reconcile.

Lod. Truly, an obedient lady : —
I do beseech your lordship, call her back.

Oth. Mistress, ——

Des. My lord ?

Oth. What would you with her, sir ?

Lod. Who, I, my lord ?

Oth. Ay ; you did wish, that I would make her
turn :

Sir, she can turn, and turn, and yet go on,
And turn again ; and she can weep, sir, weep :
And she's obedient, as you say, — obedient, —
Very obedient ; — Proceed you in your tears. —
Concerning this, sir, — O well-painted passion !
I am commanded home : Get you away ;
I'll send for you anon. — Sir, I obey the mandate,
And will return to Venice ; — Hence, avaunt !

[*Exit* DESDEMONA.]

Cassio shall have my place. And, — sir, to-night,
I do entreat that we may sup together.

You are welcome, sir, to Cyprus. — Goats, and
monkies ! [*Exit.*]

Lod. Is this the noble Moor whom our full senate
Call — all-in-all sufficient ? — This the noble nature
Whom passion could not shake ? whose solid virtue
The shot of accident, nor dart of chance,
Could neither graze, nor pierce ?

Iago. He is much chang'd.

Lod. Are his wits safe ? is he not light of brain ?

Iago. He is that he is ; I may not breathe my
censure.

What he might be, — if, what he might, he is
not, —

I would to heaven he were.

Lod. What, strike his wife !

Iago. 'Faith, that was not so well ; Yet 'would I
knew,

That stroke would prove the worst.

Lod. Is it his use?
Or did the letters work upon his mood,
And new-create this fault?

Iago. Alas, alas!
It is not honesty in me, to speak
What I have seen and known. You shall observe
him;

And his own courses will denote him so,
That I may save my speech: Do but go after,
And mark how he continues.

Lod. I am sorry, that I am deceiv'd in him.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

A Room in the Castle.

Enter OTHELLO and EMILIA.

Oth. You have seen nothing then!

Emil. Nor ever heard; nor ever did suspect.

Oth. Yes, you have seen Cassio and she together.

Emil. But then I saw no harm: and then I heard
Each syllable, that breath made up between them.

Oth. What, did they never whisper?

Emil. Never, my lord.

Oth. Nor send you out of the way?

Emil. Never.

Oth. To fetch her fan, her gloves, her mask, nor
nothing?

Emil. Never, my lord.

Oth. That's strange.

Emil. I durst, my lord, to wager she is honest,
Lay down my soul at stake: if you think other,
Remove your thought; it doth abuse your bosom.
If any wretch hath put this in your head,
Let heaven requite it with the serpent's curse!

For, if she be not honest, chaste, and true,
There's no man happy : the purest of their wives
Is foul as slander.

Oth. Bid her come hither : — go. —

[*Exit* EMILIA.]

She says enough : — yet she's a simple drab
That cannot say as much. This is a subtle pimp,
A closet-lock-and-key of villainous secrets.

Re-enter EMILIA, *with* DESDEMONA.

Des. My lord, what is your will ?

Oth. Pray, chuck, come hither.

Des. What is your pleasure ?

Oth. Let me see your eyes ;

Look in my face.

Des. What horrible fancy's this ?

Oth. Some of your function, mistress ;

[*To* EMILIA.]

Leave us alone, and shut the door :

Cough, or cry — hem, if any body come :

Your mystery, your mystery ; — nay despatch.

[*Exit* EMILIA.]

Des. Upon my knees, what doth your speech
import ?

I understand a fury in your words,

But not the words.

Oth. Why, what art thou ?

Des. Your wife, my lord ; your true
And loyal wife.

Oth. Come, swear it, damn thyself ;
Lest, being like one of heaven, the devils them-
selves

Should fear to seize thee :

Swear — thou art honest.

Des. Heaven doth truly know it.

Oth. Heaven truly knows, that thou art false as
hell.

Des. To whom, my lord? with whom? How am I false?

Oth. O Desdemona! — away! away! away!

Des. Alas, the heavy day! — Why do you weep? Am I the occasion of these tears, my lord? If, haply, you my father do suspect, An instrument of this your calling back, Lay not your blame on me; if you have lost him, Why, I have lost him too.

Oth. Had it pleas'd heaven To try me with affliction; had he rain'd All kinds of sores, and shames, on my bare head; Steep'd me in poverty to the very lips; Given to captivity me and my utmost hopes; I should have found in some part of my soul A drop of patience: but (alas!) to make me A fixed figure, for the time of scorn To point his slow and moving finger at, — O! O!

Yet could I bear that too; well, very well: But there, where I have garner'd⁶ up my heart; Where either I must live, or bear no life; The fountain from the which my current runs, Or else dries up; to be discarded thence! Turn thy complexion there! Patience, thou young and rose-lipp'd cherubin; Ay, there, look grim as hell!

Des. I hope, my noble lord esteems me honest.

Oth. O, ay: as summer flies are in the shambles, That quicken even with blowing. O thou weed, Who art so lovely fair, and smell'st so sweet, That the sense aches at thee. — 'Would thou hadst ne'er been born!

Des. Alas, what ignorant sin have I committed?

Oth. Was this fair paper, this most goodly book, Made to write whore upon! What committed!

⁶ Treasured up.

Committed! — O thou publick commoner!
 I should make very forges of my cheeks,
 That would to cinders burn up modesty,
 Did I but speak thy deeds — What committed!
 The very wind that kisses all it meets,
 Is hush'd within the hollow mine of earth,
 And will not hear it: What committed! —
 Impudent strumpet!

Des. By heaven, you do me wrong.

Oth. Are not you a strumpet?

Des. No, as I am a Christian:
 If to preserve this vessel for my lord,
 From any other foul unlawful touch,
 Be, — not to be a strumpet, I am none.

Oth. What, not a whore?

Des. No, as I shall be saved.

Oth. Is it possible?

Des. O, heaven forgive us!

Oth. I cry you mercy, then;
 I took you for that cunning whore of Venice,
 That married with Othello. — You, mistress,

Re-enter EMILIA.

That have the office opposite to Saint Peter,
 And keep the gate of hell; You! you! ay, you:
 We have done our course; there's money for your
 pains;
 I pray you, turn the key, and keep our counsel.

[*Exit.*

Emil. Alas, what does this gentleman conceive? —
 How do you, madam? how do you, my good lady?

Des. 'Faith, half asleep.

Emil. Good madam, what's the matter with my
 lord?

Des. With who?

Emil. Why, with my lord, madam.

Des. Who is thy lord ?

Emil. He that is yours, sweet lady.

Des. I have none : Do not talk to me, Emilia ;
I cannot weep ; nor answer I have none,
But what should go by water. Pr'ythee to-night
Lay on my bed my wedding sheets, — remember ; —
And call thy husband hither.

Emil. Here is a change, indeed !
[*Exit.*

Des. 'Tis meet I should be us'd so, very meet.
How have I been behav'd, that he might stick
The small'st opinion on my great'st abuse ?

Re-enter EMILIA, with IAGO.

Iago. What is your pleasure, madam ? How is
it with you ?

Des. I cannot tell. Those that do teach young
babes,

Do it with gentle means, and easy tasks :
He might have chid me so : for, in good faith,
I am a child to chiding.

Iago. What's the matter, lady ?

Emil. Alas, Iago, my lord hath so bewhor'd her,
Thrown such despite and heavy terms upon her,
As true hearts cannot bear.

Des. Am I that name, Iago ?

Iago. What name, fair lady ?

Des. Such as, she says, my lord did say I was.

Emil. He call'd her, whore ; a beggar, in his
drink,

Could not have laid such terms upon his callet.⁷

Iago. Why did he so ?

Des. I do not know ; I am sure, I am none such.

Iago. Do not weep, do not weep ; Alas the day !

Emil. Has she forsook so many noble matches,

⁷ His drab.

Her father, and her country, and her friends,
To be call'd—whore? would it not make one weep?

Des. It is my wretched fortune.

Iago. Beshrew him for it!

How comes this trick upon him?

Des. Nay, heaven doth know.

Emil. I will be hang'd, if some eternal villain,
Some busy and insinuating rogue,
Some cogging cozening slave, to get some office,
Have not devis'd this slander; I'll be hang'd else.

Iago. Fye, there is no such man; it is impossible.

Des. If any such there be, heaven pardon him!

Emil. A halter pardon him. Who keeps her
company?

What place? what time? what form? what likeli-
hood?

The Moor's abus'd by some most villainous knave,
Some base notorious knave, some scurvy fellow:—
O, heaven, that such companions⁸ thou'dst unfold;
And put in every honest hand a whip,
To lash the rascal naked through the world,
Even from the east to the west!

Iago. Speak within door.

Emil. O, fye upon him! some such squire he
was,

That turn'd your wit the seamy side⁹ without,
And made you to suspect me with the Moor.

Iago. You are a fool; go to.

Des. O, good Iago,

What shall I do to win my lord again?

Good friend, go to him; for by this light of heaven,
I know not how I lost him. Here I kneel:—
If e'er my will did trespass 'gainst his love,
Either in discourse of thought, or actual deed;
Or that mine eyes, mine ears, or any sense,

⁸ Fellows.

⁹ Inside out.

Delighted them in any other form ;
 Or that I do not yet, and ever did,
 And ever will, — though he do shake me off
 To beggarly divorcement, — love him dearly,
 Comfort forswear me ! Unkindness may do much ;
 And his unkindness may defeat my life,
 But never taint my love. I can't say, whore ;
 It does abhor me, now I speak the word ;
 To do the act that might the addition¹ earn,
 Not the world's mass of vanity, could make me.

Iago. I pray you, be content ; 'tis but his humour ;

The business of the state does him offence,
 And he does chide with you.

Des. If 'twere no other, —

Iago. It is but so, I warrant you. [*Trumpets.*
 Hark, how these instruments summon to supper !
 And the great messengers of Venice stay :
 Go in, and weep not ; all things shall be well.

[*Exeunt* DESDEMONA and EMILIA.]

Enter RODERIGO.

How now, Roderigo ?

Rod. I do not find, that thou deal'st justly with me.

Iago. What in the contrary ?

Rod. Every day thou doff'st² me with some device, Iago ; and rather (as it seems to me now) keep'st from me all conveniency, than supplies me with the least advantage of hope. I will, indeed, no longer endure it : Nor am I yet persuaded, to put up in peace what already I have foolishly suffered.

Iago. Will you hear me, Roderigo ?

¹ Title.

² Put'st me off.

Rod. I have heard too much ; for your words, and performances, are no kin together.

Iago. You charge me most unjustly.

Rod. With nought but truth. I have wasted myself out of my means. The jewels you have had from me, to deliver to Desdemona, would half have corrupted a votarist : You have told me — she has received them, and returned me expectations and comforts of sudden respect and acquittance³ ; but I find none.

Iago. Well ; go to ; very well.

Rod. Very well ! go to ! I cannot go to, man ; nor 'tis not very well : By this hand, I say, it is very scurvy ; and begin to find myself fobbed in it.

Iago. Very well.

Rod. I tell you, 'tis not very well. I will make myself known to Desdemona : If she will return me my jewels, I will give over my suit, and repent my unlawful solicitation : if not, assure yourself, I will seek satisfaction of you.

Iago. You have said now.

Rod. Ay, and I have said nothing, but what I protest intendment of doing.

Iago. Why, now I see there's mettle in thee ; and even, from this instant, do build on thee a better opinion than ever before. Give me thy hand, Roderigo : Thou hast taken against me a most just exception ; but yet, I protest, I have dealt most directly in thy affair.

Rod. It hath not appeared.

Iago. I grant, indeed, it hath not appeared ; and your suspicion is not without wit and judgment. But, Roderigo, if thou hast that within thee indeed, which I have greater reason to believe now than ever, — I mean, purpose, courage, and valour,

³ Requit.

— this night show it: if thou the next night following enjoyest not Desdemona, take me from this world with treachery, and devise engines for my life.

Rod. Well, what is it? is it within reason, and compass?

Iago. Sir, there is especial commission come from Venice, to depute Cassio in Othello's place.

Rod. Is that true? why, then Othello and Desdemona return again to Venice.

Iago. O, no; he goes into Mauritania, and takes away with him the fair Desdemona, unless his abode be lingered here by some accident; wherein none can be so determinate, as the removing of Cassio.

Rod. How do you mean — removing of him?

Iago. Why, by making him incapable of Othello's place; knocking out his brains.

Rod. And that you would have me do?

Iago. Ay; if you dare do yourself a profit and a right. He sups to-night with a harlot, and thither will I go to him; — he knows not yet of his honourable fortune: if you will watch his going thence, (which I will fashion to fall out between twelve and one,) you may take him at your pleasure; I will be near to second your attempt, and he shall fall between us. Come, stand not amazed at it, but go along with me; I will show you such a necessity in his death, that you shall think yourself bound to put it on him. It is now high supper-time, and the night grows to waste: about it.

Rod. I will hear further reason for this.

Iago. And you shall, be satisfied. [Exeunt.]

SCENE III.

Another Room in the Castle.

Enter OTHELLO, LODOVICO, DESDEMONA, EMILIA, and Attendants.

Lod. I do beseech you, sir, trouble yourself no further.

Oth. O, pardon me; 'twill do me good to walk.

Lod. Madam, good night; I humbly thank your ladyship.

Des. Your honour is most welcome,

Oth. Will you walk, sir? —

O, — Desdemona, —

Des. My lord?

Oth. Get you to bed on the instant, I will be returned forthwith: dismiss your attendant there; look, it be done.

Des. I will, my lord.

[*Exeunt OTH. LOD. and Attendants.*]

Emil. How goes it now? he looks gentler than he did.

Des. He says he will return incontinent;⁴ He hath commanded me to go to bed, And bade me to dismiss you.

Emil. Dismiss me!

Des. It was his bidding; therefore, good Emilia, Give me my nightly wearing, and adieu: We must not now displeas him.

Emil. I would, you had never seen him!

Des. So would not I; my love doth so approve him,

⁴ Immediately.

That even his stubbornness, his checks, and frowns, —
Pr'ythee, unpin me, — have grace and favour in them.

Emil. I have laid those sheets you bade me on
the bed.

Des. All's one : — Good father ! how foolish are
our minds ! —

If I do die before thee, pr'ythee, shroud me
In one of those same sheets.

Emil. Come, come, you talk.

Des. My mother had a maid call'd — Barbara ;
She was in love ; and he, she lov'd, prov'd mad,⁵
And did forsake her : she had a song of — willow,
An old thing 'twas, but it express'd her fortune,
And she died singing it : That song, to-night,
Will not go from my mind ; I have much to do
But to go hang my head all at one side,
And sing it like poor Barbara. Pr'ythee, despatch.

Emil. Shall I go fetch your night-gown ?

Des. No, unpin me here. —
This Lodovico is a proper man.

Emil. A very handsome man.

Des. And he speaks well.

Emil. I know a lady in Venice, who would have
walked barefoot to Palestine, for a touch of his
nether lip.

I.

Des. *The poor-soul sat sighing by a sycamore tree,
Sing all a green willow ;* [Singing.

*Her hand on her bosom, her head on her knee,
Sing willow, willow, willow :*

*The fresh streams ran by her, and murmur'd her
moans ;*

Sing willow, &c.

*Her salt tears fell from her, and soften'd the
stones ;*

⁵ Wild, inconstant.

Lay by these :

Sing willow, willow, willow ;

Pr'ythee, hie thee ; he'll come anon. —

Sing all a green willow must be my garlánd.

II.

Let nobody blame him, his scorn I approve, —

Nay, that's not next. — Hark ! who is it that
knocks ?

Emil. It is the wind.

Des. So, get thee gone ; good night. Mine eyes
do itch ;

Doth that bode weeping ?

Emil. 'Tis neither here nor there.

Des. I have heard it said so. — O, these men,
these men ! —

Dost thou in conscience think, — tell me, Emilia, —
That there be women do abuse their husbands
In such gross kind ?

Emil. There be some such, no question.

Des. Wouldst thou do such a deed for all the
world ?

Emil. Why, would not you ?

Des. No, by this heavenly light !
Wouldst thou do such a deed for all the world ?

Emil. The world is a huge thing : 'Tis a great
price.

Des. Good troth, I think thou wouldst not.

Emil. By my troth, I think I should. Marry, I
would not do such a thing for a joint-ring ; nor for
measures of lawn ; nor for gowns, petticoats, nor
caps, nor any pretty exhibition : but, for the whole
world.

Des. Beshrew me, if I would do such a wrong
for the whole world.

Emil. Why, the wrong is but a wrong i'the world; and, having the world for your labour, 'tis a wrong in your own world, and you might quickly make it right.

Des. I do not think there is any such woman.

Emil. Yes, a dozen.

But, I do think, it is their husbands' faults,
If wives do fall: Say, that they slack their duties,
Or else break out in peevish jealousies,
Throwing restraint upon us; or, say they strike
us,

Or scant our former having⁶ in despite;
Why, we have galls; and, though we have some
grace,

Yet we have some revenge. Let husbands know
Their wives have sense⁷ like them: they see, and
smell,

And have their palates both for sweet and sour,
As husbands have. What is it that they do,
When they change us for others? Is it sport?

I think it is; And doth affection breed it?

I think it doth; Is't frailty, that thus errs?

It is so too: And have not we affections?

Desires like them? and frailty, as men have?

Then, let them use us well: else let them know,
The ills we do, their ills instruct us to.

Des. Good night, good night: Heaven me such
usage send,

Not to pick bad from bad; but, by bad, mend!

[*Exeunt.*]

⁶ Our former allowance of expence.

⁷ Sensation.

ACT V.

SCENE I. — *A Street.*

Enter IAGO and RODERIGO.

Iago. Here, stand behind this bulk ; straight
will he come :

Wear thy good rapier bare⁸, and put it home ;
Quick, quick ; fear nothing ; I'll be at thy elbow :
It makes us, or it mars us ; think on that,
And fix most firm thy resolution.

Rod. Be near at hand ; I may miscarry in't.

Iago. Here, at thy hand ; be bold, and take thy
sword. [*Retires to a little distance.*]

Rod. I have no great devotion to the deed ;
And yet he has given me satisfying reasons : —
'Tis but a man gone : — forth, my sword ; he dies.

[*Goes to his stand.*]

Iago. I have rubb'd this youngster almost to the
sense,⁹

And he grows angry. Now, whether he kill Cassio,
Or Cassio him, or each do kill the other,
Every way makes my gain : Live Roderigo,
He calls me to a restitution large
Of gold, and jewels, that I bobb'd¹ from him,
As gifts to Desdemona ;
It must not be : if Cassio do remain,
He hath a daily beauty in his life,
That makes me ugly ; and, besides, the Moor
May unfold me to him ; there stand I in much peril :
No, he must die : — But so, I hear him coming.

⁸ Unsheathed.

⁹ To the quick.

¹ Fished.

Enter CASSIO.

Rod. I know his gait, 'tis he; — Villain, thou diest. [*Rushes from his post, and makes a pass at CASSIO.*]

Cas. That thrust had been mine enemy indeed, But that my coat is better than thou think'st; I will make proof of thine.

[*Draws, and wounds RODERIGO.*]

Rod. O, I am slain!

[*IAGO rushes from his post, cuts CASSIO behind in the Leg; and Exit.*]

Cas. I am maim'd for ever: — Help, ho! murder! murder! [*Falls.*]

Enter OTHELLO, at a distance.

Oth. The voice of Cassio: — Iago keeps his word.

Rod. O, villain that I am!

Oth. Hark! 'tis even so.

Cas. O, help! ho! light! a surgeon!

Oth. 'Tis he; — O brave Iago, honest, and just, That hath such noble sense of thy friend's wrong! Thou teachest me, — Minion, your dear lies dead, And your fate hies apace: — Strumpet, I come: Forth² of my heart those charms, thine eyes, are blotted;

Thy bed, now stain'd, shall with thy blood be spotted. [*Exit OTHELLO.*]

Enter LODOVICO and GRATIANO, at a distance.

Cas. What, ho! no watch? no passage?³ murder! murder!

Gra. 'Tis some mischance; the cry is very direful.

² Out.

³ No passengers.

Cas. O, help!

Lod. Hark!

Rod. O wretched villain!

Lod. Two or three groans; — it is a heavy⁴
night:

These may be counterfeits; let's think't unsafe
To come in to the cry, without more help.

Rod. No body come? then shall I bleed to death.

Enter IAGO, with a Light.

Lod. Hark!

Gra. Here's one comes in his shirt, with light
and weapons.

Iago. Who's there? whose noise is this, that
cries on murder?

Lod. We do not know.

Iago. Did you not hear a cry?

Cas. Here, here; for heaven's sake, help me.

Iago. What's the matter?

Gra. This is Othello's ancient, as I take it.

Lod. The same, indeed; a very valiant fellow.

Iago. What are you here that cry so grievously?

Cas. Iago? O, I am spoil'd, undone by villains!
Give me some help.

Iago. O me, lieutenant! what villains have done
this?

Cas. I think, that one of them is hereabout,
And cannot make away.

Iago. O treacherous villains! —
What, are you there? come in, and give some help.

[*To LODOVICO and GRATIANO.*

Rod. O, help me here!

Cas. That's one of them.

Iago. O murderous slave! O villain!
[*IAGO stabs RODERIGO.*

⁴ Thick, cloudy.

Rod. O vile Iago! O inhuman dog! —
O! O! O!

Iago. Kill men i'the dark! — Where be these
bloody thieves?

How silent is this town! — Ho! murder! murder!
What may you be? are you of good, or evil?

Lod. As you shall prove us, praise us.

Iago. Signior Lodovico.

Lod. He, sir.

Iago. I cry you mercy; Here's Cassio hurt
By villains.

Gra. Cassio?

Iago. How is it, brother?

Cas. My leg is cut in two.

Iago. Marry, heaven forbid! —
Light, gentlemen; I'll bind it with my shirt.

Enter BIANCA.

Bian. What is the matter, ho? who is't that
cry'd?

Iago. Who is't that cry'd?

Bian. O my dear Cassio! my sweet Cassio!
O Cassio! Cassio! Cassio!

Iago. O notable strumpet! — Cassio, may you
suspect
Who they should be, that have thus mangled you?

Cas. No.

Gra. I am sorry, to find you thus: I have been
to seek you.

Iago. Lend me a garter: So. — O, for a chair,
To bear him easily hence!

Bian. Alas, he faints: — O Cassio! Cassio! Cas-
sio!

Iago. Gentlemen all, I do suspect this trash
To be a party in this injury. —
Patience a while, good Cassio. — Come, come;

Lend me a light. — Know we this face, or no?
 Alas! my friend, and my dear countryman,
 Roderigo? no: — Yes, sure; 'tis Roderigo.

Gra. What, of Venice?

Iago. Even he, sir; did you know him?

Gra.

Know him, ay.

Iago. Signior Gratiano? I cry you gentle pardon;
 These bloody accidents must excuse my manners,
 That so neglected you.

Gra.

I am glad to see you.

Iago. How do you, Cassio?—O, a chair, a chair!

Gra. Roderigo!

Iago. He, he, 'tis he: — O, that's well said; —
 the chair: — [A Chair brought in.

Some good man bear him carefully from hence;
 I'll fetch the general's surgeon. — For you, mis-
 tress, [To BIANCA.

Save you your labour. He that lies slain here,
 Cassio,

Was my dear friend: What malice was between
 you?

Cas. None in the world; nor do I know the man.

Iago. [To BIAN.] What, look you pale? — O,
 bear him out o'the air. —

[CASSIO and ROD. are borne off.

Stay you, good gentlemen: — Look you pale, mis-
 tress?

Do you perceive the ghastness of her eye? —
 Nay, if you stare, we shall hear more anon: —
 Behold her well; I pray you, look upon her;
 Do you see, gentlemen? nay, guiltiness will speak,
 Though tongues were out of use.

Enter EMILIA.

Emil. 'Las, what's the matter; what's the matter,
 husband?

Iago. Cassio hath here been set on in the dark,
By Roderigo, and fellows that are 'scap'd;
He's almost slain, and Roderigo dead.

Emil. Alas, good gentleman! alas, good Cassio!

Iago. This is the fruit of lewdness. — Pr'ythee,
Emilia,

Go know of Cassio where he supp'd to-night: —
What, do you shake at that?

Bian. He supp'd at my house; but I therefore
shake not.

Iago. O, did he so? I charge you, go with me.

Emil. Fye, fye upon thee, strumpet!

Bian. I am no strumpet; but of life as honest,
As you that thus abuse me.

Emil. As I? foh! fye upon thee!

Iago. Kind gentlemen, let's go see poor Cassio
dress'd: —

Come, mistress, you must tell us another tale. —

Emilia, run you to the citadel,

And tell my lord and lady what has happ'd. —

Will you go on, I pray? — This is the night,

[*Aside.*

That either makes me, or fordoes⁵ me quite.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

*A Bed-chamber: DESDEMONA in bed asleep. A Light
burning.*

Enter OTHELLO.

Oth. It is the cause, it is the cause, my soul, —
Let me not name it to you, you chaste stars! —
It is the cause. — Yet I'll not shed her blood;

⁵ Undoes.

Nor scar that whiter skin of her's than snow,
And smooth as monumental alabaster.

[*Takes off his Sword.*

Yet she must die, else she'll betray more men.
Put out the light, and then put out the light : ⁶
If I quench thee, thou flaming minister,
I can again thy former light restore,
Should I repent me : — but once put out thine,
Thou cunning'st pattern of excelling nature,
I know not where is that Promethean heat,
That can thy light relume. When I have pluck'd
thy rose,

I cannot give it vital growth again,
It needs must wither : — I'll smell it on the tree. —

[*Kissing her.*

O balmy breath, that dost almost persuade
Justice to break her sword! — One more, one more —
Be thus when thou art dead, and I will kill thee,
And love thee after : — One more, and this the last :
So sweet was ne'er so fatal. I must weep,
But they are cruel tears : She wakes —

Des. Who's there ? Othello ?

Oth. Ay, Desdemona.

Des. Will you come to bed, my lord ?

Oth. Have you pray'd to-night, Desdemona ?

Des. Ay, my lord.

Oth. If you bethink yourself of any crime,
Unreconcil'd as yet to heaven and grace,
Solicit for it straight.

Des. Alas, my lord, what may you mean by that ?

Oth. Well, do it, and be brief ; I will walk by ;
I would not kill thy unprepared spirit ;
No, — Heaven forbid !⁷ — I would not kill thy soul.

⁶ *i. e.* The light of life.

This is the punctuation of the folio of 1623, and of Pope, Steevens, &c., but some editors point it thus —

Put out the light, and then : — Put out the light :

⁷ Forbid.

Des. Talk you of killing?

Oth. Ay, I do.

Des. Then, heaven
Have mercy on me!

Oth. Amen, with all my heart!

Des. If you say so, I hope you will not kill me.

Oth. Humph!

Des. And yet I fear you: for you are fatal then,
When your eyes roll so: Why I should fear, I
know not,

Since guiltiness I know not; but yet, I feel, I fear.

Oth. Think on thy sins.

Des. They are loves I bear to you.

Oth. Ay, and for that thou diest.

Des. That death's unnatural, that kills for
loving. —

Alas, why gnaw you so your nether lip?
Some bloody passion shakes your very frame:
These are portents; but yet, I hope, I hope,
They do not point on me.

Oth. Peace, and be still!

Des. I will so: What's the matter?

Oth. That handkerchief which I so lov'd and
gave thee,

Thou gav'st to Cassio.

Des. No, by my life and soul;
Send for the man and ask him.

Oth. Sweet soul, take heed,
Take heed of perjury; thou art on thy death-bed.

Des. Ay, but not yet to die.

Oth. Yes, presently:
Therefore confess thee freely of thy sin;
For to deny each article with oath,
Cannot remove, nor choke, the strong conception,
That I do groan withal. Thou art to die.

Des. O heaven, have mercy on me!

Oth. I say, amen.

Des. And have you mercy too! — I never did
Offend you in my life; never lov'd Cassio,
But with such general warrant of heaven
As I might love: I never gave him token.

Oth. By heaven, I saw my handkerchief in his
hand.

O perjur'd woman! thou dost stone my heart,
And mak'st me call what I intend to do, —
A murder, which I thought a sacrifice:
I saw the handkerchief.

Des. He found it then;
I never gave it him: — Send for him hither,
Let him confess a truth.

Oth. He hath confess'd.

Des. What, my lord?

Oth. That he hath — us'd thee.

Des. How? unlawfully?

Oth. Ay.

Des. He'll not say so.

Oth. No, his mouth is stopp'd;
Honest Iago hath ta'en order for't.

Des. My fear interprets then, — What, is he dead?

Oth. Had all his hairs been lives, my great re-
venge

Had stomach for them all.

Des. Alas! he is betray'd, and I undone.

Oth. Out, strumpet! Weep'st thou for him to my
face?

Des. O, banish me, my lord, but kill me not.

Oth. Down, strumpet!

Des. Kill me to-morrow, let me live to-night.

Oth. Nay, if you strive, —

Des. But half an hour.

Oth. Being done,

There is no pause.

Des. But while I say one prayer.

Oth. It is too late. [*He smother's her.*]

Emil. [*Within.*] My lord, my lord! what ho! my lord! my lord!

Oth. What noise is this? — Not dead! not yet quite dead?

I, that am cruel, am yet merciful;
I would not have thee linger in thy pain. —
So, so.

Emil. [*Within.*] What ho! my lord, my lord!

Oth. Who's there?

Emil. [*Within.*] O, good my lord, I would speak a word with you.

Oth. Yes; — 'tis Emilia: — by and by. — She's dead.

'Tis like she comes to speak of Cassio's death:
The noise was high. — Ha! no more moving?
Still as the grave. Shall she come in? Were't good?

I think, she stirs again: — No. — What's the best?
If she come in, she'll sure speak to my wife:
My wife! my wife! what wife? — I have no wife:
O, insupportable! O heavy hour!
Methinks it should be now a huge eclipse
Of sun and moon; and that the affrighted-globe
Should yawn at alteration.

Emil. [*Within.*] I do beseech you I may speak with you.

O, good my lord!

Oth. I had forgot thee: O, come in, Emilia: —
Soft, — by and by: — Let me the curtains draw. —
Where art thou? What's the matter with thee now?

[*Unlocks the Door.*

Enter EMILIA.

Emil. O, good my lord, yonder's foul murder done.

Oth. What? now?

Emil. But now, my lord!

Oth. It is the very error of the moon;
She comes more near the earth than she was
wont;
And makes men mad.

Emil. Cassio, my lord, has kill'd a young Ve-
netian,
Call'd — Roderigo.

Oth. Roderigo kill'd!
And Cassio kill'd!

Emil. No, Cassio is not kill'd.

Oth. Not Cassio kill'd? then murder's out of
tune,
And sweet revenge grows harsh.

Des. O, falsely, falsely murder'd!

Emil. Alas! what cry is that?

Oth. That! what?

Emil. Out, and alas! that was my lady's voice:—
Help! help, ho! help!—O lady, speak again!
Sweet Desdemona! O, sweet mistress, speak!

Des. A guiltless death I die.

Emil. O, who hath done
This deed?

Des. Nobody; I myself; farewell:
Commend me to my kind lord; O, farewell. [*Dies.*]

Oth. Why, how should she be murder'd?

Emil. Alas, who knows?

Oth. You heard her say herself, it was not I.

Emil. She said so; I must needs report the
truth.

Oth. She's like a liar, gone to burning hell;
'Twas I that kill'd her.

Emil. O, the more angel she,
And you the blacker devil!

Oth. She turn'd to folly, and she was a whore.

Emil. Thou dost belie her, and thou art a devil.

Oth. She was false as water.

Emil. Thou art rash as fire, to say
That she was false ; O, she was heavenly true !

Oth. False, and with Cassio ; ask thy husband
else.

O, I were damn'd beneath all depth in hell,
But that I did proceed upon just grounds
To this extremity ; Thy husband knew it all.

Emil. My husband ?

Oth. Thy husband.

Emil. That she was false to wedlock ?

Oth. Ay, with Cassio.

Nay, had she been true,
If heaven would make me such another world
Of one entire and perfect chrysolite,¹
I'd not have sold her for it.

Emil. My husband ?

Oth. Ay, 'twas he that told me first ;
An honest man he is, and hates the slime
That sticks on filthy deeds.

Emil. My husband ?

Oth. What needs this iterance², woman ? I say,
thy husband.

Emil. O mistress, villainy hath made mocks with
love ! —

My husband say, that she was false ?

Oth. He, woman.

I say, thy husband ; Dost understand the word ?
My friend, thy husband, honest, honest Iago.

Emil. If he say so, may his pernicious soul
Rot half a grain a day ! he lies to the heart ;
She was too fond of her most filthy bargain.

Oth. Ha !

Emil. Do thy worst :
This deed of thine is no more worthy heaven,
Than thou wast worthy her.

Oth. Peace, you were best.

¹ A precious stone.

² Repetition.

Emil. Thou hast not half the power to do me harm,
 As I have to be hurt.³ O gull! O dolt!
 As ignorant as dirt! thou hast done a deed, —
 I care not for thy sword; I'll make thee known,
 Though I lost twenty lives: — Help! help, ho!
 help!
 The Moor has kill'd my mistress; Murder! murder!

Enter MONTANO, GRATIANO, *and* IAGO.

Mon. What is the matter! — How now, general?

Emil. O, are you come, Iago? you have done well,

That men must lay their murders on your neck.

Gra. What is the matter?

Emil. Disprove this villain, if thou be'st a man.
 He says, thou told'st him, that his wife was false:
 I know, thou didst not, thou art not such a villain;
 Speak, for my heart is full.

Iago. I told him what I thought; and told no more

Than what he found himself was apt and true.

Emil. But did you ever tell him she was false?

Iago. I did.

Emil. You told a lie; an odious, damned lie;
 Upon my soul, a lie: a wicked lie: —
 She false with Cassio! — Did you say with Cassio?

Iago. With Cassio, mistress; Go to, charm your tongue.

Emil. I will not charm my tongue; I am bound to speak;

My mistress here lies murder'd in her bed.

All. O heavens forbend!⁴

Emil. And your reports have set the murder on.

Oth. Nay, stare not, masters; it is true, indeed.

³ "More can I bear than you dare execute."

⁴ Forbid.

Gra. 'Tis a strange truth.

Mon. O monstrous act!

Emil. Villainy, villainy, villainy! —
I think upon't, — I think, — I smell't; — O vil-
lainy!

I thought so then; — I'll kill myself for grief. —
O villainy, villainy!

Iago. What, are you mad? I charge you, get you
home.

Emil. Good gentlemen, let me have leave to
speak:

'Tis proper I obey him, but not now: —

Perchance, Iago, I will ne'er go home.

Oth. O! O! O! [Hanging over his Wife.

Emil. Nay, lay thee down, and roar;
For thou hast kill'd the sweetest innocent,
That e'er did lift up eye.

Oth. O, she was foul! —

[Rising.

I scarce did know you, uncle: There lies your niece,
Whose breath, indeed, these hands have newly
stopp'd:

I know, this act shows horrible and grim.

Gra. Poor Desdemona! I am glad thy father's
dead;

Thy match was mortal to him, and pure grief
Shore his old thread in twain: did he live now,
This sight would make him do a desperate turn.

Oth. 'Tis pitiful: but yet Iago knows,
That she with Cassio hath the act of shame
A thousand times committed; Cassio confess'd it:
And she did gratify his amorous vows
With that recognizance and pledge of love
Which I first gave her; I saw it in his hand;
It was a handkerchief, an antique token
My father gave my mother.

Emil. O heaven! O heavenly powers!

Iago. Come, hold your peace.

Emil. 'Twill out, 'twill out; — I hold my peace,
sir? no;

No, I will speak as liberal⁵ as the air;
Let heaven, and men, and devils, let them all,
All, all, cry shame against me, yet I'll speak.

Iago. Be wise, and get you home.

Emil. I will not.

[*IAGO offers to stab his Wife.*

Gra. Fye!

Your sword upon a woman?

Emil. O thou dull Moor! that handkerchief thou
speak'st of,

I found by fortune, and did give my husband;
For often, with a solemn earnestness,
(More than, indeed, belong'd to such a trifle,)
He begg'd of me to steal it.

Iago. Villainous liar!

Emil. She give it Cassio! no, alas; I found it,
And I did give't my husband.

Iago. Filth, thou liest.

Emil. By heaven, I do not: I do not, gentlemen:
O murd'rous coxcomb! what should such a fool
Do with so good a wife?

[*IAGO stabs EMILIA, then runs out.*

Oth. Are there no stones in heaven,
But what serve for the thunder? — Precious villain!

Gra. The woman falls! sure, he has kill'd his wife.

Emil. Ay, ay; O, lay me by mistress' side!

Gra. He's gone, but his wife's kill'd.

Mon. 'Tis a notorious villain. Take you this
weapon

Which I have here recover'd from the Moor:
Come, guard the door without; let him not pass.
But kill him rather; I'll after that same villain,

[*Exeunt MONTANO and GRATIANO.*

⁵ Free.

Oth. I am not valiant neither,
But every puny whipster gets my sword : —
But why should honour outlive honesty ?
Let it go all.

Emil. What did thy song bode, lady ?
Hark, canst thou hear me ? I will play the swan,
And die in musick ; — *Willow, willow, willow.* —
Moor, she was chaste ; she lov'd thee, cruel Moor ;
So come my soul to bliss, as I speak true ;
So speaking as I think, I die, — I die. [*Dies.*]

Oth. I have another weapon in this chamber,
It is a sword of Spain, the ice-brook's temper ;⁶ —
O, here it is : — Uncle, I must come forth.

Gra. [*Within.*] If thou attempt it, it will cost
thee dear ;
Thou hast no weapon, and perforce must suffer.

Oth. Look in upon me then, and speak with me,
Or, naked as I am, I will assault thee.

Re-enter GRATIANO.

Gra. What is the matter ?

Oth. Behold ! I have a weapon ;
A better never did itself sustain
Upon a soldier's thigh : I have seen the day,
That, with this little arm, and this good sword,
I have made my way through more impediments
Than twenty times your stop : — But, O vain boast !
Who can control his fate ? 'tis not so now. —
Be not afraid, though you do see me weapon'd ;
Here is my journey's end, here is my butt,
And very sea-mark of my utmost sail.
Do you go back dismay'd ? 'tis a lost fear ;
Man but a rush against Othello's breast,
And he retires ; — Where should Othello go ? —
Now, how dost thou look now ? O ill-starr'd wench !

⁶ Steel is hardened by being put red-hot into very cold water.

Pale as thy smock! when we shall meet at compt⁷
 This look of thine will hurl my soul from heaven,
 And fiends will snatch at it. Cold, cold, my girl?
 Even like thy chastity. —

O cursed, cursed slave! — Whip me, ye devils,
 From the possession of this heavenly sight!
 Blow me about in winds! roast me in sulphur!
 Wash me in steep-down gulfs of liquid fire! —
 O Desdemona! Desdemona! dead?
 Dead? O! O! O!

Enter LODOVICO, MONTANO, CASSIO, *carried in a*
Chair, and Officers, with IAGO, *prisoner.*

Lod. Where is this rash and most unfortunate
 man?

Oth. That's he, that was Othello; here I am.

Lod. Where is that viper? bring the villain forth.

Oth. I look down towards his feet⁸; — but that's
 a fable:

If that thou be'st a devil, I cannot kill thee.

[OTHELLO wounds IAGO.

Lod. Wrench his sword from him.

Iago. I bleed, sir; but not kill'd.

Oth. I am not sorry neither; I'd have thee live;
 For, in my sense, 'tis happiness to die.

Lod. O thou Othello, that was once so good,
 Fall'n in the practice⁹ of a cursed slave,
 What shall be said to thee?

Oth. Why, any thing:

An honourable murderer, if you will;
 For nought I did in hate, but all in honour.

Lod. This wretch hath part confess'd his villainy:
 Did you and he consent in Cassio's death?

Oth. Ay.

⁷ Account.

⁸ To see if his feet be cloven.

⁹ By the stratagem.

Cas. Dear general, I never gave you cause.

Oth. I do believe it, and I ask your pardon.
Will you, I pray, demand that demi-devil,
Why he hath thus ensnar'd my soul and body?

Iago. Demand me nothing: What you know,
you know:

From this time forth I never will speak word.

Lod. What? not to pray?

Gra. Torments will ope your lips.

Oth. Well, thou dost best.

Lod. Sir, you shall understand what hath be-
fall'n,

Which, as I think, you know not: Here is a letter,
Found in the pocket of the slain Roderigo;
And here, another: the one of them imports
The death of Cassio to be undertook
By Roderigo.

Oth. O villain!

Cas. Most heathenish, and most gross!

Lod. Now here's another discontented paper,
Found in his pocket too: and this, it seems,
Roderigo meant to have sent this worst of villains,
But that, belike, Iago in the interim
Came in and satisfied him.

Oth. O the pernicious caitiff! —
How came you, Cassio, by that handkerchief
That was my wife's?

Cas. I found it in my chamber:
And he himself confess'd, but even now,
That there he dropp'd it for a special purpose,
Which wrought to his desire.

Oth. O fool! fool! fool!

Cas. There is, besides, in Roderigo's letter, —
How he upbraids Iago, that he made him
Brave me upon the watch; whereon it came
That I was cast: And even but now he spake,
After long seeming dead, — Iago hurt him,
Iago set him on.

Lod. You must forsake this room and go with us ;

Your power and your command is taken off,
And Cassio rules in Cyprus. For this slave, —
If there be any cunning cruelty,
That can torment him much, and hold him long,
It shall be his : You shall close prisoner rest,
Till that the nature of your fault be known
To the Venetian state : — Come, bring away.

Oth. Soft you ; a word or two before you go.
I have done the state some service, and they know it ;
No more of that : — I pray you, in your letters,
When you shall these unlucky deeds relate,
Speak of me as I am ; nothing extenuate,
Nor set down aught in malice : then must you
speak

Of one, that lov'd not wisely, but too well ;
Of one, not easily jealous, but, being wrought,
Perplex'd in the extreme ; of one, whose hand,
Like the base Judean, threw a pearl away,
Richer than all his tribe ; of one, whose subdu'd
eyes,

Albeit unused to the melting mood,
Drop tears as fast as the Arabian trees
Their medicinal gum : Set you down this :
And say, besides, — that in Aleppo once,
Where a malignant and a turbān'd Turk
Beat a Venetian, and traduc'd the state,
I took by the throat the circumcised dog,
And smote him — thus. [*Stabs himself.*]

Lod. O bloody period !

Gra. All, that's spoke, is marr'd.

Oth. I kiss'd thee, ere I kill'd thee ; — No way
but this, [*Falling upon DESDEMONA.*]
Killing myself, to die upon a kiss. [*Dies.*]

Cas. This did I fear, but thought he had no
weapon ;
For he was great of heart.

Lod. O Spartan dog,
More fell than anguish, hunger, or the sea!
Look on the tragick loading of this bed; [*To IAGO.*
This is thy work: the object poisons sight; —
Let it be hid. — Gratiano, keep the house,
And seize upon the fortunes of the Moor,
For they succeed to you. — To you, lord governor,
Remains the censure of this hellish villain;
The time, the place, the torture, — O enforce it!
Myself will straight aboard; and, to the state,
This heavy act with heavy heart relate. [*Exeunt.*

POSTSCRIPT TO OTHELLO.

IN considering this admirable tragedy, which if not the very first, is certainly one of the first of dramatic writings, I think it is impossible to help wishing that one easy alteration had been made, which would add to the probability of the story, and would rather improve than injure the general effect of the drama. If Othello had entrusted Desdemona at Venice to the care of Cassio instead of Iago, the accusation of the latter would have gained an additional degree of probability. Cassio was the most intimate friend of Othello, he went a wooing with him, and to whom could he so naturally entrust the care of his wife, when compelled to leave her at the hour of his marriage? Iago might then have urged their being together at Venice after the departure of Othello, and their performing the voyage together; but as the story

is now told, the adultery of Desdemona with Cassio, is a crime not only improbable, but absolutely impossible to have been committed ; Cassio having sailed at the same time as Othello during the night of the marriage : —

“ You must away to-night.”

The drunken quarrel in the street of Cyprus, took place on the night of Othello's arrival, and it was the next day that Iago urged Desdemona's entreaties for the pardon of Cassio, as a proof of her unlawful connection with him. Every argument which he enforces to prove their guilt, might, therefore, as the story is now told, have been answered, by saying the thing is impossible ; and this objection to the play might have been obviated, by the easy and natural alteration which has here been suggested.

THOMAS BOWDLER.

THE END.

LONDON :

Printed by A. & R. Spottiswoode,
New-Street-Square.



PR 275

B7

1827

v. 8

