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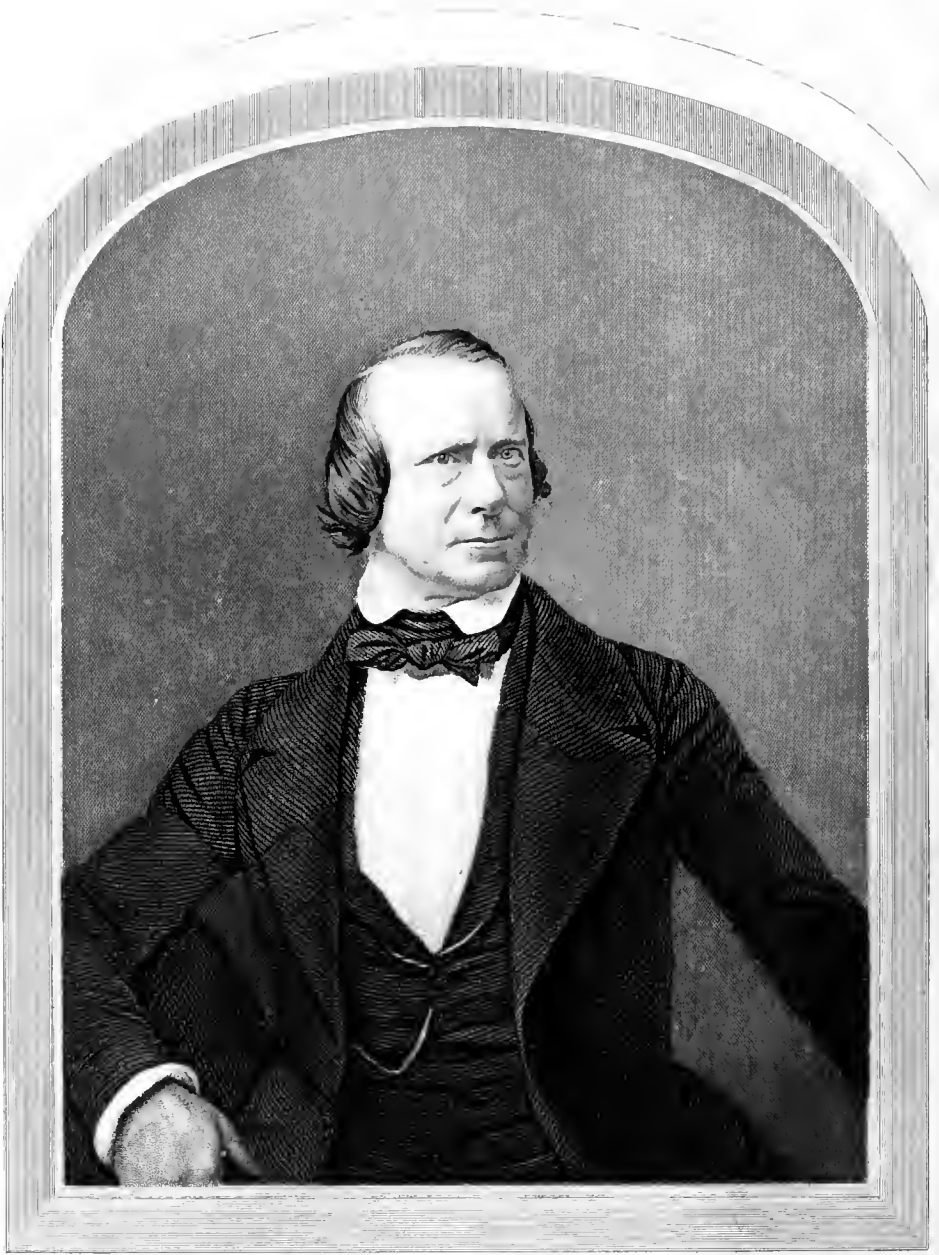








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*Saml Phelps*





Martha J. F. Mearns



P2





*Genl. Davenport*



*Anna Maria Howarth*







*Mrs. Vandenberg*









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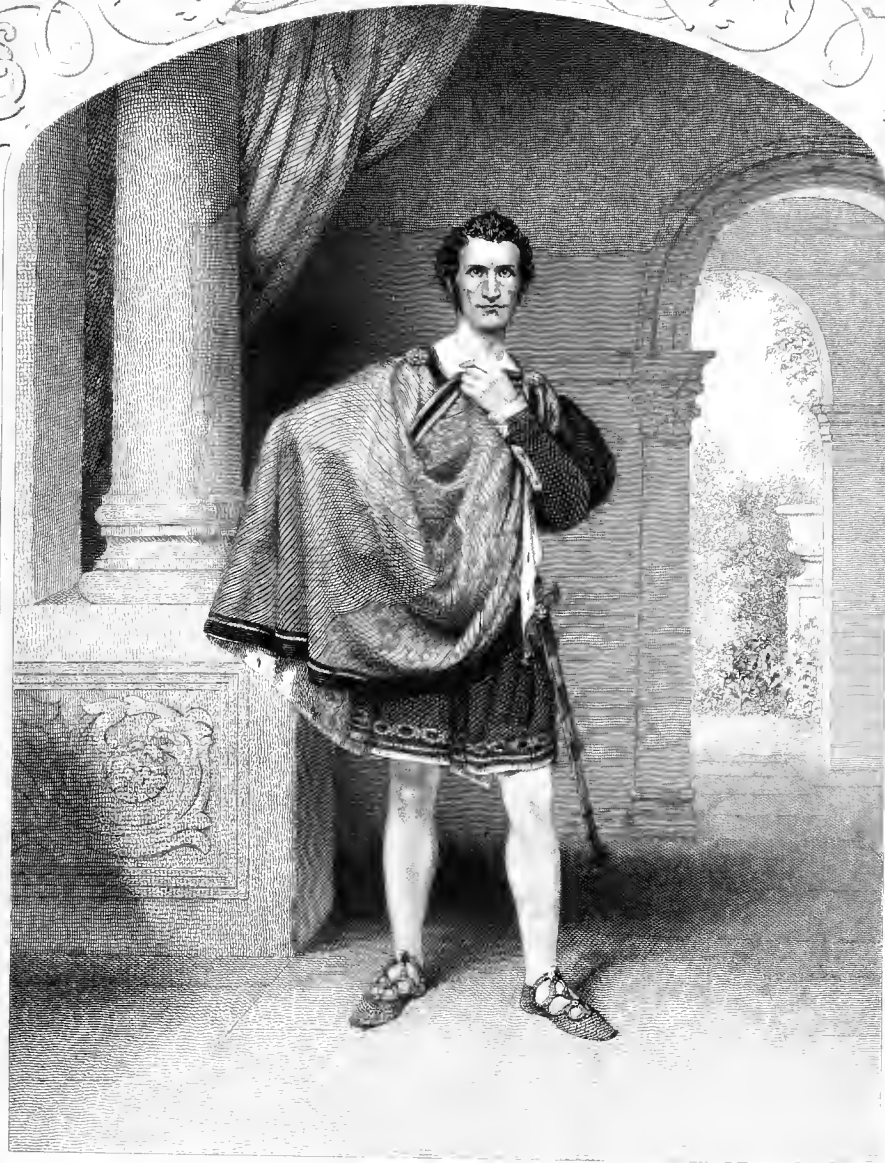








MISS STEPHENSON



MR. T. MEAD AS LAETIUS

FROM THE  
ILLUSTRATIONS OF  
THE  
ROMAN HISTORY



THE  
DOUBTFUL PLAYS

OF

SHAKSPEARE;

BEING ALL THE

DRAMAS ATTRIBUTED TO THE MUSE OF THE WORLD'S GREAT POET;

REVISED FROM THE ORIGINAL EDITIONS.

ACCOMPANIED WITH

*Historical and Analytical Introductions to each Play,*

AND

NOTES CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY:

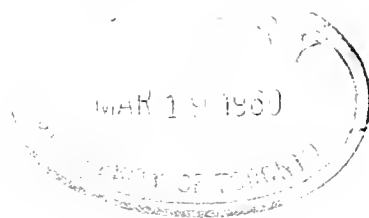
BY HENRY TYRRELL, ESQ.

ELEGANTLY AND APPROPRIATELY ILLUSTRATED BY

PORTRAITS ENGRAVED ON STEEL, FROM DAGUERREOTYPES OF THE GREATEST  
AND MOST INTELLECTUAL ACTORS OF THE AGE.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY JOHN TALLIS AND COMPANY,  
LONDON AND NEW YORK.

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## King Edward the Third.

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THE preceding dramas all appeared in the third edition of Shakspeare's works (the folio of 1664); but, from statements in the catalogues of booksellers, and from the authority of a volume formerly in the library of King Charles the Second, certain others have been attributed to him. The English critics have, until very lately, utterly disregarded these latter productions; the German critics, on the other hand, have highly lauded them for their power and beauty, and in some cases strenuously argued that they were creations of the muse of Shakspeare. Pursuing the course which I think the most just to the memory both of the bard himself, and of his obscure compeers, and the most satisfactory to all real students and lovers of that giant spirit which is blended with the genius of our country, I will place these dramas before the readers of the poet, and with them such evidence as exists both for and against their authenticity, mingled with remarks of a critical, and where the subject calls for it, of an analytical character. Hitherto these dramas have been read by antiquarians and scholars only, and by them generally with carelessness and indifference. They did not peruse them with that patient loving spirit of critical appreciation which they had extended to the most humble of the known works of our great poet, but in a hasty inattentive mood, and merely for the sake of expressing an opinion upon them. Opinions thus hastily conceived were necessarily liable to be both erroneous and superficial, but such judgments have hitherto governed the public mind with respect to the authenticity and merit of these poor fatherless children of the dramatic muse. The inquiring student of Shakspeare will act differently; he will read and judge for himself, and he will then discover that if but little can be said in favour of the authenticity of these dramas, very much may be said of their poetical value. Indeed, such is the power and grace exhibited in some of them, that though I dare not say I believe they *were* the productions of Shakspeare in his youth, still they *might have been*. In such a case an interest of no common kind attaches to them, and those who dwell with rapture on the works and memory of the wise and profound Shakspeare, will also glance with kindness upon productions which probably were born of other but still of kindred spirits.

These remarks form an appropriate prelude to the introduction of so noble and powerful a drama as *Edward the Third*, a drama of which Ulrici, a tasteful and discriminating German critic, has said—"Truly, if this piece, as the English critics assert, is not Shakspeare's own, it is a shame for them that they have done nothing to recover from forgetfulness the name of this second Shakspeare, this twin-brother of their great poet." This is a very high praise, and perhaps not altogether undeserved, teeming as the play does with beauty and power, buoyant with vigour and instinct with life, breathing in the early part the gentle softness of a poetical, passionate, yet adulterous love; and in the latter resounding with the clash of arms and the roar of battle; it is equal if not superior to some of Shakspeare's early dramas, but it lacks the grandeur, the occasional sublimity, and the never absent *variety* of his maturest efforts. It is far more probable that it was an early work of Shakspeare than that it was written by any twin-brother of our poet in the glorious family of genius. It was entered on the Stationers' books in 1595, a date which is quite consistent with the supposition that it was Shakspeare's; and Capell, a careful and underrated editor of our poet's works, republished it in 1760 in a volume, entitled *Prolusions, &c.*, "as a play *thought* to be writ by Shakspeare." In his preface to that volume, he thus cautiously expresses his opinion—"That it was indeed written by Shakspeare, it cannot be said with candour that there is any external evidence at all: something of proof arises from resemblance between the style of his earlier

performances and of the work in question; and a more conclusive one yet from consideration of the time it appeared in, *in which there was no known writer equal to such a play*: the fable of it too is taken from the same books which that author is known to have followed in some other plays; to wit, Holinshed's *Chronicle*, and a book of novels called *The Palace of Pleasure*. But after all, it must be confessed that its being his work is conjecture only, and matter of opinion; and the reader must form one of his own, guided by what is now before him, and by what he shall meet with in perusal of the piece itself." In the conclusion of his preface, Capell adds, in an unimpassioned manner, which bespeak his words to be the result of a careful judgment—"the play has many striking parts in it, not unworthy of the pen they are supposed to come from; and is, at worst, a curiosity of which the greater part of the world has no knowledge."

Ulrici, who appears very confident that this play was an early work of Shakspeare, starts a curious hypothesis to account for the author abandoning his claim to it. In the first two acts it contains some bitter reflections upon the Scots, which were palatable to Queen Elizabeth, "who, it is well known, loved her successor not much better than she did his mother, and ever stood in a guarded attitude against Scotland." But what pleased Elizabeth must have been very offensive to James; and Shakspeare, who received many favours from that monarch, was probably anxious to disown a drama which ridiculed the country of his sovereign's birth, and to have it forgotten that such a work ever was the production of his pen. This explanation of the cause of its omission by Heminge and Condell from the first folio edition of the poet's works, is at the least entitled to respectful consideration.

The first two acts of this drama are based upon a tradition that the stern and powerful Edward was passionately in love with the wife of one of his nobles, the virtuous, beautiful, and accomplished Countess of Salisbury. He is represented as completely enslaved and subdued by this sinful fancy; his iron mind is prostrated before the loveliness and fascinations of a woman, and abashed by her purity and virtue. He implores her to yield to his passion; firmly and with dignity, yet without anger, she refuses compliance, eloquently urging her duty to her husband, to herself, and to God. Her obedience is her king's, but her person her lord's; she reasons with the passionate monarch, and tells him:

As easy may my intellectual soul  
Be lent away, and yet my body live,  
As lend my body, palace to my soul,  
Away from her, and yet retain my soul.  
My body is her bower, her court, her abbey,  
And she an angel, pure, divine, unspotted;  
If I should lend her house, my lord, to thee,  
I kill my poor soul, and my poor soul me.

The lady's father, the Earl of Warwick, distressed at the melancholy of his sovereign, implores to be made acquainted with the cause of it. The subtle king first extracts an oath from the honourable old noble, that he will attempt by any means in his power to remove his grief. Edward then urges him to corrupt the mind of his own daughter, and persuade her to yield to his criminal passion. Warwick is thunderstruck, but he has sworn, he therefore addresses himself to the fulfilment of his oath, and yet contrives to possess his daughter with a proper repugnance to that which he persuades her to. This scene is managed with exquisite art and great power. The countess is resolute in virtue; her honour, like the purest crystal, is without flaw or speck; she had gently dissuaded the king, but she sternly reprimands her father for his infamous solicitation. The old noble is overjoyed; he has discharged his oath, but his daughter remains a pure unsullied wife. He then unsays his words, and leaves her, after the utterance of a touching and paternal homily. It is indeed difficult to name the dramatic author of that age, besides Shakspeare, who could write such lines as these:—

That sin doth ten times aggravate itself,  
That is committed in a holy place:  
An evil deed, done by authority,  
Is sin, and subornation: Deck an ape

## KING EDWARD THE THIRD.

In tissue, and the beauty of the robe  
Adds but the greater scorn unto the beast.  
A spacious field of reasons could I urge,  
Between his glory, daughter, and thy shame :  
That poison shews worst in a golden cup ;  
Dark night seems darker by the lightning flash ;  
Lilies that fester, smell far worse than weeds ;  
And every glory that inclines to sin,  
The shame is treble by the opposite.

The virtuous countess at length shames the luxurious king into an abandonment of his wanton suit ; by a vigorous mental effort he shakes off the idle spells that have fettered him ; he is again the stern military hero, and shortly after we behold him the victor of France, wresting the regal diadem from its reigning king, and leading him captive into England. The countess disappears after the first two acts ; we hear no more of her, and have no allusion made by Edward to his weakness ; the lover is lost in the warrior, and the sighs of disappointed desire are puffed away by the rude blasts of the trumpets, and drowned in the tramp of armies. Though no absolute division is made, the drama is in reality separated into two parts : the first is compounded of a monarch's weakness, the last reveals his strength ; the first is born of tradition and romance, the last of sober history.

These events are made by Ulrici the text of an eloquent moral, or the key with which he unlocks a lofty and elevating principle. He says—"We see, in the first two acts, how the powerful king (who, in his rude greatness, in his reckless iron energy, reminds us of the delineations of character in the elder King John, Henry VI., and Richard III.), sinks down into the slough of common life before the virtue and faithfulness of a powerless woman ; how he, suddenly enchained by an unworthy passion, abandons his great plans in order to write verses, and to spin intrigues. All human greatness, power, and splendour, fall of themselves, if not planted upon the soil of genuine morality ; the highest energies of mankind are not proof against the attacks of sin, when they are directed against the weak unguarded side—this is the subject of the view here taken, and it forms the basis of the first part. But true energy is enabled again to elevate itself ; it strengthens itself from the virtues of others, which, by God's appointment, are placed in opposition to it. With this faith, and with the highest, most masterly, deeply-penetrating, and even sublime picture of the far greater energy of a woman, who, in order to save her own honour, and that of her royal master, is ready to commit self-murder, the second act closes. This forms the transition to the following second part, which shows us the true heroic greatness, acquired through self-conquest, not only in the king, but also in his justly celebrated son. For even the prince has gone through the same school : he proves this, towards the end of the second act, by his quick silent obedience to the order of his father, although directly opposed to his wishes."

The last three acts have more bustle, but perhaps less poetic interest than the preceding ones, though they are well-sustained, and endued with a patriotic and heroic spirit ; if they possess a fault, it is that they have not that variety and contrast of character which is usually to be found in the works of Shakspeare. The merit of this drama consists rather in a sweet and gorgeous flow of language than in the subtle and truthful representation of those mingled and opposing characters which are ever found in large groups in actual life.

H. T.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

EDWARD THE THIRD, *King of England.*

*Appears*, Act I. sc. 1; sc. 2. Act II. sc. 1; sc. 2. Act III. sc. 3; sc. 5. Act IV. sc. 2. Act V. sc. 1.

EDWARD, *Prince of Wales, his Son.*

*Appears*, Act I. sc. 1. Act II. sc. 2. Act III. sc. 3; sc. 4; sc. 5. Act IV. sc. 4; sc. 6; sc. 7. Act V. sc. 1.

EARL OF WARWICK.

*Appears*, Act I. sc. 1; sc. 2. Act II. sc. 1; sc. 2.

EARL OF DERBY.

*Appears*, Act I. sc. 1. Act II. sc. 2. Act III. sc. 3; sc. 5. Act IV. sc. 2. Act V. sc. 1.

EARL OF SALISBURY.

*Appears*, Act IV. sc. 1; sc. 5. Act V. sc. 1.

LORD AUDLEY.

*Appears*, Act I. sc. 1. Act II. sc. 2. Act III. sc. 3; sc. 5. Act IV. sc. 4; sc. 6; sc. 7. Act V. sc. 1.

LORD PERCY.

*Appears*, Act IV. sc. 2.

LODOWICK, *a Confident of King Edward.*

*Appears*, Act II. sc. 1; sc. 2.

SIR WILLIAM MOUNTAGUE

*Appears*, Act I. sc. 1; sc. 2.

COPLAND, *an Esquire, afterwards Sir John Copland.*

AN ENGLISH HERALD.

*Appear*, Act V. sc. 1.

ROBERT, *styling himself Earl of Artois.*

*Appears*, Act I. sc. 1; sc. 2. Act II. sc. 2. Act III. sc. 3; sc. 5. Act IV. sc. 6; sc. 7. Act V. sc. 1.

EARL OF MONTFORD.

*Appears*, Act IV. sc. 1.

GOBIN DE GREY, *a Frenchman, Prisoner to the English.*

*Appears*, Act III. sc. 3.

JOHN, *King of France.*

*Appears*, Act III. sc. 1; sc. 3; sc. 4. Act IV. sc. 3; sc. 5; sc. 6; sc. 7. Act V. sc. 1.

CHARLES, *Duke of Normandy, his Son.*

*Appears*, Act III. sc. 1; sc. 3. Act IV. sc. 3; sc. 5; sc. 6; sc. 7.

PHILIP, *Second Son of the French King.*

*Appears*, Act III. sc. 1; sc. 3. Act IV. sc. 5; sc. 6; sc. 7. Act V. sc. 1.

DUKE OF LORRAIN.

*Appears*, Act I. sc. 2. Act III. sc. 1; sc. 3; sc. 4.

VILLIERS, *a French Lord.*

*Appears*, Act IV. sc. 1; sc. 3.

KING OF BOHEMIA, *an Ally of the French King.*

*Appears*, Act III. sc. 1; sc. 3; sc. 5.

A FRENCH MARINER.

*Appears*, Act III. sc. 1.

THREE FRENCH HERALDS.

*Appear*, Act IV. sc. 4.

CITIZENS OF CALAIS.

*Appears*, Act V. sc. 1.

DAVID, *King of Scotland.*

*Appears*, Act I. sc. 2. Act V. sc. 1.

EARL DOUGLAS.

*Appears*, Act I. sc. 2.

PHILIPPA, *Queen to King Edward.*

*Appears*, Act V. sc. 1.

COUNTESS OF SALISBURY.

*Appears*, Act I. sc. 2. Act II. sc. 1; sc. 2.

A FRENCH WOMAN.

*Appears*, Act III. sc. 2.

*Lords, Heralds, Officers, Soldiers, &c.*

SCENE.—*Dispersed, in ENGLAND, FLANDERS, and FRANCE.*

# King Edward the Third.

## ACT I.

SCENE I.—London. *A Room of State in the Palace.*

*Flourish.* Enter KING EDWARD, attended; PRINCE OF WALES, WARWICK, DERBY, AUDLEY, ARTOIS, and Others.

*Edw.* Robert of Artois, banish'd though thou be<sup>1</sup> From France, thy native country, yet with us Thou shalt retain as great a signiory; For we create thee Earl of Richmond here. And now go forwards with our pedigree; Who next succeeded Philip le Beau?<sup>2</sup>

*Art.* Three sons of his; which all, successively, Did sit upon their father's regal throne; Yet died, and left no issue of their loins.

*Edw.* But was my mother sister unto those?

*Art.* She was, my lord; and only Isabelle Was all the daughters that this Philip had: Whom afterward your father took to wife; And, from the fragrant garden of her womb, Your gracious self, the flower of Europe's hope, Derived is inheritor to France.

But note the rancour of rebellious minds. When thus the lineage of Le Beau was out, The French obscured your mother's privilege; And, though she were the next of blood, proclaim'd John, of the house of Valois, now their king: The reason was, They say, the realm of France, Replete with princes of great parentage, Ought not admit a governor to rule, Except he be descended of the male: And that's the special ground of their contempt, Wherewith they study to exclude your grace: But they shall find that forged ground of theirs To be but dusty heaps of brittle sand.

Perhaps, it will be thought a heinous thing, That I, a Frenchman, should discover this: But heaven I call to record of my vows; It is not hate, nor any private wrong, But love unto my country, and the right, Provokes my tongue thus lavish in report

You are the lineal watchman of our peace, And John of Valois indirectly climbs: What then should subjects, but embrace their king? Ah, wherein may our duty more be seen, Than, striving to rebate<sup>3</sup> a tyrant's pride, Place the true shepherd of our commonwealth?

*Edw.* This counsel, Artois, like to fruitful showers,

Hath added growth unto my dignity: And, by the fiery vigour of thy words, Hot courage is engender'd in my breast, Which heretofore was rak'd in ignorance; But now doth mount with golden wings of fame, And will approve fair Isabelle's descent Able to yoke their stubborn necks with steel That spuru against my sovereignty in France.—

[*Cornet within.*

A messenger?—Lord Audley, know from whence.

[*Exit AUD. and returns.*

*Aud.* The duke of Lorraine, having cross'd the seas, Intreats he may have conference with your highness.

*Edw.* Admit him, lords, that we may hear the news.—

[*Exeunt Lords. KING takes his State.*

*re-enter Lords; with LORRAIN, attended.*

Say, duke of Lorraine, wherefore art thou come?

*Lor.* The most renowned prince, King John of France,

Doth greet thee, Edward: and by me commands, That, for so much as by his liberal gift The Guyenne dukedom is entail'd to thee, Thou do him lowly homage for the same: And, for that purpose, here I summon thee Repair to France within these forty days, That there, according as the custom is, Thou may'st be sworn true liege-man to the king; Or, else, thy title in that province dies, And he himself will repossess the place.

*Edw.* See, how occasion laughs me in the face!

No sooner minded to prepare for France,  
 But, straight I am invited; nay, with threats,  
 Upon a penalty, enjoind to come:  
 'Twere but a foolish part, to say him nay,—  
 Lorraine, return this answer to thy lord:  
 I mean to visit him, as he requests;  
 But how? not servilely dispos'd to bend;  
 But like a conqueror, to make him bow:  
 His lame unpolish'd shifts are come to light;  
 And truth hath pull'd the vizard from his face,  
 That set a gloss upon his arrogance.  
 Dare he command a fealty in me?  
 Tell him, the crown, that he usurps, is mine;  
 And where he sets his foot, he ought to kneel:  
 'Tis not a petty dukedom that I claim,  
 But all the whole dominions of the realm:  
 Which if with grudging he refuse to yield,  
 I'll take away those borrowed plumes of his,  
 And send him naked to the wilderness.

*Lor.* Then, Edward, here, in spite of all thy  
 lords,

I do pronounce defiance to thy face.

*Prince.* Defiance, Frenchman? we rebound it  
 back,

Even to the bottom of thy master's throat:  
 And,—be it spoke with reverence of the king  
 My gracious father, and these other lords,  
 I hold thy message but as scurrilous;  
 And him that sent thee, like the lazy drone,  
 Crept up by stealth unto the eagle's nest;  
 From whence we'll shake him with so rough a  
 storm,

As others shall be warned by his harm.

*War.* Bid him leave off the lion's ease he wears;  
 Lest, meeting with the lion in the field,  
 He chance to tear him piece-meal for his pride.

*Art.* The soundest counsel I can give his grace,  
 Is, to surrender ere he be constrain'd:

A voluntary mischief hath less scorn,  
 Than when reproach with violence is born.

*Lor.* Regenerate traitor, viper to the place  
 Where thou wast foster'd in thine infancy,

[*Drawing his Sword.*]

Bear'st thou a part in this conspiracy?

*Edw.* Lorraine, behold the sharpness of this steel:

[*Drawing his*

Fervent desire, that sits against my heart,  
 Is far more thorny-pricking than this blade;  
 That, with the nightingale, I shall be scar'd,  
 As oft as I dispose myself to rest,  
 Until my colours be display'd in France:  
 This is thy final answer, so be gone.

*Lor.* It is not that, nor any English brave,

Afflicts me so, as doth his poison'd view;  
 That is most false, should most of all be true.

[*Exeunt Lor. and Train.*]

*Edw.* Now, lords, our fleeting bark is under sail:  
 Our gage is thrown; and war is soon begun,  
 But not so quickly brought unto an end.

*Enter SIR WILLIAM MOUNTAGUE.*

But wherefore comes Sir William Mountague?  
 How stands the league between the Scot and us?

*Mount.* Crack'd and diserver'd, my renowned  
 lord,

The treacherous king no sooner was inform'd  
 Of your withdrawing of your army back,  
 But straight, forgetting of his former oath,  
 He made invasion on the bordering towns:  
 Berwick is won; Newcastle spoil'd and lost;  
 And now the tyrant hath begirt with siege  
 The castle of Roxborough, where enclos'd  
 The countess Salisbury is like to perish.

*Edw.* That is thy daughter, Warwick, is it not;  
 Whose husband hath in Bretagne serv'd so long,  
 About the planting of Lord Montfort there?

*War.* It is, my lord.

*Edw.* Ignoble David! hast thou none to grieve,  
 But silly ladies, with thy threat'ning arms?  
 But I will make you shrink your snail's horns.—  
 First, therefore, Audley, this shall be thy charge;  
 Go levy footmen for our wars in France:—<sup>5</sup>  
 And, Ned, take muster of our men at arms:  
 In every shire elect a several band;  
 Let them be soldiers of a lusty spirit,  
 Such as dread nothing but dishonour's blot:  
 Be wary therefore; since we do commence  
 A famous war, and with so mighty nation.

Derby, be thou ambassador for us  
 Unto our father-in-law, the Earl of Hainault:  
 Make him acquainted with our enterprise;  
 And likewise will him, with our own allies,  
 That are in Flanders, to solicit too  
 The Emperor of Almaine in our name.—  
 Myself, whilst you are jointly thus employ'd,  
 Will, with these forces that I have at hand,  
 March, and once more repulse the trait'rous Scots.  
 But, sirs, be resolute; we shall have wars  
 On every side:—and, Ned, thou must begin  
 Now to forget thy study and thy books,  
 And use thy shoulders to an armour's weight.

*Prince.* As cheerful sounding to my youthful  
 spleen

This tumult is of war's increasing broils,  
 As, at the coronation of a king,  
 The joyful clamours of the people are,



When, *ave*, Cæsar! they pronounce aloud;  
 Within this school of honour I shall learn,  
 Either to sacrifice my foes to death,  
 Or in a rightful quarrel spend my breath.  
 Then cheerfully forward, each a several way;  
 In great affairs 'tis naught to use delay. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—Roxborough. *Before the Castle.*

*Enter* COUNTESS OF SALISBURY, and certain of her  
 People upon the Walls.

*Cou.* Alas, how much in vain my poor eyes gaze  
 For succour that my sovereign should send!  
 Ah, cousin Mountague, I fear, thou want'st  
 The lively spirit, sharply to solicit  
 With vehement suit the king in my behalf:  
 Thou dost not tell him, what a grief it is  
 To be the scornful captive to a Scot;  
 Either to be woo'd with broad untuned oaths,  
 Or forc'd by rough insulting barbarism:  
 Thou dost not tell him, if he here prevail,  
 How much they will deride us in the north;  
 And, in their vile, uncivil, skipping jigs,  
 Bray forth their conquest, and our overthrow,  
 Even in the barren, bleak, and fruitless air.

*Enter* KING DAVID and Forces, with DOUGLAS,  
 LORRAIN, and Others.

I must withdraw; the everlasting foe  
 Comes to the wall: I'll closely step aside,  
 And list their babble; blunt, and full of pride.

[*Retiring behind the Works.*]

*Dav.* My Lord of Lorraine, to our brother of  
 France

Commend us, as the man in Christendom  
 Whom we most reverence, and entirely love.  
 Touching your embassy, return, and say  
 That we with England will not enter parley,  
 Nor never make fair weather, or take truce;  
 But burn their neighbour towns, and so persist  
 With eager roads beyond their city York.  
 And never shall our bonny riders rest;  
 Nor rusting canker have the time to eat  
 Their light-born snaffles, nor their nimble spurs;  
 Nor lay aside their jacks of gymold mail;<sup>6</sup>  
 Nor hang their staves of grained Scottish ash,  
 In peaceful wise, upon their city walls;  
 Nor from their button'd tawny leathern belts  
 Dismiss their biting whinyards,<sup>7</sup> 'till your king  
 Cry out, "Enough; spare England now for pity."  
 Farewell: and tell him, that you leave us here  
 Before this castle; say, you came from us,  
 Even when we had that yielded to our hands.

*Lor.* I take my leave; and fairly will return  
 Your acceptable greeting to my king.

[*Exit. Lor.*]

*Dav.* Now Douglas, to our former task again,  
 For the division of this certain spoil.

*Dou.* My liege, I crave the lady, and no more.

*Dav.* Nay, soft ye, sir, first I must make my  
 choice;

And first I do bespeak her for myself.

*Dou.* Why then, my liege, let me enjoy her  
 jewels.

*Dav.* Those are her own, still liable to her,  
 And, who inherits her, bath those withal.

*Enter a Messenger, hastily.*

*Mes.* My liege, as we were pricking on the hills,  
 To fetch in booty, marching hitherward  
 We might desery a mighty host of men:  
 The sun, reflecting on the armour, show'd  
 A field of plate, a wood of pikes advanc'd;  
 Bethink your highness speedily herein:  
 An easy march within four hours will bring  
 The hindmost rank unto this place, my liege.

*Dav.* Dislodge, dislodge, it is the king of Eng-  
 land.

*Dou.* Jemmy my man, saddle my bonny black.<sup>8</sup>

*Dav.* Mean'st thou to fight, Douglas? we are  
 too weak.

*Dou.* I know it well, my liege, and therefore flee.

*Cou.* My lords of Scotland, will ye stay and  
 drink? [*Rising from her concealment.*]

*Dav.* She mocks at us; Douglas, I can't en-  
 dure it.

*Cou.* Say, my lord, which is he, must have the  
 lady;

And which, her jewels? I am sure, my lords,  
 Ye will not hence, 'till you have shar'd the spoils.

*Dav.* She heard the messenger, and heard our  
 talk;

And now that comfort makes her scorn at us.

*Enter another Messenger.*

*Mes.* Arm, my good lord; O, we are all sur-  
 pris'd!

*Cou.* After the French ambassador, my liege,  
 And tell him, that you dare not ride to York;  
 Excuse it, that your bonny horse is lame.

*Dav.* She heard that too; intolerable grief!—  
 Woman, farewell: although I do not stay,—

[*Alarums. Exeunt Scots.*]

*Cou.* 'Tis not for fear,—and yet you run away.—  
 O happy comfort, welcome to our house!  
 The confident and boist'rous boasting Scot,—

That swore before my walls, they would not back  
For all the armed power of this land,—  
With faceless fear, that ever turns his back,  
Turn'd hence again the blasting north-east wind,  
Upon the bare report and name of arms.

*Enter MOUNTAGUE, and Others.*

O summer's day! see where my cousin comes.

*Mou.* How fares my aunt? Why, aunt, we are  
not Scots;

Why do you shut your gates against your friends?

*Cou.* Well may I give a welcome, cousin, to thee,  
For thou com'st well to chase my foes from hence.

*Mou.* The king himself is come in person hither;  
Dear aunt, descend, and gratulate his highness.

*Cou.* How may I entertain his majesty,  
To show my duty, and his dignity? [*Exit from above.*]

*Flourish. Enter KING EDWARD, WARWICK,  
ARTOIS, and Others.*

*Edw.* What, are the stealing foxes fled and gone,  
Before we could muncuple at their heels?

*War.* They are, my liege; but, with a cheerful  
cry,  
Hot hounds, and hardy, chase them at the heels.

*Re-enter COUNTESS, attended.*

*Edw.* This is the countess, Warwick, is it not?

*War.* Even she, my liege; whose beauty tyrants  
fear,

As a May blossom with pernicious winds,  
Hath sully'd, wither'd, overcast, and done.

*Edw.* Hath she been fairer, Warwick, than she is?

*War.* My gracious king, fair is she not at all,  
If that herself were by to stain herself,  
As I have seen her when she was herself.

*Edw.* What strange enchantment lurk'd in those  
her eyes,

When they excell'd this excellence they have,  
That now her dim decline hath power to draw  
My subject eyes from piercing majesty,  
To gaze on her with doting admiration? [*Aside.*]

*Cou.* In duty lower than the ground I kneel,  
And for my dull knees bow my feeling heart,  
To witness my obedience to your highness;  
With many millions of a subject's thanks  
For this your royal presence, whose approach  
Hath driven war and danger from my gate.

*Edw.* Lady, stand up: I come to bring thee peace,  
However thereby I have purchas'd war.

*Cou.* No war to you, my liege; the Scots are gone,  
And gallop home toward Scotland with their haste.

*Edw.* Lest yielding here I pine in shameful love,

Come, we'll pursue the Scots [*Aside*];—Artois,  
away.

*Cou.* A little while, my gracious sovereign, stay,  
And let the power of a mighty king  
Honour our roof; my husband in the wars,  
When he shall hear it, will triumph for joy:  
Then, dear my liege, now niggard not thy state;  
Being at the wall, enter our homely gate.

*Edw.* Pardon me, countess, I will come no near;  
I dream'd to-night of treason, and I fear.

*Cou.* Far from this place let ugly treason lie!

*Edw.* No farther off, than her conspiring eye;  
Which shoots infected poison in my heart,  
Beyond repulse of wit, or cure of art.  
Now in the sun alone it doth not lie,  
With light to take light from a mortal eye;  
For here two day stars, that mine eyes would see,  
More than the sun, steal mine own light from me.  
Contemplative desire! desire to be,

In contemplation, that may master thee! [*Aside.*]  
Warwick, Artois, to horse, and let's away.

*Cou.* What might I speak, to make my sovereign  
stay?

*Edw.* What needs a tongue to such a speaking  
eye,

That more persuades than winning oratory? [*Aside.*]

*Cou.* Let not thy presence, like the April sun,  
Flatter our earth, and suddenly be done:  
More happy do not make our outward wall,  
Than thou wilt grace our inward house withal.  
Our house, my liege, is like a country swain,  
Whose habit rude, and manners blunt and plain,  
Presageth nought; yet inly beautify'd  
With bounty's riches, and fair hidden pride:  
For, where the golden ore doth bury'd lie,  
The ground, undeck'd with nature's tapestry,  
Seems barren, sere, unfertile, fruitless, dry;  
And where the upper turf of earth doth boast  
His proud perfumes, and party-colour'd cost,  
Delve there, and find this issue, and their pride,  
To spring from ordure, and corruption's side.  
But, to make up my all too long compare,—  
These ragged walls no testimony are  
What is within; but, like a cloak, doth hide,  
From weather's west, the under garnish'd pride.  
More gracious than my terms can let thee be,  
Entreat thyself to stay a while with me.

*Edw.* As wise as fair; What fond fit can be heard,  
When wisdom keeps the gate as beauty's guard?—  
[*Aside.*]

Countess, albeit my business urgeth me,  
It shall attend, while I attend on thee.—  
Come on, my lords, here will I host to-night.

## ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Same. Gardens of the Castle.**Enter LODOWICK.*

*Lod.* I might perceive his eye in her eye lost,  
His ear to drink her sweet tongue's utterance;  
And changing passion, like inconstant clouds,—  
That, rack'd upon the carriage of the winds,  
Increase, and die,—in his disturbed cheeks.  
Lo, when she blush'd, even then did he look pale;  
As if her cheeks, by some enchanted power,  
Attracted had the cherry blood from his:  
Anon, with reverent fear when she grew pale,  
His cheeks put on their scarlet ornaments;  
But no more like her oriental red,  
Than brick to coral, or live things to dead.  
Why did he then thus counterfeit her looks?  
If she did blush, 'twas tender modest shame,  
Being in the sacred presence of a king;  
If he did blush, 'twas red immodest shame,  
To veil his eyes amiss, being a king:  
If she look'd pale, 'twas silly woman's fear,  
To bear herself in presence of a king;  
If he look'd pale, it was with guilty fear,  
To dote amiss, being a mighty king:  
Then, Scottish wars, farewell; I fear, 'twill prove  
A ling'ring English siege of pceevish love.<sup>9</sup>  
Here comes his highness, walking all alone.

*Enter KING EDWARD.*

*Edw.* She is grown more fairer far since I came  
hither;  
Her voice more silver every word than other,  
Her wit more fluent: What a strange discourse  
Unfolded she, of David, and his Scots?  
"Even thus," quoth she, "he spake,"—and then  
spake broad,  
With epithets and accents of the Scot;  
But somewhat better than the Scot could speak:  
"And thus," quoth she,—and answer'd then her-  
self;  
For who could speak like her? but she herself  
Breathes from the wall an angel's note from heaven  
Of sweet defiance to her barbarous foes.  
When she would talk of peace, methinks, her tongue  
Commanded war to prison; when of war,  
It waken'd Cæsar from his Roman grave,  
To hear war beautify'd by her discourse.  
Wisdom is foolishness, but in her tongue;  
Beauty a slander, but in her fair face:

There is no summer, but in her cheerful looks;  
Nor frosty winter, but in her disdain.  
I cannot blame the Scots, that did besiege her,  
For she is all the treasure of our land;  
But call them cowards, that they ran away,  
Having so rich and fair a cause to stay.—  
Art thou there, Lodowick? give me ink and paper.

*Lod.* I will, my sovereign.

*Edw.* And bid the lords hold on their play at  
chess,

For we will walk and meditate alone.

*Lod.* I will, my liege.*Exit LOD.*

*Edw.* This fellow is well read in poetry,  
And hath a lusty and persuasive spirit:  
I will acquaint him with my passion;  
Which he shall shadow with a veil of lawn,  
Through which the queen of beauty's queen shall  
see  
Herself the ground of my infirmity.—

*Re-enter LODOWICK.*

Hast thou pen, ink, and paper ready, Lodowick?

*Lod.* Ready, my liege.

*Edw.* Then in the summer arbour sit by me,  
Make it our council-house, or cabinet;  
Since green our thoughts, green be the conventicle,  
Where we will ease us by disburd'ning them.  
Now, Lodowick, invoke some golden muse,  
To bring thee hither an enchanted pen,  
That may, for sighs, set down true sighs indeed;  
Talking of grief, to make thee ready groan;  
And, when thou writ'st of tears, encouch the word,  
Before, and after, with such sweet laments,  
That it may raise drops in a Tartar's eye,  
And make a flint heart Scythian pitiful:  
For so much moving hath a poet's pen;  
Then, if thou be a poet, move thou so,  
And be enriched by thy sovereign's love.  
For, if the touch of sweet concordant strings  
Could force attendance in the ears of hell;  
How much more shall the strain of poet's wit  
Beguile, and ravish, soft and humane minds?

*Lod.* To whom, my lord, shall I direct my stile?

*Edw.* To one that shames the fair, and sots the  
wise;

Whose body, as an abstract, or a brief,  
Contains each general virtue in the world:  
Better than beautiful,—thou must begin;  
Devise for fair a fairer word than fair;

And every ornament, that thou would'st praise,  
Fly it a pitch above the soar of praise :  
For flattery fear thou not to be convicted ;  
For, were thy admiration ten times more,  
Ten times ten thousand more the worth exceeds,  
Of that thou art to praise, thy praise's worth.  
Begin, I will to contemplate the while :  
Forget not to set down, how passionate,  
How heart-sick, and how full of languishment,  
Her beauty makes me.

*Lod.* Write I to a woman ?

*Edw.* What beauty else could triumph over me ;  
Or who, but women, do our love-jays greet ?  
What, think'st thou I did bid thee praise a horse ?

*Lod.* Of what condition or estate she is,  
'Twere requisite that I should know, my lord.

*Edw.* Of such estate, that hers is as a throne,  
And my estate the footstool where she treads :  
Then may'st thou judge what her condition is,  
By the proportion of her mightiness.  
Write on, while I peruse her in my thoughts.—  
Her voice to music, or the nightingale :—  
To music every summer-leaping swain  
Compares his sun-burnt lover when she speaks :  
And why should I speak of the nightingale ?  
The nightingale sings of adulterate wrong ;  
And that, compar'd, is too satirical :  
For sin, though sin, would not be so esteem'd ;  
But, rather, virtue sin, sin virtue deem'd.  
Her hair, far softer than the silk-worm's twist,  
Like as a flattering glass, doth make more fair  
The yellow amber : Like a flattering glass  
Comes in too soon ; for, writing of her eyes,  
I'll say, that like a glass they catch the sun,  
And thence the hot reflection doth rebound  
Against my breast, and burns my heart within.  
Ah, what a world of descant makes my soul  
Upon this voluntary ground of love !—  
Come, Lodowick, hast thou turn'd thy ink to gold ?  
If not, write but in letters capital  
My mistress' name,  
And it will gild thy paper : Read, lord, read,  
Fill thou the empty hollows of mine ears  
With the sweet hearing of thy poetry.

*Lod.* I have not to a period brought her praise.

*Edw.* Her praise is as my love, both infinite,  
Which apprehend such violent extremes,  
That they disdain an ending period.  
Her beauty hath no match, but my affection ;  
Hers more than most, mine most, and more than  
more :

Hers more to praise, than tell the sea by drops ;  
Nay, more, than drop the massy earth by sands,

And, sand by sand,<sup>10</sup> print them in memory :  
Then wherefore talk'st thou of a period,  
To that which craves unended admiration ?  
Read, let us hear.

*Lod.* " More fair, and chaste, than is the queen  
of shades,"

*Edw.* That line hath two faults, gross and  
palpable :

Compar'st thou her to the pale queen of night,  
Who, being set in dark, seems therefore light ?  
What is she, when the sun lifts up his head,  
But like a fading taper, dim and dead ?  
My love shall brave the eye of heaven at noon,  
And, being unmask'd, outshine the golden sun.

*Lod.* What is the other fault, my sovereign  
lord ?

*Edw.* Read o'er the line again.

*Lod.* " More fair, and chaste."

*Edw.* I did not bid thee talk of chastity,—  
To ransack so the treasure of her mind ;  
For I had rather have her chas'd than chaste,  
Out with the moon-line, I will none of it,  
And let me have her liken'd to the sun :  
Say, she hath thrice more splendour than the sun,  
That her perfection emulates the sun,  
That she breeds sweets as plenteous as the sun,  
That she doth thaw cold winter like the sun,  
That she doth cheer fresh summer like the sun,  
That she doth dazzle gazers like the sun :  
And, in this application to the sun,  
Bid her be free and general as the sun ;  
Who smiles upon the basest weed that grows,  
As lovingly as on the fragrant rose.  
Let's see what follows that same moon-light line.

*Lod.* " More fair, and chaste, than is the queen of  
shades ;

More bold in constancy,"—

*Edw.* In constancy! than who?

*Lod.*—" than Judith was."<sup>11</sup>

*Edw.* O moustrous line! Put in the next a  
sword,

And I shall woo her to cut off my head.

Blet, blot, good Lodowick! Let us hear the next.

*Lod.* There's all that yet is done.

*Edw.* I thank thee then, thou hast done little  
ill ;

But what is done, is passing passing ill.

No, let the captain talk of boist'rous war ;

The prisoner, of immured dark constraint ;

The sick man best sets down the pangs of death ;

The man that starves, the sweetness of a feast ;

The frozen soul, the benefit of fire ;

And every grief, his happy opposite :

Love cannot sound well, but in lovers' tongues ;  
Give me the pen and paper, I will write.—

*Enter* COUNTESS.

But, soft, here comes the treasure of my spirit.—  
Lodowick, thou know'st not how to draw a battle ;  
These wings, these flankers, and these squadrons  
here,  
Argue in thee defective discipline :  
Thou should'st have plac'd this here, this other  
here.

*Cou.* Pardon my boldness, my thrice gracious  
lord ;

Let my intrusion here be call'd my duty,  
That comes to see my sovereign how he fares.

*Edu.* Go, draw the same, I tell thee in what  
form.

*Lod.* I go. [*Exit.* LOD.]

*Cou.* Sorry I am, to see my liege so sad :  
What may thy subject do, to drive from thee  
This gloomy consort, sullen melancholy ?

*Edu.* Ah, lady, I am blunt, and cannot straw  
The flowers of solace in a ground of shame :  
Since I came hither, countess, I am wrong'd.

*Cou.* Now, God forbid, that any in my house  
Should think my sovereign wrong ! Thrice gentle  
king,

Acquaint me with your cause of discontent.

*Edu.* How near thou shall I be to remedy ?

*Cou.* As near, my liege, as all my woman's  
power

Can pawn itself to buy thy remedy.

*Edu.* If thou speak'st true, then have I my  
redress :

Engage thy power to redeem my joys,  
And I am joyful, countess ! else I die.

*Cou.* I will, my liege.

*Edu.* Swear, countess, that thou wilt.

*Cou.* By heaven, I will.

*Edu.* Then take thyself a little way aside ;  
And tell thyself, a king doth dote on thee :  
Say, that within thy power it doth lie,  
To make him happy ; and that thou hast sworn,  
To give me all the joy within thy power :  
Do this ; and tell me, when I shall be happy.

*Cou.* All this is done, my thrice dread sovereign :  
That power of love, that I have power to give,  
Thou hast with all devout obedience ;  
Employ me how thou wilt in proof thereof.

*Edu.* Thou hear'st me say, that I do dote on  
thee.

*Cou.* If on my beauty, take it if thou can'st ;  
Though little, I do prize it ten times less :

If on my virtue, take it if thou can'st ;  
For virtue's store by giving doth augment :  
Be it on what it will, that I can give,  
And thou can'st take away, inherit it.

*Edu.* It is thy beauty that I would enjoy.

*Cou.* O, were it painted, I would wipe it off,  
And dispossess myself, to give it thee :  
But, sovereign, it is solder'd to my life ;  
Take one, and both ; for, like an humble shadow,  
It haunts the sun-shine of my summer's life.

*Edu.* But thou may'st lend it me, to sport  
withal.

*Cou.* As easy may my intellectual soul  
Be lent away, and yet my body live,  
As lend my body, palace to my soul,  
Away from her, and yet retain my soul.  
My body is her bower, her court, her abbey,  
And she an angel, pure, divine, unspotted ;  
If I should lend her house, my lord, to thee,  
I kill my poor soul, and my poor soul me.

*Edu.* Did'st thou not swear to give me what I  
would ?

*Cou.* I did, my liege ; so, what you would, I  
could.

*Edu.* I wish no more of thee, than thou may'st  
give :

Nor beg I do not, but I rather buy,  
That is, thy love ; and, for that love of thine,  
In rich exchange, I tender to thee mine.

*Cou.* But that your lips were sacred, O my lord,  
You would profane the holy name of love.  
That love, you offer me, you cannot give :  
For Ciesar owes that tribute to his queen :  
That love, you beg of me, I cannot give ;  
For Sarah owes that duty to her lord.

He, that doth clip, or counterfeit your stamp,  
Shall die, my lord : And will your sacred self  
Commit high treason 'gainst the king of heaven,  
To stamp his image in forbidden metal,  
Forgetting your allegiance and your oath ?

In violating marriage sacred law,

You break a greater honour than yourself :  
To be a king, is of a younger house  
Than to be married ; your progenitor,  
Sole-reigning Adam on the universe,  
By God was honour'd for a married man,  
But not by him anointed for a king.

It is a penalty, to break your statutes,  
Though not enacted by your highness' hand :  
How much more, to infringe the holy act  
Made by the mouth of God, seal'd with his hand ?  
I know, my sovereign—in my husband's love,  
Who now doth loyal service in his wars—

Doth but to try the wife of Salisbury,  
Whether she will hear a wanton's tale, or no;  
Lest being therein guilty by my stay,  
From that, not from my liege, I turn away.

[*Exit Cor.*]

*Edw.* Whether is her beauty by her words divine;  
Or are her words sweet chaplains to her beauty?  
Like as the wind doth beautify a sail,  
And as a sail becomes the unseen wind,  
So do her words her beauty, beauty words.  
O, that I were a honey-gathering bee,  
To bear the comb of virtue from this flower;  
And not a poison-sucking envious spider,  
To turn the vice I take to deadly venom!  
Religion is austere, and beauty gentle;  
Too strict a guardian for so fair a ward.  
O that she were, as is the air, to me!  
Why so she is; for, when I would embrace her,  
This do I, and catch nothing but myself.  
I must enjoy her; for I cannot beat,  
With reason and reproof, fond love away.

*Enter WARWICK.*

Here comes her father: I will work with him,  
To bear my colours in this field of love.

*War.* How is it, that my sovereign is so sad?  
May I with pardon know your highness' grief,  
And that my old endeavour will remove it,  
It shall not cumber long your majesty.

*Edw.* A kind and voluntary gift thou offer'st,  
That I was forward to have begg'd of thee.  
But, O thou world, great nurse of flattery,  
Why dost thou tip men's tongues with golden  
words,

And peize their deeds with weight of heavy lead,  
That fair performance cannot follow promise?  
O, that a man might hold the heart's close book;  
And choke the lavish tongue, when it doth utter  
The breath of falsehood not character'd there!

*War.* Far be it from the honour of my age,  
That I should owe bright gold, and render lead!  
Age is a cynic, not a flatterer:  
I say again, that if I knew your grief,  
And that by me it may be lessened,  
My proper harm should buy your highness' good.

*Edw.* These are the vulgar tenders of false men,  
That never pay the duty of their words.  
Thou wilt not stick to swear what thou hast said;  
But, when thou know'st my grief's condition,  
This rash disgorged vomit of thy word  
Thou wilt eat up again, and leave me helpless.

*War.* By heaven, I will not; though your majesty  
Did bid me run upon your sword, and die.

*Edw.* Say, that my grief is no way med'cinable,  
But by the loss and bruising of thine honour?

*War.* If nothing but that loss may vantage you,  
I would account that loss my vantage too.

*Edw.* Think'st, that thou can'st unswear thy  
oath again?

*War.* I cannot; nor I would not, if I could.

*Edw.* But, if thou dost, what shall I say to thee?

*War.* What may be said to any perjurer'd villain,  
That breaks the sacred warrant of an oath.

*Edw.* What wilt thou say to one that breaks an  
oath?

*War.* That he hath broke his faith with God and  
man,

And from them both stands excommunicate.

*Edw.* What office were it, to suggest a man  
To break a lawful and religious vow?

*War.* An office for the devil, not for man.

*Edw.* That devil's office must thou do for me;

Or break thy oath, or cancel all the bonds  
Of love and duty 'twixt thyself and me.

And therefore, Warwick, if thou art thyself,  
The lord and master of thy word and oath,

Go to thy daughter: and, in my behalf,  
Command her, woo her, win her any ways,  
To be my mistress, and my secret love.

I will not stand to hear thee make reply;

Thy oath break hers, or let thy sovereign die.

[*Exit EDW.*]

*War.* O doting king! O detestable office!  
Well may I tempt myself to wrong myself,  
When he hath sworn me by the name of God,  
To break a vow made by the name of God.  
What if I swear by this right hand of mine,  
To cut this right hand off? the better way  
Were, to profane the idol, than confound it:  
But neither will I do; I'll keep my oath,  
And to my daughter make a recantation  
Of all the virtue I have preach'd to her:  
I'll say, she must forget her husband Salisbury,  
If she remember to embrace the king;  
I'll say, an oath may easily be broken,  
But not so easily pardon'd, being broken  
I'll say, it is true charity to love,  
But not true love to be so charitable;  
I'll say, his greatness may bear out the shame,  
But not his kingdom can buy out the sin  
I'll say, it is my duty to persuade,  
But not her honesty to give consent.

*Enter COUNTESS.*

See, where she comes: Was never father, had,  
Against his child, an embassy so bad.

*Cou.* My lord and father, I have sought for you :  
My mother and the peers importune you,  
To keep in presence of his majesty,  
And do your best to make his highness merry.

*War.* How shall I enter in this graceless errand?  
I must not call her child ; for where's the father  
That will, in such a suit, seduce his child ?  
Then, Wife of Salisbury,—shall I so begin ?  
No, he's my friend ; and where is found the friend,  
That will do friendship such endamagement ?  
Neither my daughter, nor my dear friend's wife,  
I am not Warwick, as thou think'st I am,  
But an attorney from the court of hell ;  
That thus have hous'd my spirit in his form,  
To do a message to thee from the king.  
The mighty king of England dotes on thee :  
He, that hath power to take away thy life,  
Hath power to take thine honour ; then consent  
To pawn thine honour, rather than thy life :  
Honour is often lost, and got again ;  
But life, once gone, hath no recovery.  
The sun, that withers hay, doth nourish grass ;  
The king, that would distain thee, will advance  
thee.

The poets write, that great Achilles' spear  
Could heal the wound it made : the moral is,  
What mighty men misdo, they can amend.  
The lion doth become his bloody jaws,  
And grace his foragement, by being mild  
When vassal fear lies trembling at his feet.  
The king will in his glory hide thy shame ;  
And those, that gaze on him to find out thee,  
Will lose their eye-sight, looking in the sun.  
What can one drop of poison harm the sea,  
Whose huge vastures can digest the ill,  
And make it lose his operation ?  
The king's great name will temper thy misdeeds,  
And give the bitter potion of reproach  
A sugar'd-sweet and most delicious taste :  
Besides, it is no harm, to do the thing  
Which without shame could not be left undone.  
Thus have I, in his majesty's behalf,  
Apparel'd sin in virtuous sentences,  
And dwell upon thy answer in his suit.

*Cou.* Unnatural besiege ! Woe me unhappy,  
To have escap'd the danger of my foes,  
And to be ten times worse invir'd by friends !  
Hath he no means to stain my honest blood,  
But to corrupt the author of my blood,  
To be his scandalous and vile solicitor ?  
No marvel, though the branches be infected,  
When poison hath encompassed the root :  
No marvel, though the leprous infant die,

When the stern dam evenenometh the dug.  
Why then, give sin a passport to offend,  
And youth the dangerous rein of liberty :  
Blot out the strict forbidding of the law ;  
And cancel every canon, that prescribes  
A shame for shame, or penance for offence.  
No, let me die, if his too boist'rous will  
Will have it so, before I will consent  
To be an actor in his graceless lust.

*War.* Why, now thou speak'st as I would have  
thee speak :  
And mark how I unsay my words again.  
An honourable grave is more esteem'd,  
Than the polluted closet of a king :  
The greater man, the greater is the thing,  
Be it good, or bad, that he shall undertake :  
An unreputed note, flying in the sun,  
Presents a greater substance than it is :  
The freshest summer's day doth soonest taint  
The loathed carrion that it seems to kiss :  
Deep are the blows made with a mighty axe :  
That sin doth ten times aggravate itself,  
That is committed in a holy place :  
An evil deed, done by authority,  
Is sin, and subornation : Deck an ape  
In tissue, and the beauty of the robe  
Adds but the greater scorn unto the beast.  
A spacious field of reasons could I urge,  
Between his glory, daughter, and thy shame :  
That poison shows worst in a golden cup ;  
Dark night seems darker by the lightning flash ;  
Lilies, that fester, smell far worse than weeds ;<sup>12</sup>  
And every glory that inclines to sin,  
The shame is treble by the opposite.  
So leave I, with my blessing in thy bosom ;  
Which then convert to a most heavy curse,  
When thou convert'st from honour's golden name  
To the black faction of bed-blotting shame ! [*Exit.*]

*Cou.* I'll follow thee ; And, when my mind  
turns so,  
My body sink my soul in endless woe ! [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*The Same. A Room in the Castle.*

*Enter DERBY, and AUDLEY, meeting.*

*Der.* Thrice noble Audley, well encounter'd here :  
How is it with our sovereign, and his peers ?

*Aud.* 'Tis full a fortnight, since I saw his high-  
ness,

What time he sent me forth to muster men ;  
Which I accordingly have done, and bring them  
In fair array before his majesty.

What news, my lord of Derby, from the emperor ?

*Der.* As good as we desire: the emperor  
Hath yielded to his highness friendly aid;  
And makes our king lieutenant-general,  
In all his lands and large dominions:  
Then *via* for the spacious bounds of France!<sup>13</sup>

*Aud.* What, doth his highness leap to hear this  
news?

*Der.* I have not yet found time to open them;  
The king is in his closet, malcontent,  
For what, I know not, but he gave in charge,  
'Till after dinner, none should interrupt him:  
The countess Salisbury, and her father Warwick,  
Artois, and all, look underneath the brows.

*Aud.* Undoubtedly, then something is amiss.

[*Trumpet within.*]

*Der.* The trumpets sound; the king is now abroad.

*Enter EDWARD.*

*Aud.* Here comes his highness.

*Der.* Befall my sovereign all my sovereign's wish!

*Edu.* Ah, that thou wert a witch, to make it so!

*Der.* The emperor greeteth you:

[*Presenting Letters.*]

*Edu.* 'Would it were the countess!

*Der.* And hath accorded to your highness' suit.

*Edu.* Thou ly'st, she hath not; But I would,  
she had!

*Aud.* All love, and duty, to my lord the king!

*Edu.* Well, all but one is none:—What news  
with you?

*Aud.* I have, my liege, levy'd those horse and foot,  
According to your charge, and brought them hither.

*Edu.* Then let those foot trudge hence upon  
those horse,

According to our discharge, and be gone.—

Derby, I'll look upon the countess' mind

Anon.<sup>14</sup>

*Der.* The countess' mind, my liege?

*Edu.* I mean, the emperor: Leave me alone.

*Aud.* What's in his mind?

*Der.* Let's leave him to his humour.

[*Exeunt DER., and AUD.*]

*Edu.* Thus from the heart's abundant speaks the  
tongue;

Countess for emperor: And, indeed, why not?

She is as imperator over me;

And I to her

Am as a kneeling vassal, that observes

The pleasure, or displeasure, of her eye.—

*Enter LODOWICK.*

What says the more than Cleopatra's match  
To Cæsar now?

*Lod.* That yet, my liege, ere night  
She will resolve your majesty. [*Drum within.*]

*Edu.* What drum is this, that thunders forth  
this march,

To start the tender Cupid in my bosom?

Poor sheep-skin, how it brawls with him that  
beateth it!

Go, break the thundering parchment bottom out,

And I will teach it to conduct sweet lines

Unto the bosom of a heavenly nymph:

For I will use it as my writing-paper;

And so reduce him, from a scolding drum,

To be the herald, and dear counsel-bearer,

Betwixt a goddess and a mighty king.

Go, bid the drummer learn to touch the lute,

Or hang him in the braces of his drum;

For now we think it an uncivil thing,

To trouble heaven with such harsh resounds:

Away.

[*Exit LOD.*]

The quarrel, that I have, requires no arms,

But these of mine; and these shall meet my foe

In a deep march of penetrable groans:

My eyes shall be my arrows; and my sighs

Shall serve me as the vantage of the wind,

To whirl away my sweet'st artillery:

Ah but, alas, she wins the sun of me,

For that is she herself; and thence it comes

That poets term the wanton warrior, blind;

But love hath eyes as judgment to his steps,

'Till too much loved glory dazzles them.—

*Re-enter LODOWICK.*

How now?

*Lod.* My liege, the drum, that strook the lusty  
march,

Stands with prince Edward, your thrice valiant son.

*Enter PRINCE. LODOWICK retires to the Door.*

*Edu.* I see the boy. O, how his mother's face,

Moulded in his, corrects my stray'd desire,

And rates my heart, and chides my thievish eye;

Who, being rich enough in seeing her,

Yet seeks elsewhere: and basest theft is that,

Which cannot check itself on poverty.—

Now, boy, what news?

*Prince.* I have assembl'd, my dear lord and fa-  
ther,

The choicest buds of all our English blood,

For our affairs in France; and here we come,

To take direction from your majesty.

*Edu.* Still do I see in him delineate

His mother's visage; those his eyes are hers,

Who, looking wistly on me, made me blush;



For faults against themselves give evidence :  
Lust is a fire ; and men, like lanterns, show  
Light lust within themselves, even through them-  
selves.

Away, loose silks of wavering vanity !  
Shall the large limit of fair Brittany  
By me be overthrown ? and shall I not  
Master this little mansion of myself ?  
Give me an armour of eternal steel ;  
I go to conquer kings ; And shall I then  
Subdue myself, and be my enemy's friend ?  
It must not be.—Come, boy, forward, advance !  
Let's with our colours sweep the air of France.

*Lod.* My liege, the countess, with a smiling  
cheer,

Desires access unto your majesty.

[*Advancing from the Door, and whispering him.*

*Edw.* Why, there it goes ! that very smile of  
hers

Hath ransom'd captive France ; and set the king,  
The dauphin, and the peers, at liberty.—  
Go, leave me, Ned, and revel with thy friends.

[*Exit PRINCE.*

Thy mother is but black ; and thou, like her,  
Dost put into my mind how foul she is.—  
Go, fetch the countess hither in thy hand,  
And let her chase away those winter clouds ;  
For she gives beauty both to heaven and earth.

[*Exit LOD.*

The sin is more, to hack and hew poor men,  
Than to embrace, in an unlawful bed,  
The register of all rarities  
Since leathern Adam 'till this youngest hour.

*Re-enter LODOWICK, with the COUNTESS.*

Go, Lodowick, put thy hand into my purse,  
Play, spend, give, riot, waste ; do what thou wilt,  
So thou wilt hence awhile, and leave me here.

[*Exit LOD.*

Now, my soul's play-fellow ! and art thou come,  
To speak the more than heavenly word, of yea,  
To my objection in thy beauteous love ?

*Cou.* My father on his blessing hath com-  
manded—

*Edw.* That thou shalt yield to me.

*Cou.* Ay, dear my liege, your due.

*Edw.* And that, my dearest love, can be no less  
Than right for right, and tender love for love.

*Cou.* Than wrong for wrong, and endless hate  
for hate.—

But,—sith I see your majesty so bent,  
That my unwillingness, my husband's love,  
Your high estate, nor no respect respected

Can be my help, but that your mightiness  
Will overbear and awe these dear regards,—  
I bind my discontent to my content,  
And, what I would not, I'll compel I will ;  
Provided, that yourself remove those lets,<sup>15</sup>  
That stand between your highness' love and mine.

*Edw.* Name them, fair countess, and, by heaven,  
I will ;

*Cou.* It is their lives, that stand between our  
love,

That I would have chok'd up, my sovereign.

*Edw.* Whose lives, my lady ?

*Cou.* My thrice loving liege,  
Your queen, and Salisbury my wedded husband  
Who living have that title in our love,  
That we cannot bestow but by their death.

*Edw.* Thy opposition is beyond our law.

*Cou.* And so is your desire : If the law  
Can hinder you to execute the one,  
Let it forbid you to attempt the other :  
I cannot think you love me as you say,  
Unless you do make good what you have sworn.

*Edw.* No more ; thy husband and the queen  
shall die.

Fairer thou art by far than Hero was ;  
Beardless Leander not so strong as I :  
He swam an easy current for his love ;  
But I will, through a helly spout of blood,<sup>16</sup>  
Arrive that Sestos where my Hero lies.

*Cou.* Nay, you'll do more ; you'll make the river  
too,

With their heart-bloods that keep our love asunder,  
Of which, my husband, and your wife, are twain.

*Edw.* Thy beauty makes them guilty of their  
death,

And gives in evidence, that they shall die :  
Upon which verdict, I, their judge, condemn them.

*Cou.* O perjurd beauty ! more corrupted judge !  
When, to the great star-chamber o'er our heads,  
The universal sessions calls to count  
This packing evil,<sup>17</sup> we both shall tremble for it.

*Edw.* What says my fair love ? is she resolute ?

*Cou.* Resolute to be dissolv'd ; and, therefore,  
this,—

Keep but thy word, great king, and I am thine.  
Stand where thou dost, I'll part a little from thee,  
And see how I will yield me to thy hands.

[*Turning suddenly upon him, and showing two  
Daggers.*

Here by my side do hang my wedding knives :  
Take thou the one, and with it kill thy queen,  
And learn by me to find her where she lies ;  
And with the other I'll dispatch my love,

Which now lies fast asleep within my heart :  
 When they are gone, then I'll consent to love.  
 Stir not, lascivious king, to hinder me ;  
 My resolution is more nimbler far,  
 Than thy prevention can be in my rescue,  
 And, if thou stir, I strike : therefore stand still,  
 And hear the choice that I will put thee to :  
 Either swear to leave thy most unholy suit,  
 And never henceforth to solicit me ;  
 Or else, by heaven, [*kneeling*] this sharp-pointed  
 knife  
 Shall stain thy earth with that which thou would'st  
 stain,  
 My poor chaste blood. Swear, Edward, swear,  
 Or I will strike, and die, before thee here.

*Edw.* Even by that Power I swear, that gives  
 me now

The power to be ashamed of myself  
 I never mean to part my lips again  
 In any word that tends to such a suit.

Arise, true English lady; whom our isle  
 May better boast of, than e'er Roman might  
 Of her, whose ransack'd treasury hath task'd  
 The vain endeavour of so many pens :<sup>18</sup>  
 Arise ; And be my fault thy honour's fame,  
 Which after ages shall enrich thee with.  
 I am awaked from this idle dream ;—  
 Warwick, my son, Derby, Artois, and Audley,  
 Brave warriors all, where are you all this while ?

*Enter PRINCE and Lords.*

Warwick, I make thee warden of the north :—  
 You, prince of Wales, and Audley, straight to sea ;  
 Scour to Newhaven ; some there stay for me :—  
 Myself, Artois, and Derby, will through Flanders,  
 To greet our friends there, and to crave their aid :  
 This night will scarce suffice me, to discover  
 My folly's siege against a faithful lover ;  
 For, ere the sun shall gild the eastern sky,<sup>19</sup>  
 We'll wake him with our martial harmony. [*Exeunt.*]

### ACT III.

SCENE I.—Flanders. *The French Camp.*

*Enter KING JOHN of France; his two sons, CHARLES  
 Duke of Normandy, and PHILIP; DUKE OF  
 LORRAIN, and Others.*

*John.* Here, 'till our navy, of a thousand sail.  
 Have made a breakfast to our foe by sea,  
 Let us encamp, to wait their happy speed.—  
 Lorraine, what readiness is Edward in ?  
 How hast thou heard that he provided is  
 Of martial furniture for this exploit ?

*Lor.* To lay aside unnecessary soothing,  
 And not to spend the time in circumstance,  
 'Tis bruited for a certainty, my lord,  
 That he's exceeding strongly fortify'd ;  
 His subjects flock as willingly to war,  
 As if unto a triumph they were led.

*Cha.* England was wont to harbour malcontents,  
 Blood-thirsty and seditious Catalines,<sup>20</sup>  
 Spend-thrifts, and such as gape for nothing else  
 But change and alteration of the state ;  
 And is it possible, that they are now  
 So loyal in themselves ?

*Lor.* All but the Scot ; who solemnly protests,  
 As heretofore I have inform'd his grace,  
 Never to sheath his sword, or take a truce.

*John.* Ah, that's the anchorage of some better  
 hope !

But, on the other side, to think what friends  
 King Edward hath retain'd in Netherland,  
 Among those ever-bibbing epicures,  
 Those frothy Dutchmen, puff'd with double beer,  
 That drink and swill in every place they come,  
 Doth not a little aggravate mine ire :  
 Besides, we hear, the emperor conjoins,  
 And stalls him in his own authority :  
 But, all the mightier that their number is,  
 The greater glory reaps the victory.  
 Some friends have we, beside domestic power ;  
 The stern Polonian, and the warlike Dane,  
 The king of Boheme, and of Sicily,  
 Are all become confederates with us,  
 And, as I think, are marching hitherward.  
 [*Drum within.*]

But, soft, I hear the music of their drums,  
 By which I guess that their approach is near.

*Enter BOHEMIA, and Forces; and Aid of Danes,  
 Poles, and Muscovites.*

*Boh.* King John of France, as league, and neigh-  
 bourhood

Requires, when friends are any way distress'd,  
 I come to aid thee with my country's force.

*Pol.* And from great Moscow, fearful to the  
 Turk,  
 And lofty Poland, nurse of hardy men,

I bring these servitors to fight for thee,  
Who willingly will venture in thy cause.

*John.* Welcome, Bohemian king; and welcome,  
all:

This your great kindness I will not forget;  
Beside your plentiful rewards in crowns,  
That from our treasury ye shall receive:  
There comes a hare-brain'd nation, deek'd in pride,  
The spoil of whom will be a treble gain.—  
And now my hope is full, my joy complete:  
At sea, we are as puissant as the force  
Of Agamemnon in the haven of Troy;<sup>21</sup>  
By land, with Xerxes we compare of strength,<sup>22</sup>  
Whose soldiers drank up rivers in their thirst:  
Then, Bayard-like, blind over-weening Ned,  
To reach at our imperial diadem,  
Is, either to be swallow'd of the waves,  
Or hack'd a-pieces when thou com'st ashore.

*Enter a Mariner.*

*Mar.* Near to the coast I have descried, my lord,  
As I was busy in my watchful charge,  
The proud armada of King Edward's ships;  
Which, at the first, far off when I did ken  
Seem'd as it were a grove of wither'd pines;  
But, drawing near, their glorious bright aspect,  
Their streaming ensigns wrought of colour'd silk,  
Like to a meadow full of sundry flowers,  
Adorns the naked bosom of the earth:  
Majestical the order of their course,  
Figuring the horned circle of the moon:  
On the top-gallant of the admiral,  
And likewise all the handmaids of his train,  
The arms of England and of France unite  
Are quarter'd equally by herald's art.<sup>23</sup>  
Thus, tightly carried with a merry gale,  
They plough the ocean hitherward amain.

*John.* Dare he already crop the flower-de-luce?  
I hope, the honey being gather'd thence,  
He, with the spider, afterward approach'd,  
Shall suck forth deadly venom from the leaves.—  
But where's our navy? how are they prepar'd  
To wing themselves against this flight of ravens?

*Mar.* They, having knowledge brought them by  
the scouts,  
Did break from anchor straight; and, puffed with  
rage,  
No otherwise than were their sails with wind,  
Made forth; as when the empty eagle flies,  
To satisfy his hungry griping maw.

*John.* There's for thy news. Return unto thy  
bark;  
And, if thou 'scape the bloody stroke of war,

And do survive the conflict, come again,  
And let us hear the manner of the fight.—

[*Exit Mar.*]

Mean space, my lords, 'tis best we be dispers'd  
To several places, lest they chance to land:  
First, you, my lord, with your Bohemian troops,  
Shall pitch your battles on the lower hand;  
My eldest son, the duke of Normandy,  
Together with this aid of Muscovites,  
Shall climb the higher ground another way;  
Here in the middle coast, betwixt you both,  
Philip, my youngest boy, and I will lodge.  
So, lords, be gone, and look unto your charge;  
You stand for France, an empire fair and large.—

[*Exeunt CHA. LOR. BOH. and Forces.*]

Now tell me, Philip, what is thy conceit,  
Touching the challenge that the English make?

*Phi.* I say, my lord, claim Edward what he can,  
And bring he ne'er so plain a pedigree,  
'Tis you are in possession of the crown,  
And that's the surest point of all the law:  
But, were it not; yet, ere he should prevail,  
I'll make a conduit of my dearest blood,  
Or chase those straggling upstarts home again.

*John.* Well said, young Philip! Call for bread  
and wine,  
That we may cheer our stomachs with repast,  
To look our foes more sternly in the face.

[*A Table and Provisions brought in; King  
and his Son set down to it. Ordnance  
afar off.*]

Now is begun the heavy day at sea.  
Fight, Frenchmen, fight: be like the field of bears,  
When they defend their younglings in their caves!  
Steer, angry Nemesis, the happy helm;  
That, with the sulphur'd battles of your rage,  
The English fleet may be dispers'd, and sunk!

[*Ordnance again.*]

*Phi.* O, father, how this echoing cannon shot,  
Like sweetest harmony, digests my eates!

*John.* Now, boy, thou hear'st what thundering  
terror 'tis,

To buckle for a kingdom's sovereignty:  
The earth, with giddy trembling when it shakes,  
Or when the exhalations of the air  
Break in extremity of lightning flash,  
Affrights not more, than kings, when they dis-  
pose

To shew the rancour of their high-swollen hearts.

[*Retreat heard.*]

Retreat is sounded; one side hath the worse:  
O, if it be the French!—Sweet fortune, turn;  
And, in thy turning, change the froward winds,

That, with advantage of a favouring sky,  
Our men may vanquish, and the other fly!

*Enter Mariner.*

My heart misgives:—Say, mirror of pale death,  
To whom belongs the honour of this day?  
Relate, I pray thee, if thy breath will serve,  
The sad discourse of this discomfiture.

*Mar.* I will, my lord.

My gracious sovereign, France hath ta'en the  
foil,

And boasting Edward triumphs with success.  
These iron-hearted navies,  
When last I was reporter to your grace,  
Both full of angry spleen, of hope, and fear,  
Hasting to meet each other in the face,  
At last conjoin'd; and by their admiral  
Our admiral encounter'd many shot:  
By this, the other, that beheld these twain  
Give earnest penny of a further wreck,  
Like fiery dragons took their haughty flight;  
And, likewise meeting, from their smoky wombs  
Sent many grim ambassadors of death.  
Then 'gan the day to turn to gloomy night;  
And darkness did as well enclose the quick,  
As those that were but newly reft of life:  
No leisure serv'd for friends to bid farewell;  
And, if it had, the hideous noise was such,  
As each to other seem'd deaf and dumb:  
Purple the sea; whose channel fill'd as fast  
With streaming gore, that from the maim'd fell,  
As did her gushing moisture break into  
The crann'd clefures of the through-shot planks:  
Here flew a head, dissever'd from the trunk;  
There mangl'd arms, and legs, were toss'd aloft;  
As when a whirlwind takes the summer dust,  
And scatters it in middle of the air:  
Then might ye see the reeling vessels split,  
And tottering sink into the ruthless flood,  
Until their lofty tops were seen no more.  
All shifts were tried, both for defence and hurt:  
And now the effects of valour, and of fear,  
Of resolution, and of cowardice,  
Were lively pictur'd; how the one for fame,  
The other by compulsion laid about:  
Much did the Nonpareille, that brave ship;  
So did the Black-Snake of Boulogne, than which  
A bonnier vessel never yet spread sail:  
But all in vain; both sun, the wind and tide,  
Revolted all unto our foemen's side,  
That we perforce were fain to give them way,  
And they are landed: Thus my tale is done;  
We have untimely lost, and they have won.

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*John.* Then rests there nothing, but, with present  
speed,

To join our several forces all in one,  
And bid them battle, ere they range too far.—  
Come, gentle Philip, let us hence depart;  
This soldier's words have pierc'd thy father's heart.

SCENE II.—Picardy. *Fields near Crecy.*

*Enter a Frenchman, meeting certain Others, a  
Woman, and two Children, laden with Household-  
stuff, as removing.*

*1st Fr.* Well met, my masters: How now?  
what's the news?

And wherefore are you laden thus with stuff?  
What, is it quarter-day, that you remove,  
And carry bag and baggage too?

*2nd Fr.* Quarter-day? ay, and quartering day, I  
fear:

Have you not heard the news that flies abroad?

*1st Fr.* What news?

*3rd Fr.* How the French navy is destroy'd at  
sea,

And that the English army is arriv'd.

*1st Fr.* What then?

*2nd Fr.* What then, quoth you? why, is't not  
time to fly,

When envy and destruction is so nigh?

*1st Fr.* Content thee, man; they are far enough  
from hence;

And will be met, I warrant you, to their cost,  
Before they break so far into the realm.

*2nd Fr.* Ay, so the grasshopper doth spend the  
time

In mirthful jollity, 'till winter come;  
And then too late he would redeem his time,  
When frozen cold hath nipped his careless head.

He, that no sooner will provide a cloak,  
Than when he sees it doth begin to rain,  
May, peradventure, for his negligence,  
Be thoroughly wash'd when he suspects it not.  
We, that have charge, and such a train as this,  
Must look in time to look for them and us,  
Lest, when we would, we cannot be reliev'd.

*1st Fr.* Belike, you then despair of all success,  
And think your country will be subjugate.

*3rd Fr.* We cannot tell; 'tis good, to fear the  
worst.

*1st Fr.* Yet rather fight, than, like unnatural  
sons,

Forsake your loving parents in distress.

*2nd Fr.* Tush, they, that have already taken arms,  
Are many fearful millions, in respect

Of that small handful of our enemies ;  
But 'tis a rightful quarrel must prevail ;  
Edward is son unto our late king's sister,  
Where John Valois is three degrees remov'd.

*Wom.* Besides, there goes a prophecy abroad,  
Publish'd by one that was a friar once,  
Whose oracles have many times prov'd true ;  
And now he says, " The time will shortly come,  
When as a lion, roused in the west,  
Shall carry hence the flower-de-luce of France :"  
These, I can tell ye, and such like surmises  
Strike many Frenchmen cold unto the heart.

*Enter another Frenchman, hastily.*

*4th Fr.* Fly, countrymen, and citizens of France !  
Sweet-flow'ring peace, the root of happy life,  
Is quite abandon'd and expuls'd the land :  
Instead of whom, ransack-constraining war  
Sits like to ravens on your houses' tops ;  
Slaughter and mischief walk within your streets,  
And, unrestrain'd, make havoc as they pass :  
The form whereof even now myself beheld,  
Now, upon this fair mountain, whence I came.  
For so far as I did direct mine eyes,  
I might perceive five cities all on fire,  
Corn-fields, and vineyards, burning like an oven ;  
And, as the leaking vapour in the wind  
Turned aside, I likewise might discern  
The poor inhabitants, escap'd the flame,  
Fall numberless upon the soldiers' pikes :  
Three ways these dreadful ministers of wrath  
Do tread the measures of their tragic march ;  
Upon the right hand comes the conquering king.  
Upon the left his hot unbrid'd son,  
And in the midst our nation's glittering host ;  
All which, though distant, yet conspire in one  
To leave a desolation where they come.  
Fly, therefore, citizens, if you be wise,  
Seek out some habitation further off :  
Here if you stay, your wives will be abus'd,  
Your treasure shar'd before your weeping eyes ;  
Shelter yourselves, for now the storm doth rise ;  
Away, away ! methinks, I hear their drums :—  
Ah wretched France, I greatly fear thy fall ;  
Thy glory shaketh like a tottering wall.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*The Same.*

*Drums.* *Enter* KING EDWARD, *marching* ; DERBY,  
&c., *and* FORCES, *and* GOBIN DE GREY.

*Edw.* Where is the Frenchman, by whose cunning guide

We found the shallow of this river Somme,  
And had direction how to pass the sea ?

*Gob.* Here, my good lord.

*Edw.* How art thou call'd ? thy name ?

*Gob.* Gobin de Grey, if please your excellence.

*Edw.* Then, Gobin, for the service thou hast done,  
We here enlarge and give thee liberty ;  
And, for a recompense, beside this good,  
Thou shalt receive five hundred marks in gold.—  
I know not how, we should have met our son ;  
Whom now in heart I wish I might behold.

*Enter ARTOIS.*

*Art.* Good news, my lord ; the prince is hard at  
hand,  
And with him comes lord Audley, and the rest,  
Whom since our landing we could never meet.

*Drums.* *Enter* PRINCE, AUDLEY, *and* FORCES.

*Edw.* Welcome, fair prince ! How hast thou  
sped, my son,  
Since thy arrival on the coast of France ?

*Prince.* Successfully, I thank the gracious heavens :

Some of their strongest cities we have won,  
As Harfleur, Lo, Crotage, and Carentan ;  
And others wasted ; leaving at our heels  
A wide apparent field, and beaten path,  
For solitariness to progress in :  
Yet, those that would submit, we kindly pardon'd ;  
For who in scorn refus'd our proffer'd peace,  
Endur'd the penalty of sharp revenge.

*Edw.* Ah, France, why should'st thou be thus  
obstinate

Against the kind embracement of thy friends ?  
How gentle had we thought to touch thy breast,  
And set our foot upon thy tender mould,  
But that, in forward and disdainful pride,  
Thou, like a skittish and untam'd colt,  
Dost start aside, and strike us with thy heels ?—  
But tell me, Ned, in all thy warlike course  
Hast thou not seen the usurping king of France ?

*Prince.* Yes, my good lord, and not two hours ago,  
With full an hundred thousand fighting men,  
Upon the one side o' the river's bank,  
I on the other ; with his multitudes  
I fear'd he would have crop'd our smaller power :  
But, happily, perceiving your approach,  
He hath withdrawn himself to Creey' plains ;  
Where, as it seemeth by his good array,  
He means to bid us battle presently.

*Edw.* He shall be welcome, that's the thing wo  
crave.

*Drums. Enter KING JOHN; CHARLES and PHILIP, his Sons; BOHEMIA, LORRAIN, &c., and Forces.*

*John.* Now, Edward, know, that John, true king of France,—

Musing thou should'st encroach upon his land,  
And, in thy tyrannous proceeding, slay  
His faithful subjects, and subvert his towns,—  
Spits in thy face; and in this manner following  
Upbraids thee with thine arrogant intrusion.  
First, I condemn thee for a fugitive,  
A thievish pirate, and a needy mate;  
One, that hath either no abiding place,  
Or else, inhabiting some barren soil,  
Where neither herb or fruitful grain is had,  
Dost altogether live by pilfering:  
Next,—inasmuch thou hast infring'd thy faith,  
Broke league and solemn covenant made with  
me,—

I hold thee for a most pernicious wretch:  
And last of all,—although I scorn to cope  
With one so much inferior to myself;  
Yet, in respect thy thirst is all for gold,  
Thy labour rather to be fear'd than lov'd,—  
To satisfy thy lust in either part,  
Here am I come; and with me I have brought  
Exceeding store of treasure, pearl, and coin.  
Leave therefore now to persecute the weak;  
And, armed ent'ring conflict with the arm'd,  
Let it be seen, 'mongst other petty thefts,  
How thou canst win this pillage manfully.

*Edw.* If gall, or wormwood, have a pleasant  
taste,  
Then is thy salutation honey-sweet:  
But as the one hath no such property,  
So is the other most satirical.  
Yet wot how I regard thy worthless taunts;—  
If thou have utter'd them to foil my fame,  
Or dim the reputation of my birth,  
Know, that thy wolfish barking cannot hurt:  
If sily to insinuate with the world,  
And with a strumpet's artificial line  
To paint thy vicious and deformed cause,  
Be well assur'd, the counterfeit will fade,  
And in the end thy foul defects be seen:  
But if thou did'st it to provoke me on,—  
As who should say, I were but timorous,  
Or, coldly negligent, did need a spur,—  
Bethink thyself, how slack I was at sea;  
How, since my landing, I have won no towns,  
Enter'd no further but upon thy coast,  
And there have ever since securely slept.  
But if I have been otherways employ'd,

Imagine, Valois, whether I intend  
To skirmish, not for pillage, but the crown  
Which thou dost wear; and that I vow to have,  
Or one of us shall fall into his grave.

*Prince.* Look not for cross invectives at our  
hands,  
Or railing execrations of despite:  
Let creeping serpents, hid in hollow banks,  
Sting with their tongues; we have remorseless  
swords,

And they shall plead for us, and our affairs.  
Yet thus much, briefly, by my father's leave:  
As all the immodest poison of thy throat  
Is scandalous and most notorious lies,  
And our pretended quarrel<sup>24</sup> truly just,  
So end the battle when we meet to-day;  
May either of us prosper and prevail,  
Or, luckless curst, receive eternal shame!

*Edw.* That needs no further question; and, I  
know,  
His conscience witnesseth, it is my right.—  
Therefore, Valois, say, wilt thou yet resign,  
Before the sickle's thrust into the corn,  
Or that unkind'd fury turn'd to flame?

*John.* Edward, I know what right thou hast in  
France:

And ere I basely will resign my crown,  
This champion field shall be a pool of blood,  
And all our prospect as a slaughter-house.

*Prince.* Ay, that approves thee, tyrant, what  
thou art:

No father, king, or shepherd of thy realm;  
But one, that tears her entrails with thy hands,  
And, like a thirsty tiger, suck'st her blood.

*Aud.* You peers of France, why do you follow  
him

That is so prodigal to spend your lives?

*Cha.* Whom should they follow, aged impotent,  
But he that is their true-born sovereign?

*Edw.* Upbraid'st thou him, because within his  
face

Time hath engrav'd deep characters of age?  
Know, these grave scholars of experience,  
Like stiff-grown oaks, will stand immovable,  
When whirlwind quickly turns up younger trees.

*Der.* Was ever any of thy father's house  
King, but thyself, before this present time?  
Edward's great lineage, by the mother's side,  
Five hundred years hath held the sceptre up:—  
Judge then, conspirators, by this descent,  
Which is the true-born sovereign, this, or that.<sup>25</sup>

*Phi.* Good father 'range your battles, prate no  
more;

These English fain would spend the time in words,  
That, night approaching, they might 'scape unfought.

*John.* Lords, and my loving subjects, now's the time,  
That your intended force must 'bide the touch :  
Therefore, my friends, consider this in brief,—  
He, that you fight for, is your natural king ;  
He, against whom you fight, a foreigner :  
He, that you fight for, rules in clemency,  
And reins you with a mild and gentle bit ;  
He, against whom you fight, if he prevail,  
Will straight enthrone himself in tyranny,  
Make slaves of you, and, with a heavy hand,  
Curtailed and curb your sweetest liberty.

Then, to protect your country, and your king,  
Let but the haughty courage of your hearts  
Answer the number of your able hands,  
And we shall quickly chase these fugitives.  
For what's this Edward, but a belly-god,  
A tender and lascivious wantonness,  
That t'other day was almost dead for love ?  
And what, I pray you, is his goodly guard ?  
Such as, but scant them of their chins of beef,  
And take away their downy feather-beds,  
And, presently, they are as resty-stiff  
As 'twere a many over-ridden jades.

Then, Frenchmen, scorn that such should be your  
lords,

And rather bind ye them in captive bands.

*Fr. Vive le roi !* God save King John of France !

*John.* Now on this plain of Crecy spread yourselves,—

And, Edward, when thou dar'st, begin the fight.

[*Exeunt* KING JOHN, CHA. PHIL. LOR. BOIL.  
and Forces.

*Edw.* We presently will meet thee, John of  
France :—

And, English lords, let us resolve this day,  
Either to clear us of that scandalous crime,  
Or be entombed in our innocence.—

And, Ned, because this battle is the first  
That ever yet thou fought'st in pitched field,  
As ancient custom is of martialists,  
To dub thee with the type of chivalry,  
In solemn manner we will give thee arms :—  
Come, therefore, heralds, orderly bring forth  
A strong attirement for the prince my son.—

*Flourish.* Enter Four Heralds, bringing a Coat-  
armour, a Helmet, a Lance, and a Shield : First  
Herald delivers the Armour to KING EDWARD ;  
who, putting it on his Son,

Edward Plantagenet, in the name of God,  
As with this armour I impall thy breast,

So be thy noble unrelenting heart  
Wall'd in with flint of matchless fortitude,  
That never base affections enter there ;  
Fight and be valiant, conquer where thou com'st !  
Now follow, lords, and do him honour too.

*Der.* [*Receiving the Helmet from the Second  
Herald.*

Edward Plantagenet, Prince of Wales,  
As I do set this helmet on thy head,  
Wherewith the chamber of thy brain is fence'd,  
So may thy temples, with Bellona's hand,  
Be still adorn'd with laurel victory :  
Fight and be valiant, conquer where thou com'st !

*Aud.* [*Receiving the Lance from the Third  
Herald.*

Edward Plantagenet, Prince of Wales,  
Receive this lance, into thy manlike hand ;  
Use it in fashion of a brazen pen,  
To draw forth bloody stratagems in France,  
And print thy valiant deeds in honour's book :  
Fight and be valiant, conquer where thou com'st !

*Art.* [*Receiving the Shield from the Fourth  
Herald.*

Edward Plantagenet, Prince of Wales,  
Hold, take this target, wear it on thy arm ;  
And may the view thereof, like Perseus' shield,  
Astonish and transform thy gazing foes  
To senseless images of meagre death ;  
Fight and be valiant, conquer where thou com'st !

*Edw.* Now wants there nought but knighthood ;  
which, deferred,

We leave till thou hast won it in the field.

*Pri.* My gracious father, and ye forward peers,  
This honour, you have done me, animates  
And cheers my green yet-scarce-appearing strength  
With comfortable good-presaging signs ;  
No otherwise than did old Jacob's words,  
When as he breath'd his blessings on his sons :  
These hallow'd gifts of yours when I profane,  
Or use them not to glory of my God,  
To patronage the fatherless and poor,  
Or for the benefit of England's peace,  
Benumb my joints ! wax feeble both mine arms !  
Wither my heart ! that, like a sapless tree,  
I may remain the map of infamy.

*Edw.* Then thus our steed battles shall be  
rang'd ;—

The leading of the vaward,<sup>56</sup> Ned, is thine ;  
To dignify whose lusty spirit the more,  
We temper it with Audley's gravity ;  
That, courage and experience join'd in one,  
Your manage may be second unto none :  
For the main battles, I will guide myself ;

And Derby, in the rearward march behind.  
That orderly dispos'd, and set in 'ray,  
Let us to horse; and God grant us the day!

SCENE IV.—*Near the Field of Battle.*

*Alarums. Enter a many Frenchmen, flying; PRINCE, and English pursuing; and Exeunt: then Enter KING JOHN, and LORRAIN.*

*John.* O Lorrain, say, what mean our men to fly?  
Our number is far greater than our foes.

*Lor.* The garrison of Genoeses, my lord,  
That came from Paris, weary with their march,  
Grudging to be so suddenly employ'd,<sup>27</sup>  
No sooner in the fore-front took their place,  
But, straight retiring, so dismay'd the rest,  
As likewise they betook themselves to flight;  
In which, for haste to make a safe escape,  
More in the clust'ring throng are press'd to death,  
Than by the enemy, a thousand fold.

*John.* O hapless fortune! Let us yet assay  
If we can counsel some of them to stay. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—*A Hill near the Battle-field.*

*Drums. Enter KING EDWARD and AUDLEY.*

*Edw.* Lord Audley, whiles our son is in the chase,  
Withdraw your powers unto this little hill,  
And here a season let us breathe ourselves.

*Aud.* I will, my lord. [*Exit AUD. Retreat.*]

*Edw.* Just-dooming heaven, whose secret providence  
To our gross judgment is inscrutable,  
How are we bound to praise thy wondrous works,  
That hast this day giv'n way unto the right,  
And made the wicked stumble at themselves?

*Enter ARTOIS, hastily.*

*Art.* Rescue, King Edward! rescue for thy son!

*Edw.* Rescue, Artois,? what, is he prisoner?  
Or, else, by violence fell beside his horse?

*Art.* Neither, my lord; but narrowly beset  
With turning Frenchmen, whom he did pursue,  
As 'tis impossible that he should 'scape,  
Except your highness presently descend.

*Edw.* Tut, let him fight; we gave him arms to-day,  
And he is labouring for a knighthood, man.

*Enter DERBY, hastily.*

*Der.* The prince, my lord, the prince! O succour  
him;

He's close encompassed with a world of odds!

*Edw.* Then will he win a world of honour too.  
If he by valour can redeem him thence:  
If not, what remedy? we have more sons  
Than one, to comfort our declining age.

*Re-enter AUDLEY, hastily.*

*Aud.* Renowned Edward, give me leave, I pray,  
To lead my soldiers, where I may relieve  
Your grace's son, in danger to be slain.  
The snares of French, like emmets on a bank,  
Must'ring about him; whilst he, lion-like,  
Entangl'd in the net of their assaults,  
Frantically rends, and bites the woven toil:  
But all in vain, he cannot free himself.

*Edw.* Audley, content; I will not have a man,  
On pain of death, sent forth to succour him:  
This is the day ordain'd by destiny  
To season his green courage with those thoughts,  
That, if he break'th out Nestor's years on earth,  
Will make him savour still of this exploit.

*Der.* Ah, but he shall not live to see those days.

*Edw.* Why, then his epitaph is lasting praise.

*Aud.* Yet, good my lord, 'tis too much wilfulness,  
To let his blood be spilt, that may be sav'd,

*Edw.* Exclaim no more; for none of you can tell,  
Whether a borrow'd aid will serve, or no;  
Perhaps, he is already slain, or ta'en:  
And dare a falcon when she's in her flight,  
And ever after she'll be haggard-like:<sup>28</sup>  
Let Edward be deliver'd by our hands,  
And still, in danger, he'll expect the like;  
But if himself himself redeem from thence,  
He will have vanquish'd, cheerful, death, and fear,  
And ever after dread their force no more,  
Than if they were but babes, or captive slaves.

*Aud.* O cruel father!—Farewell, Edward, then!

*Der.* Farewell, sweet prince, the hope of chivalry!

*Art.* O, would my life might ransom him from  
death!

*Edw.* Forbear, my lords,—But, soft; methinks, I  
hear [*Retreat sounded.*]

The dismal charge of trumpets' loud retreat:  
All are not slain, I hope, that went with him;  
Some will return with tidings, good, or bad.

*Flourish. Enter PRINCE EDWARD in Triumph, bearing in his Hand his shiver'd Lance; his Sword, and batter'd Armour, borne before him, and the Body of the King of Bohemia, wrapt in the Colours: Lords run and embrace him.*

*Aud.* O joyful sight! victorious Edward lives!

*Der.* Welcome, brave prince!

*Edw.* Welcome, Plantagenet! [*Embracing him.*]



*Prince.* First having done my duty, as becom'd,

[*Kneels, and kisses his Father's Hand.*]

Lords, I regret you all with hearty thanks.  
And now, behold,—after my winter's toil,  
My painful voyage on the boist'rous sea  
Of war's devouring gulfs and steely rocks,—  
I bring my fraught unto the wished port,  
My summer's hope, my travel's sweet reward:  
And here, with humble duty, I present  
This sacrifice, this first fruit of my sword,  
Cropp'd and cut down even at the gate of death,  
The king of Boheme, father, whom I slew;  
Whose thousands had intrench'd me round about,  
And lay as thick upon my batter'd crest,  
As on an anvil, with their pond'rous glaives:  
Yet marble courage still did underprop;  
And when my weary arms, with often blows,—  
Like the continual-lab'ring woodman's axe,  
That is enjoin'd to fell a load of oaks,—  
Began to falter, straight I would remember  
My gifts you gave me, and my zealous vow,  
And then new courage made me fresh again;  
That, in despite, I carv'd my passage forth,  
And put the multitude to speedy flight.  
Lo, thus hath Edward's hand fill'd your request,  
And done, I hope, the duty of a knight.

*Edw.* Ay, well thou hast deserv'd a knighthood,  
Ned.

And, therefore, with thy sword, yet reeking warm  
[*Receiving it from the Soldier who bore it, and  
laying it on the kneeling PRINCE.*]

With blood of those that sought to be thy bane,  
Arise, prince Edward, trusty knight at arms:  
This day thou hast confounded me with joy,  
And prov'd thyself fit heir unto a king.

*Prince.* Here is a note, my gracious lord, of  
those

That in this conflict of our foes were slain:  
Eleven princes of esteem;<sup>29</sup> four score  
Barons, and earls; and hundred twenty knights;  
And thirty thousand private soldiers;  
And, of our men, a thousand.

*Edw.* Our God be prais'd! Now, John of France,  
I hope,  
Thou know'st king Edward for no wantonness,  
No love-sick cockney;<sup>30</sup> nor his soldiers, jades.—  
But which way is the fearful king escap'd?

*Prince.* Towards Poitiers, noble father, and his  
sons.

*Edw.* Ned, thou, and Audley, shall pursue them  
still;  
Myself, and Derby, will to Calais straight,  
And there begirt that haven-town with siege:  
Now lies it on an upshot; therefore strike,  
And wistly follow while's the game's on foot.  
What picture's this? [Pointing to the Colours.]

*Prince.* A pelican, my lord,  
Wounding her bosom with her crooked beak,  
That so her nest of young ones may be fed  
With drops of blood that issue from her heart;  
The motto, *Sic et vos*, "And so should you."

[*Flourish. Exeunt in Triumph.*]

## ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Bretagne. Camp of the English Forces  
under the Earl of Salisbury; Salisbury's Tent.*

*Enter SALISBURY; to him, the EARL OF MONTFORT,  
attended, a Coronet in his Hand.*

*Mon.* My lord of Salisbury, since by your aid  
Mine enemy sir Charles of Blois is slain,  
And I again am quietly possess'd  
In Bretagne's dukedom, know, that I resolve,  
For this kind furtherance of your king, and you,  
To swear allegiance to his majesty:  
In sign whereof, receive this coronet,  
Bear it unto him; and, withal, my oath,  
Never to be but Edward's faithful friend.

*Sal.* I take it, Montfort: Thus, I hope, ere long  
The whole dominions of the realm of France  
Will be surrender'd to his conquering hand.

[*Exeunt MON., and Train.*]

Now, if I knew but safely how to pass,  
I would at Calais gladly meet his grace,  
Whither, I am by letters certifi'd,  
That he intends to have his host remov'd.  
It shall be so; this policy will serve:—  
Ho, who's within? Bring Villiers to me.—

*Enter VILLIERS.*

Villiers, thou know'st, thou art my prisoner,  
And that I might, for ransom, if I would,  
Require of thee an hundred thousand franks,  
Or else retain and keep thee captive still:  
But so it is, that for a smaller charge  
Thou may'st be quit, an if thou wilt thyself;  
And this it is, Procure me but a passport  
Of Charles the duke of Normandy, that I,  
Without restraint, may have recourse to Calais  
Through all the countries where he hath to do,

(Which thou may'st easily obtain, I think,  
By reason I have often heard thee say,  
He and thyself were students once together)  
And then thou shalt be set at liberty.

How say'st thou? wilt thou undertake to do it?

*Fl.* I will, my lord; but I must speak with him.

*Sal.* Why, so thou shalt; take horse, and post  
from hence:

Only, before thou go'st, swear by thy faith,  
That, if thou can'st not compass my desire,  
Thou wilt return my prisoner back again;  
And that shall be sufficient warrant for thee.

*Fl.* To that condition I agree, my lord,  
And will unfeignedly perform the same.

*Sal.* Farewell, Villiers.— [Exit *VILL.*]  
Thus, once I mean to try a Frenchman's faith.

SCENE II.—Picardy. *The English Camp before Calais.*

*Enter KING EDWARD, and DERBY, with Soldiers.*

*Edw.* Since they refuse our proffer'd league, my lord,

And will not ope the gates, and let us in,  
We will intrench ourselves on every side,  
That neither victuals, nor supply of men,  
May come to succour this accursed town;  
Famine shall combat where our swords are stopt.

*Der.* The promis'd aid, that made them stand aloof,  
Is now retir'd, and gone another way;  
It will repent them of their stubborn will.

*Enter some poor Frenchmen.*

But what are these poor ragged slaves, my lord?

*Edw.* Ask what they are; it seems they come from Calais.

*Der.* You wretched patterns of despair and woe,  
What are ye? living men; or gliding ghosts,  
Crept from your graves to walk upon the earth?

*1st Fr.* No ghosts, my lord, but men that breathe a life

Far worse than is the quiet sleep of death:  
We are distress'd poor inhabitants,  
That long have been diseased, sick, and lame;  
And now, because we are not fit to serve,  
The captain of the town hath thrust us forth,  
That so expense of victuals may be sav'd.<sup>31</sup>

*Edw.* A charitable deed, and worthy praise.—  
But how do you imagine then to speed?

We are your enemies; in such a case  
We can no less but put you to the sword,  
Since, when we proffer'd truce, it was refus'd.

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*1st Fr.* An if your grace no otherwise vouchsafe,  
As welcome death is unto us as life.

*Edw.* Poor silly men, much wrong'd, and more  
distress'd!—

Go, Derby, go, and see they be reliev'd;  
Command that victuals be appointed them,  
And give to every one five crowns apiece:—

[*Exeunt DER. and Fr.*]

The lion scorns to touch the yielding prey;  
And Edward's sword must fresh itself in such  
As wilful stubbornness hath made perverse.—

*Enter the LORD PERCY, from England.*

Lord Percy! welcome: What's the news in England?

*Per.* The queen, my lord, commends her to your grace;

And from her highness and the lord vicegerent,  
I bring this happy tidings of success:  
David of Scotland, lately up in arms,  
(Thinking, belike, he soonest should prevail,  
Your highness being absent from the realm)  
Is, by the faithful service of your peers,  
And painful travel of the queen herself,  
That, big with child, was every day in arms,  
Vanquish'd, subdu'd, and taken prisoner.

*Edw.* Thanks, Percy, for thy news, with all my heart!

What was he, took him prisoner in the field?

*Per.* A squire, my lord; John Copland is his name:

Who since, entreated by her majesty,  
Denies to make surrender of his prize  
To any but unto your grace alone;  
Whereat the queen is grievously displeas'd.

*Edw.* Well, then we'll have a pursuivant dispatch'd,

To summon Copland hither out of hand,  
And with him he shall bring his prisoner king.

*Per.* The queen's, my lord, herself by this at sea;

And purposeth, as soon as wind will serve,  
To land at Calais, and to visit you.

*Edw.* She shall be welcome; and, to wait her coming,

I'll pitch my tent near to the sandy shore.

*Enter a French Captain.*

*Capt.* The burgesses of Calais, mighty king,  
Have, by a council, willingly decreed  
To yield the town, and castle to your hands;  
Upon condition, it will please your grace  
To grant them benefit of life and goods.

*Edw.* They will so! then, belike, they may command,

Dispose, elect, and govern as they list.

No, sirrah, tell them, since they did refuse  
Our princely elemency at first proclaim'd,  
They shall not have it now, although they would;  
I will accept of nought but fire and sword,  
Except, within these two days, six of them,  
That are the wealthiest merchants in the town,  
Come naked, all but for their linnen shirts,  
With each a halter hang'd about his neck,  
And prostrate yield themselves, upon their knees,  
To be afflict'd, hang'd, or what I please;  
And so you may inform their masterships.

[*Exeunt EDW. and PER.*]

*Cap.* Why, this it is to trust a broken staff.  
Had we not been persuaded, John our king  
Would with his army have reliev'd the town,  
We had not stood upon defiance so:  
But now 'tis past that no man can recall;  
And better some do go to wreck, than all. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—Poitou. *Fields near Poitiers.*

*The French Camp; Tent of the DUKE OF NORMANDY. Enter CHARLES, and VILLIERS.*

*Chas.* I wonder, Villiers, thou should'st importune me

For one that is our deadly enemy.

*Vil.* Not for his sake, my gracious lord, so much

Am I become an earnest advocate,

As that thereby my ransom will be quit.

*Chas.* Thy ransom, man! why, need'st thou talk of that?

Art thou not free? and are not all occasions,

That happen for advantage of our foes,

To be accepted of, and stood upon?

*Vil.* No, good my lord, except the same be just;

For profit must with honour be co-mixed,

Or else our actions are but scandalous:

But, letting pass these intricate objections,

Will please your highness to subscribe, or no?

*Chas.* Villiers, I will not, nor I cannot do it;

Salisbury shall not have his will so much,

To claim a passport how it pleas'th himself.

*Vil.* Why, then I know the extremity, my lord,  
I must return to prison whence I came.

*Chas.* Return! I hope thou wilt not, Villiers:

What bird, that hath escap'd the fowler's gin,

Will not beware how she's ensnared again?

Or, what is he, so senseless, and secure,

That, having hardly passed a dangerous gulf,  
Will put himself in peril there again?

*Vil.* Ah, but it is my oath, my gracious lord,  
Which I in conscience may not violate,  
Or else a kingdom should not draw me hence.

*Chas.* Thine oath! why, that doth bind thee to abide:

Hast thou not sworn obedience to thy prince?

*Vil.* In all things that uprightly he commands:

But either to persuade or threaten me,  
Not to perform the covenant of my word,  
Is lawless, and I need not to obey.

*Chas.* Why, is it lawful for a man to kill,  
And not, to break a promise with his foe?

*Vil.* To kill, my lord, when war is once proclaimed,

So that our quarrel be for wrongs receiv'd,

No doubt, is lawfully permitted us:

But, in an oath, we must be well advis'd

How we do swear; and, when we once have sworn,

Not to infringe it, though we die therefore:

Therefore, my lord, as willing I return,

As if I were to fly to paradise. [*Going.*]

*Chas.* Stay, my Villiers; thy honourable mind  
Deserves to be eternally admir'd.

Thy suit shall be no longer thus deferr'd;

Give me the paper, I'll subscribe to it:

[*Signs, and gives it back.*]

And, wheretofore I loved thee as Villiers,

Hereafter I'll embrace thee as myself;

Stay, and be still in favour with thy lord.

*Vil.* I humbly thank your grace: I must dispatch,

And send this passport first unto the earl,

And then I will attend your highness' pleasure.

[*Exit VIL.*]

*Chas.* Do so, Villiers;—and Charles, when he hath need,

Be such his soldiers, howsoe'er he speed!

*Enter KING JOHN.*

*John.* Come, Charles, and arm thee; Edward is entrapp'd,

The prince of Wales is fall'n into our hands,  
And we have compassed him, he cannot 'scape.

*Chas.* But will your highness fight to-day?

*John.* What else, my son? he's scarce eight thousand strong,

And we are threescore thousand at the least.

*Chas.* I have a prophecy, my gracious lord,

Wherein is written, what success is like

To happen us in this outrageous war;

It was delivered me at Crecy' field,  
By one that is an aged hermit there.

[*Reads.*

When feather'd fowl shall make thine army tremble,  
And flint stones rise, and break the battle 'ray,  
Then think on him that doth not now dissemble;  
For that shall be the hapless dreadful day:  
Yet, in the end, thy foot thou shalt advance  
As far in England, as thy foe in France.

*John.* By this it seems we shall be fortunate:  
For as it is impossible, that stones  
Should ever rise, and break the battle 'ray;  
Or airy fowl make men in arms to quake;  
So is it like, we shall not be subdu'd:  
Or, say this might be true, yet, in the end,  
Since he doth promise, we shall drive him hence,  
And forage their country, as they have done ours,  
By this revenge that loss will seem the less.  
But all are frivolous fancies, toys, and dreams:  
Once, we are sure we have ensnar'd the son,  
Catch we the father after how we can. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*The Same. The English Camp.*

*Enter PRINCE EDWARD, AUDLEY, and Others.*

*Prince.* Audley, the arms of death embrace us  
round,  
And comfort have we none, save that to die,  
To pay sour earnest for a sweeter life.  
At Crecy field our clouds of warlike smoke  
Chok'd up those French mouths, and dissever'd  
them,  
But now their multitudes of millions hide,  
Masking as 'twere, the beauteous burning sun;  
Leaving no hope to us, but sullen dark,  
And eyeless terror of all-ending night.

*Aud.* This sudden, mighty, and expedient head,  
That they have made, fair prince, is wonderful.  
Before us in the valley lies the king,  
Vantag'd with all that heaven and earth can yield;  
His party stronger battl'd than our whole:  
His son, the braving duke of Normandy,  
Hath triam'd the mountain on our right hand up  
In shining plate, that now the aspiring hill  
Shows like a silver quarry, or an orb;  
Aloft the which, the banners, bannerets,  
And new-replenished pendants, cuff the air,  
And beat the winds, that, for their gaudiness,  
Struggles to kiss them: on our left hand lies  
Philip, the younger issue of the king,  
Coating the other hill in such array,  
That all his gilded upright pikes do seem  
Straight trees of gold, the pendant streamers,  
leaves;

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And their device of antique heraldry,  
Quarter'd in colours seeming sundry fruits,  
Makes it the orchard of the Hesperides:  
Behind us too the hill doth bear his height,  
(For, like a half-moon, op'ning but one way,  
It rounds us in) there at our backs are lodg'd  
The fatal cross-bows; and the battle there  
Is govern'd by the rough Chatillion.  
Then thus it stands,—The valley for our flight  
The king binds in; the hills on either hand  
Are proudly royalized by his sons;  
And on the hill behind stands certain death,  
In pay and service with Chatillion.

*Prince.* Death's name is much more mighty than  
his deeds;—

Thy parcelling this power hath made it more.  
As many sands as these my hands can hold,  
Are but my handful of so many sands;  
Then, all the world,—and call it but a power,—  
Is easily ta'en up, and quickly thrown away:  
But, if I stand to count them sand by sand,  
The number would confound my memory,  
And make a thousand millions of a task,  
Which briefly, is no more, indeed, than one.  
These quarter'd squadrons, and these regiments,  
Before, behind us, and on either hand,  
Are but a power: When we name a man,  
His hand, his foot, his head, have several strengths;  
And being all but one self instant strength,  
Why, all this many, Audley, is but one,  
And we can call it but one man's strength.  
He, that hath far to go, tells it by miles;  
If he should tell the steps, it kills his heart:  
The drops are infinite that make a flood;  
And yet, thou know'st, we call it but a rain.  
There is but one France, and one king of France,  
That France hath no more kings; and that same  
king  
Hath but the puissant legion of one king;  
And we have one: Then apprehend no odds;  
For one to one is fair equality.—

*Enter a Herald.*

What tidings, messenger? be plain, and brief.

*Her.* The king of France, my sovereign lord  
and master,

Greets thus by me his foe the Prince of Wales:  
If thou call forth an hundred men of name,  
Of lords, knights, 'squires, and English gentlemen,  
And with thyself and those kneel at his feet,  
He straight will fold his bloody colours up,  
And ransom shall redeem lives forfeited:  
If not, this day shall drink more English blood

Than e'er was buried in our British earth.  
What is the answer to his proffer'd mercy ?

*Prince.* This heaven, that covers France, contains the mercy  
That draws from me submissive orisons ;  
That such base breath should vanish from my lips,  
To urge the plea of mercy to a man,  
The Lord forbid ! Return, and tell thy king,  
My tongue is made of steel, and it shall beg  
My mercy on his coward burgonet ;  
Tell him, my colours are as red as his,  
My men as bold, our English arms as strong,  
Return him my defiance in his face.

*Her.* I go. [*Exit Her.*]

*Enter another Herald.*

*Prince.* What news with thee ?

*Her.* The duke of Normandy, my lord and master,  
Pitying thy youth is so engirt with peril,  
By me hath sent a nimble-jointed jennet,  
As swift as ever yet thou did'st bestride,  
And therewithal he counsels thee to fly ;  
Else, death himself hath sworn, that thou shalt die.

*Prince.* Back with the beast unto the beast that sent him ;  
Tell him, I cannot sit a coward's horse :  
Bid him to-day bestride the jade himself ;  
For I will stain my horse quite o'er with blood,  
And double-gild my spurs, but I will catch him ;  
So tell the carping boy, and get thee gone.

[*Exit Her.*]

*Enter another Herald.*

*Her.* Edward of Wales, Philip, the second son  
To the most mighty christian king of France,  
Seeing thy body's living date expir'd,  
All full of charity and christian love,  
Commends this book, full fraught with holy prayers,  
To thy fair hand, and, for thy hour of life,  
Intreats thee that thou meditate therein,  
And arm thy soul for her long journey towards.  
Thus have I done his bidding, and return.

*Prince.* Herald of Philip, greet thy lord from me ;  
All good, that he can send, I can receive :  
But think'st thou not, the unadvised boy  
Hath wrong'd himself, in thus far tend'ring me ?  
Haply, he cannot pray without the book ;  
I think him no divine extemporal :  
Then render back this common-place of prayer,  
To do himself good in adversity :

Besides, he knows not my sin's quality,  
And therefore knows no prayers for my avail ;  
Ere night his prayer may be, to pray to God  
To put it in my heart to hear his prayer ;  
So tell the courtly wanton, and be gone.

*Her.* I go. [*Exit Her.*]

*Prince.* How confident their strength and number makes them !—

Now, Audley, sound those silver wings of thine,  
And let those milk-white messengers of time<sup>32</sup>  
Show thy time's learning in this dangerous time :  
Thyself art bruise'd and bent with many broils,  
And stratagems forepassed with iron pens  
Are texed in thine honourable face ;  
Thou art a married man in this distress,  
But danger woos me as a blushing maid ;  
Teach me an answer to this perilous time.

*Aud.* To die is all as common, as to live ;  
The one in choice, the other holds in chace :  
For, from the instant we begin to live,  
We do pursue and hunt the time to die :  
First bud we, then we blow, and after seed ;  
Then, presently, we fall ; and, as a shade  
Follows the body, so we follow death.

If then we hunt for death, why do we fear it ?  
Or, if we fear it, why do we follow it ?  
If we do fear, with fear we do but aid  
The thing we fear to seize on us the sooner :  
If we fear not, then no resolved proffer  
Can overthrow the limit of our fate :  
For, whether ripe, or rotten, drop we shall,  
As we do draw the lottery of our doom.

*Prince.* Ah, good old man, a thousand thousand armours

These words of thine have buckl'd on my back :  
Ah, what an idiot hast thou made of life,  
To seek the thing it fears ! and how disgrac'd  
The imperial victory of murd'ring death !  
Since all the lives, his conquering arrows strike,  
Seek him, and he not them, to shame his glory.  
I will not give a penny for a life,  
Nor half a halfpenny to slun grim death ;  
Since for to live is but to seek to die,  
And dying but beginning of new life :  
Let come the hour when He that rules it will !  
To live, or die, I hold indifferent. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—*The Same. The French Camp.*

*Enter KING JOHN, and CHARLES.*

*John.* A sudden darkness hath defae'd the sky,<sup>33</sup>  
The winds are erept into their caves for fear,  
The leaves move not, the world is hush'd and still,

The birds cease singing, and the wand'ring brooks  
Murmur no wonted greeting to their shores :  
Silence attends some wonder, and expecteth  
That heaven should pronounce some prophecy :  
Where, or from whom, proceeds this silence,  
Charles ?

*Chas.* Our men, with open mouths, and staring  
eyes,

Look on each other, as they did attend  
Each other's words, and yet no creature speaks ;  
A tongue-tied fear hath made a midnight hour,  
And speeches sleep through all the waking regions.

*John.* But now the pompous sun, in all his pride,  
Look'd through his golden coach upon the world,  
And, on a sudden hath he hid himself ;  
That now the under earth is as a grave,  
Dark, deadly, silent, and uncomfortable.

[*A Clamour of Ravens heard.*]

Hark ! what a deadly outcry do I hear !

*Chas.* Here comes my brother Philip.  
*John.* All dismay'd :—

*Enter PHILIP.*

What fearful words are those thy looks presage ?

*Phi.* A flight, a flight !

*John.* Coward, what flight ? thou liest, there  
needs no flight.

*Phi.* A flight !

*John.* Awake thy craven powers, and tell on  
The substance of that very fear indeed,  
Which is so ghastly printed in thy face :  
What is the matter ?

*Phi.* A flight of ugly ravens  
Do croak and hover o'er our soldiers' heads,  
And keep in triangles, and corner'd squares,  
Right as our forces are embattled ;  
With their approach there came this sudden fog,  
Which now hath hid the airy floor of heaven,  
And made at noon a night unnatural  
Upon the quaking and dismay'd world :  
In brief, our soldiers have let fall their arms,  
And stand like metamorphos'd images,  
Bloodless and pale, one gazing on another.

*John.* Ay, now I call to mind the prophecy ;  
But I must give no entrance to a fear.—  
Return, and hearten up those yielding souls ;  
Tell them, the ravens, seeing them in arms,—  
So many fair against a famished few,—  
Come but to dine upon their handiwork,  
And prey upon the carrion that they kill :  
For when we see a horse laid down to die,  
Although he be not dead, the ravenous birds  
Sit watching the departure of his life ;

Even so these ravens, for the carcases  
Of those poor English, that are mark'd to die,  
Hover about ; and, if they cry to us,  
'Tis but for meat that we must kill for them.  
Away, and comfort up my soldiers,  
And sound the trumpets ; and at once dispatch  
This little business of a silly fraud. [*Exit PHILIP.*]

*Noise within. Enter a French Captain, with  
SALISBURY, Prisoner.*

*Capt.* Behold, my liege, this knight, and forty  
more,—

Of whom the better part are slain and fled,—  
With all endeavour sought to break our ranks,  
And make their way to the encompass'd prince ;  
Dispose of him as please your majesty.

*John.* Go, and the next bough, soldier, that thou  
see'st,

Disgrace it with his body presently :  
For I do hold a tree in France too good  
To be the gallows of an English thief.

*Sal.* My lord of Normandy, I have your pass  
And warrant for my safety through this land.

*Chas.* Villiers procur'd it for thee, did he not ?  
*Sal.* He did.

*Chas.* And it is current, thou shalt freely pass.

*John.* Ay, freely to the gallows to be hang'd,  
Without denial, or impediment :—

Away with him.

*Chas.* I hope, your highness will not so disgrace  
me,

And dash the virtue of my seal at arms :  
He hath my never-broken name to shew,  
Character'd with this princely hand of mine ;  
And rather let me leave to be a prince,  
Than break the stable verdict of a prince :  
I do beseech you, let him pass in quiet.

*John.* Thou and thy word lie both in my com-  
mand ;

What can'st thou promise, that I cannot break ?  
Which of these twain is greater infamy,  
To disobey thy father, or thyself ?  
Thy word, nor no man's, may exceed his power ;  
Nor that same man doth never break his word,  
That keeps it to the utmost of his power :  
The breach of faith dwells in the soul's consent ;  
Which if thyself without consent do break,  
Thou art not charged with the breach of faith.—  
Go, hang him ; for thy licence lies in me :—  
And my constraint stands the excuse for thee.

*Chas.* What, am I not a soldier in my word ?  
Then, arms adieu, and let them fight that list :  
Shall I not give my girdle from my waist,<sup>34</sup>

But with a guardian I shall be controul'd,  
To say, I may not give my things away?  
Upon my soul, had Edward prince of Wales,  
Engag'd his word, writ down his noble hand,  
For all your knights to pass his father's land,  
The royal king, to grace his warlike son,  
Would not alone safe conduct give to them,  
But with all bounty feasted them and theirs.

*John.* Dwell'st thou on precedents? Then be  
it so.—

Say, Englishman, of what degree thou art?

*Sal.* An earl in England, though a prisoner here;  
And those, that know me, call me Salisbury.<sup>55</sup>

*John.* Then, Salisbury, say, whither thou art  
bound?

*Sal.* To Calais, where my liege, king Edward,  
is.

*John.* To Calais, Salisbury? Then to Calais  
pack;

And bid the king prepare a noble grave,  
To put his princely son, black Edward, in.  
And as thou travel'st westwards from this place,  
Some two leagues hence there is a lofty hill,  
Whose top seems topless, for the embracing sky  
Doth hide his high head in her azure bosom;  
Upon whose tall top when thy foot attains,  
Look back upon the humble vale below,  
(Humble of late, but now made proud with arms)  
And thence behold the wretched priuce of Wales,  
Hoop'd with a band of iron round about.  
After which sight, to Calais spur amain,  
And say, the prince was smother'd, and not slain:  
And tell the king, this is not all his ill;  
For I will greet him, ere he thinks I will.  
Away, be gone; the smoke but of our shot  
Will choke our foes, though bullets hit them not.

SCENE VI.—*The Same. A part of the Field of  
Battle.*

*Alarums, as of a Battle joined; Skirmishings.*  
*Enter PRINCE EDWARD and ARTOIS.*

*Art.* How fares your grace? are you not shot,  
my lord?

*Prince.* No, dear Artois; but chok'd with dust  
and smoke,

And stepp'd aside for breath and fresher air.

*Art.* Breathe then, and to 't again: the amazed  
French

Are quite distract with gazing on the crows:  
And, were our quivers full of shafts again,  
Your grace should see a glorious day of this:—  
O, for more arrows, lord! that is our want.

*Prince.* Courage, Artois! a fig for feather'd  
shafts,

When feather'd fowls do bandy on our side!  
What need we fight, and sweat, and keep a coil,  
When railing crows out-scoold our adversaries?  
Up, up, Artois! the ground itself is arm'd  
With fire-containing flint; command our bows  
To hurl away their pretty-colour'd yew,  
And to 't with stones: Away, Artois, away;  
My soul doth prophecy we win the day. [*Exeunt.*]

*Alarums, and Parties skirmishing. Enter KING  
JOHN.*

*John.* Our multitudes are in themselves con-  
founded,  
Dismayed and distraught; swift-starting fear  
Hath buzz'd a cold dismay through all our army,  
And every petty disadvantage prompts  
The fear-possess'd abject soul to fly:  
Myself, whose spirit is steel to their dull lead,  
(What with recalling of the prophecy,  
And that our native stones from English arms  
Rebel against us)<sup>56</sup> find myself attainted  
With strong surprise of weak and yielding fear.

*Enter CHARLES.*

*Chas.* Fly, father, fly! the French do kill the  
French;  
Some, that would stand, let drive at some that fly:  
Our drums strike nothing but discouragement,  
Our trumpets sound dishonour and retire;  
The spirit of fear, that feareth nought but death,  
Cowardly works confusion on itself.

*Enter PHILIP.*

*Phi.* Pluck out your eyes, and see not this day's  
shame!  
An arm hath beat an army; one poor David  
Hath with a stone foil'd twenty stout Goliaths:  
Some twenty naked starvelings, with small flints,  
Have driven back a puissant host of men,  
Array'd and fenc'd in all accomplishments.

*John.* Mordien, they quoit at us, and kill us  
up;

No less than forty thousand wicked elders  
Have forty lean slaves this day ston'd to death.<sup>57</sup>

*Chas.* O, that I were some other countryman!  
This day hath set derision on the French;  
And all the world will blurt and scorn at us.

*John.* What, is there no hope left?

*Phi.* No hope, but death, to bury up our shame.

*John.* Make up once more with me; the twen-  
tieth part

Of those that live, are men enough to quail  
The feeble handful on the adverse part.

*Chas.* Then charge again: if heaven be not oppos'd,

We cannot lose the day

*John.* On, on; away. [*Exeunt.*]

*Alarums, &c.* Enter AUDLEY, wounded, and two Esquires, his Rescuers.

*1st Esq.* How fares my lord?

*Aud.* E'en as a man may do,  
That dines at such a bloody feast as this.

*2nd Esq.* I hope, my lord, that is no mortal scar.

*Aud.* No matter, if it be; the count is cast,  
And in the worst, ends but a mortal man.  
Good friends, convey me to the princely Edward,  
That, in the crimson bravery of my blood,  
I may become him with saluting him:  
I'll smile, and tell him, that this open scar  
Doth end the harvest of his Audley's war.

[*Exeunt. Other Alarums; afterwards, a Retreat.*]

SCENE VII.—*The Same. The English Camp.*

*Flourish.* Enter PRINCE EDWARD, in Triumph, leading Prisoners, KING JOHN, and his Son CHARLES; and Officers, Soldiers, &c., with Ensigns spread.

*Prince.* Now, John in France, and lately John of France,

Thy bloody ensigns are my captive colours:  
And you, high-vaunting Charles of Normandy,  
That once to-day sent me a horse to fly,  
Are now the subjects of my clemency.  
Fie, lords! is't not a shame,<sup>38</sup> that English boys,  
Whose early days are yet not worth a beard,  
Should in the bosom of your kingdom thus,  
One against twenty, beat you up together?

*John.* Thy fortune, not thy force, hath conquer'd us.

*Prince.* An argument, that heaven aids the right.—

Enter ARTOIS, with PHILIP.

See, see, Artois doth bring along with him  
The late good counsel-giver to my soul!—  
Welcome, Artois;—and welcome, Philip, too:  
Who now, of you, or I, have need to pray?  
Now is the proverb verified in you,  
Too bright a morning breeds a lowering day.—

Enter AUDLEY, led by the Two Esquires.

But, say, what grim discouragement comes here!

Alas, what thousand arm'd men of France  
Have writ that note of death in Audley's face?—  
Speak, thou that woo'st death with thy careless smile,

And look'st so merrily upon thy grave  
As if thou wert enamour'd on thy end,  
What hungry sword hath so bereav'd thy face,  
And lopp'd a true friend from my loving soul?

*Aud.* O prince, thy sweet bemoaning speech  
to me

Is as a mournful knell to one dead-sick.

*Prince.* Dear Audley, if my tongue ring out thy end,

My arms shall be thy grave: What may I do,  
To win thy life, or to revenge thy death?  
If thou wilt drink the blood of captive kings,—  
Or, that it were restorative, command  
A health of king's blood, and I'll drink to thee:  
If honour may dispense for thee with death,  
The never-dying honour of this day  
Share wholly, Audley, to thyself, and live.

*Aud.* Victorious prince,—that thou art so, behold

A Caesar's fame in kings' captivity,—  
If I could hold dim death but at a bay,  
'Till I did see my liege thy royal father,  
My soul should yield this castle of my flesh,  
This mang'd tribute, with all willingness,  
To darkness' consummation, dust, and worms.

*Prince.* Cheerly, bold man! thy soul is all too proud,

To yield her city, for one little breach,  
Should be divorced from her earthly spouse  
By the soft temper of a Frenchman's sword:  
Lo, to repair thy life, I give to thee  
Three thousand marks a year in English land.

*Aud.* I take thy gift, to pay the debts I owe:  
These two poor 'squires redeem'd me from the French,

With lusty and dear hazard of their lives;  
What thou hast given to me, I give to them;  
And, as thou lov'st me, prince, lay thy consent  
To this bequeath in my last testament.

*Prince.* Renown'd Audley, live, and have from me

This gift twice doubled, to these 'squires, and thee:  
But, live, or die, what thou hast given away,  
To these, and theirs, shall lasting freedom stay.—  
Come, gentlemen, I'll see my friend bestow'd  
Withiu an easy litter: then we'll march  
Proudly towards Calais, with triumphant pace,  
Unto my royal father, And there bring  
The tribute of my wars, fair France's king.



## ACT V.

SCENE — Picardy. *The English Camp before Calais.*

*Enter EDWARD, with PHILIPPA his Queen, and DERBY; Officers, Soldiers, &c.*

*Edw.* No more, queen Philippe, pacify yourself; Copland, except he can excuse his fault, Shall find displeasure written in our looks.— And now unto this proud resisting town: Soldiers, assault; I will no longer stay, To be deluded by their false delays; Put all to sword, and make the spoil your own.

*[Trumpets sound to Arms.*

*Enter, from the Town, six Citizens, in their Shirts, and bare-footed, with Halters about their Necks.*

*Cit.* Mercy, King Edward! mercy, gracious lord!

*Edw.* Contemptuous villains! call ye now for truce?

Mine ears are stopped against your bootless cries:— Sound, drums; *[Alarum]* draw, threat'ning swords!

*1st Cit.* Ah, noble prince,

Take pity on this town, and bear us, mighty king! We claim the promise that your highness made; The two days' respite is not yet expir'd, And we are come, with willingness, to bear What torturing death, or punishment, you please, So that the trembling multitude be sav'd.

*Edw.* My promise? well, I do confess as much: But I require the chiefest citizens, And men of most account, that should submit; You, peradventure, are but servile grooms, Or some felonious robbers on the sea, Whom, apprehended, law would execute, Albeit severity lay dead in us: No, no, ye cannot over-reach us thus.

*2nd Cit.* The sun, dread lord, that in the western fall

Beholds us now low brought through misery, Did in the orient purple of the morn Salute our coming forth, when we were known; Or may our portion be with damn'd fiends.

*Edw.* If it be so, then let our covenant stand, We take possession of the town in peace; But, for yourselves, look you for no remorse; But, as imperial justice hath decreed, Your bodies shall be dragg'd about these walls, And after feel the stroke of quartering steel: This is your doom;—Go, soldiers, see it done.

*Queen.* Ah, be more mild unto these yielding men! It is a glorious thing, to 'stablish peace; And kings approach the nearest unto God, By giving life and safety unto men: As thou intendest to be king of France, So let her people live to call thee king; For what the sword cuts down, or fire hath spoil'd, Is held in reputation none of ours.

*Edw.* Although experience teach us this is true, That peaceful quietness brings most delight When most of all abuses are controul'd, Yet, insomuch it shall be known, that we As well can master our affections, As conquer other by the dint of sword, Philippe, prevail; we yield to thy request; These men shall live to boast of clemency,—<sup>39</sup> And, tyranny, strike terror to thyself.

*Cit.* Long live your highness! happy be your reign!

*Edw.* Go, get you hence, return unto the town; And if this kindness hath deserv'd your love, Learn then to reverence Edward as your king.—

*[Exeunt Cit.]*

Now, might we hear of our affairs abroad, We would, 'till gloomy winter were o'erspent, Dispose our men in garrison a while. But who comes here?

*Enter COPLAND, and KING DAVID.*

*Der.* Copland, my lord, and David king of Scots.

*Edw.* Is this the proud presumptuous squire o' the north,

That would not yield his prisoner to my queen?

*Cop.* I am, my liege, a northern 'squire, indeed, But neither proud nor insolent, I trust.

*Edw.* What mov'd thee then, to be so obstinate To contradict our royal queen's desire?

*Cop.* No wilful disobedience, mighty lord, But my desert, and public law of arms: I took the king myself in single fight; And, like a soldier, would be loth to lose The least pre-eminence that I had won: And Copland, straight, upon your highness' charge, Is come to France, and, with a lowly mind, Doth vail the bonnet of his victory.<sup>40</sup>

Receive, dread lord, the custom of my fraight, The wealthy tribute of my labouring hands; Which should long since have been surrender'd up, Had but your gracious self been there in place.

*Queen.* But, Copland, thou didst scorn the king's command,  
Neglecting our commission in his name.

*Cop.* His name I reverence, but his person more;

His name shall keep me in allegiance still,  
But to his person I will bend my knee.

*Edw.* I pray thee, Philippe, let displeasure pass;  
This man doth please me, and I like his words:  
For what is he, that will attempt high deeds,  
And lose the glory that ensues the same?

All rivers have recourse unto the sea;  
And Copland's faith, relation to his king.—  
Kneel therefore down; now rise, King Edward's knight:

And, to maintain thy state, I freely give  
Five hundred marks a year to thee and thine.—

*Enter SALISBURY.*

Welcome, Lord Salisbury: What news from Bretagne?

*Sal.* This, mighty king: The country we have won;

And John de Montfort, regent of that place,  
Presents your highness with this coronet,  
Protesting true allegiance to your grace.

*Edw.* We thank thee for thy service, valiant earl;

Challenge our favour, for we owe it thee.

*Sal.* But now, my lord, as this is joyful news,  
So must my voice be tragical again,  
And I must sing of doleful accidents.

*Edw.* What, have our men the overthrow at Poitiers?

Or is my son beset with too much odds?

*Sal.* He was, my lord: and as my worthless self,  
With forty other serviceable knights,  
Under safe-conduct of the dauphin's seal  
Did travel that way, finding him distressed,

A troop of lances met us on the way,  
Surpris'd, and brought us prisoners to the king;

Who, proud of this, and eager of revenge,  
Commanded straight to cut off all our heads:

And surely we had dy'd, but that the duke,  
More full of honour than his angry sire,  
Procur'd our quick deliverance from thence:  
But, ere we went, "Salute your king," quoth he,  
"Bid him provide a funeral for his son,

To-day our sword shall cut his thread of life;  
And, sooner than he thinks, we'll be with him,  
To quittance those displeasures he hath done:"  
This said, we pass'd, not daring to reply;

Our hearts were dead, our looks diffus'd and wan.

Wand'ring, at last we clim'd unto a hill;  
From whence, although our grief were much before,

Yet now to see the occasion with our eyes  
Did thrice so much increase our heaviness:

For there, my lord, O, there we did desery  
Down in a valley how both armies lay.  
The French had cast their trenches like a ring;

And every barricado's open front  
Was thick imbost with brazen ordinance:  
Here stood a battle of ten thousand horse;  
There twice as many pikes, in quadrant wise;  
Here cross-bows, arm'd with deadly-wounding darts:

And in the midst, like to a slender point  
Within the compass of the horizon,—  
As 'twere a rising bubble in the sea,  
A hazel-wand amidst a wood of pines,—  
Or as a bear fast chain'd unto a stake,  
Stood famous Edward, still expecting when  
Those dogs of France would fasten on his flesh.

Anon, the death-procuring knell begins:  
Off go the cannons, that, with trembling noise,  
Did shake the very mountain where they stood;  
Then sound the trumpets' clangors in the air,  
The battles join: and, when we could no more  
Discern the difference 'twixt the friend and foe,  
(So intricate the dark confusion was)

Away we turn'd our watery eyes, with sighs  
As black as powder fuming into smoke.  
And thus, I fear, unhappy have I told  
The most untimely tale of Edward's fall.

*Queen.* Ah me! is this my welcome into France?  
Is this the comfort, that I look'd to have,  
When I should meet with my beloved son?  
Sweet Ned, I would, thy mother in the sea  
Had been prevented of this mortal grief?

*Edw.* Content thee, Philippe; 'tis not tears, will serve

To call him back, if he be taken hence:  
Comfort thyself, as I do, gentle queen,  
With hope of sharp, unheard of, dire revenge.—

He bids me to provide his funeral;  
And so I will: but all the peers in France  
Shall mourners be, and weep out bloody tears,  
Until their empty veins be dry and sear:  
The pillars of his hearse shall be his bones;  
The mould that covers him, their city' ashes;  
His knell, the groaning cries of dying men;  
And, in the stead of tapers on his tomb,  
An hundred fifty towers shall burning blaze,  
While we bewail our valiant son's decease.

[*Flourish of Trumpets within.*]

*Enter a Herald.*

*Her.* Rejoice, my lord, ascend the imperial throne!

The mighty and redoubted prince of Wales,  
Great servitor to bloody Mars in arms,  
The Frenchman's terror, and his country's fame,  
Triumphant rideth like a Roman peer:  
And, lowly at his stirrup, comes afoot  
King John of France, together with his son,  
In captive bonds; whose diadem he brings,  
To crown thee with, and to proclaim thee king.

*Edw.* Away with mourning, Philippe, wipe thine eyes;—

Sound, trumpets, welcome in Plantagenet!

[*A loud Flourish.*]

*Enter PRINCE, AUDLEY, ARTOIS, with KING JOHN, and PHILIP.*

As things, long lost, when they are found again,  
So doth my son rejoice his father's heart,  
For whom, even now, my soul was much perplex'd!

[*Running to the PRINCE, and embracing him.*]

*Queen.* Be this a token to express my joy,

[*Kissing him.*]

For inward passions will not let me speak.

*Prince.* My gracious father, here receive the gift,

[*Presenting him with KING JOHN'S Crown.*]

This wreath of conquest, and reward of war,  
Got with as mickle peril of our lives,  
As e'er was thing of price before this day;  
Install your highness in your proper right:  
And, herewithal, I render to your hands  
These prisoners, chief occasion of our strife,

*Edw.* So, John of France, I see, you keep your word;

You promis'd to be sooner with ourself  
Than we did think for, and 'tis so indeed:  
But, had you done at first as now you do,  
How many civil towns had stood untouch'd,  
That now are turn'd to ragged heaps of stones?  
How many people's lives might you have sav'd,  
That are untimely sunk into their graves?

*John.* Edward, recount not things irrevocable;  
Tell me what ransom thou requir'st to have?

*Edw.* Thy ransom, John, hereafter shall be known:

But first to England thou must cross the seas,  
To see what entertainment it affords;  
Howe'er it falls, it cannot be so bad  
As ours hath been since we arriv'd in France.

*John.* Accurs'd man! of this I was foretold,  
But did misconster what the prophet told.

*Prince.* Now, father, this petition Edward makes,—  
To Thee, [*kneels*] whose grace hath been his strongest shield,

That as thy pleasure chose me for the man,  
To be the instrument to show thy power,  
So thou wilt grant that many princes more,  
Bred and brought up within that little isle,  
May still be famous for like victories!—  
And, for my part, the bloody scars I bear,  
The weary nights that I have watch'd in field,  
The dangerous conflicts I have often had,  
The fearful menaces were proffer'd me,  
The heat, and cold, and what else might displease,  
I wish were now redoubl'd twenty fold;  
So that hereafter ages, when they read  
The painful traffic of my tender youth,  
Might thereby be inflam'd with such resolve,  
As not the territories of France alone,  
But likewise Spain, Turkey, and what countries  
else

That justly would provoke fair England's ire,  
Might, at their presence, tremble, and retire!

*Edw.* Here, English lords, we do proclaim a rest,

An interceasing of our painful arms:  
Sheath up your swords, refresh your weary limbs,  
Peruse your spoils; and, after we have breath'd  
A day or two within this haven town,  
God willing, then for England we'll be shipp'd;  
Where, in a happy hour, I trust, we shall  
Arrive, three kings, two princes, and a queen.

[*Flourish. Exeunt omnes.*]

## NOTES TO KING EDWARD THE THIRD.

<sup>1</sup> *Robert of Artois, banish'd though thou be.*

Robert of Artois was descended from the royal family of France; he had married the sister of the French king; and his talents were considered equal to his birth and connexions. He was deprived of the country of Artois, which he claimed as his birthright; and in consequence of some disgraceful conduct on his part, driven into exile. He was a man of violent passions, and so enraged against the French king, that he is said to have attempted the life of that monarch by witchcraft and assassination. These efforts failing, he endeavoured to raise up in Edward a rival claimant to the throne of France; and his sinister persuasions doubtless had some share in producing that series of wars which for so long desolated his native land.

<sup>2</sup> *Who next succeeded Philip le Beau?*

The old quartos erroneously read, *Philip of Bew.*

<sup>3</sup> *Striving to rebate.*

To *rebate* is to blunt, to beat back, to deprive of power. From *rebuttre*, French.

<sup>4</sup> *Regenerate traitor.*

This does not convey any definite meaning; should we not read *degenerate*?

<sup>5</sup> *Go lery footmen for our wars in France.*

Edward made the most extensive preparations for the war with France; he obtained subsidies, tallages, and forced loans, adopted many arbitrary and tyrannical means of raising money, and even pawned the jewels of his crown.

<sup>6</sup> *Their jacks of gymold mail.*

*Gymold mail* is armour composed of a number of links, like small chains; it was flexible, and therefore fitted better to the body than any other description of defensive covering.

<sup>7</sup> *Their biting whinyards.*

Their sharp broadswords. In Barry's comedy of *Ram Alley; or Merry Tricks*:

If you be pleased hold up your finger; if not,  
By heaven I'll gar my *whinyard* through your womb.

<sup>8</sup> *Jemmy, my man, saddle my bonny black.*

The Scots are treated very contemptuously in this drama; they were disliked both by Queen Elizabeth and by the English people; therefore, for an author to ridicule them, was frequently to gain the applause of his audience. But the Scots, who were in reality, during the reign of Edward III., the terror of the English living near the borders, are very differently described by the

chivalrous and romantic chronicler Froissart. The passage is of so interesting a character that I will extract it. "The Scots are bold, hardy, and much inured to war. When they make their invasions into England, they march from twenty to twenty-four leagues without halting, as well by night as day; for they are all on horseback, except the camp followers, who are on foot. The knights and esquires are well mounted on large bay horses, the common people on little galloways. They bring no carriages with them, on account of the mountains they have to pass in Northumberland; neither do they carry with them any provisions of bread or wine; for their habits of sobriety are such, in time of war, that they will live for a long time on flesh half-sodden, without bread, and drink the river water without wine. They have, therefore, no occasion for pots or pans; for they dress the food of their cattle in the skins, after they have taken them off: and, being sure to find plenty of them in the country which they invade, they carry none with them. Under the flaps of his saddle, each man carries a broad plate of metal; behind the saddle, a little bag of oatmeal: when they have eaten too much of the sodden flesh, and their stomach appears weak and empty, they place this plate over the fire, mix with water their oatmeal, and when the plate is heated, they put a little of the paste upon it, and make a thin cake, like a cracknel or bisenit, which they eat to warm their stomachs: it is therefore no wonder that they perform a longer day's march than other soldiers."

<sup>9</sup> *Peevish love, i.e. silly love.*

<sup>10</sup> *And said by said.*

The old copy reads erroneously—"and said by said."

<sup>11</sup> *Than Judith was.*

Judith the beautiful Hebrew widow, who by a stratagem destroyed Holofernes the captain of the Assyrian army. See the book of *Judith*, in the Apocrypha.

<sup>12</sup> *Lilies, that fester, smell far worse than weeds.*

This beautiful line is contained in the ninety-fourth of Shakspeare's *Sonnets*. If play and poem are the production of different authors, one of them has unwittingly copied the other.

<sup>13</sup> *Then via for the spacious bounds of France.*

That is, then away for France; away joyfully.

<sup>14</sup> *Derby, I'll look upon the countess' mind anon.*

The dramatist here very skilfully shows how the powerful mind of Edward is completely filled and subdued by his admiration of the fascinating countess. Froissart speaks at some length of this traditionary amour, and

his *Chronicles* quite justify the position taken by our poet. He says: "You have heard how passionately he (Edward) was smitten with the charms of the noble lady, Catherine, countess of Salisbury; insomuch that he could not put her out of his mind, for love reminded him of her day and night, and represented her beauties and lively behaviour in such bewitching points of view, that he could think of nothing else, notwithstanding that the earl of Salisbury was one of his most trusty counsellors, and one who in England had most loyally served him."

<sup>15</sup> *Remove those lets, i.e. hindrances.*

<sup>16</sup> *Through a helly spout of blood.*

I think we should read *Hellespont*, otherwise the comparison is incomplete.

<sup>17</sup> *This packing evil.*

*Packing evil* is subtle, underhand, treacherous evil. In *King Lear* the word *packings* is used to express deceitful contrivances.

<sup>18</sup> *Of her, whose ransacked treasury hath task'd  
The ruin endeavour of so many pens.*

An allusion to Lucretia, the chaste and noble victim of the violence of Sextus Tarquin.

<sup>19</sup> *Ere the sun shall gild the eastern sky.*

The old copy reads, "shall guide the," &c.

<sup>20</sup> *Blood-thirsty and seditious Catalines.*

Cataline was a Roman noble of infamous character. Having ruined himself by debauchery and extravagance, and been refused the consulship, he conspired, with other desperate men, to murder every member of the senate, seize the public treasure, and burn Rome to ashes. He is reported to have taken an oath to accomplish these savage objects, and together with the rest of the conspirators, confirmed it by a draught of human blood, warm from the veins of a slave whom they slew for the occasion. The conspiracy was discovered by Cicero, and Cataline fled to Gaul, where he assembled an army, and a battle took place, in which he was slain, sixty-three years before Christ. Besides many other great and revolting crimes, he was guilty of the murder of his own brother.

<sup>21</sup> *Of Agamemnon in the laven of Troy.*

Agamemnon, the king of Mycenæ and Argos. He was the brother of Menelaus, and chosen king of the allied Grecian princes during the siege of Troy. He was married to Clytemnestra, the sister of the beautiful but voluptuous Helen. During the protracted war which the Greeks waged against the Trojans he behaved with great valour, but having taken away the mistress of Achilles, his quarrel with that hero was fatal to the Greeks. After the destruction of Troy, Cassandra, Priam's mad daughter, who was regarded as a prophetess, fell to the share of Agamemnon and foretold that his wife would murder him. He disregarded this prediction and returned to Argos, where it was verified.

Clytemnestra, assisted by her paramour Egisthus, killed her husband with a hatchet as he was emerging from the bath. Cassandra, to whom he was greatly attached, shared his fate. Agamemnon was of a very noble and commanding appearance; Homer makes Priam, in allusion to him, ask:—

————— What Greek is he

(Far as from hence these aged orbs can see)

Around whose brow such awful graces shine,

So tall, so awful, and almost divine?

Though some of larger stature tread the green,

None match his grandeur and exalted mien.

<sup>22</sup> *With Xerxes we compare of strength.*

Xerxes was a monarch of Persia who terminated his career about 464 years before Christ. Having subdued Egypt he led an army against the Greeks; this army, with its retinue of servants, eunuchs, and women, is said to have amounted to the enormous and almost incredible number of nearly five millions and a quarter of people. So great was this concourse that they spread famine in the provinces through which they passed, and are metaphorically said to have drank up whole rivers. When Xerxes reviewed them he is reported to have burst into tears from the reflection that in one hundred years not one of that vast multitude would be left alive; all that mass of living breathing creatures would be cold and still; those millions of hearts would have ceased to beat, and grass and wild flowers be growing over their graves. Wonderful are the chances of war, and great the power of science and discipline; this gigantic army was stopped at Thermopylæ by the valour of three hundred Spartans, under King Leonidas; and the Persian monarch, although he burnt the deserted city of Athens, was compelled to return in disgrace to his own country. There he gave himself up to indolence and voluptuousness, and was in consequence murdered in his bed by Artabanus, the captain of his guards.

<sup>23</sup> *The arms of England and of France unite  
Are quarter'd equally by herald's art.*

Edward publicly assumed the title of King of France, and quartered the French lilies in his arms.

<sup>24</sup> *And our pretended quarrel.*

That is, our intended or proposed quarrel. The word pretence is frequently used by Shakspeare for design or purpose, and pretended as intended.

<sup>25</sup> *Which is the true-born sovereign, this or that?*

Edward's claim to the French crown, if not ridiculous was manifestly unjust. It was as follows:—Philip the Fair, King of France, left three sons and one daughter. Isabella, the daughter, was married to Edward II. and was the mother of Edward III. Lewis Hutin, the eldest son, ascended the throne, but as he died without male children, and females being by an ancient custom of France, excluded from regal honours, the crown descended to his brother Philip. Edward's claim was through his mother, who, though he acknowledged that she, being a woman, could not legally claim the sove-

reignty of France, he urged that he, to whom her right descended, being a man, could. Thus the son insisted that he inherited, through his mother, a property which she herself had never possessed; and the result of this wicked sophistry was, that many thousands of French and English mingled their blood upon the fields of France, and left their mangled bodies to the kites and crows.

<sup>26</sup> *The vaward*, i.e. the van, or advanced part of the army.

<sup>27</sup> *Grudging to be so suddenly employ'd.*

Froissart tells us, "As soon as the King of France came in sight of the English, his blood began to boil, and he cried out to his marshals, 'Order the Genoese forward, and begin the battle, in the name of God and St. Denis.' There were about fifteen thousand Genoese cross-bowmen; but they were quite fatigued, having marched on foot that day six leagues, completely armed, and with their cross-bows. They told the constable they were not in a fit condition to do any great things that day in battle. The Earl of Alençon, hearing this, said, 'This is what one gets by employing such scoundrels, who fall off when there is any need for them.'" The Genoese, who were thus forced into action, fell back before the terrible flight of arrows with which they were saluted by the sturdy English archers; when the French King, mad with passion, exclaimed: "Kill me those scoundrels; for they stop up our road without any reason." His horsemen immediately attacked the Genoese, and such was the confusion which resulted from this foolish and vindictive proceeding, that it mainly contributed to the loss of the battle.

<sup>28</sup> *And dare a falcon when she's in her flight,  
And ever after she'll be haggard-like.*

That is, check a falcon in her flight and afterwards she will be but a tame, spiritless bird. *Dare* was anciently sometimes used in the sense of *to check*, and a haggard was a species of worthless hawk. Edward compares his son to a falcon, and fears that if he checks or aids him in his first military exploit, he will be deficient in courage and self-reliance in future.

<sup>29</sup> *Eleven princes of esteem.*

Among those princes who were slain at the fatal battle of Crecy was John de Luxembourg, the blind old king of Bohemia. Fearing that his son was killed, and that the fortune of the day was against the side he had embraced, he begged to be placed between two knights, and carried into the battle, that he might strike a blow in revenge for his son, and expire with him. This was done, and the sightless and sorrowing old man soon lay cold and lifeless upon the ensanguined field. His crest was three ostrich feathers, and the motto of "ICH DIEN," (I serve); it was adopted by the Black Prince, and to this day is borne by the princes of Wales.

<sup>30</sup> *No love-sick cockney.*

Antiquarians have been unable to agree as to the

exact meaning of this term of contempt. Mr. Steevens conjectures that a cockney was an ancient name for a cook. Thus, in *King Lear* the fool says; "Cry to it, nuncle, as the *cockney* did to the eels, when she put them in the paste alive." In the ancient ballad of *The Tournament of Tottenham* it seems also to mean a cook:—

At that feast were they served in rich array;  
Every five and five had a *cokeney*.

Dr. Percy imagines the word to signify some common kind of food; and Mr. Whalley, agreeing with him, quotes the following epigram from Davies:—

He that comes every day, shall have a *cock-nay*,  
And he that comes but now and then, shall have a fat hen.

Chancer, in his *Reve's Tale*, uses it in much the same sense in which it is employed in the present day:—

And when this jape is told another day,  
I shall be balden a daffe or a *cokenay*.

<sup>31</sup> *The captain of the town hath thrust us forth,  
That so expense of victuals may be sav'd.*

This cruel action is one of the many black spots which disgrace the pages of history. It is thus related by Froissart. "The king made no attacks upon the town, as he knew it would be only lost labour; and he was sparing of his men and artillery; but said, he would remain there so long that he would starve the town into a surrender, unless the king of France should come there to raise the siege. When the governor of Calais saw the preparations of the king of England, he collected together all the poor inhabitants, who had not laid in any store of provisions, and, one Wednesday morning, sent upwards of seventeen hundred men, women, and children out of the town. As they were passing through the English army, they asked them, why they had left the town? They replied, because they had nothing to eat. The king, upon this, allowed them to pass through in safety, ordered them a hearty dinner, and gave to each two sterlings as charity and alms, for which many of them prayed earnestly for the king."

<sup>32</sup> *Those milk-white messengers of time.*

A beautiful simile for his grey hairs.

<sup>33</sup> *A sudden darkness hath defaced the sky.*

On the morning of the battle of Crecy, there was an eclipse of the sun, accompanied by a heavy fall of rain, and frequent thunder. Before the rain a great flight of crows, the harbingers of the storm, hovered over the French army, but there is no mention of any of these things occurring at Poitiers.

<sup>34</sup> *Shall I not give my gurdle from my waste.*

*Waste* and *waist* appear to have been used by our ancient writers as words of synonymous import.

<sup>35</sup> *And those, that know me, call me Salisbury.*

Froissart relates this incident, but makes the hero of it to be Sir Walter Manny, and not the Earl of Salisbury.

## NOTES TO KING EDWARD THE THIRD.

<sup>36</sup> *And that our native stones from English arms  
rebel against us.*

The English bowmen having shot away all their arrows, have been just commanded to continue the conflict with the flint stones with which the place abounded; the language of the prophecy was thus fulfilled:—

And flint stones rise, and break the battle 'ray.

Stones were also used as cannon-balls at this period. In Shakspeare's *Henry the Fifth*, mention is made of gun-stones.

<sup>37</sup> *No less than forty thousand wicked elders  
Have forty lean slaves this day ston'd to death.*

An allusion to the story of Susannah and the Elders. See the Apocrypha.

<sup>38</sup> *Fie lords! is't not a shame.*

The poet here deviates from historical truth, which, in most points, he has followed with a literal fidelity. Prince Edward, instead of galling the unfortunate French king with ungenerous taunts, behaved to him with great kindness and humanity. He consoled him in his adversity, praised his personal valour, invited him to supper,

and waited upon him personally; saying, "Dear sir, do not make a poor meal, because the Almighty God has not gratified your wishes in the event of this day; for be assured that my lord and father will show you every honour and friendship in his power, and will arrange your ransom so reasonably, that you will henceforward always remain friends."

<sup>39</sup> *These men shall live to boast of clemency.*

Edward's clemency was not very remarkable; he certainly did, at the earnest and tearful solicitation of his queen, abandon his ferocious purpose of executing the noble patriots who had surrendered themselves to him in order to save their fellow-townsmen, but he did not forego his vengeance on the ill-fated place. He drove out all the inhabitants of Calais, and repopulated it with his English subjects.

<sup>40</sup> *Doth veil the bonnet of his victory.*

In Bullokar's *English Expositor*, 1616, *to veil* is thus explained: "It means to put off the hat, to strike sail, to give signs of submission."

H. T.

## The Merry Devil of Edmonton.



THE present drama was first published in 1608, with the following title-page:—*The Merry Devill of Edmonton: As it hath been sundry times acted by his Maiestie's Servants, at the Globe on the Banke-side.* Many subsequent editions of it were published within half a century after its first appearance. It was ascribed to Shakspeare by a bookseller named Kirkman, who took a great interest in old plays, and made very diligent inquiries respecting them; but upon what authority he claimed our poet as the author of it, or if indeed upon any, is not known. That it could not have been the production of the pen of Shakspeare is evident enough from the date. It had certainly been written and acted a few years before it was entered in the Stationers' books, being thus alluded to in the *Blacke Booke*, by T. M., 1604: "Give him leave to see *The Merry Devil of Edmonton*; or, *A Woman killed with kindness.* But even at the last-mentioned period, Shakspeare was in the zenith of his fame, and the fulness of his intellectual and poetic power; he had long passed the time when comparatively feeble, or unequally sustained works could have been composed by him. He was then the acknowledged poet of the day; the great dramatist; loved by the people, admired by the nobles, and caressed by his sovereign. He was the dramatic Atlas who bore the Globe (theatre) upon his shoulders. It is conjectured, that in 1603 he wrote *Measure for Measure*; *The Winter's Tale* in 1604; and *King Lear* in 1605: in such high company the modest but interesting little *Merry Devil* must not show its head. It could not have been Shakspeare's; we must look further a-field for its parentage.

Thomas Coxeter, an industrious antiquary, who died in 1747, states it to have been written by the poet Michael Drayton, who, if the voice of Tradition is to be depended upon, was a friend of Shakspeare, and the companion of his social hours. Mr. Oldys also attributed it to Drayton. In an entry of the title of it on the Stationers' books, on the 5th of April, 1608, it is said to be written "By T. B." These initials are supposed to stand for Tony, or Anthony Brewer, a writer of whom nothing is with certainty known, but who is thus alluded to in a poem called *Steps to Parnassus*, quoted by Chetwood:—

LET BREWER take his artful pen in hand,  
Attending muses will obey command,  
Invoke the aid of Shakespear's sleeping clay,  
And strike from utter darkness new-born day.

Whoever was the author, it is a performance of considerable merit, breathing much sweetness and tenderness; and was exceedingly popular with the playgoers of the period in which it was produced. In Ben Jonson's Prologue to his comedy of *The Devil is an Ass*, it is thus alluded to:—

————— If you'll come  
To see new plays, pray you afford us room,  
And show this but the same face you have done,  
YOUR DEAR DELIGHT THE DEVIL OF EDMONTON.

As an evidence of its long-continued popularity, it may be mentioned that it was revived some time before 1692, when the celebrated Betterton, and the beautiful, fascinating, and scarcely less celebrated Mrs. Bracegirdle, performed the characters of Sir Richard Jerningham, and the gentle, confiding Millisent. Charles Lamb, in his *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets*, after quoting a part of the second scene of this little comedy, says—"This scene has much of Shakspeare's manner in the sweetness



## THE MERRY DEVIL OF EDMONTON.

and good-naturedness of it. It seems written to make the reader happy. Few of our dramatists or novelists have attended enough to this. They torture and wound us abundantly. They are economists only in delight. Nothing can be finer, more gentleman-like, and noble, than the conversation and compliments of these young men. How delicious is Raymond Mounchensey's forgetting, in his fears, that Jerningham has a 'Saint in Essex;' and how sweetly his friend reminds him! I wish it could be ascertained that Michael Drayton was the author of this piece; it would add a worthy appendage to the renown of that panegyrist of my native earth; who has gone over her soil (in his *Polyolbion*) with the fidelity of a herald, and the painful love of a son; who has not left a rivulet (so narrow that it may be stepped over) without honourable mention; and has animated hills and streams with life and passion above the dreams of old mythology."

The author of this drama probably intended to write a second part; for in this the story of Fabel, the merry devil, is left unfinished. In the first scene we find him tricking the fiend out of another lease of life of seven years' duration: but the comedy would be sadly damped if we were to suppose that the demon got possession of the kind-hearted and repentant magician at the end of that period. The author doubtless intended that Fabel should a second time defeat the Devil, and set himself free from the satanic dominion for ever. Perhaps it was meant that he should employ the seven years in works of benevolence and charity, and so reconcile himself to heaven, and win its protective power. All that he does to assist the lovers is effected without the aid of enchantment. His only act of magic is to bind the devil in his necromantic chair, and keep him there, until the fiend assents to his conditions. Indeed, the supernatural business of the drama terminates with the first scene. The character of Fabel is a slight and imperfect sketch; nor is he woven up very closely with the rest of the story; but it is scarcely fair to look for any profound development of character in a comedy so brief and of such modest pretensions.

The chief merit of this drama lies in the many sweet passages of true poetry which are scattered throughout it; but it possesses, also, some naturally-sketched characters. Such is mine host Blague, the hearty, merry, practical jester and stealer of venison. It has been remarked, that he resembles the host in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*; and the author probably had an eye upon that humorous publican. The wild priest, Sir John, who begins each speech like a profligate, and then, suddenly recollecting his serious profession, ends it with a moral reflection upon the certainty of death; Banks, the poaching miller; and Smug, the drunken smith, form an amusing group, who carry on a comic under-plot with considerable humour and vivacity. Nor should we forget the poor timid sexton, who, seeing the miller during the darkness of night in his white coat in the church porch, takes him for a ghost; and afterwards declares not only that he has seen a spirit, but that "there was a hundred cats, all fire, dancing even now; and they have clomb up to the top of the steeple."

In the more serious part of the comedy there is, perhaps, less breadth of character displayed. Millisent is a constant, loving, trusting creature, and wins at once our sympathy. Her lover, Mounchensey, too, is a manly young fellow; we wish him success; and are glad that he obtains it: the lovers triumph; and the selfish old men are tricked and defeated; but they are reconciled at last; and all ends well and happily.

H. T.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

SIR ARTHUR CLARE.

HENRY CLARE, *his Son.*

*Appears, sc. 2; sc. 4; sc. 5; sc. 6; sc. 7; sc. 9.*

SIR RICHARD MOUNCHENSEY.

*Appears, sc. 2; sc. 4.*

RAYMOND MOUNCHENSEY, *his Son.*

*Appears, sc. 2; sc. 4; sc. 6; sc. 9.*

SIR RALPH JERNINGHAM.

*Appears, sc. 2; sc. 5; sc. 7; sc. 9.*

FRANK JERNINGHAM, *his Son.*

*Appears, sc. 2; sc. 4; sc. 5; sc. 6; sc. 7; sc. 9.*

SIR JOHN, *the Priest of Enfield.*

*Appears, sc. 3; sc. 7; sc. 8; sc. 9.*

BANKS, *a Miller.*

*Appears, sc. 3; sc. 7; sc. 8.*

SMUG, *a Smith.*

*Appears, sc. 3; sc. 7; sc. 9.*

BILBO, *Servant to Sir Arthur Clare.*

*Appears, sc. 2; sc. 4; sc. 5; sc. 9.*

BLAGUE, *the Host of the George Inn.*

*Appears, sc. 2; sc. 3; sc. 7; sc. 8; sc. 9.*

BRIAN, *a Forest-keeper.*

RALPH, *his Man.*

*Appears, sc. 7.*

SEXTON.

*Appears, sc. 8.*

FRIAR HILDERSHAM.

BENEDIC, *a Novice.*

CHAMBERLAIN.

*Appears, sc. 9.*

PETER FABEL, *a Scholar and Magician, surnamed*  
*"the Merry Devil."*

*Appears, sc. 1; sc. 2; sc. 4; sc. 6; sc. 9.*

COREB, *an Evil Spirit.*

*Appears, sc. 1.*

LADY CLARE.

*Appears, sc. 2; sc. 4; sc. 5; sc. 6.*

MILLISENT, *her Daughter.*

*Appears, sc. 2; sc. 4; sc. 5; sc. 6; sc. 7; sc. 9.*

ABBESS OF CHESTON PRIORY.

*Appears, sc. 5.*

*Nuns and Attendants.*

SCENE.—EDMONTON, *and the Surrounding*  
*Country.*

[NOTE.—This Comedy is complete in One Act; the old copies are not divided into scenes—I am responsible for its arrangement in that respect.—ED.]

# The Merry Devil of Edmonton.

## THE PROLOGUE.

YOUR silence and attention, worthy friends,  
That your free spirits may with more pleasing  
seuse

Relish the life of this our active scene :  
To which intent, to calm this murmuring breath,  
We ring this round with our invoking spells ;  
If that your list'ning ears be yet prepar'd  
To entertain the subject of our play,  
Lend us your patience.

'Tis Peter Fabel, a renowned scholar,<sup>1</sup>  
Whose fame hath still been hitherto forgot  
By all the writers of this latter age.  
In Middlesex his birth and his abode,  
Not full seven miles from this great famous city ;  
That, for his fame in slights and magic wou,  
Was call'd the merry fiend of Edmonton.  
If any here make doubt of such a name,  
In Edmonton yet fresh unto this day,  
Fix'd in the wall of that old ancient church,  
His monument remaineth to be seen :  
His memory yet in the mouths of men,  
That whilst he liv'd he could deceive the devil.  
Imagine now, that whilst he is retir'd  
From Cambridge back unto his native home,  
Suppose the silent sable-visag'd night  
Casts her black curtain over all the world ;  
And whilst he sleeps within his silent bed,  
Toil'd with the studies of the pass'd day,  
Tho very time and hour wherein that spirit,  
That many years attended his command,  
And oftentimes 'twixt Cambridge and that town  
Had in a minute borne him thro' the air,  
By composition 'twixt the fiend and him,  
Comes now to claim the scholar for his due.

[*Draw the Curtains.*

Behold him here laid on his restless couch !  
His fatal chime prepared at his head,  
His chamber guarded with these sable slights,  
And by him stands that necromantic chair,  
In which he makes his direful invocations,  
And binds the fiends that shall obey his will.  
Sit with a pleased eye, until you know  
The comic end of our sad tragic show.

SCENE I.—Fabel's Chamber, supplied with Books  
and Necromantie Instruments.

*The chime goes, in which time FABEL is oft seen  
to stare about him and hold up his hands.*

*Fabel.* What means the tolling of this fatal  
chime ?

O what a trembling horror strikes my heart !  
My stillen'd hair stands upright on my head,  
As do the hristles of a porcupiue.

*Enter COREB, a Spirit.*

*Coreb.* Fabel, awake ! or I will bear thee hence  
Headlong to hell.

*Fabel.* Ha, ha, why dost thou wake me ?  
*Coreb,* is it thou ?

*Coreb.* 'Tis I.

*Fabel.* I know thee well, I hear the watchful dogs  
With hollow howling tell of thy approach :  
The lights burn dim, affrighted with thy presence ;  
And this distemper'd and tempestuous night  
Tells me the air is troubled with some devil.

*Coreb.* Come, art thou ready ?

*Fabel.* Whither, or to what ?

*Coreb.* Why, scholar, this the hour my date ex-  
pires ;

I must depart, and come to claim my due.

*Fabel.* Hah ! what is thy due ?

*Coreb.* Fabel, thyself.

*Fabel.* O let not darkness hear thee speak that  
word,

Lest that with force it hurry hence amain,  
And leave the world to look upon my woe :  
Yet overwhelm me with this globe of earth,  
And let a little sparrow with her bill,  
Take but so much as she can bear away,  
That every day thus losing of my load,  
I may again, in time, yet hope to rise.

*Coreb.* Didst thou not write thy name with thine  
own blood ?

And drew'st the formal deed 'tixt thee and me ?  
And is it not recorded now in hell ?

*Fabel.* Why com'st thou in this stern and horrid  
shape ?

Not in familiar sort as thou wast wont ?

*Coreb.* Because the date of thy command is out,  
And I am master of thy skill and thee.

*Fabel.* Coreb, thou angry and impatient spirit,  
I have earnest business for a private friend:  
Reserve me, spirit, until some farther time.

*Coreb.* I will not for the mines of all the earth.

*Fabel.* Then let me rise, and ere I leave the  
world,

Dispatch some business that I have to do;  
And in mean time repose thee in that chair.

*Coreb.* Fabel, I will. [Sits down.]

*Fabel.* O that this soul, that cost so dear a price  
As the dear precious blood of her Redeemer,  
Inspir'd with knowledge, should by that alone,  
Which makes a man so mean unto the powers,  
Ev'n lead him down into the depth of hell;  
When men in their own pride strive to know more  
Than man should know!

For this alone God cast the angels down.

The infinity of arts is like a sea,  
Into which when man will take in hand to sail  
Farther than reason (which should be his pilot)  
Hath skill to guide him; losing once his compass,  
He falleth to such deep and dangerous whirlpools,  
As he doth lose the very sight of heaven:

The more he strives to come to quiet harbour,  
The farther still he finds himself from laud.

Man striving still to find the depth of evil,  
Seeking to be a God, becomes a devil.

*Coreb.* Come, Fabel, hast thou done?

*Fabel.* Yes, yes, come hither.

*Coreb.* Fabel, I cannot.

*Fabel.* Cannot! what ails your hollowness?

*Coreb.* Good Fabel, help me.

*Fabel.* Alas! where lies your grief?—Some aqua  
vitæ!

The devil's very sick, I fear he'll die,  
For he looks very ill.

*Coreb.* Dar'st thou deride the minister of dark-  
ness?

In Lucifer's great name, Coreb conjures thee  
To set him free.

*Fabel.* I will not for the mines of all the earth,  
Unless thou give me liberty to see  
Seven years more, before thou seize on me.

*Coreb.* Fabel, I give it thee.

*Fabel.* Swear, damned fiend.

*Coreb.* Unbind me, and by hell I will not touch  
thee

Till seven years, from this hour, be full expir'd.

*Fabel.* Enough, come out.

*Coreb.* A vengeance take thy art!  
Live, and convert all piety to evil;

Never did man thus over-reach the devil.

No time on earth, like Phætonic flames,

Can have perpetual being. I'll return

To my infernal mansion: but be sure,

Thy seven years done, no trick shall make me tarry;

But, Coreb, thou to hell shalt Fabel carry.

*Fabel.* Then thus between us two this variance  
ends;

Thou to thy fellow-fiends, I to my friends.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. — *A Room in the George Inn, at  
Waltham.*

*Enter SIR ARTHUR CLARE, DORCAS his Lady;  
MILLISENT his Daughter, Young HARRY CLARE;  
the men booted, the Gentlewomen in Cloaks and  
Safe-guards: 2* *BLAGUE, the merry Host of the  
George, comes in with them.*

*Host.* Welcome, good knight, to the George at  
Waltham; my freehold, my tenements, goods, and  
chattels. Madam, here's a room is the very Homer  
and Iliads of a lodging, it hath none of the four  
elements in it; I built it out of the centre, and I  
drink ne'er the less sack.—Welcome,—my little  
waste of maidenheads: what? I serve the good  
duke of Norfolk.

*Clare.* God a mercy, my good host Blague:  
Thou hast a good seat here.

*Host.* 'Tis correspondent, or so: there's not a  
Tartarian,<sup>3</sup> nor a carrier, shall breathe upon your  
geldings: they have villanous rank feet, the  
rogues, and they shall not sweat in my linen.  
Knights and lords too have been drunk in my  
house, I thank the destinies.

*H. Clare.* Pr'ythee, good sinful inn-keeper, will  
that corruption, thine hostler,<sup>4</sup> to look well to my  
gelding—Hay! a pox of these rushes.<sup>5</sup>

*Host.* You, St. Dennis, your gelding shall walk  
without doors, and cool his feet for his master's  
sake. By the body of Saint George, I have an ex-  
cellent intellect to go steal some venison:<sup>6</sup> now  
when wast thou in the forest?

*H. Clare.* Away, you stale mess of white broth.  
Come hither, sister, let me help you.

*Clare.* Mine host, is not Sir Richard Mouchen-  
sey come yet, according to our appointment when  
we last dined here?

*Host.* The knight's not yet apparent—marry  
here's a fore-runner that summons a parley, and  
faith he'll be here top and top-gallant presently.

*Clare.* 'Tis well; good mine host, go down and  
see breakfast be provided.

*Host.* Knight, thy breath hath the force of a woman, it takes me down; I am for the baser element of the kitchen: I retire like a valiant soldier, face point-blank to the foe-man; or like a courtier, that must not shew his prince his posteriors: vanish to know my canvasadoes, and my interrogatories, for I serve the good duke of Norfolk.

[*Exit.*

*Clare.* How doth my lady? are you not weary, madam?

Come hither, I must talk in private with you; My daughter Millisent must not over-hear.

*Mill.* Ay! whispering! pray God it tend to my good!

Strange fear assails my heart, usurps my blood.

*Clare.* You know, our meeting with the knight Mouchensey

Is to assure our daughter to his heir.

*Dorcas.* 'Tis without question.

*Clare.* Two tedious winters have pass'd o'er, since first

These couple lov'd each other, and in passion  
Glew'd first their naked hands with youthful moisture;

Just so long, on my knowledge.

*Dorcas.* And what of this

*Clare.* This morn'g should my daughter lose her name,

And to Mouchensey's house convey our arms,  
Quarter'd within his 'scutcheon: the alliance made

'Twixt him and her, this morning should be seal'd.

*Dorcas.* I know it should.

*Clare.* But there are crosses, wife; here's one in Waltham,

Another at the Abbey, and a third

At Cheston; and it is ominous to pass

Any of these without a pater-noster.

Crosses of love still thwart this marriage,

Whilst that we two like spirits walk in night,

About those stony and hard-hearted plots.

*Mill.* O God! what means my father? [*Aside.*

*Clare.* For look you wife, the riotous old knight

Hath over-run his annual revenue,

In keeping jolly Christmas all the year:

The nostrils of his chimneys are still stuff'd

With smoke, more chargeable than cane tobacco;

His hawks devour his fattest dogs, whilst simple,

His leanest curs eat his hounds' carrion.

Besides, I heard of late his younger brother,

A Turkey-merchant, hath sure suck'd the knight,

By means of some great losses on the sea;

That (you conceive me) before God, all's naught,

D. P.

2 R

His seat is weak: thus each thing rightly scan'd,  
You'll see a flight, wife, shortly of his land.

*Mill.* Treason to my heart's truest sovereign:  
How soon is love smother'd in foggy gain! [*Aside.*

*Dorcas.* But how shall we prevent this dangerous match?

*Clare.* I have a plot, a trick, and this it is.  
Under this colour I'll break off the match;  
I'll tell the knight, that now my mind is chang'd  
For marrying of my daughter; for I intend  
To send her unto Cheston nunnery.

*Mill.* O me accursed! [*Aside.*

*Clare.* There to become a most religious nun.

*Mill.* I'll first be buried quick. [*Aside.*

*Clare.* To spend her beauty in most private prayers.

*Mill.* I'll sooner be a sinner in forsaking  
Mother and father. [*Aside.*

*Clare.* How dost like my plot?

*Dorcas.* Exceeding well: but is it your intent  
She shall continue there?

*Clare.* Continue there? ha, ha, that were a jest:  
You know a virgin may continue there  
A twelve-month and a day, only on trial.  
There shall my daughter sojourn some three  
months,

And in meantime I'll compass a fair match  
'Twixt youthful Jerningham, the lusty heir  
Of Sir Ralph Jerningham, dwelling in the forest.  
I think they'll both come hither with Mouchensey.

*Dorcas.* Your care argues the love you bear our  
child;

I will subscribe to any thing you'll have me.

[*Exeunt CLARE and DORCAS.*

*Mill.* You will subscribe to it?—good, good, 'tis  
well;

Love hath two chairs of state, heaven and hell.  
My dear Mouchensey, thou my death shalt rue,  
Ere to thy heart Millisent prove untrue. [*Exit.*

*Enter BLAGUE.*

*Host.* Hostlers, you knaves and commanders,  
take the horses of the knights and competitors:  
your honourable hulks have put into harbour,  
they'll take in fresh water here, and I have provided  
clean chamber-pots. *Via*—they come.<sup>7</sup>

*Enter SIR RICHARD MOUCHENSEY, SIR RALPH  
JERNINGHAM, YOUNG FRANK JERNINGHAM, RAY-  
MOND MOUCHENSEY, PETER FABEL, and BILBO.*

*Host.* The destinies be most neat chamberlains  
to these swaggering puritans, knights of the  
subsidy.

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*Sir Rich.* God a mercy, good mine host.

*Sir Ralph.* Thanks, good host Blague.

*Host.* Room for my case of pistols, that have Greek and Latin bullets in them: let me cling to your flanks, my nimble Giberalters, and blow wind in your calves to make them swell bigger. Ha; I'll caper in mine own fee-simple; away with punctilios and orthography, I serve the good duke of Norfolk.

*Bilbo.* *Tityre, tu patula recubans sub tegmine fagi.*<sup>5</sup> Truly, mine host, Bilbo, though he be somewhat out of fashion, will be your only blade still; I have a villanous sharp stomach to slice a breakfast.

*Host.* Thou shalt have it without any more discontinuance, releases, or attournment—what! we know our terms of hunting, and the sea card.

*Bilbo.* And do you serve the good duke of Norfolk still?

*Host.* Still, and still, and still, my soldier of Saint Quintin's. Come follow me, I have Charles's-wain below in a butt of sack, I will glisten like your crab-fish.

*Bilbo.* You have fine scholar-like terms: your Cooper's Dictionary is your only book to study in a cellar,<sup>9</sup> a man shall find very strange words in it. Come, my host, let's serve the good duke of Norfolk.

*Host.* And still, and still, and still, my boy, I'll serve the good duke of Norfolk.

[*Exeunt* Host and BILBO.]

*Enter* SIR ARTHUR CLARE, HARRY CLARE, and MILLISENT.

*Sir Ralph.* Good Sir Arthur Clare!

*Clare.* What gentleman is that? I know him not.

*Sir Rich.* 'Tis Mr. Fabel, sir, a Cambridge scholar, My son's dear friend.

*Clare.* Sir, I entreat you know me.

*Fabel.* Command me, sir, I am affected to you For your Mouchensy's sake.

*Clare.* Alas! for him, I not respect whether he sink or swim!

A word in private, Sir Ralph Jerningham.

*Ray.* Methinks your father looketh strangely on me:

Say, love, why are you sad?

*Mill.* I am not, sweet; Passion is strong, when woe with woe doth meet.

*Clare.* Shall's in to breakfast? After we'll conclude,

The cause of this our coming: in and feed, And let that usher a more serious deed. [*Exit.*

*Mill.* Whilst you desire his grief, my heart shall bleed. [*Exit.*

*II. Clare.* Raymond Mouchensy, come, be frolic, friend;

This is the day thou hast expected long.

*Ray.* Pray God, dear Harry Clare, it prove so happy!

*II. Clare.* There's nought can alter it; be merry, lad.

*Fabel.* There's nought shall alter it; be lively, Raymond:

Stand any opposition 'gainst thy hope,

Art shall confront it with her largest scope. [*Exeunt.*

PETER FABEL, *solus.*

*Fabel.* Good old Mouchensy, is thy hap so ill, That for thy bounty, and thy royal parts, Thy kind alliance should be held in scorn; And after all these promises by Clare, Refuse to give his daughter to thy son, Only because thy revenues cannot reach To make her dowage of so rich a jointure As can the heir of wealthy Jerningham? And therefore is the false fox now in hand To strike a match betwixt her and the other; And the old gray-beards now are close together, Plotting it in the garden. Is't even so? Raymond Mouchensy, boy, have thou and I Thus long at Cambridge read the liberal arts, The metaphysics, magic, and those parts Of the most secret deep philosophy? Have I so many melancholy nights Watch'd on the top of Peter-house highest tower, And come we back unto our native home, For want of skill to lose the wench thou lov'st? We'll first hang Euvil in such rings of mist As never rose from any dampish fen; I'll make the brinéd sea to rise at Ware, And drown the marshes unto Stratford-bridge: I'll drive the deer from Waltham in their walks, And scatter them, like sheep, in every field. We may perhaps be cross'd; but if we be, He shall cross the devil that but crosses me.

*Enter* RAYMOND and Young JERNINGHAM.

But here comes Raymond, discousolate and sad; And here's the gallant that must have the wench.

*Jer.* I pry'thee, Raymond, leave these solemn dumps,

Revive thy spirits; thou that before hast been More watchful than the day-proclaiming cock, As sportive as a kid, as frank and merry As mirth herself.

If aught in me may thy content procure,  
It is thine own, thou may'st thyself assure.

*Ray.* Ha! Jerningham, if any but thyself  
Had spoke that word, it would have come as cold  
As the bleak northern winds upon the face  
Of winter.

From thee, they have some power upon my blood;  
Yet being from thee, had but that hollow sound  
Come from the lips of any living man,  
It might have won the credit of mine ear;  
From thee it cannot.

*Jer.* If I understand thee, I am a villain:  
What! dost thou speak in parables to thy friend?

*Enter HARRY CLARE.*

Come, boy, and make me this same groaning love,  
Troubled with stitches and the cough o'th lungs,  
That wept his eyes out when he was a child,  
And ever since hath shot at hoodman-blind:  
Make her leap, caper, jerk, and laugh, and sing,  
And play me horse tricks.

Make Cupid wanton as his mother's dove;  
But in this sort, boy, I would have thee love.

*Ebel.* Why, how now, madcap? what, my lusty  
Frank,

So near a wife, and will not tell your friend?  
But you will to this gear in hugger-mugger:<sup>10</sup>  
Art thou turn'd miser, rascal, in thy loves?

*Jer.* Who I? z'blood, what should all you see  
in me, that I should look like a married man? ha!  
am I bald? are my legs too little for my hose? if  
I feel any thing in my forehead, I am a villain.  
Do I wear a night-cap? do I bend in the hams?  
What dost thou see in me, that I should be to-  
wards marriage? ha?

*H. Clare.* What, thou married? let me look upon  
thee; rogue, who has given this out of thee? how  
can'st thou into this ill name? what company  
hast thou been in, rascal?

*Ebel.* You are the man, sir, must have Millisent,  
The match is making in the gardeu now;  
Her jointure is agreed on, and the old men,  
Your fathers, mean to launch their busy bags;<sup>11</sup>  
But in the mean time to thrust Mouchensey off.  
For colour of this new-intended match,  
Fair Millisent to Cheston must be sent,  
To take the approbation for a Nun,  
Ne'er look upon me, lad, the match is done.

*Jer.* Raymond Mouchensey, now I touch thy  
grief

With the true feeling of a zealous friend.  
And as for fair and beauteous Millisent,  
With my vain breath I will not seek to slubber<sup>12</sup>

Her angel-like perfections: but thou know'st  
That Essex hath the saint that I adore:  
Where e'er didst meet me, that we two were jovial,  
But like a wag thou hast not laugh'd at me,  
And with regardless jesting mock'd my love?  
How many a sad and weary summer's night,  
My sighs have drunk the dew from off the earth,  
And I have taught the nightingale to wake,  
And from the meadows sprung the early lark  
An hour before she should have list to sing:  
I have loaded the poor minutes with my moans,  
That I have made the heavy slow-pac'd hours  
To hang like heavy clogs upon the day.  
But, dear Mouchensey, had not my affection  
Seiz'd on the beauty of another dame,  
Before I'd wrong the chase, and leave the love  
Of one so worthy, and so true a friend,  
I will abjure both beauty and her sight,  
And will in love become a counterfeit.

*Moun.* Dear Jerningham, thou hast begot my  
life,  
And from the mouth of hell, where now I sate,  
I feel my spirit rebound against the stars,  
Thou hast conquer'd me, dear friend, in my free  
soul,

There time, nor death, can by their power controul.

*Ebel.* Frank Jerningham, thou art a gallant  
boy:

And were he not my pupil, I would say,  
He were as fine a metal'd gentleman,  
Of as free spirit, and of as fine a temper,  
As is in England; and he is a man  
That very richly may deserve thy love.  
But, noble Clare, this while of our discourse,  
What may Mouchensey's honour to thyself  
Exact upon the measure of thy grace?

*H. Clare.* Raymond Mouchensey, I would have  
thee know,

He does not breathe this air, whose love I cherish,  
And whose soul I love more than Mouchensey's:  
Nor ever in my life did see the man  
Whom, for his wit and many virtuous parts,  
I think more worthy of my sister's love.  
But since the matter grows unto this pass,  
I must not seem to cross my father's will;  
But when thou list to visit her by night,  
My horse is saddled, and the stable door  
Stands ready for thee: use them at thy pleasure.  
In honest marriage wed her frankly, boy,  
And if thou gett'st her, lad, God give thee joy.

*Moun.* Then, care away! let fate my fall pre-  
tend,

Back'd with the favours of so true a friend.

*Fabel.* Let us alone, to bustle for the set;  
For age and craft with wit and art have met.  
I'll make my spirits to dance such nightly jigs  
Along the way 'twixt this and Tot'nam Cross,  
The carriers' jades shall cast their heavy packs,  
And the strong hedges scarce shall keep them in:  
The milk-maids' cuts<sup>13</sup> shall turn the wenches off,  
And lay their dossers<sup>11</sup> tumbling in the dust:  
The frank and merry London 'prentices,  
That come for cream and lusty country cheer,  
Shall lose their way; and scrambling in the ditches  
All night, shall whoop and hollow, cry and call,  
Yet none to other find the way at all.

*Moun.* Pursue the project scholar, what we can  
do  
To help endeavour, join our lives thereto. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*The House of Banks, the Miller, at Waltham.*

*Enter BANKS, SIR JOHN, and SMUG.*

*Banks.* Take me with you, good Sir John<sup>15</sup>: a plague on thee, Smug, and thou touchest liquor thou art foundered straight—What! are your brains always water-mills? must they ever run round?

*Smug.* Banks, your ale is as a Philistine fox;— nouns! there's fire i' th' tail on't;—you are a rogue to charge us with mugs i' th' rearward;—a plague of this wind, O, it tickles our catastrophe.

*Sir John.* Neighbour Banks of Waltham, and Goodman Smug, the honest smith of Edmonton, as I dwell betwixt you both, at Enfield, I know the taste of both your ale-houses; they are good both, smart both.—Hem, grass and hay,—we are all mortal,—let's live 'till we die, and be merry, and there's an end.

*Banks.* Well said, sir John, you are of the same humour still; and doth the water run the same way still, boy?

*Smug.* Vulcan was a rogue to him;—Sir John, lock, lock, lock fast, sir John;—So, sir John, I'll one of these years, when it shall please the goddesses and the destinies, be drunk in your company; that's all now, and God send us health.—Shall I swear I love you?

*Sir John.* No oaths, no oaths, good neighbour Smug,  
We'll wet our lips together, and hug;  
Carouse in private, and elevate the heart, and the liver, and the lights, and the lights; mark you me, within us for—hem—grass and hay,—we are all mortal,—let's live till we die, and be merry, and there's an end.

*Banks.* But to our former motion about stealing some venison; whither go we?

*Sir John.* Into the forest, neighbour Banks; into Brian's walk, the mad-keeper.

*Smug.* Blood! I'll tickle your keeper.

*Banks.* U'faith, thou art always drunk, when we have need of thee.

*Smug.* Need of me! heart, you shall have need of me always, while there is iron in an anvil.

*Banks.* Mr. Parson, may the Smith go (think you) being in this taking?

*Smug.* Go! I'll go, in spite of all the bells in Waltham.

*Sir John.* The question is, good neighbour Banks—let me see, the moon shines to night,—there's not a narrow bridge betwixt this and the forest,—his brain may be settled ere night,—he may go, he may go, neighbour Banks. Now we want none but the company of mine host Blague, of the George at Waltham: if he were here, our consort were full. Look where comes my good host, the duke of Norfolk's man! and how? and how? A hem—grass and hay—we are not yet mortal; let us live till we die, and be merry, and there's an end.

*Enter Host.*

*Host.* Ha! my Castilian dialogues; and art thou in breath still, boy? Miller, doth the match hold? Smith, I see by thy eyes thou hast been reading a little Geneva print:<sup>16</sup> but wend we merrily to the forest, to steal some of the king's deer? I'll meet you, at the time appointed. Away, I have knights and colonels at my house, and must tend the Hungarians.<sup>17</sup> If we be scared in the forest, we'll meet in the church-porch at Enfield: is't correspondent?

*Banks.* 'Tis well; but how if any of us should be taken?

*Smug.* He shall have ransom by my sword.

*Host.* Tush, the knaves keepers are my bona socias, and my pensioners—Nine o'clock—Be valiant, my little Gognagogs;—I'll fence with all the justices in Hertfordshire—I'll have a buck till I die; I'll slay a doe while I live—Hold your bow strait and steady; I serve the good duke of Norfolk.

*Smug.* O rare! who, ho, ho, boy.

*Sir John.* Peace, neighbour Smug! You see this boor, a boor of the country, an illiterate boor, and yet the citizen of good-fellows. Come, let's provide: a hem—grass and hay,—we are not yet all mortal; we'll live till we die, and be merry, and there's an end: come, Smug.

*Smug.* Good night, Waltham—who, ho, ho, boy.

[*Exeunt.*]



SCENE IV.— *A Room in the George Inn.*

*Enter the Knights and Gentlemen from Breakfast again.*

*O. Moun.* Nor I for thee, Clare, not of this :  
What! hast thou fed me all this while with shalls?  
And com'st to tell me now, thou lik'st it not?

*Clare.* I do not hold thy offer competent :  
Nor do I like the assurance of thy land,  
The title is so brangled with thy debts.<sup>18</sup>

*O. Moun.* Too good for thee: and, knight, thou  
know'st it well,

I fawn'd not on thee for thy goods, not I,  
'Twas thine own motion; that thy wife doth know.

*L. Clare.* Husband, it was so; he lies not in that.

*Clare.* Hold thy chat, quean.

*O. Moun.* To which I hearkened willingly, and  
the rather,

Because I was persuaded it proceeded  
From love thou bor'st to me and to my boy;  
And gav'st him free access unto thy house,  
Where he hath not behav'd him to thy child  
But as befits a gentleman to do:  
Nor is my poor distress'd state so low  
That I'll shut up my doors, I warrant thee.

*Clare.* Let it suffice, Mounchensey, I mislike it;  
Nor think thy son a match fit for my child.

*O. Moun.* I tell thee, Clare, his blood is good  
and clear

As the best drop that panteth in thy veins:  
But for this maid, thy fair and virtuous child,  
She is no more disparag'd by thy baseness,  
Than the most orient and the precious jewel,  
Which still retains his lustre and his beauty,  
Although a slave were owner of the same.

*Clare.* She is the last is left me to bestow;  
And her I mean to dedicate to God.

*O. Moun.* You do, sir?

*Clare.* Sir, sir, I do; she is mine own.

*O. Moun.* And pity she is so:

Damnation dog thee and thy wretched pelf. [*Aside.*]

*Clare.* Not thou, Mounchensey, shalt bestow my  
child.

*O. Moun.* Neither shouldst thou bestow her  
where thou meanest.

*Clare.* What wilt thou do?

*O. Moun.* No matter, let that be;  
I will do that, perhaps, shall anger thee:

Thou hast wrong'd my love, and, by God's bless'd  
angel,

Thou shalt well know it.

*Clare.* Tut, brave not me.

*O. Moun.* Brave thee, base churl! were't not for  
manhood sake—

I say no more, but that there be some by  
Whose blood is hotter than ours is,  
Which, being stirr'd might makes us both repent  
This foolish meeting. But Harry Clare,  
Although thy father hath abus'd my friendship,  
Yet I love thee, I do, my noble boy,  
I do, i'faith.

*L. Clare.* Ay, do, do, fill all the world with talk  
of us, man; man, I never look'd for better at your  
hands.

*Ebel.* I hop'd your great experience, and your  
years,

Would have prov'd patience rather to your soul,  
Than with this frantic and untamed passion  
To whet their skeens;<sup>19</sup> and, but for that  
I hope their friendships are too well confirm'd,  
And their minds tempered with more kindly heat,  
Than for their forward parent's frowardness,  
That they should break forth into public brawl.  
Howe'er the rough hand of the untoward world  
Hath moulded your proceedings in this matter,  
Yet I am sure the first intent was love:  
Then since the first spring was so sweet and warm,  
Let it die gently, ne'er kill it with a scorn.

*Ray.* O thou base world! how leprous is that  
soul

That is once lim'd in that polluted mud!  
O sir Arthur! you have startled his free active  
spirit

With a too sharp spur for his mind to bear.  
Have patience, sir; the remedy to woe,  
Is, to leave that of force we must forego.

*Mill.* And I must take a twelvemonth's appro-  
bation,

That in the meantime this sole and private life,  
At the year's end may fashion me a wife.

But, sweet Mounchensey, ere this year be done,  
Thou'st be a friar, if that I be a nun.

And, father, ere young Jerningham's I'll be,  
I will turn mad, to spite both him and thee. [*Aside.*]

*Clare.* Wife, come to horse; and, housewife,  
make you ready:

For if I live, I swear by this good light,  
I'll see you lodg'd in Cheston-house to-night.

[*Exeunt.*]

*O. Moun.* Raymond, away, thou see'st how mat-  
ters fall.

Churl, hell consume thee, and thy pelf and all!

[*Exit.*]

*Ebel.* Now, Mr. Clare, you see how matters  
fadge;<sup>20</sup>

Your Millisent must needs be made a nun.  
 Well, sir, we are the men must ply the match :  
 Hold you your peace, and be a looker-on :  
 And send her unto Cheston, where he will,  
 I'll send me fellows of a handful high  
 Into the cloisters where the nuns frequent,  
 Shall make them skip like does about the dale ;  
 And make the lady prioress of the house  
 To play at leap-frog naked in their smocks,  
 Until the merry wenches at their mass  
 Cry teehee, weehce ;  
 And tickling these mad lasses in their flanks,  
 Shall sprawl and squeak, and pinch their fellow  
 nuns.  
 Be lively, boys, before the wench we lose,  
 I'll make the abbess wear the canon's hose. [*Exeunt.*]

*Re-enter* HARRY CLARE, FRANK JERNINGHAM,  
 PETER FABEL, and MILLISENT.

*H. Clare.* Spite now hath done her worst ; sister,  
 be patient.

*Jer.* Forewarn'd poor Raymond's company ! O  
 heaven !

When the composure of weak frailty meet  
 Upon this mart of dirt, O then weak love  
 Must in her own unhappiness be silent,  
 And wink on all deformities.

*Mill.* 'Tis well :

Where's Raymond, brother ? Where's my dear  
 Mouchensey ?

Would we might weep together, and then part,  
 Our sighing parley would much ease my heart.

*Fabel.* Sweet beauty, fold your sorrows in the  
 thought

Of future reconciliation : let your tears  
 Show you a woman, but be no farther spent  
 Than from the eyes : for sweet experience says,  
 That love is firm that's flatter'd with delays.

*Mill.* Alas, sir, think you I shall e'er be his ?

*Fabel.* As sure as parting smiles on future bliss.  
 Yond comes my friend ; see, he hath doated  
 So long upon your beauty, that your want  
 Will with a pale retirement waste his blood :  
 For in true love music doth sweetly dwell ;  
 Sever'd, these less worlds bear within them hell.

*Enter* MOUCHENSEY.

*Moun.* Harry and Frank, you are enjoined to  
 wean

Your friendship from me, we must part ; the breath  
 Of all advis'd corruption ; pardon me,  
 Faith, I must say so ; you may think I love you,  
 I breathe not rougher spite do sever us ;

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We'll meet by stealth, sweet friend, by stealth you  
 twain ;

Kisses are sweetest got by struggling pain.

*Jer.* Our friendship dies not, Raymond.

*Moun.* Pardon me :

I am busied ; I have lost my faculties,  
 And buried them in Millisent's clear eyes.

*Mill.* Alas ! sweet love, what shall become of  
 me ?

I must to Cheston to the nunnery,  
 I shall ne'er see thee more.

*Moun.* How, sweet !

I'll be thy votary, we'll often meet :  
 This kiss divides us, and breathes soft adieu—  
 This be a double charm to keep both true.

*Fabel.* Have done, your fathers may chance spy  
 your parting.

Refuse not you by any means, good sweetness,  
 To go into the nunnery, for from hence  
 Must we beget your loves sweet happiness :  
 You shall not stay there long, your harder bed  
 Shall be more soft, when nun and maid are dead.

*Enter* BILBO.

*Moun.* Now, sirrah, what's the matter ?

*Bilbo.* Marry, you must to horse presently ; that  
 villanous old gouty churl, sir Arthur Clare, longs  
 till he be at the nunnery.

*H. Clare.* How, sir ?

*Bilbo.* O, I cry you mercy, he is your father, sir,  
 indeed ; but I am sure, that there's less affinity  
 betwixt your two natures, than there is between  
 a broker and a cutpurse.

*Moun.* Bring me my gelding, sirrah.

*Bilbo.* Well, nothing grieves me, but for the  
 poor wench ; she must now cry valed to lobster  
 pies, artichokes, and all such meats of mortality.  
 Poor gentlewoman ! the sign must not be in Virgo  
 any longer with her, and that me grieves : farewell.

Poor Millisent

Must pray and repent ;

O fatal wonder !

She'll now be no fatter,

Love must not come at her,

Yet she shall be kept under. [*Exit.*]

*Jer.* Farewell dear Raymond.

*H. Clare.* Friend, adieu.

*Mill.* Dear sweet,

No joy enjoys my heart till we next meet. [*Exeunt.*]

*Fabel.* Well, Raymond, now the tide of discon-  
 tent

Beats in thy face ; but ere't be long, the wind  
 Shall turn the flood. We must to Waltham-abbey,

And as fair Millisent in Cheston lives  
A most unwilling nun, so thou shalt there  
Become a beardless novice; to what end,  
Let time and future accidents declare:  
Taste thou my sleights, thy love I'll only share.

*Moun.* Turn friar? Come, my good counsellor,  
let's go,  
Yet that disguise will hardly shroud my woe.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—*A Room in Cheston (i. e. Cheshunt)*  
*Priory.*

*Enter the PRIORRESS OF CHESTON, with a Nun or two, SIR ARTHUR CLARE, SIR RALPH JERNINGHAM, HENRY and FRANK, the Lady and BILBO, with MILLISENT.*

*L. Clare.* Madam,  
The love unto this holy sisterhood,  
And our confirm'd opinion of your zeal,  
Hath truly won us to bestow our child  
Rather on this than any neighbouring cell.

*Pri.* Jesus' daughter, Mary's child,  
Holy matron, woman mild,  
For thee a mass shall still be said,  
Every sister drop a bead;  
And those again succeeding them,  
For you shall sing a *Requiem*.

*Frank.* The wench is gone, Harry, she is no more  
a woman of this world—Mark her well, she looks  
like a nun already: what think'st on her?

*H. Clare.* By my faith, her face comes handsomely  
to't.

But peace, let's hear the rest.

*Clare.* Madam, for a twelvemonth's approba-  
tion,

We mean to make this trial of our child.  
Your care, and our dear blessing in mean time,  
We pray may prosper this intended work.

*Pri.* May your happy soul be blithe,  
That so truly pay your tithes:  
He that many children gave,  
'Tis fit that he one child should have.  
Then, fair virgin, hear my spell,  
For I must your duty tell.

*Mill.* Good men and true, stand together,  
And hear your charge.

*Pri.* First, a moruing take your book,  
The glass wherein yourself must look;  
Your young thoughts, so proud and jolly,  
Must be turn'd to motions holy;  
For your busk attires, and toys,  
Have your thoughts on heavenly joys;

And for all your follies past,  
You must do penance, pray, and fast.

*Bilbo.* Let her take heed of fasting; and if ever  
she hurt herself with praying, I'll ne'er trust  
beast.

*Mill.* This goes hard, by'r lady. [*Aside.*]

*Pri.* You shall ring the sacring bell,<sup>21</sup>  
Keep your hours and tell your knell,  
Rise at midnight to your matins,  
Read your psalter, sing your latins;  
And when your blood shall kindle pleasure,  
Scourge yourself in plenteous measure.

*Mill.* Worse and worse, by St. Mary. [*Aside.*]

*Frank.* Sirrah, Hal, how does she hold her coun-  
tenance?—well, go thy ways, if ever thou prove a  
nun, I'll build an abbey.

*H. Clare.* She may be a nun; but if ever she  
prove an anchoress, I'll dig her grave with my  
nails.

*Frank.* To her again, mother.

*H. Clare.* Hold thine own, wench.

*Pri.* You must read the morning mass  
You must creep unto the cross,<sup>22</sup>  
Put cold ashes on your head,  
Have a hair-cloth for your bed.

*Bilbo.* She had rather have a man in her bed.

*Pri.* Bind your beads, and tell your needs,  
Your holy aves and your creeds:  
Holy maid, this must be done,  
If you mean to live a nun.

*Mill.* The holy maid will be no nun. [*Aside.*]

*Clare.* Madam, we have some business of im-  
port,  
And must be gone:

Will't please you take my wife into your closet,  
Who farther will acquaint you with my mind:  
And so, good madam, for this time adieu.

[*Exeunt Women, and CLARE.*]

*Sir R.* Well now, Frank Jerningham, how sayest  
thou?

To be brief.

What wilt thou say for all this, if we two,  
Her father and myself, can bring about,  
That we convert this nun to be a wife,  
And thou the husband to this pretty nun?  
How then, my lad? ha, Frank; it may be done.

*H. Clare.* Ay, now it works.

*Frank.* O God, sir! you amaze me at your  
speech,<sup>23</sup>

Think with yourself, sir, what a thing it were  
To cause a recluse to remove her vow  
A maiméd, contrite, and repentant soul,  
Ever mortified with fasting and with prayer,

Whose thoughts, even as her eyes, are fix'd on  
heaven ;

To draw a virgin thus devout with zeal,  
Back to the world ; O impious deed !  
Nor by the canon law can it be done,  
Without a dispensation from the church :  
Besides, she is so prone unto this life,  
As she 'll even shriek to hear a husband nam'd.

*Bilbo.* Ay, a poor innocent she !—well, here 's  
no knavery ;

He flouts the old fools to their teeth. [*Aside.*]

*Sir R.* Boy, I am glad to hear  
Theu mak'st such scruple of that conscience  
And in a man so young as is yourself,  
I promise you 'tis very seldom seen.  
But Frank, this is a trick, a mere device,  
A sleight plotted betwixt her father and myself,  
To thrust Mouchensey's nose beside the cushion ;  
That being thus debarr'd of all access,  
Time yet may work him from her thoughts,  
And give thee ample scope to thy desires.

*Bilbo.* A plague on you both for a couple of  
Jews. [*Aside.*]

*II. Clare.* How now, Frank, what say you to that ?

*Frank.* Let me alone, I warrant thee.  
[*To II. CLARE.*]

Sir, assured that this motion doth proceed  
From your most kind and fatherly affection,  
I do dispose my liking to your pleasure :  
But for it is a matter of such moment  
As holy marriage, I must crave thus much,  
To have some conference with my ghostly father,  
Friar Hildersham, here by, at Waltham abbey  
To be absolv'd of things, that it is fit  
None only but my confessor should know.

*Sir R.* With all my heart, he is a reverend man :  
And to-morrow morning we will meet all at the  
abbey,

Where, by the opinion of that reverend man,  
We will proceed ; I like it passing well.  
Till then we part, boy ; ay, think of it, farewell :  
A parent's care no mortal tongue can tell. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI.—*Before the Gate of the Priory.*

*Enter SIR ARTHUR CLARE, and RAYMOND MOUN-  
CHENSEY, like a Friar.*

*Clare.* Holy young novice, I have told you now  
My full intent, and do refer the rest  
To your professed secrecy and care :  
And see,  
Our serious speech hath stolen upon the way,  
That we are come unto the abbey gate.

Because I know Mouchensey is a fox,  
That craftily doth overlook my doings,  
I 'll not be seen, not I ; tush, I have done,  
I had a daughter, but she 's now a nun :  
Farewell, dear son, farewell. [*Exit.*]

*Moun.* Fare you well—Ay, you have done :  
Your daughter, sir, shall not be long a nun.  
O my rare tutor ! never mortal brain  
Plotted out such a plot of policy ;  
And my dear bosom is so great with laughter,  
Begot by his simplicity and error,  
My soul is fall'n in labour with her joy.  
O my friends, Frank Jerniugham, and Clare !  
Did you but know but how this jest takes fire,  
That good sir Arthur, thinking me a novice,  
Hath even pour'd himself into my bosom,  
O you would vent your spleens with tickling mirth.  
But, Raymond, peace, and have an eye about,  
For fear perhaps some of the nuns look out.

Peace and charity within,  
Never touch'd with deadly sin ;  
I cast holy water pure  
On this wall, and on this door,  
That from evil shall defend,  
And keep you from the ugly fiend :  
Evil sprite, by night nor day,  
Shall approach, or come this way ;  
Elf nor fairy, by this grace,  
Day nor night shall haunt this place.

Holy maidens— [*Knocks.*]  
[*Answer within.*] Who 's that which knocks ? ha,  
who 's there ?

*Moun.* Gentle nun, here is a friar.

*Enter Nun.*

*Nun.* A friar without ? now Christ us save :  
Holy man, what would'st thou have ?

*Moun.* Holy maid, I hither come  
From friar and father Hildersham,  
By the favour and the grace  
Of the Prioress of this place,  
Amongst you all to visit one  
That 's come for approbation ;  
Before she was as now you are,  
The daughter of sir Arthur Clare ;  
But since she now became a nun,  
Call'd Millisent of Edmonton.<sup>24</sup>

*Nun.* Holy man, repose you there,  
This news I 'll to our abbess bear,  
To tell what a man is sent,  
And your message, and intent.

*Moun.* Benedicite.

*Nun.* Benedicite. [*Exit.*]

*Moun.* Do, my good plump wench; if all fall right,  
I'll make your sisterhood one less by night.  
Now, happy fortune, speed this merry drift,  
I like a wench comes roundly to her shrift.

*Enter LADY CLARE and MILLISENT.*

*L. Clare.* Have friars recourse then to the house of nuns?

*Mill.* Madam, it is the order of this place,  
When any virgin comes for approbation,  
(Lest that for fear, or such sinister practice,  
She should be fore'd to undergo this veil,  
Which should proceed from conscience and devotion)  
A visitor is sent from Waltham house,  
To take the true confession of the maid.

*L. Clare.* Is that the order? I commend it well:  
You to your shrift, I'll back unto the cell. [*Exit.*]

*Moun.* Life of my soul! bright angel!

*Mill.* What means the friar?

*Moun.* O Millisent, 'tis I.

*Mill.* My heart misgives me; I should know that voice.

You? who are you? the holy virgin bless me!  
Tell me your name: you shall ere you confess me.

*Moun.* Mouchensey, thy true friend.

*Mill.* My Raymond! my dear heart!  
Sweet life, give leave to my distracted soul  
To wake a little from this swoon of joy.  
By what means can'st thou to assume this shape?

*Moun.* By means of Peter Fabel, my kind tutor,  
Who in the habit of friar Hildersham,  
Frank Jerningham's old friend and confessor,  
Plotted by Frank, by Fabel, and myself,  
And so delivered to sir Arthur Clare,  
Who brought me here unto the abbey gate,  
To be his nun-made daughter's visitor.

*Mill.* You are all sweet traitors to my poor old father.

O my dear life, I was a dreamed to-night,  
That as I was praying in my psalter,  
There came a spirit unto me as I kneel'd,  
And by his strong persuasions tempted me  
To leave this nunnery: and methought  
He came in the most glorious angel shape,  
That mortal eye did ever look upon.  
Ha! thou art sure that spirit, for there's no form  
Is in mine eye so glorious as thine own.

*Moun.* O thou idolatress, that dost this worship  
To him whose likeness is but praise of thee!  
Thou bright unsetting star, which through this veil,  
For very envy, mak'st the sun look pale.

*Mill.* Well, visitor, lest that perhaps my mother

Should think the friar too strict in his decrees,  
I this confess to my sweet ghostly father;  
If chaste pure love be sin, I must confess,  
I have offended three years now with thee.

*Moun.* But do you yet repent you of the same?  
*Mill.* I'faith I cannot.

*Moun.* Nor will I absolve thee  
Of that sweet sin, though it be venial:  
Yet have the penance of a thousand kisses;  
And I enjoin you to this pilgrimage:—  
That in the evening you bestow yourself  
Here in the walk near to the willow ground,  
Where I'll be ready both with men and horse  
To wait your coming, and convey you hence  
Unto a lodge I have in Enfield Chase:  
No more reply if that you yield consent:  
I see more eyes upon our stay are bent.

*Mill.* Sweet life, farewell, 'tis done, let that suffice;

What my tongue fails, I send thee by mine eyes.  
[*Exit.*]

*Enter FABEL, HARRY CLARE, and JERNINGHAM.*

*Jer.* Now, visitor, how does this new-made nun?

*H. Clare.* Come, come, how does she, noble capuchin?

*Moun.* She may be poor in spirit, but for the flesh

'Tis fat and plump, boys. Ah, rogues, there is  
A company of girls would turn you all friars.

*Fabel.* But how, Mouchensey, how, lad, for the wench?

*Moun.* Zounds, lads (i'faith I thank my holy habit.)

I have confess'd her, and the lady prioress  
Hath given me ghostly counsel, with her blessing.  
And how say ye, boys,  
If I be chose the weekly visitor!

*H. Clare.* Blood! she'll have ne'er a nun unbag'd to sing mass then.

*Jer.* The abbot of Waltham will have as many children to put to nurse, as he has calves in the marsh.

*Moun.* Well, to be brief, the nun will soon at night turn Lippit; if I can but devise to quit her cleanly of the nunnery, she is mine own.

*Fabel.* But sirrah, Raymond, what news of Peter Fabel at the house?

*Moun.* Tush, he is the only man, a necromancer, and a conjuror, that works for young Mouchensey altogether; and if it be not for friar Benedic, that he can cross him by his learned skill, the wench is gone, Fabel will fetch her out by very magic.

*Fabel.* Stands the wind there, boy? keep them in that key,

The wench is ours before to-morrow day.

Well, Harry and Frank, as ye are gentlemen, stick to us close this once; you know your fathers. Have men and horse lie ready still at Cheston, to watch the coast be clear, to scout about, and have an eye unto Mouchensey's walks. Therefore you two may hover thereabouts, and no man will suspect you for the matter: be ready but to take her at our hands, leave us to scamble,<sup>25</sup> for her getting out.

*Jer.* Blood! if all Hertfordshire were at our heels, we'll carry her away in spite of them.

*II. Clare.* But whither, Raymond?

*Moun.* To Brian's upper lodge in Enfield Chase; he is mine honest friend, and a tall-keeper;<sup>26</sup> I'll send my man unto him presently, to acquaint him with your coming and intent.

*Fabel.* Be brief, and secret.

*Moun.* Soon at night, remember you bring your horses to the willow ground.

*Jer.* 'Tis done, no more.

*II. Clare.* We will not fail the hour, my life and fortune now lie in your power.

*Fabel.* About our business! Raymond, let's away, think of your hour, it draws well off the day.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VII.—Enfield Chase.

*Enter* BLAGUE, BANKS, SMUG, *and* SIR JOHN.

*Blague.* Come, ye Hungarian pilchers,<sup>27</sup> we are once more come under the Zona Torrida of the forest; let's be resolute; let's fly to and again; and the devil come, we'll put him to his interrogatories, and not budge a foot. What! foot, I'll put fire into you, ye shall all three serve the good duke of Norfolk.

*Smug.* Mine host, my bully, my precious consul, my noble Holofernes, I have been drunk in thy house twenty times and ten; all's one for that: I was last night in the third heaven, my brain was poor, it had yeast in't, but now I am a man of action; is't not so, lad?

*Banks.* Why, now thou hast two of the liberal sciences about thee, wit and reason, thou mayest serve the duke of Europe.

*Smug.* I will serve the duke of Christendom, and do him more credit in his cellar, than all the plate in his buttery; is't not so, lad?

*Sir John.* Mine host, and Smug, stand there: Banks, you and your horse keep together, but lie

close, show no tricks for fear of the keeper. If we be scar'd, we'll meet in the church-porch at Enfield.

*Smug.* Content, sir John.

*Banks.* Smug, dost not thou remember the tree thou fellest out of last night.

*Smug.* Tush, and't had been as high as an abbey, I should ne'er have hurt myself; I have fall'n into the river, coming home from Waltham, and 'scaped drowning.

*Sir John.* Come, sever, fear no spirits, we'll have a buck presently; we have watch'd later than this for a doe, nine host.

*Host.* Thou speakest as true as velvet.

*Sir John.* Why then come—grass and hay, &c.

[*Exeunt.*]

*Enter* HARRY CLARE, JERNINGHAM, *and* MILLISENT.

*II. Clare.* Frank Jerningham!

*Jer.* Speak, softly, rogue, how now?

*II. Clare.* 'Sfoot, we shall lose our way, it's so dark: whereabouts are we?

*Jer.* Why man, at Porter's gate, the way lies right: hark, the clock strikes at Enfield, what's the hour?

*II. Clare.* Ten, the bell says.

*Jer.* A lie's in's throat, it was but eight when we set out of Cheston; sir John and his sexton are at their ale to-night, the clock runs at random.

*II. Clare.* Nay, as sure as thou liv'st, the villainous vicar is abroad in the chase this dark night: the stone priest steals more venison than half the country.

*Jer.* Millisent, how dost thou?

*Mill.* Sir, very well.

I would to God we were at Brian's lodge.

*II. Clare.* We shall anon—nouns, hark! What means this noise?

*Jer.* Stay, I hear horsemen.

*II. Clare.* I hear footmen too.

*Jer.* Nay then I have it: we have been discovered, and we are followed by our father's men.

*Mill.* Brother, and friend, alas! what shall we do?

*II. Clare.* Sister, speak softly, or we are descry'd, they are hard upon us, whatso'er they be; shadow yourself behind this brake of fern, we'll get into the wood, and let them pass.

*Enter* SIR JOHN, BLAGUE, SMUG, *and* BANKS; *one after another.*

*Sir John.* Grass and hay, we are all mortal! the keeper's abroad, and there's an end.

*Banks.* Sir John!

*Sir John.* Neighbour Banks, what news?

*Banks.* Zounds, sir John, the keepers are abroad;  
I was hard by 'em.

*Sir John.* Grass and hay, where's mine host  
Blague?

*Blague.* Here, metropolitan; the Philistines are  
upon us, be silent: let us serve the good duke of  
Norfolk.—But where is Smug?

*Smug.* Here: a pox on you all, dogs; I have  
killed the greatest buck in Brian's walk:—Shift  
for yourselves, all the keepers are up; let's meet  
in Enfield church porch:—Away, we are all taken  
else. [Exit.

*Enter BRIAN, with his man RALPH and his Hound.*

*Brian.* Ralph, hear'st thou any stirring?

*Ralph.* I heard one speak here hard by in the  
bottom. Peace, master, speak low—nouns, if I  
did not hear a bow go off and the buck bray, I never  
heard deer in my life.

*Brian.* When went your fellows into their walks?

*Ralph.* An hour ago.

*Brian.* Life! is there stealers abroad, and we  
cannot hear of them?

Where the devil are my men to-night?

*Sirrah,* go up and wind toward Buckley's lodge:

I'll cast about the bottom with my hound,

And I will meet thee under Cony-oak.

*Ralph.* I will, sir. [Exit.

*Brian.* How now! by the mass, my hound stays  
upon something; hark, hark, Bowman, hark, bark  
there.

*Mill.* Brother, Frank Jerningham, brother Clare!

*Brian.* Peace: that's a woman's voice—Stand;  
who's there? Stand, or I'll shoot.

*Mill.* O Lord! hold your hands, I mean no harm,  
sir.

*Brian.* Speak, who are you?

*Mill.* I am a maid, sir—who? master Brian?

*Brian.* The very same: sure I should know her  
voice—Mistress Millisent!

*Mill.* Ay; it is I, sir.

*Brian.* God for his passion! what make you here  
alone? I look'd for you at my lodge an hour ago.  
What means your company to leave you thus? Who  
brought you hither?

*Mill.* My brother, sir, and master Jerningham;  
who, hearing folks about us in the chase, feared it  
had been sir Arthur my father, who had pursued  
us, and thus dispers'd ourselves till they were  
past us.

*Brian.* But where be they?

*Mill.* They be not far off, here about the grove.

*Enter HARRY CLARE and JERNINGHAM.*

*H. Clare.* Be not afraid, man; I hear Brian's  
tongue, that's certain.

*Jer.* Call softly for your sister.

*H. Clare.* Millisent!

*Mill.* Ay, brother, here.

*Brian.* Master Clare!

*H. Clare.* I told you it was Brian.

*Brian.* Who is that, Master Jerningham? You  
are a couple of hot-shots: does a man commit his  
wench to you, to put her to grass at this time of  
night?

*Jer.* We heard a noise about us in the chase,  
And fearing that our fathers had pursu'd us,  
Severed ourselves.

*H. Clare.* Brian, how hapdst thou on her?

*Brian.* Seeking for stealers that are abroad to-  
night,  
My hound stay'd on her, and so found her out.

*H. Clare.* They were these stealers that affrighted  
us;

I was hard upon them when they hors'd their deer,  
And I perceive they took me for a keeper.

*Brian.* Which way took they?

*Jer.* Towards Enfield.

*Brian.* A plague upon't, that's the damn'd priest,  
and Blague of the George, he that serves the good  
duke of Norfolk.

[A noise within.] Follow, follow, follow.

*H. Clare.* Peace; that's my father's voice.

*Brian.* Nouns, you suspected them, and now  
they are here indeed.

*Mill.* Alas! what shall we do?

*Brian.* If you go to the lodge, you are surely  
taken:

Strike down the wood to Enfield presently,  
And if Mouchensey come, I'll send him to you.

Let me alone to bustle with your fathers;

I warrant you that I will keep them play

Till you have quit the chase; away, away.

Who's there?

*Enter the Knights.*

*Sir R.* In the king's name pursue the ravisher.

*Brian.* Stand, or I'll shoot.

*Clare.* Who's there?

*Brian.* I am the keeper, that do charge you  
stand;

You have stolen my deer.

*Clare.* We stolen thy deer? we do pursue a  
thief.

*Brian.* You are arrant thieves, and ye have stolen my deer.

*Clare.* We are knights; sir Arthur Clare, and sir Ralph Jerningham.

*Brian.* The more your shame, that knights should be such thieves.

*Clare.* Who, or what art thou?

*Brian.* My name is Brian, keeper of this walk.

*Clare.* O Brian, a villain!

Thou hast receiv'd my daughter to thy lodge.

*Brian.* You have stolen the best deer in my walk to-night: my deer.

*Clare.* My daughter—

Stop not my way.

*Brian.* What make you in my walk? you have stolen the best buck in my walk to-night.

*Clare.* My daughter—

*Brian.* My deer—

*Sir R.* Where is Mouchensey?

*Brian.* Where is my buck?

*Clare.* I will complain me of thee to the king.

*Brian.* I'll complain unto the king, you spoil his game: 'tis strange that men of your account and calling will offer it. I tell you true, sir Arthur and sir Ralph, that none but you have only spoil'd my game.

*Clare.* I charge you stop us not.

*Brian.* I charge you both get out of my ground. Is this a time for such as you, men of place, and of your gravity, to be abroad a thieving? 'tis a shame; and afore God if I had shot at you, I had served you well enough. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VIII.—*Before the Porch of Enfield Church.*

*Enter BANKS, the Miller, wet on his Legs.*

*Banks.* Foot, here's a dark night indeed: I think I have been in fifteen ditches between this and the forest—Soft, here's Enfield church: I am so wet with climbing over into an orchard, for to steal some filberts—Well, here I'll sit in the church-porch, and wait for the rest of my consorts.

*Enter Sexton.*

*Ser.* Here's a sky as black as Lucifer, God bless us. Here was goodman Theophilus buried, he was the best nut-cracker that ever dwelt in England—Well, 'tis nine o'clock, 'tis time to ring curfew. Lord bless us, what a white thing is that in the church-porch! O Lord, my legs are too weak for my body, my hair is too stiff for my night-cap, my heart fails; this is the ghost of Theophilus:

O Lord, it follows me, I cannot say my prayers and one would give me a thousand pound. Good spirit! I have bowled and drunk and followed the bounds with you a thousand times, though I have not the spirit now to deal with you—O Lord!

*Enter Priest.*

*Sir John.* Grass and hay! we are all mortal; who's there?

*Ser.* We are grass and hay indeed: I know you to be master parson, by your phrase.

*Sir John.* Sexton!

*Ser.* I, sir.

*Sir John.* For mortality's sake, what's the matter?

*Ser.* O Lord, I am a man of another element; master Theophilus's ghost is in the church porch. There was an hundred cats, all fire, dancing even now, and they are clomb up to the top of the steeple: I'll not into the belfry for a world.

*Sir John.* O goodman Solomon, I have been about a deed of darkness to-night: O Lord! I saw fifteen spirits in the forest like white bulls; if I lie, I am an errant thief: mortality haunts us—grass and hay! the devil's at our heels, and let's hence to the parsonage. [*Exeunt.*

[*The Miller comes out very softly.*

*Miller.* What noise was that? 'tis the watch; sure that villanous unlucky rogue Smug is ta'en, upou my life, and then all our knavery comes out: I heard one cry, sure.

*Enter Host BLAGUE.*

*Host.* If I go steal any more venison, I am a paradox: foot, I can scarce bear the sin of my flesh in the day, 'tis so heavy: if I turn not honest, and serve the good duke of Norfolk as a true mareterraneum skinker<sup>28</sup> should do, let me never look higher than the element of a constable.

*Miller.* By the mass there are some watchmen; I hear them name master constable: I would my mill were an ennuh, and wanted her stones, so I were hence.

*Host.* Who's there?

*Miller.* 'Tis the constable, by this light: I'll steal hence, and if I can meet mine host Blague, I'll tell him how Smug is ta'en, and will him to look to himself. [*Exit.*

*Host.* What the devil is that white thing? this same is a church-yard, and I have heard that ghosts and villanous goblins have been seen here.

*Enter Sexton and Priest.*

*Sir John.* Grass and hay! oh that I could con-



jure! we saw a spirit here in the church-yard; and in the fallow field there's the devil with a man's body upon his back in a white sheet.

*Sex.* It may be a woman's body, sir John.

*Sir John.* If she be a woman, the sheets damn her.

Lord bless us, what a night of mortality is this!

*Host.* Priest!

*Sir John.* Mine host!

*Host.* Did you not see a spirit all in white cross you at the stile?

*Sex.* O no, mine host! but there sat one in the porch: I have not breath enough left to bless me from the devil.

*Host.* Who's that?

*Sir John.* The sexton, almost frighted out of his wits: Did you see Banks, or Smug?

*Host.* No, they are gone to Waltham, sure. I would fain hence; come, let's to my house; I'll ne'er serve the duke of Norfolk in this fashion again whilst I breathe. If the devil be among us, it's time to hoist sail, and cry roomer. Keep together; sexton, thou art secret. What! let's be comfortable one to another.

*Sir John.* We are all mortal, mine host.

*Host.* True; and I'll serve God in the night hereafter, afore the duke of Norfolk. [Exit.]

SCENE IX.—*A Room in a House opposite the George Inn.*

*Enter SIR ARTHUR CLARE, and SIR RALPH JER-  
NINGHAM, trussing their Points, as newly up.*

*Sir R.* Good-morrow, gentle knight;

A happy day after your short night's rest.

*Clare.* Ha, ha, sir Ralph, stirring so soon indeed?

By'r lady, sir, rest would have done right well:

Our riding late last night has made me drowsy.

Go to, go to, those days are gone with us.

*Sir R.* Sir Arthur, sir Arthur, care go with those days,

Let 'em even go together, let 'em go;

'Tis time, i'faith, that we were in our graves,

When children leave obedience to their parents

When there's no fear of God, no care, no duty.

Well, well, nay it shall not do, it shall not:

No, Mounchensey, thou'lt hear on't, thou shalt,

Thou shalt, i'faith;

I'll hang thy son, if there be law in England.

A man's child ravish'd from a nunnery!

This is rare! well, there's one gone for friar Hildersham.

*Clare.* Nay, gentle knight, do not vex thus, it will but hurt your heat; you cannot grieve more than I do, but to what end; but hark you, sir Ralph, I was about to say something; it makes no matter: but hark you, in your ear; the friar's a knave: but God forgive me, a man cannot tell neither: 'sfoot, I am so out of patience, I know not what to say.

*Sir R.* There's one went for the friar an hour ago. Comes he not yet? 'Sfoot, if I do find knavery under's cowl, I'll tickle him, I'll ferk him—Here, here, he's here, he's here. Good-morrow, friar; good morrow, gentle friar.

*Enter HILDERSHAM.*

*Clare.* Good-morrow, father Hildersham, good-morrow.

*Hild.* Good-morrow, reverend knights, unto you both.

*Clare.* Father, how now? You hear how matters go;

I am undone, my child is cast away;

You did your best, at least I think the best:

But we are all cross'd; flatly, all is dash'd.

*Hild.* Alas! good knights, how might the matter be?

Let me understand your grief, for charity.

*Clare.* Who does not understand my grief? Alas! alas!

And yet you do not: will the church permit

A nun, in approbation of her habit,

To be ravished?

*Hild.* A holy woman, Benedicite!

Now God forefend that any should presume

To touch the sister of a holy house.

*Clare.* Jesus deliver me!

*Sir R.* Why, Millisent, the daughter of this knight,

Is out of Cheston taken this last night.

*Hild.* Was that fair maiden late become a nun?

*Sir R.* Was she, quoth a? Knavery, knavery, knavery, knavery; I smell it, I smell it, i'faith; is the wind in that door? Is it even so? Dost thou ask me that now?

*Hild.* It is the first time that e'er I heard of it.

*Clare.* That's very strange.

*Sir R.* Why, tell me friar, tell me, thou art counted a holy man; do not play the hypocrite with me, (nor bear with me)<sup>29</sup> I cannot dissemble: did I aught but by thy own consent? by thy allowance? nay, farther, by thy warrant?

*Hild.* Why, reverend knight—

*Sir R.* Uareverend friar—

*Hild.* Nay, then give me leave, sir, to depart in quiet:

I had hop'd you had sent for me to some other end.

*Clare.* Nay, stay, good friar, if anything hath hap'd About this matter, in thy love to us, That thy strict order cannot justify, Admit it to be so, we will cover it; Take no care, man:

Disclaim not yet my counsel and advice,  
The wisest man that is may be o'er-reach'd.

*Hild.* Sir Arthur, by my order, and my faith,  
I know not what you mean.

*Sir R.* By your order, and by your faith? this is most strange of all: why tell me, friar, are not you confessor to my son Frank?

*Hild.* Yes, that I am.

*Sir R.* And did not this good knight here, and myself,  
Confess with you, being his ghostly father,  
To deal with him about th' unbanded marriage  
Betwixt him and that fair young Millisent?

*Hild.* I never heard of any match intended.

*Clare.* Did not we break our minds that very time,

That our device in making her a nun  
Was but a colour, and a very plot  
To put by young Mounchensy? Is't not true?

*Hild.* The more I strive to know what you should mean,  
The less I understand you.

*Sir R.* Did not you tell us still, how Peter Fabel  
At length would cross us, if we took not heed?

*Hild.* I have heard of one that is a great magician,  
But he's about the university.

*Sir R.* Did you not send your novice, Benedic,  
To persuade the girl to leave Mounchensy's love,  
To cross that Peter Fabel in his art,  
And to that purpose made him visitor?

*Hild.* I never sent my novice from my house,  
Nor have we made our visitation yet.

*Clare.* Never sent him! nay, did he not go?  
and did not I direct him to the house, and confer  
with him by the way? and did not he tell me what  
charge he had received from you, word by word, as  
I requested at your hands?

*Hild.* That you shall know; he came along  
with me,  
And stays without:—Come hither, Benedic.

*Enter* BENEDIC.

Young Benedic, were you e'er sent by me  
To Cheston nunnery for a visitor?

*Ben.* Never, sir, truly.

*Sir R.* Stranger than all the rest!

*Clare.* Did not I direct you to the house,  
Confer with you from Waltham abbey  
Unto Cheston wail?

*Ben.* I never saw you, sir, before this hour.

*Sir R.* The devil thou did'st not!—Ho, Cham-berlain!

*Enter* Chamberlain.

*Cham.* Anon, anon.

*Sir R.* Call mine host Blague hither.

*Cham.* I will send one over, sir, to see if he be up: I think he be scarce stirring yet.

*Sir R.* Why, knave, didst thou not tell me an hour ago mine host was up?

*Cham.* Ay, sir, my master's up.

*Sir R.* You knave, is he up, and is he not up? Dost thou mock me?

*Cham.* Ay, sir, my master is up; but I think master Blague indeed be not stirring.

*Sir R.* Why, who's thy master? Is not the master of the house thy master?

*Cham.* Yes, sir, but master Blague dwells over the way.

*Clare.* Is not this the George? Before Jove there's some villany in this.

*Cham.* Foot, our sign's remov'd; this is strange!

*Enter* BLAGUE, *trussing his Points.*

*Host.* Chamberlain, speak up to the new lodgings.  
Bid Nell look well to the bak'd meat.

How now, my old Jenerts bank, my horse,  
My castle;<sup>30</sup> lie in Waltham all night, and  
Not under the canopy of your host Blague's house?

*Clare.* Mine host, mine host, we lay all night at the George in Waltham; but whether the George be your fee-simple or no, 'tis a question: look upon your sign.

*Host.* Body of St. George, this is mine overthwart neighbour hath done this to seduce my blind customers. I'll tickle his catastrophe for this; if I do not indict him at the next assizes for burglary, let me die of the yellows,<sup>31</sup> for I see it is no boot in these days to serve the good duke of Norfolk: the villanous world is turn'd manger; one jade deceives another, and your hostler plays his part commonly for the fourth share. Have we comedies in hand, you whorson, villanous male London-letcher?

*Clare.* Mine host, we have had the moilingest night of it,<sup>32</sup> that ever we had in our lives.

*Host.* Is it certain?

*Clare.* We have been in the forest all night almost.

*Host.* Foot, how did I miss you? Heart! I was stealing of a buck there.

*Clare.* A plague on you; we were staid for you.

*Host.* Were you, my noble Romans? Why you shall share; the venison is a footing, *sine Cerere et Baccho friget Venus*; that is, there is a good breakfast provided for a marriage that is in my house this morning.

*Clare.* A marriage, mine host!

*Host.* A conjunction copulative; a gallant match between your daughter and Raymond Mouchensey, young *juventus*.

*Clare.* How?

*Host.* 'Tis firm; 'tis done.

We'll show you a precedent in the civil law for't.

*Sir R.* How! married?

*Host.* Leave tricks and admiration, there's a cleanly pair of sheets on the bed in the orchard-chamber, and they shall lie there—What? I'll do it, I serve the good duke of Norfolk.

*Clare.* Thou shalt repent this, Blague.

*Sir R.* If any law in England will make thee smart for this, expect it with all severity.

*Host.* I renounce your defiance; if you parley so roughly, I'll barricado my gates against you. Stand fair, bully; priest, come off from the rear-ward: what can you say now? 'Twas done in my house; I have shelter in the court for't. Do you see you bay window? I serve the good duke of Norfolk, and 'tis his lodging. Storm, I care not, serving the good duke of Norfolk: thou art an actor in this, and thou shalt carry fire in thy face eternally.

*Enter SMUG, MOUNCHENSEY, HARRY CLARE, and MILLISENT.*

*Smug.* Fire! nonns, there's no fire in England like your Trinidado sack. Is any man here humorous?<sup>33</sup> We stole the venison, and we'll justify it: say you now.

*Host.* In good sooth, Smug, there's more sack on the fire, Smug.

*Smug.* I do not take any exceptions against your sack; but if you'll lend me a pike staff, I'll cudgel them all hence, by this hand.

*Host.* I say thou shalt into the cellar.

*Smug.* 'Sfoot, mine host, shall's not grapple? Pray you, pray you; I could fight now for all the world like a cockatrice's egg. Shall's not serve the duke of Norfolk? [Exit.

*Host.* In, skipper, in.

*Clare.* Sirrah! hath young Mouchensey married your sister?

*II. Clare.* 'Tis certain, sir; here's the priest that coupled them, the parties joined, and the honest witness that cry'd amen.

*Moun.* Sir Arthur Clare, my new-created father, I beseech you hear me.

*Clare.* Sir, sir, you are a foolish boy, you have done that you cannot answer; I dare be bold to seize her from you, for she's a professed nun

*Mill.* With pardon, sir, that name is quite un-  
done;

This true-love knot cancels both maid and nun.

When first you told me I should act that part,

How cold and bloody it crept o'er my heart.

To Cheston with a smiling brow I went,

But yet, dear sir, it was to this intent,

That my sweet Raymond might find better means

To steal me thence. In brief, disguis'd he came,

Like novice to old father Hildersham;

His tutor, here, did act that cunning part,

And in our love hath join'd much wit to art.

*Clare.* Is it even so?

*Mill.* With pardon, therefore, we entreat your  
smiles?

Love thwarted, turns itself to thousand wiles.

*Clare.* Young master Jerningham, were you an  
actor

In your own love's abuse?

*Jern.*

My thoughts, good sir,

Did labour seriously unto this end,

To wrong myself, ere I'd abuse my friend.

*Host.* He speaks like a bachelor of music; all in numbers. Knights, if I had known you would have let this covey of partridges sit thus long upon their knees under my sign post, I would have spread my door with coverlids.

*Clare.* Well, sir, for this your sign was removed, was it?

*Host.* Faith, we followed the directions of the devil, master Peter Fabel; and Smng (Lord bless us) could never stand upright since.

*Clare.* You, sir, 'twas you was his minister that married them.

*Sir John.* Sir, to prove myself an honest man, being that I was last night in the forest stealing venison; now, sir, to have you stand my friend, if the matter should be called in question, I married your daughter to this worthy gentleman.

*Clare.* I may chance to requite you, and make your neck crack for't.

*Sir John.* If you do, I am as resolute as my neighbour vicar of Waltham-abbey—a hem—grass

and hay, we are all mortal; let's live till we be hang'd, mine host, and be merry, and there's an end.

*Enter FABEL.*

*Fabel.* Now, knights, I enter; now my part begins. To end this difference, know, at first I knew What you intended, ere your love took flight From old Mounchensy: you, sir Arthur Clare, Were minded to have married this sweet beauty To young Frank Jerningham: to cross this match I us'd some pretty sleights, but I protest, Such as but sat upon the skirts of art; No conjurations, nor such weighty spells As tie the soul to their performancy: These, for his love who once was my dear pupil, Have I effected. Now, methinks 'tis strange That you, being old in wisdom, should thus knit Your forehead on this match; since reason fails, No law can curb the lover's rash attempt; Years, in resisting this, are sadly spent: Smile then upon your daughter and kind son, And let our toil to future ages prove, The devil of Edmonton did good in love.

*Clare.* Well, 'tis in vain to cross the providence: Dear son, I take thee up into my heart; Rise, daughter, this is a kind father's part.

*Host.* Why, sir George, send for Spindle's noise presently:<sup>34</sup>

Ha! ere't be night I'll serve the good duke of Norfolk.

*Sir John.* Grass and hay, mine host, let's live till we die, and be merry, and there's an end.

*Clare.* What, is breakfast ready, mine host?

*Host.* 'Tis, my little Hebrew.

*Clare.* Sirrah! ride straight to Cheston nunnery, Fetch thence my lady; the house, I know, By this time misses their young votary. Come, knights, let's in.

*Bilbo.* I will to horse presently, sir.—A plague on my lady, I shall miss a good breakfast.—Smug, how chance you cut so plaguely behind, Smug?

*Smug.* Stand away, I'll founder you else.

*Bilbo.* Farewell, Smug, thou art in another element.

*Smug.* I will be, by and by; I will be Saint George again.

*Clare.* Take heed the fellow do not hurt himself.

*Sir R.* Did we not last night find two Saint Georges here?

*Fabel.* Yes, knights, this martialist was one of them.

*Clare.* Then thus conclude your night of merriment. [ *Exeunt omnes.* ]

# NOTES TO THE MERRY DEVIL OF EDMONTON.

<sup>1</sup> 'Tis *Peter Fabel*, a renowned scholar.

In *Weever's Funeral Monuments*, 1631, we have the following brief account of the hero of this drama:—"Here (i.e. at Edmonton) lieth interred under a seemely tome without inscription, the body of Peter Fabel (as the report goes) upon whom this fable was fathered, that he by his wittie devises beguiled the devill; belike he was some ingenious conceited gentleman, who did use some sleighty trickes for his owne disports. He lived and died in the raigne of Henry the Seventh, saith the booke of his merry pranks." Again, in the *Speculum Britannie*, Middlesex; Norden says: "There is a fable of one Peter Fabel that lyeth in the same church also, who is saide to have beguiled the devill by pollicie for money."

Fuller also, in his *Worthies*, thus alludes to the visionary and traditionary hero of this drama:—"I shall probably offend the gravity of some to insert, and certainly curiosity of others to omit him. Some make him a friar, others a lay gentleman, all a conceited (i.e. a witty, ingenious) person, who, with his merry devices, deceived the devil, who by grace may be resisted, not deceived by wit. If a grave bishop in his sermon, speaking of Brute's coming into this land, said it was but a *bruit*, I hope I may say without offence, that this Fabel was but a *fable*, supposed to live in the reign of King Henry the Sixth."

<sup>2</sup> *The gentlewomen in cloaks and safe-guards.*

*Safe-guards* were a kind of outer petticoat formerly worn by ladies who rode on horseback; they had their name from their being used to preserve the other clothes from mud.

<sup>3</sup> *A Tartarian*, i.e. a cant name for a thief.

<sup>4</sup> *Will that corruption, thine ostler, &c.*

To *will* him is to desire him to do any service.

<sup>5</sup> *Hay! a pox of these rushes.*

I have before mentioned, that previously to the introduction of carpets into England, it was customary to strew the floors of rooms with rushes. Numerous allusions to this practice may be found in our ancient dramatists; thus Shakspeare, in *Henry IV.*, Part I.:—

She bids you

Upon the wanton rushes lay you down.

Again, in Ben Jonson's *Cynthia's Revels*:—"All the ladies and gallants lye languishing upon the rushes, like so many pounded cattle i' the midst of harvest." And in Dekkar's *Bel-man of London*:—"the windowes were spread with hearbs, the chimney drest up with greene

loughes, and the floore strewed with bulrushes, as if some lasse were that morning to be married."

<sup>6</sup> *I have an excellent intellect to go steal some venison.*

That is, I have a good mind to do so.

<sup>7</sup> *Via—they come.*

A cant phrase, common in our old plays, expressive of exultation or defiance. Mr. Tollet supposes it to be taken from the Italian *via*, and to be used on occasions to quicken or pluck up courage. It is sometimes used in the sense of *away*.

<sup>8</sup> *Tityre, tu patulæ recubans sub tegmine fagi.*

The first line of Virgil's *Ecloques*.

<sup>9</sup> *Your Cooper's Dictionary is your only book to study in a cellar.*

A very poor quibble, alluding to the wine-casks made by a cooper, and also to Thomas Cooper's *Thesaurus lingue Latine*, printed in folio, 1584.

<sup>10</sup> *But will you to this gear in hugger-mugger.*

That is, in private, or with secrecy. Thus, in *Hamlet*, the King, speaking of the death of Polonius, says:—

———— We have done but greenly,  
In *hugger-mugger* to inter him.

Again, in *The Revenger's Tragedy*, 1609:—"He died like a politician, in *hugger-mugger*, made no man acquainted with it." The word is graceless enough, but, as Dr. Johnson remarks, "If phraseology is to be changed as words grow uncouth by disuse, or gross by vulgarity, the history of every language will be lost; we shall no longer have the words of any author; and, as these alterations will be often unskilfully made, we shall in time have very little of his meaning."

<sup>11</sup> *Mean to launch their busy bays.*

Thus the quartos; Mr. Dodsley reads *pursy*.

<sup>12</sup> *I will not seek to slubber  
Her angel-like perfections.*

That is, to describe them in an imperfect or neglectful manner; to obscure. This rather inelegant word occurs in Shakspeare's *Othello*.

<sup>13</sup> *The milk-maid's cuts.*

That is, horses. Anciently a horse was frequently called *cut*, but the word was also a vulgar term of abuse. Mr. Gilchrist remarks: "It appears probable to me that the opprobrious epithet, *cut*, arose from the practice of cutting the hair of convicted thieves, which was, anciently the custom in England, as appears from

the edicts of John de Northampton against adulterers, who thought, with Paulo Migante, that

' England ne'er would thrive,  
Till all the whores were burnt alive.' "

<sup>14</sup> *Dossers*, i.e. panniers.

<sup>15</sup> *Take me with you, good Sir John.*

That is, explain your meaning, let my apprehension follow your words. Thus, in the first part of *Henry the Fourth*, Falstaff, pretending not to understand the Prince, exclaims: "I would your grace would take me with you, whom means your grace?"

<sup>16</sup> *I see by thy eyes thou hast been reading a little Geneva print.*

A quibble, meaning that Smug's eyes were red from drinking gin, commonly called Geneva.

<sup>17</sup> *And must tend the Hungarians.*

By the *Hungarians*, the host, whose conversation is full of puns and quibbles, means his *hungry* guests.

<sup>18</sup> *The title is so braugled with thy debts.*

That is, choked up, lost, overgrown, and hidden by them.

<sup>19</sup> *To whet their skeins.*

*Skein* is the Irish word for a knife or dagger. So in *Soliman and Persida*, 1599:—

Against the light-foot Irish have I serv'd  
And in my skin bear tokens of the *skeins*.

<sup>20</sup> *You see how matters fadge.*

That is, *go, proceed*: though it is usually employed in the sense of *succeed*. Thus, in Haughton's *Englishmen for any Money*:—

But, sirra Ned, what sayes Mathea to thee?  
Wilt fadge? Wilt fadge? What, wilt it be a match?

<sup>21</sup> *The sacring bell.*

The little hell which is rung to give notice of the approach of the Host when it is carried in procession. It is also mentioned in *Henry the Eighth*.

<sup>22</sup> *You must creep unto the cross.*

A practice, I believe, still in use in religious houses attached to the Romish church. The penitents creep on their hands and knees to the foot of a crucifix, in token of their remorse for sin, and their humiliation of spirit. The custom is thus alluded to in Warner's *Albion's England*, 1602:—

We offer tapers, pay our tythes and vowes; we pilgrims goe,  
To every sainen, at every shrine we offerings doe bestow;  
We kiss the pix, we *creepe the cross*, our heades we over-runne,  
The convent hath a legacie, who so is left undone.

<sup>23</sup> *You amaze me at your speech.*

I am responsible for the last word of this line; the old copies read:—You amaze me at your ——. A word equivalent to that I have supplied, had evidently been dropped by the compositor.

<sup>24</sup> *Call'd Millisent of Edmonton.*

When a novice entered a religious house for the sake

of becoming a monk or nun, they gave up the name by which they had been known in the outward world, and some new cognomen was bestowed upon them.

<sup>25</sup> *Leave us to scamble.*

*Scamble* is an obsolete word, having the same meaning as *scramble*.

<sup>26</sup> *And a tall keeper.*

The word *tall*, here and in many other places in our ancient writers, is not designed to give an idea of height or bulk, but signifies stout, bold, or courageous.

<sup>27</sup> *Come, ye Hungarian pilchers.*

*Hungarian* was a cant term used to express contempt. It does not appear to have had any strictly defined meaning. Mr. Tollet observes, that "the Hungarians, when infidels, overran Germany and France, and would have invaded England if they could have come to it. See Stowe, in the year 939; and Holinshed's *Invasions of Ireland*, p. 56. Hence their name might become a proverb of baseness."

<sup>28</sup> *As a true mareterraneum skinker.*

A *skinker* is a tapster, or drawer. Mr. Steevens says, it is derived from the Dutch word *schenken*, which signifies, to fill a cup or glass. The word *mareterraneum* I cannot explain, but suspect it is a coinage of the bombastic host's, and not intended to possess any definite meaning.

<sup>29</sup> *Nor bear with me.*

Perhaps we should read,—"*Now bear with me.*"

<sup>30</sup> *How now, my old Jener's bank, my horse, my castle.*

An anonymous critic observes:—"I once suspected this passage of corruption, but have found reason to change my opinion. The merry host seems willing to assemble ideas expressive of *trust* and *confidence*. The old quartos begin the word *jener's bank* with a capital letter; and therefore, we may suppose *Jener's bank* to have been the shop of some banker, in whose possession money could be deposited with security. The Irish still say—as sure as *Burton's Bank*; and our own countrymen—as safe as the *Bank of England*. We might read, my *house*, instead of my *horse*, as the former agrees better with *castle*. The services of a *horse* are of all things the most uncertain."

<sup>31</sup> *Let me die of the yellows.*

A disease peculiar to horses. So in Shakspeare's *Taming of a Shrew*:—

His horse sped with spavins, and raied with the *yellows*.

<sup>32</sup> *We have had the mollingest night of it.*

That is, the most toilsome and dirty; to *moil*, is to labour wearily through the mire.

<sup>33</sup> *Is any man here humourous?*

That is, capricious, changeable. Thus, in the *Spanish Tragedy*, 1607:—

You know that women oft are *humourous*.

In *Cynthia's Revels*, by Ben Jonson, we have:—"A

NOTES TO THE MERRY DEVIL OF EDMONTON.

nymph of a most wandering and giddy disposition, *humourous* as the air," &c. Again, in the comedy of *The Silent Woman*:—"As proud as May, and as *humourous* as April." And in Dekkar's *Satiromastrix*, 1600:—

———— All our understanding faculties,  
Sit there in their high court of parliament,  
Enacting laws to sway this *humourous* world,  
This little isle of man.

By the Elizabethan writers the word *humour* was frequently used for peculiarities of manner. Whalley observes—"The word was new; the use, or rather abuse of it was excessive. It was applied upon all occasions with as little judgment as wit. Every coxcomb had it always in his mouth; and every particularity he affected was denominated by the name of *humour*. To redress this extravagance, Jonson is exact in describing the true meaning and proper application of the term." Jonson's description and definition will be both interesting and valuable to the readers of our ancient drama; I therefore subjoin it. It is contained in the induction to his comedy of *Every Man Out of his Humour*:—

Why humour, as 'tis ens (i.e. *as it is an existence*) we thus  
define it,  
To be a quality of air, or water,  
And in itself holds these two properties,  
Moisture and fluxure: as, for demonstration,  
Pour water on this floor, 'twill wet and run:  
Likewise the air, forced through a horn or trumpet,

Flows instantly away, and leaves behind  
A kind of dew; and hence we do conclude,  
That whatsoe'er hath fluxure and humidity,  
As wanting power to contain itself,  
Is humour. So in every human body,  
The cholera, melancholy, phlegm, and blood,  
By reason that they flow continually  
In some one part, and are not continent,  
Receive the name of humours. Now thus far  
It may, by metaphor, apply itself  
Unto the general disposition:  
As when some one peculiar quality  
Doth so possess a man, that it doth draw  
All his affects, his spirits, and his powers,  
In their confluxions, all to run one way,  
This may be truly said to be a humour.  
But that a rook, by wearing a pyed feather,  
The cable hatband, or the three-piled ruff,  
A yard of shoe-tye, or the Switzer's knot  
On his French garters, should affect a humour:  
O, it is more than most ridiculous.

<sup>34</sup> *Send for Spindle's noise presently.*

A band of music was formerly called a *noise* of music. Thus, in *Henry the Fourth* (Part II.):—"See if thou canst find out Sneak's noise; mistress Tearsheet would fain hear some music." And in Cartwright's comedy of *The Ordinary*, 1651:—

Hang shop-books; give us some wine! *hey for a noise  
Of fiddlers now.*

H. T.

## Fair Em: the Miller's Daughter of Manchester.

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THIS comedy does not appear to have been published before the year 1631, a period at which Shakspeare had lain in his grave for fifteen years; it then came from the press with the following title-page:—*A Pleasante Comedie of Faire Em, the Miller's Daughter of Manchester, with the Love of William the Conqueror. As it was sundry times publicquely acted in the Honourable Citie of London, by the right Honourable the Lord Strange his servants.* How it came to be regarded as a production of Shakspeare's it is useless now to inquire; the motives of those who attributed it to our poet, are buried for ever in the deep and impenetrable silence of the grave, but it would seem to have no external evidence in favour of its authenticity but the lettering of a bookbinder. Indeed what little evidence there exists seems to go against the supposition that it was Shakspeare's, for Edward Phillips in his *Theatrum Poetarum*, published in 1674, assigns to Robert Green the authorship of this little comedy. He (Phillips) says:—"Robert Green, one of the Pastoral Sonnet-makers of Qu. Elizabeth's time, contemporary with Dr. Lodge, with whom he was associated in the writing of several comedies, namely, *The Laws of Nature, Lady Alimony, Liberality and Prodigality*, and a masque called *Luminalia*; besides which, he wrote alone the comedies of *Friar Bacon*, and FAIR EMME." Even this assertion is rendered doubtful from the date upon the comedy; unless a previous edition to that of 1631 had been published, it may be conjectured that it belongs to an ago subsequent to that of Green and Shakspeare. Indeed, Mr. Knight observes that "the versification does not often exhibit that antiquated structure which we occasionally meet with in Green and his contemporaries."

The internal evidence supplied by the piece itself, is still more decidedly adverse to the traditional supposition that would claim our great Elizabethan poet as the author of it. Among the German critics, Tieck and Horn attribute it to Shakspeare, while Ulrici unequivocally rejects it. I cannot imagine its genuineness or otherwise is a matter at all dependent upon dates; any English reader, moderately conversant with Shakspeare, will at once perceive that *Fair Em* bears no resemblance whatever to any drama of his, either in style, tone, thought, or structure.

That it possesses interest is certain; its language is lively, and at times rises almost into poetry, but it contains little or no development of character. Fair Em, the heroine, is the most perfect in this respect; she is delineated with the intention of working out a great moral principle, that of vindicating the character of woman from the reproaches cast upon it by shallow or sensual men. She is a high-souled loving girl, earnest and generous in her misplaced passion from first to last. Her devoted affection to the frivolous and selfish Manvile, has something very winning in it, and her final rejection of him for his unworthiness, although she still loves but cannot esteem him, is an heroic instance of self-denial, and a just and striking assertion of the claims of her sex upon the honour and truthfulness of man.

Having pretended to be both blind and deaf, that she may get rid of the importunities of two troublesome lovers, she is readily forsaken also by Manvile, to whom she is really strongly attached. He does not even stay to inquire respecting her misfortune, or to offer her any consolation. With the first blast of winter, this swallow takes his flight and breathes his hollow vows of love in the ears of another maiden. Poor Em is bitterly wounded; the only man she loved, and whom she loved so tenderly, is false to her: and not false alone but frivolous and heartless. She lays aside her assumed infirmities



## FAIR EM; THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER OF MANCHESTER.

and blushes once again in all her beauty; then the fickle Manvile wishes to renew his suit, and approaches to embrace her for her faithfulness to him. Her answer is womanly and dignified:—

Lay off thy hands, disloyal as thou art!  
Nor shalt thou have possession of my love,  
That canst so finely shift thy matters off.  
Put case I had been blind and could not see,  
As oftentimes such visitations fall,  
That pleaseth God, which all things doth dispose:  
Should'st thou forsake me in regard of that?  
I tell thee, Manvile, had'st thou been blind,  
Or deaf, or dumb, or else what impediments  
Might befall to man, Em would have lov'd and kept,  
And honour'd thee: yea, begg'd if wealth had fail'd  
For thy relief.

This unworthy lover then entreats the forgiveness of his mistress; her reply at once exhibits her self-respect and the warm tender love she had borne him:—

I do forgive thee with my heart,  
And will forget thee too if case I can,  
But never speak to me, nor seem to know me.

Manvile then again proffers his hand to the other lady, but is deservedly rejected by her also. The Conqueror having been jilted in love, had made up his mind to scorn and abhor the sex; but he is touched by this noble conduct on the part of the ladies, and alters his opinion respecting them. He finds that they act from higher motives than he gave them credit for, and, receiving them into grace again, resolves to marry.

The rest of the characters in this little comedy call for no remark; there is a wonderful similitude in them all; any attempt at analytical criticism would be thrown away upon them; Trotter, the Miller's man, differs from the rest; he forms the broad comedy of the piece, and appears to have been introduced to satisfy the requirements of the theatre,—thrown in as a part for the comedian who usually performed the clown; but he is but a poor forward fool, not necessarily connected with the story, and might have been omitted without much loss.

This piece is not in any way to be regarded as an historical one; the William the Conqueror introduced into it is entirely a creature of the author's brain, bearing no resemblance to the stern talented butcher whose name he bears; nor has any attempt been made to adhere to the manners and customs of the remote period in which he lived. The circumstances and personages of the drama, are in reality (apart from the names of the characters) just as referable to the time of Queen Elizabeth, or King George the Third, as to that of William the Conqueror. It is certainly true that even Shakspeare, in *Cymbeline*, *Lear*, and *Hamlet*, errs in attributing the manners and customs of one country and period to that of another more remote, and thus brings the past nearer to us, or rather makes us behold it through a false medium; but he does not do so in the abrupt regardless way adopted by the author of the present drama. To attribute this little comedy to Shakspeare, is either to be deficient in ordinary discrimination, or else to act upon some principle of criticism of which I am ignorant. As an interesting relic of our ancient English drama, let it be preserved; indeed it possesses more than ordinary interest, from the fact that it has by some accident been attributed to our great master poet; but we must not sully his illustrious memory by proclaiming as his, a drama which is below in point of creative and poetic merit, even such productions as might be reasonably expected from his boyhood.

H. T.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR, *King of England, and Duke of Normandy.*

*Appears, Act I. sc. 1 ; sc. 3. Act II. sc. 1 ; sc. 3 ; sc. 5.  
[Act III. sc. 1 ; sc. 3 ; sc. 5.]*

DUKE DIROT, *Regent in England during William's absence.*

*Appears, Act I. sc. 1.*

EARL DEMARCH, *joined with Dirot in the Regency.*

*Appears, Act III. sc. 1 ; sc. 3 ; sc. 5.*

MANVILE, *a Norman Gentleman, attending on the Conqueror.*

*Appears, Act I. sc. 1 ; sc. 4 ; sc. 5. Act II. sc. 6. Act III. sc. 2 ; sc. 5.*

VALINOFORD, *a Noble attending on the Conqueror.*

*Appears, Act I. sc. 1 ; sc. 4. Act II. sc. 2 ; sc. 4 ; sc. 6.  
Act III. sc. 2 ; sc. 4 ; sc. 5.*

MOUNTNEY, *a Noble attending on the Conqueror.*

*Appears, Act I. sc. 1 ; sc. 4 ; sc. 5. Act II. sc. 4 ; sc. 6.  
Act III. sc. 5.*

SIR THOMAS GODDARD, *a Saxon Gentleman, disguised as a Miller.*

*Appears, Act I. sc. 2. Act II. sc. 6. Act III. sc. 4 ; sc. 5.*

A CITIZEN OF CHESTER.

*Appears, Act III. sc. 2.*

TROTTER, *the Miller's Man.*

*Appears, Act I. sc. 2 ; sc. 5. Act II. sc. 6.*

ZWENO, *King of Denmark.*

*Appears, Act I. sc. 3. Act II. sc. 7. Act III. sc. 5.*

ROCILIO, *a Danish Noble.*

*Appears, Act II. sc. 7. Act III. sc. 5.*

AMBASSADOR FROM DENMARK.

*Appears, Act III. sc. 3.*

MARQUIS LUBECK, *a Danish Knight, staying at the Court of William.*

*Appears, Act I. sc. 1 ; sc. 3. Act II. sc. 1 ; sc. 3 ; sc. 7.  
Act III. sc. 5.*

BLANCH, *Daughter of the Danish King.*

*Appears, Act I. sc. 3. Act II. sc. 1 ; sc. 3 ; sc. 5. Act III. sc. 5.*

MARIANA, *a Swedish Princess, Prisoner to the Danish King.*

*Appears, Act I. sc. 3. Act II. sc. 1 ; sc. 3. Act III. sc. 5.*

FAIR EM, *Daughter of Sir Thomas Goddard.*

*Appears, Act I. sc. 2 ; sc. 5. Act II. sc. 2 ; sc. 6. Act III. sc. 4 ; sc. 5.*

ELNER, *Daughter of the Citizen of Chester.*

*Appears, Act III. sc. 2 ; sc. 5.*

SCENE.—*In ENGLAND and DENMARK, alternately.*

[NOTE.—The old copy is not divided into either acts or scenes—I am responsible for the arrangement in that respect.—ED.]

# Fair Em; the Miller's Daughter of Manchester.

## ACT I.

### SCENE I.—*The English Court.*

*Enter WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR, MARQUIS LUBECK with a Picture, MOUNTNEY, MANVILLE, VALINGFORD, and DUKE DIROT.*

*Lubeck.* What means fair Britain's mighty conqueror

So suddenly to cast away his staff,  
And all in passion to forsake the tilt?

*Dirot.* My lord, this triumph we solemnise here,  
Is of mere love to your increasing joys;  
Only expecting cheerful looks for all.

What sudden pangs then moves your majesty,  
To dim the brightness of the day with frowns?

*W. Con.* Ah, good my lords, misconster not the cause;

At least, suspect not my displeas'd brows,  
I amorously do bear to your intent;  
For thanks and all that you can wish I yield.  
But that which makes me blush and shame to tell,  
Is cause why thus I turn my conquering eyes  
To coward's looks and beaten fantasies.

*Mount.* Since we are guiltless, we the less dismay  
To see this sudden change possess your cheer;  
For if it issue from your own conceits,  
Bred by suggestion of some envious thoughts;  
Your highness' wisdom may suppress it straight.  
Yet tell us (good my lord) what thought it is,  
That thus bereaves you of your late content,  
That in advice we may assist your grace,  
Or bend our forces to revive your spirits.

*W. Con.* Ah, Marquis Lubeck, in thy power it lies

To rid my bosom of these thrall'd dumps:<sup>1</sup>  
And, therefore, good my lords, forbear awhile,  
That we may parley of these private cares,  
Whose strength subdues me more than all the world.

*Val.* We go, and wish thee private conference,  
Public affects in this accustomed peace.

[*Exit all but W. CON. and LUBECK.*

*W. Con.* Now, marquis, must a conqueror at arms  
Disclose himself thrall'd to unarm'd thoughts,  
And threaten'd of a shadow, yield to lust:  
No sooner had my sparkling eyes beheld  
The flames of beauty blazing on this piece,  
But suddenly a sense of miracle  
Imagined on thy lovely mistress' face,  
Made me abandon bodily regard,  
And cast all pleasures from my wounded soul:  
Then, gentle marquis, tell me what she is,  
That thus thou honourest on thy warlike shield;  
And if thy love and interest be such,  
As justly may give place to mine,  
That if it be: my soul with honour's wings  
May fly into the bosom of my dear.  
If not, close them and stoop into my grave.

*Lubeck.* If this be all, renown'd conqueror,  
Advance your drooping spirits, and revive  
The wonted courage of your conquering mind;  
For this fair picture painted on my shield  
Is the true counterfeit of lovely Blanch,  
Princess and daughter to the king of Danes;  
Whose beauty and excess of ornaments<sup>2</sup>  
Deserves another manner of defence,  
Pomp and high person to attend her state  
Than marquis Lubeck any way presents:  
Therefore her virtues I resign to thee,  
Already shrin'd in thy religious breast,  
To be advanc'd and honour'd to the full.  
Nor bear I this an argument of love;<sup>3</sup>  
But to renown, fair Blanch, my sovereign's child,  
In every place where I by arms may do it.

*W. Con.* Ah, marquis, thy words bring heaven  
unto my soul,  
And had I heaven to give for thy reward,  
Thou shouldst be thron'd in no unworthy place.  
But let my uttermost wealth suffice thy worth,  
Which here I vow, and to aspire the bliss  
That hangs on quick achievement of my love,  
Thyself and I will travel in disguise,  
To bring this lady to our Britain court.

*Lubeck.* Let William but bethink what may avail,

And let me die if I deny my aid.

*W. Con.* Then thus: The duke Dirot and th' earl Demarch

Will I leave substitutes to rule my realm,  
While mighty love forbids my being here,  
And in the name of sir Robert of Windsor  
Will go with thee unto the Danish court.  
Keep William's secrets, marquis, if thou love him.

Bright Blanch I come, sweet fortune favour me,  
And I will laud thy name eternally. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The Cottage of the Miller of Manchester.*

*Enter the Miller and EM, his Daughter.*

*Miller.* Come daughter, we must learn to shake off pomp,

To leave the state that earst<sup>4</sup> besecm'd a knight,  
And gentleman of no mean descent,  
To undertake this homely miller's trade:  
Thus must we mask to save our wretched lives,  
Threaten'd by conquest of this hapless isle:  
Whose sad invasion by the conqueror,  
Have made a number such as we subject  
Their gentle necks unto the stubborn yoke.  
Of drudging labour and base peasantry  
Sir Thomas Goddard now old Goddard is,  
Goddard the miller of fair Manchester.  
Why should not I content me with this state,  
As good sir Edmund Trofferd did the flail?  
And thou, sweet Em, must stoop from high estate<sup>5</sup>  
To join with mine, that thus we may protect  
Our harmless lives, which led in greater port<sup>6</sup>  
Would be an envious object to our foes,  
That seek to root all Britain's gentry  
From bearing countenance against their tyranny.

*Em.* Good father, let my full resolv'd thoughts,  
With settled patience to support this chance  
Be some poor comfort to your aged soul;  
For therein rests the height of my estate,  
That you are pleas'd with this dejection,  
And that all toils my hands may undertake,  
May serve to work your worthiness content.

*Miller.* Thanks my dear daughter; these thy  
pleasant words  
Transfer my soul into a second heaven;  
And in thy settled mind, my joys consist,  
My state reviv'd, and I in former plight.  
Although our outward pomp be thus abased,  
And thrall'd to drudging, stayless of the world,

Let us retain those honourable minds  
That lately govern'd our superior state.  
Wherein true gentry is the only mean,  
That makes us differ from base millers born;  
Though we expect no knightly delicates,  
Nor thirst in soul for former sovereignty,  
Yet may our minds as highly scorn to stoop  
To base desires of vulgar's worldliness,  
As if we were in our precedent way.  
And lovely daughter, since thy youthful years  
Must needs admit as young affections;  
And that sweet love impartial perceives  
Her dainty subjects through every part,  
In chief receive these lessons from my lips,  
The true discoverers of a virgin's due.  
Now requisite, now that I know thy mind  
Something inclin'd to favour Manville's suit,  
A gentleman, thy lover in protest:  
And that thou mayst not be by love deceiv'd,  
But try his meaning fit for thy desert,  
In pursuit of all amorous desires,  
Regard thine honour. Let not vehement sighs  
Nor earnest vows importing fervent love,  
Render thee subject to the wrath of lust:  
For that transform'd to former sweet delight,  
Will bring thy body and thy soul to shame.  
Chaste thoughts and modest conversations,  
Of proof to keep out all enchanting vows,  
Vain sighs, fore'd tears, and pitiful aspects,  
Are they that make deform'd ladies fair,  
Poor wretch, and such enticing men,  
That seek of all but only present grace,  
Shall in persévérance of a virgin's due,  
Prefer the most refusers to the choice  
Of such a soul as yielded what they thought.  
But ho! where is Trotter?

*Enter TROTTER, the Miller's Man, to them; they within call to him for their Grist.*

*Trot.* Where's Trotter? why Trotter is here.  
I'faith, you and your daughter go up and down weeping,  
And wamenting, and keeping of a wamentation,  
As who should say, the mill would go with your wamenting.

*Miller.* How now, Trotter? why complainest thou so?

*Trot.* Why yonder is a company of young men and maids  
Keep such a stir for their grist, that they would have it before  
My stones be ready to grind it. But i'faith, I would I could

Break wind enough backward: you should not tarry for your

Grist, I warrant you.

*Miller.* Content thee Trotter, I will go pacify them.

*Trot.* I wis you will when I cannot. Why look, You have a mill. Why what's your mill without me? Or rather mistress, what were I without you?

*Em.* Nay, Trotter, if you fall a chiding, I will give you over.

*Trot.* I chide you dame to amend you. You are too fine to be a miller's daughter; For if you should but stoop to take up the tole dish You will have the cramp in your finger At least ten weeks after.

*Miller.* Ah, well said, Trotter, teach her to play the good housewife, And thou shalt have her to thy wife, if thou canst get her good will.

*Trot.* Ah, words wherein I see matrimony come laden

With kisses to salute me: Now let me alone to pick the mill,

To fill the hopper, to take the tole, to mend the sails,

Yea, and to make the mill to go with the very force of my love.

[*They call for their Grist within.*]

*Trot.* I come, I come, i'faith now you shall have your grist,

Or else Trotter will trot and amble himself to death.

[*They call him again. Exit.*]

SCENE III.—*The Danish Court.*

*Enter* KING OF DENMARK, *with some Attendants;* BLANCH *his Daughter,* MARIANA, MARQUIS LUBECK, *and* WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR, *disguised.*

*K. Den.* Lord Marquis Lubeck, welcome home, Welcome brave knight unto the Denmark king; For William's sake the noble Norman duke, So famous for his fortunes and success, That graceth him with name of conqueror: Right double welcome must thou be to us.

*Sir R.* And to my lord the king shall I recount Your grace's courteous entertainment, That for his sake vouchsafe to honour me A simple knight attendant on his grace.

*K. Den.* But say, sir knight, what may I call your name?

*Sir R.* Robert Windsor and like your majesty.

*K. Den.* I tell thee Robert, I so admire the man, As that I count it heinous guilt in him

That honours not duke William with his heart. Blanch, bid this stranger welcome, good my girl.

*Blanch.* Sir, should I neglect your highness' charge herein,

It might be thought of base discourtesy.

Welcome, sir knight, to Denmark heartily.

*Sir R.* Thanks, gentle lady. Lord Marquis, what is she?

*Lubeck.* That same is Blanch, daughter to the king,

The substance of the shadow that you saw.<sup>7</sup>

*Sir R.* May this be she, for whom I cross'd the seas? (I am asham'd to think I was so fond,)

In whom there's nothing that contents my mind, Ill head, worse featur'd, uncomely, nothing courtly, Swart and ill-favour'd, a collier's sanguine skin.

I never saw a harder favour'd slut.

Love her? for what? I can no whit abide her. [*Aside.*]

*K. Den.* Mariana, I have this day received letters From Swethia, that let me understand, Your ransom is collecting there with speed, And shortly shall be hither sent to us.

*Mar.* Not that I find occasion to mislike<sup>8</sup>

My entertainment in your grace's court,

But that I long to see my native home.

*K. Den.* And reason have you madam for the same:

Lord marquis I commit unto your charge

The entertainment of sir Robert here.

Let him remain with you within the court,

In solace and disport, to spend the time.

[*Exit* K. DEN.

*Sir R.* I thank your highness, whoso bounden I remain.

*Blanch.* [*Aside.*] Unhappy Blanch, what strange effects are these

That work within my thoughts confusedly?

That still methinks affection draws me on

To take, to like, nay more, to love this knight.

*Sir R.* A modest countenance, no heavy sullen look,

Not very fair, but richly deck'd with favour;

A sweet face, an exceeding dainty hand;

A graceful body; were it fram'd of wax<sup>9</sup>

By all the cunning artists of the world,

It could not better be proportioned.

*Lubeck.* How now, sir Robert? in a study man? Here is no time for contemplation.

*Sir R.* My lord there is a certain odd conceit,<sup>10</sup> Which on the sudden greatly troubles me.

*Lubeck.* How like you Blanch? I partly do perceive

The little boy hath played the wag with you.

*Sir R.* The more I look the more I love to look.  
Who says that Mariana is not fair?  
I'll gage my gauntlet 'gainst the envious man,  
That dares avow there liveth her compare.

*Lubeck.* Sir Robert, you mistake your counterfeit.

This is the lady which you came to see.

*Sir R.* Yea, my lord: she is counterfeit indeed:  
There is the substance that best contents me.

*Lubeck.* That is my love. Sir Robert, you do wrong me.

*Sir R.* The better for you, sir, she is your love.  
As for the wrong, I see not how it grows.

*Lubeck.* In seeking that which is another's right.

*Sir R.* As who should say your love were privileged,  
That none might look upon her but yourself.

*Lubeck.* These jars become not our familiarity,  
Nor will I stand on terms to move your patience.

*Sir R.* Why, my lord, am not I of flesh and blood  
as well as you?

Then give me leave to love as well as you.

*Lubeck.* To love, sir Robert? but whom? not  
she I love?

Nor stands it with the honour of my state,  
To brook corrivals with me in my love.

*Sir R.* So, sir, we are thorough for that love;<sup>11</sup>  
Ladies farewell. Lord Marquis, will you go?  
I will find a time to speak with her I trow.

*Lubeck.* With all my heart. Come, ladies, will  
you walk? [Exit.]

SCENE IV.—*The English Court.*

*Enter MANVILLE alone, disguised.*

*Man.* Ah Em, the subject of my restless thoughts,  
The anvil whereupon my heart doth beat,  
Framing thy state to thy desert,  
Full ill this life becomes thy heavenly look,  
Wherein sweet love and virtue sit enthron'd.  
Bad world, where wealth's esteem'd above them  
both,<sup>12</sup>

In whose base eyes nought else is bountiful.  
A miller's daughter, says the multitude,  
Should not be lov'd of a gentleman.  
But let them breathe their souls into the air;  
Yet will I still affect thee as myself;  
So thou be constant in thy plighted vow:  
But here comes one, I'll listen to his talk.

*Enter VALINGFORD, disguised.*

*Val.* Go, William Conqueror, and seek thy love,  
Seek thou a minion in a foreign land,

Whilst I draw back and court my love at home.  
The miller's daughter of fair Manchester  
Hath bound my feet to this delightful soil;  
And from her eyes do dart such golden beams,  
That holds my heart in her subjection.

*Man.* He ruminates on my beloved choice:  
God grant he come not to prevent my hope.  
But here's another; him I'll listen to.

*Enter MOUNTNEY, disguised.*

*Mount.* Nature unjust, in utterance of thy art,  
To grace a peasant with a prince's fame:  
Peasant am I so to mis-term my love,  
Although a miller's daughter by her birth:  
Yet may her beauty and her virtues well suffice  
To hide the blemish of her birth in hell,  
Where neither envious eyes nor thought can  
pierce,  
But endless darkness ever smother it.  
Go, William Conqueror, and seek thy love  
Whilst I draw back and court mine own the  
while:

Decking her body with such costly robes  
As may become her beauty's worthiness,  
That so thy labours may be laugh'd to scorn,  
And she thou seekest in foreign regions,  
Be darken'd and eclips'd when she arrives,  
By one that I have chosen nearer home.

*Man.* What comes he too, to intercept my love?  
Then hie thee Mauville to forestall such foes.

[Exit MAN.]

*Mount.* What now, Lord Valingford, are you  
behind?

The king hath chosen you to go with him.

*Val.* So chose he you; therefore I marvel much  
That both of us should linger in this sort.  
What may the king imagine of our stay?

*Mount.* The king may justly think we are to  
blame:

But I imagin'd I might well be spar'd,  
And that no other man had borne my mind.

*Val.* The like did I: in friendship then resolve  
What is the cause of your unlook'd-for stay?

*Mount.* Lord Valingford, I tell thee as a friend,  
Love is the cause why I have stay'd behind.

*Val.* Love, my lord? of whom?

*Mount.* Em, the miller's daughter of Manchester.

*Val.* But may this be?

*Mount.* Why not, my lord? I hope full well you  
know

That love respects no difference of state,  
So beauty serve to stir affection.

*Val.* But this it is that makes me wonder most,

That you and I should be of one conceit  
In such a strange unlikely passion.

*Mount.* But is that true? my lord, I hope you  
do but jest.

*Val.* I would I did: then were my grief the less.

*Mount.* Nay, never grieve: for if the cause be  
such,

To join our thoughts in such a sympathy,  
All envy set aside: let us agree  
To yield to either's fortune in this choice.

*Val.* Content, say I, and whatsoe'er befall,  
Shake hands, my lord, and fortune thrive at all.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—*Country near the Miller's Cottage.*

*Enter EM and TROTTER, the Miller's Man, with a  
Kerchief on his Head.*<sup>13</sup>

*Em.* Trotter, where have you been?

*Trot.* Where have I been? Why, what signifies  
this?

*Em.* A kerchief, doth it not?

*Trot.* Then this is mystically to give you to  
understand

I have been at the Phisnicary's house.<sup>14</sup>

*Em.* How long hast thou been sick?

*Trot.* I'faith, even as long as I have not been  
half well,

And that hath been a long time.

*Em.* A loitering time, I rather imagine.

*Trot.* It may be so: but the Phisnicary telis  
me that you can help me.

*Em.* Why, anything I can do for recovery of thy  
health,

Be right well assur'd of.

*Trot.* Then give me your hand.

*Em.* To what end?

*Trot.* That the ending of an old indenture

Is the beginning of a new bargain.

*Em.* What bargain?

*Trot.* That you promis'd to do anything to re-  
cover my health.

*Em.* On that condition I give thee my hand.

*Trot.* Ah, sweet Em! [*He offers to kiss her.*]

*Em.* How now, Trot? your master's daughter?

*Trot.* I'faith, I aim at the fairest;

Ah, Em! sweet Em! fresh as the flower

That hath power to wound my heart,

And ease the smart, of me poor thief,

In prison bound.

*Em.* So all your rhyme lies on the ground.

But what means this?

*Trot.* Ah, mark the device;

For thee my love full sick I was, in hazard of my  
life;

Thy promise was to make me whole, and for to be  
my wife.

Let me enjoy my love my dear,

And thou possess thy Trotter here.

*Em.* But I meant no such matter.

*Trot.* Yes, woos, but you did; I'll go to our  
parson, sir John;

And he shall mumble up the marriage out of hand.

*Em.* But here comes one that will forbid the  
banns.

*Enter MANVILE.*

*Trot.* Ah, sir, you come too late.

*Man.* What remedy, Trotter.

*Em.* Go, Trotter, my father calls.

*Trot.* Would you have me go in, and leave you  
two here?

*Em.* Why, darest thou not trust me?

*Trot.* Yes, faith; even as long as I see you.

*Em.* Go thy ways, I pray thee, heartily.

*Trot.* That same word, heartily, is of great  
force.

I will go: but I pray, sir, beware you

Come not too near the wench. [*Exit Trot.*]

*Man.* I am greatly beholden to you.

Ah, mistress, some time I might have said my love;  
But time and fortune hath bereav'd me of that:

And I am abject in those gracious eyes

That with remorse erst saw into my grief,

May sit and sigh the sorrows of your heart.

*Em.* Indeed my Manvile hath some cause to  
doubt,

When such a swain is rival in his love.

*Man.* Ah, Em! were he the man that causeth  
this mistrust,

I should esteem of thee as at thee first.

*Em.* But is my love in earnest all this while?

*Man.* Believe me, Em, it is not time to jest,

When other's 'joy, what lately I possess'd.

*Em.* If, touching love, my Manvile charge me  
thus;

Unkindly must I take it at his hands,

For that my conscience clears me of offence.

*Man.* Ah, impudent and shameless in thy ill,

That with thy cunning and defraudful tongue

Seeks to delude the honest meaning mind:

Was never heard in Manchester before,

Of truer love than hath been 'twixt us twain:

And for my part, how I have hazarded

Displeasure of my father and my friends

Thyself can witness: yet, notwithstanding this,

Two gentlemen attending on duke William,  
Meuntney and Valingford, as I heard them named,  
Oft times resort to see and to be seen,  
Walking the street fast by thy father's door,  
Whose glancing eyes up to windows east,  
Gives testies<sup>15</sup> of their master's amorous heart.  
This, Em, is noted, and too much talk'd on,  
Some see it without mistrust of ill;  
Others there are that, scorning, grin thereat,  
And saith, there go the Miller's daughter's wooers.  
Ah me! whom chiefly and most of all it doth concern,

To spend my time in grief and vex my soul,  
To think my love should be rewarded thus,  
And for thy sake abhor all womankind.

*Em.* May not a maiden look upon a man  
Without suspicious judgment of the world?

*Man.* If sight do move offence, 'tis better not  
to see.

But thou didst more, inconstant as thou art,  
For with them thou hadst talk and conference.

*Em.* May not a maid talk with a man without  
mistrust?<sup>16</sup>

*Man.* Not with such men suspected amorous.

*Em.* I grieve to see my Manvile's jealousy.

*Man.* Ah, Em, faithful love is full of jealousy;  
So did I love thee true and faithfully,  
For which I am rewarded most unthankfully.

[*Exit in a rage.*]

*Em.* And so away? what, in displeasure gone?  
And left me such a bitter sweet to gnaw upon?  
Ah, Manvile, little wottest thou  
How near this parting goeth to my heart.  
Uncourteous love, whose followers reap reward,  
Of hate, disdain, reproach, and infamy,  
The fruit of frantic, bedlam jealousy.

*Enter MOUNTNEY.*

But here comes one of these suspicious men:  
Witness, my God, without desert of me,<sup>17</sup>  
For only Manvile honour I in heart,  
Nor shall unkindness cause me from him to start.

*Mount.* For this good fortune, Venus be thou  
bless'd,

To meet my love, the mistress of my heart,  
Where time and place gives opportunity  
At full to let her understand my love.

[*He turns to Em, and offers to take her hand;  
she goes from him.*]

Fair mistress, since my fortune sorts so well,  
Hear you a word. What meaneth this?  
Nay, stay fair Em.

*Em.* I am going homewards, sir.

*Mount.* Yet stay (sweet love), to whom I must  
dislose

The hidden secrets of a lover's thoughts,  
Not doubting but to find such kind remorse<sup>18</sup>  
As naturally you are inclin'd to.

*Em.* The gentleman, your friend, sir,  
I have not seen him this four days at the least.

*Mount.* What's that to me?

I speak not, sweet, in person of my friend,  
But for myself, whom if that love deserve  
To have regard, being honourable love;  
Not base affects of loose, lascivious love,  
Whom youthful wantons play and dally with:  
But that unites in honourable bands,<sup>19</sup>  
And knits the sacred knot that gods—

*Em.* What mean you, sir, to keep me here so  
long?

I cannot understand you by your signs;  
You keep a prattling with your lips,  
But never a word you speak that I can hear.

*Mount.* What, is she deaf? a great impediment.  
Yet remedies there are for such defects.

Sweet Em, it is no little grief to me,  
To see where nature, in her pride of art,  
Hath wrought perfections rich and admirable

*Em.* Speak you to me, sir?

*Mount.* To thee, my only joy.

*Em.* I cannot hear you.

*Mount.* Oh plague of fortune: Oh hell without  
compare.

What boots it us to gaze and not enjoy?

*Em.* Fare you well, sir. [*Exit Em.*]

*Mount.* Farewell my love, nay, farewell life and  
all;

Could I procure redress for this infirmity,  
It might be means she would regard my suit.  
I am acquainted with the king's physicians,  
Amongst the which there's one, mine honest friend,  
Seignior Alberto, a very learned man,  
His judgment will I have to help this ill.  
Ah! Em, fair Em, if art can make thee whole:  
I'll buy that sense for thee, although it cost me  
dear.

But Mountney, stay, this may be but deceit,  
A matter feined only to delude thee,  
And not unlike, perhaps, by Valingford;  
He loves fair Em as well as I.

As well as I? ah no, not half so well.

Put ease, yet may be be thine enemy,  
And give her counsel to dissemble thus.

I'll try the event, and if it fall out so,  
Friendship farewell: love makes me now a foe.

[*Exit MOUNT.*]



## ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An Ante-chamber at the Danish Court.*

*Enter* MARQUIS LUBECK, *and* MARIANA.

*Mar.* Trust me, my lord, I am sorry for your hurt.

*Lubeck.* Gramercy, madam: but it is not great: Only a thrust, prick'd with a rapier's point.

*Mar.* How grew the quarrel, my lord?

*Lubeck.* Sweet lady, for thy sake.

There was last night two masks in company,  
Myself the foremost, the others strangers were:  
Amongst the which, when music 'gan to sound,  
Each masker made choice of his lady:  
And one more forward than the rest stept towards thee:

Which I perceiving thrust him aside, and took thee myself;

But this was taken in so ill a part,

That at my coming out of the court-gate,

It was my chance to be thrust in the arm.

The doer thereof, because he was the cause of the disorder

At that inconvenient time, was presently committed,

And is this morning sent for to answer the matter;  
And I think here he comes. What, Sir Robert of Windsor, how now?

*Enter* Keeper *with* SIR ROBERT OF WINDSOR.

*Sir R.* I'faith, my lord, a prisoner; but what ails your arm?

*Lubeck.* Hurt the last night by mischance.

*Sir R.* What, not in the mask at the court-gate?

*Lubeck.* Yes, trust me there.

*Sir R.* Why then, my lord, I thank you for my night's lodging.

*Lubeck.* And I you for my hurt, if it were so;

Keeper away, I discharge you of your prisoner.

[*Exit the Keeper.*]

*Sir R.* Lord marquis, you offer'd me disgrace to shoulder me.

*Lubeck.* Sir I knew you not, and therefore you must pardon me,

And the rather it might be alleged to me of Mere simplicity, to see another dance with my mistress

Disguis'd, and I myself in presence; but seeing it Was our haps to damnify each other unwillingly,

Let us be content with our harms,  
And lay the fault where it was, and so become friends.

*Sir R.* I'faith I am content with my night's lodging,

If you be content with your hurt.

*Lubeck.* Not content that I have it, but content To forget how I came by it.

*Sir R.* My lord, here comes lady Blanch, let's away.

*Enter* BLANCH.

*Lubeck.* With good will, lady you will stay?

[*Exit* LUBECK *and* SIR R.]

*Mar.*

Madam.

*Blanch.* Mariana, as I am grieved with thy presence,

So am I not offended for thy absence,

And were it not a breach to modesty,

Thou shouldst know before I left thee.

*Mar.* How near is this humour to madness.

If you hold on as you begin, you are in a pretty way to scolding.

*Blanch.* To scolding, housewife?

*Mar.*

Madam here comes one.

[*Here enters one with a Letter.*]

*Blanch.* There doth indeed. Fellow, would'st thou have any

Thing with any body here?

*Mes.* I have a letter to deliver to the lady Mariana.

*Blanch.* Give it me.

*Mes.*

There must none but she have it.

[BLANCH *snatcheth the Letter from him.*]

*Exit* Mes.

Go to, foolish fellow

And therefore to ease the anger I sustain,

I'll be so bold to open it: what's here?

Sir Robert greets you well;

You mistress! his love, his life; oh, amorous man,

How he entertains his new mistress,

And bestows on Lubeck, his odd friend,

A horn night-cap to keep in his wit.<sup>20</sup>

*Mar.* Madam, though you have discourteously

Read my letter, yet I pray you give it me.

*Blanch.* Then take it there, and there, and there. [*She tears it.* *Exit* BLANCH.]

*Mar.* How far doth this differ from modesty:

Yet will I gather up the pieces, which haply

May shew to me the intent thereof,  
Though not the meaning.

[*She gathers up the pieces, and joins them.*]

*Mar.* "Your servant and love, sir Robert of Windsor,

Alias William the Conqueror, wisheth long health and happiness;"

Is this William the Conqueror, shrouded under  
The name of sir Robert of Windsor?

Were he the monarch of the world  
He should not dispossess Lubeck of his love.

Therefore I will to the court, and if I can  
Close to be friends with lady Blanch,

And thereby keep Lubeck my love for myself:  
And further the lady Blanch in her suit as much  
as I may. [Exit.]

SCENE II.—England, near the Miller's Cottage.

*Enter EM.*

*Em.* Jealousy that sharps the lover's sight,  
And makes him conceive and conster<sup>21</sup> his intent,  
Hath so bewitched my lovely Marvile's senses,  
That he misdoubts his Em that loves his soul.  
He doth suspect corrivals in his love:  
Which how untrue it is be judge my God.  
But now no more: here cometh Valingford;  
Shift him off now, as thou hast done the other.

*Enter VALINGFORD.*

*Val.* See how fortune presents me with the hope  
I look'd for.

Fair Em!

*Em.* Who is that?

*Val.* I am Valingford thy love and friend.

*Em.* I cry you mercy, sir; I thought so by  
your speech.

*Val.* What aileth thine eyes?

*Em.* Oh blind, sir, blind, stricken blind by mis-  
hap on a sudden.<sup>22</sup>

*Val.* But is it possible you should be taken on  
such a sudden?

Unfortunate Valingford to bethus cross'd in thy love.  
Fair Em, I am not a little sorry to see this thy  
hard hap;

Yet nevertheless, I am acquainted with a learn'd  
physician,

That will do any thing for thee at my request.

To him will I resort, and inquire his judgment,  
As concerning the recovery of so excellent a sense.

*Em.* O Lord, sir; and of all things I cannot  
abide physic;

The very name thereof to me is odious.

*Val.* No; not the thing will do thee so much  
good?

Sweet Em, hither I came to parley of love,  
Hoping to have found thee in thy wonted pros-  
perity.

And have the gods so unmercifully thwarted my  
expectation?<sup>23</sup>

By dealing so sinisterly with thee sweet Em?

*Em.* Good sir, no more, it fits not me  
To have respect to such vain fantasies  
As idle love presents my ears withal,  
More reason, I should ghostly give myself  
To sacred prayers, for this my former sin,  
For which this plague is justly fall'n on me,  
Than hearken to the vanities of love.

*Val.* Yet, sweet Em, accept this jewel at my  
hand,

Which I bestow on thee in token of my love.

*Em.* A jewel, sir, what pleasure can I have  
In jewels, treasure, or any worldly thing,  
That want my sight that should discern thereof?  
Ah, sir, I must leave you;  
The pain of mine eyes is so extreme  
I cannot long stay in one place; I take my leave.

[Exit EM.]

*Val.* Zounds, what a cross is this to my conceit;  
But Valingford, search the depth of this device.  
Why may not this be fain'd subtilty,  
By Mountney's invention, to the intent  
That I, seeing such occasion, should leave off my  
suit,

And no more persist to solicit for her love?<sup>24</sup>  
I'll try the event; if I can by any means perceive  
The effect of this deceit to be procured by his  
means,

Friend Mountney the one of us is like to repent  
our bargain. [Exit.]

SCENE III.—The Danish Court.

*Enter MARIANA and MARQUIS LUBECK.*

*Lubeck.* Lady, since that occasion forward in our  
good

Presenteth place and opportunity,  
Let me entreat your wonted kind consent  
And friendly furtherance in a suit I have.

*Mar.* My lord, you know you need not to  
entreat,

But may command Mariana to her power,  
Be it no impeachment to my honest fame.

*Lubeck.* Free are my thoughts from such base  
villany.

As may in question, lady, call your name:

Yet is the matter of such consequence,  
 Standing upon my honourable credit,  
 To be effected with such zeal and secrecy,  
 As should I speak and fail my expectation,  
 It would rebound greatly to my prejudice.

*Mar.* My lord, wherein hath Mariana given you  
 occasion  
 That you should mistrust or else be jealous of my  
 secrecy?

*Lubeck.* Mariana, do not misconster of me:  
 I not mistrust thee, nor thy secrecy,  
 Nor let my love misconster my intent,  
 Nor think thereof but well and honourable.  
 Thus stands the case: thou knowest from England  
 Hither came with me Robert of Windsor, a noble-

man at arms,  
 Lusty and valiant, in spring-time of his years;  
 No marvel then though he prove amorous.

*Mar.* True, my lord, he came to see fair Blanch.

*Lubeck.* No, Mariana, that is not it.  
 His love to Blanch was then extinct  
 When first he saw thy face.

'Tis thee he loves: yea, thou art only she  
 That is mistress and commander of his thoughts.

*Mar.* Well, well, my lord, I like you; for such  
 drifts

Put silly ladies often to their shifts:  
 Oft have I heard you say, you lov'd me well:  
 Yea, sworn the same, and I believ'd you too.  
 Can this be found an action of good faith,  
 Thus to dissemble where you found true love?

*Lubeck.* Mariana, I not dissemble on mine honour:  
 Nor fails my faith to thee. But for my friend,  
 For princely William, by whom thou shalt possess  
 The title of estate and majesty,  
 Fitting thy love and virtues of thy mind,  
 For him I speak, for him do I entreat,  
 And with thy favour fully do resign  
 To him the claim and interest of my love.

Sweet Mariana then deny me not;  
 Love William, love my friend and honour me,  
 Who else is clean dishonoured by thy meaus.

*Mar.* Born to mishap, myself am only she,  
 On whom the sun of fortune never shined:  
 But planets ruled by retrograde aspect,  
 Foretold mine ill in my nativity.

*Lubeck.* Sweet lady cease, let my entreaty serve  
 To pacify the passion of thy grief,  
 Which well I know proceeds of ardent love.

*Mar.* But Lubeck now regards not Mariana.

*Lubeck.* Even as my life, so love I Mariana.

*Mar.* Why do you post me to another then?

*Lubeck.* He is my friend, and I do love the man.

*Mar.* Thou wilt duke William rob me of my love?

*Lubeck.* No, as his life Mariana he doth love.

*Mar.* Speak for yourself my lord, let him alone.

*Lubeck.* So do I, madam, for he and I am one.

*Mar.* Then loving you I do content you both.

*Lubeck.* In loving him you shall content us both.  
 Me, for I crave that favour at your hands;  
 He, for he hopes that comfort at your hands.

*Mar.* Leave off my lord, here comes the lady  
 Blanch.

*Enter* BLANCH.

*Lubeck.* Hard hap to break us of our talk so  
 soon,

Sweet Mariana, do remember me. [*Exit* LUBECK.]

*Mar.* Thy Mariana cannot choose but remember  
 thee.

*Blanch.* Mariana well met, you are very forward  
 in your love?

*Mar.* Madam, be it in secret spoken to yourself,  
 If you'll but follow the complot I've invented,  
 You will not think me so forward  
 As yourself shall prove fortunate.

*Blanch.* As how?

*Mar.* Madam, as thus: It is not unknown to you  
 That sir Robert of Windsor,  
 A man that you do not little esteem,  
 Hath long importuned me of love:  
 But rather than I will be found false  
 Or unjust to the marquis Lubeck,  
 I will as did the constant lady Penelope,  
 Undertake to effect some great task.

*Blanch.* What of all this?

*Mar.* The next time that sir Robert shall come,  
 In his wonted sort to solicit me with love,  
 I will seem to agree and like of anything  
 That the knight shall demand, so far forth  
 As it be no impeachment to my chastity;  
 And to conclude, point some place for to meet the  
 man,

For my conveyance from the Denmark court;  
 Which determined upon, he will appoint some cer-  
 tain time

For our departure; whereof you having intelligence,  
 You may soon set down a plot to wear the English  
 crown;

And then;—

*Blanch.* What then?

*Mar.* If sir Robert prove a king and you his  
 queen,  
 How then?

*Blanch.* Were I assured of the one, as I am  
 persnaded

Of the other, there were some possibility in it.  
But here comes the man.

*Mar.* Madam, begone, and you shall see  
I will work to your desire and my content.

[*Exit* BLANCH.]

*Enter* WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

*W. Con.* Lady, this is well and happily met,  
Fortune hitherto hath been my foe,  
And though I have oft sought to speak with you,  
Yet still I have been cross'd with sinister haps.  
I cannot, madam, tell a loving tale,  
Or court my mistress with fabulous discourses,  
That am a soldier sworn to follow arms;  
But this I bluntly let you understand,  
I honour you with such religious zeal  
As may become an honourable mind.  
Nor may I make my love the siege of Troy  
That am a stranger in this country.  
First what I am, I know you are resolv'd,  
For that my friend hath let you understand,  
The marquis Lubeck, to whom I am so bound,  
That whilst I live I count me only his.

*Mar.* Surely you are beholden to the marquis,  
For he hath been an earnest spokesman in your  
cause.

*W. Con.* And yields my lady then at this request,  
To grace duke William with her gracious love;

*Mar.* My lord, I am a prisoner, and hard it were  
To get me from the court.

*W. Con.* An easy matter to get you from the  
court,  
If case that you will thereto give consent.

*Mar.* Put case I should, how would you use me  
then?

*W. Con.* Not otherwise but well and honourably.  
I have at sea a ship that doth attend,  
Which shall forthwith conduct us into England;  
Where when we are, I straight will marry thee.  
We may not stay deliberating long,  
Lest that suspicion, envious of our weal,  
Set in a foot to hinder our pretence.

*Mar.* But this I think were most convenient,  
To mask my face the better to scape unknown.

*W. Con.* A good device; till then, farewell fair  
love.

*Mar.* But this I must entreat your grace,  
You would not seek by lust unlawfully  
To wrong my chaste determinations.

*W. Con.* I hold that man most shameless in his  
sin,  
That seeks to wrong an honest lady's name,  
Whom he thinks worthy of his marriage bed.

*Mar.* In hope your oath is true,  
I leave your grace till the appointed time.

[*Exit* *MAR.*]

*W. Con.* O happy William, blessed in thy love  
Most fortunate in Mariana's love;  
Well, Lubeck, well, this courtesy of thine  
I will requite if God permit me life. [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.—England. *Country near the Court.*

*Enter* VALINGFORD and MOUNTNEY, looking angrily  
each on other, with Rapiers drawn.

*Mount.* Valingford, so hardly I digest an injury  
Thou hast proffer'd me, as wer't not that I detest  
to do

What stands not with the honour of my name,  
Thy death should pay the ransom of thy fault.

*Val.* And Mountney, had not my revenging  
wrath,

Incens'd with more than ordinary love,  
Been such for to deprive thee of thy life,  
Thou hadst not lived to brave me as thou dost,  
wretch as thou art.

Wherein hath Valingford offended thee  
That honourable bond which late we did confirm  
In presence of the gods,

When with the conquerer we arrived here,  
For my part hath been kept inviolably,  
Till now too much abused by thy villany,  
I am enforced to cancel all those bands,  
By hating him which I so well did love.

*Mount.* Subtle thou art, and cunning in thy  
fraud,

That giving me occasion of offence,  
Thou pick'st a quarrel to excuse thy shame.  
Why Valingford, was it not enough for thee  
To be a rival 'twixt me and my love,  
But counsel her to my no small disgrace,  
That when I came to talk with her of love,  
She should seem deaf, as feigning not to hear?

*Val.* But hath she, Mountney, used thee as thou  
sayest?

*Mount.* Thou knowest too well she hath;  
Wherein thou couldst not do me greater injury.

*Val.* Then I perceive we are deluded both;  
For when I offer'd many gifts of gold and jewels  
To entreat for love, she hath refused them with a  
coy disdain,

Alleging that she could not see the sun.  
The same conjectur'd I to be thy drift,  
That feigning so she might be rid of me.

*Mount.* The like did I by thee. But are not  
these natural impediments?

*Val.* In my conjecture merely counterfeit ;  
Therefore let's join hands in friendship once again,  
Since that the jar grew only by conjecture.

*Mount.* With all my heart: yet let's try the  
truth thereof.

*Val.* With right good will. We will straight  
unto her father,  
And there to learn whether it be so or no. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—*The Danish Court.*

*Enter WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR, and BLANCH,  
disguised, with a Mask over her Face.*

*W. Con.* Come on, my love, the comfort of my life ;  
Disguis'd thus we may remain unknown,  
And get we once to seas, I force not then ;  
We quickly shall attain the English shore.

*Blanch.* But this I urge you with your former  
oath,

You shall not seek to violate mine honour,  
Until our marriage rites be all perform'd.

*W. Con.* Mariana, here I swear to thee by heaven,  
And by the honour that I bear to arms,  
Never to seek or crave at hands of thee  
The spoil of honourable chastity  
Until we do attain the English coast,  
Where thou shalt be my right espoused queen.

*Blanch.* In hope your oath proceedeth from your  
heart,

Let's leave the court, and betake us to His power  
That governs all things to His mighty will :  
And will reward the just with endless joy,  
And plague the bad with most extreme annoy.

*W. Con.* Lady, as little tarrance as we may,  
Lest some misfortune happen by the way.

[*Exit BLANCH and W. CON.*]

SCENE VI.—*England. The Miller's Cottage.*

*Enter the Miller, his man TROTTER, and  
MANVILE.*

*Miller.* I tell you, sir, it is no little grief to me,  
You should so hardly conceit of my daughter,  
Whose honest report, though I say it,  
Was never blotted with any title of defamation.

*Man.* Father Miller, the repair of those gentle-  
men to your house,

Hath given me great occasion to dislike.

*Miller.* As for those gentlemen, I never saw in  
them

Any evil entreaty. But should they have prof-  
fer'd it,

Her chaste mind hath proof enough to prevent it.

*Trot.* Those gentlemen are as honest as ever I  
saw :

For, i'faith, one of them gave me sixpence  
To fetch a quart of sack. See, master, here they  
come.

*Enter MOUNTNEY and VALINGFORD.*

*Miller.* Trotter, call Em ; now they are here to-  
gether,  
I'll have this matter thoroughly debated.

[*Exit TROT.*]

*Mount.* Father, well met. We are come to confer  
with you.

*Man.* Nay ; with his daughter, rather.

*Val.* Thus it is, father ; we are come to crave  
your friendship in a matter.

*Miller.* Gentlemen, as you are strangers to me,  
Yet, by the way of courtesy, you shall demand  
Any reasonable thing at my hands.

*Man.* What, is the matter so forward,  
They come to crave his good will ?

*Val.* It is given us to understand, that your  
daughter  
Is suddenly become both blind and deaf.

*Miller.* Marry, God forbid ! I have sent for her ;  
indeed

She hath kept her chamber this three days.

It were no little grief to me if it should be so.

*Man.* This is God's judgment for her treachery.

*Enter TROTTER, leading EM.*

*Miller.* Gentlemen, I fear your words are too true ;  
See where Trotter comes leading of her.

What ails my Em ? not blind I hope ?

*Em.* Mountney and Valingford both together ?  
And Manvile, to whom I have faithfully vow'd my  
love ?

Now, Em, suddenly help thyself. [*Aside.*]

*Mount.* This is no dissembling, Valingford.

*Val.* If it be, it is cunningly contriv'd of all  
sides.

*Em.* Trotter, lend me thy hand ;  
And as thou lovest me keep my counsel,  
And justify whatever I say ; and I'll largely  
requite thee.

*Trot.* Ah, that is as much as to say you would  
tell a monstrous,

Terrible, horrible, outrageous lie ;

And I shall sooth it : no by lady.

*Em.* My present extremity wills me, if thou love  
me, Trotter ?

*Trot.* That same word, love, makes me to do any-  
thing.

*Em.* Trotter, where's my father?

[*He thrusts EM upon her Father.*]

*Trot.* Why, what a blind dunce are you, can you not see?

He standeth right before you.

*Em.* Is this my father?

Good father, give me leave to sit

Where I may not be disturb'd,

Sith God hath visited me both of my sight and hearing.

*Miller.* Tell me, sweet Em, how came this blindness?

Thy eyes are lovely to look on,  
Yet have they lost the benefit of sight.  
What a grief is this to thy poor father!

*Em.* Good father, let me not stand an open gazing-stock,

But in a place alone, as fits a creature so miserable.

*Miller.* Trotter, lead her in; the utter overthrow of poor Goddard's joy and only solace.

[*Exit the Miller, TROT., and EM.*]

*Man.* Both blind and deaf, then is she no wife for me;

And glad am I so good occasion is happen'd:

Now will I away to Manchester,

And leave these gentlemen to their blind fortune.

[*Exit MAN.*]

*Mount.* Since fortune hath thus spitefully cross'd our hope,

Let us leave this quest<sup>25</sup> and hearken after our king,

Who is at this day landed at Li'rpool.

[*Exit MOUNT.*]

*Val.* Go, my lord, I'll follow you.

Well, now Mountney is gone,

I'll stay behind to solicit my love,

For I imagine I shall find this but a feign'd invention,

Thereby to have us leave off our suits.

SCENE VII.—*The Danish Court.*

*Enter MARQUIS LUBECK, and the KING of DENMARK, angrily, with some Attendants.*

*K. Den.* Well, Lubeck, well; it is not possible but you must be consenting to this act.  
Is this the man so highly you extol'd?

And play a part so hateful with his friend?  
Since first he came with thee into the court,  
What entertainment and what countenance  
He hath receiv'd, none better knows than thou.

In recompense whereof, he quits me well,

To steal away fair Mariana, my prisoner,

Whose ransom being lately 'greed upon,

I am deluded of by this escape.

Besides, I know not how to answer it

When she shall be demanded home to Swethia.

*Lubeck.* My gracious lord, conjecture not, I pray,  
Worser of Lubeck than he doth deserve.

Your highness knows Mariana was my love,

Sole paragon and mistress of my thoughts.

Is it likely I should know of her departure,

Wherein there is no man injured more than I?

*K. Den.* That carries reason, marquis, I confess.

Call forth my daughter; yet I am persuaded

That she, poor soul, suspected not her going

For, as I hear, she likewise lov'd the man,

Which he, to blame, did not at all regard.

*Rocil.* My lord, here is the princess Mariana:  
It is your daughter is convey'd away.

*K. Den.* What! my daughter gone?

Now, marquis, your villany breaks forth.

This match is of your making, gentle sir;

And you shall dearly know the price thereof.

*Lubeck.* Knew I thereof, or that there was intent

In Robert thus to steal your highness' daughter,

Let heaven in justice presently confound me.

*K. Den.* Not all the protestations thou canst use

Shall save thy life. Away with him to prison.

And, minion, otherwise it cannot be,

But you're an agent in this treachery.

I will revenge it thoroughly on you both.

Away with her to prison. Here's stuff indeed!

My daughter stolen away!

It booteth not thus to disturb myself,

But presently to send to English William,

To send me that proud knight of Windsor hither

Here in my court to suffer for his shame:

Or at my pleasure to be punish'd there,

Withal, that Blanch be sent me home again,

Or I shall fetch her unto Windsor's cost;

Yea, and William's, too, if he deny her me.

[*Exit K. DEN.*]

## ACT III.

SCENE I.—England. *Camp of the Earl Demarch.*

*Enter WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR, taken with Soldiers.*

*W. Con.* Could any cross, could any plague be worse?

Could heaven or hell, did both conspire in one,  
To afflict my soul, invent a greater scourge  
Than presently I am tormented with?

Ah, Mariana, cause of my lament;  
Joy of my heart, and comfort of my life;  
For thee I breathe my sorrows in the air,  
And tire myself: for silently I sigh,  
My sorrow afflicts my soul with equal passion.

*Sol.* Go to, sirrah, put up, it is to small purpose.

*W. Con.* Hence, villains, hence: dare you lay  
your hands  
Upon your sovereign?

*Sol.* Well, sir, we will deal for that;  
But here comes one will remedy all this.

*Enter DEMARCH.*

*Sol.* My lord, watching this night in the camp,  
We took this man, and know not what he is:  
And in his company was a gallant dame;  
A woman fair in outward show she seem'd,  
But that her face was mask'd, we could not see  
The grace and favour of her countenance.

*Dem.* Tell me, fellow, of whence and what thou art?

*Sol.* Why do you not answer my lord?  
He takes scorn to answer.

*Dem.* And takest thou scorn to answer my demand?

Thy proud behaviour very well deserves  
This misdemeanor at the worst be construed.

Why, dost thou neither know, nor hast thou heard,  
That in the absence of the Saxon duke,  
Demarch is his especial substitute,  
To punish those that shall offend the laws?

*W. Con.* In knowing this, I know thou art a  
traitor,

A rebel, and mutinous conspirator.

Why, Demarch, knowest thou who I am?

*Dem.* Pardon, my dread lord, the error of my  
sense,

And misdemeanor to your princely excellency.

*W. Con.* Why, Demarch, what is the cause my  
subjects are in arms?

*Dem.* Free are my thoughts, my dread and gracious lord,

From treason to your state and common weal;  
Only revengement of a private grudge,  
By lord Dirot lately proffer'd me,  
That stands not with the honour of my name,  
Is cause I have assembled for my guard  
Some men in arms that may withstand his force,  
Whose settled malice aimeth at my life.

*W. Con.* Where is lord Dirot?

*Dem.* In arms, my gracious lord,  
Not past two miles from hence,  
As credibly I am ascertained.

*W. Con.* Well, come, let us go,  
I fear I shall find traitors of you both. *[Exit.*

SCENE II.—*Garden before the House of a  
Citizen at Chester.*

*Enter the Citizen of Chester, and his Daughter  
ELNER, and MANVILLE.*

*Cit.* Indeed, sir, it would do very well  
If you could entreat your father to come hither:  
But if you think it be too far,  
I care not much to take horse and ride to Manchester.  
I am sure my daughter is content with either:  
How sayest thou, Elner, art thou not?

*Elner.* As you shall think best; I must be contented.

*Man.* Well, Elner, farewell; only thus much,  
I pray make all things in a readiness,  
Either to serve here, or to carry thither with us.

*Cit.* As for that, sir, take you no care;  
And so I betake you to your journey.<sup>2c</sup> *[Exit MAN.*

*Enter VALINGFORD.*

But soft, what gentleman is this?

*Val.* God speed, sir; might a man crave a word  
or two with you?<sup>27</sup>

*Cit.* God forbid else, sir; I pray you speak your  
pleasure.

*Val.* The gentleman that parted from you, was  
he not

Of Manchester, bis father living there of good  
account.

*Cit.* Yes, marry is he, sir: why do you ask?  
Belike you have some acquaintance with him.

*Val.* I have been<sup>f</sup> acquaint'd with him in times  
past,<sup>28</sup>  
But through his double dealing,  
I am grown weary of his company.  
For be it spoken to you,  
He hath been acquainted with a poor miller's  
daughter,  
And divers times hath promis'd her marriage.  
But what with his delays and flouts,  
He hath brought her into such a taking,  
That I fear me it will cost her her life.

*Cit.* To be plain with you, sir:  
His father and I have been of old acquaintance,  
And a motion was made,  
Between my daughter and his son,  
Which is now thoroughly agreed upon,  
Save only the place appointed for the marriage,  
Whether it shall be kept here or at Manchêster,  
And for no other occasion he is now ridden.

*Elner.* What hath he done to you,  
That you should speak so ill of the man?

*Val.* Oh, gentlewoman, I ery you mercy;<sup>29</sup>  
He is your husband that shall be.

*Elner.* If I knew this to be true,  
He should not be my husband were he ne'er so  
good;

And therefore, good father,  
I would desire you to take the pains  
To bear this gentleman company to Manchester,  
To know whether this be true or no.

*Cit.* Now trust me he deals with me very hardly,  
Knowing how well I meant to him.  
But I care not much to ride to Manchester  
To know whether his father's will be  
He should deal with me so badly.  
Will it please you, sir, to go in, we will presently  
take horse and away.

*Val.* If it please you to go in  
I'll follow you presently.

[*Exit ELNER and her Father.*]

Now shall I be reveng'd on Manvile,  
And by this means get Em unto my wife;  
And therefore I will straight to her father's  
And inform them both of all that is happen'd.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—*A Room of State in the Palace of  
William the Conqueror.*

*Enter WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR, the AMBASSADOR  
OF DENMARK, DEMARCH, and other Attendants.*

*W. Con.* What news with the Denmark Am-  
bassador?

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*Amb.* Marry thus, the king of Denmark, and my  
sovereign,  
Doth send to know of thee what is the cause,  
That injuriously against the law of arms,  
Thou hast stolen away his daughter Blanch,  
The only stay and comfort of his life?  
Therefore by me he willeth thee to send her,  
Or else forthwith he'll levy such an host,  
As soon shall fetch her in despite of thee.

*W. Con.* Ambassador, this answer I return thy  
king.

He willeth me to send his daughter Blanch:  
Saying I convey'd her from the Danish court,  
That never yet did once as think thereof.  
As for his menacing and daunting threats,  
I will regard him nor his Danish power;  
For if he come to fetch her forth my realm,  
I will provide him such a banquet here,  
That he shall have small cause to give me  
thanks.

*Amb.* Is this your answer then?

*W. Con.* It is, and so he gone.

*Amb.* I go; but to your cost. [*Exit AMB.*]

*W. Con.* Demarch, our subjects erst levied in  
civil broils,

Muster forthwith for to defend the realm,  
In hope whereof that we shall find you true,  
We freely pardon this thy late offence.

*Dem.* Most humble thanks I render to your  
grace. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*The Miller's Cottage.*

*Enter the Miller and VALINGFORD.*

*Miller.* Alas, sir, why should you trouble your-  
self so much,  
Considering the imperfections of my daughter,  
Which is able to withdraw the love of any man  
from her,

As already it hath done in her first choice.  
Master Manvile hath forsaken her,  
And at Chester shall be married to a man's  
daughter of no little wealth;<sup>30</sup>  
But if my daughter knew so much,  
It would go very near her heart, I fear me.

*Val.* Father miller, such is the entire affection  
to your daughter,  
As no misfortune whatsoever can alter.  
My fellow MOUNTNEY thou see'st gave quickly  
over,

But I by reason of my good meaning  
Am not so soon to be changed,  
Although I am borne off with scorns and denial.



*Enter Em.*

*Miller.* Trust me, sir, I know not what to say,  
My daughter is not to be compell'd by me,  
But here she comes herself; speak to her and spare  
not,

For I never was troubled with love matters so  
much before.

*Em.* Good Lord! shall I never be rid of this  
importunate man?

Now must I dissemble blindness again.

Once more for thy sake, Manvile, thus am I  
enforced,

Because I shall complete my full resolved mind to  
thee.

Father where are you?

*Miller.* Here sweet Em, answer this gentleman  
That would so fain enjoy thy love.

*Em.* Where are you, sir? will you never leave  
This idle and vain pursuit of love?

Is not England stor'd enough to content you,  
But you must still trouble the poor  
Contemptible maid of Manchester?

*Val.* None can content me but the fair maid of  
Manchester.

*Em.* I perceive love is vainly describ'd,  
That being blind himself,  
Would have you likewise troubled with a blind  
wife,

Having the benefit of your eyes,  
But neither follow him so much in folly,  
But love one in whom you may better delight.

*Val.* Father miller, thy daughter shall have  
honour

By granting me her love;  
I am a gentleman of king William's court,  
And no mean man in king William's favour.

*Em.* If you be a lord, sir, as you say,  
You offer both yourself and me great wrong;  
Yours, as apparent in limiting your love so un-  
orderly,

For which you rashly endure reproachment:  
Mine, as open and evident,  
When being shut from the vanities of this world,  
You'd have me as a gazing-stock to all the world;  
For lust, not love, leads you into this error;  
But from the one I will keep me as well as I can,  
And yield the other to none but to my father,  
As I am bound by duty.

*Val.* Why fair Em, Manvile hath forsaken thee,  
And must at Chester be married, which,  
If I speak otherwise than true,  
Let thy father speak what credibly he hath heard.

D. P.

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*Em.* But can it be Manvile will deal so unkindly,  
To reward my justice with such monstrous un-  
gentleness?

Have I dissembled for thy sake,  
And dost thou now thus requite it?  
Indeed these many days I have not seen him,  
Which hath made me marvel at his long absence.  
But father, are you assur'd the words he spake,  
Were concerning Manvile?

*Miller.* In sooth daughter, now it is forth,  
I must needs confirm it.

Master Manvile hath forsaken thee,  
And at Chester must be married  
To a man's daughter of no little wealth.

His own father procures it,  
And therefore I dare credit it,  
And do thou believe it,  
For trust me good father it is so.

*Em.* Then good father pardon the injury  
That I have done to you only causing your grief,  
By over-fond affecting a man so truthless.  
And you likewise, sir, I pray hold me excus'd,  
As I hope this cause will allow sufficiently for me:  
My love to Manvile, thinking he would requite it,  
Hath made me double with my father and you,  
And many more besides,  
Which I will no longer hide from you.  
That enticing speeches should not beguile me,  
I have made myself deaf to any but to him.  
And lest any man's person should please me more  
than his,

I have dissembled the want of my sight;  
Both which shadows of my irrevocable affections,  
I have not spar'd to confirm before him.  
My father, and all other amorous solicitors;  
Wherewith not made acquainted, I perceive  
My true intent hath wrought mine own sorrow  
And seeking by love to be regarded,  
Am cut off with contempt, and despised.

*Miller.* Tell me, sweet Em, hast thou but fain'd  
all this while for his love,  
That hath so discourteously forsaken thee?

*Em.* Credit me father, I have told the truth,  
Wherewith I desire you and lord Valingford not to  
be displeas'd;  
For ought else I shall say,  
Let my present grief hold me excus'd.  
But may I live to see that ungrateful man  
Justly rewarded for his treachery,  
Poor Em would think herself not a little happy.  
Favour my departing at this instant,  
For my troubled thought desires to meditate alone  
in silence.

[Exit Em.]

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*Val.* Will not Em show one cheerful look on  
Valingford?

*Miller.* Alas, sir, blame her not, you see she  
hath good cause,

Being so handled by this gentleman:

And so I'll leave you, and go comfort my poor  
wench

As well as I may. [*Exit the Miller.*]

*Val.* Farewell, good Father. [*Exit VAL.*]

SCENE V.—*An open Place prepared for the meet-  
ing of William the Conqueror and Zweno the  
Danish King.*

*Enter KING OF DENMARK, with ROSILIO,  
and other Attendants.*

*K. Den.* Rosilio, is this the place whereat the  
Duke William should meet me?

*Rosil.* It is, and like your grace.

*K. Den.* Go, captain, away, regard the charge I  
gave:

See all our men be marshal'd for the fight.

Dispose the wards as lately was devis'd,

And let the prisoners under several guards,

Be kept apart until you hear from us.

Let this suffice, you know my resolution,

If William, duke of Saxony, be the man,

That by his answer sent us, he would send

Not words but wounds; not parleys but alarms,

Must be decider of this controversy.

Rosilio, stay with me, the rest begone. [*Exeunt.*]

*Enter WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR, and DEMARCH,  
with other Attendants.*

*W. Con.* All but Demarch go shroud you out of  
sight,

For I will go parley with the prince myself.

*Dem.* Should Zweno by this parley call you  
forth,

Upon intent injuriously to deal,

This offereth too much opportunity.

*W. Con.* No, no, Demarch, that were a breach  
Against the law of arms! therefore begone,

And leave us here alone. [*Exeunt.*]

*Re-enter KING OF DENMARK and ROSILIO.*

I see that Zweno is master of his word.

Zweno, William of Saxony greeteth thee

Either well or ill, according to thy intent.

If well thou wish to him and Saxony,

He bids thee friendly welcome as he can:

If ill thou wish to him and Saxony,

He must withstand thy malice as he may

*K. Den.* William, for other name and title give  
I none

To him, who, were he worthy of those honours

That fortune and his predecessors left,

I ought by right and humane courtesy

To grace his style with duke of Saxony.

But for I find a base degenerate mind,

I frame my speech according to the man,

And not the state that he unworthy holds.

*W. Con.* Herein Zweno dost thou abase thy  
state,

To break the peace which by our ancestors

Hath heretofore been honourably kept.

*K. Den.* And should that peace for ever have  
been kept,

Had not thyself been author of the breach;

Nor stands it with the honour of my state,

Or nature of a father to his child,

That I should so be robb'd of my daughter,

And not unto the utmost of my power

Revenge so intolerable an injury.

*W. Con.* Is this the colour of your quarrel,  
Zweno?

I well perceive the wisest men may err.

And think you I convey'd away your daughter  
Blanch?

*K. Den.* Art thou so impudent to deny thou didst  
When that the proof thereof is manifest?

*W. Con.* What proof is there?

*K. Den.* Thine own confession is sufficient proof.

*W. Con.* Did I confess I stole your daughter  
Blanch?

*K. Den.* Thou didst confess thou hadst a lady  
hence.

*W. Con.* I have and do.

*K. Den.* Why that was Blanch my daughter

*W. Con.* Nay, that was Mariana,

Who wrongfully thou detainest prisoner.

*K. Den.* Shameless persisting in thy ill,

Thou dost maintain a manifest untruth,

As she shall justify unto thy teeth.

Rosilio, fetch her and the marquis hither.

[*Exit ROSILIO for MARI.*]

*W. Con.* It cannot be I should be so deceived.

*Dem.* I hear this night among the soldiers,

That in their watch they took a pensive lady;

Who, at the appointment of the lord Dirot, is yet  
in keeping:

What she is I know not,

Only thus much I overheard by chance.

*W. Con.* And what of this?

*Dem.* It may be Blanch, the king of Denmark's  
daughter.

*W. Con.* It may be so: but on my life it is not;  
Yet Demarch, go and fetch her straight.

*Enter ROSILIO with the MARQUIS.*

*Rosil.* Pleaseth your highness, here is the Marquis and Mariana.

*K. Den.* See here, duke William, your competitors,

That were consenting to my daughter's 'scape:  
Let them resolve you of the truth herein,  
And here I vow and solemnly protest,  
That in thy presence they shall lose their heads,  
Unless I hear whereat my daughter is.

*W. Con.* O master Lubeck, how it grieveth me,  
That for my sake thou should'st endure these bonds,

Be judge my soul that feels the martyrdom.

*Lubeck.* Duke William, you know it is for your cause,

It pleaseth thus the king to misconceive of me,  
And for his pleasure doth me injure.

*Enter DEMARCH with the LADY BLANCH.*

*Dem.* May it please your highness,  
Here is the lady that you sent me for.

*W. Con.* Away Demarch, what tellest thou me  
of ladies?

I so detest the dealing of their sex,  
As that I count a lover's state to be the base  
And vildest<sup>31</sup> slavery in the world.

*Dem.* What humours are these? here's a strange alteration.

*K. Den.* See, duke William, is this Blanch or no?  
You know her, if you see her, I am sure.

*W. Con.* Zweno I was deceiv'd, yea, utterly deceiv'd,

Yet this is she: this same is lady Blanch.  
And for mine error, here I am content  
To do whatsoever Zweno shall set down.

Ah cruel Mariana thus to use  
The man which loved and honoured thee.

*Mari.* When first I came into your highness' court,

And William often importing me of love;<sup>32</sup>  
I did devise to ease the grief your daughter did sustain:

She should meet sir William, masked as I it were.  
This put in proof, did take so good effect,  
As yet it seems his grace is not resolv'd,  
But it was I which he convey'd away.

*W. Con.* May this be true? It cannot be but true.

Was it lady Blanch which I convey'd away?

Inconstant Mariana,  
Thus to deal with him which meant to thee nought  
but faith.

*Blanch.* Pardon dear father my follies that are past,

Wherein I have neglected my duty  
Which I in reverence ought to show your grace.  
For led by love I thus have gone astray,  
And now repent the errors I was in.

*K. Den.* Stand up, dear daughter, though thy fault deserves

For to be punish'd in the extremest sort;  
Yet love that covers multitude of sins,  
Makes love in parents wink at children's faults.  
Sufficeth Blanch thy father loves thee so,  
Thy follies past he knows, but will not know.  
Duke William take my daughter to thy wife,  
For well I am assured she loves thee well.

*W. Con.* A proper conjunction; as who should say,  
Lately come out of the fire,

I would go thrust myself into the flame.  
Let mistress nice go saint it where she list,  
And coyly quaint it with dissembling face,  
I hold in scorn the fooleries that they use,  
I being free will ne'er subject myself  
To such as she is underneath the sun.

*K. Den.* Refusest thou to take my daughter to thy wife?

I tell thee, duke, this rash denial  
May cause more mischief than thou canst avoid.<sup>33</sup>

*W. Con.* Conceit hath wrought such general dislike,

Through the false dealing of Mariana,  
That utterly I do abhor their sex.

They are all disloyal, inconstant, all unjust;  
Who tries as I have tried, and finds as I have found,  
Will say there's no such creatures on the ground.<sup>34</sup>

*Blanch.* Inconstant knight, though some deserve  
no trust,  
There's others faithful, loving, loyal, just.

*Enter VALINGFORD, with EM and the Miller, MOUNTNEY, MANVILLE, and ELMER.*

*W. Con.* How now Lord Valingford, what makes these women here?

*Val.* Here be two women, may it please your grace,

That are contracted to one man,  
And are in strife whether shall have him to their husband.

*W. Con.* Stand forth women and say,  
To whether of you did he first give his faith.

*Em.* To me forsooth.

*Elner.* To me my gracious lord.

*W. Con.* Speak, Manvile, to whether didst thou give thy faith?

*Man.* To say the truth, this maid had first my love.

*Elner.* Yea, Manvile, but there was no witness by.

*Em.* Thy conscience, Manvile, is a hundred witnesses.

*Elner.* She hath stol'n a conscience to serve her own turn;

But you are deceived, i'faith he will none of you.

*Man.* Indeed, dread lord, so dear I held her love, As in the same I put my whole delight.

But some impediments which at that instant happen'd,

Made me forsake her quite,

For which I had her father's frank consent.

*W. Con.* What were the impediments?

*Man.* Why she could neither hear nor see.

*W. Con.* Now she doth both. Maiden, how were you cured?

*Em.* Pardon me, my lord, I'll tell your grace the truth,

Be it not imputed to me as discredit.

I lov'd this Manvile so much, that still methought

When he was absent, did present to me

The form and feature of that countenance

Which I did shrine an idol in my heart;

And never could I see a man methought

That equal'd Manvile in my partial eye.

Nor was there any love between us lost,

But that I held the same in high regard,

Until repair of some unto our house,

Of whom my Manvile grew thus jealous;

As if he took exception I vouchsaf'd

To hear them speak, or saw them when they came;

On which I straight took order with myself

To void the scruple of his conscience,

By counterfeiting that I neither saw nor heard,

Anyways to rid my hands of them.

All this I did to keep my Manvile's love,

Which he unkindly seeks for to reward.

*Man.* And did my Em to keep her faith with me,

Dissemble that she neither heard nor saw?

Pardon me sweet Em, for I am only thine.

*Em.* Lay off thy hands, disloyal as thou art!

Nor shalt thou have possession of my love,

That canst so finely shift thy matters off.

Put case I had been blind and could not see,

As oftentimes such visitations fall,

That pleaseth God, which all things doth dispose;

Shouldst thou forsake me in regard of that?

I tell thee, Manvile, hadst thou been blind,

Or deaf, or dumb, or else what impediments

Might befall to man, Em would have lov'd, and kept,

And honour'd thee; yea, begg'd if wealth had fail'd

For thy relief.

*Man.* Forgive me, sweet Em.

*Em.* I do forgive thee with my heart,

And will forget thee too if case I can;

But never speak to me, nor seem to know me.

*Man.* Then farewell frost; well fare a wench that will.

Now, Elner, I am thine own, my girl.

*Elner.* Mine, Manvile? thou never shalt be mine.

I so detest thy villany,

That whilst I live I will abhor thy company.

*Man.* Is it come to this? of late, I had choice of twain

On either side to have me to her husband,

And now am utterly rejected of them both.

*Val.* My lord, this gentleman when time was

Stood something in our light,

And now I think it not amiss

To laugh at him that sometime scorn'd at us.

*Moun.* Content, my lord, invent the form.

*Val.* Then thus—

*W. Con.* I see that women are not general evils,

Blanch is fair; methinks I see in her,

A modest countenance, a heavenly blush.

Zweno, receive a reconcil'd foe,

Not as thy friend, but as thy son-in-law,

If so that thou be thus content.

*K. Den.* I joy to see your grace so tractable.

Here, take my daughter Blanch,

And after my decease the Denmark crown.

*W. Con.* Now, sir, bow stands the case with you?

*Man.* I partly am persuaded as your grace is,

My lord, he is best at ease that meddleth least.

*Val.* Sir, may a man be so bold

As to crave a word with you?

*Man.* Yea, two or three; what are they?

*Val.* I say, this maid will have thee to her husband.<sup>35</sup>

*Moun.* And I say this: and thereof will I lay an hundred pound.

*Val.* And I say this: whereon I will lay as much.

*Man.* And I say neither: what say you to that?

*Moun.* If that be true, then are we both deceiv'd.

*Man.* Why, it is true, and you are both deceiv'd.

*Mar.* In mine eyes, this is the properest wench.  
Might I advise thee, take her unto thy wife.

*K. Den.* It seems to me, she hath refus'd him.

*Lubeck.* Why there's the spite.

*K. Den.* If one refuse him, yet may he have the other.

*Lubeck.* He will ask but her good will, and all her friends.

*K. Den.* Might I advise thee, let them both alone.

*Man.* Yea, that's the course, and thereon will I stand,

Such idle love henceforth I will detest.

*Val.* The fox will eat no grapes, and why?

*Mount.* I know full well, because they hang too high.

*W. Con.* And may it be a miller's daughter by her birth?

I cannot think but she is better born.

*Val.* Sir Thomas Goddard hight this reverend man,<sup>36</sup>

Fam'd for his virtues, and his good success:  
Whose fame hath been renown'd through the world.

*W. Con.* Sir Thomas Goddard, welcome to thy prince,

And fair Em, frolic with thy good father.

As glad am I to find sir Thomas Goddard,

As good sir Edmund Treford on the plains;

He like a shepherd, thou our country miller.

*Miller.* And longer let not Goddard live a day,  
Than he in honour loves his sovereign.

*W. Con.* But say sir Thomas, shall I give thy daughter?

*Miller.* Goddard, and all that he hath,  
Doth rest at the pleasure of your majesty.

*W. Con.* And what says Em to lovely Valingford?  
It seem'd he loved you well,

That for your sake durst leave his king.

*Em.* Em rests at the pleasure of your highness;  
And would I were a wife for his desert.

*W. Con.* Then here lord Valingford, receive fair Em.

Here take her, make her thy espous'd wife.

Then go we in, that preparation may be made,

To see these nuptials solemnly performed.

[*Exeunt all. Flourish of drums and trumpets.*]

# NOTES TO FAIR EM; THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER OF MANCHESTER.

<sup>1</sup> *To rid my bosom of these thravelled dumps.*

That is, enslaving sorrows, settled melancholy. The word *dumps* was used by our ancient dramatists in a serious sense; with us it is employed in a comic one, and to denote pettish ill-humour rather than deep despondency.

<sup>2</sup> *Whose beauty and excess of ornaments.*

*Ornaments* is here used for accomplishments; her beauty and great acquirements.

<sup>3</sup> *Nor bear I this an argument of love.*

That is, he did not bear the portrait of the lady Blanch upon his shield because he sought her love; but as a memorial of loyalty and affection towards his sovereign, he wears the portrait of that prince's only daughter as his armorial bearings.

*That earst*, i.e. that once, in time past.

<sup>5</sup> *Must stoop from high estate.*

I have printed this drama from the earliest edition known, that of 1631. It is full of evident corruptions, and was certainly never corrected by the author. It appears to have been taken from a copy written from dictation by one who was more anxious to complete his task than to ensure its accuracy. Under these circumstances I have made a perhaps liberal use of an editor's privilege in expunging some utterly unnecessary words which clogged the lines, and of altering others that appear incorrect. I have thought it right to make this statement at the outset, and I shall mention all deviations, of the smallest importance, from the old copy in the notes. The edition, 1631, reads in the line above quoted—

Must stoop to high estate.

This being unintelligible, as we do not stoop to reach an eminence, I have substituted *from* for *to*.

<sup>6</sup> *Which led in greater port.*

*Greater port* is a loftier or more ostentatious style of living.

<sup>7</sup> *The substance of the shadow that you saw.*

That is, the original of the picture with which you were so captivated.

<sup>8</sup> *Not that I find occasion to mislike.*

The old copy reads *of* mislike.

<sup>9</sup> *A graceful body were it fram'd of wax.*

I am responsible for the word *graceful*. The old copy reads defectively—

A body were it framed of wax.

Some word equivalent to the one I have interpolated has evidently been dropped by the compositor

<sup>10</sup> *A certain odd conceit*, i.e. a strange fancy.

<sup>11</sup> *So, sir, we are thorough for that love.*

The old copy reads—thorough for that L. This is unintelligible, something has been omitted. I have therefore added three letters and converted L. into *love*. This, if not perfectly satisfactory, gives at least a meaning, i.e., "So, sir, I am to understand we are both completely and fully in love with that lady."

<sup>12</sup> *Bad world, where wealth's esteem'd above them all.*

The old copy reads harshly—

Bad world, where riches is esteemed above them all.

I have erased the redundant syllables, and restored the line to the state in which it was doubtless written. The transcriber of this play had an ear, and so has an ass.

<sup>13</sup> *With a kerchief on his head.*

I have here erased a part of the stage direction, and two lines in the dialogue which succeeds, for which labour the modest will thank me, and the bold may rest assured they have no loss to regret. The omitted lines are as frivolous as they are offensive. Dr. Johnson has somewhere observed, that there are higher laws than those of criticism.

<sup>14</sup> *At the phisimiearie's house.*

Trotter, who is not one of the learned, means he has been to a physician.

<sup>15</sup> *Gives testes*, i.e. testimony.

<sup>16</sup> *May not a maid talk with a man without mistrust?*

For the sake of metre, it would be better to read—

May not a maiden talk without mistrust.

<sup>17</sup> *Without desert of me.*

That is, without encouragement from me.

<sup>18</sup> *Such kind remorse.*

*Remorse* is frequently used by our old writers for pity, compassion.

<sup>19</sup> *But that unites in honourable bands.*

Old copy reads redundantly—in honourable bands of holy rites.

<sup>20</sup> *A horn nightcap to keep in his wit.*

An allusion to the horns said to be worn by injured husbands; our ancestors seem never to have become weary of any possible variation of this dull coarse jest.

<sup>21</sup> *Conster*, i.e. construe, interpret.

NOTES TO FAIR EM; THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER OF MANCHESTER.

<sup>22</sup> *Oh blind sir, blind, stricken blind by mishap on a sudden.*

I would read—

Blind, sir, blind; stricken blind on a sudden.

Thus would the metre be rendered perfect and the line more forcible.

<sup>23</sup> *And have the gods so unmercifully thwarted my expectations.*

The gods are several times alluded to throughout this drama; the author seems to have forgotten that he had laid his scene in a christian country.

<sup>44</sup> *And no more persist to solicit for her love.*

The old copy reads—

And not any more persist to solicit her of love.

<sup>25</sup> *Let us leave this quest.*

The old copy reads *quest*: as that supplies no meaning, I have substituted *quest*, no doubt the word used by the author.

<sup>26</sup> *And so I betake you to your journey.*

That is, I will conduct you to the commencement of your journey; see you off.

<sup>27</sup> *God speed, sir, might a man crave a word or two with you?*

Apparent corruptions are very numerous throughout this comedy, and the lines so overburdened with unnecessary words, that I am convinced they were the interpolations of some ignorant scribe or player. In the present case I would read—

God speed, sir, might I crave a word with you?

The line is then verse; as it stands it is prose.

<sup>28</sup> *I have been acquainted with him in times past.*

I am responsible for the words *with him*, which were necessary to complete the line.

<sup>29</sup> *I cry you mercy*, i.e. I ask you pardon.

<sup>30</sup> *And at Chester shall be married to a man's daughter of no little wealth.*

We should get rid of some of the redundant syllables of this line by reading—

And at Chester shall be married to a lady of great wealth.

<sup>31</sup> *Vildest*, an obsolete word signifying vilest.

<sup>32</sup> *Importing me of love.*

That is, *importuning*; Shakspeare has frequently used the word *important* for *importunate*.

<sup>33</sup> *May cause more mischief than thou canst avoid.*

Old copy reads redundantly—

May bring more mischief on thee than thou canst avoid.

<sup>34</sup> *Will find there's no such creatures on the ground.*

That is, no other creatures so disposed to evil.

<sup>35</sup> *I say, this maid will have thee to her husband.*

The meaning of this and the five following lines is not very clear; I suppose Valingford and Mountney are jocosely taunting Manville about having lost both the ladies by his selfishness, Valingford asserting that one maid will have the disgraced lover for her husband, and Mountney offering to wager that the other will have him, although both had very positively rejected him. The sarcasm is not very bitter, or the fun very obvious; but the gentlemen are lovers, not wits.

<sup>36</sup> *Sir Thomas Goddard, hight this reverent man.*

*Hight* is an old Saxon word, still sometimes used by poets, meaning, was named, or was called. This reverent man was called Sir Thomas Goddard. In the following line we are told he was—

Fam'd for his virtues and his good success.

The author is a little forgetful here, as the misfortunes and want of success of Sir Thomas form one of the chief incidents of the drama.

H. T.

## Mucedorus.

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THIS little comedy, or at least the earliest edition we now possess of it, made its appearance in the year 1598, with the following title: *A most pleasant Comedy of Mucedorus, the King's Sonne of Valentia, and Amadine, the King's Daughter of Arragon, with the merry Conceits of Mouse.* It enjoyed a remarkable popularity, was frequently reprinted, and even revived after the Restoration. Mr. C. Knight is very severe in his condemnation of this little production, styling it a "rude, inartificial, unpoetical, and altogether effete performance." I cannot coincide in this wholesale censure, but, on the contrary, esteem it as a pleasing and lively comedy, in which the interest never flags, or if so, but for a moment, and which frequently exhibits a warm and luxuriant vein of poetry. Throughout it there is the fresh sweet breath and glow of forest life; and the numerous adventures of the prince and princess are so far skilfully treated that we readily yield ourselves to a belief of them.

The interest of the production is not so essentially comic as romantic; indeed, of its comic portions I must speak very slightly. Mouse, the clown, is certainly rather impertinent than amusing; he is very persevering in his attempts at fun, but his sallies are strained and unnatural. Some latitude, however, must be allowed to a licensed fool. Still his struggles with the bear, which he tumbles over in his attempt to avoid, and his practical tricks upon the old woman whose mug he had stolen, doubtless afforded immense amusement to the uneducated members of the audience before whom the play was represented. Probably the mirth arising from these tricks was not confined to the uneducated; rude gambols have sometimes diverted grave minds. A profound mathematician has declared that to witness a pantomime was an inexpressible delight to him; and a distinguished American thinker said that a ballet aroused in him religious emotions. In the same way we may suppose that the nobles of the time of Elizabeth were diverted by the "merry conceits" of Master Mouse.

As a poetic drama, however, it is but just to speak highly of this production. The scene in which occurs the meeting in the forest of the princess Amadine with the wild man, who adopts the savage resolution of killing her that he may gratify his cannibal appetite by feeding on her flesh, is written with a bold and terror-striking pen. The savage having raised his ponderous and knotted club aloft, is suddenly impressed with the beauty and helpless innocence of the forlorn maiden; feelings till then unknown overpower him, his brutal violence is dashed,

With sudden adoration and blank awe.

He is an illustration of the poet Milton's fine lines:—

Some say, no evil thing that walks by night,  
In fog or fire, by lake or moorish fen,  
Blue meagre hag, or stubborn unlaid ghost  
That breaks his magic chains at curfew time;  
No goblin, or swart faery of the mine,  
Hath hurtful power o'er true virginity.

After a vain attempt to revive his ferocious courage, and to strike the trembling girl, who, with pallid lips and closed eyes is kneeling at his feet, he thus acknowledges the power of beauty:—

I cannot wield my weapons in my hand,  
Methinks I should not strike so fair a one;  
I think her beauty hath bewitch'd my force  
Or else with me altered nature's course.



## MUCEDORUS.

This reveals both dramatic power and poetic beauty. The scene, also, in which the savage courts Amadine after he is subdued by her beauty, is exceedingly graceful and elegant; the language is that of a true poet, and abounds in luxurious description, heightened and adorned by imaginative power. It is invested with captivating ideality. Some may object that it is a mode of speech which a wild man, living in solitude apart from all the graces of life, and ignorant of the arts of oratory, would not be very likely to adopt. But in considering works of fiction and poetry, we must not be too literal; we should be careful that we do not, like Sterne's critic, gaze at works of art, or efforts of genius, with a stop-watch or a foot-rule in our hands. A large-souled, kindly criticism, which will lend itself to an endeavour to realize the creations of the poet, is the most generous and perhaps the most philosophical. To censure is the easiest thing in the world; justly to appreciate perhaps the most difficult. The highest class of critics do not crouch and glare like tigers, ready to spring upon every defect they may observe, and tear and rend without either pity or discretion, but sometimes, like the dove, they gently let fall the laurel upon the brows of the struggling author. Even if severity may improve the living, it is lost upon the dead; we must take what they have written as we find it, and make the best of it; and the best is to glean from it all of truth and beauty that it can by possibility afford. The living poet, also, may expostulate with us, and say in the language of Ben Jonson:—

Good men, and virtuous spirits, that loathe vice,  
Will cherish my free labours, love my lines,  
And with the fervour of their shining grace  
Make my brain fruitful, to bring forth more objects,  
Worthy their serious and intente eyes.

To return to the production under consideration: the devoted affection of Amadine do doubt won the admiration of the audiences before whom the comedy was represented, and indeed it deserved to do so. In her the author has presented a very sweet and pleasing sketch of womanly tenderness and devotion. What a contrast she presents to the brutal monster, Breuno—another Caliban and Miranda. Mucedorus is a noble young prince: adventurous, brave, and generous; but he subjects the devotion of his mistress to too many and too severe trials; but her patience and her warm trusting heart triumph over all. Her first lover, Segasto, I am inclined to pronounce an unnatural character. He is cowardly and treacherous; deserting his lady in danger, desirous of destroying his rival by the hand of a bravo, and then afterwards, by some unaccountable moral transformation, becomes good-tempered and generous, is forgiven by those whom he sought to injure, and forgives those whom he considered sought to injure him. He bears some distant resemblance to Shakspeare's character of Cloten; but Cloten does not undergo any such moral change, and become a virtuous and very estimable man. The Ethiop cannot change his skin, or the leopard his spots; and men's natures may be modified but not radically altered.

In taking leave of this little comedy, it is, I think, scarcely necessary to affirm to the reflective reader that it is not the work of Shakspeare, or to add, that whoever was the author, it is a pleasant little dramatic romance, slightly constructed, but possessing considerable interest and occasional gleams of a high poetic talent. Let none grudge it a place in the library among the more perfect and finished productions of a later age.

H. T.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

ADRASTUS, *King of Aragon.*

*Appears, sc. 4 ; sc. 7 ; sc. 13.*

KING OF VALENTIA.

*Appears, sc. 9 ; sc. 13.*

MUCEDORUS, *Son of the King of Valentia.*

*Appears, sc. 1 ; sc. 3 ; sc. 5 ; sc. 7 ; sc. 8 ; sc. 10 ; sc. 11 ;  
sc. 12 ; sc. 13.*

ANSELMO, *a Noble in the confidence of Prince  
Mucedorus.*

*Appears, sc. 1 ; sc. 9 ; sc. 13.*

SEGASTO, *a wealthy Noble of Aragon, engaged to  
Amadine.*

*Appears, sc. 3 ; sc. 5 ; sc. 7 ; sc. 8 ; sc. 11 ; sc. 12 ; sc. 13.*

TREMELIO, *a Captain of Aragon, and Friend to  
Segasto.*

*Appears, sc. 4 ; sc. 5.*

COLLIN, *a Counsellor of the King of Aragon.*

*Appears, sc. 4 ; sc. 13.*

MOUSE, *the Clown.*

*Appears, sc. 2 ; sc. 3 ; sc. 5 ; sc. 7 ; sc. 8 ; sc. 10 ; sc. 11 ;  
sc. 12 ; sc. 13.*

BREMO, *a Wild Man.*

*Appears, sc. 6 ; sc. 8 ; sc. 11 ; sc. 12.*

RUMBELLO, *a Soldier in the service of Segasto.*

*Appears, sc. 11.*

RODERIGO, } *Nobles attending on the King of*  
BRACHIUS, } *Valentia.*

*Appear, sc. 9 ; sc. 13.*

AMADINE, *the Daughter of the King of Aragon.*

*Appears, sc. 3 ; sc. 4 ; sc. 7 ; sc. 8 ; sc. 11 ; sc. 12 ; sc. 13.*

ARIENA, *Amadine's Maid.*

*Appears, sc. 7.*

AN OLD WOMAN, *Keeper of an Alchouse.*

*Appears, sc. 8.*

COMEDY.

ENVY.

*Appear, in the Induction and at the end of the piece.*

*Counsellors, a Prisoner, a Messenger, a Page, and  
Attendants.*

SCENE.—*First at VALENTIA, afterwards at  
ARAGON, and a Forest near it.*

[NOTE.—This Comedy is complete in One Act ; the old copies are not divided into scenes—I am responsible for the arrangement in that respect.—ED.]

# Mucedorus.

## PROLOGUE.

Most sacred majesty,<sup>1</sup> whose great deserts,  
Thy subject England, nay, the world admires ;  
Which heaven grant still increase, O may your praise  
Multiplying with your hours, your fame still raise :  
Embrace your council: Love, with Faith them guide,  
That both as one bench, by the other's side.  
So may your life pass on, and so run even,  
That your firm zeal plant you a throne in heaven,

Where smiling angels shall your guardians be,  
From blemish'd traitors stain'd with perjury :  
And as the night's inferior to the day,  
So be all earthly regions to your sway.  
Be as the sun to day, the day to night ;  
For from your beams Europe shall borrow light.  
Mirth drown your bosom, fair Delight your mind,  
And may our pastime your contentment find.

## INDUCTION.

*Enter COMEDY joyfully, with a Garland of Bays on her Head.*

*Com.* Why so, thus do I hope to please :  
Music revives, and mirth is tolerable :  
Comedy, play thy part and please :  
Make merry them that come to joy with thee :  
Joy then good gentles, I hope to make you laugh :  
Sound forth Bellona's silver tun'd strings,<sup>2</sup>  
Time fits us well, the day and place is ours.

*Enter ENVY, his Arms naked, besmeared with Blood.*

*Envy.* Nay, stay, minion, stay, there lies a block  
What, all on mirth ? I'll interrupt your tale,  
And mix your music with a tragic end.

*Com.* What monstrous ugly hag is this,  
That dares controul the pleasures of our will ?  
Vaunt, churlish cur, besmeared with gory blood,  
That seem'st to check the blossom of delight,  
And still the sound of sweet Bellona's breath :  
Blush, monster, blush, and post away with shame,  
That seek'st disturbance of a goddess' name.

*Envy.* Post hence thyself thou counterchecking  
trull,  
I will possess this habit spite of thee,  
And gain the glory of this wish'd part ;  
I'll thunder music shall appal the nymphs,

And make them shiver their clattering strings,  
Flying for succour to their Danish caves.  
[*A sound of Drums within, and cries of "Stab,"*  
"stab."

Hearken, thou shalt hear noise  
Shall fill the air with shrilling sound :  
And thunder music to the gods above :  
Mars shall himself breathe down  
A peerless crown upon brave Envy's head,  
And raise his chival<sup>3</sup> with a lasting fame :  
In this brave music Envy takes delight,  
Where I may see them wallow in their blood,  
To spurn at arms and legs quite shivered off,<sup>4</sup>  
And hear the cries of many thousand slain :  
How lik'st thou this my trull ? 'tis sport alone for  
me.

*Com.* Vaunt, bloody cur, nurst up with tiger's sap,  
That so dost quail a woman's mind :  
Comedy is mild, gentle, willing for to please,  
And seeks to gain the love of all estates ;  
Delighting in mirth, mix'd all with lovely tales ;  
And bringeth things with treble joy to pass.  
Thou bloody, envious, disdainful of men's joys ;  
Whose name is wrought with bloody stratagems,  
Delights in nothing but in spoil and death,  
Where thou may'st trample in their luke-warm  
blood,

And grasp their hearts within thy curséd paws ;  
 Yet veil thy mind, revenge thee not on me,  
 A silly woman begs it at thy hands.  
 Give me the leave to utter out my play :  
 Forbear this place, I humbly crave thee hence,  
 And mix not death amongst pleasing comedies,  
 That treat nought else but pleasure and delight :  
 If any spark of human rests in thee,  
 Forbear, begone, tender the suit of me.<sup>5</sup>

*Envy.* Why so I will ; forbearance shall be such,  
 As treble death shall cross thee with despite,  
 And make thee mourn where most thou joyest,  
 Turning thy mirth into a deadly dole,<sup>6</sup>  
 Whirling thy pleasures with a peal of death,  
 And drench thy methods in a sea of blood ;  
 Thus will I do ; thus shall I bear with thee,  
 And more to vex thee with a deeper spite,  
 I will with threats of blood begin the play,  
 Favouring thee with Envy and with Hate.

*Com.* Then, ugly monster, do thy worst,  
 I will defend them in despite of thee ;<sup>7</sup>  
 And though thou thinkest with tragic fumes  
 To prove my play unto my great disgrace,  
 I force it not,<sup>8</sup> I scorn what thou canst do :  
 I'll grace it so, thyself shall it confess,  
 From tragic stuff to be a pleasant comedy.

*Envy.* Why then, Comedy, send the actors  
 forth,

And I will cross the first step of their trade,  
 Making them fear the very dart of death.

*Com.* And I'll defend them, maugre all thy  
 spite :

So, ugly fiend, farewell till time shall serve,  
 That we may meet to parley for the best.

*Envy.* Content, Comedy, I'll go spread my branch,  
 And scattered blossoms from my envious tree  
 Shall prove two monsters spoiling of their joys.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE I.—*An Apartment at the Court of the  
 King of Valentia.*

*Enter MUCEDORUS, and ANSELMO, his Friend.*

*Muc.* Anselmo ?

*Ansel.* My lord and friend,  
 Whose dear affections bosom with my heart,  
 And keep their domination in one orb ;  
 Whence ne'er disloyalty shall root it forth,  
 But faith plant firmer in your choice respect.

*Muc.* Much blame were mine if I should other  
 deem,  
 Nor can coy fortune contrary allow ;  
 But my Anselmo, loth I am to say, I must estrange  
 that friendship.

Misconstrue not, 'tis from the realm, not thee :  
 Though lands part bodies, hearts keep company ;  
 Thou know'st that I imparted often have,  
 Private relations with my royal sire,  
 Had, as concerning beauteous Amadine,  
 Rich Aragon's bright jewel ; whose face (some say)  
 That blooming lilies never shone so gay ;  
 Excelling, not excell'd ; yet lest report  
 Does mangle verity, boasting of what is not,  
 Wing'd with desire, thither I'll straight repair,  
 And be my fortunes as my thoughts are fair.

*Ansel.* Will you forsake Valentia ? leave the  
 court ?

Absent you from the eye of sovereignty ?  
 Do not, sweet prince, adventure on that task,  
 Since danger lurks each where, be won from it.

*Muc.* Desist dissuasion,  
 My resolution brooks no battery,  
 Therefore if thou retain thy wonted form,  
 Assist what I intend.

*Ansel.* Your miss<sup>9</sup> will breed a blemish in the court,  
 And throw a frosty dew upon that beard,  
 Whose front Valentia stoops to.

*Muc.* If thou my welfare tender, then no more,  
 Let love's strong magic charm thy trivial phrase,  
 Wasted as vainly as to gripe the sun :  
 Augment not then mere answer ; lock thy lips,  
 Unless thy wisdom sure me with disguise,  
 According to my purpose.

*Ansel.* That action craves no counsel,  
 Since what you rightly are, will mere command,  
 Than best usurpéd shape.

*Muc.* Thou still art opposite in disposition.  
 A more obscure servile habiliment  
 Becems this enterprise.

*Ansel.* Then like a Florentine or mountebank.

*Muc.* 'Tis much too tedious, I dislike thy judg-  
 ment,

My mind is grafted on a humbler stock.

*Ansel.* Within my closet does there hang a  
 eassock,

Though base the weed is, 'twas a shepherd's  
 Which I presented in lord Julins' mask.<sup>10</sup>

*Muc.* That my Anselmo, and nought else but that,  
 Mask Mucedorus from the vulgar view :  
 That habit suits my mind, fetch me that weed.

[*Exit ANSEL.*]

Better than kings have not disdain'd that state,  
And much inferior to obtain their mate.

*Re-enter ANSELMO with a Shepherd's Coat.*

So, let our respect command thy secrecy,—  
At once a brief farewell,  
Delay to lovers is a second hell. [Exit Muc.

*Ansel.* Prosperity forerun thee; awkward chance,  
Never be neighbour to thy wish's venture,  
Content and fame advance thee. Ever thrive,  
And glory thy mortality survive.

SCENE II.—*The Outskirts of a Forest near Aragon.*

*Enter MOUSE with a Bottle of Hay.<sup>11</sup>*

*Mouse.* O horrible, terrible! was ever poor gentleman so scar'd out of his seven senses? A bear? Nay sure it cannot be a bear, but some devil in a bear's doublet; for a bear could never have had that agility to have frighted me. Well, I'll see my father hang'd before I'll serve his horse any more. Well, I'll carry home my bottle of hay, and for once let my father's horse turn Puritan, and observe fasting days, for he gets not a bit. But soft, this way she followed me, therefore I'll take the other path, and because I'll be sure to have an eye to her, I will shake hands with some foolish creditor, and make every step backward.

[*As he goes backward the Bear comes in, and he tumbles over her, and runs away, leaving his bottle of hay behind him.*

SCENE III.—*Another part of the Forest.*

*Enter SEGASTO running, and AMADINE after him, being pursued by a Bear.*

*Seg.* O fly madam, fly, or else we are but dead.

*Ama.* Help, Segasto, help, help sweet Segasto, or else I die.

*Seg.* Alas, madam, there is no way but flight; Then haste and save yourself. [Exit running.

*Ama.* Why then I die. Oh! help me in distress.

*Enter MUCEDORUS like a Shepherd, with a Sword drawn, and a Bear's Head in his Hand.*

*Muc.* Stay, lady, stay, and be no more dismay'd,  
That cruel beast most merciless and fell,  
Affrighted many with his hard pursues,  
Prying from place to place to find his prey,  
Prolonging thus his life by others' death:  
His carcase now lies headless, void of breath.

*Ama.* That foul deform'd monster, is he dead?

*Muc.* Assure yourself thereof, behold his head,

Which if it please you, lady, to accept,  
With willing heart I yield it to your majesty.

*Ama.* Thanks, worthy shepherd, thanks a thousand times:

This gift, assure thyself, contents me more,  
Than greatest bounty of a mighty prince,  
Although he were the monarch of the world.

*Muc.* Most gracious goddess, more than mortal wight,

Your heavenly hue of right imports no less;  
Most glad am I, in that it was my chance  
To undertake this enterprise in hand,  
Which doth so greatly glad your princely mind.

*Ama.* No goddess (shepherd), but a mortal wight,  
A mortal wight distressed as thou see'st;

My father here is king of Aragon,  
I, Amadine, his only daughter am,  
And after him sole heir unto the crown:

Now, whereas it is my father's will  
To marry me unto Segasto,  
One whose wealth, through father's former usury,  
Is known to be no less than wonderful:

We both of custom oftentimes did use,  
(Leaving the court) to walk within the fields  
For recreation, especially the spring,

In that it yields great store of rare delights:  
And passing farther than our wonted walks,  
Scarcely enter'd within these luckless woods,

But right before us down a steepfast hill,  
A monstrous ugly bear did hie him fast  
To meet us both: I faint to tell the rest,  
Good shepherd; but suppose the ghastly looks,  
The hideous fears, the hundred thousand woes  
Which at this instant Amadine sustain'd.

*Muc.* Yet, worthy princess, let thy sorrows cease  
And let this sight your former joys revive.

*Ama.* Believe me, shepherd, so it doth no less.

*Muc.* Long may they last unto your heart's content;

But tell me, lady, what is become of him,  
Segasto call'd,—what is become of him?

*Ama.* I know not, I, that know the powers divine,

But God grant this, that sweet Segasto live.

*Muc.* Yet hard-hearted he in such a case,

So cowardly to save himself by flight,  
And leave so brave a princess to the spoil.

*Ama.* Well, shepherd, for thy worthy valour tried,

Endangering thyself to set me free,  
Unrecompens'd sure thou shalt not be:

In court thy courage shall be plainly known.  
Bear thou the head of this most monstrous beast.

In open sight to every courtier's view :  
So will the king, my father, thee reward.  
Come, let's away, and guard me to the court.

*Muc.* With all my heart. [*Exeunt.*]

*Enter SEGASTO, solus.*

*Seg.* When heaps of harms do hover overhead,  
'Tis time as then (some say) to look about,  
And of ensuing harms to choose the least.  
But hard, yea hapless is that wretch's chance,  
Luckless his lot, and catiff-like accurst,  
At whose proceedings fortune ever frown  
Myself I mean, most subject unto thrall :  
For I, the more I seek to shun the worst,  
The more by proof I find myself accurst.  
Erewhiles assaulted with an ugly bear,  
Fair Amadine in company all alone,  
Forthwith by flight I thought to save myself,  
Leaving my Amadine unto her shifts :  
For death it was for to resist the bear,  
And death no less of Amadine's harms to bear.  
Accurséd I, in lingering life thus long :  
In living thus, each minute of an hour  
Doth pierce my heart with darts of thousand deaths :  
If she by flight her fury doth escape,  
What will she think ?  
Will she not say, yea flatly to my face,  
Accusing me of mere disloyalty,—  
A trusty friend is tried in time of need :  
But I, when she in danger was of death,  
And needed me, and cried, Segasto, help,  
I turn'd my back and quickly ran away ;  
Unworthy I to bear this vital breath :  
But what, what need these plaints ?  
If Amadine do live, then happy I,  
She will in time forgive and so forget :  
Amadine is merciful, not Juno-like,  
In harmful hearts to harbour hatred long.

*Enter MOUSE, the Clown, running; crying "Clubs!"*

*Mouse.* Clubs, prongs, pitchforks, bills! Oh help!  
A bear, a bear, a bear!

*Seg.* Still bears, and nothing but bears.  
Tell me, sirrah, where she is.

*Mouse.* O, sir, she is run down the woods ;  
I saw her white head, and her white belly.

*Seg.* Thou talk'st of wonders to tell me of  
white bears ;

But, sirrah, didst thou ever see any such ?

*Mouse.* No, faith, I never saw any such :  
But I remember my father's words.

He bade me take heed I was not caught with the  
white bear.

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*Seg.* A lamentable tale, no doubt.

*Mouse.* I'll tell you what, sir ; as I was going  
a-field to serve my father's great horse, and carried  
a bottle of hay upon my head : now, do you see,  
sir, I fast hood-wink'd that I should see nothing ;  
I, perceiving the bear coming, threw my hay into  
the hedge, and ran away.

*Seg.* What, from nothing ?

*Mouse.* I warrant you yes, I saw something ; for  
there was two loads of thorns besides my bottle of  
hay, and that made three.

*Seg.* But tell me, sirrah, the bear that thou didst  
see,

Did she not bear a bucket on her arm ?

*Mouse.* Ha, ha, ha, I never saw a bear go a-milk-  
ing in all my life. But hark you, sir, I did not  
look so high as her arm ; I saw nothing but her  
white head, and her white belly.

*Seg.* But tell me, sirrah, where dost thou dwell ?

*Mouse.* Why, do you not know me ?

*Seg.* Why no ; how should I know thee ?

*Mouse.* Why then you know nobody, and you  
know not me : I tell you, sir, I am goodman Rats'  
son, of the next parish over the hill.

*Seg.* Goodman Rats' son, what's thy name ?

*Mouse.* Why, I am very near kin unto him.

*Seg.* I think so ; but what's thy name ?

*Mouse.* My name ? I have a very pretty name.  
I'll tell you what my name is ; my name is Mouse.

*Seg.* What, plain Mouse ?

*Mouse.* Ay, plain Mouse, without either welt or  
gard<sup>12</sup> But do you hear, sir, I am a very young  
mouse, for my tail is scarce grown out yet ; look  
here else.

*Seg.* But, I pray you, who gave you that name ?

*Mouse.* Faith, sir, I know not that, but if you  
would fain know, ask my father's great horse, for  
he hath been half-a-year longer with my father  
than I have.

*Seg.* This seems to be a merry fellow,  
I care not if I take him home with me ;  
Mirth is a comfort to a troubled mind,  
A merry man a merry master makes.

How say'st thou, sirrah, wilt thou dwell with me ?

*Mouse.* Nay, soft, sir, two words to a bargain.  
Pray, what occupation are you ?

*Seg.* No occupation ; I live upon my lands.

*Mouse.* Your lands ? away, you are no master  
for me. Why, do you think that I am so mad to  
go seek my living in the lands among the stones,  
briers, and bushes, and tear my holiday apparel ?  
Not I, by your leave.

*Seg.* Why, do I mean thou shalt ?

*Mouse.* How then ?

*Seg.* Why thou shalt be my man, and wait on me at court.

*Mouse.* What's that ?

*Seg.* Where the king lies.

*Mouse.* What is that king, a man or a woman ?

*Seg.* A man, as thou art.

*Mouse.* As I am ? Hark you, sir, pray you what kin is he to goodman King, of our parish, the churchwarden ?

*Seg.* No kin to him ; he is king of the whole land.

*Mouse.* King of the whole land ! I never saw him.

*Seg.* If thou wilt dwell with me, thou shalt see him every day.

*Mouse.* Shall I go home again to be torn in pieces with bears ? No, not I ; I will go home and put on a clean shirt, and then go drown myself.

*Seg.* Thou shalt not need ; if thou wilt dwell with me thou shalt want nothing.

*Mouse.* Shall I not ? then here's my hand, I'll dwell with you ; and, hark you, sir, now you have entertained me, I'll tell you what I can do ; I can keep my tongue from picking and stealing, and my hands from lying and slandering, I warrant you, as well as ever you had any man in your life.

*Seg.* Now will I to court with sorrowful heart, rounded with doubts : If Amadine do live, then happy I ; yea, happy I if Amadine do live. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*Camp of the King of Aragon.*

*Enter the KING, with a young Prisoner, AMADINE, TREMELIO, with COLLIN, and Counsellors.*

*King.* Now, brave lords, our wars are brought to end,

Our foes the foil, and we in safety rest ;  
It us behoves to use such clemency in peace,  
As valour in the wars ;

'Tis as great honour to be bountiful at home,  
As conquerors in the field.

Therefore, my lords, the more to my content,  
Your liking and our country's safeguard,

We are dispos'd in marriage for to give  
Our daughter unto lord Segasto here,  
Who shall succeed the diadem after me,  
And reign hereafter, as I to-fore have done,  
Your sole and lawful king of Aragon.

What say you, lordlings ? like you my advice ?

*Col.* An't please your majesty, we do not only  
allow of your highness' pleasure, but also vow  
faithfully in what we may to further it.

*King.* Thanks, good my lords, if long Adrastus  
live,

He will at full requite your courtesies.

Tremelio, in recompense of your late valour done,  
Take unto thee the Catalone, a prince,  
Lately our prisoner, taken in the wars ;  
Be thou his keeper, his ransom shall be thine ;  
We'll think of it when leisure shall afford ;  
Meanwhile do use him well, his father is a king.

*Tre.* Thanks to your majesty ; his usage shall be  
such,

As he thereat shall have no cause to grutch. [*Exit.*]

*King.* Then march we on to court, and rest our  
wearied limbs.

But, Collin, I have a tale in secret fit for thee,  
When thou shalt hear a watch-word from thy king,  
Think then some weighty matter is at hand,  
That highly shall concern our state ;  
Then, Collin, look thou be not far from me,  
And for thy service thou to-fore hast done,  
Thy truth and valour prov'd in every point,  
I shall with bounties thee enlarge therefore.

So guard us to the court. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—*Room at the Court of Aragon.*

*Enter SEGASTO, and MOUSE, with Weapons about  
him.*

*Seg.* Tell me, sirrah, how do you like your  
weapons ?

*Mouse.* O very well, very well, they keep my  
sides warm.

*Seg.* They keep the dogs from your shins well,  
do they not ?

*Mouse.* How keep the dogs from my shins ? I  
would scorn but my shins should keep the dogs  
from them.

*Seg.* Well, sirrah, leaving idle talk, tell me,  
Dost thou know captain Tremelio's chamber ?

*Mouse.* Ay, very well, it hath a door.

*Seg.* I think so, for so hath every chamber ;  
But dost thou know the man ?

*Mouse.* Ay, forsooth, he hath a nose on his face.

*Seg.* Why so hath every one.

*Mouse.* That's more than I know.

*Seg.* But dost thou remember the captain that  
was here with the king, that brought the young  
prince prisoner ?

*Mouse.* O very well.

*Seg.* Go to him, and bid him come unto me ;  
Tell him I have a matter in secret to impart to  
him.

*Mouse.* I will, master. . What's his name ?

*Seg.* Why, captain Tremelio.

*Mouse.* O, the meal-man ; I know him very well,

He brings meal every Saturday; but hark you, master,  
Must I bid him come to you, or must you come to him?

*Seg.* No, sirrah, he must come to me.

*Mouse.* Hark you, master, if he be not at home, What shall I do then?

*Seg.* Why then leave word with some of his folks.

*Mouse.* O, master, if there be nobody within, I will leave word with his dog.

*Seg.* Why, can his dog speak?

*Mouse.* I cannot tell, wherefore doth he keep his chamber else?

*Seg.* To keep out such knaves as thou art.

*Mouse.* Nay by lady, then go yourself.

*Seg.* You will go, sir, will you not?

*Mouse.* Yes, marry will I. O, 'tis come to my head: And if he be not within, I'll bring his chamber to you.

*Seg.* What, will you pluck down the king's house?

*Mouse.* No by lady, I'll know the price of it first. Master, it is such a hard name, I have forgotten it again;

I pray you tell me his name?

*Seg.* I tell thee, captain Tremelio.

*Mouse.* O captain Treble-knave, captain Treble-knave.

*Enter TREMELIO.*

*Tre.* How now, sirrah, dost thou call me?

*Mouse.* You must come to my master, captain treble-knave.

*Tre.* My lord Segasto, did you send for me?

*Seg.* I did, Tremelio. Sirrah, about your business.

*Mouse.* Ay marry, what's that; can you tell?

*Seg.* No, not well.

*Mouse.* Marry then I can, straight to the kitchen-dresser to John the cook, and get me a good piece of beef and brewis,<sup>13</sup> and then to the buttery-hatch to Thomas the butler for a jake of beer: and there for an hour I'll so belabour myself, and therefore I pray you call me not till you think I have done, I pray you good master.

*Seg.* Well, sir, away. [*Exit MOUSE.* Tremelio; this it is, thou knowest the shepherd's fame is

Spread through all the kingdom of Aragon,  
And such as have found triumph and favours  
Never daunted at any time; but now a shepherd's,  
Admired in court for worthiness,  
And Segasto's honour laid aside:

My will therefore is this, thou dost find some means to work the shepherd's death; I know thy

strength sufficient to perform my desire, and thy love no otherwise than to revenge my injuries.

*Tre.* It is not the frowns of a shepherd that Tremelio seares:

Therefore account accomplish'd what I take in hand.

*Seg.* Thanks good Tremelio, and assure thyself, What I promise, that will I perform.

*Tre.* Thanks, good my lord: and in good time, See where he cometh; stand by a while, And you shall see me put in practice your intended drift.

Have at thee swain, if that I hit thee right.

*Enter MUCEDORUS.*

*Muc.* Vild coward, so without cause to strike a man;

Turn, coward, turn; now strike and do thy worst.

[*Muc. killeth him.*

*Seg.* Hold, shepherd, hold, spare him, kill him not: Accurs'd villain, tell me, what hast thou done?

Ah, Tremelio, trusty Tremelio, I sorrow for thy death,

And since that thou living didst prove faithful to Segasto,

So Segasto now living will honour the dead Corpse of Tremelio with revenge.

Blood-thirsty villain, born and bred in merciless murder,

Tell me, how darst thou be so bold,

As once to lay thy hands upon the least of mine?

Assure thyself thou shalt be us'd according to the law.

*Muc.* Segasto cease, these threats are needless, Accuse me not of murder, that have done nothing, But in mine own defence.

*Seg.* Nay shepherd, reason not with me, I'll manifest thy fact unto the king; Whose doom will be thy death, as thou deserv'st. What ho! Mouse come away.

*Enter MOUSE.*

*Mouse.* Why, how now, what's the matter? I thought you would be calling before I had done.

*Seg.* Come, help away with my friend.

*Mouse.* Why is he drunk? can he not stand on his feet?

*Seg.* No, he is not drunk, he is slain.

*Mouse.* Flain? No, by lady he is not flain.

*Seg.* He's killed, I tell thee.

*Mouse.* What, do you use to kill your friends? I will serve you no longer.

*Seg.* I tell thee the shepherd killed him.



*Mouse.* O did he so? But master, I will have all his apparel if I carry him away.

*Seg.* Why so thou shalt.

*Mouse.* Come then, I will help: mass, master, I think his mother sung looby to him, he is so heavy.

[*Exeunt SEG. and MOUSE with the Body.*]

*Muc.* Behold the fickle state of man, always mutable, never at one.

Sometime we feed our fancies with the sweet of our desires:

Sometimes again, we feel the heat of extreme miseries.

Now am I in favour about the court and country,  
To-morrow those favours will turn to frowns.

To-day I live revengéd on my foe,<sup>1</sup>

To-morrow I die, my foe revenged on me. [*Exit.*]

SCENE VI.—*A Pathway in the Forest.*

*Enter BREMO, a wild Man.*

*Bre.* No passenger this morning? what, not one?

A chance that seldom doth befall,

What, not one? then lie thou there,

And rest thyself till I have further need:

Now Bremo, sith thy leisure so affords,

An endless thing, who knows not Bremo's strength,  
Who like a king commands within these woods?

The bear, the boar, dare not abide his sight,

But haste away, to save themselves by flight.

The crystal waters in the bubbling brooks,

When I come by do swiftly slide away,

And elap themselves in closets under banks,

Afraid to look bold Bremo in the face.

The aged oaks at Bremo's breath do bow,

And all things else are still at my command.

Else what would I?

Rend them in pieces, and pluck them from the earth,

And each way else I would revenge myself.

Why who comes here, with whom dare I not fight?

Who fights with me, and doth not die the death?

Not one.

What favour shows this sturdy stick to those

That here within these woods are combatants with me?

Why, death, and nothing else but present death;

With restless rage I wander through these woods;

No creature here but feareth Bremo's force:

Man, woman, child, beast, and bird,

And everything that doth approach my sight,

Are fore'd to fall, if Bremo once do frown.

Come, cudgel, come, my partner in my spoils,

For here I see this day it will not be,

But when it falls that I encounter any,

One pat sufficeth for to work my will,

What, comes not one? then let's begone,

A time will serve when we shall better speed. [*Exit.*]

SCENE VII.—*Aragon. A Room of State in the Court.*

*Enter the KING, SEGASTO, MUCEDORUS, MOUSE, and Others.*

*King.* Shepherd, thou hast heard thine accusers,  
Murder is laid to thy charge:

What canst thou say? thou hast deservéd death.

*Muc.* Dread sovereign, I must needs confess,

I slew this captain in my own defence,

Not of any malice, but by chance:

But mine accuser hath a further meaning.

*Seg.* Words will not here prevail,

I seek for justice, and justice craves his death.

*King.* Shepherd, thine own confession hath condemnéd thee:

Sirrah, take him away, and do him to execution straight.

*Mouse.* So he shall, I warrant him:

But do you hear master king? he is kin to a monkey,  
His neck is higher than his head.

*Seg.* Come, sirrah, away with him,

And hang him about the middle.

*Mouse.* Yes, forsooth, I warrant you; come you sirrah:

'A, so like a sheep-biter!<sup>1</sup> 'a looks.

*Enter AMADINE, and a Boy with a Bear's Head.*

*Ama.* Dread sovereign, and well-belovéd sire,  
On bended knee I crave the life of this condemnéd shepherd,  
which heretofore preserved the life of thy sometime distressed daughter.

*King.* Preserved the life of my sometime distressed daughter!

How can that be? I never knew the time,

Wherein was thou distrest: I never knew the day,

But that I have maintainéd thy estate,

As best beseem'd the daughter of a king.

I never saw the shepherd until now;

How comes it, then, that he preserv'd thy life?

*Ama.* Once walking with Segasto in the woods,

Further than our accustom'd manner was,

Right before us down a steepfall hill,

A monstrous ugly bear did hie him fast

To meet us both: now whether this be true,

I refer it to the credit of Segasto.

*Seg.* Most true, an't like your majesty.

*King.*

How then?

*Ama.* The bear being eager to obtain his prey,

Made forward to us with an open mouth,  
As if he meant to swallow us both at once ;  
The sight whereof did make us both to dread ;  
But specially your daughter Amadine,  
Who for I saw no succour incident  
But in Segasto's valour, I grew desperate,  
And he most coward-like began to fly—  
Left me distress'd to be devour'd of him ;  
How say you, Segasto, is it not true ?

*King.* His silence verifies it to be true : what then ?

*Ama.* Then, I amaz'd, distress'd, all alone,  
Did hie me fast, to 'scape that ugly bear,  
But all in vain ; for why he reach'd after me,  
And hardly I did oft escape his paws.  
Till at the length this shepherd came,  
And brought to me his head.  
Come hither, boy ; lo, here it is, which I do present  
unto your majesty.

*King.* The slaughter of this bear deserves great fame.

*Seg.* The slaughter of a man deserves great blame.

*King.* Indeed, occasion oftentimes so falls out.

*Seg.* Tremelio in the wars (O king) preserved thee.

*Ama.* The shepherd in the woods (O king) preserved me.

*Seg.* Tremelio fought when many men did yield.

*Ama.* So would the shepherd had he been in field.

*Mouse.* So would my master had he not run away.

*Seg.* Tremelio's force sav'd thousands from the foe.

*Ama.* The shepherd's force hath many thousands more.

*Mouse.* Aye, shipsticks,<sup>15</sup> nothing else.

*King.* Segasto, cease to accuse the shepherd,  
His worthiness deserves a recompense ;  
All we are bound to do the shepherd good.  
Shepherd, whereas it was my sentence thou shouldst die,

So shall my sentence stand, for thou shalt die.

*Seg.* Thanks to your majesty.

*King.* But soft, Segasto, not for this offence :  
Long may'st thou live ; and when the sisters shall decree,

To cut in twain the twisted thread of life,  
Then let him die ; for this I set him free,  
And for thy valour I will honour thee.

*Ama.* Thanks to your majesty.

*King.* Come, daughter, let us now depart to honour the worthy valour of the shepherd with our rewards. [Exeunt KING, AMAD., MUC., &c.]

*Mouse.* O master hear you, you have made a fresh hand now,  
I thought you would, beshrew you : what will you do now ?

You have lost me a good occupation by this means :  
Faith, master, now I cannot hang the shepherd,  
I pray you let me take pains to hang you,  
It is but half an hour's exercise.

*Seg.* You are still in your knavery :  
But sith I cannot have his life,  
I will procure his banishment for ever. Come on, sirrah. [Exeunt SEG. and MOUSE.]

*Enter MUCEDORUS, solus.*

*Muc.* From Amadine, and from her father's court,  
With gold and silver, and with rich rewards,  
Flowing from the banks of gold and treasures :  
More may I boast and say : but I ——<sup>16</sup>  
Was never shepherd in such dignity.

*Enter Messenger and MOUSE.*

*Mess.* All hail, worthy shepherd.

*Mouse.* All hail, lousy shepherd.

*Muc.* Welcome my friends, from whence come you ?

*Mess.* The king and Amadine greet thee well ;  
And after greeting done, bid thee depart the court.  
Shepherd, begone.

*Mouse.* Shepherd take law-legs, fly away shepherd.

*Muc.* Those words are these ? come they from Amadine ?

*Mess.* Ay, from Amadine.

*Mouse.* Ay, from Amadine.

*Muc.* Oh luckless fortune, worse than Phaeton's tale,

My former bliss is now become my bale.

*Mouse.* What, wilt thou poison thyself ?

*Muc.* My former heaven is now become my hell.

*Mouse.* The worst ale-house that ever I came in in all my life.

*Muc.* What shall I do ?

*Mouse.* Even go hang thyself.

*Muc.* Can Amadine so churlishly command  
To banish the shepherd from her father's court ?

*Mess.* What should shepherds do in the court ?

*Mouse.* What should shepherds do among us ?

Have we not lords enough on us in the court ?

*Muc.* Why, shepherds are men, and kings are no more.

*Mess.* Shepherds are men, and masters o'er their flocks.

*Mouse.* That's a lie ; who pays them their wages then ?

*Miss.* Well, you are always interrupting me ;  
But you were best to look to him, lest you hang  
for him when he is gone. [*Exit.*]

*Mouse.* And you shall hang for company, [*Sings.*]  
For leaving me alone,  
Shepherd stand forth and hear my sentence,  
Shepherd begone, shepherd begone, begone, begone  
Begone shepherd, shepherd, shepherd.

[*Exit Mouse.*]

*Muc.* And must I go? and must I needs depart?  
Ye goodly groves, partakers of my songs,  
In time before when fortune did not frown,  
Pour forth your plaints, and wail awhile with me:  
And thou, bright sun, the comfort of my cold,  
Hide, hide thy face, and leave me comfortless:  
Ye wholesome herbs and sweet smelling savours,  
Yea, each thing else prolonging life of man,  
Change, change your wonted course,  
That I, wanting your aid, in woful sort may die.

*Enter AMADINE and ARIENA, her Maid.*

*Ama.* Ariena, if anybody ask for me,  
Make some excuse till I return.

*Ari.* What and Segasto call?

*Ama.* Do you the like to him; I mean not to  
stay long. [*Exit Ari.*]

*Muc.* This voice so sweet my pining spirit re-  
vives.

*Ama.* Shepherd well met, tell me how thou dost.

*Muc.* I linger life, yet wish for speedy death.

*Ama.* Shepherd, although thy banishment already  
be decreed, and all against my will, yet Amadine—

*Muc.* Ah Amadine, to hear of banishment, is  
death:

Ay, double death to me: but since I must depart,  
one thing I crave.

*Ama.* Say on with all my heart.

*Muc.* That in absence either far or near,  
You honour me as servant to your name.

*Ama.* Not so.

*Muc.* And why?

*Ama.* I honour thee as sovereign of my heart.

*Muc.* A shepherd and a sovereign nothing like.<sup>17</sup>

*Ama.* Yes like enough, where there is no dislike.

*Muc.* Yet great dislike, or else no banishment.

*Ama.* Shepherd, it is only Segasto that procures  
thy banishment.

*Muc.* Unworthy wights are more in jealousy.

*Ama.* Would God they would free thee from  
banishment,

Or likewise banish me.

*Muc.* Amen, I say, to have your company.

*Ama.* Well, shepherd, sith thou sufferest for my  
sake,

With thee in exile also let me live;  
On this condition, shepherd, thou canst love.

*Muc.* No longer love, no longer let me live

*Ama.* Of late I loved one indeed, but now I love  
none but only thee.<sup>18</sup>

*Muc.* Thanks, worthy princess; burn likewise,  
Yet smother up the blast,<sup>19</sup>

I dare not promise what I may perform.

*Ama.* Well, shepherd, hark what I shall say;

I will return unto my father's court,  
There to provide me of such necessaries

As for my journey I shall think most fit;

This being done, I will return to thee;

Do thou therefore appoint the place

Where we may meet.

*Muc.* Down in the valley where I slew the bear,  
And there doth grow a fair broad branched beech

That overshades a well; so who comes first,

Let them abide the happy meeting of us both.

How like you this?

*Ama.* I like it well.

*Muc.* Now, if you please, you may appoint the  
time.

*Ama.* Full three hours hence, God willing, I will  
return.

*Muc.* The thanks that Paris gave the Grecian  
queen,

The like doth Mucedorus yield.

*Ama.* Then, Mucedorus, for three hours fare-  
well. [*Exit.*]

*Muc.* Your departure, lady, breeds a privy pain.  
[*Exit.*]

*Enter SEGASTO, solus.*

*Seg.* Tis well, Segasto, that thou hast thy will;  
Should such a shepherd, such a simple swain as he,  
Eclipse thy credit, famous through the court?

No, ply, Segasto, ply; let it not in Aragon be said,  
A shepherd hath Segasto's honour won.

*Enter MOUSE, the Clown, calling his Master.*

*Mouse.* What ho, master, will you come away?

*Seg.* Will you come hither, I pray you; what is  
the matter?

*Mouse.* Why, is it not past eleven of the clock?

*Seg.* How then, sir?

*Mouse.* I pray you come away to dinner.

*Seg.* I pray you come hither.

*Mouse.* Here's such ado with you; will you  
never come?

*Seg.* I pray you, sir, what news of the message I sent you about?

*Mouse.* I tell you all the messes be on the table already. There wants not so much as a mess of mustard half-an-hour ago.

*Seg.* Come, sir, your mind is all upon your belly; You have forgotten what I bid you do.

*Mouse.* Faith, I know nothing, but you bade me go to breakfast.

*Seg.* Was that all?

*Mouse.* Faith I have forgotten it, the very scent of the meat hath made me forget it quite.

*Seg.* You have forgot the errand I bid you do.

*Mouse.* What errand? an arrant knave, or an arrant whore?

*Seg.* Why thou knave, did I not bid thee banish the shepherd?

*Mouse.* O, the shepherd's bastard.

*Seg.* I tell thee the shepherd's banishment.

*Mouse.* I tell you the shepherd's bastard shall be well kept, I'll look to it myself; but I pray you come away to dinner.

*Seg.* Then you will not tell me whether you have banished him or no?

*Mouse.* Why I cannot say banishment if you would give me a thousand pounds to say so.

*Seg.* Why your whoreson slave, have you forgotten that I sent you and another to drive away the shepherd?

*Mouse.* What an ass are you? here's a stir indeed: Here's message, arrant, banishment, and I cannot tell what.

*Seg.* I pray you, sir, shall I know whether you have drove him away?

*Mouse.* Faith I think I have; and you will not believe me, ask my staff.

*Seg.* Why, can thy staff tell?

*Mouse.* Why, he was with me too.

*Seg.* Then happy I that have obtain'd my will.

*Mouse.* And happier I if you would go to dinner.

*Seg.* Come, sirrah, follow me.

*Mouse.* I warrant you, I will not lose an inch of you now you are going to dinner: I promise you I thought seven years before I could get him away.

SCENE VIII.—*Beside the Well in the Forest.*

*Enter AMADINE.*

*Ama.* God grant my long delay procures no harm,

For this my tarrying frustrates my pretence:

My Mucedorus surely stays for me,

And thinks me over-long; at length I come,

360

My present promise to perform:

Ah, what a thing is firm, unfeign'd love!

What is it which true love does not attempt?

My father he may make, but I must match:

Segasto loves, but Amadine must like

Where likes her best: compulsion is a thrall:

No, no, the hearty choice is all in all.

The shepherd's virtue Amadine esteems.

But what, methinks the shepherd is not come;

I muse at that, the hour is at hand.

Well, here I'll rest till Mucedorus come.

[*She sits down.*]

*Enter BREMO, looking about; hastily takes hold of her.*

*Bre.* A happy prey: now, Bremo, feed on flesh: Dainties, Bremo, dainties, thy hungry paunch to fill; Now glut thy greedy guts with lukewarm blood: Come fight with me; I long to see thee dead.

*Ama.* How can she fight that weapons cannot wield?

*Bre.* What, canst not fight? then lie thee down and die.

*Ama.* What, must I die?

*Bre.* What needs these words? I thirst to suck thy blood.

*Ama.* Yet pity me, and let me live awhile.

*Bre.* No pity I, I'll feed upon thy flesh; And tear thy body piece-meal, joint by joint.

*Ama.* Ah, now I want my shepherd's company.

*Bre.* I'll crush thy bones between two oaken trees.

*Ama.* Haste shepherd, haste, or else thou com'st too late.

*Bre.* I'll suck the sweetness from thy marrow bones.

*Ama.* Ah, spare, ah, spare, to shed my guiltless blood.

*Bre.* With this, my bat,<sup>20</sup> I will beat out thy brains;

Down, down, I say; prostrate thyself upon the ground,

*Ama.* Then Mucedorus farewell; my hoped joys farewell: [*She kneels.*]

Yea, farewell life, and welcome present death;

To thee, O God, I yield my dying ghost.

*Bre.* Now Bremo play thy part.

How now? what sudden chance is this?

My limbs do tremble, and my sinews shake,

My unweaken'd arms have lost their former force;

Ah, Bremo, Bremo, what a foil hadst thou,

That yet at no time was afraid,

To dare the greatest gods to fight with thee,

And now want strength for one down-driving blow.

[*He strikes.*]

Ah how my courage fails when I should strike;  
Some new-come spirit abiding in my breast,  
Saith, spare her, Bremo, spare her, do not kill:  
Shall I spare her that never spar'd any?

To it Bremo, to it, say again:—

I cannot wield my weapons in my hand;  
Methinks I should not strike so fair a one:  
I think her beauty hath bewitch'd my force,  
Or else with me altered nature's course.

Ay, woman, wilt thou live in woods with me?

*Ama.* Fain would I live, yet loth to live in woods.

*Bre.* Thou shalt not choose, it shall be as I say,  
And therefore follow me. [*Exeunt BRE. and AMA.*]

*Enter MUCEDORUS.*

*Muc.* It was my will an hour ago and more,  
As was my promise for to make return;  
But other business hinder'd my pretence.  
It is a world to see, when man appoints,  
And purposely one certain thing decrees,  
How many things may hinder his intent:  
What one would wish, the same is farthest off;  
But yet the appointed time cannot be pass'd,  
Nor hath her presence yet prevented me:  
Well, here I'll stay and expect her coming.

[*A cry within, "Hold him, hold him!"*]

Some one or other is pursued no doubt,  
Perhaps some search for me; 'tis good to doubt  
the worst;

Therefore I'll be gone.

[*Exit. A cry within, "Hold him, hold him!"*]

*Enter MOUSE, the Clown, with a Pot.*

*Mouse.* Hold him, hold him, hold him! here's a stir indeed: here came hue after the erier; and I was set close at Mother Nips' house, and there I called for three pots of ale, as 'tis the manner of us courtiers. Now, sirrah, I had taken the maidenhead of two of them, and as I was lifting up the third to my mouth, there came, "Hold him, hold him!" Now I could not tell whom to catch hold on, but I am sure I caught one, perchance a may be in this pot. Well, I'll see, mass, I cannot see him yet: well, I'll look a little further; mass, he is a little slave if he be here; why, here's nobody; all this is well yet. But if the old Trot should come for her pot, ay, marry, there's the matter: but I care not; I'll face her out, and call her old rusty, dusty, musty, fusty, crusty, firebrand, and worse than all that, and so face her out of her pot: but soft, here she comes.

*Enter the Old Woman.*

*Old W.* Come, you knave, where's my pot, you knave?

*Mouse.* Go look your pot; come not to me for your pot, 'twere good for you.

*Old W.* Thou liest, thou knave, thou hast my pot.

*Mouse.* You lie and you say it; I your pot? I'll know what I'll say.

*Old W.* What wilt thou say?

*Mouse.* But say I have it and thou dar'st.

*Old W.* Why, thou knave, thou hast not only my pot but my drink unpaid for.

*Mouse.* You lie like an old —, I will not say where.

*Old W.* Dost thou call me whore? I'll cap thee for my pot.

*Mouse.* Cap me and thou darest:  
Search me whether I have it or no.

[*She searcheth him and he drinketh over her Head, and casteth down the Pot; she stum-bleth at it; and then they fall together by the Ears; she takes up her Pot and runs out.*]

*Enter SEGASTO.*

*Seg.* How now, sirrah, what's the matter?

*Mouse.* O flies, master, flies.

*Seg.* Flies, where are they?

*Mouse.* O here, master, all about your face.

*Seg.* Why, thou liest; I think thou art mad.

*Mouse.* Why, master, I have killed a dung-cart-ful at the least.

*Seg.* Go to, sirrah, leave this idle talk, give care to me.

*Mouse.* How, give you one of my cares?  
Not an you were ten masters.

*Seg.* Why, sir, I pray you give ear to my words.

*Mouse.* I tell you I will not be made a curtall<sup>21</sup> for no man's pleasure.

*Seg.* I tell thee attend what I say.  
Go thy ways straight and rear the whole town.

*Mouse.* How, rear the whole town? even go yourself, it is more than I can do. Why, do you think I can rear a town that can scarce rear a pot of ale to my head? I should rear a town, should I not?

*Seg.* Go to the constable, and make a privy search,  
For the shepherd is run away with the king's daughter.

*Mouse.* How, is the shepherd run away with the king's daughter, or is the king's daughter run away with the shepherd?

*Seg.* I cannot tell, but they are both gone together.

*Mouse.* What a fool is she to run away with the shepherd! Why, I think I am a little handsomer man than the shepherd myself: but tell me, master, must I make a privy search, or search in the privy?

*Seg.* Why, dost thou think they will be there?

*Mouse.* I cannot tell.

*Seg.* Well then, search everywhere.

Leave no place unsearch'd for them. [*Exit. SEG.*]

*Mouse.* Oh, now I am in office; now will I to that old firebrand's house, and will not leave one place unsearch'd: nay, I'll to the ale-stand, and drink so long as I can stand; and when I have done, I'll let out all the rest, to see if he be not hid in the barrel; and if I find him not there, I'll to the cupboard; I'll not leave one corner of her house unsearched; i'faith ye old crust I'll be with ye now. [*Exit.*]

SCENE IX.—*Room of State in the Court of Valentia.*

*Enter the KING OF VALENTIA, ANSELMO, RODERIGO, LORD BRACHIUS, with Others.*

*K. Val.* Enough of music, it but adds to torment. Delights to vex'd spirits are as dates Set to a sick man, which rather cloy than comfort: Let me entreat you to entreat no more.

*Rod.* Let your strings sleep, have done there.

[*Music ceaseth.*]

*K. Val.* Mirth to a soul disturb'd, are embers turn'd,

Which sudden gleam with molestation,

But sooner lose their light for't;

'Tis gold bestow'd upon a rioter,

Which not relieves but murders him.

'Tis a drug given to the healthful,

Which infects, not cures.

How can a father that hath lost his son,

A prince both wise, virtuous, and valiant,

Take pleasure in the idle acts of time?

No, no, till Mucedorus I shall see again,

All joy is comfortless, all pleasure pain.

*Ansel.* Your son, my lord, is well.

*K. Val.* I prythee speak that thrice.

*Ansel.* The prince, your son, is safe.

*K. Val.* O, where, Anselmo; surfeit me with that.

*Ansel.* In Aragon, my liege, and at his parting, Bound my secrecy,

By his affection's love not to disclose it;

But care of him and pity of your age Makes my tongue blab what my breast vow'd concealment.

*K. Val.* Thou not deceiv'st me, I ever thought thee what I find thee now, An upright, loyal man.

But what desire or young-fed humour, Nursed within his brain,

Drew him so privately to Aragon?

*Ansel.* A forcing adamant, Love mix'd with fear and doubtful jealousy, Whether report gilded a worthless trunk, Or Amadine deserved her high extolment.

*K. Val.* See our provision be in readiness, Collect us followers of the comeliest hue, For our chief guardians; we will thither wend; The crystal eye of heaven shall not thrice wink, Nor the green flood six times his shoulders turn, Till we salute the Aragonian king.

Music speak loudly now, the season's apt For former dolours are in pleasure wrapt.

SCENE X.—*The Forest.*

*Enter MUCEDORUS.*

*Muc.* Now, Mucedorus, whither wilt thou go? Home to thy father, to thy native soil, Or try some long abode within these woods? Well, I will hence depart, and hie me home; What, hie me home said I? that may not be: In Amadine rests my felicity.

Then, Mucedorus, do as thou didst decree, Attire thee hermit-like within these groves; Walk often to the beech, and view the well, Make settles there, and seat thyself thereon: And when thou feel'st thyself to be athirst, Then drink a hearty draught to Amadine. No doubt she thinks on thee, And will one day come pledge thee at this well.

[*He disguises himself.*]

Come, habit, thou art fit for me: No shepherd now, an hermit must I be;<sup>22</sup> Methinks this fits me very well; Now must I learn to bear a walking staff, And exercise some gravity withal.

*Enter MOUSE the Clown.*

*Muc.* Here's through the woods and through the woods, To look out a shepherd, and a stray king's daughter:

But soft, who have we here? what art thou?

*Muc.* I am a hermit.

*Mouse.* An emmet, I never saw such a big emmet in all my life before.

*Muc.* I tell you, sir, I am an hermit, One that leads a solitary life within these woods.

*Mouse.* O, I know thee now, thou art he that eats up all the hips and haws: we could not have one piece of fat bacon for thee all this year.

*Muc.* Thou dost mistake me: But I pray thee tell me, whom dost thou seek in these woods?

*Mouse.* What do I seek? for a stray king's daughter, Run away with a shepherd.

*Muc.* A stray king's daughter, run away with a shepherd!

Wherefore, canst thou tell?

*Mouse.* Yes, that I can, 'tis this; my master and Amadine walking one day abroad, nearer these woods than they were used (about what I cannot tell), but towards them comes running a great bear. Now my master played the man, and ran away, and Amadine crying after him: now, sir, comes me a shepherd, and he strikes off the bear's head; now, whether the bear were dead before or no I cannot tell, for bring twenty bears before me, and bind their hands and feet, and I'll kill them all: now, ever since Amadine hath been in love with the shepherd, and for good will she's even run away with the shepherd.

*Muc.* What manner of man was he? canst thou describe him unto me?

*Mouse.* Scribe him, aye, I warrant you that I can; a was a little, low, broad, tall, narrow, big, well-favoured fellow, a jerkin of white cloth, and buttons of the same.

*Muc.* Thou describest him well, but if I chance to see any such, pray you where shall I find you, or what's your name?

*Mouse.* My name is called master Mouse.

*Muc.* O, master Mouse; I pray you what office might you bear in the court?

*Mouse.* Marry, sir, I am rusher of the stable.

*Muc.* Oh, usher of the table.

*Mouse.* Nay, I say rusher, and I'll prove mine office good; for, look you, sir, when any come from under the sea or so, and a dog chance to blow his nose backward, then with a whip I give him the good time of the day, and strow rushes presently; therefore I am a rusher; a high office, I promise ye.

*Muc.* But where shall I find you in the court?

*Mouse.* Why, where it is best being, either in the kitchen eating, or in the buttery, drinking;

but if you come, I will provide for thee a piece of beef and brewes knuckle deep in fat; pray you take pains, remember master Mouse. [*Exit.*]

*Muc.* Aye, sir, I warrant I will not forget you. Ah, Amadine! what should become of her? Whither shouldst thou go so long unknown? With watch and ward each passage is beset, So that she cannot long escape unknown. Doubtless, she hath lost herself within these woods, And wandering to and fro she seeks the well, Which yet she cannot find, therefore will I seek her out. [*Exit.*]

SCENE XI.—*Another part of the Forest.*

*Enter BREMO and AMADINE.*

*Bre.* Amadine, how like you Bremo aud his woods?

*Ama.* As like the woods of Bremo's cruelty, Though I were dumb and could not answer him, The beasts themselves would with relenting tears Bewail thy savage and inhuman deeds.

*Bre.* My love, why dost thou murmur to thyself? Speak louder, for thy Bremo hears thee not.

*Ama.* My Bremo! no, the shepherd is my love.

*Bre.* Have I not savéd thee from sudden death, Given thee leave to live that thou might'st love, And dost thou whet me on to cruelty? Come, kiss me (sweet) for all my favours past.

*Ama.* I may not, Bremo, therefore pardon me.

*Bre.* See how she flies away from me; I will follow and give attend to her. Deny my love? a worm of beauty, I will chastise thee: come, come, Prepare thy head upon the block.

*Ama.* O, spare me, Bremo, love should limit life, Not to be made a murderer of himself.<sup>23</sup> If thou wilt glut thy loving heart with blood, Encounter with the lion or the bear; And, like a wolf, prey not upon a lamb.

*Bre.* Why then dost thou repine at me? If thou wilt love me thou shalt be my queen, I'll crown thee with a chaplet made of ivory, And make the rose and lily wait on thee: I'll rend the burly branches from the oak, To shadow thee from the fierce burning sun,<sup>24</sup> The trees shall spread themselves where thou dost go,

And as they spread, I'll trace along with thee.<sup>25</sup>

*Ama.* You may, for who but you?

*Bre.* Thou shalt be fed with quails and partridges, With blackbirds, larks, thrushes, and nightingales;

Thy drink shall be goat's milk and crystal water;  
Distilling from the fountains and the clearest  
springs;

And all the dainties that the woods afford,  
I'll freely give thee to obtain thy love.

*Ama.* You may, for who but you?

*Bre.* The day I'll spend to recreate my love,  
With all the pleasures that I can devise;  
And in the night I'll be thy bedfellow,  
And lovingly embrace thee in mine arms.

*Ama.* One may, so may not you?

*Bre.* The satyrs and the wood-nymphs shall at-  
tend on thee,

And lull thee asleep with music's gentle sound,<sup>26</sup>  
And in the morning when thou dost awake,  
The lark shall sing, good morrow to my queen;  
And whilst he sings I'll kiss mine Amadine.

*Ama.* You may, for who but you.

*Bre.* When thou art up, the wood-lanes shall be  
strewed

With violets, cowslips, and sweet marigolds,  
For thee to trample and to tread upon;  
And I will teach thee how to kill the deer,  
To chase the hart, and how to rouse the roe,  
If thou wilt live to love and honour me.

*Ama.* You may, for who but you?

*Enter MUCEDORUS.*

*Bre.* Welcome, sir, an hour ago I look'd for  
such a guest;

Be merry, wench, we'll have a frolic feast,  
Here's flesh enough for to suffice us both.  
Say, sirrah, wilt thou fight, or dost thou mean to  
die?

*Muc.* I want a weapon! how then can I fight?

*Bre.* Thou want'st a weapon, why then thou  
yield'st to die?

*Muc.* I say not so, I do not yield to die.

*Bre.* Thou shalt not choose, I long to see thee  
dead.

*Ama.* Yet spare him, Bremono, spare him.

*Bre.* Away, I say, I will not spare him.

*Muc.* Yet give me leave to speak.

*Bre.* Thou shalt not speak.

*Ama.* Yet give him leave to speak for my sake.

*Bre.* Speak on, but he not over-long.

*Muc.* In time of yore, when men like brutish  
beasts

Did lead their lives in loathsome cells and woods,  
And wholly give themselves to witless will;  
A rude unruly rout: then man to man became  
A present prey, then might prevailed,  
The weakest ever then went to the wall.<sup>27</sup>

Right was unknown, for wrong was all in all.  
As men thus lived in their great outrage,  
Behold, one Orpheus came (as poets tell),  
And them from rudeness unto reason brought,  
Who led by reason soon forsook the woods.  
Instead of caves, they built them castles strong,  
Cities and towns were founded by them then:  
Glad were they, they had found such ease,  
And in the end they grew to perfect amity,  
Waying their former wickedness,<sup>28</sup>  
They term'd the time wherein they lived then,  
A golden age, a good and golden age.  
Now Bremono (for so I heard thee call'd),  
If men which lived 'tofore, as thou dost now,  
Wild in woods, addicted all to spoil,  
Return'd were by worthy Orpheus' means,  
Let me (like Orpheus) cause thee to return  
From murder, bloodshed, and such-like cruelties:  
What, should we fight before we have a cause?  
No, let's live, and love together faithfully:  
I'll fight for thee.

*Bre.* Fight for me, or die; or fight, or else thou  
diest.<sup>29</sup>

*Ama.* Hold Bremono, hold.

*Bre.* Away, I say, thou troublest me.

*Ama.* You promis'd to make me queen.

*Bre.* I did, I mean no less.

*Ama.* You promis'd that I should have my will.

*Bre.* I did, I mean no less.

*Ama.* Then save the hermit's life, for he may  
save us both.

*Bre.* At thy request I'll save him, but never any  
after him;

Say, hermit, what canst thou do?

*Muc.* I'll wait on thee, sometime upon thy queen,  
Such service shalt thou have as Bremono never had.

[*Exeunt BRE., AMA., and MUC.*

*Enter SEGASTO, MOUSE, and RUMBELO.*

*Seg.* Come, sirs, what, shall I never have you find  
out Amadine and the shepherd?

*Mouse.* I have been through the woods, and  
through the woods, and could see nothing but an  
emmet.

*Rum.* Why, I see a thousand emmets; thou  
meanest a little one.

*Mouse.* Nay, that emmet that I saw was bigger  
than thou art.

*Rum.* Bigger than I? what a fool have you to  
your man. I pray you, master, turn him away.

*Seg.* But dost thou hear, was he not a man?

*Mouse.* I think he was, for he said he did lead a  
salt-seller's life round about the woods.



*Seg.* Thou would'st say a solitary life about the woods.

*Mouse.* I think it was indeed.

*Rum.* I thought what a fool thou art.

*Mouse.* Thou art a wise man: why, he did nothing but sleep since he went.

*Seg.* But tell me, Mouse, how did he go?

*Mouse.* In a white gown, and a white hat on his head, and a staff in his hand.

*Seg.* I thought so; he was an hermit, that walked a solitary life in the woods. Well, get you to dinner, and after, never leave seeking till you bring some news of them, or I'll hang you both.

[*Exit SEG.*]

*Mouse.* How now, Rumbelo, what shall we do now?

*Rum.* Faith I'll home to dinner, and afterwards to sleep.

*Mouse.* Why then thou wilt be hanged.

*Rum.* Faith I care not, for I know I shall never find them: well, I'll once more abroad, and if I cannot find them I'll never come home again.

*Mouse.* I tell thee what, Rumbelo, thou shalt go in at one end of the wood, and I at the other, and we will both meet together in the midst.

*Rum.* Content; let's away to dinner. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE XII.—*The Forest near the Cave of the Wild Man.*

*Enter MUCEDORUS.*

*Muc.* Unknown to any, here within these woods, With bloody Brema do I lead my life: The monster he doth murder all he meets, He spareth none, and none doth him escape: Who would continue, who but only I, In such a cruel cut-throat's company? Yet Amadine is there, how can I choose? Ah silly soul, how oftentimes she sits, And sighs, and calls, "Come, shepherd, come: Sweet Mucedorus, come set me free;" When Mucedorus (peasant) stands her by. But here she comes. What news, fair lady, As you walk these woods?

*Enter AMADINE.*

*Ama.* Ah, hermit, none but bad, And such as thou knowest.

*Muc.* How do you like your Brema and his woods?

*Ama.* Not my Brema, nor his, Brema's, woods.

*Muc.* And why not yours? methinks he loves you well.

*Ama.* I like not him; his love to me is nothing worth.

*Muc.* Lady, in this methinks you offer wrong, To hate the man that ever loves you best.

*Ama.* Ah, hermit, I take no pleasure in his love, Neither doth Brema like me best.

*Muc.* Pardon my boldness, fair lady, sith we both May safely talk now out of Brema's sight, Unfold to me, if you please, the full discourse; How, when, and why you came into these woods, And fell into this bloody butcher's hands.

*Ama.* Hermit, I will: Of late a worthy shepherd I did love.

*Muc.* A shepherd (lady), sure a man unfit to match with you.

*Ama.* Hermit, this is true: and when we had——

*Muc.* Stay there; the wild man comes. Refer the rest until another time.

*Enter BREMA.*

*Bre.* What secret tale is this? what whispering have we here? Villain, I charge thee tell thy tale again.

*Muc.* If needs I must, lo, here it is again. When as we both had lost the sight of thee, It griev'd us both, but 'specially thy queen, Who in thy absence ever fears the worst, Lest some mischance befall your royal grace. "Shall my sweet Brema wander through the wood, Toil to and fro, for to redress my want, Hazard his life, and all to cherish me? I like not this," quoth she: And thereupon did crave to know of me, If I could teach her handle weapons well. My answer was, "I had small skill therein: But gladsome (mighty king) to learn of thee?" And this was all.

*Bre.* Was't so? none can mislike of this: I'll teach you both to fight; but first my queen begin.

Here, take this weapon, see how thou canst use it.

*Ama.* This is too big; I cannot wield it in mine arm.

*Bre.* Is't so? we'll have a knotty crab-tree staff for thee;

But, sirrah, tell me, what sayest thou?

*Muc.* With all my heart, I willing am to learn.

*Bre.* Then take my staff, and see how thou canst wield it.

*Muc.* First teach me how to hold it in mine hand.

*Bre.* Thou holdest it well; look how he doth; Thou mayest the sooner learn.

*Muc.* Next tell how, and when 'tis best to strike.

*Bre.* 'Tis best to strike when time doth serve;  
'Tis best to lose no time.

*Muc.* Then now or never it is time to strike.

*Bre.* And when thou strikest be sure to hit the head.

*Muc.* The head?

*Bre.* The very head.

*Muc.* Then have at thine—

[*He strikes him down dead.*]

So, lie there and die; a death (no doubt) according to desert,

Or else a worse, as thou deservest worse.

*Ama.* It glads my heart this tyrant's death to see.

*Muc.* Now, lady, it remains in you  
To end the tale you lately had begun,  
Being interrupted by this wicked wight:  
You said you lov'd a shepherd.

*Ama.* Ay, so I do, and none but only him:  
And will do still as long as life shall last.

*Muc.* But tell me, lady, sith I set you free,  
What course of life do you intend to take?

*Ama.* I will disguis'd wander through the world,  
Till I have found him out.

*Muc.* How if you find your shepherd in these woods?

*Ama.* Ah! none so happy then as Amadine.

[*He discloseth himself.*]

*Muc.* In tract of time a man may alter much;  
Say, lady, do you know your shepherd well?

*Ama.* My Mucedorus, hath he set me free?

*Muc.* He hath set thee free.

*Ama.* And liv'd so long unknown to Amadine?

*Muc.* Ay, that's a question whereof you may not be resolv'd:

You know that I am banish'd from the court;  
I know, likewise, each passage is beset,  
So that we cannot long escape unknown;  
Therefore my will is this; that we return,  
Right through the thickets to the wild man's cave,

And there awhile live on his provision,  
Until the search and narrow watch be past:  
This is my counsel, and I like it best.

*Ama.* I think the same.

*Muc.* Come, let's begone.

*Enter MOUSE, searching; he falls over the Wild Man, and so carries him away.*<sup>30</sup>

*Mouse.* Nay, soft, sir, are you here: a bots on you;

I was like to be hang'd for not finding of you:

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We would borrow a certain stray king's daughter of you,

A wench, a wench, sir, we would have.

*Muc.* A wench of me? I'll make thee eat my sword.

*Mouse.* O Lord, nay, and you are so lusty, I'll call a cooling card for you: O master, master, come away quickly.

*Enter SEGASTO.*

*Seg.* What's the matter?

*Mouse.* Look, Amadine and the shepherd: O brave!

*Seg.* What, minion, have I found you out?

*Mouse.* Nay, that a lie, I found her out myself.

*Seg.* Thou gadding housewife, what cause hadst thou

To gad abroad?

When, as thou knowest, our wedding day so nigh?

*Ama.* Not so, Segasto, no such thing in hand:

Show your assurance, then I'll answer you.

*Seg.* Thy father's promise my assurance is.

*Ama.* But what he promis'd he hath not perform'd.

*Seg.* It rests in thee for to perform the same.

*Ama.* Not I.

*Seg.* And why?

*Ama.* So is my will, and therefore even no.

*Mouse.* Master with a none, none so.

*Seg.* Ah, wicked villain, art thou here?

*Muc.* What need these words? I weigh them not.

*Seg.* We weigh them not; proud shepherd, I scorn thy company.

*Muc.* I scorn not thee, nor yet the least of thine.

*Mouse.* That's a lie, a would have kill'd me with his pugs-nando.

*Seg.* This stoutness, Amadine, contents me not.

*Ama.* Then seek another that you may better please.

*Muc.* Well, Amadine, it only rests in thee,  
Without delay to make thy choice of three:  
There stands Segasto, a second here,  
There stands the third: now make thy choice.

*Mouse.* A lord, at the least I am.

*Ama.* My choice is made, for I will none but thee.

*Seg.* A worthy mate (no doubt) for such a wife.

*Muc.* And Amadine, why will thou none but me?

I cannot keep thee as thy father did;

I have no lands for to maintain thy state:

Moreover, if thou mean to be my wife,

Commonly this must be thy use,

To bed at midnight, up at four,

Drudge all day, and trudge from place to place,

Whereby our daily victual for to win ;  
And last of all, which is the worst of all,  
No princess then, but a plain shepherd's wife.

*Mouse.* Then God give you good morrow, goody shepherd.

*Ama.* It shall not need, if Amadine do live,  
Thou shalt be crownéd king of Aragon,

*Mouse.* O master, laugh, when he is a king, I'll be a queen.

*Muc.* Then know that which ne'ertofore was known :

I am no shepherd, no Aragonian I,  
But born of royal blood: my father's of Valentia king,  
My mother queen: who for thy sacred sake  
Took this hard task in hand.

*Ama.* Oh, how I joy my fortune is so good.

*Seg.* Well, now I see Segasto shall not speed,  
But Mucedorus, I as much do joy  
To see thee here within our court of Aragon,  
As if a kingdom had befall'n me at this time ;  
I with my heart surrender her to thee.

[*He gives her to him.*]

And look what right to Amadine I have.

*Mouse.* What barn's door, and born where my father was constable? a bots on thee, how dost thou?

*Muc.* Thanks Segasto, but you levell'd at the crown.

*Mouse.* Master, bear this and bear all.

*Seg.* Why so, sirrah?

*Mouse.* He says you take a goose by the crown.

*Seg.* Go to, sirrah, away, post you to the king,  
Whose heart is fraught with careful doubts,  
Glad him up, and tell him these good news,  
And we will follow as fast as we may.

*Mouse.* I go master, I run master. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE XIII.—Aragon. *Room of State in the Court.*

*Enter the KING and COLLIN.*

*King.* Break heart, and end my pallid woes,  
My Amadine, the comfort of my life ;  
How can I joy except she were in sight?  
Her absence breeds great sorrow to my soul,  
And with a thunder breaks my heart in twain.

*Collin.* Forbear those passions, gentle king,  
And you shall see 'twill turn unto the best,  
And bring your soul to quiet and to joy.

*King.* Such joy as death, except of her I hear,  
And that with speed, I cannot sigh thus long ;  
But what a tumult do I hear within?

[*They cry within, "Joy and happiness."*]

*Collin.* I hear a noise of over-passing joy  
Within the court: my lord be of good comfort,  
And here comes one in haste.

*Enter MOUSE running.*

*Mouse.* A king, a king!

*Collin.* Why, how now, sirrah, what's the matter?

*Mouse.* O 'tis news for a king, 'tis worth money.

*King.* Why, sirrah, thou shalt have silver and gold if it be good.

*Mouse.* O 'tis good, 'tis good Amadine.

*King.* O what of her? tell me, and I will make thee a knight.

*Mouse.* How, a spright! no by lady, I will not be a spright.

Master get you away; if I be a spright, I shall be so lean

I shall make you all afraid.

*Collin.* Then, sot, the king means to make thee a gentleman.

*Mouse.* Why, I shall want 'parel.

*King.* Thou shalt want for nothing.

*Mouse.* Then stand away, strike up thyself, here they come.

*Enter SEGASTO, MUCEDORUS, and AMADINE.*

*Ama.* My gracious father, pardon thy disloyal daughter.

*King.* What, do mine eyes behold my daughter Amadine?

Rise up daughter, and let these embracing arms  
Show some token of thy father's joy,  
Which ever since thy departure hath languished in sorrow.

*Ama.* Dear father, never were your sorrows Greater than my griefs.

Never you so desolate as I comfortless:

Yet, nevertheless, knowing myself

To be the cause of both, on bended knees

I humbly crave your pardon.

*King.* I'll pardon thee, dear daughter, but for him—

*Ama.* Ay, father, what of him?

*King.* As sure as I am king, and wear the crown,  
I'll be reveng'd on that accurséd wretch.

*Muc.* Yet worthy prince, work not thy will in wrath; show favour.

*King.* Ay, such favour as thou deservest.

*Muc.* I do deserve the daughter of a king.

*King.* Oh impudent! a shepherd and so insolent.

*Muc.* No shepherd I, but a worthy prince.

*King.* In fair conceit, not princely born.

*Muc.* Yes, princely born; my father is a king,  
My mother a queen, and of Valentia both.

*King.* What, Mucedorus! welcome to our court.  
What cause hadst thou to come to me disguis'd?

*Muc.* No cause to fear, I caus'd no offence;  
But this, desiring thy daughter's virtues for to see,  
Disguis'd myself from out my father's court,  
Unknown to any in secret, I did rest,  
And pass'd many troubles near to death:  
So hath your daughter my partaker been,  
As you shall know hereafter more at large;  
Desiring you, you will give her to me,  
Even as my own, and sovereign of my life,  
Then shall I think my travels all well spent.

*King.* With all my heart; but this,  
Segasto claims my promise made 'tofore,  
That he should have her as his only wife,  
Before my council when he came from war.  
Segasto, may I crave thee, let it pass,  
And give Amadine as wife to Mucedorus?

*Seg.* With all my heart, were it a far greater  
thing,

And what I may to furnish up their rites,  
With pleasing sport and pastimes you shall see.

*King.* Thanks good Segasto, I will think of this.

*Muc.* Thanks, good my lord, and whilst I live  
Account of me in what I can or may.

*Am.* Good Segasto, these great courtesies  
Shall not be forgot.

*Mouse.* Why, bark you, master, bones! what  
have you done? what, given away the wench you  
made me take such pains for? You are wise in-  
deed. Mass! and I had known of that, I would  
have had her myself; faith, master, now we may  
go to breakfast with a woodcock pie.

*Seg.* Go to, sirrah, you were best to leave this  
knavery.

*King.* Come on, my lords, let's now to court,  
Where we may finish up the joyfullest day  
That ever happ'd to a distress'd king:  
Were but thy father, the Valentia lord,  
Present in view of this combined knot—

[*A shout within.*]

*Enter Messenger.*

What shout was that?

*Mess.* My lord, the great Valentia king,  
Newly arriv'd, entreats your presence.

*Muc.* My father?

*King.* Prepar'd welcomes give him entertain-  
ment;

A happier planet never reign'd than that  
Which governs at this hour.

[*Music.*]

*Enter the KING OF VALENTIA, ANSELMO, RODERIGO,  
BRACHIUS, with Others. The King runs and  
embraces his Son.*

*K. Val.* Rise, honour of my age, food to my rest;  
Condemn not, mighty king of Aragon,  
My rude behaviour, so compell'd by nature,  
That manners stood unacknowledg'd.

*King.* What we have to recite would tedious prove  
By declaration, therefore in and feast;  
To-morrow the performance shall explain  
What words conceal; till then drums speak, bells  
ring,

Give plausive welcomes to our brother king.  
[*Flourish of Drums and Trumpets. Exeunt Omnes.*]

*Enter COMEDY and ENVY.*

*Com.* How now, Envy! what, blushest thou al-  
ready?

Peep forth, hide not thy head with shame,  
But with courage praise a woman's deeds;  
Thy threats were vain, thou couldst do me no hurt,  
Although thou seem'st to cross me with despite,  
I overwhelm'd and turn'd upside down thy blocks,  
And made thyself to stumble at the same.

*Envy.* Though stumbled, yet not overthrown,  
Thou canst not draw my head to mildness;  
Yet must I needs confess thou hast done well,  
And play'd thy part with mirth and pleasant glee:  
Say all this; yet canst thou not conquer me,  
Although this time thou hast a triumph got,<sup>31</sup>  
Yet not the conquest neither,  
A double revenge another time I'll have.

*Com.* Envy spit thy gall;  
Plot, work, contrive, create new fallacies,  
Teem from thy womb each minute a black traitor,  
Whose blood and thoughts have twin conception;  
Study to act deeds yet unchronicled,  
Cast native monsters in the moulds of men;  
Case vicious devils under sancted robes;  
Unhasp the wicket where all perjuries roost,  
And swarm this ball<sup>32</sup> with treasons, do thy worst,  
Thou canst not, hell-hound, cross my steer<sup>33</sup> to-  
night,

Nor blind that glory where I will delight.

*Envy.* I can, I will.

*Com.* Nefarious bag begin,  
And let us tug till one the mastery win.

*Envy.* Comedy, thou art a shallow goose,  
I'll overthrow thee in thine own intent,  
And make thy fall my comic merriment.

*Com.* Thy policy wants gravity, thou art too weak;  
Speak friend, as how?

*Envy.* Why thus,  
From my foul study will I hoist a wretch,  
A lean and hungry meagre cannibal,  
Whose jaws swell to his eyes with chewing malice;  
And him I'll make a poet.

*Com.* What's that to the purpose?

*Envy.* This scrambling raven with his needy  
beard,

Will I whet on to write a comedy;  
Wherein shall be compos'd dark sentences,  
Pleasing to factious brains;  
And every otherwhere place me a jest,  
Whose high abuse shall more torment than blows,  
Then I myself (quicker than lightning,)  
Will fly me to the puissant magistrate,  
And waiting with a trencher at his back,  
In midst of jollity rehearse those gauls  
With some additions) so lately vented in your the-  
atre;

He on this cannot but make complaint  
To your great danger, or at least restraint.

*Com.* Ha, ha, ha, I laugh to hear thy folly:  
This is a trap for boys, not men, not such,  
Especially deceitful in their doings,  
Whose staid discretion rules their purposes:

I and my faction do eschew those vices:  
But see, O see, the weary sun for rest,  
Hath lain his golden compass to the west,  
Where he perpetual bide, and ever shine,  
As David's offspring in this happy clime.<sup>34</sup>  
Stoop, Envy, stoop, bow to the earth with me,  
Let's beg our pardon on our bended knee.

[*They kneel.*]

*Envy.* My power hath lost her might, Envy's  
date's expired,

And I amazed am. [*Falls down and quakes.*]

*Com.* Glorious and wise Arch-Cæsar on this earth,  
At whose appearance Envy's stricken dumb,  
And all bad things cease operation:  
Vouchsafe to pardon our unwilling error,  
So late presented to your gracious view,  
And we'll endeavour with excess of pain,  
To please your senses in a choicer strain.  
Thus we commit you to the arms of night,  
Whose spangled carcase would for your delight,  
Strive to excel the day: be blessed then,  
Who other wishes, let him never speak.

*Envy.* Amen.

To fame and honour we commend your rest,  
Live still more happy, every hour more blest.

## NOTES TO MUCEDORUS.

### <sup>1</sup> *Most sacred majesty.*

This prologue appears to have been an occasional one, spoken when the comedy was performed before the king. It was witnessed by James the First, and was also revived and played before Charles, after the Restoration. Ben Jonson's prologue to his comedy of *The Poetaster*, bears some resemblance to this, and may have been suggested by it. There Envy arises in the midst of the stage, and in the course of a long speech informs us:—

For I am rissè here with a covetous hope,  
To blast your pleasures and destroy your sports,  
With wrestings, comments, applications,  
Spy-like suggestions, privy whisperings,  
And thousand such promoting slights as these.

Envy then invokes all ill-disposed authors, all "poet-asses," to render him their assistance in condemning the play:—

You know what dear and ample faculties  
I have endow'd you with: I'll lend you more.  
Here, take my snakes among you, come and eat,  
And while the squeez'd juice flows in your black jaws,  
Help me to daian the anuthor. Spit it forth  
Upon his lines, and show your rusty teeth  
At every word, or accent: or else choose  
Out of my longest vipers, to stick down  
In your deep throats; and let the heads come forth  
At your rank mouths; that he may see you arm'd  
With triple malice, to hiss, sting, and tear  
His work and him; to forge, and then declaim,  
Traduce, corrupt, apply, inform, suggest;  
O, these are gifts wherein your souls are blest.

As the authors do not appear, Envy, as in the present comedy, is baffled, and then descends slowly to his legitimate habitation.

### <sup>2</sup> *Sound forth Bellona's silver tun'd strings.*

The author has here, I think, fallen into error; what was Comedy to do with Bellona? The latter was the goddess of war, not of pastime. She was the sister of Mars; or, according to other writers, his wife or daughter. Ancient poets described her as appearing in battle with dishevelled hair flowing wildly behind her, while in one hand she held a whip to scourge cowards, and in the other a flaming torch to animate the brave. At the gate of the temple erected to her at Rome was a small pillar called the column of war, against which the priests threw a spear whenever war was declared against an enemy. Among other superstitions which they practised, was the following barbarous and disgusting one: in moments of fanatical excitement they inflicted deep gashes on their bodies, particularly on the thigh, and receiving the blood

which flowed from the wound, in their hands, offered it as an acceptable sacrifice to the goddess. In paroxysms of wild excitement they frequently predicted war and slaughter, the defeat of enemies, and the desolation of nations.

### <sup>3</sup> *His chival; i.e. his reputation.*

### <sup>4</sup> *To spurn at arms and legs quite shivered off.*

Should we not read, *shivered* off? *Sliver* is a common word in the north, where it means to cut a piece or slice. In *Macbeth* we have

———— Slips of yew,  
*Sliver'd* in the moon's eclipse.

### <sup>5</sup> *Tender the suit of me.*

That is, respect it, regard it with kindness.

### <sup>6</sup> *A deadly dole; i.e. a gloomy lamentation.*

### <sup>7</sup> *I will defend them in despite of thee.*

Comedy has not mentioned whom she will defend, but I presume she alludes to the actors, who were threatened with an extinction of their calling by the Puritans, whom I suspect the author here intended to personify under the name of Envy.

<sup>8</sup> *I force it not; i.e. do not obtrude it on unwilling listeners.*

### <sup>9</sup> *Your miss; i.e. your absence.*

### <sup>10</sup> *Which I presented in Lord Julius' mask.*

Those who love to reflect on the customs and pleasures of a past and brilliant age, will not quarrel with me for introducing the following extract from an interesting paper on *Masques*, in D'Israeli's *Curiosities of Literature*:—"It sometimes happens in the history of national amusements, that a name survives, while the thing itself is forgotten. This has been remarkably the ease with our COURT MASQUES, respecting which our most eminent writers long ventured on so many false opinions, with a perfect ignorance of the nature of those compositions, which combined all that was exquisite in the imitative arts of poetry, painting, music, song, dancing, and machinery, at a period when our public theatre was in its rude infancy. \* \* \* Warburton said on *Masques*, that 'Shakspeare was an enemy to these *fooleries*, as appears by his writing none!' This opinion was among the many which that singular critic threw out as they arose at the moment, for Warburton forgot that Shakspeare characteristically introduces one in the *Tempest's* most fanciful scene. Granger, who had not much time to study the manners of the age,

whose personages he was so well acquainted with, in a note on Milton's masque, said that, 'These compositions were trifling and perplexed allegories; the persons of which are fantastical to the last degree. Ben Jonson, in his *Masque of Christmas*, has introduced *Minceed Pie*, and *Bubie Cuke*, who act their parts in the drama. But the most wretched performances of this kind could please by the help of music, machinery, and dancing. Granger blunders, describing by two farcical characters a species of composition of which farce was not the characteristic; such personages as he notices would enter into the *Anti-Masque*, which was a humorous parody, of the more solemn masque, and sometimes relieved it. Malone, whose fancy was not vivid, condemns masques and the age of masques, in which he says, echoing Granger's epithet, 'the wretched taste of the times found amusement.' And lastly comes Mr. Tidd, whom the splendid fragment of the *Arcades*, and the entire masque, which we have by heart, could not warm; while his neutralizing criticism fixes him at the freezing point of the thermometer.' 'This dramatic entertainment, performed not without prodigious expense in machinery and decoration, to which *humour* we certainly owe the entertainment of *Arcades*, and the inimitable mask of *Comus*.' *Comus*, however, is only a fine dramatic poem, retaining scarcely any features of the masque." Notwithstanding Mr. D'Israeli's eulogy of this obsolete entertainment, I incline greatly to the opinion of Dr. Warburton, nor can I think that Shakspeare's introduction of a brief masque, or allegorical dance, in one of the scenes of *The Tempest*, any evidence that he approved of the masque as an entertainment in itself.

<sup>11</sup> *Enter Mouse with a bottle of hay.*

The term *bottle* was anciently applied to a quantity of hay or grass bundled up together.

<sup>12</sup> *Ay, plain mouse, without either welt or yard.*

That is, without any addition or ornament.

<sup>13</sup> *Of beef and brewis.*

*Brewis* is a piece of bread soaked in boiling fat pottage, made of salted meat. It seems anciently also to have meant some kind of broth. Thus, in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Dioclesian*:—

What an ocean of *brewis* shall I swim in.

<sup>14</sup> *A sheepbiter*; i. e., a petty thief.

<sup>15</sup> *Aye, shipsticks.*

I suppose he means *sheep-stakes*. The shepherd's vigilance had saved many sheep-stakes or hurdles from being stolen.

<sup>16</sup> *More may I boast and say: but I—*

Mucedorus means, not only may I boast of favour and rewards from the king, but also of the affection of the princess Amadine; and he then breaks off abruptly, implying that it is not prudent to speak upon such a subject.

<sup>17</sup> *A shepherd and a sovereign nothing like.*

I see no sense in this line as it stands; should we not read:—A shepherd *is* a sovereign nothing like; i. e., no-way resembles him.

<sup>18</sup> *Of late I loved on indeed, but now I love none but only thee.*

This is very ambiguous; perhaps we should read:—

Of late I loved another, now I love only thee.

<sup>19</sup> ————— *Burn likewise,  
Yet smother up the blast.*

The prince should speak this aside; he is addressing his own heart, and saying to it,—burn thou with an equal affection to that which inspires Amadine, but for the present hide thy feelings; do not compel me to divulge my disguise.

<sup>20</sup> *My bat*, i. e. club.

<sup>21</sup> *I will not be made a curtall.*

A *curtall*, or *eurtail*, is a dog of small value, who having had his tail cut off, misses his game. The tail is counted necessary to the agility of a greyhound. Mouse is quibbling on the previous observation of his master, namely, "give ear to my words;" to which he answers, "he will not give his ears;" that is, be curtailed, or deprived of them for any man's pleasure.

<sup>22</sup> *Come, habit, thou art fit for me:*

*No shepherd now, an hermit must I be.*

The dress of a hermit was suitable to his depressed state of mind, being expressive of loneliness and sadness.

<sup>23</sup> *O spare me, Bremo, love should limit life,  
Not to be made a murderer of himself.*

I cannot understand this: Amadine is not begging the savage to limit or destroy her life, but to save it. She seems to say the reverse of what it is evident she means. In these dramas a little conjectural emendation may very fairly be indulged in, especially if not introduced into the text; I would therefore suggest that the passage should read thus:

O spare me, Bremo, love should *not* limit life,  
And thus be made a murderer of itself.

<sup>24</sup> *To shadow thee from the fierce burning sun.*

The old copy reads, *from burning sun*. I have interpolated the words, *the fierce*, as they, or something like them, appear to have been accidentally omitted, and the metre thus rendered defective.

<sup>25</sup> *I'll trace along with thee.*

That is, follow in thy very footsteps.

<sup>26</sup> *With music's gentle sound.*

Old copy reads—with music's sound.

<sup>27</sup> *The weakest ever then went to the wall.*

The old copy, which is evidently corrupt, reads:

The weakest went to walls.

The correction I have made is essential, but I think it proper to mention it.

<sup>28</sup> *Waving their former wretchedness.*

That is, doing away with, or abandoning it.

<sup>29</sup> *Fight for me, or die: or fight, or else thou diest.*

I suspect this line is corrupted; it should read:—

Fight me or die: fight, or else thou diest.

<sup>30</sup> *Enter Mouse, searching; he falls over the wild man, and so carries him away.*

This was a primitive way of getting the supposed dead man off the stage. The players of those times having no scenes, could not shut the corpse out from the view of the audience. Malone, in his *Historical Account of the English Stage*, says:—"How little the imaginations of the audience were assisted by scenical deception, and how much necessity an author had to call on them 'to piece out imperfections with their thoughts, may be collected from Sir Philip Sidney, who, describing the state of the drama and the stage, in his time, (about the year 1583,) says, 'Now, you shall have three ladies walk to gather flowers, and then we must believe the stage to be a garden. By-and-by we hear news of shipwreck in the same place; then we are to blame if we accept it not for a rock. Upon the back of that comes out a hideous monster with fire and smoke; and then the miserable beholders are bound to take it for a cave; while, in the mean time, two armies fly in, represented with four swords and bucklers, and then what hard heart will not receive it for a pitched field.'

"The first notice that I have found of anything like moveable scenes being used in England, is in the narrative of the entertainment given to King James, at Oxford, in August, 1605, when three plays were performed in the hall of Christ Church, of which we have the following account by a contemporary writer: 'The stage (he tells

us) was built close to the upper end of the hall, as it seemed at the first sight: but indeed it was but a false wall, faire painted, and adorned with stately pillars, which pillars would turn about; by reason whereof, and with the help of other *painted clothes*, their stage did vary three times in the acting of one tragedy;" that is, in other words, there were three scenes employed in the exhibition of the piece."

<sup>31</sup> *Although this time thou hast a triumph got.*

The old copy reads, "This time thou hast got." I have interpolated the words *a triumph*, which were essential both to sense and metre.

<sup>32</sup> *This ball*, i.e. this world.

<sup>33</sup> *Thou canst not, hell-hound, cross my steer.*

Perhaps we should read *steer*, i.e. my course, or progress onward.

<sup>34</sup> *As David's offspring in this happy clime.*

The old copy reads, *his* happy clime. This gives no meaning. The line is an allusion to King James, in whose presence the comedy was performed. James was, by his flatterers, called the Modern Solomon, and is therefore here alluded to as, in a metaphorical sense, the offspring of David; his descendant, because inheriting his wisdom and great qualities. The character of Solomon has been far too highly estimated by both ancient and modern writers, it has been drawn by the pen of devotion rather than by that of history, but let us make what deduction we please. it is still an insult to the memory of the wise, worldly, voluptuous, and gorgeous Hebrew monarch to compare him with that scoff of sovereignty, the vulgar, tyrannical, and pedantic James the First.



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THIS powerful drama, the work of a poet of no common power, whoever he was, was first published in the year 1592, without the name of the author, and with the following descriptive title:—*The lamentable and true Tragedie of M. Arden of Feversham, in Kent, who was most wickedlye murdered, by the means of his disloyall and wanton Wyfe, who for the love she bare to one Mosbie, hyred two desperat Ruffins, Blackwill and Shagbagg, to kill him. Wherein is showed the great Malice and Discimulation of a wiked Woman, the insatiable desire of filthie Lust, and the shameful End of all Murderers.* It appears to have enjoyed a considerable popularity, for it was republished in 1599 and in 1633; and in the next century, Lillo, the author of *George Barnwell*, produced a drama upon the same subject, in which he borrowed largely from the present tragedy. Lillo, who was more a moralist than a poet, rather weakened the original than improved on it; and his version of the drama, when recently produced, was very unfavourably received. A critic of the daily press thus referred to it: "Lillo worked for the stage during a licentious period with an honest intention of making it a school of morals; but unfortunately the qualities which secured estimation for the man, occasioned dulness in the author. In his eyes Newgate was evidently the great source of ethical teaching, and his method was to select some tremendous crime committed in the sphere of domestic life, as an illustration of the necessary connection between guilt and the gallows. As he did not write about the sorrows of kings and queens, and his works stood by the side of some of the most turgid productions of the heroic school, his admirers persuaded themselves that his taste was simple and natural, though a more artificial writer never took pen in hand." The mind of Lillo then was the medium through which this striking tragedy was to be sifted before making its appearance upon the modern stage. Truly, paraphrases and adaptations are, for the most part, what I once heard them very aptly described to be, "diluted impertinences." Had the *original* drama been produced, it might have experienced a different fate. I cannot think that a tragedy which is not only interesting, but even painfully exciting in the perusal, would have failed in the representation; if so, this result would be produced by the absence of comedy as a sufficient relief to the deep gloom which hangs over so much of the production. Little gleams of comic interest sparkle here and there in it like stray sunbeams in a dungeon; but, on the whole, it must be admitted, that it has not sufficient variety and contrast.

In the year 1770, *Arden of Feversham* was again published in its original form, and under peculiar circumstances. Edward Jacob, a resident of Feversham who had written a history of that town and port, reprinted it, with a preface which attributed the drama to our national poet. That portion of his preface, in which Mr. Jacob assigns his reasons for doing so, I will extract; it runs as follows: "Mr. Rowe, in the preface to his edition of Shakspear's plays, says, 'it would be without doubt a pleasure to any man curious in things of this kind, to see and know what was the first essay of a fancy like his.' It is therefore submitted to the discerning critics to determine, whether this anonymous tragedy of *Arden* is not the thing so long wished for. The reasons of this seeming extraordinary proposition arise from the similarity of this with the later and known compositions of Shakspear, and the time when it was printed, viz. in quarto, A. D. 1592. Why it never was printed with his other plays, may be presumed to have happened, from its not having been acted in that house, from whence his plays were collected and published by his brother-performers, so many years afterwards. The oldest date to any of his plays being 1597, five years after this play was printed, and the author then thirty-three years old; consequently this bids fair (if the proposition be admitted) for being his earliest theatrical production now

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remaining. Indeed the very name of *Arden*, from which family he descended by the female line, might probably stimulate him to try his early powers, on the subject of this shocking murder, so largely described by Holinshed. It is worthy of observation, that Ben Jonson's play, *The Case Altered*, though printed so late as 1609, (and a collection of whose plays was printed in his lifetime, which was not the case with those of Shakspear) was not known to be in print, till it was discovered to Mr. Whalley, the editor of a late edition of Jonson's works, by our most excellent Roscius, Mr. Garrick, who supplied him with the same from his own most curious collection of old plays. The same fate may possibly have attended this tragedy of *Arden*; the original from which this is printed, verbatim, perhaps may be only in the hands of the editor; so far is certain, no notice is taken of this edition by Ames, in his *History of Printing*; or by any person that has published accounts of our old dramatic authors; neither is it to be found in the above mentioned curious collection. No wonder is it, then, that it should so long escape the critical observations of the professed admirers of the unparalleled Shakspear, to whose judgment it is now most willingly submitted, either to be approved as his, or to be rejected. It may not be improper to observe farther, that there is another, but very incorrect edition of this play, in the Roman letter, and that even this is so scarce as not to be met with, where it was most likely it should be, that is at Faversham, some of whose inhabitants have, till of late, at a few years interval, doubly murdered it, by the excessive bad manuscript copies they used, and their more injudicious acting; to the no small discredit of this valuable tragedy, whoever was the author of it; doubly valuable indeed, on account of its intrinsic worth, and its rarity. The editor, therefore, whose sole view is to secure it from total oblivion, and to oblige the curious, makes no doubt of their favouring this republication."

This preface is followed by a number of passages and expressions very similar to others which are to be found in the known productions of our great poet, which similar expressions Mr. Jacob thought were very convincing arguments in favour of his supposition that Shakspeare was the author of this tragedy. Such general resemblances are, however, very unsatisfactory evidence, especially when unsupported by any concurrent testimony; many of them might have been, and probably were, the joint-stock common-places of writers of that age. Thus, we have allusions to the painted cloths or tapestry then in use, to the imaginary horns of the cuckold—a universal joke among the dramatists of the Elizabethan age, and perfectly threadbare from repetition. Then again Shakspeare and the writer of this drama both allude to the song of the mermaid, the eyes of the basilisk, the moon and Endimion, and compare a raven with a dove. These things are not original thoughts, or striking beauties—merely illustrations of argument, and ornaments of speech, which any writer of that age, gifted with a poetical temperament, would probably have used.

We then naturally inquire, does this drama possess those qualities which are to be expected in an early work of Shakspeare's? Has it his sweetness and grace of language, his depth of thought, his knowledge of character, his occasional aphorisms, rhyming couplets, and frequent quibbles? To these questions it must be answered, that some of the above-named evidences of the hand of our great bard, are not to be found in this production; his quibbles and his frequent rhymes (peculiarities with which his known earliest works abound to a very faulty extent) are not visible. Yet, on the other hand, to no dramatic poet of that age of whom we have any record, can this tragedy be attributed except to Shakspeare; it bears no resemblance whatever to the works of any other known writer of that period, and its simplicity of structure and natural power of language, give a strong colouring to the supposition that it might be a work of his early manhood.

The plot also is taken from a book which Shakspeare had carefully read, and to which he was indebted for the groundwork of many of his historical dramas—*The Chronicle of Holinshed*; where the circumstances of the murder are related with great particularity. The graphic and gossiping historian observing: "The which murder, for the horribleness thereof, although otherwise it may seem to be but a private matter, and therefore, as it were, impertinent to this history, I have thought good to set it forth somewhat at large, having the instructions delivered to me by them that have used some diligence to gather the true understanding of the circumstances." The relation of the old chronicler is followed with that

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literal exactness which was general with Shakspeare when he selected a work which he thought suitable for the structure of a drama. The simplicity of the story was such as would have been approved of by the great poet, and the manner in which it is conducted bespeaks a dramatist of no common constructive skill. The play has no artificiality, no underplot so arranged that the listeners are expected to cry and laugh in alternate regularity, no episodes or licentious excrescences, and, notwithstanding Dr. Ulrici's opinion to the contrary, no unnecessary characters.

Certainly it must be admitted that poetry and sweetness of language are more abundant in it than variety of character, but yet it contains some masterly sketches. Its fault in this direction is its sameness; we seem, while perusing it, to be wandering in a maze of crime; murder glares from every page; most of the characters, with the exception of Arden, and his blunt, honest friend, Franklin, are unprincipled ruffians, each ready to sell himself to the commission of murder, for some unimportant consideration. Mosbie, for the love of Alice; Clarke and Michael, for the love of Susan; Black Will and Shakebag for gold; and Greene, for revenge. The awful crime of murder seems at first too lightly treated; it is a matter of callous gossip, and the treacherous Alice talks of it to Mosbie, and even to her servant, Michael, with a revolting indifference. Amends are made for this as we proceed; murder is soon made to assume a shape of loathsomeness and horror; at the close a terrible retribution is dealt out to all, and the fleeting pleasures of adulterous love vanish before the horrible realities of the stake and the gibbet.

The uxorious Arden is blinded by the passionate affection he bears to his guilty wife; the chronicler describes him as a man "of a tall and comely personage," and the poet has drawn him as deserving, and likely to win, the love of any woman. He is a perfect pattern of an easy husband, and his generous unquestioning affection, and misplaced confidence, lead to his untimely death. Ulrici sees no sufficient cause for his murder; he cannot understand why a woman should seek the death of so amiable a husband. Alas! for the profound depravity of the human mind, when it has once cast aside the curb and guard of pure and elevating principles! The headlong, mad, unreasoning passion of Alice, which hurries her, as in a wild resistless tempest, from adultery to murder, is cause sufficient to those who weigh well the prolific power of crime. Alice is in a waking dream of sensuality and horror all through the play; she is haunted by an ever-present and tyrannical suggestion. These whisperings of savage and revolting desires breed a kind of wolf-like madness in her, an impatient thirst for her husband's blood. Nor does this hideous dream vanish until after the murder is accomplished; then the darkness of soul in which she has been so long enveloped, suddenly disappears; the gibbering phantoms who have tempted her, fade away in the departing gloom, like shrouded ghosts into their graves, and she awakes to a sense of her guilt and the horrors of her situation. Previously she had seemed scarce human, a demon under a veil of beauty; but after the murder, the hysterical, smitten, guilty, and repentant wretch, still looks a woman, and when finally led away to the horrible punishment of death by fire, great as her crime has been, we experience for her a sensation of pity.

Mosbie is a coarse-minded vulgar villain, who trades upon the love borne to him by Alice, and is himself equally without affection and without principle; an educated and capricious ruffian, living in an atmosphere of treachery and crime, and influenced by an unquenchable appetite for lust and murder. There is something awful in this soulless wretch, whose spell-like influence upon the unhappy Alice, converts her from a loving woman to an incarnate demon. He himself reveals the bottomless depth of his depravity, by determining, after the murder of Arden, to send to her eternal rest or unrest the woman whose love for him has brought about this sad tragedy. To himself he thus reasons respecting her:—

———— I may not trust you, Alice,  
You have supplanted Arden for my sake,  
And will extirpen me to plant another:  
*'Tis fearful sleeping in a serpent's bed;*  
And I will cleaaly rid my hands of her.

Like a bird caught in a storm, the unhappy Alice struggles for a time against the influence which

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Mosbie possesses over her; very pathetic is the appeal she makes to him to leave and to forget her, to permit her to wash out with tears the remembrance of her adulterous love, and the contemplation of that gloomy crimson sin, the commission of which severs the perpetrators from all sympathy with the human race, and renders them accursed of God, cut off like wolves from amongst men, and driven, like fiends, from association with angels. In an hour of tearful repentance and self-reproach, she exclaims—

I pray thee, Mosbie, let our spring-time wither,  
Our harvest else will yield but loathsome weeds.  
Forget, I pray thee, what has pass'd betwixt us,  
For now I blush and tremble at the thought.

Here the delusion seems fading away from the mind of the unhappy Aliee, tears of agony have for a moment purified her blackened soul; she raises her eyes from earth, and once more beholds the melancholy but holy looking stars, and they seem to speak of innocence in the past, and hope for the future; hope of deliverance from the raging conflict of passions in which she is engulfed; hope of forgiveness, hope of peace. It is the crisis of her fate, the hallowed moment when a light from heaven seems to show the wanderer her way back into the right path; her better angel beckens her from that sad vale of pitfalls and ruin; she hesitates, her eyes fall again upon her paramour; the evil influence returns in all its overwhelming force, the struggle is over;—a star has fallen from heaven, and a soul is lost. From that moment Alice is a restless tigress, thirsting for her husband's blood with a devil-like longing that is truly appalling. Finely has the poet expressed this terrible desire to slay, which haunts the guilty woman like an evil spirit, or rather like some dark spectre whose fearful presence is felt, not seen. Speaking to Mosbie of her husband, she says—

This night I rose and walk'd about the chamber,  
And twice or thrice, I thought to have murder'd him.

What a picture! worthy in its concentration of horrors of the pen of the young Shakspeare.

Of the minor characters, a few observations will be sufficient. Black Will is drawn with a broad and powerful pencil; he is a sottish, savage, merciless, vapouring bully; a human slaughterman, always ready to murder for hire; utterly destitute of any feeling of remorse or pity, below the beasts even in his instincts. Perhaps it is scarcely wise to paint such dark portraits on the pages of the poet; portraits which are akin to the creations of the Spanish artist, Spagnoletto, who delighted in painting men writhing in agony upon the rack, or expiring in every conceivable state of torture; who represented the spasms of Prometheus on his rock, and Saint Bartholomew shrinking beneath the knife of his torturer. Such creations rather appal than please or better us, yet I think it will be admitted that Black Will and his fitting companion, Shakebag, are delineated by a master hand, even by such a hand as in after-times might have created the reckless, profligate murderer, Barnadine.

In conclusion, I must say that I do not assert this tragedy to be the work of Shakspeare; my belief is rather on the adverse side; but I think the suggestion of Mr. Jacob, that it might have been the first, or a very early effort of our poet's muse, well entitled to critical consideration.

H. T.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

LORD CHIEFY.

*Appears*, Act IV. sc. 2.

ARDEN, *a Gentleman of Feversham.*

*Appears*, Act I. sc. 1; sc. 2; sc. 3. Act II. sc. 3. Act III. sc. 1; sc. 3. Act IV. sc. 2; sc. 3; sc. 4; sc. 5. Act V. sc. 2.

FRANKLIN, *his Friend.*

*Appears*, Act I. sc. 1; sc. 2; sc. 3. Act II. sc. 3. Act III. sc. 1; sc. 3. Act IV. sc. 2; sc. 3; sc. 4; sc. 5. Act V. sc. 2; sc. 4; sc. 6.

MOSBIE, *the Paramour of Arden's Wife.*

*Appears*, Act I. sc. 2; sc. 3. Act II. sc. 1. Act IV. sc. 1; sc. 3; sc. 4; sc. 5. Act V. sc. 1; sc. 2; sc. 4; sc. 6.

CLARKE, *a Painter, in Love with Susan Mosbie.*

*Appears*, Act I. sc. 2. Act II. sc. 1. Act IV. sc. 3.

GREENE, *a Townsman of Feversham.*

*Appears*, Act I. sc. 3. Act II. sc. 2; sc. 3. Act III. sc. 2; sc. 4. Act IV. sc. 2; sc. 3; sc. 4. Act V. sc. 1; sc. 2.

BRADSHAW, *a Goldsmith.*

*Appears*, Act II. sc. 2. Act IV. sc. 1. Act V. sc. 2; sc. 6.

ADAM FOWLE, *Landlord of the Flower-de-luce.*

*Appears*, Act I. sc. 1. Act V. sc. 1.

DICK REDE, *a Townsman of Feversham; ruined by Arden.*

A SAILOR, *his Companion.*

*Appear*, Act IV. sc. 5.

MICHAEL, *a Servant of Arden's, in Love with Susan Mosbie.*

*Appears*, Act I. sc. 1; sc. 3. Act II. sc. 3. Act III. sc. 1; sc. 3; sc. 4. Act IV. sc. 2; sc. 3; sc. 5. Act V. sc. 1; sc. 2; sc. 4; sc. 6.

BLACK WILL, *a Ruffian.*

*Appears*, Act II. sc. 2; sc. 3. Act III. sc. 2; sc. 4. Act IV. sc. 2; sc. 4; sc. 5. Act V. sc. 1; sc. 2; sc. 5.

SHAKEBAG, *his Companion.*

*Appears*, Act II. sc. 2; sc. 3. Act III. sc. 2; sc. 4. Act IV. sc. 2; sc. 4; sc. 5. Act V. sc. 1; sc. 2; sc. 3.

MAYOR OF FEVERSHAM.

*Appears*, Act V. sc. 2; sc. 4; sc. 6.

A FERRYMAN.

*Appears*, Act IV. sc. 4.

A LONDON 'PRENTICE.

*Appears*, Act II. sc. 3.

ALICE, *Wife to Arden.*

*Appears*, Act I. sc. 1; sc. 2; sc. 3. Act II. sc. 1. Act IV. sc. 1; sc. 3; sc. 5. Act V. sc. 1; sc. 2; sc. 4; sc. 6.

SUSAN, *Servant to Alice, and Sister to Mosbie.*

*Appears*, Act II. sc. 1. Act V. sc. 2; sc. 4; sc. 6.

*Watchmen, and Attendants on Lord Chieffy.*

SCENE.—*Chiefly at FEVERSHAM and LONDON, and the Road between them.*

[NOTE.—The old copy of this Tragedy is not divided into acts or scenes—I am responsible for its arrangement in that respect.—Ed.]

# Arden, of Feversham.

## ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Room in Arden's House.*

*Enter ARDEN and FRANKLIN.*

*Frank.* Arden, cheer up thy spirits, and droop no more :

My gracious lord, the duke of Somerset,  
Hath freely given to thee and to thy heirs,  
By letters patent from his Majesty,<sup>1</sup>  
All the lands of the abbey of Feversham.  
Here are the deeds, seal'd and subscrib'd with his  
name and the king's.

Read them ; and leave this melancholy mood.

*Arden.* Franklin, thy love prolongs my weary  
life ;

And but for thee, how odious were this life ;  
That shows me nothing, but torments my soul,  
And those foul objects that offend mine eyes,  
Which make me wish that for this vale of heaven,  
The earth hung o'er my head and cover'd me.  
Love-letters pass 'twixt Mosbie and my wife,  
And they have privy meetings in the town :  
Nay, on his finger did I spy the ring,  
Which, at our marriage day, the priest put on ;  
Can any grief be half so great as this ?

*Frank.* Comfort thyself, sweet friend, it is not  
strange

That women will be false and wavering.

*Arden.* Ay, but to doat on such a one as he,

Is monstrous, Franklin, and intolerable

*Frank.* Why, what is he ?

*Arden.* A botcher, and no better at the first,  
Who, by base brokage, getting some small stock,  
Crept into service of a nobleman ;  
And by his servile flattery and fawning,  
Is now become the steward of his house ;  
And bravely jets it in his silken gown.

*Frank.* No nobleman will countenance such a  
peasant.

*Arden.* Yes, the lord Clifford ; he that loves  
not me :

But through his favour let him not grow proud ;

For were he by the lord Protector back'd,  
He should not make me to be pointed at :  
I am by birth a gentleman of blood ;<sup>2</sup>  
And that injurious ribald that attempts  
To violate my dear wife's chastity,  
(For dear I hold her love, as dear as heaven,)  
Shall, on the bed which he thinks to defile,  
See his dissever'd joints and sinews torn ;  
Whilst on the planchers<sup>3</sup> pants his weary body,  
Smear'd in the channels of his lustful blood.

*Frank.* Be patient, gentle friend, and learn of me  
To ease thy grief, and save her chastity :  
Entreat her fair ; sweet words are fittest engines  
To raze the flint walls of a woman's breast.

In any case be not too jealous,  
Nor make a question of her love to thee ;  
But as securely, presently take horse,  
And lie with me at London all this term :  
For women, when they may, will not ;  
But being kept back, straight grows outrageous.

*Arden.* Though this abhors from reason, yet I'll  
try it,<sup>4</sup>  
And call her forth, and presently take leave. How,  
Alice !

*Enter ALICE.*

*Alice.* Husband, what mean you to get up so  
early ?

Summer nights are short, and yet you rise ere day ;  
Had I been 'wake you had not rose so soon.

*Arden.* Sweet love, thou knowest that we two,  
Ovid-like,

Have often chid the morn, when't 'gan to peep ;  
And often wish'd that dark night's purblind steeds  
Would pull her by the purple mantle back,  
And cast her in the ocean to her love.

But this night, sweet Alice, thou hast kill'd my  
heart :

I heard thee call on Mosbie in thy sleep.

*Alice.* 'Tis like I was asleep when I nam'd him,  
For being awake he comes not in my thoughts.

*Arden.* Ay, but you started up, and suddenly,  
Instead of him, caught me about the neck.

*Alice.* Instead of him! why, who was there  
but you?

And where but one is, how can I mistake?

*Frank.* Arden, forbear to urge her over far.

*Arden.* Nay, love, there is no credit in a dream;  
Let it suffice I know thou lov'st me well.

*Alice.* Now I remember whereupon it came:  
Had we no talk of Mosbie yesternight?

*Frank.* Mistress Alice, I leard you name him  
once or twice.

*Alice.* And thereof came it; therefore blame  
not me.

*Arden.* I know it did, and therefore let it pass:  
I must to London, sweet Alice, presently.

*Alice.* But tell me; do you mean to stay there  
long?

*Arden.* No longer there, till my affairs be done.

*Frank.* He will not stay above a month at most.

*Alice.* A month, ah me! sweet Arden, come  
again

Within a day or two, or else I die.

*Arden.* I cannot long be from thee, gentle Alice.  
Whilst Michael fetch our horses from the field,  
Franklin and I will down unto the quay:  
For I have certain goods there to unload.  
Meanwhile, prepare our breakfast, gentle Alice;  
For yet, ere noon, we'll take horse and away.

[*Exeunt ARDEN and FRANK.*]

*Alice.* Ere noon he means to take horse and  
away:

Sweet news is this! Oh that some airy spirit  
Would, in the shape and likeness of a horse,  
Gallop with Arden across the Ocean,  
And throw him from his back into the waves.  
Sweet Mosbie is the man that hath my heart;  
And he usurps it, having nought but this—  
That I am tied to him by marriage.  
Love is a god, and marriage is but words;  
And therefore Mosbie's title is the best.  
Tush; whether it be so or no, he shall be mine,  
In spite of him, of Hymen, and of rites.

*Enter ADAM of the Flower-de-luce.*

And here comes Adam of the Flower-de-luce;  
I hope he brings me tidings of my love.  
How now, Adam, what is the news with you?  
Be not afraid; my husband is now from home.

*Adam.* He whom ye wot of,—Mosbie, mistress  
Alice,

Is come to town; and sends you word by me,  
In any case you may not visit him.

*Alice.* Not visit him?

*Adam.* No, nor take knowledge of his being here.

*Alice.* But tell me, is he angry or displeas'd.

*Adam.* It should seem so, for he is wondrous sad.

*Alice.* Were he as mad as raving Hercules,<sup>5</sup>

I'll see him, I; and were thy house of force,  
These hands of mine should raze it to the ground;  
Unless that thou wouldst bring me to my love.

*Adam.* Nay, and you be so impatient, I'll be  
gone.

*Alice.* Stay, Adam, thou wert wont to be my  
friend:

Ask Mosbie how I have incurr'd his wrath;  
Bear him from me this pair of silver dice,<sup>6</sup>  
With which we play'd for kisses many a time;

And when I lost, I won, and so did he:  
Such winning, and such losing, Jove send me;

And bid him, if his love do not decline,  
To come this morning but along my door,

And as a stranger, but salute me there:

This may he do without suspect or fear.

*Adam.* I'll tell him what you say, and so fare-  
well. [*Exit ADAM.*]

*Alice.* Do, and one day I'll make amends for all.  
I know he loves me well, but dares not come,  
Because my husband is so jealous:  
And these my narrow prying neighbours blab,  
Hinders our meetings when we would confer.  
But if I live that block shall be remov'd;  
And Mosbie, thou that comes to me by stealth,  
Shall neither fear the biting speech of men,  
Nor Arden's looks; as surely shall he die,  
As I abhor him, and love only thee.

*Enter MICHAEL.*

How now, Michael, whither are you going?

*Mich.* To fetch my master's nag;

I hope you'll think on me.

*Alice.* Ay, but Michael, see you keep your oath;  
And be as secret as you are resolute.

*Mich.* I'll see he shall not live above a week.

*Alice.* On that condition, Michael, here's my  
hand:

None shall have Mosbie's sister but thyself.

*Mich.* I understand the painter here hard by,  
Hath made report that he and Sue is sure.

*Alice.* There's no such matter, Michael, believe  
it not.

*Mich.* But he hath sent a dagger sticking in a  
heart,

With a verse or two stolen from a painted cloth;  
The which I hear the wench keeps in her chest:

Well, let her keep it, I shall find a fellow

That can both write and read, and make rhyme too ;  
And if I do,—well, I say no more :  
I'll send from London such a taunting letter,  
As shall eat the heart he sent with salt,  
And fling the dagger at the painter's head.

*Alice.* What needs all this? I say that Susan's  
thine.

*Mich.* Why, then I say that I will kill my master,  
Or any thing that you will have me do.

*Alice.* But, Michael, see you do it cunningly.

*Mich.* Why, say I should be took, I'll ne'er  
confess

That you know anything; and Susan being a maid,  
May beg me from the gallows of the sheriff.

*Alice.* Trust not to that, Michael.

*Mich.* You cannot tell me; I have seen it, I;  
But, mistress, tell her whether I live or die,  
I'll make her more worth than twenty painters can.  
For I will rid mine elder brother away;

And then the farm of Bocton is mine own.  
Who would not venture upon house and land,  
When he may have it for a right down blow?

*Alice.* Yonder comes Mosbie; Michael get thee  
gone,  
And let not him nor any know thy drift.

[*Exit MICH.*]

SCENE II.—*Before Arden's House.*

*Enter ALICE from the House, meeting MOSBIE.*

*Alice.* Mosbie, my love.

*Mos.* Away, I say, and talk not to me now.

*Alice.* A word or two, sweetheart, and then I  
will;

'Tis yet but early days, thou needst not fear.

*Mos.* Where is your husband?

*Alice.* 'Tis now high water, and he is at the  
quay.

*Mos.* There let him be; henceforward know  
me not.

*Alice.* Is this the end of all thy solemn oaths?  
Is this the fruit thy reconciliation buds?

Have I for this given thee so many favours,  
Incurr'd my husband's hate, and, out alas!

Made shipwreck of mine honour for thy sake?  
And dost thou say, henceforward know me not?

Remember when I lock'd thee in my closet,  
What were thy words and mine; did we not both  
Decree, to murder Arden in the night?

The heavens can witness, and the world can tell,  
Before I saw that falsehood look of thine,

'Fore I was 'tangled with thy 'ticing speech,  
Arden to me was dearer than my soul,

And shall be still; base peasant, get thee gone,  
And boast not of thy conquest over me,  
Gotten by witchcraft, and mere socery.  
For what hast thou to countenance my love,  
Being descended of a noble house,  
And match'd already with a gentleman,  
Whose servant thou may'st be;—and so farewell.

*Mos.* Ungentle and unkind Alice, now I see  
That which I ever fear'd, and find too true:  
A woman's love is as the lightning flame,  
Which even in bursting forth consumes itself.  
To try thy constancy have I been strange;  
Would I had never tried, but liv'd in hope.

*Alice.* What needs thou try me, whom thou  
ne'er found false.

*Mos.* Yet pardon me, for love is jealous.

*Alice.* So lists the sailor to the mermaid's song;  
So looks the traveller to the basilisk:  
I am content for to be reconcil'd,  
And that I know will be mine overthrow.

*Mos.* Thine overthrow? first let the world dis-  
solve.

*Alice.* Nay, Mosbie, let me still enjoy thy love.  
And happen what will, I am resolute,  
My saving husband hordes up bags of gold,  
To make our children rich, and now is he  
Gone to unload the goods that shall be thine,  
And he and Franklin will to London straight.

*Mos.* To London, Alice, if thou'lt be rul'd by me,  
We'll make him sure enough for coming there.

*Alice.* Ah, would we could.

*Mos.* I happen'd on a painter yesternight,  
The only cunning man of Christendom:  
For he can temper poison with his oil,  
That whoso looks upon the work he draws,  
Shall with the beams that issue from his sight,  
Suck venom to his breast and slay himself.  
Sweet Alice he shall draw thy counterfeit,  
That Arden may, by gazing on it, perish.

*Alice.* Ay, but Mosbie, that is dangerous:  
For thou, or I, or any other else,  
Coming into the chamber where it hangs, may die.

*Mos.* Ay, but we'll have it covered with a cloth,  
And hung up in the study for himself.

*Alice.* It may not be, for when the picture's  
drawn,

Arden I know will come and show it me.

*Mos.* Fear not, we will have that shall serve the  
turn:

This is the painter's house; I'll call him forth,

*Alice.* But Mosbie, I'll have no such picture, I.

*Mos.* I pray thee leave it to my discretion. How,  
Clarke.



*Enter CLARKE.*

O, you are an honest man of your word,  
You served me well.

*Clarke.* Why, Sir, I'll do it for you at any time,  
Provided, as you have given your word,  
I may have Susan Mosbie to my wife :  
For as sharp-witted poets, whose sweet verse  
Make heavenly gods break off their nectar draughts,  
And lay their ears down to the lowly earth :  
Use humble promise to their sacred muse,  
So we that are the poet's favorites,  
Must have a love. Ay, love's the painter's muse,  
That makes him frame a speaking countenance,  
A weeping eye that witnesses heart's grief ;  
Then tell me, master Mosbie, shall I have her ?

*Alice.* 'Tis pity but he should, he'll use her well.

*Mos.* Clarke, here's my hand, my sister shall be  
thine.

*Clarke.* Then, brother, to requite this courtesy,  
You shall command my life, my skill, and all.

*Alice.* Ah, that thou could'st be secret.

*Mos.* Fear him not, love, I have talk'd sufficient.

*Clarke.* You know not me, that ask such ques-  
tions :

Let it suffice, I know you love him well,  
And fain would have your husband made away :  
Wherein, trust me, you show a noble mind,  
That rather than you'll live with him you hate,  
You'll venture life, and die with him you love.  
The like will I do for my Susan's sake.

*Alice.* Yet nothing could enforce me to the  
deed,

But Mosbie's love ; might I without control,  
Enjoy thee still, then Arden should not die :  
But seeing I cannot, therefore let him die.

*Mos.* Enough, sweet Alice ; thy kind words make  
me melt,

Your trick of poisoned pictures we dislike,  
Some other poison would do better far.

*Alice.* Ay, such as might be put into his broth,  
And yet in taste not to be found at all.

*Clarke.* I know your mind, and here I have it for  
you,

Put but a dram of this into his driuk,  
Or any kind of broth that he shall eat :  
And he shall die within an hour after.

*Alice.* As I am a gentlewoman, Clarke, next day  
Thou and Susan shall be married.

*Mos.* And I'll make her dowry more than I'll  
talk of, Clarke.

*Clarke.* Yonder's your husband ;— Mosbie, I'll  
be gone.

D. P.

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*Enter ARDEN and FRANKLIN.*

*Alice.* In good time, see where my husband  
comes ;

Master Mosbie ask him the question yourself.

[*Exit CLARKE.*]

*Mos.* Master Arden, being at London yester-  
night,

The Abbey lands whereof you are now possess'd,  
Were offer'd me, on some occasion,  
By Greene, one of Sir Antony Agers' men :  
I pray you, sir, tell me, are not the lands yours ?  
Hath any other interest herein ?

*Arden.* Mosbie, that question we'll decide anon,  
Alice, make ready my breakfast, I must hence.

[*Exit ALICE.*]

As for the lands, Mosbie, they are mine,  
By letters patent from his majesty :

But I must have a mandate for my wife,  
They say you seek to rob me of her love ;  
Villain, what makes thou in her company,  
She's no companion for so base a groom.

*Mos.* Arden, I thought not on her ; I came to  
thee,

But rather than I'll pocket up this wrong—

*Frank.* What will you do, sir ?

*Mos.* Revenge it on the proudest of you both :

[*ARDEN draws forth Mos.'s Sword.*]

*Arden.* So, sirrah, you may not wear a sword,  
The statute makes against artificers,<sup>7</sup>  
I warrant that I do ;<sup>8</sup> now use your bodkin,  
Your Spanish needle, and your pressing iron.  
For this shall go with me ;—and mark my words,—  
You, goodman butcher, 'tis to you I speak,—  
The next time that I take thee near my house,  
Instead of legs I'll make thee crawl on stumps.

*Mos.* Ah, master Arden, you have injur'd me,  
I do appeal to God, and to the world.

*Frank.* Why, canst thou deny thou wert a butcher  
once.

*Mos.* Measure me what I am, not what I was.

*Arden.* Why, what art thou now but a velvet  
drudge,

A cheating steward, and base-minded peasant ?

*Mos.* Arden, now thou hast belch'd and vomited  
The rancorous venom of thy mis-swoln heart,  
Hear me but speak : As I intend to live  
With God, and his elected saints in heaven,  
I never meant more to solicit her,  
And that she knows, and all the world shall see.  
I loved her once,—sweet Arden, pardon me,  
I could not choose ; her beauty fir'd my heart ;  
But time hath quench'd these over-raging coals,

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And, Arden, though I now frequent thy house,  
 'Tis for my sister's sake her waiting maid,  
 And not for hers. Mayest thou enjoy her long  
 Hell fire and wrathful vengeance light on me,  
 If I dishonour her or injure thee.

*Arden.* Mosbie, with these thy protestations,  
 The deadly hatred of my heart's appeas'd,  
 And thou and I'll be friends if this prove true.  
 As for the base terms I gave thee lately,  
 Forget them, Mosbie: I had cause to speak;  
 When all the knights and gentlemen of Kent,  
 Make common table-talk of her and thee.

*Mos.* Who lives that is not touch'd with slau-  
 derous tongues,

*Frank.* Then Mosbie, to eschew the speech of  
 men,

Upon whose general bruit all honour hangs,  
 Forbear his house.

*Arden.* Forbear it! Nay, rather frequent it  
 more,

The world shall see that I distrust her not.  
 To warn him on the sudden from my house,  
 Were to confirm the rumour that is grown.

*Mos.* By my faith, sir, you say true,  
 And therefore will I sojourn here a while,  
 Until our enemies have talk'd their fill.  
 And then I hope they'll cease, and at last confess,  
 How causeless they have injur'd her and me.

*Arden.* And I will lie at London all this term,  
 To let them see how light I weigh their words.

[*Exeunt into the House.*]

SCENE III.—*Room in Arden's House, as before.*

*Enter ARDEN, FRANKLIN, MOSBIE, MICHAEL, and  
 ALICE.*

*Alice.* Husband sit down, your breakfast will be  
 cold.

*Arden.* Come, Master Mosbie, will you sit with  
 us.

*Mos.* I cannot eat, but I'll sit for company.

*Arden.* Sirrah Michael, see my horse be ready.

*Alice.* Husband why pause ye, why eat you not?

*Arden.* I am not well, there's something in this  
 broth

That is not wholesome; didst thou make it, Alice?

*Alice.* I did, and that's the cause it likes not you,

[*She throws the Broth on the Ground.*]

There's nothing that I do can please your taste,  
 You were best to say I would have poison'd you.

I cannot speak or cast aside my eye,

But he imagines, I have steep awry.

Here's he that you cast in my teeth so oft,

Now will I be convinced, or purge myself,  
 I charge thee speak to this mistrustful man,  
 Thou that wouldst see me hang;—thou, Mosbie,  
 thou,

What favour hast thou had more than a kiss,<sup>10</sup>  
 At coming or departing from the town?

*Mos.* You wrong yourself and me, to cast these  
 doubts,

Your loving husband is not jealous.

*Arden.* Why, gentle mistress Alice, can't I be ill,  
 But you'll accuse yourself.

Franklin, thou hast a box of methridate,  
 I'll take a little to prevent the worst.

*Frank.* Do so, and let us presently take horse,  
 My life for yours ye shall do well enough.

*Alice.* Give me a spoon, I'll eat of it myself,  
 Would it were full of poison to the brim;

Then should my cares and troubles have an end;  
 Was ever silly woman so tormented?

*Arden.* Be patient, sweet love, I mistrust not  
 thee.

*Alice.* God will revenge it, Arden, if thou dost,  
 For never woman lov'd her husband better, than I  
 thee.

*Arden.* I know it, sweet Alice, cease to complain;  
 Lest that in tears I answer thee again.

*Frank.* Come, leave this dallying, and let us away.

*Alice.* Forbear to wound me with that bitter  
 word,

Arden shall go to London in my arms

*Arden.* Loth am I to depart, yet I must go.

*Alice.* Wilt thou to London, then, and leave me  
 here:

Ah, if thou love me, gentle Arden, stay,

Yet if thy business be of great import,

Go if thou wilt; I'll bear it as I may:

But write from London to me every week,

Nay, every day, and stay no longer there

Than thou must need, lest that I die for sorrow.

*Arden.* I'll write unto thee every other tide,  
 And so farewell, sweet Alice, till we meet next.

*Alice.* Farewell, husband, seeing you'll have  
 it so.

And master Franklin, seeing you take him hence,  
 In hope you'll hasten him home, I'll give you this.

[*She kisses him.*]

*Frank.* And if he stay, the fault shall not be  
 mine;—

Mosbie, farewell; and see you keep your oath.

*Mos.* I hope he is not jealous of me now.

*Arden.* No, Mosbie, no; hereafter think of me,  
 As of your dearest friend, and so farewell.

[*Exeunt ARDEN, FRANK. and MICH.*]

*Alice.* I am glad he is gone, he was about to stay ;  
But did you mark me then how I broke off ?

*Mos.* Ay, Alice, and it was cunningly performed :  
But what a villain is this painter, Clarke !

*Alice.* Was it not a goodly poison that he gave ?  
Why he's as well now as he was before.

It should have been some fine confection,  
That might have given the broth some dainty taste,  
This powder was too gross and populous.

*Mos.* But had he eaten but three spoonfulls more,  
Then had he died, and our love continued.

*Alice.* Why so it shall, Mosbie, albeit he live.

*Mos.* It is impossible, for I have sworn  
Never hereafter to solicit thee,

Or, whilst he lives, once more importune thee.

*Alice.* Thou shalt not need, I will importune  
thee.

What ! shall an oath make thee forsake my love ?

As if I have not sworn as much myself,

And given my hand unto him in the church.

Tush, Mosbie, oaths are words, and words are wind,

And wind is mutable : Then I conclude,

'Tis childishness to stand upon an oath.

*Mos.* Well proved, mistress Alice ; yet by your  
leave,

I will keep mine unbroken whilst he lives.

*Alice.* Aye, do, and spare not ; his time is but  
short ;

For if thou art as resolute as I,

We'll have him murdered as he walks the streets.

In London many alehouse ruffians keep,

Which, as I hear, will murder men for gold ;

They shall be soundly fee'd to pay him home.

*Mos.* Alice, what's he that comes yonder, know-  
est thou him ?

*Alice.* Mosbie, begone ; I hope 'tis one that  
comes

To put in practice our intended drifts. [*Exit Mos.*]

*Enter GREENE.*

*Greene.* Mistress Arden, you are well met ;

I am sorry that your husband is from home,

When, as my purpos'd journey was to him :

Yet all my labour is not spent in vain ;

For I suppose that you can full discourse,

And flat resolve me of the thing I seek.

*Alice.* What is it, master Greene ? If that I may,  
Or can, with safety, I will answer you.

*Greene.* I heard your husband hath the grant,  
of late,

Confirm'd by letters patent from the king,

Of all the lands of the abbey of Feversham,

Generally entitl'd ; so that all former grants

Are cut off, whereof I myself had one ;

But now my interest by that is void.

This is all, mistress Arden, is it true or no ?

*Alice.* True, master Greene, the lands are his in  
state :

And whatsoever leases were before,

Are void for term of master Arden's life.

He hath the grant under the chancery seal.

*Greene.* Pardon me, mistress Arden, I must  
speak,

For I am touch'd. Your husband doth me wrong,

To wring from me the little land I have.

My living is my life, only that

Resteth remainder of my portion.

Desire of wealth is endless in his mind :

And he is greedy, gaping still for gain :

Nor cares he though young gentlemen do beg,

So he may scrape and hoard up in his pouch.

But seeing he hath taken my lands, I'll value life

As careless, as he is careful for to get :

And tell him this from me, U'll be reveng'd,

And so, as he shall wish the abbey lands

Had rested still within their former state.

*Alice.* Alas, poor gentleman, I pity you !

And woe is me that any man should want.

God knows, 'tis not my fault : But wonder not,

Though he be hard to others, when to me——

Ah, master Greene, God knows how I am used.

*Greene.* Why, mistress Arden, can the crabbed  
churl

Use you unkindly ? Respects he not your birth,

Your honourable friends, nor what you brought ?

Why, all Kent knows your parentage, and what  
you are.

*Alice.* Ah, master Greene, be it spoken in secret  
here,

I never live good day with him alone :

When he's at home, then have I froward looks,

Hard words and blows, to mend the match withal :

And though I might content as good a man,

Yet doth he keep in every corner trulls

And, weary with his trugs at home,

Then rides he straight to London : there, forsooth,

He revels it among such filthy ones,

As counsel him to make away his wife.

Thus live I daily in continual fear,

In sorrow : so despairing of redress,

As every day I wish, with hearty prayer,

That he or I were taken forth the world.

*Greene.* Now trust me, mistress Alice, it griev-  
eth me,

So fair a creature should be so abused.

Why, who'd have thought the civil sir so sullen,

He looks so smoothly. Fie upon him, churl;  
 And if he lives a day he lives too long.  
 But, frolic woman, I shall be the man  
 Shall set you free from all this discontent:  
 And if the churl deny my interest,  
 And will not yield my lease into my hand,  
 I'll pay him home whatever hap to me.

*Alice.* But speak you as you think?

*Greene.* Ay, God's my witness, I mean plain dealing;

For I had rather die than lose my land.

*Alice.* Then, master Greene, be counselled by me;  
 Endanger not yourself for such a churl,  
 But hire some cutter for to cut him short:  
 And here's ten pounds to wager them withal;  
 When he is dead you shall have twenty more.

And the lands whereof my husband is possess'd,  
 Shall be entitled as they were before.

*Greene.* Will you keep promise with me?

*Alice.* Or count me false and perjur'd whilst I live.

*Greene.* Then here's my hand, I'll have him so despatch'd:

I'll up to Londen straight, I'll thither post,  
 And never rest till I have compass'd it.  
 Till then, farewell.

*Alice.* Good fortune follow all your forward thoughts. [*Exit GREENE.*]

And whosoever deth attempt the deed.

A happy hand I wish, and so farewell.

All this goes well. Mosbie, I long for thee,  
 To let thee know all that I have contriv'd.

## ACT II.

### SCENE I.—*Before Arden's House.*

*Enter MOSBIE and CLARKE, meeting ALICE.*

*Mos.* How now, Alice, what's the news?

*Alice.* Such as will content thee well, sweetheart.

*Mos.* Well, let them pass awhile, and tell me, Alice,

How have you dealt and temper'd with my sister.  
 What, will she have my neighbour Clarke, or no?

*Alice.* What, master Mosbie! let him woo himself!

Think you that maids look not for fair words?  
 Go to her, Clarke, she's all alone within:  
 Michael, my man, is clean out of her books.

*Clarke.* I thank you, mistress Arden, I will in;  
 And if fair Susan and I can agree,  
 You shall command me to the uttermost,  
 As far as either goods or life may stretch.

[*Exit CLARKE.*]

*Mos.* Now, Alice, let's hear thy news.

*Alice.* They be so good, that I must laugh for joy,

Before I can begin to tell my tale.

*Mos.* Let's hear them, then, that I may laugh for company.

*Alice.* This morning, master Greene, Dick Greene, I mean;

From whom my husband had the abbey land,  
 Came hither, railing, for to know the truth,  
 Whether my husband had the lands by grant.  
 I told him all, wherewith he storm'd amain,

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And swore he would cry quittance with the churl;  
 And if he did deny his interest,  
 Stab him, whatever did befall himself.

When, as I saw his cholere thus to rise,  
 I whetted on the gentleman with words:  
 And to conclude, Mosbie, at last we grew  
 To composition for my husband's death.

I gave him ten pounds to hire knaves,  
 By some devise to make away the churl;  
 When he is dead he should have twenty more,  
 And repossess his former lands again.

On this we agreed; and he is ridden straight  
 To London, to bring his death about.

*Mos.* But call you this good news?

*Alice.* Ay, sweetheart, be they not?

*Mos.* 'Twere cheerful news to hear the churl were dead:

But trust me, Alice, I take it passing ill  
 You would be so forgetful of our state,  
 To make recount of it to every groom.

What! to acquaint each stranger with our drifts,  
 Chiefly in case of murder; why, 'tis the way  
 To make it open unto Arden's self,

And bring thyself and me to ruin both;  
 Forewarn'd, forearm'd; who threatens his enemy,  
 Lends him a sword to guard himself withal.

*Alice.* I did it for the best.

*Mos.* Well, seeing 'tis done, clearly let it pass.  
 You know this Greene; is he not religious?  
 A man, I guess, of great devotion.

*Alice.* He is.

*Mos.* Then, sweet Alice, let it pass; I have a drift

Will quiet all, whatever is amiss.

*Enter CLARKE and SUSAN.*

*Alice.* How now, Clarke, have you found me false?

Did I not plead the matter hard for you?

*Clarke.* You did.

*Mos.* And what; wil't be a match?

*Clarke.* A match! ay, faith, sir; ay, the day is mine.

The painter lays his colours to the life:  
His pencil draws no shadows in his love.  
Susan is mine.

*Alice.* You make her blush.

*Mos.* What, sister, is it Clarke must be the man?

*Susan.* It resteth in your grant; some words are pass'd;

And happily we be grown unto a match,  
If you be willing that it shall be so.

*Mos.* Ah, master Clarke, it resteth at my grant;  
You see my sister's yet at my dispose;  
But so you'll graut me one thing I shall ask,  
I am content my sister shall be yours.

*Clarke.* What is it, master Mosbie?

*Mos.* I do remember once, in secret talk,  
You told me how you could compound by art,  
A crucifix impoisoned;  
That whoso look'd upon it should wax blind,  
And with the scent be stifled; that ere long  
He should be poison'd that did view it well.  
I would have you make me such a crucifix,  
And then I'll grant my sister shall be yours.

*Clarke.* Though I am loth, because it toucheth life;

Yet rather or I'll leave sweet Susan's love,  
I'll do it, and with all the haste I may  
But for whom is it?

*Alice.* Leave that to us. Why, Clarke, is it possible

That you should paint and draw it out yourself,  
The colours being baleful and impoisoned,  
And no ways prejudice yourself withal?

*Mos.* Well questioned, Alice; Clarke, how answer you that?

*Clarke.* Very easily: I'll tell you straight,  
How I do work of these impoison'd drugs.  
I fasten on my spectacles so close,  
As nothing can any way offend my sight;  
Then, as I put a leaf within my nose,  
So put I rhubarb, to avoid the smell,  
And softly as another work I paint.

*Mos.* 'Tis very well; but against when shall I have it?

*Clarke.* Within these ten days.

*Mos.* 'Twill serve the turn.  
Now Alice let's in, and see what cheer you keep.

I hope, now Master Arden is from home,  
You'll give me leave to play your husband's part.

*Alice.* Mosbie, you know who's master of my heart,

As well may be the master of the house. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*Country between Feversham and London.*

*Enter GREENE and BRADSHAW.*

*Brad.* See you them that come yonder, Master Greene?

*Greene.* Ay, very well, do you know them?

*Brad.* The one I know not, but he seems a knave,  
Chiefly for bearing the other company:  
For such a slave, so vile a rogue as he,  
Lives not again upon the earth.

Black Will is his name: I tell you, master Greene,  
At Boulogne he and I were fellow-soldiers,  
Where he played such pranks,  
As all the camp fear'd him for his villany:  
I warrant you he bears so bad a mind,  
That for a crown he'll murder any man.

*Greene.* The fitter is he for my purpose, marry.

[*Aside.*]

*Enter BLACK WILL and SHAKEBAG.*

*Will.* How now, fellow Bradshaw,  
Whither away so early?

*Brad.* O Will, times are changed, no fellows now,

Though we were once together in the field;  
Yet thy friend, to do thee any good I can.

*Will.* Why, Bradshaw, was not thou and I  
Fellow-soldiers at Boulogne:

Where I was a corporal, and thou but a base mercenary groom?

No fellows now, because you are a goldsmith,  
And have a little plate in your shop.

You were glad to call me fellow Will,  
And with a curtesy to the earth;

"One snatch, good corporal,"

When I stole the half ox from John the vit'ler,  
And domineer'd with it amongst good fellows,  
In one night.

*Brad.* Ay, Will, those days are past with me.

*Will.* Ay, but they be not past with me,  
For I keep that same honourable mind still.

Good, neighbour Bradshaw, you are too proud to  
be my fellow;

But were it not that I see more company coming  
down

The hill, I would be fellows with you once more,  
And share crowns with you too.

But let that pass, and tell me whither you go.

*Brad.* To London, Will, about a piece of service,  
Wherein happily thou mayst pleasure me.

*Will.* What is it?

*Brad.* Of late Lord Cheiny lost some plate,  
Which one did bring, and sold it at my shop,  
Saying he served sir Anthony Cooke.

A search was made, the plate was found with me,  
And I am bound to answer at the 'size,  
Now, lord Cheiny solemnly vows,

If law will serve him, he'll hang me for his plate.

Now I am going to London, upon hope,

To find the fellow; now, Will, I know

Thou art acquainted with such companions.

*Will.* What manner of man was he?

*Brad.* A lean-faced writthen knave,  
Hawk-nosed, and very hollow-eyed,  
With mighty furrows in his stormy brows;  
Long hair down his shoulders curled,  
His chin was bare, but on his upper lip,  
A mutchado, which he wound about his ear.

*Will.* What apparel had he?

*Brad.* A watchet satin doublet all so torn,  
The inner side did bear the greatest show;  
A pair of threadbare velvet hose, seam rent,  
A worsted stocking rent above the shoe,  
A livery cloak, but all the lace was off,  
'Twas bad, but yet it served to hide the plate.

*Will.* Sirrah, Shakebag, canst thou remember  
Since we trowled the bowl at Sittingburn,  
Where I broke the tapster's head of the Lion  
With a cudgel stick?

*Brad.* Aye, very well, Will.

*Will.* Why, it was with the money that the plate  
was sold for;

Sirrah, Bradshaw, what wilt thou give him  
That can tell thee who sold the plate?

*Brad.* Who, I pray thee, good Will?

*Will.* Why, 'twas one Jack Fitten,  
He's now in Newgate for stealing a horse,  
And shall be arraigned the next 'size.

*Brad.* Why, then, let lord Cheiny seek Jack  
Fitten forth;

For I'll back and tell him who robbed him of his  
plate;

This cheers my heart; master Greene, I'll leave you,  
For I must to the Isle of Sheppy with speed.

*Greene.* Before you go, let me entreat you  
To carry this letter to mistress Arden of Feversham,  
And humbly recommend me to herself.

*Brad.* That will I, master Greene, and so fare-  
well.

Here, Will, there's a crown for thy good news.

[*Exit.* BRAD.]

*Will.* Farewell, Bradshaw,  
I'll drink no water for thy sake, whilst this lasts:  
Now, gentlemen, shall we have your company to  
London?

*Greene.* Nay, stay, sirs, a little more, I needs  
must use your help,  
And in a matter of great consequence;  
Wherein if you'll be secret and profound,  
I'll give you twenty angels for your pains.

*Will.* How! twenty angels? Give my fellow  
George Shakebag and me twenty angels,  
And if thou'lt have thine own father slain,  
That thou mayst inherit his land; we'll kill him.

*Shake.* Aye, thy mother, thy sister, thy brother,  
or all thy kin.

*Greene.* Well, this it is; Arden of Feversham  
Hath highly wrong'd me about the Abbey land,  
That no revenge but death will serve the turn:  
Will you two kill him? here are the angels down,  
And I will lay the platform of his death.<sup>11</sup>

*Will.* Plat me no platforms, give me the money,  
And I'll stab him as he stands pissing against a wall,  
But I'll kill him.

*Shake.* Where is he?

*Greene.* He is now at London, in Aldersgate  
street.

*Shake.* He's dead as if he had been condemn'd  
By an act of parliament, if once Black Will and I  
Swear his death.

*Greene.* Here is ten pound, and when he is dead,  
Ye shall have twenty more.

*Will.* My fingers itch to be at the peasant.  
Ah, that I might be set a work thus through the year,  
And that murder would grow to an occupation;  
That a man might without danger of law:  
Zounds, I warrant I should be warden of the com-  
pany.

Come, let us be going, and we'll bate at Rochester,  
Where I'll give thee a gallon of sack,  
To hansel the match withal. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—London. *A Street near St. Paul's.*

*Enter* MICHAEL.

*Mich.* I have gotten such a letter,  
As will touch the painter: And thus it is.

*Enter ARDEN and FRANKLIN, and hear MICHAEL read this letter.*

My duty remembered, Mrs. Susan, hoping in God you be in good health, as I, Michael, was at the making hereof. This is to certify you, that as the turtle true, when she hath lost her mate, sitteth alone; so I, mourning for your absence, do walk up and down Paul's, till one day I fell asleep, and lost my master's Pantophelles.<sup>12</sup> Ah, mistress Susan, abolish that paltry painter, cut him off by the shins, with a frowning look of your crabbed countenance, and think upon Michael, who, drunk with the dregs of your favour, will cleave as fast to your love, as a plaster of pitch to a galled horse's back. Thus hoping you will let my passions penetrate, or rather impetrate mercy of your meek hands, I end

Your MICHAEL, or else not MICHAEL.

*Arden.* [Coming forward] Why, you paltry knave, Stand you here loitering, knowing my affairs, What haste my business craves to seud to Kent?

*Frank.* Faith, friend Michael, this is very ill, Knowing your master hath no more but you, And do ye slack his business for your own?

*Arden.* Where is the letter, sirrah, let me see it.

[He gives him the Letter.]

See, master Franklin, here is proper stuff, Susan my maid, the painter, and my man. A crew of harlots<sup>13</sup> all in love forsooth, Sirrah, let me hear no more of this, Nor for thy life once write to her a word.

*Enter GREENE, WILL, and SHAKEBAG.*

Wilt thou be married to so base a trull? 'Tis Mosbie's sister: come I once at home, I'll rouse her from remaining in my house. Now, Master Franklin, let's go walk in Paul's, Come, but a turn or two, and then away. [Exit.]

*Greene.* The first is Arden, and that's his man, The other is Franklin; Arden's dearest friend.

*Will.* Zounds! I'll kill them all three.

*Greene.* Nay, sirs, touch not his man in any case, But stand close, and take you fittest standing, And at his coming forth speed him: To the Nag's Head, there is this coward's haunt; But now I'll leave you till the deed be done.

[Exit GREENE.]

*Shake.* If he be not paid his own, ne'er trust Shakebag.

*Will.* Sirrah, Shakebag, at his coming forth I'll run him through, and then to the Blackfriars, And there take water and away.

*Shake.* Why, that's the best; but see thou miss him not.

*Will.* How can I miss him, when I think on the forty Angels I must have more.

*Enter a PRENTICE.*

*Pren.* 'Tis very late, I were best shut up my stall, For here will be old filching,<sup>14</sup> when the press comes forth

Of Paul's.

[Lets down his Window, and it breaks WILL'S Head.<sup>15</sup>

*Will.* Zounds! draw, Shakebag, draw, I am almost kill'd.

*Pren.* We'll tame you, I warrant.

*Will.* Zounds! I am tame enough already.

*Enter ARDEN, FRANKLIN, and MICHAEL.*

*Arden.* What troublesome fray or mutiny is this?

*Frank.* 'Tis nothing but some babbling paltry fray,

Devis'd to pick men's pockets in the throng.

*Arden.* Is't nothing else? Come, Franklin, let us away. [Exit.]

*Will.* What mends shall I have for my broken head?

*Pren.* Marry, this mends, that if you get you not away

All the sooner, you shall be well beaten, and sent to the compter.<sup>16</sup> [Exit PREN.]

*Will.* Well, I'll be gone, but look to your signs, For I'll pull them down all.

Shakebag, my broken head grieves me not so much, As by this means Arden hath escaped.

*Enter GREENE.*

*Greene.* I had a glimpse of him and his companion.

Why, sirs, Arden's as well as I.

I met him and Franklin going merrily to the ordinary again,

What, dare you not do it?

*Will.* Yes, sir, we dare do it, but were my consent to give,

We would not do it under ten pound more.

I value every drop of my blood at a French crown.

I have had ten pound to steal a dog,

And we have no more here to kill a man;

But that a bargain is a bargain, and so forth,

You should do it yourself.

*Greene.* I pray thee how came thy head broke?

*Will.* Why, thou seest it is broke, dost thou not?

*Shake.* Standing against a stall, watching Arden's coming,

A boy let down his shop window, and broke his head.

Whereupon arose a brawl, and in the tumult  
Arden escap'd us, and passed by unthought on ;  
But forbearance is no acquittance,  
Another time we'll do it, I warrant thee.

*Greene.* I pray thee Will, make clean thy bloody  
brow,

And let's bethink us on some other place,  
Where Arden may be met with handsomely.  
Remember how devoutly thou hast sworn  
To kill the villain ; think upon thine oath.

*Will.* Tush, I have broken five hundred oaths ;  
But wouldst thou charm me to effect this deed,  
Tell me of gold, my resolution's fee.

Say, thou seest Mosbie kneeling at my knees,  
Offering me service for my high attempt :  
And sweet Alice Arden, with a lap of crowns,  
Come, with a lowly curtesy to the earth,  
Saying, Take this : but for thy quarterage,  
Such yearly tribute will I answer thee.

Why, with this would steel soft-mettled cowardice,  
With which Black Will was never tainted yet.  
I tell thee, Greene, the forlorn traveller,  
Whose lips are glued with summer's parching heat,  
Ne'er long'd so much to see a running brook,  
As I to finish Arden's tragedy.

Seest thou this gore that cleaveth to my face ?  
From hence ne'er will I wash this bloody stain,  
Till Arden's heart be panting in my hand.<sup>17</sup>

*Greene.* Why that's well said, but what says  
Shakebag ?

*Shake.* I cannot paint my valour out with words,  
But give me place and opportunity,  
Such mercy as the starven lioness,  
When she is dry-sucked of her eager young,  
Shows to the prey that next encounters her,  
On Arden so much pity would I take.

*Greene.* So should it fare with men of firm re-  
solve.

And now, sirs, seeing this accident,  
Of meeting him in Paul's, hath no success,  
Let us bethink us on some other place,  
Whose earth may swallow up this Arden's blood.  
See, yonder comes his man, and wot you what,  
The foolish knave's in love with Mosbie's sister,  
And for her sake, whose love he cannot get,  
Unless Mosbie solicit his suit,  
The villain hath sworn the slaughter of his master.  
We'll question him, for he may stead us much :

*Enter MICHAEL.*

How now, Michael, whither are you going ?

*Mich.* My master hath now supped,  
And I am going to prepare his chamber.

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*Greene.* Where supped Master Arden ?

*Mich.* At the Nag's Head, at the eighteen-penny  
ordinary.

How now, Master Shakebag ! What, Black Will !  
God's dear lady, how chance your face is so bloody ?

*Will.* Go too, sirrah, there is a chance in it,  
This sauciness in you will make you be knock'd.

*Mich.* Nay, and you be offended I'll be gone.

*Greene.* Stay, Michael, you may not escape us so ;  
Michael, I know you love your master well.

*Mich.* Why so I do, but wherefore urge you  
that ?

*Greene.* Because I think you love your mistress  
better.

*Mich.* So think not I, but say, i'faith what if I  
should ?

*Shake.* Come, to the purpose, Michael, we hear  
You have a pretty love in Feversham.

*Mich.* Why, have I two or three, what's that to  
thee ?

*Will.* You deal too mildly with the peasant ;  
thus it is,

'Tis known to us that you love Mosbie's sister.  
We know besides, that you have tak'n your oath,  
To further Mosbie to your mistress' bed,  
And kill your master, for his sister's sake.  
Now, sir, a poorer coward than yourself,  
Was never foster'd in the coast of Kent.  
How comes it then, that such a knave as you  
Dare swear a matter of such consequence ?

*Greene.* Ah, Will !—

*Will.* Tush, give me leave, there is no more but  
this,

Since thou hast sworn, we dare discover all ;  
And hadst thou, or shouldst thou utter it,  
We have devised a complot under hand,  
Whatever shall betide to any of us,  
To send thee roundly to the devil of hell.  
And therefore thus : I am the very man,  
Mark'd in my birth-hour by the destinies,  
To give an end to Arden's life on earth ;  
Thou but a member, but to whet the knife,  
Whose edge must search the closet of his breast.  
Thy office is but to appoint the place,  
And train thy master to his tragedy.  
Mine to perform it, when occasion serves.  
Then be not nice, but here devise with us,  
How, and what way, we may conclude his death.

*Shake.* So shalt thou purchase Mosbie for thy  
friend,

And, by his friendship, gain his sister's love.

*Greene.* So shall thy mistress be thy favourer,  
And thou disburden'd of the oath thou made.



*Mich.* Well, gentlemen, I cannot but confess,  
Since you have urged me so apparently,  
That I have vowed my Master Arden's death;  
And he, whose kindly love and liberal hand,  
Doth challenge naught but good deserts of me,  
I will deliver over to your hands.

This night come to his house at Aldersgate,  
The doors I'll leave unlock'd against you come.  
No sooner shall ye enter through the latch,  
Over the threshold to the inner court,  
But on your left hand shall you see the stairs,  
That leads directly to my master's chamber.  
There take him, and dispose him as you please.  
Now it were good we parted company,  
What I have promis'd I will perform.

*Will.* Should you deceive us, 'twould go wrong  
with you.

*Mich.* I will accomplish all I have reveal'd.

*Will.* Come, let's go drink, choler makes me as  
dry as a dog.

[*Exeunt WILL, GREENE, and SHAKE.*

*Mich.* Thus feeds the lamb securely on the  
down,

Whilst through the thicket of an arbour brake,  
The hunger-bitten wolf e'er prires his haunt,  
And takes advantage for to eat him up.

Ah! harmless Arden, how hast thou misdone,  
That thus thy gentle life is level'd at?  
The many good turns that thou hast done to me,  
Now must I quittance with betraying thee.

I that should take the weapon in my hand,  
And buckler thee from ill-intending foes,  
Do lead thee, with a wicked fraudulent smile,  
As unsuspected, to the slaughter-house.  
So have I sworn to Mosbie and my mistress;  
So have I promised to the slaughtermen:

And should I not deal currently with them,  
Their lawless rage would take revenge on me.

Tush, I will spurn at mercy for this once;

Let pity lodge where feeble women lie,  
I am resolv'd, and Arden needs must die.

[*Exit MICH.*

## ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Room in Franklin's House, at  
Aldersgate.*

*Enter ARDEN and FRANKLIN.*

*Arden.* No, Franklin, no; if fear or stormy  
threats,

If love of me, or care of womanhood,  
If fear of God, or common speech of men,  
Who mangle credit with their wounding words,  
And couch dishonour as dishonour buds,  
Might join repentance in her wanton thoughts,  
No question then but she would turn the leaf,  
And sorrow for her dissolution:

But she is rooted in her wickedness;  
Perverse and stubborn, not to be reclaim'd;  
Good counsel is to her as rain to weeds,  
And reprehension makes her vice to grow,  
As hydra's head, that perish'd by decay.<sup>18</sup>

Her faults, methinks, are painted in my face,  
For every searching eye to over-read;  
And Mosbie's name a scandal unto mine,  
Is deeply trench'd in my blushing brow.

Ah! Franklin, Franklin, when I think on this,  
My heart's grief rends my other powers,  
Worse than the conflict at the hour of death.

*Frank.* Gentle Arden, leave this sad lament,

She will amend, and so your griefs will cease,  
Or else she'll die, and so your sorrows end.

If neither of these two do happily fall,  
Yet let your comfort be, that others bear  
Your woes twice doubled all with patience.

*Arden.* My house is irksome, there I cannot rest.

*Frank.* Then stay with me in London, go not  
home.

*Arden.* Then that base Mosbie doth usurp my  
room,

And makes his triumph of my being thence.

At home, or not at home, where'er I be,  
Here, here it lies; ah, Franklin, here it lies,  
That will not out till wretched Arden dies.

*Enter MICHAEL.*

*Frank.* Forget your griefs a while, here comes  
your man.

*Arden.* What o'clock is't, sirrah?

*Mich.* Almost ten.

*Arden.* See, see, how runs away the weary time.  
Come, Master Franklin, shall we go to bed.

[*Exeunt ARDEN and MICH.*

*Frank.* I pray you go before, I'll follow you;  
Ah, what a hell is fretful jealousy!

What pity-moving words! what deep-fetch'd sighs!

What grievous groans, and overlading woes,  
 Accompany this gentle gentleman!  
 Now will he shake his care-oppress'd head,  
 Then fix his sad eyes on the sullen earth,  
 Asham'd to gaze upon the open world.  
 Now will he cast his eyes up towards the heavens,  
 Looking that way for a redress of wrong:  
 Sometimes he seeketh to beguile his grief,  
 And tells a story with his careful tongue.  
 Then comes his wife's dishonour in his thoughts,  
 And in the middle cutteth off his tale;  
 Pouring fresh sorrow on his weary limbs.  
 So woe-begone, so inly charg'd with woe,  
 Was never any lived, and bare it so.

*Re-enter* MICHAEL.

*Mich.* My master would desire you come to bed.

*Frank.* Is he himself already in his bed?

*Mich.* He is, and fain would have the light away;  
 [*Exit* FRANK.]

Conflicting thoughts encamp'd in my breast,  
 Awake me with the echo of their strokes:  
 And I a judge to censure either side,  
 Can give to neither wish'd victory.  
 My master's kindness pleads to me for life,  
 With just demand, and I must grant it him.  
 My mistress she hath forced me with an oath,  
 For Susan's sake, the which I may not break;  
 For that is nearer than a master's love.  
 That grim-faced fellow, pityless black Will,  
 And Shakebag, stern in bloody stratagem,  
 (Two rougher ruffians never liv'd in Kent,)  
 Have sworn my death if I infringe my vow:  
 A dreadful thing to be consider'd of.  
 Methinks I see them with their bolster'd hair,  
 Staring and grinning in thy gentle face,  
 And in their ruthless hands their daggers drawn,  
 Insulking o'er thee with a peck of oaths;  
 Whilst thou, submissive, pleading for release,  
 Art mangled by their ireful instruments.  
 Methinks I hear them ask where Michael is;  
 And pityless black Will cries, "Stab the slave:  
 The peasant will detect the tragedy."  
 The wrinkles in his foul, death-threatening face,  
 Gape open wide, like graves to swallow men.  
 My death to him is but a merriment;  
 And he will murder me to make him sport.  
 He comes, he comes! ah, master Franklin, help!  
 Call up the neighbours, or we are but dead.

*Re-enter* FRANKLIN and ARDEN.

*Frank.* What dismal outcry calls me from my  
 rest?

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*Arden.* What hath occasion'd such a fearful cry?  
 Speak, Michael, hath any injur'd thee?

*Mich.* Nothing, sir; but as I fell asleep,  
 Upon the threshold leading to the stairs,  
 I had a fearful dream that troubled me;  
 And in my slumber thought I was beset  
 With murderous thieves, that came to rifle me.  
 My trembling joints witness my inward fear:  
 I crave your pardons for disturbing you.

*Arden.* So great a cry for nothing I ne'er heard:  
 What, are the doors fast lock'd, and all things safe?

*Mich.* I cannot tell; I think I lock'd the doors.

*Arden.* I like not this; but I'll go see myself:  
 Ne'er trust me, but the doors were all unlock'd.  
 This negligence not half contenteth me.

Get you to bed; and if you love my favour,  
 Let me have no more such pranks as these.  
 Come, master Franklin, let us go to bed.

*Frank.* Ay, by my faith, the air is very cold.  
 Michael, farewell; I pray thee dream no more.

SCENE II.—*Outside* Franklin's House.

*Enter* WILL, GREENE, and SHAKEBAG.

*Shake.* Black night hath hid the pleasure of the day;  
 And sheeting darkness overhangs the earth;  
 And with the black fold of her cloudy robe,  
 Obscures us from the eyesight of the world,  
 In which sweet silence such as we triumph.  
 The lazy minutes linger on their time,  
 As loth to give due audit to the hour:  
 Till in the watch our purpose be complete,  
 And Arden sent to everlasting night.  
 Greene, get you gone, and linger here about  
 And at some hour hence, come to us again,  
 Where we will give you iustance of his death.

*Greene.* Speed to my wish, whose will soe'er  
 says no;  
 And so I'll leave you for an hour or two.

[*Exit* GREENE.]

*Will.* I tell thee, Shakebag, would this thing  
 were done.

I am so heavy than I can scarce go:  
 This drowsiness in me bodes little good.

*Shake.* How now, Will, become a precisian?<sup>19</sup>  
 Nay, then, let's go sleep: when bugs and fears  
 Shalt kill our courage with their fancy's work.

*Will.* Why, Shakebag, thou mistakes me much,  
 And wrong me too, in telling me of fear.  
 Were't not a serious thing we go about,  
 It should be slipp'd, till I had fought with thee:  
 To let thee know I am no coward, I!  
 I tell thee, Shakebag, thou abusest me.

*Shake.* Why, thy speech betray'd an inly kind of fear,

And savour'd of a weak, relenting spirit.  
Go forward now in that we have begun ;  
And afterwards attempt me when thou darest.

*Will.* And if I do not, heaven cut me off :  
But let that pass, and show me to this house,  
Where thou shalt see I'll do as much as Shakebag.

*Shake.* This is the door; but soft, methinks 'tis shut !

The villain, Michael, hath deceived us.

*Will.* Soft, let me see, Shakebag; 'tis shut indeed.

Knock with thy sword: perhaps the slave will hear.

*Shake.* It will not be; the white-liver'd peasant is gone to bed,

And laughs us both to scorn.

*Will.* And he shall buy his merriment as dear,  
As ever coistrel bought so little sport :  
Ne'er let this sword assist me when I need,  
But rust and canker after I have sworn ;  
If I, the next time that I meet the hind  
Lop not away his leg, his arm, or both.

*Shake.* And let me never draw a sword again,  
Nor prosper in the twilight, cock-shut light,  
When I would fleece the wealthy passenger,  
But lie and languish in a loathsome den,  
Hated, and spit at by the goers by,  
And in that death may die unpitied,  
If I, the next time that I meet the slave,  
Cut not the nose from off the coward's face,  
And trample on it for his villany.

*Will.* Come, let's go seek out Greene; I know he'll swear.

*Shake.* He were a villain and he would not swear;  
'Twould make a peasant swear among his boys,  
That ne'er durst say before but yea and no,  
To be thus flouted of a coistrel.<sup>20</sup>

*Will.* Shakebag, let's seek out Greene, and in the morning,  
At the alehouse 'butting Arden's house,  
Watch the out-coming of that prick-ear'd cur;  
And then let me alone to handle him. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*Room in Franklin's House, as before.*

*Enter ARDEN, FRANKLIN, and MICHAEL.*

*Arden.* Sirrah, get you back to Billingsgate,  
And learn what time the tide will serve our turn;  
Come to us in Paul's; first go make the bed,  
And afterwards go hearken for the flood.

[*Exit MICH.*]

Come, master Franklin, you shall go with me.  
This night I dream'd, that being in a park,  
A toil was pitch'd to overthrow the deer;  
And I, upon a little rising hill,  
Stood wistly watching for the herd's approach :  
Even there, methought a gentle slumber took me,  
And summon'd all my parts to sweet repose.  
But, in the pleasure of this golden rest,  
An ill-thew'd forester had remov'd the toil,  
And rounded me with that beguiling home,  
Which late, methought, was pitch'd to east the deer;

With that he blew an evil-sounding horn,  
And at the noise, another herdsman came,  
With falchion drawn, and bent it at my breast,  
Crying aloud, "Thou art the game we seek."  
With this I wak'd, and trembled every joint,  
Like one obscured in a little bush,  
That sees a lion foraging about ;  
And when the dreadful forest king is gone,  
He pries about with timorous suspect,  
Throughout the thorny casements of the brake,  
And will not think his person dangerless,  
But quakes and shivers, though the cause be gone.  
So trust me, Franklin, when I did awake,  
I stood in doubt whether I waked or no :  
Such great impression took this fond surprise.  
God grant this vision deemed me any good.

*Frank.* This phantasy doth rise from Michael's fear,

Who being awak'd with the noise he made,  
His troubled senses yet could take no rest.  
And this, I warrant you, procrend your dream.

*Arden.* It may be so; God frame it to the best;  
But oftentimes my dreams presage too true.

*Frank.* To such as note their nightly phantasies,  
Some one in twenty may incur belief;  
But use it not; 'tis but a mockery.

*Arden.* Come, master Franklin, we'll now walk in Paul's,

And dine together at the ordinary,  
And by my man's direction draw to the quay.  
And with the tide go down to Feversham.  
Say, master Franklin, shall it not be so?

*Frank.* At your good pleasure, sir,  
I'll bear you company. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—Aldersgate.

*Enter MICHAEL; then enter GREENE, WILL, and SHAKEBAG, at another Door.*

*Will.* Draw, Shakebag, for here's that villain Michael.

*Greene.* First, let's hear what he can say.

*Will.* Speak, milksop slave, and never after speak.

*Mich.* For God's sake, sirs, let me excuse myself,  
For here I swear by heaven, and earth, and all,  
I did perform the utmost of my task,  
And left the doors unbolted and unlock'd.  
But see the chance, Franklin and my master,  
Were very late conferring in the porch,  
And Franklin left his napkin where he sat,  
With certain gold knit in it, as he said,  
Being in bed, he did bethink himself,  
And coming down, he found the doors unshut,  
He lock'd the gates and brought away the keys,  
For which offence my master rated me:  
But now I am going to see what flood it is,  
For with the tide my master will away,

Where you may front him well on Rainham Down,  
A place well fitting such a stratagem.

*Will.* Your excuse hath somewhat mollified my  
choler:

Why, now Greene, 'tis better now than ere it was.

*Greene.* But Michael, is it true?

*Mich.* As true as I report it to be true.

*Shake.* Then Michael, this shall be your penance,  
To feast us all at the Salutation,  
Where we will plot our purpose thoroughly.

*Greene.* And Michael, you shall bear no news of  
this tide,

Because they two may be in Rainham Down before  
your master.

*Mich.* Why, I'll agree to any thing you'll have me,  
So you will accept of my company. [*Exeunt.*]

## ACT IV.

### SCENE I.—Arden's House at Feversham.

*Enter MOSBIE.*

*Mos.* Disturbed thoughts drive me from company,  
And dry my marrow with their watchfulness,  
Continual trouble of my moody brain,  
Feebles my body by excess of drink,  
And nips me, as the bitter north-east wind  
Doth check the tender blossoms in the spring.  
Well fares the man howe'er his eates do taste,  
That tables not with foul suspicion:  
And he but pines amongst his delicates,  
Whose troubled mind is stuff with discontent.  
My golden time was, when I had no gold,  
Though then I wanted, yet I slept secure;  
My daily toil, begat me night's repose,  
My night's repose made daylight fresh to me;  
But since I climb'd the top-bough of the tree,  
And sought to build my nest among the clouds,  
Each gentle starry gale<sup>21</sup> doth shake my bed:  
And makes me dread my downfall to the earth,  
But whither doth contemplation carry me?  
The way I seek to find, where pleasure dwells,  
Is hedged behind me, that I cannot back,  
But needs must on, although to danger's gate;  
Then Arden perish thou by that decree.  
For Greene doth err the land,<sup>22</sup> and weed thee up,  
To make my harvest nothing but pure corn.  
And for his pains I'll leave him up a while,  
And after smother him to have his wax.  
Such bees as Greene must never live to sting.

Then is there Michael, and the painter too,  
Chief actors to Arden's overthrow:  
Who, when they see me sit in Arden's seat,  
They will insult upon me for my mead,  
Or fright me by detecting of his end.  
I'll none of that, for I can cast a bone,  
To make these curs pluck out each other's throat,  
And then am I sole ruler of mine own:  
Yet mistress Arden lives, but she's myself,  
And holy church-rites make us two but one,  
But what for that, I may not trust you, Alice,  
You have supplanted Arden for my sake,  
And will extirpen me to plant another:  
'Tis fearful sleeping in a serpent's bed;  
And I will cleanly rid my hands of her.

*Enter ALICE.*

But here she comes, and I must flatter her.  
How now, Alice? What, sad and passionate?  
Make me partake of thy pensiveness:  
Fire divided burns with lesser force.

*Alice.* But I will damn that fire within my  
breast,<sup>23</sup>

Till by the force thereof my part consume; ah,  
Mosbie!

*Mos.* Such deep pathairs,<sup>24</sup> like to a cannon's  
burst,

Discharg'd against a ruined wall,  
Break my relenting heart in thousand pieces.  
Ungentle Alice, thy sorrow is my sore,  
Thou know'st it well, and 'tis thy policy

To forge distressful looks, to wound a breast,  
Where lies a heart, that dies when thou art sad;  
It is not love, that loves to anger love.

*Alice.* It is not love that loves to murder love.

*Mos.* How mean you that?

*Alice.* Thou knowest how dearly Arden loved me.

*Mos.* And then——

*Alice.* And then, conceal the rest, for 'tis too bad,  
Lest that my words be carried with the wind,  
And publish'd in the world to both our shames,  
I pray thee, Mosbie, let our spring-time wither,  
Our harvest else will yield but loathsome weeds.  
Forget, I pray thee, what hast pass'd betwixt us,  
For now I blush, and tremble at the thought.

*Mos.* What, are you chang'd?

*Alice.* Ay! to my former happy life again:  
From title of an odious strumpet's name,  
To honest Arden's wife, not Arden's honest wife.  
Ah! Mosbie, 'tis thou hast rifled me of that,  
And made me slanderous to all my kin:  
Even in my forehead is thy name engraven,  
A mean artificer, that low-born name.  
I was bewitched, woe worth the hapless hour,  
And all the causes that enchanted me.

*Mos.* Nay, if thou ban, let me breathe curses forth,  
And if you stand so nicely at your fame,  
Let me repent the credit I have lost.  
I have neglected matters of import,  
That would have stated me above thy state  
Forslow'd advantages,<sup>25</sup> and spurn'd at time.  
Ay, fortune's right hand Mosbie hath forsook,  
To take a wanton giglot<sup>26</sup> by the left.  
I left the marriage of an honest maid,  
Whose dowry would have weighed down all thy  
wealth,

Whose beauty and demeanour far exceeded thee.  
This certain good I lost for changing bad,  
And wrap'd my credit in thy company.  
I was bewitch'd! that is no theme of thine,  
And thou unhallowed hast enchanted me:  
But I will break thy spells and exorcisms,  
And put another sight upon these eyes,  
That show'd my heart a raven for a dove.  
Thou art not fair, I view'd thee not till now,  
Thou art not kind, till now I knew thee not.  
And now the rain hath beaten off thy gilt,  
Thy worthless copper shows thee counterfeit.  
It grieves me not to see how foul thou art,  
But mads me that I ever thought thee fair.  
Go, get thee gone, a copesmate for thy hinds,  
I am too good to be thy favourite.

*Alice.* Ay, now I see, and too soon find it true,  
Which often hath been told me by my friends:

That Mosbie loves me not, but for my wealth,  
Which, too incredulous, I ne'er believ'd.  
Nay, hear me speak, Mosbie, a word or two,  
I'll bite my tongue if it speak bitterly:  
Look on me, Mosbie, or I'll kill myself,  
Nothing shall hide me from thy stormy look:  
If thou cry war, there is no peace for me,  
I will do penance for offending thee,  
And burn this prayer-book, where I here use,  
The holy word that had converted me.  
See, Mosbie, I will tear away the leaves,  
And all the leaves, and in this golden cover  
Shall thy sweet phrases and thy letters dwell,  
And thereon will I chiefly meditate,  
And hold no other sect but such devotion.  
Wilt not thou look? is all thy love o'erwhelm'd?  
Wilt thou not hear? what malice stops thine ears?  
Why speak'st thou not? what silence ties thy  
tongue?

Thou hast been sighted, as the eagle is,  
And heard as quickly as the fearful hare:  
And spoke as smoothly as an orator,  
When I have bid thee hear, or see, or speak.  
And art thou sensible in none of these?  
Weigh all my good turns, with this little fault,  
And I deserve not Mosbie's muddy looks.  
A sense of trouble is not thicken'd, still  
Be clear again; I'll ne'er more trouble thee.

*Mos.* O no, I am a base artificer;  
My wings are feather'd for a lowly flight.  
Mosbie, fie, no; not for a thousand pound,  
Make love to you, why, 'tis unpardonable!  
We beggars must not breathe where gentles are.

*Alice.* Sweet Mosbie is as gentle as a king,  
And I too blind to judge him otherwise;  
Flowers do sometimes spring in fallow lands,  
And weeds in gardens, roses grow on thorns.  
So whatso'er my Mosbie's father was,  
Himself is valued gentle by his worth.

*Mos.* Ah, how you women can insinuate,  
And clear a trespass with your sweet-set tongue!  
I will forget this quarrel, gentle Alice,  
Provided I'll be tempted so no more.

*Alice.* Then with thy lips seal up this now made  
match.

*Mos.* Soft, Alice, for here comes somebody.

*Enter BRADSHAW.*

*Alice.* How now, Bradshaw, what's the news  
with you?

*Brad.* I have little news, but here's a letter,  
That master Greene importuned me to give you.

*Alice.* Go in Bradshaw, call for a cup of beer,

'Tis almost supper time, thou shalt stay with us.

[*Exit*. BRAD.]

[*Reads.*] We have missed of our purpose at London, but shall perform it by the way. We thank our neighbour Bradshaw.  
YOURS, RICHARD GREENE.

How likes my love the tenor of this letter?

*Mos.* Well, were his date completed and expir'd.

*Alice.* Ah, would it were.

Then comes my happy hour;

Till then my bliss is mix'd with bitter gall.

Come, let us in, to shun suspicion.

*Mos.* Ay, to the gates of death to follow thee.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*Country near Rochester.*

*Enter* GREENE, WILL, and SHAKEBAG.

*Shake.* Come, Will, see thy tools be in readiness, Is not thy powder dank,

Or will thy flint strike fire?

*Will.* Then ask me if my nose be on my face, Or whether my tongue be frozen in my mouth. Zounds, here's a coil, you were best swear me on the Interrogatories, how many pistols I have took in hand,

Or whether I love the smell of gunpowder, Or dare abide the noise the dag<sup>27</sup> will make, Or will not wink at flashing of the fire.

I pray thee, Shakebag, let this answer thee, That I have took more purses in this Down, Than e'er thou handledst pistols in thy life.

*Shake.* Ay, haply thou hast pick'd more in a throng,

But should I brag what booties I have took, I think the overplus that's more than thine, Would 'mount to a greater sum of money, Than either thou, or all thy kin are worth. Zounds, I hate them as I hate a toad, That carry a museado in their tongue, And scarce a hurting weapon in their hand.

*Will.* O, Greene, intolerable.

It is not for mine honour to bear this.

Why, Shakebag, I did serve the king at Boulogne, And thou canst brag of nothing that thou hast done.

*Shake.* Why, so can Jack of Feversham, That swooned for a fillip on the nose; When he that gave it him hollowed in his ear, And he supposed a cannon bullet hit him.

[*They fight.*]

*Greene.* I pray you, sirs, list to Æsop's talk: Whilst two stout dogs were striving for a bone, There comes a cur, and stole it from them both.

So while you stand striving on these terms of manhood,

Arden escapes us, and deceives us all.

*Shake.* Why, he begun.

*Will.* And thou shalt find I'll end.

I do but slip it until better time;

But if I do forget —

[*He kneels down, and holds up his Hands to Heaven.*]

*Greene.* Well, take your fittest standings, and once more

Line well your twigs to catch this wary bird.

I'll leave you, and at your dag's discharge,

Make towards, like the longing water dog,

That coucheth till the fowling-piece be off,

Then seizeth on the prey with eager mood.

Ah, might I see him stretching forth his limbs,

As I have seen them beat their wings ere now.

*Shake.* Why, that thou shalt see, if he comes this way.

*Greene.* Yes, that he doth, Shakebag, I warrant thee:

But brawl not when I am gone in any case;

But, sirs, be sure to speed him when he comes,

And in that hope I'll leave you for an hour.

[*Exit* GREENE; WILL and SHAKE. *hide themselves.*]

*Enter* ARDEN, FRANKLIN, and MICHAEL.

*Mich.* 'Twere best that I went back to Rochester: The horse halts downright; it were not good He travelled in such pain to Feversham; Removing of a shoe may happily help it.

*Arden.* Well, get you back to Rochester; but, sirrah, see ye

Overtake us ere we come to Rainham Down,

For it will be very late ere we get home.

*Mich.* Ay, God knows, and so doth Will and Shakebag,

That thou shalt never go further than that Down; And therefore have I prick'd the horse on purpose, Because I would not view the massacre. [*Aside.*]

[*Exit* MICH.]

*Arden.* Come, master Franklin, onward with your tale.

*Frank.* I assure you, sir, you task me much: A heavy blood is gathered at my heart; And on the sudden is my wind so short, As hindereth the passage of my speech; So fierce a qualm yet ne'er assailed me.

*Arden.* Come, master Franklin, let us go on softly.

The annoyance of the dust, or else some meat

You eat at dinner, cannot brook with you :  
I have been often so, and soon amended.

*Frank.* Do you remember where my tale did  
leave ?

*Arden.* Ay, where the gentleman did check his  
wife.

*Frank.* She being reprehended for the fact,  
Witness produced, that took her with the deed,  
Her glove brought in, which there she left behind,  
And many other assured arguments,  
Her husband ask'd her whether it were not so.

*Arden.* Her answer then ? I wonder how she  
look'd,

Having forsworn it with such vehement oaths,  
And at the instant so approv'd upon her.

*Frank.* First did she cast her eyes down to the  
earth,

Watching the drops that fell amain from thence ;  
Then softly draws she forth her handkerchief,  
And modestly she wipes her tear-stain'd face ;  
Then hemm'd she out, to clear her voice should  
seem,

And with a majesty address'd herself,  
To encounter all their accusations ;—  
Pardon me, master Arden, I can no more ;  
This fighting at my heart makes short my wind.

*Arden.* Come, we are almost now at Rainham  
Down.

Your pretty tale beguiles the weary way :  
I would you were in state to tell it out.

*Shake.* Stand close, Will ; I hear them coming.

*Enter LORD CHEINY, with his Men.*

*Will.* Stand to it, Shakebag, and be resolute.

*L. Ch.* Is it so near night as it seems ?

Or will this black-fac'd evening have a shower ?  
What, master Arden ! you are well met :  
I have long'd this fortnight's day to speak with  
you ;

You are a stranger, man, in the isle of Sheppey.

*Arden.* Your honour's always bound to do you  
service.

*L. Ch.* Come you from London, and ne'er a man  
with you ?

*Arden.* My man's coming after.

But here's my honest friend that came along with  
me.

*L. Ch.* My lord Protector's man, I take you  
to be.

*Frank.* Ay, my good lord, and highly bound to  
you.

*L. Ch.* You and your friend come home and sup  
with me.

*Arden.* I beseech your honour, pardon me ;  
I have made a promise to a gentleman,  
My honest friend, to meet him at my house ;  
The occasion is great, or else would I wait on  
you.

*L. Ch.* Will you come to-morrow and dine with  
me,

And bring your honest friend along with you :  
I have divers matters to talk with you about.

*Arden.* To-morrow we will wait upon your honour.

*L. Ch.* One of you stay my horse at the top of  
the hill.

What, Black Will, for whose purse wait you ?  
Thou wilt be hang'd in Kent, when all is done.

*Will.* Not hang'd, God save your honour :  
I am your beadsman,<sup>28</sup> bound to pray for you.

*L. Ch.* I think thou ne'er saidst prayer in all thy  
life.

One of you give him a crown :  
And, sirrah, leave this kind of life.

If thou art tainted for a penny matter,  
And come in question, surely thou wilt truss.  
Come, master Arden, let us be going ;  
Your way and mine lies four miles together.

[*Exeunt all but WILL. and SHAKE.*

*Will.* The devil break all your necks at four  
miles end.

Zounds, I could kill myself for very anger.

His lordship chops me in, even when  
My dag was level'd at his heart.

I would his crown were molten down his throat.

*Shake.* Arden, thou hast wondrous holy luck.  
Did ever man escape as thou hast done ?

Well, I'll discharge my pistol at the sky ;  
For by this bullet Arden might not die.

*Re-enter GREENE.*

*Greene.* What, is he down ? Is he despatch'd ?

*Shake.* Ay, in health, towards Feversham, to  
shame us all.

*Greene.* The devil he is ; why, sirs, how 'scap'd  
he ?

*Shake.* When we were ready to shoot,  
Comes my lord Cheiny to prevent his death.

*Greene.* The Lord of heaven hath preserv'd  
him.

*Will.* Preserv'd a fig ! the lord Cheiney hath  
preserv'd him,

And bids him to a feast, at his house at Shurland.

But by the way, once more I'll meet with him ;  
And if all the Cheineys in the world say no,  
I'll have a bullet in his breast to-morrow ;

Therefore come Greene, and let us to Feversham.

*Greene.* Ay, and excuse ourselves to mistress Arden.

O, how she'll chafe when she hears of this!

*Shake.* Why, I'll warrant you she'll think we dare not do it.

*Will.* Why then, let us go, and tell her all the matter;

And plot the news to cut him off to-morrow.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—Arden's House at Feversham.

*Enter ARDEN and his Wife, FRANKLIN, and MICHAEL.*

*Arden.* See how the hours, guardians of heaven's gate,

Have by their toil remov'd the darksome clouds,  
That Sol may well discern the trampled pace,  
Wherein he went to guide his golden car;  
The season fits; come, Franklin, let's away.

*Alice.* I thought you did pretend some special hunt,

That made you thus cut short the time of rest.

*Arden.* It was no chase that made me rise so early,

But, as I told thee yesternight, to go to the Isle of Sheppey,

There to dine with my lord Cheiney;

For so his honour late commanded me.

*Alice.* Ay, such kind husbands seldom want excuses.

Home is a wild cat to a wandering wit:  
The time hath been, would God it were not pass'd,  
That honours, title, nor a lord's command,  
Could once have drawn you from these arms of mine:  
But my deserts, or your deserves decay,  
Or both; yet if true love may seem desert,  
I merit still to have thy company.

*Frank.* Why, I pray you, sir, let her go along with us;

I am sure his honour will welcome her  
And us the more for bringing her along.

*Arden.* Content, sirrah, saddle your mistress' nag.

*Alice.* No; beg'd favour merits little thanks:

If I should go, our house would run away,  
Or else be stolen; therefore I'll stay behind.

*Arden.* Nay, see how mistaking you are;

I pray thee go.

*Alice.* No, no, not now.

*Arden.* Then let me leave thee satisfied in this,  
That time, nor place, nor persons alter me,  
But that I hold thee dearer than my life.

*Alice.* That will be seen soon, by your quick return.

*Arden.* And that shall be ere night, and if I live.

Farewell, sweet Alice, we mind to sup with thee.

[*Exit ALICE.*]

*Frank.* Come, Michael, are our horses ready?

*Mich.* Ay, your horses are ready, but I am not ready,

For I have lost my purse,

With six and thirty shillings in it,

With taking up of my mistress' nag.

*Frank.* Why, I pray you, let us go before,

Whilst he stays behind to seek his purse.

*Arden.* Go to, sirrah, see you follow us to the isle of Sheppey,

To my lord Cheiney's where we mean to dine.

[*Exeunt ARDEN and FRANK.*]

*Mich.* So, fair weather after you;

For before you lies Black Will and Shakebag,

In the broom close, too close for you;

They'll be your ferry-men to a long home.

*Enter CLARKE.*

But who is this? the painter, my corival,

That would needs win mistress Susan.

*Clarke.* How now, Michael, how doth my mistress,

And all at home?

*Mich.* Who, Susan Mosbie? she is your mistress too.

*Clarke.* Ay, how doth she, and all the rest?

*Mich.* All's well but Susan, she is sick.

*Clarke.* Sick, of what disease?

*Mich.* Of a great fear.

*Clarke.* A fear, of what?

*Mich.* A great fever.

*Clarke.* A fever! God forbid.

*Mich.* Yes, faith, and of a lordain, too,<sup>29</sup>

As big as yourself.

*Clarke.* O, Michael, the spleen prickles you;

Go to, you carry an eye over mistress Susan.

*Mich.* Ay, faith, to keep her from the painter.

*Clarke.* Why more from the painter, than from a serving creature like yourself?

*Mich.* Because you painters make but a painting-table of a pretty wench, and spoil her beauty with blotting.

*Clarke.* What mean you by that?

*Mich.* Why, that you painters paint lambs in the linings of wenches' petticoats,

And we serving-men put horns to them, to make them become sheep.



*Clarke.* Such another word will cost you a cuff  
or a knock.

*Mich.* What, with a dagger made of a pencil?

Faith, 'tis too weak;

And therefore thou too weak to win Susan.

*Clarke.* Would Susan's love lay upon this stroke.

[*He breaks MICHAEL'S Head.*]

*Enter MOSBIE, GREENE, and ALICE.*

*Alice.* I'll lay my life, this is for Susan's love;

Staid you behind your master to this end?

Have you no other time to brable in

But now, when serious matters are in hand?

Say, Clarke, hast thou done the thing thou promis'd?

*Clarke.* Ay, here it is, the very touch is death.

*Alice.* Then this I hope, if all the rest do fail,

Will catch master Arden,

And make him wise in death, that liv'd a fool.

Why should he thrust his sickle in our corn;

Or what hath he to do with thee, my love?

Or govern me, that am to rule myself?

Forsooth, for credit sake, I must leave thee.

Nay, he must leave to live, that we may love:

May live, may love, for what is life but love?

And love shall last as long as life remains;

And life shall end, before my love depart.

*Mos.* Why, what is love without true constancy?

Like to a pillar built of many stones,

Yet neither with good mortar, well compact,

Nor cement to fasten it in the joints;

But that it shakes with every blast of wind,

And being touch'd, straight falls unto the earth,

And buries all his haughty pride in dust.

No, let our love be rocks of adamant,

Which time, nor place, nor tempest can asunder.

*Greene.* Mosbie, leave protestations now,

And let's bethink us what we have to do;

Black Will and Shakebag I have placed

In the broom, close watching Arden's coming,

Let's to them, and see what they have done.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*The Kentish Coast opposite the Isle of Sheppey.*

*Enter ARDEN and FRANKLIN.*

*Arden.* Oh, ferryman, where art thou?

*Enter Ferryman.*

*Fer.* Here, here, go before to the boat,  
And I will follow you.

*Arden.* We have great haste, I pray thee come  
away.

*Fer.* Fic! what a mist is here.

*Arden.* This mist, my friend, is mystical,

Like to a good companion's smoky brain,

That was half-drowned with new ale over night.

*Fer.* 'Twere pity but his scull were opened,  
To make more chimney room.

*Frank.* Friend, what's thy opinion of this mist?

*Fer.* I think 'tis like to a curst wife in a little  
house,

That never leaves her husband till she have driven

Him out at doors, with a wet pair of eyes;

Then looks he as if his house were a-fire,

Or some of his friends dead.

*Arden.* Speak'st thou this of thine own experience?

*Fer.* Perhaps aye, perhaps no: for my wife is as  
other women,

That is to say, governed by the moon.

*Frank.* By the moon! how, I pray thee?

*Fer.* Nay, thereby lies a bargain,

And you shall not have it fresh and fasting.

*Arden.* Yes, I pray thee, good ferryman.

*Fer.* Then for this once, let it be midsummer  
moon,

But yet my wife has another moon.

*Frank.* Another moon?

*Fer.* Ay, and it hath influences, and eclipses.

*Arden.* Why then, by this reckoning, you sometimes

Play the man in the moon.

*Fer.* Ay, but you had not best to meddle with  
that moon,

Lest I scratch you by the face, with my bramble  
bush.

*Arden.* I am almost stifled with this fog; come,  
let's away.

*Frank.* And, sirrah, as we go, let us have some  
more of your bold yeomanry.

*Fer.* Nay, by my troth, sir, but flat knavery.

[*Exeunt.*]

*Enter WILL and SHAKEBAG at opposite Sides.*

*Shake.* Oh Will, where art thou?

*Will.* Here, Shakebag, almost in hell's mouth,  
Where I cannot see my way for smoke.

*Shake.* I pray thee speak still, that we may meet  
by the sound, or I shall fall into some ditch or  
other, unless my feet see better than my eyes.

*Will.* Did'st thou ever see better weather to run  
away with another man's wife, or play with a wench  
at potfinger?

*Shake.* No, this were a fine world for chandlers,  
If this weather would last, for then a man  
Should never dine nor sup without candle light.

But, sirrah, Will, what horses are those that pass'd ?

*Will.* Why, didst thou hear any ?

*Shake.* Ay, that I did.

*Will.* My life for thine, it was Arden and his  
companion,  
And then all our labour's lost.

*Shake.* Nay, say not so, for if it be they, they  
May happily lose their way as we have done,  
And then we may chance meet with them.

*Will.* Come, let us go on like a couple of blind  
pilgrims. [SHAKE. falls into a Ditch.

*Shake.* Help, Will, help, I am almost drown'd !

*Enter the Ferryman.*

*Fer.* Who's that, that calls for help ?

*Will.* 'Twas none here, 'twas thou thyself.

*Fer.* I came to help him that call'd for help.  
Why, how now ? who is this that's in the ditch ?  
You are well enough serv'd, to go without a guide,  
such weather as this.

*Will.* Sirrah, what company hath passed your ferry  
this morning ?

*Fer.* None but a couple of gentlemen, that went  
to dine at my lord Cheiney's.

*Will.* Shakehag, did I not tell thee as much ?

*Fer.* Why, sir, will you have any letters carried  
to them ?

*Will.* No, sir, get you gone.

*Fer.* Did you ever see such a mist as this ?

*Will.* No, nor such a fool as will rather be  
boughed than get his way.<sup>30</sup>

*Fer.* Why, sir, this is no hough Monday, you are  
deceiv'd.

What's his name, I pray you sir ?

*Shake.* His name is Black Will.

*Fer.* I hope to see him one day hang'd upon a hill.

[Exit Fer.

*Shake.* See how the sun hath cleared the foggy  
mist,

Now we have miss'd the mark of our intent.

*Enter GREENE, MOSBY, and ALICE.*

*Mos.* Black Will and Shakebag, what make you  
here ?

What, is the deed done ? is Arden dead ?

*Will.* What could a blinded man perform in  
arms ?

Saw you not how till now, the sky was dark,  
That neither horse nor man could be discerned ?  
Yet did we hear their horses as they passed.

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*Greene.* Have they escap'd you then, and passed  
the ferry ?

*Shake.* Ay, for a while, but here we two will stay,  
And at their coming back, meet with them once  
more.

Zounds, I was ne'er so toiled in all my life,  
In following so slight a task as this.

*Mos.* How cam'st thou so heraid ?<sup>31</sup>

*Will.* With making false footing in the dark.  
He needs would follow them without a guide.

*Alice.* Here's to pay for a fire and good cheer ;  
Get you to Feversham to the Flower de-luce,  
And rest yourselves until some other time.

*Greene.* Let me alone, it most concerns my state.

*Will.* Ay, mistress Arden, this will serve the turn,  
In case we fall into a second fog.

[Exit GREENE, WILL, and SHAKE.

*Mos.* These knaves will never do it, let us give it  
over.

*Alice.* First tell me how you like my new device ?  
Soon when my husband is returning back,  
You and I both marching arm in arm,  
Like loving friends, we'll meet him on the way,  
And boldly beard and brave him to his teeth :  
When words grow hot, and blows begin to rise,  
I'll call those cutters forth your tenement,  
Who in a manner to take up the fray,  
Shall wound my husband hornsby to the death.<sup>32</sup>

*Mos.* Ah, fine device, why this deserves a kiss.

[Exit.

SCENE V.—*The Open Country.*

*Enter DICK REDE and a Sailor.*

*Sailor.* Faith, Dick Rede, it is to little end,  
His conscience is too liberal,<sup>33</sup> and he too niggardly  
To part from any thing may do thee good.

*Redc.* He is coming from Shurland as I understand.  
Here I'll intercept him, for at his house  
He never will vouchsafe to speak with me :  
If prayers and fair entreaties will not serve,  
Or make no battery in his flinty breast,  
I'll curse the earl and see what that will do ;  
See where he comes, to further my intent.

*Enter FRANKLIN, ARDEN, and MICHAEL.*

Master Arden, I am now bound to the sea ;  
My coming to you was about the plot of ground  
Which wrongfully you detain from me :  
Although the rent of it be very small,  
Yet will it help my wife and children :  
Which here I leave in Feversham ; God knows,  
Needy and bare ; for Christ's sake let them have it.

*Arden.* Franklin, hearest thou this fellow speak?  
That which he craves I dearly bought of him,  
Although the rent of it was ever mine.  
*Sirrah,* you that ask these questions,  
If with thy clamorous impeaching tongue  
Thou rail on me, as I have heard thou dost,  
I'll lay thee up so close a twelve months' day,  
As thou shalt neither see the sun nor moon.  
Look to it, for as surely as I live,  
I'll banish pity if thou use me thus.

*Rede.* What! wilt thou do me wrong, and threaten me too?

Nay, then I'll tempt thee, Arden; do thy worst.  
God, I beseech thee, show some miracle  
On thee or thine, in plaguing thee for this.  
That plot of ground, which thou detainest from me,—  
I speak it in an agony of spirit,—  
Be ruinous and fatal unto thee:  
Either there be butcher'd by thy dearest friends,  
Or else be brought for men to wonder at,  
Or thou or thine miscarry in that place,  
Or there run mad, and end thy cursed days.

*Frank.* Fie, bitter knave, bridle thine envious tongue,

For curses are like arrows shot upright,  
Which falling down light on the shooter's head.

*Rede.* Light where they will, were I upon the sea,  
As oft I have in many a bitter storm,  
And saw a dreadful southern flaw at hand,  
The pilot quaking at the doubtful storm,  
And all the sailors praying on their knees,  
Even in that fearful time would I fall down,  
And ask of God, whate'er betide of me,  
Vengeance on Arden, or some mis-event,  
To show the world what wrong the carl hath done.  
This charge I'll leave with my distressful wife:  
My children shall be taught such prayers as these,  
And thus I go, but leave my curse with thee.

[*Exeunt REDE and Sailor.*]

*Arden.* It is the railing knave in Christendom;  
And oftentimes the villain will be mad:  
It greatly matters not what he says;  
But I assure you I ne'er did him wrong.

*Frank.* I think so, master Arden.

*Arden.* Now that our horses are gone home before,

My wife may haply meet me on the way;  
For God knows she's grown passing kind of late,  
And greatly changed from the old humour  
Of her wonted frowardness;  
And seeks by fair means to redeem old faults.

*Frank.* Happy the change that alters for the best;

But see in any case you make no speech  
Of the cheer we had at my lord Cheiney's,  
Although most bounteous and liberal;  
For that will make her think herself more wrong'd,  
In that we did not carry her along;  
For sure she grieved that she was left behind.

*Arden.* Come, Franklin, let us strain to mend our pace,

And take her unawares, playing the cook,

[*Enter ALICE and MOSBIE.*]

For I believe she'll strive to mend our cheer.

*Frank.* Why, there's no better creatures in the world

Than women are when they are in good humours.

*Arden.* Who is that? Mosbie, what, so familiar?  
Injurious strumpet, and thou ribald knave,  
Untwine those arms.

*Alice.* Ay, with a sugar'd kiss, let them untwine.

*Arden.* Ah, Mosbie, perjur'd beast; bear this and all.

*Mos.* And yet no horned beast; the horns are thine.

*Frank.* O monstrous: Nay, then, 'tis time to draw.

*Alice.* Help, help! they murder my husband

[*Enter WILL and SHAKEBAG.*]

*Shake.* Zounds, who injures master Mosbie?

[*WILL, SHAKE. and MOS. attack ARDEN and FRANK., the Ruffians are driven back.*]

Help, Will, I am hurt.

*Mos.* I may thank you, mistress Arden, for this wound. [*Exeunt MOS., WILL, and SHAKE.*]

*Alice.* Ah, Arden, what folly blinded thee?

Ah, jealous harebrain'd man! what hast thou done?  
When we to welcome thy intended sport,  
Came lovingly to meet thee on thy way,  
Thou drewest thy sword, enraged with jealousy,  
And hurt thy friend,

Whose thoughts were free from harm;  
All for a worthless kiss, and joining arms,  
Both done but merrily, to try thy patience.

And me unhappy that devised the jest,  
Which though begun in sport, yet ends in blood.

*Frank.* Marry, God defend me from such a jest.

*Alice.* Couldst thou not see us friendly smile on this,

When we join'd arms, and when I kiss'd his cheek.  
Hast thou not lately found me ever kind?

Didst thou not hear me cry they murder thee?

Call'd I not help to set my husband free?

No, ears and all were 'witch'd; ah me, accurs'd,  
To link in liking with a frantic man!

Henceforth I'll be thy slave, no more thy wife ;  
 For with that name I never shall content thee.  
 If I be merry, thou straightways think me light.  
 If sad, thou sayest the sullens trouble me.  
 If well attired, thou thinks I will be gadding.  
 If homely, I seem sluttish in thine eye.  
 Thus am I still, and shall be while I live,  
 Poor wench abused by thy misgovernment.

*Arden.* But is it for truth, that neither thou nor he,  
 Intendest malice in your misdemeanor.

*Alice.* The heavens can witness of our harmless  
 thoughts.

*Arden.* Then pardon me, sweet Alice, and for-  
 give this fault :

Forget but this, and never see the like.  
 Impose me penance, and I will perform it :  
 For in thy discontent I find a death,  
 A death tormenting more than death itself.

*Alice.* Nay, hadst thou lov'd me as thou dost  
 pretend,  
 Thou wouldst have mark'd the speeches of thy friend,  
 Who, going wounded from the place, he said  
 His skin was pierc'd only through my device ;  
 And if sad sorrow taint thee for this fault,  
 Thou wouldst have followed him and seen him  
 dress'd,

And cried him mercy whom thou hast misdone ;  
 Ne'er shall my heart be eas'd till this be done.

*Arden.* Content thee, sweet Alice, thou shalt  
 have thy will,

Whate'er it be, for that I injur'd thee  
 And wrong'd my friend ; shame scourgeth my offence :  
 Come thou, thyself, and go along with me,  
 And be a mediator 'twixt us two.

*Frank.* Why, master Arden, know you what you do ?  
 Will you follow him that hath dishonour'd you ?

*Alice.* Why, canst thou prove that I have been  
 disloyal ?

*Frank.* Why Moshie taunt your husband with  
 the horn ?

*Alice.* Ay, after he had revil'd him,  
 By the injurious name of perjured beast :  
 He knew no wrong could spite a jealous man  
 More than the hateful naming of the horn.

*Frank.* Suppose 'tis true, yet is it dangerous  
 To follow him whom he hath lately hurt.

*Alice.* A fault confess'd is more than half amends.  
 But men of such ill spirit as yourself,  
 Work crosses and debates 'twixt man and wife.

*Arden.* I pray thee, gentle Franklin, hold thy peace ;  
 I know my wife counsels me for the best.  
 I'll seek out Moshie, where his wound is dress'd,  
 And salve this hapless quarrel if I may.

[*Exeunt ARDEN and ALICE.*]

*Frank.* He whom the devil drives must go per-  
 force.

Poor gentleman, how soon he is bewitch'd ;  
 And yet because his wife's the instrument,  
 His friends must not be lavish in their speech.

[*Exit FRANK.*]

## ACT V.

### SCENE I.—*A Street in Feversham.*

*Enter BLACK WILL, SHAKBAG, and GREENE.*

*Will.* Sirrah Greene, when was I so long in  
 killing a man ?

*Greene.* I think we shall never do it ;  
 Let us give it over.

*Shake.* Nay, zounds, we'll kill him,  
 Though we be hang'd at his door for our labour.

*Will.* Thou knowest, Greene, that I have liv'd in  
 London these twelve years,  
 Where I have made some go upon wooden legs,  
 For taking the wall on me.  
 Divers with silver noses, for saying,  
 There goes Black Will.  
 I have cracked as many blades,  
 As thou hast done nuts.

*Greene.* O monstrous lie !

*Will.* Faith in a manner I have.

The hawdy-houses have paid me tribute ;  
 There durst not a whore set up, unless she have  
 agreed

With me first, for opening her shop windows.

For a cross word of a tapster,

I have pierced one barrel after another, with my  
 dagger,

And held him by the ears till all his beer hath run  
 out.

In Thames-street a brewer's cart was like to have  
 run

Over me ; I made no more ado, but went to the clerk,  
 And cut all the natches of his tallies,

And beat them about his head.

I, and my company, have taken the constable from  
 his watch,

And carried him about the fields on a coltstaff.

I have broken a sergeant's head with his own mace,  
 And bail'd whom I list with my sword and buckler.  
 All the tenpenny alehouse men would stand every  
 morning,  
 With a quart pot in their hands,  
 Saying, will it please your worship drink :  
 He that had not done so had been sure to have had  
 his  
 Sign pull'd down, and his lattice borne away the  
 next night.  
 To conclude, what have I not done ? yet cannot  
 do this,  
 Doubtless he is preserved by miracle.

*Enter ALICE and MICHAEL.*

*Greenc.* Hence, Will, here comes mistress Arden.

*Alice.* Ah, gentle Michael, art thou sure they're  
 friends ?

*Mich.* Why, I saw them when they both shook  
 hands,

When Mosbie bled, he even wept for sorrow :  
 And rail'd on Franklin that was cause of all.  
 No sooner came the surgeon in at doors,  
 But my master took to his purse and gave him  
 money.

And to conclude, sent me to bring you word,  
 That Mosbie, Franklin, Bradshaw, Adam Fowle,  
 With divers of his neighbours, and his friends,  
 Will come and sup with you at our house this night.

*Alice.* Ah, gentle Michael, run thou back again,  
 And when my husband walks into the fair,  
 Bid Mosbie steal from him and come to me.

And this night shall thou and Susan be made sure.

*Mich.* I'll go tell him.

*Alice.* And as thou goest, tell John Cooke of our  
 guests,

And bid him lay it on, spare for no cost. [*Exit MICH.*]

*Will.* Nay, and there be such cheer, we will bid  
 ourselves,

Mistress Arden, Dick Greene and I do mean to  
 sup with you.

*Alice.* And welcome shall you be. Ah, gentlemen,  
 How miss'd you of your purpose yesternight ?

*Greenc.* 'Twas long of Shakebag, that unlucky  
 villain.

*Shake.* Thou dost me wrong, I did as much as  
 any.

*Will.* Nay, then, mistress Alice, I'll tell you how  
 it was.

When he should have lock'd with both his bilts,  
 He in a bravery flourish'd over his head ;  
 With that comes Franklin at him lustily,  
 And hurts the slave, with that he slinks away.

Now his way had been to have come hand and feet,  
 One and two round at his costerd.<sup>34</sup>  
 He like a fool bears his sword point half a yard out  
 Of danger, I lie here for my life.

If the devil come, and he have no more strength  
 than fence,

He shall never beat me from this ward.

I'll stand to it, a buckler in a skilful hand,  
 Is as good as a castle.

Nay, 'tis better than a sconce,<sup>35</sup> for I have tried it.

Mosbie perceiving this, began to faint.

With that comes Arden with his arming sword,  
 And thrust him through the shoulder in a trice.

*Alice.* Ay, but I wonder why you both stood still.

*Will.* Faith I was so amazed I could not strike.

*Alice.* Ah, sirs, had he yesternight been slain,  
 For every drop of his detested blood,

I would have crammed in angels in thy fist,

And kiss'd thee too, and hug'd thee in my arms.

*Will.* Patient yourself, we cannot help it now,  
 Greene, and we two, will dodge him through the fair,  
 And stab him in the crowd, and steal away.

*Enter MOSBIE.*

*Alice.* It is impossible ; but here comes he,  
 That will, I hope, invent some surer means.

Sweet Mosbie, hide thy arm, it kills my heart.

*Mos.* Ay, mistress Arden, this is your favour.

*Alice.* Ah, say not so, for when I saw thee hurt,  
 I could have took the weapon thou let'st fall,

And run at Arden, for I have sworn,

That these mine eyes, offended with his sight,  
 Shall never close, till Arden's be shut up.

This night I rose and walk'd about the chamber,  
 And twice or thrice, I thought to have murdered  
 him.

*Mos.* What, in the night ! then had we been  
 undone.

*Alice.* Why, how long shall he live ?

*Mos.* Faith, Alice, no longer than this night.

Black Will and Shakebag, will you two

Perform the complot that I have laid.

*Will.* Ay, or else think me as a villain.

*Greenc.* And rather than you shall want,  
 I'll help myself.

*Mos.* You, master Greene, shall single Franklin  
 forth,

And hold him with a long tale of strange news,

That he may not come home till supper time.

I'll fetch master Arden home, and we like friends

Will play a game or two at tables here.

*Alice.* But what of all this ? How shall he be  
 slain ?

*Mos.* Why, Black Will and Shakebag, lock'd within the counting-house, Shall, at a certain watchword given, rush forth.

*Will.* What shall the watchword be ?

*Mos.* Now I take you, that shall be the word, But come not forth before in any case.

*Will.* I warrant you, but who shall lock me in ?

*Alice.* That will I do, thou'st keep the key thyself.

*Mos.* Come, master Greene, go you along with me. See all things ready, Alice, against we come.

*Alice.* Take no care for that, send you him home,

[*Exeunt MOS. and GREENE.*]

And if he ere go forth again, blame me. Come, Black Will, that in mine eyes art fair, Next unto Mosbie do I honour thee.

Instead of fair words and large promises, My hands shall play you golden harmony.

How like you this ? say, will you do it, sirs ?

*Will.* Ay, and that bravely too, mark my device.

Place Mosbie, being a stranger, in a chair,

And let your husband sit upon a stool,

That I may come behind him cunningly,

And with a towel pull him to the ground ;

Then stab him till his flesh be as a sieve

That done bear him behind the Abbey,

That those that find him murder'd, may suppose,

Some slave or other kill'd him for his gold.

*Alice.* A fine device, you shall have twenty pound, And when he is dead, you shall have forty more.

And lest you might be suspected staying here,

Michael shall saddle you two lusty geldings.

Ride whether you will, to Scotland or to Wales.

I'll see you shall not lack, where'er you be.

*Will.* Such words would make one kill a thousand men.

Give me the key ; which is the counting-house ?

*Alice.* Here would I stay, and still encourage you, But that I know how resolute you are.

*Shake.* Tush, you are too faint-hearted, we must do it.

*Alice.* But Mosbie will be there, whose very looks Will add unwonted courage to my thought, And make me the first, that shall adventure on him.

*Will.* Tush, get you gone, 'tis we must do the deed.

When this door opens next look for his death.

*Alice.* Ah, would he now were here, that it might open.

I shall no more be closed in Arden's arms,

That like the snakes of black Tisiphone,

Sting me with their embracings.<sup>36</sup> Mosbie's arms

Shall compass me, and were I made a star,

I would have none other spheres but those.

There is no nectar, but in Mosbie's lips ; Had chaste Diana kiss'd him, she, like me, Would grow love-sick, and from her watery bower, Fling down Endimion and snatch him up :<sup>37</sup> Then blame not me, that slay a silly man, Not half so lovely as Endimion.

SCENE II.—*A Room in Arden's House.*

*Enter MICHAEL and ALICE.*

*Mich.* Mistress, my master is coming hard by.

*Alice.* Who comes with him ?

*Mich.* Nobody but Mosbie.

*Alice.* That's well, Michael, fetch in the tables, And when thou hast done, stand before the counting-house door.

*Mich.* Why so ?

*Alice.* Black Will is lock'd within to do the deed.

*Mich.* What, shall he die to-night ?

*Alice.* Ay, Michael.

*Mich.* But shall not Susan know it ?

*Alice.* Yes, for she'll be as secret as ourselves.

*Mich.* That's brave, I'll go fetch the tables.

*Alice.* But, Michael, hark to me a word or two. When my husband is come in, lock the street-door : He shall be murdered or e'er the guests come in.

[*Exit. MICH.*]

*Enter ARDEN and MOSBIE.*

Husband, what mean you to bring Mosbie home ? Although I wish'd you to be reconciled, 'Twas more for fear of you, than love of him. Black Will and Greene are his companions, And they are cutters, and may cut you short ; Therefore I thought it good to make you friends. But wherefore do you bring him hither now ?

You have given me my supper with his sight. *Mos.* Master Arden, methinks your wife would have me gone.

*Arden.* No, good master Mosbie, women will be prating.

*Alice,* bid him welcome ; he and I are friends.

*Alice.* You may enforce me to it, if you will But I had rather die than bid him welcome.

His company hath purchas'd me ill friends ; And therefore will I ne'er frequent it more.

*Mos.* Oh, how cunningly she can dissemble !

[*Aside.*]

*Arden.* Now he is here you will not serve me so.

*Alice.* I pray you be not angry or displeas'd ;

I'll bid him welcome, seeing you'll have it so ;

You are welcome, master Mesbie ; will you sit down ?

*Mos.* I know I am welcome to your loving husband,  
 But for yourself, you speak not from your heart.  
*Alice.* And if I do not, sir, think I have cause.  
*Mos.* Pardon me, master Arden, I'll away.  
*Arden.* No, good master Mosbie.  
*Alice.* We shall have guests enough, though you go hence.  
*Mos.* I pray you, master Arden, let me go.  
*Arden.* I pray thee, Mosbie, let her prate her fill.  
*Alice.* The doors are open, sir, you may be gone.  
*Mich.* Nay, that's a lie, for I have lock'd the doors. [*Aside.*]  
*Arden.* Sirrah, fetch me a cup of wine ;  
 I'll make them friends.  
 And, gentle mistress Alice, seeing you are so stout,  
 You shall begin ; frown not, I'll have it so.  
*Alice.* I pray you meddle with that you have to do.  
*Arden.* Why, Alice, how can I do too much for him,  
 Whose life I have endangered without cause.  
*Alice.* 'Tis true ; and seeing 'twas partly through my means,  
 I am content to drink to him for this once.  
 Here, master Mosbie, and I pray you henceforth,  
 Be you as strange to me as I to you :  
 Your company hath purchas'd me ill friends ;  
 And I for you, God knows, have undeserved  
 Been ill spoken of in every place :  
 Therefore, henceforth frequent my house no more.  
*Mos.* I'll see your husband in despite of you :  
 Yet, Arden, I protest to thee by heaven,  
 Thou ne'er shall see me more, after this night.  
 I'll go to Rome rather than be forsworn.  
*Arden.* Tush, I'll have no such vows made in my house.  
*Alice.* Yes, I pray you, husband, let him swear ;  
 And on that condition, Mosbie, pledge me here.  
*Mos.* Ay, as willingly as I mean to live.  
*Arden.* Come, Alice, is our supper ready yet ?  
*Alice.* It will by then you have played a game at tables.  
*Arden.* Come, master Mosbie, what shall we play for ?  
*Mos.* Three games for a French crown, sir,  
 And please you.  
*Arden.* Content. [*They play at Tables.*]  
*Will.* Can he not take him yet ? what a spite is that ?  
*Alice.* Not yet. Will ; take heed he see thee not.  
*Will.* I fear he will espy me as I am coming.  
*Mich.* To prevent that, creep betwixt my legs.

*Mos.* One ace, or else I lose the game.  
*Arden.* Marry, sir, there's two for failing.  
*Mos.* Ah, master Arden, now I can take you.<sup>38</sup>  
 [*BLACK WILL. and SHAKE. enter from the Counting-house ; WILL. pulls ARDEN down with a Towel.*]  
*Arden.* Mosbie ! Michael ! Alice ! what will you do ?  
*Will.* Nothing but take you up, sir, nothing else.  
*Mos.* There's for the pressing-iron you told me of. [*Stabs him.*]  
*Shake.* And there's for the ten pound in my sleeve. [*Stabs him.*]  
*Alice.* What, groanest thou ? nay, then, give me the weapon :  
 Take this for hindering Mosbie's love and mine. [*She stabs him.*]  
*Mich.* O, mistress !  
*Will.* Ah ! that villain will betray us all.  
*Mos.* Tush, fear him not, he will be secret.  
*Mich.* Why, dost thou think I will betray myself ?  
*Shake.* In Southwark dwells a bonny northern lass ;  
 The widow Chambley ; I'll to her house now,  
 And if she will not give me harbour,  
 I'll make booty of the quean even to her smock.  
*Will.* Shift for yourselves ; we two will leave you now.  
*Alice.* First lay the body in the counting-house. [*They lay the Body in the Counting-house.*]  
*Will.* We have our gold, mistress Alice, adieu :  
 Mosbie, farewell ; and Michael, farewell too. [*Exeunt.*]

*Enter SUSAN.*

*Susan.* Mistress, the guests are at the doors.  
 Hearken, they knock ; what, shall I let them in ?  
*Alice.* Mosbie, go thou and bear them company :  
 [*Exit Mos.*]  
 And, Susan, fetch water and wash away the blood.  
*Susan.* The blood cleaveth to the ground, and will not out.  
*Alice.* But with my nails I'll scrape away the blood :  
 The more I strive the more the blood appears.  
*Susan.* What's the reason, mistress, can you tell ?  
*Alice.* Because I blush not at my husband's death.

*Re-enter MOSBIE.*

*Mos.* How now, what's the matter ? is all well ?  
*Alice.* Ay, well, if Arden were alive again :  
 In vain we strive ; for here his blood remains.

*Mos.* Why, strew rushes on it, can you not?  
This wench doth nothing: fall unto the work.

*Alice.* 'Twas thou that made me murder him!

*Mos.* What of that?

*Alice.* Nay, nothing, Mosbie, so it be not known.

*Mos.* Keep thou it close, and 'tis impossible.

*Alice.* Ah, but I cannot; was he not slain by me?  
My husband's death torments me at the heart.

*Mos.* It shall not long torment thee, gentle Alice  
I am thy husband; think no more of him.

*Enter ADAM FOWLE and BRADSHAW.*

*Brad.* How now, mistress Arden? what ail you  
weep?

*Mos.* Because her husband is abroad so late.  
A couple of ruffians threaten'd him yesternight;  
And she, poor soul, is afraid he should be hurt.

*Adam.* Is't nothing else? tush, he'll be here  
anon.

*Enter GREENE.*

*Greene.* Now, mistress Arden, lack you any  
guests?

*Alice.* Ah, master Greene, did you see my hus-  
band lately?

*Greene.* I saw him walking behind the abbey  
even now.

*Enter FRANKLIN.*

*Alice.* I do not like this being out so late:  
Master Franklin, where did you leave my husband?

*Frank.* Believe me I saw him not since morning.  
Fear you not, he'll come anon; mean time  
You may do well to bid his guests sit down.

*Alice.* Ay, so they shall; master Bradshaw, sit  
you there:

I pray you be content; I'll have my will.  
Master Mosbie, sit you in my husband's seat.

*Mich.* Susan, shall thou and I wait on them?

Or, and thou sayest the word, let us sit down too.

*Susan.* Peace; we have other matters now in  
hand.

I fear me, Michael, all will be betray'd.

*Mich.* Tush, so it be known that I shall marry  
thee in the

Morning, I care not though I be hang'd ere night.  
But to prevent the worst, I'll buy some ratsbane.

*Susan.* Why, Michael, wilt thou poison thyself?

*Mich.* No, but my mistress, for I fear she'll tell.

*Susan.* Tush, Michael, fear not her; she's wise  
enough.

*Mos.* Sirrah Michael, give us a eup of beer:  
Mistress Arden, here's to your husband.

*Alice.* My husband?

*Frank.* What ails you, woman, to cry so suddenly?

*Alice.* Ah, neighbours, a sudden qualm came  
o'er my heart:

My husband's being forth torments my mind.  
I know something's amiss; he is not well,

Or else I should have heard of him ere now.

*Mos.* She will undo us through her foolishness.

*Greene.* Fear not, mistress Arden, he is well  
enough.

*Alice.* Tell not me; I know he is not well.

He was not wont for to stay thus late.

Good master Franklin, go and seek him forth,  
And if you find him, send him home to me;

And tell him what a fear he hath put me in.

*Frank.* I like not this; I pray God all be well.  
I'll seek him out, and find him if I can.

[*Exeunt FRANK, MOS., and GREENE.*]

*Alice.* Michael, how shall I do to rid the rest  
away?

*Mich.* Leave that to my charge; let me alone

'Tis very late, master Bradshaw,

And there are many false knaves abroad,

And you have many narrow lanes to pass.

*Brad.* Faith, friend Michael, and thou sayest true.  
Therefore, I pray thee, light's forth, and lend's a  
link. [*Exeunt BRAD., ADAM, and MICH.*]

*Alice.* Michael, bring them to the doors, but do  
not stay:

You know I do not love to be alone.

Go, Susan, and bid thy brother come;

But wherefore should he come? Here is nought  
but fear.

Stay, Susan, stay, and help to counsel me.

*Susan.* Alas, I counsel! fear frights away my wits.

[*They open the Counting-house Door, and look  
upon ARDEN.*]

*Alice.* See, Susan, where thy quondam master lies;  
Sweet Arden, smear'd in blood and filthy gore.

*Susan.* My brother, you, and I, shall rue this deed.

*Alice.* Come, Susan, help to lift his body forth;  
And let our salt tears be his obsequies.

*Re-enter MOSBIE and GREENE.*

*Mos.* How now, Alice, whither will you bear him?

*Alice.* Sweet Mosbie, art thou come? Then weep  
that will.

I have my wish in that I joy thy sight.

*Greene.* Well, it 'hoves us for to be circumspect.

*Mos.* Ay, for Franklin thinks that we have mur-  
dered him.

*Alice.* Ay, but he cannot prove it for his life:  
We'll spend this night in dalliance and in sport.



*Re-enter MICHAEL.*

*Mich.* O, mistress! the mayor and all the watch  
Are coming towards our house with gloves and bills.

*Alice.* Make the door fast; let them not come in

*Mos.* Tell me, sweet Alice, how shall I escape

*Alice.* Out at the back door, over the pile of wood,  
And, for one night, lie at the Flower-de-luce.

*Mos.* That is the next way to betray myself.

*Greene.* Alas, mistress Arden, the watch will take  
me here,

And canse suspicion, where else would be none

*Alice.* Why, take that way that master Mosbie  
doth:

But first convey the body to the fields.

*Mos.* Until to-morrow, sweet Alice, now farewell;  
And see you confess nothing in any case.

*Greene.* Be resolute, mistress Alice, betray us not,  
But cleave to us as we will stick to you.

[*Exeunt Mos. and GREENE, bearing away the  
Body.*

*Alice.* Now let the judge and juries do their  
worst:

My house is clear; and now I fear them not.

*Susan.* As we went it snow'd all the way,  
Which makes me fear our footsteps will be spied,

*Alice.* Peace, fool; the snow will cover them  
again.

*Susan.* But it had done before we came back  
again.

*Alice.* Hark! hark! they knock:  
Go, Michael, let them in.

*Enter the Mayor and the Watch.*

How now, master mayor, have you brought my  
husband home?

*Mayor.* I saw him come into your house an hour  
ago.

*Alice.* You are deceiv'd, it was a Londoner.

*Mayor.* Mistress Arden, know you not one  
That is called Black Will?

*Alice.* I know none such; what mean these  
questions?

*Mayor.* I have the counsel's warrant to apprehend  
him.

*Alice.* I am glad it is no worse. [*Aside.*  
Why, master mayor, think you I harbour any such?

*Mayor.* We are inform'd that here he is;  
And therefore pardon us, for we must search.

*Alice.* Ay, search and spare you not, through  
every room;

Were my husband at home, you would not offer  
this.

*Enter FRANKLIN.*

Master Franklin, what mean you come so sad?

*Frank.* Arden, thy husband, and my friend, is  
slain.

*Alice.* Ah! by whom? master Franklin, can  
you tell?

*Frank.* I know not; but behind the abbey  
There he lies murder'd in most piteous case.

*Mayor.* But, master Franklin, are you sure 'tis he?

*Frank.* I am too sure; would God I were de-  
ceiv'd.

*Alice.* Find out the murderers, let them be known.

*Frank.* Ay, so they shall, come you along with us.

*Alice.* Wherefore?

*Frank.* Know you this hand-towel and this knife?

*Susan.* Ah, Michael, through this thy negligence,  
Thou hast betrayed and undone us all. [*Aside.*

*Mich.* I was so afraid, I knew not what I did,  
I thought I had thrown them both into the well.

[*Aside.*

*Alice.* It is the pig's blood we had to supper.  
But wherefore stay you? find out the murderers.

*Mayor.* I fear me you'll prove one of them your-  
self.

*Alice.* I one of them! what mean such questions?

*Frank.* I fear me he was murder'd in this house,  
And carried to the fields; for from that place,

Backwards and forwards, may you see,

The print of many feet within the snow.

And look about this chamber where we are,

And you shall find part of his guiltless blood,

For in his slip-shoe did I find some rushes,

Which argueth he was murdered in this room.

*Mayor.* Look in the place where he was wont to  
sit.

See, see, his blood; it is too manifest.

*Alice.* It is a cup of wine that Michael shed.

*Mich.* Ay, truly.

*Frank.* It is his blood, which, strumpet, thou  
hast shed.

But if I live, thou and thy 'complices

Which have conspiréd, and wrought his death,

Shall rue it.

*Alice.* Ah, master Franklin, God and heaven can  
tell,

I lov'd him more than all the world beside.

But bring me to him, let me see his body.

*Frank.* Bring that villain, and Mosbie's sister  
too,

And one of you go to the Flower-de-luce.

And seek for Mosbie, and apprehend him.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*An obscure Street in London.**Enter SHAKEBAG.*

*Shake.* The widow Chambly in her husband's days I kept,  
 And now he's dead, she has grown so stont,  
 She will not know her old companions:  
 I came thither, thinking to have had  
 Harbour, as I was wont,  
 And she was ready to thrust me out at doors,  
 But whether she would or no, I go me up,  
 And as she followed me I spurn'd her down the stairs,  
 And broke her neck; and cut her tapster's throat.  
 And now I am going to fling them in the Thames  
 I have the gold, what care I though it be known?  
 I'll cross the water, and take sanctuary. [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.—*Arden's House at Feversham.**Enter the Mayor, MOSBIE, ALICE, FRANKLIN, MICHAEL, and SUSAN.*

*Mayor.* See, mistress Arden, where your husband lies,  
 Confess this foul fault and be penitent,  
*Alice.* Arden, sweet husband, what shall I say?  
 The more I sound his name, the more he bleeds;<sup>39</sup>  
 This blood condemns me, and in gushing forth,  
 Speaks as it falls, and asks me why I did it.  
 Forgive me Arden, I repent me now;  
 And would my death save thine, thou shouldst not die.  
 Rise up, sweet Arden, and enjoy thy love,  
 And frown not on me, when we meet in heaven.  
 In heaven I'll love thee, though on earth I did not.  
*Mayor.* Say, Mosbie, what made thee murder him  
*Frank.* Study not for an answer, look not down,  
 His purse and girdle found at thy bed's head.  
 Witness sufficiently thou didst the deed.  
 It bootless is to swear thou didst it not.  
*Mos.* I hired Black Will and Shakebag, ruffians  
 both,  
 And they and I have done this murderous deed.  
 But wherefore stay we?  
 Command and bear me hence.  
*Frank.* Those ruffians shall notescape.  
 I will to London and get the counsel's warrant  
 To apprehend them. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—*The Kentish Coast.**Enter BLACK WILL.*

*Will.* Shakebag, I hear hath taken sanctuary,  
 406

But I am so pursued with hnes and cries,  
 For petty robberies that I have done:  
 That I can come unto no sanctuary:  
 Therefore must I in some oyster boat,  
 At last be fain to go aboard some hoy,  
 And so to Flushing; there is no staying here.  
 At Sittingburn the watch was like to take me,  
 And had not I with my buckler cover'd my head,  
 And ran full blank at all adventures,  
 I am sure I had ne'er gone further than that place,  
 For the constable had twenty warrants to apprehend me.  
 Besides that, I robbed him and his man once at  
 Gad's-hill.  
 Farewell England, for I'll to Flushing now. [*Exit.*]

SCENE VI.—*Justice Room at Feversham.**Enter the Mayor, MOSBIE, ALICE, MICHAEL, SUSAN, and BRADSHAW.*

*Mayor.* Come, make haste, and bring away the prisoners.

*Brad.* Mistress Arden, you are now going to God,  
 And I am by the law condemn'd to die,  
 About a letter I brought from master Greene  
 I pray you, mistress Arden, speak the truth:  
 Was I ever privy to your intent or no?<sup>40</sup>

*Alice.* What should I say?  
 You brought me such a letter,  
 But I dare swear thou knewest not the contents.  
 Leave now to trouble me with worldly things,  
 And let me meditate upon my Saviour, Christ,  
 Whose blood must save me for the blood I shed.

*Mos.* How long shall I live in this hell of grief?  
 Convey me from the presence of that strumpet.

*Alice.* Ah! but for thee I had never been a strumpet.

What cannot oaths and protestations do,  
 When men have opportunity to woo?  
 I was too young to sound thy villainies;  
 But now I find it and repent too late.

*Susan.* Ah, gentle brother, wherefore should I die?

I knew not of it till the deed was done.

*Mos.* For thee I mourn more than for myself:  
 Let it suffice I cannot save thee now.

*Mich.* And if your brother, and my mistress,  
 Had not promised me you in marriage,  
 I had never given consent to this foul deed.

*Mayor.* Leave to accense each other now,  
 And listen to the sentence I shall give.  
 Bear Mosbie and his sister to London straight,  
 Where they in Smithfield must be executed.

Bear mistress Arden unto Canterbury ;  
Where, as her sentence is, she must be burnt.  
Michael and Bradshaw in Feversham  
Must suffer death.

*Alice.* Let my death make amends for all my sin.

*Mos.* Fie upon women, this shall be my song ;  
But bear me hence, for I have liv'd too long.

*Susan.* Seeing no hope on earth, in heaven is my  
hope.

*Mich.* Faith I care not, seeing I die with Susan.

*Brad.* My blood be on his head who gave the  
sentence.

*Mayor.* To speedy execution with them all.

[*Exeunt.*]

*Enter FRANKLIN.*

*Frank.* Thus have you seen the truth of Arden's  
death.

As for the ruffians Shakebag and Black Will,  
The one took sanctuary, and being sent for out,  
Was murder'd in Southwark, as he pass'd  
To Greenwich, where the lord Protector lay.  
Black Will was burnt in Flushing, at a stake ;  
Greene was hang'd at Osprunge in Kent ;  
The painter fled ; and how he died we know not.  
But this above the rest is to be noted :  
Arden lay murder'd in that plot of ground,  
Which he by force and violence held from Rede ;  
And in the grass his body's print was seen  
Two years and more after the deed was done.  
Gentlemen, we hope you'll pardon this naked  
tragedy,  
Wherein no fil'd points are foisted in,  
To make it gracious to the ear or eye ;  
For simple truth is gracious enough,  
And needs no other points of glozing stuff.

## NOTES TO ARDEN, OF FEVERSHAM.

<sup>1</sup> *By letters patent from his majesty.*

The murder on which this tragedy was founded took place in the year 1551; therefore the sovereign here alluded to was Edward the Sixth, the singularly amiable son of that bloated savage, Henry the Eighth. The Duke of Somerset, just before mentioned, was, in consequence of the king being a minor, Lord Protector of the kingdom.

<sup>2</sup> *A gentleman of blood*: i.e. of a good family.

<sup>3</sup> *Whilst on the planchers.*

The *planchers* were the boards of which the flooring of a room was composed. From *plancher*, French.

<sup>4</sup> *Though this abhors from reason, yet I'll try it.*

That is, although the plan you propose is repugnant to, and condemned by, my reason, still I will try it with a faint hope that as all ordinary and likely methods of winning back my wife's affection have failed, an extraordinary and unlikely one may perhaps succeed.

<sup>5</sup> *Were he as mad as raving Hercules.*

It is related that Hercules, having shot the centaur, Nessus, with a poisoned arrow, because he offered violence to his wife, Dejanira, the dying monster, eager for revenge, gave the lady his tunic, which was covered with blood, poisoned and infected by the arrow, and told her that the garment had the power of recalling a faithless husband from unlawful loves. An occasion for testing the virtue of the dress soon arrived: Hercules had seized a princess of the name of Iole, with whom he was passionately in love, and he took her to Mount Ceta, where he intended to offer a sacrifice to Jupiter. Not having a proper garment in which to officiate, he sent to his wife for one. Dejanira sent him the dress which had belonged to the centaur; and Hercules, having put it on, was seized with a raving madness. As he also suffered the acutest torments from the poison having penetrated to his bones, he mounted a funeral pile, and ordering it to be set on fire, perished in the flames.

<sup>6</sup> *Bear him from me these pair of silver dice.*

Whimsical as this incident may be, it was an actual occurrence: the poet has here literally followed the chronicler. Holinshed tells us: "It happened this Mosbie, upon some mistaking to fall out with her (Alice); but she being desirous to be in favour with him again, sent him a pair of *silver dice* by one Adam Foule, dwelling at the Flower-de-luce, in Feversham. After which he resorted to her again, and oftentimes lay in Arden's house; and although (as it was said) Arden perceived right well their mutual familiarity to be much greater than

their honesty, yet because he would not offend her, and so lose the benefit he hoped to gain at some of her friends' hands, in bearing with her lewdness, which he might have lost had he fallen out with her, he was contented to wink at her filthy disorder, and both permitted and also invited Mosbie very often to lodge in his house. And thus it continued a good space before any practice was begun by them against Master Arden. She at length, inflamed in love with Mosbie, and loathing her husband, wished, and after practised, the means how to hasten his end."

<sup>7</sup> *The statute makes against artificers.*

To *make*, in ancient phraseology usually meant to do; *makes* is here used in the sense of decides against. The law forbade any under the rank of a gentleman to wear a sword.

<sup>8</sup> *I warrant that I do*; i.e. the law justifies my act.

<sup>9</sup> *She throws the broth on the ground.*

This, the first attempt of Alice upon her husband's life, is thus related by Holinshed; the reader will perceive how closely the poet has followed the track of the historian:—"Now, Master Arden purposing that day to ride to Canterbury, his wife brought him his breakfast; which was wont to be milk and butter. He, having received a spoonful or two of the milk, misliked the taste and colour thereof, and said to his wife, 'Mistress Alice, what milk have you given me here?' Wherewithal she tilted it over with her hand, saying, 'I ween nothing can please you.' Then he took horse and rode towards Canterbury, and by the way fell into extreme sickness, and so escaped for that time."

<sup>10</sup> *What favour hast thou had more than a kiss?*

In those days a kiss was merely a salutation, and not, as now, an act of familiarity and affection.

<sup>11</sup> *The platform of his death*; i.e. the scheme or plan of it.

<sup>12</sup> *My master's pantophelles*; i.e. his slippers.

<sup>13</sup> *A crew of harlots.*

*Harlot* was a reproachful term which in former times was sometimes applied to men as well as to women. It is so used by Chaucer, Shakspeare, and Ben Jonson; it was probably a name addressed to lewd, unmanly triflers.

<sup>14</sup> *Old filching*; i.e. excessive filching.

<sup>15</sup> *It breaks Black Will's head.*

This incident gives a lively idea of some of the inconveniences of London in old times.

<sup>16</sup> *You shall be well beaten and sent to the comptor.*

Some may perhaps be surprised at the insolence of the 'prentice, and the comparatively submissive manner of the ruffian, Black Will, who is represented as a man not likely to put up with the slightest injury without resenting it. But they must remember that the apprentices of London were, in the age referred to, a very formidable body, and that a cry for "clubs" would have brought hundreds of these young gentlemen, ever ready for and delighting in a fray, to the assistance of their comrade.

<sup>17</sup> *Till Arden's heart be panting in my hand.*

It has been objected that the language of Black Will and Shakebag in this scene is more poetical than natural, that it is not appropriately given to men so sunk in intellectual and moral darkness. This must to some extent be admitted; too great a licence in this direction is ever the fault of young poets. Energy of mind and warmth of imagination, must be directed by experience, and chastened by maturity, before they become real poetic power.

<sup>18</sup> *As Hydra's head, that perish'd by decay.*

I think we should read, *nourished* by decay; the fable being, that as soon as one head of the hydra was cut off, two sprang up in its place.

<sup>19</sup> *How now, Will, become a precisian?*

A *precisian* is one who pretends to a more than ordinary degree of sanctity. It was a name frequently bestowed upon the Puritans. In Dr. Faustus, 1604, we have:—

I will set my countenance like a *precisian*.

And in Ben Jonson's *Case is Altered*:—

It is *precisianism* to alter that,

With austere judgment, which is given by nature.

<sup>20</sup> *A coistrel*; i.e. a coward, a runaway.

<sup>21</sup> *Each gentle starry gale.*

That is, *stirring* gale. Our word *star* is supposed to be derived from *stir-an*, a Saxon word, signifying to move.

<sup>22</sup> *For Greene doth erre the land.*

This may mean that Greene *heirs* or inherits the land, or that he *ears*; i.e. ploughs it.

<sup>23</sup> *But I will dam that fire within my breast.*

That is, close it up within my own breast. Alice is meditating a separation from Mosbie, and therefore says she will close up her affection within her own heart.

<sup>24</sup> *Such deep pathairs.*

That is, moving sighs; sighs which from their intensity have a pathetic power.

<sup>25</sup> *Forstow'd advantages.*

That is, neglected, delayed, or hindered them.

<sup>26</sup> *A wanton giglot.*

A *giglot*, or *giglet*, is a frivolous and lascivious woman.

D. P.

3 G

<sup>27</sup> *The dag.*

An obsolete term anciently applied both to a pistol and a dagger.

<sup>28</sup> *I am your beadsman.*

That is, your dependent, who in return for charitable assistance, constantly renders up prayers for your welfare.

<sup>29</sup> *And of a lordain too.*

I have not met this word elsewhere, but I suppose it means a looby, an awkward lout. The meaning, then, is, Susan is sick of a fever arising from the fear of your presence.

<sup>30</sup> *As will rather be houghed than get his way.*

To *hough* a man, was to hamstring him, to disable him, by cutting the sinews of his hams. Black Will, desirous of getting rid of the ferryman, utters this brutal threat.

<sup>31</sup> *Beraide*; i.e. mud-bespattered.

<sup>32</sup> *Shall wound my husband hornsbie to the death.*

I suppose she means, shall wound my *cuckold* husband.

<sup>33</sup> *His conscience is too liberal.*

That is, too licentious; too easy and indifferent to be aroused by your words.

<sup>34</sup> *His costard*; i.e. his head.

<sup>35</sup> *A sconce*; i.e. a helmet; a protection for the sconce.

<sup>36</sup> *That like the snakes of black Tisiphone,  
Sting me with their embracing.*

According to the Greek mythology, Tisiphone was one of the furies, and dealt out the vengeance of the gods when they were offended with mankind. She was a wholesale dispenser of plagues and famines, and was also entrusted with the amiable office of scourging the spirits of the wicked in Tartarus. She was represented with a whip in her hand, and a serpent hanging from among her hair; these venomous reptiles were also encircled round her wrists in the manner of bracelets.

<sup>37</sup> *Fling down Endymion and snatch him up.*

The passion of Alice for Mosbie, in its wild extravagance, certainly borders upon sensual madness. She adorns this "black, swart man" with all the manly graces that a vivid imagination can conceive; she does not so much love him as she loves the being, which in her heated fancy he appears. Actuated by this feeling she compares him to Endymion, who was reported to be so exceedingly beautiful that the goddess Diana became enamoured of him as he slept naked on Mount Latmos, and descended from her starry habitation that she might enjoy his love. Some have said that this fable of Endymion's amours with Diana, or the moon, had its origin in his knowledge of astronomy, and that as he passed the night upon some mountain, gazing in an attitude of admiration upon the heavenly bodies, it was reported that he was courted by the radiant queen of night.

NOTES TO ARDEN, OF FEVERSHAM.

<sup>38</sup> *Ah! master Arden, now I take you.*

The curious reader will be interested in the account given by Holinshed, of the circumstances of this savage murder:—"They conveyed Black Will into Master Arden's house, putting him into a closet at the end of his parlour. Before this they had sent out of the house all the servants, those excepted which were privy to the devised murder. Then went Mosbie to the door, and there stood in a nightgown of silk girded about him, and this was betwixt six and seven of the clock at night. Master Arden, having been at a neighbour's house of his, named Dumpkin, and having cleared certain reckonings betwixt them, came home, and, finding Mosbie standing at the door, asked him if it were supper-time? I think not, (quoth Mosbie,) it is not yet ready. Then let us go and play a game at the tables in the mean season, said Master Arden. And so they went straight into the parlour: and as they came by through the hall, his wife was walking there, and Master Arden said, How now, Mistress Alice? But she made small answer to him. In the meantime, one chained the wicket-door of the entry. When they came into the parlour, Mosbie sat down on the bench, having his face toward the place where Black Will stood. Then Michael, Master Arden's man, stood at his master's back, holding a candle in his hand, to shadow Black Will, that Arden might by no means perceive him coming forth. In their play Mosbie said thus (which seemed to be the watchword for Black Will's coming.) Now I may take you, sir, if I will. Take me? quoth Master Arden; which way? With that Black Will stepped forth, and cast a towel about his neck, so as to stop his breath and strangle him.

Then Mosbie, having at his girdle a pressing iron of fourteen pounds weight, struck him on the head with the same, so that he fell down, and gave a great groan, in-somuch that they thought he had been killed."

<sup>39</sup> *The more I sound his name, the more he bleeds.*

An allusion to an ancient and widely-spread superstition that the body of a murdered man bled again in the presence of his assassin. It was supposed that even inanimate objects were revolted at the crime of murder; and, departing from the course of nature, in some mysterious manner pointed out the criminal. A modern poet, and one who was a poet of great pathetic and tragic power, though commonly regarded as a humorist only—I mean the late Thomas Hood—thus refers to the superstition alluded to in the text:—

Oh, God! it made me quake to see  
Such sense within the slain;  
For when I touched the lifeless clay,  
The blood gushed out again:  
For every clot, a burning spot  
Was scorching in my brain.

<sup>40</sup> *Was I ever privy to your intent or no?*

Bradshaw, it appears both from the Chronicle and the drama, was innocent of the murder, although he was by no means a very estimable and unspotted character. However, he suffered the same punishment as the others, namely, that of death. There is a venerable saying, that men are judged of by their associates; and in the case of this poor goldsmith, the evil reputation and actions of his companions brought him to a violent and ignominious end.

H. T.

# The Birth of Merlin; or, the Child hath found his Father.

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“WRITTEN by William Shakspeare and William Rowley,” so says the title-page of the earliest edition known of this drama, that of 1662. Of Rowley we have very little information; he had received his education at the University of Cambridge; was an actor in the company of which our poet was a part proprietor; wrote a few dramas by himself, and was associated in the production of others with several writers of that period, and lived during the reigns of James the First, and his successor Charles. He must have been a much younger man than Shakspeare, and if he wrote a play in conjunction with that poet, he could not have done so until the latter was in the height of his fame, and about to quit the scene of his glories for the peaceful retirement of Stratford. It is not probable that the great Shakspeare, the acknowledged poet of the age, the friend of nobles, and the pet of princes, should have united with a dramatist of third-rate reputation for the production of a piece which has every appearance of being written as a holiday spectacle. Added to this improbability is the fact that the play does not contain in it one single trace of the genius of the bard of Avon.

It is a singular instance of extravagance and mystery, a medley of the natural and the supernatural, possessing a rapidity of action, and a variety of incidents, which enlist the attention, and please the fancy, but do not satisfy the judgment. We tread, throughout, upon enchanted ground; and the scene bears less resemblance to the plains and woods of ancient Britain, than to the wild groves and caverns of the sea-beat isle of Prospero. Much merit there is in it, undoubtedly, but it is not the kind of merit displayed by Shakspeare, the magical portion is too palpable, too material; it is altogether devoid of that wild charm, that dim, superstitious light, which our great poet throws over his supernatural creations. The Devil is rather a common-place and contemptible fiend; no Satanic dignity or withered glory surrounds him; he is merely a vulgar, amorous devil, and thoroughly deserves the fate to which his son Merlin consigns him. The progeny of the fiend, somewhat oddly, turns out to be a very pious kind of person, and uses his superhuman power in the cause of virtue; but to this mode of treatment the dramatist was bound by the legend: to attribute any other character to the great British enchanter would be a violation of tradition. Merlin does little more than moralize and prophesy; and most of the other characters are very slight and sketchy, and some of them bombastic and unnatural. Of this kind are Edol, the British general, and Prince Uter; the perpetual bursts of passion of the former border upon the ludicrous, while the latter is at first a half-crazy lover, and afterwards a vindictive torturer of the object of his former adoration. Death is due to the murderess of his brother; but I think no man, unless animated by the spirit of Nero, or Caligula, could command his former mistress to be bricked up in a grave, and then, being covered over with earth, left to perish. The character of Aurelius is drawn with some dramatic power, but he soon fades from the scene; the creations next of interest are the frail Joan, and the severe Modestia; the first wins our pity, while the last excites our astonishment. Nothing further need be said of the drama; its language is not far removed above that of every day life, and it neither calls for, nor indeed will it admit of much critical consideration.

A few words respecting the remarkable person whose birth and history is the subject of this drama may prove not devoid of interest. Merlin is said by some of the old monkish chroniclers to have been born at Caermarthen, in Wales, towards the close of the fifth century. They add that he was begotten by a demon called Incubus, and that his mother was, before this strange accident, a maid-of-honour to one of the British queens; others say that she was the daughter of King Demetrius, and retired, after the birth of her son, to a nunnery attached to the church of Saint Peter at Marborough.

King Vortigern, hearing of Merlin's reputed parentage, is said to have caused both mother and son

## THE BIRTH OF MERLIN.

to be brought before him. On their arrival the king demanded of the frail fair one whether the prophet was her natural son, and, if so, who was his father? According to the legend the lady thus replied: "I never had the society of any mortal; only a spirit, assuming the shape of a beautiful young man, has many times appeared to me, with no common affection; but when any of my fellow virgins came in, he would suddenly disappear, and vanish. By his urgent importunities being at last overcome, I yielded to his pleasure, and was compressed by him; and, when my full time came, I was delivered of this son, now in your presence." Vortigern then turned his attention to Merlin, and was so pleased with his noble and intellectual appearance, that he sent him to inspect a hill, on which he promised to build the prophet a castle. Merlin told the king that in the centre of this hill was a deep pool, at the bottom of which were two rocks, each containing a fierce but sleeping dragon. Astonished at this remarkable intelligence, Vortigern caused the hill to be dug up, and thus proved the supernatural knowledge of Merlin; for, when the rocks were cleft asunder, out flew two terrible-looking dragons, one white and the other red, and began fighting desperately. At length the white dragon became the victor, when Merlin, with many tears, uttered his first prophecy. As the reader may like to know something of these much-famed predictions, I subjoin the first as a specimen, which I fancy will quite satisfy his curiosity:—

Woe 's me! for the red dragon, for alack,  
The time is come he hasteth to his mack.  
The bloody serpent (yet whose souls are white)  
Implies that nation, on which thy delight  
Was late sole fix'd, the Saxons, who as friends  
Came to thee first, but aiming at shrewd ends,  
They shall have power over the drooping red,  
In which the British nation 's figuréd.  
Drive shall he them into caves, holes, and dens,  
To barren mountains and to moorish fens;  
Hills shall remove to where the valleys stood,  
And all the baths and brooks shall flow with blood;  
The worship of the holy God shall cease,  
For in those days the kirk shall have no peace.  
The Panions, woe the while, shall get the day,  
And, with their idols, Mawmetry bear sway;  
And yet, in fine, she that was so opprest,  
Shall mount and in the high rocks build her nest;  
For out of Cornwall shall proceed a boar,  
Who shall the kirk to pristine state restore;  
Bow shall all Britain to his kingly beck,  
And he shall tread on the white dragon's neck.

In explanation of this prophecy it should be remarked that the red and white dragons are the British and Saxon people. The caverns, mountains, and high places, figure the distress into which the natives were thrown by the invaders of their country. The brooks flowing with blood typify the many savage battles between the warriors of both nations, which polluted the clear streams with the bodies of the festering dead, and converted the land into one vast burial-place. The prophecy then refers to the suppression of the Christian religion, which was at first despised as mean and effeminate by the hardy Saxons, who were for a time successful in substituting their own wild and pitiless superstitions in its place, and the altar of Woden smoked on the very spot where the sacred emblem of the cross had stood. The boar which should come out of Cornwall, and place his foot upon the neck of the white dragon, signifies the famous king Arthur, of heroic memory, who is averred by tradition to have vanquished the Saxons, and to have been a devout and zealous champion of Christianity.

Merlin uttered a great many prophecies, or rather a great number of prophetic rhymes were composed and attributed to him, which are said to have "foretold the fates and fortunes of all the kings and queens that have sat on the British throne." After prophesying and conjuring for many years he broke his wand, submitted to the stroke of death, and was gathered to the common resting-place of humanity.

H. T.



PERSONS REPRESENTED.

- AURELIUS, *King of Britain.*  
*Appears, Act I. sc. 2. Act II. sc. 2. Act III. sc. 5.*
- VORTIGER, *King of Wales.*  
*Appears, Act IV. sc. 1; sc. 3.*
- UTER PENDRAGON, *the Princee, Brother to Aurelius.*  
*Appears, Act II. sc. 1; sc. 3. Act III. sc. 5. Act IV. sc. 2; sc. 3; sc. 4. Act V. sc. 2.*
- DONOBERT, *a British Noble.*  
*Appears, Act I. sc. 1; sc. 2. Act II. sc. 2. Act III. sc. 1; sc. 2; sc. 5. Act V. sc. 2.*
- EARL OF GLOSTER.  
*Appears, Act I. sc. 1; sc. 2. Act II. sc. 2. Act III. sc. 2. Act V. sc. 2.*
- EDOL, *Earl of Chester, and General to King Aurelius.*  
*Appears, Act II. sc. 2. Act III. sc. 5. Act IV. sc. 2; sc. 3; sc. 4. Act V. sc. 2.*
- CADOR, *Earl of Cornwall, and Suitor to Constantia.*
- EDWIN, *Son to the Earl of Gloster, and Suitor to Modestia.*  
*Appear, Act I. sc. 1; sc. 2. Act II. sc. 2. Act III. sc. 1; sc. 2; sc. 5. Act IV. sc. 2; sc. 3; sc. 4. Act V. sc. 2.*
- TOCLIO, *a Gentleman attending on King Aurelius.*  
*Appears, Act I. sc. 1; sc. 2. Act II. sc. 1; sc. 2; sc. 3. Act III. sc. 1; sc. 2; sc. 5. Act IV. sc. 2; sc. 4. Act V. sc. 2.*
- OSWOLD, *a Gentleman attending on King Aurelius.*  
*Appears, Act I. sc. 2. Act II. sc. 1; sc. 2; sc. 3. Act III. sc. 2; sc. 5. Act V. sc. 2.*
- MERLIN, *the Prophet.*  
*Appears, Act III. sc. 4. Act IV. sc. 1; sc. 4. Act V. sc. 1; sc. 2.*
- ANSELME, *a Hermit.*  
*Appears, Act I. sc. 2. Act II. sc. 3. Act III. sc. 2. Act V. sc. 2.*
- SIR NICODEMUS NOTHING, *a Courtier.*  
*Appears, Act III. sc. 1.*
- CLOWN, *Brother to Joan, the Mother of Merlin.*  
*Appears, Act II. sc. 1. Act III. sc. 1; sc. 4. Act IV. sc. 1; sc. 4. Act V. sc. 2.*
- THE DEVIL, *Father of Merlin.*  
*Appears, Act III. sc. 1; sc. 3; sc. 4. Act V. sc. 1.*
- OSTORIUS, *King of the Saxons, and General of their Army.*  
*Appears, Act II. sc. 2; sc. 3. Act III. sc. 5.*
- PROXIMUS, *a Saxon Magician.*  
*Appears, Act II. sc. 2; sc. 3. Act III. sc. 5. Act IV. sc. 1.*
- TWO GENTLEMEN, *Attendants on King Vortiger.*  
*Appear, Act IV. sc. 1.*
- ARMEL, } *Spirits raised by Proximus.*  
 PLESGETH, }
- A LITTLE ANTIC SPIRIT.  
*Appears, Act IV. sc. 1.*
- ARTESIA, *Sister to Ostorius.*  
*Appears, Act I. sc. 1. Act II. sc. 2; sc. 3. Act III. sc. 5. Act V. sc. 2.*
- CONSTANTIA, *Daughter to Donobert.*  
*Appears, Act I. sc. 1. Act II. sc. 2. Act III. sc. 2.*
- MODESTIA, *Daughter to Donobert.*  
*Appears, Act I. sc. 1; sc. 2. Act II. sc. 2. Act III. sc. 2.*
- JOAN GO-TO-T, *Mother of Merlin.*  
*Appears, Act II. sc. 1. Act III. sc. 1; sc. 4. Act IV. sc. 1. Act V. sc. 1.*
- A GENTLEWOMAN, *Attending on Queen Artesia.*  
*Appears, Act II. sc. 3.*
- LUCINA, *the Goddess who presides over the Birth of Children.*  
*Appears, Act III. sc. 3.*
- Two Bishops, British and Saxon Nobles, Gentlemen and Soldiers, Attendants, the three Fates, Spirits, &c.*
- SCENE.—*In and near the BRITISH COURT, afterwards in WALES.*

[NOTE.—The old copy of this Drama is divided into acts, but not into scenes—I am responsible for the latter arrangement.—Ed.]

# The Birth of Merlin; or, the Child hath found his Father.

## ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Room in the Castle of Lord Donobert.*

*Enter* DONOBERT, GLOSTER, CADOR, EDWIN, CONSTANTIA, and MODESTIA.

*Cador.* You teach me language, sir, as one that knows the debt of love I owe unto their virtues, wherein, like a true courtier, I have fed myself with hope of fair success, and now attend your wished consent to my long suit.

*Dono.* Believe me, youthful lord, time could not give an opportunity more fitting your desires, always provided my daughter's love be suited with my grant.

*Cador.* 'Tis the condition, sir, her promise seal'd.

*Dono.* Is 't so, Constantia?

*Con.* I was content to give him words for oaths, he swōre so oft he loved me.

*Dono.* That thou believest him?

*Con.* He is a man I hope.

*Dono.* That's in the trial, girl.

*Con.* However, I am a woman, sir.

*Dono.* The law's on thy side, then, sha't have a husband,—ay, and a worthy one. Take her, brave Cornwall, and make our happiness great as our wishes.

*Cador.* Sir, I thank you.

*Glos.* Double the fortunes of the day, my lord, and crown my wishes too. I have a son here, who, in my absence, would protest no less unto your other daughter.

*Dono.* Ha, Gloster! is it so? what says lord Edwin? will she protest as much to thee?

*Edwin.* Else must she want some of her sister's faith, sir.

*Mod.* Of her credulity much rather, sir. My lord, you are a soldier, and methinks the height of that profession should diminish all heat of love's desires, being so late employed in blood and ruin.

*Edwin.* The more my conscience ties me to repair the world's losses in a new succession.

*Mod.* Necessity, it seems, ties your affections then, and that at rate I would unwillingly be thrust upon you; a wife is a dish soon cloy's, sir.

*Edwin.* Weak and diseas'd appetites it may.

*Mod.* Most of your making have dull stomachs, sir.

*Dono.* If that be all girl, thou shalt quicken him: be kind to him Modestia; noble Edwin, let it suffice, what's mine in her, speaks yours; For her consent, let your fair suit go on, She is a woman, sir, and will be won.

*Enter* TOCLIO.

*Edwin.* You give me comfort, sir.

*Dono.* Now Toclio?

*Toclio.* The king, my honoured lords, requires your presenece, and calls a council for return of answer unto the parling enemy,<sup>1</sup> whose ambassadors are on the way to court.

*Dono.* So suddenly! Chester it seems has plied them hard at war, they sue so fast for peace, which, by my advice, they ne'er shall have, unless they leave the realm. Come, noble Gloster, let's attend the king; it lies, sir, in your son to do me pleasure, and save the charges of a wedding-dinner.

If you'll make haste to end your love affairs, One cost may give discharge to both my cares.

[*Exeunt* DONO. and GLOS.]

*Edwin.* I'll do my best.

*Cador.* Now, Toclio, what stirring news at court?

*Toclio.* Oh, my lord, the court's all filled with rumour, the city with news, and the country with wonder; and all the bells i' th' kingdom must proclaim it; we have a new holiday a coming.

*Con.* A holiday! for whom? for thee?

*Toclio.* Me, madame! s'foot, I'd be loath that any man should make a holy-day for me yet.<sup>2</sup> In brief 'tis thus: there's here arrived at court, sent by the earl of Chester to the king, a man of rare esteem for holiness, a reverend hermit, that by miracle not only saved our army, but without

aid of man o'erthrew the pagan host, and with such wonder, sir, as might confirm a kingdom to his faith.

*Edwin.* This is strange news indeed! where is he?

*Toelio.* In conference with the king, that much respects him.

*Mod.* Trust me, I long to see him.

*Toelio.* Faith you will find no great pleasure in him for aught that I can see, lady; they say he is half a prophet too; would he could tell me any news of the lost prince; there's twenty talents offered to him that finds him.

*Cador.* Such news was breeding in the morning.

*Toelio.* And now it has birth and life, sir; if fortune bless me I'll once more search those woods where then we lost him; I know not yet what fate may follow me. [*Exit.*]

*Cador.* Fortune go with you, sir: come, fair mistress, your sister and lord Edwin are in game, and all their wits at stake to win the set.

*Con.* My sister has the hand yet, we had best leave them.

She will be out anon as well as I,  
He wants but cunning to put in a die.

[*Exeunt CADOR and CON.*]

*Edwin.* You are a cunning gamester, madam.

*Mod.* It is a desperate game, indeed, this marriage, where there's no winning without loss to either.

*Edwin.* Why, what but your perfection, noble lady, can bar the worthiness of this my suit? If so you please I count my happiness from difficult obtaining, you shall see my duty and observance.

*Mod.* There shall be place to neither, noble sir. I do beseech you let this mild reply give answer to your suit, for here I vow, if ever I change my virgin name, by you it gains or loses.<sup>3</sup>

*Edwin.* My wishes have their own.

*Mod.* Let them confine you then, as to my promise you give faith and credence?

*Edwin.* In your command my willing absence speaks it. [*Exit EDWIN.*]

*Mod.* Noble and virtuous; could I dream of marriage, I should affect thee Edwin. Oh, my soul, here's something tells me that these best of creatures, these models of the world, weak man and woman, should have their souls, their making, life and being, to some more excellent use. If what the sense calls pleasure were our ends, we might justly blame great nature's wisdom, who reared a building of so much art and beauty to entertain a guest so far uncertain, so imperfect. If only speech distinguish us from beasts, who know no inequality of birth or place, but still to

fly from goodness—oh, how base were life at such a rate! No, no! that power that gave to man his being, speech, and wisdom, gave it for thankfulness. To him alone that  
Made me thus, may I whence truly know,  
I'll pay to him, not man, the love I owe. [*Exit.*]

#### SCENE II.—*The British Court.*

*Flourish of Cornets.* Enter AURELIUS, King of Britain; DONOBERT, GLOSTER, CADOR, EDWIN, TOELIO, OSWOLD, and Attendants.

*Aurel.* No tidings of our brother yet? 'Tis strange, so near the court, and in our own land too, and yet no news of him! Oh, this loss tempers the sweetness of our happy conquests, with much untimely sorrow.

*Dono.* Royal sir, his safety being unquestioned, should to time leave the redress of sorrow; were he dead, or taken by the foe, our fatal loss had wanted no quick herald to disclose it.

*Aurel.* That hope alone sustains me, nor will we be so ungrateful unto heaven to question what we fear with what we enjoy. Is answer of our message yet returned from that religious man, the holy hermit, sent by the earl of Chester to confirm us in that miraculous act? For 'twas no less, our army being in rout, nay, quite o'erthrown, as Chester writes; even then this holy man, armed with his cross and staff, went smiling on, and boldly fronts the foe; at sight of whom the Saxons stood amazed; for to their seeming, above the hermit's head appeared such brightness, such clear and glorious beams, as if our men marched all in fire, wherewith the pagans fled, and by our troops were all to death pursued.

*Glos.* 'Tis full of wonder, sir.

*Aurel.* Oh, Gloster, he's a jewel worth a kingdom. Where's Oswald with his answer?

*Os.* 'Tis here, my royal lord.

*Aurel.* In writing! will he not sit with us?

*Os.* His orisons performed, he bade me say he would attend with all submission.

*Aurel.* Proceed to council then, and let some give order, the ambassadors being come, to take our answer they have admittance. Oswald, Toelio, be it your charge. [*Exeunt OS. and TOELIO.*]  
And now, my lords, observe the holy counsel of this reverend hermit. [*Reals.*]

As you respect your safety, limit not that only power that hath protected you; trust not an open enemy too far;

He's yet a loser; and knows you have won;  
Mischiefs not ended, are then but begun.

ANSELME, the Hermit.

*Dono.* Powerful and pithy, which my advice confirms; no man leaves physic when his sickness slaeks, but doubles the receipts; the word of peace seems fair to bloodshot eyes; but being applied with such a medicine as blinds all the sight, argues desire of cure, but not knowledge of art.<sup>4</sup>

*Aurel.* You argue from defects: if both the name and the condition of the peace be one, it is to be preferred; and in the offer made by the Saxon, I see nought repugnant.

*Glos.* The time of truce required for, thirty days, carries suspicion in it, since half that space will serve to strength their weakened regiments.

*Cador.* Who, in less time, will undertake to free our country from them?

*Edwin.* Leave that unto our fortune.

*Dono.* Is not our bold and hopeful general still master of the field—their legions fallen—the rest entrenched for fear, half starved, and wounded—and shall we now give o'er our fair advantage? 'Fore heaven, my lord, the danger is far more in trusting to their words than to their weapons.

*Enter OSWOLD.*

*Os.* The ambassadors are come, sir.

*Aurel.* Conduct them in: we are resolved, my lords, since policy failed in the beginning, it shall have no hand in the conclusion. That heavenly power that hath so well begun their fatal overthrow I know can end it; from which fair hope myself will give them answer.

*Flourish of Cornets. Enter ARTESIA, with the Saxon Lords.*

*Dono.* What's here?—a woman orator?

*Aurel.* Peace, Donobert. Speak, what are you, lady?

*Artes.* The sister of the Saxon general, warlike Ostorius, the East Angles king; my name Artesia; who, in terms of love, brings peace and health to great Aurelius, wishing the army may return as fair a present as she makes tender of.

*Aurel.* The fairest presenee e'er mine eyes were blest with! Command a chair, there, for this Saxon beauty! Sit, lady, we'll confer: your warlike brother sues for a peace, you say?

*Artes.* With endless love unto your state and person.

*Aurel.* He's sent a moving orator, believe me: what think'st thou, Donobert?

*Dono.* Believe me, sir, were I but young again, this gilded pill might take my stomach quickly.

*Aurel.* True, thou art old: how soon we do

forget our own defects. Fair damsel,—oh, my tongue turns traitor, and will betray my heart,—sister to our enemy:—'sdeath, her beauty mazes me; I cannot speak if I but look on her. What's that we did conclude?

*Dono.* This royal lord ———

*Aurel.* Pish, thou canst not utter it. Fairest of creatures, tell the king, your brother, that we in love—ha! and honour to our country, command his armies to depart our realm; but if you please, fair soul——Lord Donobert, deliver you our pleasure.

*Dono.* I shall, sir: lady, return, and certify your brother ———

*Aurel.* Thou art too blunt, and rude: return so soon! fie! let her stay; and send some messenger to certify our pleasure.

*Dono.* What means your grace?

*Aurel.* To give her time of rest to her long journey: we would not willingly be thought uncivil.

*Artes.* Great king of Britain, let it not seem strange to embrace the princely offers of a friend, Whose virtues, with thine own, in fairest merit; Both states in peace and love may now inherit.

*Aurel.* She speaks of love again; sure 'tis my fear, she knows I do not hate her.

*Artes.* Be then, thyself, most great Aurelius; and let not envy, nor a deeper sin, in these thy counsellors, deprive thy goodness of that fair honour, we, in seeking peace, give first to thee, who never used to sue but force our wishes; yet, if this seem light, oh let my sex, though worthless your respect, take the report of thy humanity, Whose mild and virtuous life loud fame displays, As being o'ercome by one so worthy praise.

*Aurel.* She has an angel's tongue! speak still.

*Dono.* This flattery is gross, sir; hear no more on't. Lady, these childish compliments are needless: you have your answer; and believe it, madam, his grace, though young, doth wear within his breast too grave a counsellor to be seduced by smoothing flattery, or oily words.

*Artes.* I come not, sir, to woo him.

*Dono.* 'Twere folly if you should; you must not wed him: shame take thy tongue.<sup>5</sup>

*Aurel.* Shame take thy tongue; being old and weak thyself, thou doat'st; and, looking on thy own defects, speak'st what thond'st wish in me: do I command the deeds of others, mine own act not free?

Be pleas'd to smile or frown, we respect neither; My will and rule shall stand and fall together.

Most fair Artesia, see, the king descends to give thee welcome with these warlike Saxons, and now on equal terms both sues and grants. Instead of truce, let a perpetual league seal our united bloods in holy marriage: send the East Angles king this happy news—that thou with me hast made a league for ever, and added to his state a friend and brother: speak, dearest love; dare you confirm this title?

*Artes.* I were no woman to deny so high and noble a proposal to my fame and country.<sup>6</sup>

*Aurel.* Live, then, a queen in Britain.

*Glos.* He means to marry her.

*Dono.* Death! he shall marry the devil first! marry a pagan—an idolater!<sup>7</sup>

*Cador.* He has won her quickly.

*Edwin.* She was wooed afore she came, sure; or came of purpose to conclude the match.

*Aurel.* Who dares oppose our will? My lord of Gloster, be you ambassador unto our brother, the brother of our queen, Artesia; tell him, for such our entertainment looks him,<sup>8</sup> our marriage adding to the happiness

Of our intended joys, man's good or ill,  
In this like waves agree—come double still.

*Enter the Hermit.*

Who's this? the hermit? Welcome my happiness, our country's hope: most reverend, holy man, I wanted but thy blessing to make perfect the infinite sum of my felicity.

*Her.* Alack, sweet prince; that happiness is yonder:

Felicity and thou art far asunder.  
This world can never give it.

*Aurel.* Thou art deceived: see here what I have found—beauty, alliance, peace, and strength of friends; all in this all-exceeding excellence: the league's confirmed.

*Her.* With whom, dear lord?

*Aurel.* With the great brother of this beautiful woman, the royal Saxon king.

*Her.* Oh! then I see, and fear thou art too near thy misery. What magic could so link thee to this mischief? By all the good that thou hast reaped by me, stand further from destruction.

*Aurel.* Speak as a man, and I shall hope to obey thee.<sup>9</sup>

*Her.* Idolaters, get hence! fond king, let go! Thou hug'st thy ruin, and thy country's woe.

*Dono.* Well spoke, old father, to him; bait him soundly. Now, by heaven's blest lady, I can scarce keep patience.

*1st S. Lord.* What devil is this?

*2nd S. Lord.* That cursed Christian, by whose bellish charms our army was o'erthrown.

*Her.* Why do you dally, sir? Oh! tempt not heaven; warm not a serpent in your naked bosom; discharge them from your court.

*Aurel.* Thon speak'st like madness. Command the frozen shepherd to the shade when he sits warm i' the sun—the fever-sick to add more heat unto his burning pain—these may obey: 'tis less extremity than thou enjoin'st to me: cast but thine eyes upon this beauty; do it; I'll forgive thee, though jealousy in others finds no pardon; then say thou dost not love like me: I shall then swear thou'rt immortal, and no earthly man: Oh, blame then my mortality, not me.

*Her.* It is thy weakness brings thy misery, unhappy prince.

*Aurel.* Be milder in thy doom.

*Her.* 'Tis you that must endure heaven's doom, which fallen, remember's just.

*Artes.* Thou shalt not live to see it: how fares my lord? If my poor presence breeds dislike, great prince, I am no such neglected soul, will seek to tie you to your word.

*Aurel.* My word, dear love! may my religion, crown, state, and kingdom fail when I fail thee. Command earl Chester to break up the camp, without disturbance to our Saxon friends; send every hour swift posts to hasten on the king, her brother, to conclude this league, this endless happy peace of love and marriage; till when, provide for revels; and give charge that nought be wanting which will make our triumphs  
Sportful and free to all: if such fair blood  
Engender ill, men must not look for good.

[*Flourish.* *Exeunt all but the Hermit.*]

*Enter* *MODESTIA*, *reading in a Book.*

*Mod.* How much the oft report of this blest hermit hath won on my desires: I must behold him: and sure this should be he. Oh, the world's folly! proud earth and dust, how low a price bears goodness! all that should make man absolute shines in him. Much reverent sir, may I, without offence, give interruption to your holy thoughts?

*Her.* What would you, lady?

*Mod.* That which till now ne'er found a language in me: I am in love.

*Her.* In love! with what?

*Mod.* With virtue.

*Her.* There's no blame in that.

*Mod.* Nay, sir, with you! with your religious life. Your virtue, goodness, if there be a name to

express affection greater,—that, that would I learn and utter. Reverend sir, if there be anything to bar my suit, be charitable and expose it: your prayers are the same orisons which I will number. Holy sir, keep not instruction back from willingness: possess me of that knowledge leads you on to this humility; for well I know were greatness good, you would not live so low.

*Her.* Are you a virgin?

*Mod.* Yes, sir!

*Her.* Your name?

*Mod.* Modestia.

*Her.* Your name and virtues meet, a modest

virgin: live ever in the sauctimonious way to heaven and happiness. There's goodness in you—I must instruct you further. Come, look up: behold yon firmament! there sits a power whose footstool is this earth: oh learn this lesson—  
And practise it: he that will climb so high,  
Must let no joy beneath to move his eye.<sup>10</sup>

*Mod.* I apprehend you, sir: on heaven I fix my love:

Earth gives us grief; our joys are all above.  
For this was man in innocence naked born,  
To show us wealth hinders our sweet return.

[*Exeunt.*]

## ACT II.

### SCENE I.—*A Forest.*

*Enter Clown and his Sister, great with Child.*

*Clown.* Away, follow me no further, I am none of thy brother; what, with child! great with child! and know not who's the father on't! I am ashamed to call thee sister.

*Joan.* Believe me, brother, he was a gentleman.

*Clown.* Nay, I believe that; he gives arms and legs too, and has made you the herald to blaze 'em; but Joan, Joan, sister Joan, can you tell me his name that did it? how shall we call my cousin, your bastard, when we have it?

*Joan.* Alas! I know not the gentleman's name, brother; I met him in these woods the last great hunting; he was so kind, and proffered me so much, as I had not the heart to ask him more.

*Clown.* Not his name, why this shows your country breeding now; had you been brought up i' th' city, you'd have got a father first, and the child afterwards: hast thou no marks to know him by?

*Joan.* He had most rich attire, a fair hat and feather, a gilt sword, and most excellent hangers.

*Clown.* Pox ou his hangers! would he had been gelt for his labour.

*Joan.* Had you hut heard him swear, you would have thought—

*Clown.* Ay, as you did, swearing and lying goes together still; did his oaths get you with child? we shall have a roaring boy then i'faith. Well, sister, I must leave you.

*Joan.* Dear brother stay, help me to find him out; I'll ask no further.

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*Clown.* 'Sfoot, who should I find? who should I ask for?

*Joan.* Alas! I know not: he uses in these woods, and these are witness of his oaths and promise.

*Clown.* We are like to have a hot suit on't, when our best witness 's but a knight o' th' post.

*Joan.* Do but inquire this forest; I'll go with you, some happy fate may guide us till we meet him.

*Clown.* Meet him! and what name shall we have for him when we meet him? 'Sfoot, thou neither know'st him, nor canst tell what to call him; was ever man tied with such a business, to have a sister got with child, and know not who did it? well, you shall see him, I'll do my best for you, I'll make proclamation, if these woods and trees, as you say, will bear any witness, let them answer. Oh, yes. If there be any man that wauts a name, will come in for conscience sake, and acknowledge himself to be a whoremaster, he shall have that laid to his charge in an hour, he shall not be rid on in an age; if he have lauds he shall have an heir, if he have patience he shall have a wife, if he have neither lands nor patience, he shall have a whore. So ho, boy! so ho, so, so!

*Prince Uter.* [*Within.*] So ho, boy! so ho, illo ho, illo ho!

*Clown.* Hark, hark, sister; there's one holloas to us; what a wicked world's this; a man cannot so soon name a whore but a knave comes presently, and see where he is; stand close awhile, sister.

*Enter PRINCE UTER.*

*Prince.* How like a voice that echo spoke, but

ah, my thoughts are lost for ever in amazement; could I but meet a man to tell her beauties, these trees would bend their tops to kiss the air, that from my lips should give her praises up.

*Clown.* He talks of a woman, sister.

*Joan.* This may be he, brother.

*Clown.* View him well; you see he has a fair sword, but his hangers are fallen.

*Prince.* Here did I see her first, here view her beauty; oh, had I known her name, I had been happy.

*Clown.* Sister, this is he sure; he knows not thy name neither; a couple of wise fools i'faith, to get children and not know one another.

*Prince.* You weeping leaves, upon whose tender cheeks doth stand a flood of tears at my complaint, and heard my vows and oaths.

*Clown.* Law, law, he has been a great swearer too; 'tis he, sister.

*Prince.* For having overtook her, as I have seen a forward blood-hound, strip the swifter of the cry ready to seize his wished hopes, upon the sudden view struck with astonishment at his arrived prey, instead of seizure stands at fearful bay; Or like to Marius' soldiers, who o'ertook The eye-sight killing Gorgon, at one look Made everlasting stand; so fear'd my power Whose cloud aspir'd the sun, dissolv'd a shower: Pygmalion, then I tasted thy sad fate,<sup>11</sup> whose ivory picture, and my fair were one, our dotage past imagination; I saw and felt desire.

*Clown.* Pox o' your fingering! did he feel, sister?

*Prince.* But enjoyed not; oh, fate, thou hadst thy days and nights to feed,

Or calm affection, one poor sight was all,  
Converts my pleasure to perpetual thrall,  
Embracing thine, thou lovest breath and desire,  
So I relating mine, will here expire;  
For here I vow to you, ye mournful plants,  
Who were the first made happy by her fame,  
Never to part hence, till I know her name.

*Clown.* Give me thy hand, sister, the child has found his father; this is he sure, as I am a man; had I been a woman, these kind words would have wou me; I should have had a great belly too, that's certain; well, I'll speak to him; most honest and fleshly-minded gentleman, give me your hand, sir.

*Prince.* Ha! what art thou, that thus rudely and boldly darest take notice of a wretch so much allied to misery as I am?

*Clown.* Nay, sir, for our alliance, I shall be found to be a poor brother-in-law of your worship's; the gentlewoman you spoke on is my sister; you see

what a clew she spreads; her name is Joan Go-too't, I am her elder, but she has been at it before me: 'tis a woman's fault; pox o' this bashfulness, come forward Jug, prythee speak to him.

*Prince.* Have you e'er seen me lady?

*Clown.* Seen ye, ha, ha! it seems she has felt you too; here's a young Go-to-'t a-coming, sir; she is my sister; we all love to go to 't as well as your worship; she's a maid yet,<sup>12</sup> but you may make her a wife when you please, sir.

*Prince.* I am amazed with wonder: Tell me, woman, what sin have you committed worthy this?<sup>13</sup>

*Joan.* Do you not know me, sir?

*Prince.* Know thee! as I do thunder, hell, and mischief; witch, stallion, hag!

*Clown.* I see he will marry her, he speaks so like a husband.

*Prince.* Death! I will cut out their tongues for this blasphemy. Strumpet, villain, where have you ever seen me?

*Clown.* Speak for yourself with a pox to ye.

*Prince.* Slaves! I'll make you curse yourselves for this temptation.

*Joan.* Oh, sir, if ever you did speak to me it was in smoother phrase, in fairer language.

*Prince.* Lightning consume me if I ever saw thee! my rage o'erflows my blood, all patience flies me. [Beats her.<sup>14</sup>

*Clown.* Hold, I beseech you, sir; I have nothing to say to you.

*Joan.* Help, help! murder, murder!

*Enter TOGLIO and OSWOLD.*

*Toelio.* Make haste, sir; this way the sound came; it was a wood.

*Os.* See where she is, and the prince! the price of all our wishes.

*Clown.* The prince, say ye? he's made a poor subject of me, I am sure.

*Toelio.* Sweet prince, noble Uter, speak! how fare you, sir?

*Os.* Dear sir, recal yourself; your fearful absence hath won too much already on the grief of our sad king, from whom our labouring search hath had this fair success in meeting you.

*Toelio.* His silence and his looks argue distraction.

*Clown.* Nay, he's mad sure; he will not acknowledge my sister, nor the child neither.

*Os.* Let us entreat your grace along with us; your sight will bring new life to the king your brother.

*Toelio.* Will you go, sir?

*Prince.* Yes, any whither, guide me, all's hell I see,

Man may change air, but not his misery.

[*Exeunt PRINCE and TOELIO.*]

*Joan.* Lend me one word with you, sir.

*Clown.* Well said, sister; he has a feather, and fair hangers too, this may be he.

*Os.* What would you, fair one?

*Joan.* Sure I have seen you in these woods ere this?

*Os.* Trust me never, I never saw this place till at this time my friend conducted me.

*Joan.* The more's my sorrow then.

*Os.* Would I could comfort you: I am a bachelor, but it seems you have a husband; you have been foully o'ershot else.

*Clown.* A woman's fault; we are all snbjeet to go to't, sir.

*Enter TOELIO.*

*Toelio.* Oswald, away; the prince will not stir a foot without you.

*Os.* I am coming; farewell, woman.

*Toelio.* Prithee make haste.

*Joan.* Good sir, but one word with you ere you leave us.

*Toelio.* With me fair soul?

*Clown.* She'll have a fling at him, too; the child must have a father.

*Joan.* Have you ne'er seen me, sir?

*Toelio.* Seen thee! 'Sfoot! I have seen many fair faces in my time; prithee look up, and do not weep so; sure, pretty wanton, I have seen this face before.

*Joan.* It is enough, though you ne'er see me more. [*Sinks down.*]

*Toelio.* 'Sfoot she's fallen; this place is enchanted sure; look to the woman, fellow. [*Exit.*]

*Clown.* Oh, she's dead! she's dead! as you are a man stay and help, sir. Joan, Joan, sister Joan! why Joan Go-to-'t, I say; will you east away yourself, and your child, and me too? What do you mean, sister?

*Joan.* Oh, give me pardon, sir; 'twas too much joy oppressed my loving thoughts; I knew you were too noble to deny me; ha! where is he?

*Clown.* Who, the gentleman? he's gone, sister.

*Joan.* Oh! I am undone, then; run, and tell him I did but faint for joy; dear brother, haste; why dost thou stay? oh, never cease till he give answer to thee.

*Clown.* He! which he? what do you call him tro?

*Joan.* Unnatural brother, show me the path he took. Why dost thou dally? speak, oh, which way went he?

*Clown.* This way, that way, through the bushes there.

*Joan.* Were it through fire, the journey's easy; winged with sweet desire. [*Exit.*]

*Clown.* Hey day, there's some hope of this yet; I'll follow her for kindred's sake; if she miss of her purpose now, she'll challenge all she finds I see, for if ever we meet with a two-legged creature in the whole kingdom, the child shall have a father, that's certain. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*An Ante-chamber at the British Court.*

*Loud Music.* Enter Two with the Sword and Mace; CADOR, EDWIN, Two Bishops, AURELIUS, OSTORIUS, leading ARTESIA crowned; CONSTANTIA, MODESTIA, OCTA, PROXIMUS a Magician, DONOBERT, GLOSTER, OSWOLD, TOELIO, all pass over the stage; Manet, DONOBERT, GLOSTER, EDWIN, and CADOR.

*Dono.* Come, Gloster, I do not like this hasty marriage.

*Glos.* She was quickly wooed and won; not six days since arrived an enemy to sue for peace, and now crowned queen of Britain! this is strange.

*Dono.* Her brother, too, made as quick speed in coming, leaving his Saxons and his starved troops, to take the advantage whilst 'twas offered; 'fore heaven, I fear the king's too credulous; our army is discharged too.

*Glos.* Yes, and our general commanded home. Son Edwin, have you seen him since?

*Edwin.* He's come to court; but will not view the presence, nor speak unto the king, he's so discontent at this so strange alliance with the Saxon, as nothing can persuade his patience.

*Cador.* You know his humour will endure no check; no, if the king oppose it. All crosses feed both his spleen and his impatience; those affections are in him like powder, apt to inflame with every little spark, and blow up all his reason.

*Glos.* Edol of Chester is a noble soldier.

*Dono.* So is he by the rood,<sup>15</sup> ever most faithful to the king and kingdom, howe'er his passions guide him.

*Enter EDOL with Captains.*

*Cador.* See where he comes, my lord.

*Omnes.* Welcome to court, brave earl.

*Edol.* Do not deceive me by your flatteries. Is



not the Saxon here? the league confirmed? the marriage ratified? the court divided with pagan infidels? the least part Christians, at least in their commands? Oh, the gods!<sup>16</sup> it is a thought that takes away my sleep, and dulls my senses so, I scarcely know you. Prepare my horses, I'll away to Chester.

*Cap.* What shall we do with our companies, my lord?

*Edol.* Keep them at home to increase encolds, and get some eases for your captainships, smooth up your brows, the wars have spoiled your faces, and few will now regard you.

*Dono.* Preserve your patience, sir.

*Edol.* Preserve your honours, lords, your country's safety, your lives and lands from strangers. What black devil could so bewitch the king, so to discharge a royal army in the height of conquest—nay, even already made victorious—to give such credit to an enemy, a starved foe, a straggling fugitive, beaten beneath our feet, so low dejected, so servile, and so base, as hope of life had won them all to leave the land for ever?

*Dono.* It was the king's will.

*Edol.* It was your want of wisdom, that should have laid before his tender youth the dangers of a state, where foreign powers bandy for sovereignty with lawful kings, who being settled once, to assure themselves, will never fail to seek the blood and life of all competitors.

*Dono.* Your words sound well, my lord, and point at safety, both for the realm and us; but why did you, within whose power it lay, as general, with full commission to dispose of the war, lend ear to parley with your weakened foe?

*Edol.* Oh, the good gods!

*Cap.* And on that parley came this embassy.

*Edol.* You will hear me.

*Edwin.* Your letters did declare it to the king, both of the peace, and all conditions brought by this Saxon lady, whose fond love has thus bewitched him.

*Edol.* I will curse you all as black as hell, unless you hear me; your gross mistake would make wisdom herself run madding through the streets, and quarrel with her shadow; death! why killed ye not that woman?

*Dono.* }  
*Glos.* } Ob, my lord!

*Edol.* The great devil take me quick, had I been by, and all the women of the world were barren, she should have died e'er he had married her on these conditions.

*Cador.* It is not reason that directs you thus.

*Edol.* Then I have none, for all I have directs me, never was man so palpably abused, so basely marted, bought and sold to scorn, my honour, fame, and hopeful victories, the loss of time, expenses, blood, and fortunes, all vanished into nothing.

*Edwin.* This rage is vain, my lord; what the king does, nor they, nor you can help.

*Edol.* My sword must fail me then.

*Cador.* 'Gainst whom will you expose it?

*Edol.* What's that to you? 'gainst all the devils in hell, to guard my country.

*Edwin.* These are airy words.

*Edol.* Sir, you tread too hard upon my patience.

*Edwin.* I speak the duty of a subject's faith, and say again, had you been here in presence,

What the king did, you had not dar'd to cross it.

*Edol.* I will trample on his life and soul that says it.

*Cador.* My lord!

*Edwin.* Come, come.

*Edol.* Now, before heaven!

*Cador.* Dear sir.

*Edol.* Not dare? thou liest beneath thy lungs.

*Glos.* No more, son Edwin.

*Edwin.* I have done, sir, I take my leave.

*Edol.* But thou shall not, you shall take no leave of me, sir.

*Dono.* For wisdom's sake, my lord.

*Edol.* Sir, I'll leave him, and you, and all of you, the court and king, and let my sword and friends shuffle for Edol's safety. Stay you here, and hug the Saxons till they cut your throats, or bring the land to servile slavery.

Such yokes of baseness, Chester must not suffer, Go, and repent betimes these foul misdeeds, For in this league, all our whole kingdom bleeds, Which I'll prevent, or perish.

[*Exeunt EDOL and CAP.*]

*Glos.* See how his rage transports him!

*Cador.* These passions set apart, a braver soldier breathes not i' th' world this day.

*Dono.* I wish his own worth do not court his ruin. The king must rule, and we must learn to obey, True virtue still directs the noble way.

SCENE III.—*Hall of State in the Palace.*

*Loud Music.* Enter AURELIUS, ARTESIA, OSTORJUS, OCTA, PROXIMUS, TOCLIO, OSWOLD, and Hermit.

*Aurel.* Why is the court so dull? methinks

each room and angle of our palace should appear stuck full of objects fit for mirth and triumphs, to show our high content. Oswald, fill wine; must we begin the revels. Be it so, then, reach me the cup; I'll now begin a health to our loved queen, the bright Artesia, and the royal Saxon king, our warlike brother; go and command all the whole court to pledge it; fill to the hermit there; most reverend Anselme, we'll do thee the honour first to pledge my queen.

*Her.* I drink no healths great king, and if I did, I would be loath to part with health, to those that have no power to give it back again.

*Aurel.* Mistake not; it is the argument of love and duty to our queen and us.

*Artes.* But he owes none, it seems.

*Her.* I do to virtue, madam: temperate minds covet that health to drink which nature gives in every spring to man: he that doth hold His body but a tenement at will,  
Bestows no cost but to repair what's ill;  
Yet if your healths, or heat of wine, fair princess,  
Could this old frame, or these craz'd limbs restore,  
Or keep out death, or sickness, then fill more;  
I'll make fresh way for appetite; if no,  
On such a prodigal who would wealth bestow.

*Osto.* He speaks not like a guest to grace a wedding.

*Enter TOCLIO.*

*Artes.* No, sir; but like an envious impostor.

*Octa.* A Christian slave; a cynic.

*Osto.* What virtue could decline your kingly spirit to such respect of him whose magic spells met with your vanquished troops, and turned your arms to that necessity of fight; which but for the despair of any hope to stand but by his charms, had been defeated in a bloody conquest?

*Octa.* 'Twas magic, hell-bred magic, did it, sir; and that's a course, my lord, which we esteem in all our Saxon wars unto the last and lowest ebb of servile treachery.

*Aurel.* Sure you are deceived: it was the hand of heaven, that in his virtue gave us victory. Is there a power in man that can strike fear through a general camp, or create spirits, in recreant bosoms, above present sense?

*Osto.* To blind the sense there may, with apparition of well-armed troops, which in themselves are air, formed into human shapes; and such that day were by that sorcerer raised to cross our fortunes.

*Aurel.* There is a law tells us, that words want

force to make deeds void; examples must be shown by instances alike, ere I believe it.

*Osto.* 'Tis easily performed, believe me, sir. Propose your own desires, and give but way to what our magic here shall straight perform; and then let his or our deserts be censured.

*Aurel.* We could not wish a greater happiness than what this satisfaction brings with it: let him proceed, fair brother.

*Osto.* He shall, sir. Come, learned Proximus, this task be thine; let thy great charms confound the opinion this Christian, by his spells, hath falsely won.

*Prox.* Great king, propound your wishes, then: what persons—of what state—what numbers—or how armed: please your thoughts; they shall appear before you.

*Aurel.* Strange art! what think'st thou, reverent hermit?

*Her.* Let him go on, sir.

*Aurel.* Wilt thou behold his cunning?

*Her.* Right gladly, sir; it will be my joy to tell, That I was here to laugh at him and hell.

*Aurel.* I like thy confidence.

*Artes.* His saucy impudence; proceed to the trial.

*Prox.* Speak your desires, my lord; and be it placed in any angle beneath the moon, the centre of the earth, the sea, the air, the region of the fire, nay hell itself, and I'll present it.

*Aurel.* We'll have no sight so fearful, only this: if all thy art can reach it, show me here the two great champions of the Trojan war, Achilles and brave Hector, our great ancestor,<sup>17</sup> both in their warlike habits, armour, shields, and weapons then in use for fight.

*Prox.* 'Tis done, my lord: command a halt and silence, as each man will respect his life or danger. *Armel! Plesgeth!*

*Enter Spirit.*

*Spirit.* Quid vis?

*Prox.* Attend me.

*Aurel.* The apparition comes: on our displeasure let all keep place and silence.

*Drums within beat Marches. Enter PROXIMUS, bringing in Hector, attired and armed after the Trojan manner; with Target, Sword, and Battle-axe, a Trumpet before him, and a Spirit in flame Colours with a Torch; at the other Door Achilles, with his Spear and Falchion, a Trumpet and a Spirit in Black before him: Trumpets sound alarm, and they manage their Weapons to begin the*

*fight. After some Charges the Hermit steps in between them, at which, seeming amazed, the Spirits tremble. Thunder within.*

*Prox.* What means this stay, bright Armel, Plesgeth? why fear you and fall back? Renew the alarms, and enforce the combat, or hell and darkness circles you for ever.

*Armel.* We dare not.

*Prox.* Ha!

*Ples.* Our charms are all dissolved; Armel, away; 'Tis worse than hell to us while here we stay.

[*Exeunt the Spirits.*]

*Her.* What! at a nonpluss, sir? command them back for shame.

*Prox.* What power o'erawes my spells? Return, you hell-hounds; Armel, Plesgeth, double damnation seize you: by all the infernal powers, the prince of devils is in this Hermit's habit; what else could force my spirits quake or tremble thus?

*Her.* Weak argument to hide your want of skill.

Does the devil fear the devil, or war with hell? They have not been acquainted long, it seems. Know, misbelieving pagan, even that Power That overthrew your forces, still lets you see, He only can control both hell and thee.

*Prox.* Disgrace and mischief! I'll enforce new charms, new spells, and spirits raised from the low abyss of hell's unbottomed depths.

*Aurel.* We have enough, sir; give o'er your charms; we'll find some other time to praise your art. I dare not but acknowledge that heavenly Power my heart stands witness to. Be not dismayed, my lords, at this disaster; nor thou, my fairest queen; we'll change the scene to some more pleasing sports. Lead to your chamber: Howe'er in this thy pleasures find a cross, Our joy's too fixed here to suffer loss.

*Toelio.* Which I shall add to, sir, with news I bring. The prince, your brother, lives.

*Aurel.* Ha!

*Toelio.* And comes to grace this high and heaven-knit marriage.

*Aurel.* Why dost thou flatter me, to make me think such happiness attends me?

*Enter PRINCE UTER and OSWOLD.*

*Toelio.* His presence speaks my truth, sir.

*Dono.* 'Fore me? 'tis he! look, Gloster.

*Glos.* A blessing beyond hope, sir.

*Aurel.* Ha! 'tis he; welcome, my second comfort. Artesia, dearest love, it is my brother—my princely

brother—all my kingdom's hope: oh give him welcome, as thou lov'st my health.

*Artes.* You have so free a welcome, sir, from me, as this your presence has such power, I swear o'er me a stranger, that I must forget my country, name, and friends, and count this place my joy and birthright.

*Prince.* 'Tis she! 'tis she, I swear! oh ye good gods, 'tis she! That face, within these woods where first I saw her, captived my senses, and thus many months barred me from all society of men. How came she to this place, brother Aurelius? Speak that angel's name—her heaven-blest name: oh speak it quickly, sir.

*Artes.* It is Artesia, the royal Saxon princess.

*Prince.* A woman, and no deity: no feigned shape to mock the reason of admiring sense, on whom a hope as low as mine may live, love, and enjoy; dear brother, may it not?

*Aurel.* She is all the good or virtue thou canst name; my wife, my queen.

*Prince.* Ha! your wife?

*Artes.* Which you shall find, sir; if that time and fortune may make my love but worthy of your trial.

*Prince.* Oh!

*Aurel.* What troubles you, dear brother? Why with so strange and fixed an eye dost thou behold my joys?

*Artes.* You are not well, sir.

*Prince.* Yes, yes; oh you immortal powers, why has poor man so many entrances for sorrow to creep in at, when our sense is much too weak to hold his happiness? Oh, say I was born deaf; and let your silence confirm in me the knowing my defect; at least be charitable to conceal my sin, for hearing is no less in me, dear brother.

*Aurel.* No more; I see thou art a rival in the joys of my high bliss: come, my Artesia, The day's most prais'd when 'tis eclipsed by night, Great good must have as great ill opposite.

*Prince.* Stay, hear but a word;—yet now I think on't,

This is your wedding-night, and were it mine, I should be angry with least loss of time.

*Artes.* Envy speaks no such words; has no such looks.

*Prince.* Sweet rest unto you both.

*Aurel.* Lights to our nuptial chamber.

*Artes.* Could you speak so, I would not fear how much my grief did grow.

*Aurel.* Lights to our chamber; on, on, set on.

[*Exeunt all except the PRINCE.*]

*Prince.* "Could you speak so, I would not fear how much my griefs did grow." Those were her very words. Sure I am waking; she wrung me by the hand, and spake them to me with a most passionate affection; perhaps she loves, and now repents her choice in marriage with my brother. Oh fond man, how darest thou trust thy traitor's thoughts thus to betray thyself? 'Twas but a waking dream wherein thou madest thy wishes speak; not her, in which thy foolish hopes strive to prolong

A wretched being, so sickly children play  
With health-lov'd toys, which for a time delay,  
But do not cure the fit: be then a man;  
Meet that destruction which thou canst not fly  
From: not to live, make it thy best to die;  
And call her now, whom thou didst hope to wed,  
Thy brother's wife; thou art too near a kin,  
And such an act above all name's a sin  
Not to be blotted out, heaven pardon me;  
She's banish'd from my bosom now for ever,  
To lowest ebbs, men justly hope a flood,  
When vice grows barren, all desires are good.

*Enter a Waiting Gentlewoman, with a Jewel.*

*Gent.* The noble Prince, I take it, sir?

*Prince.* You speak me what I should be, lady.

*Gent.* Know by that name, sir, queen Artesia greets you.

*Prince.* Alas, good virtue, how is she mistaken!

*Gent.* Commending her affection in this jewel, sir.

*Prince.* She binds my service to her: ha! a jewel; 'tis a fair one, trust me; and methinks it much resembles something I have seen with her.

*Gent.* It is an artificial crab, sir.

*Prince.* A creature that goes backward.

*Gent.* True, from the way it looks.

*Prince.* There is no moral in it alludes to herself?

*Gent.* 'Tis your construction gives you that, sir; she's a woman.

*Prince.* And like this may use her legs and eyes two several ways.

*Gent.* Just like the sea-crab, which on the mussel preys, whilst he bills at a stone.

*Prince.* Pretty in troth; prithee tell me, art thou honest?

*Gent.* I hope I seem no other, sir.

*Prince.* And those that seem so are sometimes bad enough.

*Gent.* If they will accuse themselves for want of witness, let them; I am not so foolish.

*Prince.* I see thou art wise; come, speak me truly; what is the greatest sin?

*Gent.* That which man never acted, what has been done

Is as the least, common to all as one.

*Prince.* Dost think thy lady is of thy opinion?

*Gent.* She's a bad scholar else; I have brought her up, and she dares owe me still.<sup>18</sup>

*Prince.* Ay, 'tis a fault in greatness: they dare owe many ere they pay one; but darest thou expose thy scholar to my examining?

*Gent.* Yes, in good troth, sir, and pray put her to 't too; 'tis a hard lesson if she answer it not.

*Prince.* Thou know'st the hardest.

*Gent.* As far as a woman may, sir.

*Prince.* I commend thy plainness; when wilt thou bring me to thy lady?

*Gent.* Next opportunity I attend you, sir.

*Prince.* Thanks, take this, and commend me to her.

*Gent.* Think of your sea-crab, sir, I pray. [*Exit.*]

*Prince.* Oh, by any means, lady. What shall all this tend to? if it be love or lust that thus incites her, the sin is horrid and incestuous; if to betray my life, what hopes she by it? Yes, it may be a practice 'twixt themselves to expel the Britons and ensure the state through our destruction; all this may be valid with a deeper reach in villany than all my thoughts can guess at; however— I will confer with her, and if I find Lust hath given life to envy in her mind, I may prevent the danger; so men wise By the same step by which they fell, may rise. Vices are virtues, if so thought and seen,<sup>19</sup> And trees with foulest roots, branch soonest green. [*Exit.*]

## ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Before the Palace of King Aurelius.*

*Enter Clown and his Sister.*

*Clown.* Come, sister, thou art all fool, all mad-woman.

*Joan.* Prithee have patience, we are now at Court.

*Clown.* At court! ha, ha, that proves thy madness; was there ever any woman in thy taking travelled to court for a husband? 'slid, 'tis enough for them to get children, and the city to keep 'em, and the country to find nurses; everything must be done in his due place, sister.

*Joan.* Be but content awhile, for sure I know this journey will be happy. Oh, dear brother, this night my sweet friend came to comfort me; I saw him and embraced him in mine arms.

*Clown.* Why did you not hold him, and call me to help you?

*Joan.* Alas! I thought I had been with him still, but when I waked—

*Clown.* Ah, pox of all loggerheads! then you were but in a dream all this while, and we may still go look for him. Well, since we are come to court, cast your cat's-eyes about you, and either find him out you dreamed on, or some other, for I'll trouble myself no further.

*Enter DONO, CADOR, EWIN, and TOCLIO.*

See, see, here comes more courtiers; look about you; come, pray view 'em all well; the old man has none of the marks about him, the others have both swords and feathers; what thinkest thou of that tall young gentleman?

*Joan.* He much resembles him; but suro my friend, brother, was not so high of stature.

*Clown.* Oh, beast, wast thou got with child with a short thing too?

*Dono.* Come, come, I'll hear no more on't: go, lord Edwin, tell her this day her sister shall be married to Cadore, earl of Cornwall; so shall she to thee, brave Edwin, if she'll have my blessing.

*Edwin.* She is addicted to a single life; she will not hear of marriage.

*Dono.* Tush, fear it not; go you from me to her; use your best skill, my lord; and if you fail, I have a trick shall do it: haste, haste about it.

*Edwin.* Sir, I am gone; my hope is in your help more than my own.

*Dono.* And, worthy Toclio, to your care I must commend this business, for lights and music, and what else is needful.

*Toclio.* I shall, my lord.

*Clown.* We would entreat a word, sir; come forward, sister. [*Exit DONO, TOCLIO, and CADOR.*]

*Edwin.* What lackest thou, fellow?

*Clown.* I lack a father for a child, sir.

*Edwin.* How! a god-father?

*Clown.* No, sir, we mean the own father; it may be you, sir, for anything we know: I think the child is like you.

*Edwin.* Like me! prithee where is it?

*Clown.* Nay, 'tis not born yet, sir; 'tis forthcoming you see; the child must have a father: what do you think of my sister?

*Edwin.* Why I think if she ne'er had husband she's a whore, and thou a fool; farewell. [*Exit.*]

*Clown.* I thank you, sir. Well, pull up thy heart, sister; if there be any law in the court this fellow shall father it, 'cause he uses me so scurvily. There's a great wedding towards they say; we'll among them for a husband for thee.

*Enter SIR NICHODEMUS with a Letter.*

If we miss there, I'll have another bout with him that abused me. See! look, there comes another hat and feather; this should be a close lecher; he's reading of a love-letter.

*Sir Nich.* Earl Cadore's marriage, and a masque to grace it; so, so. This night shall make me famous for presentments. How now, what are you?

*Clown.* A couple of Great Britons, you may see by our bellies, sir.

*Sir Nich.* And what of this, sir?

*Clown.* Why thus the matter stands, sir. There's one of your courtiers' hunting nags has made a gap through another man's enclosure. Now, sir, here's the question; who should be at charge of a fur-bush to stop it?

*Sir Nich.* Ha, ha, this is out of my element; the law must end it.

*Clown.* Your worship says well; for surely I think some lawyer had a hand in the business, we have such a troublesome issue.

*Sir Nich.* But what's thy business with me now?

*Clown.* Nay, sir, the business is done already, you may see by my sister's belly.

*Sir Nich.* Oh, now I find thee, this gentlewoman it seems has been humbled.

*Clown.* As low as the ground would give her leave, sir, and your worship knows this; though there be many fathers without children, yet to have a child without a father were most unnatural.

*Sir Nich.* That's true i'faith, I never heard of a child yet that e'er begot his father.

*Clown.* Why, true, you say wisely, sir.

*Sir Nich.* And therefore I conclude, that he that got the child is, without all question, the father of it.

*Clown.* Ay, now you come to the matter, sir; and our suit is to your worship for the discovery of this father.

*Sir Nich.* Why, lives he in the court here?

*Joan.* Yes, sir, and I desire but marriage.

*Sir Nich.* And does the knave refuse it? Come, come, be merry, wench, he shall marry thee, and keep the child too, if my knighthood can do anything; I am bound by mine orders to help distressed ladies, and can there be a greater injury to a woman with child, than to lack a father for't? I am ashamed of your simpleness. Come, come, give me a courtier's fee for my pains, and I'll be thy advocate myself, and justice shall be found, nay, I'll sue the law for it; but give me my fee first.

*Clown.* If all the money I have i' the world will do it, you shall have it, sir.

*Sir Nich.* An angel does it.

*Clown.* Nay, there's two, for your better sight, sir.

*Sir Nich.* Why, well said; give me thy hand, wench, I'll teach thee a trick for all this shall get a father for thy child presently, and this it is, mark now; you meet a man as you meet me now, thou claimest marriage of me, and layest the child to my charge; I deny it; pish, that's nothing, hold thy claim fast, thy words carry it, and no law can withstand it.

*Clown.* Is't possible?

*Sir Nich.* Past all opposition, her own word carries it; let her challenge any man, the child shall call him father;<sup>20</sup> there's a trick for your money now.

*Clown.* Troth, sir, we thank you, we'll make use of your trick, and go no further to seek a father, for we challenge you, sir. Sister, lay it to him, he shall marry thee, I shall have a worshipful old man to my brother.

*Sir Nich.* Ha, ha! I like thy pleasantness.

*Joan.* Nay, indeed, sir, I do challenge you.

*Clown.* You think we jest, sir?

*Sir Nich.* Ay, by my troth do I, I like thy wit,

i'faith, thou shalt live at court with me; didst never hear of Nichodemus Nothing? I am the man.

*Clown.* Nothing! 'slid we are out again, thou wert never got with child with nothing, sure.

*Joan.* I know not what to say.

*Sir Nich.* Never grieve, wench; show me the man, and process shall fly out.

*Clown.* 'Tis enough for us to find the children, we look that you should find the father; and therefore, either do us justice, or we'll stand to our first challenge.

*Sir Nich.* Would you have justice without an adversary? unless you can show me the man, I can do no good in it.

*Clown.* Why, then, I hope you'll do us no harm, sir, you'll restore my money.

*Sir Nich.* What! my fee? marry, law forbid it; find out the party, and you shall have justice, your fault closed up, and all shall be amended, the child his father, and the law ended. [*Exit.*]

*Clown.* Well, he has deserved his fee indeed, for he has brought our suit to a quick end, I promise you, and yet the child has never a father; nor have we more money to seek after him, a shame of all lecherous placeats; now you look like a cat had newly kittened, what will you do tro? Follow me no further, lest I beat your brains out.

*Joan.* Impose upon me any punishment, rather than leave me now.

*Clown.* Well, I think I am bewitched with thee. I cannot find in my heart to forsake her; there was never sister would have abused a poor brother as thou hast done; I have even pined away with fretting, there's nothing but flesh and bones about me; well, and I had my money again, it were some comfort—hark, sister, [*thunder*] does it not thunder?

*Joan.* Oh, yes, most fearfully, what shall we do brother?

*Clown.* Marry, e'en get some shelter e'er the storm catch us; away, let's away, I prithee.

*Enter the Devil in Man's Habit, richly attired, his Feet and his Head horrid.*

*Joan.* Ha! 'tis he, stay brother, dear brother stay.

*Clown.* What's the matter now?

*Joan.* My love, my friend is come; yonder he goes.

*Clown.* Where, where, show me where? I'll stop him, if the devil be not in him.

*Joan.* Look there, look yonder; oh, dear friend, pity my distress, for heaven and goodness do but speak to me.

*Devil.* She calls me, and yet drives me headlong  
from her,

Poor mortal, thou and I are much uneven,  
Thou must not speak of goodness, nor of heaven,  
If I confer with thee; but be of comfort;  
Whilst men do breathe, and Britain's name be  
known,

The fatal fruit thou bear'st within thy womb,  
Shall here be famous till the day of doom.

*Clown.* 'Slid, who's that talks so? I can see no-  
body.

*Joan.* Then thou art blind, or mad; see where  
he goes, and beckons me to come; oh, lead me  
forth, I'll follow thee in spite of fear or death. [*Exit.*]

*Clown.* Oh brave, she'll run to the devil for a hus-  
band; she's stark mad sure, and talks to a shadow,  
for I could see no substance. Well, I'll after her,  
the child was got by chance, and the father must  
be found at all adventure. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*The Porch of a Church.*

*Enter HERMIT, MODESTIA, and EDWIN.*

*Mod.* Oh, reverend sir, by you my heart hath  
reached at the large hopes of holy piety, and for  
this I craved your company,  
Here in your sight religiously to vow,  
My chaste thoughts up to heaven, and make you now  
The witness of my faith.

*Her.* Angels assist thy hopes!

*Edwin.* What means my love? thou art my  
promised wife.

*Mod.* To part with willingly what friends and life  
Can make no good assurance of.

*Edwin.* Oh find remorse,  
Fair soul, to love and merit, and yet recant thy  
vow.

*Mod.* Never; this world and I are parted now  
for ever.

*Her.* To find the way to bliss, oh happy woman,  
Thou'st learn'd the hardest lesson well I see;  
Now show thy fortitude and constancy,  
Let these thy friends thy sad departure weep,  
Thou shalt but lose the wealth thou couldst not keep,  
My contemplation calls me, I must leave ye.

*Edwin.* O reverend sir, persuade her not to leave  
me.

*Her.* My lord, I do not, nor to cease to love you,  
I only pray her faith may fix'd stand,  
Marriage was blest, I know, with heaven's own  
hand.<sup>21</sup> [*Exit.*]

*Edwin.* You hear him, lady, 'tis not a virgin  
state, but sanctity of life, must make you happy.

*Mod.* Good sir, you say you love me; gentle  
Edwin, even by that love, I do beseech you leave me

*Edwin.* Think of your father's tears, your weep-  
ing friends, whom cruel grief makes pale and blood-  
less all for you.

*Mod.* Would I were dead to all.

*Edwin.* Why do you weep?

*Mod.* Oh, who would live to see  
How men with care and cost seek misery.

*Edwin.* Why do you seek it then? What joy,  
what pleasure can give you comfort in a single  
life?

*Mod.* The contemplation of a happy death, which  
is to me so pleasing that I think no torture could  
divert me. What's this world wherein you'd have  
me walk, but a sad passage to a dread judgment-  
seat, from whence even now we are but bailed upon  
our good abearing, till those great sessions come,  
when death the crier

Will surely summon us, and all to appear,  
To plead us guilty or our bail to clear. [*Soft music.*]  
What music's this?

*Enter two Bishops, DONOBERT, GLOSTER, CADOR,  
CONSTANTIA, OSWOLD, and TOGLIO.*

*Edwin.* Oh now resolve and think upon my love;  
this sounds the marriage of your beauteous sister,  
virtuous Constantia, with the noble Cadore: look,  
and behold this pleasure.

*Mod.* Cover me with night,  
It is a vanity not worth the sight.

*Dono.* See, see, she's yonder; pass on son Cadore.  
Daughter Constantia, I beseech you all, unless  
she first move speech, salute her not. Edwin, what  
good success?

*Edwin.* Nothing as yet, unless this object take her.

*Dono.* See, see, her eye is fixed upon her sister;  
Seem careless all, and take no notice of her:  
On there afore; come, my Constantia.

*Mod.* Not speak to me, nor deign to cast an eye,  
To look on my despis'd poverty?

I must be more charitable; pray stay, lady;  
Are you not she whom I did once call sister?

*Con.* I did acknowledge such a name to one  
Whilst she was worthy of it, in whose folly,  
Since you neglect your fame and friends together,  
In you I drow'd a sister's name for ever.

*Mod.* Your looks did speak no less.

*Glos.* It now begins to work; this sight has  
moved her.

*Dono.* I knew this trick would take, or nothing.

*Mod.* Though you disdain in me a sister's name,  
yet charity methinks should be so strong to in-

struet ere you reject. I am a wretch, even follies instance, who perhaps have erred, not having known the goodness bears so high and fair a show in you, which being expressed, I may recant this low despiséd life, And please those friends whom I moved to grief.

*Cador.* She is coming i'faith; be merry, Edwin.

*Con.* Since you desire instruction you shall have it; what is it should make you thus desire to live vowed to a single life?

*Mod.* Because I know I cannot fly from death; O, my good sister, I beseech you hear me: This world is but a masque, catching weak eyes, With what is not ourselves but our disguise: A vizard that falls off, the dance being done, And leaves death's glass for all to look upon: Our best happiness here, lasts but a night, Whose burning tapers make false ware seem right;

Who knows not this, and will not now provide Some better shift before his shame be spied, And knowing this vain world at last will leave him, Shake off these robes that help but to deceive him.

*Con.* Her words are powerful; I am amaz'd to hear her!

*Dono.* Her soul's enchanted with infected spells. Leave her, best girl, for now in thee I'll seek the fruits of age, posterity. Out of my sight; sure I was half asleep, or drunk, when I begot thee.

*Con.* Good sir, forbear. What say you to that, sister?

The joy of children, a blest mother's name!  
Oh, who without much grief can lose such fame?

*Mod.* Who can enjoy it without sorrow rather?  
And that most certain where the joys unsure,  
Seeing the fruit that we beget endure  
So many miseries, that oft we pray  
The heavens to shut up their afflicted day;  
At best we do but bring forth heirs to die,  
And fill the coffins of our enemy.

*Con.* Oh, my soul!

*Dono.* Hear her no more, Constantia: she's sure bewitched with error; leave her, girl.

*Con.* Then must I leave all goodness, sir: away, stand off, I say.

*Dono.* How's this?

*Con.* I have no father, friend, no husband now; all are but borrowed robes in which we masque to waste and spend the time, when all our life is but one good between two ague-days, which from the first, ere we have time to praise, a second fever takes us. Oh, my best sister! my soul's eternal

friend! forgive the rashness of my distempered tongue; for how could she who knew not herself, know thy felicity, from which worlds cannot now remove me?

*Dono.* Art thou mad too, fond woman? What's thy meaning?

*Con.* To seek eternal happiness in heaven, which all this world affords not.

*Cador.* Think of thy vow: thou art my promised wife.

*Con.* Pray trouble me no further.

*Omnos.* Strange alteration!

*Cador.* Why do you stand at gaze you sacred priests? You holy mau be equal to the gods, and consummate my marriage with this woman.

*Bishop.* Himself gives bar, my lord, to your desires and our performance; 'tis against the law and orders of the church to force a marriage.

*Cador.* How am I wronged! was this your trick, my lord?

*Dono.* I am abused past sufferance; grief and amazement strive which sense of mine shall lose her being first; yet let me call thee daughter.

*Cador.* Me, wife!

*Con.* Your words are air, you speak of want to wealth,

And wish her sickness newly raised to health.

*Dono.* Bewitched girls, tempt not an old man's fury, that hath no strength to uphold his feeble age but what your sights give life to; oh, beware, and do not make me curse you.

*Mod.* Dear father, here at your feet we kneel; grant us but this, that in your sight and hearing the good hermit may plead our cause; which, if it shall not give such satisfaction as your age desires, we will submit to you.

*Con.* You gave us life, save not our bodies but our souls from death.

*Dono.* This gives some comfort yet; rise with my blessings. Have patience, noble Cador; worthy Edwin, send for the hermit that we may confer, for sure religion ties you not to leave Your careful father thus; if so it be, Take you content, and give all grief to me.

SCENE III.—*A Cave in the Forest.*

*Thunder and Lightning. Enter Devil.*

*Devil.* Mix light and darkness, earth and heaven dissolve, be of one piece again, and turn to chaos. Break all your works you powers, and spoil the world; or, if you will maintain earth still, give way and life to this abortive birth now coming, whose



fame shall add unto your oracles. Lucina, Hecate, dreadful queen of night, bright Proserpine, be pleased from Ceres' love, from Stygian darkness summon up the fates,

And in a moment bring them quickly hither,  
Lest death do vent her birth and her together.

[*Thunder.*

Assist you spirits of infernal deeps, squint-ey'd  
Erietho, midnight Incubus!

*Enter LUCINA, and the three Fates.*<sup>22</sup>

Rise, rise to aid this birth prodigious. Thanks, Hecate, hail sister to the gods, there lies your way, haste with the Fates, and help! Give quick despatch unto her labouring throes, to bring this mixture of infernal seed to human being. [*Exit Fates.* And to beguile her pains till back you come, Antics shall dance and music fill the room.

[*A dance of Spirits.*

*Devil.* Thanks, queen of shades.

*Lucina.* Farewell, great servant to the infernal king,

In honour of this child the Fates shall bring  
All their assisting powers of knowledge, arts,  
Learning, wisdom, all the hidden parts  
Of all-admiring prophecy, to foresee  
The event of times to come, his art shall stand  
A wall of brass to guard the Britain land;  
Even from this minute all his art appears  
Manlike in judgment, person, state, and years;  
Upon his breast the Fates have fix'd his name;  
And since his birth-place was this forest here,  
They now have named him Merlin Silvester.

*Devil.* And Merlin's name in Britain shall live,  
Whilst men inhabit here, or Fates can give  
Power to amazing wonder; Envy shall weep,  
And Mischief sit and shake her ebon wings,  
Whilst all the world of Merlin's magic sings.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*The Forest.*

*Enter Clown.*

*Clown.* Well, I wonder how my poor sister does after all this thundering! I think she's dead, for I can hear no tidings of her. These woods yield small comfort to her: I could meet nothing but a swineherd's wife, keeping hogs by the forest side; but neither she nor none of her sows would stir a foot to help us. Indeed, I think she durst not trust herself under the trees with me, for I must needs confess I offered some kindness to her: well, I would fain know what's become of my sister; if

she have brought me a young cousin, his face may be a picture to find his father by. So-ho, sister Joan! Joan Go-to-'t, where art thou?

*Joan.* [*Within.*] Here, here, brother; stay but a while; I come to thee.

*Clown.* O, brave! she's alive still. I know her voice; she speaks, and speaks cheerfully, methinks: how now? what moon-calf has she got with her?

*Enter JOAN and MERLIN, with a Book.*

*Joan.* Come, my dear Merlin, why dost thou fix thine eye so deeply on that book?

*Mer.* To sound the depths of art, of learning, wisdom, knowledge.

*Joan.* Oh, my dear, dear son, those studies fit thee when thou art a man.

*Mer.* Why, mother, I can be but half a man at best,

And that is your mortality, the rest  
In me is spirit; 'tis not meat, nor time,  
That gives this growth and bigness; no, my years  
Shall be more strange than yet my birth appears.  
Look, mother, there's my uncle.

*Joan.* How dost thou know him, son? thou never saw'st him?

*Mer.* Yet I know him; and know the pains he has taken for ye to find out my father. Give me your hand, good uncle.

*Clown.* Ha, ha, I'd laugh at that, i'faith! do you know me, sir?

*Mer.* Yes, by the same token that even now you kissed the swineherd's wife i' the woods, and would have done more if she would have let you, uncle.

*Clown.* A witch! a witch! a witch! Sister, rid him out of your company; he is either a witch or a conjuror; he could never have known this else.

*Joan.* Pray love him, brother; he is my son.

*Clown.* Ha, ha! this is worse than all the rest, i'faith! by his beard he is more like your husband: let me see, is your great belly gone?

*Joan.* Yes, and this the happy fruit.

*Clown.* What, this artichoke? A child born with a beard on his face?

*Mer.* Yes, and strong legs to go, and teeth to eat.

*Clown.* You can nurse up yourself, then. There's some charges saved for soap and candle: 'slid, I have heard of some that have been born with teeth, but never none with such a talking tongue before.

*Joan.* Come, come, you must use him kindly, brother; did you but know his worth you would make much of him.

*Clown.* Make much of a monkey! This is worse than Tom Thumb; a child to speak, eat, and go

the first hour of his birth; nay, such a baby as had need of a barber before he was born, too; why, sister, this is monstrous, and shames all our kindred.

*Joan.* That thus 'gainst nature and our common births, he comes thus furnished to salute the world, is power of Fates, and gift of his great father.

*Clown.* Why, of what profession is your father, sir?

*Mer.* He keeps a hot-house in the Low Countries; will you see him, sir?

*Clown.* See him! why, sister, has the child found his father?

*Mer.* Yes, and I'll fetch him, uncle. [*Exit.*]

*Clown.* Do not uncle me till I know your kindred: 'fore my conscience some baboon begot thee; surely thou art horribly deceived, sister, this urchin cannot be of thy breeding: I shall be ashamed to call him cousin, though his father be a gentleman.

*Re-enter MERLIN and Devil.*

*Mer.* Now, my kind uncle, see, The child has found his father—this is he.

*Clown.* The devil it is! ha, ha! is this your sweetheart, sister? Have we run through the country, haunted the city, and examined the court, to find out a gallant with a hat and feather, and a silken sword, and golden hangers, and do you now bring me to a ragamuffin with a face like a frying-pan?

*Joan.* Fie, brother, you mistake; behold him better.

*Clown.* How's this? Do you juggle with me; or are mine eyes matches? Hat and feather, sword, and hangers and all! this is a gallant, indeed, sister; this has all the marks of him we look for.

*Devil.* And you have found him now, sir; give me your hand; I now must call you brother.

*Clown.* Not till you have married my sister; for all this while she's but your whore, sir.

*Devil.* Thou art too plain; I'll satisfy that wrong to her, and thee, and all, with liberal hand. Come, why art thou fearful?

*Clown.* Nay, I am not afraid, and you were the devil, sir.

*Devil.* Thou need'st not; keep with thy sister still, and I'll supply your wants; you shall lack nothing that gold and wealth can purchase.

*Clown.* Thank you, brother; we have gone many a weary step to find you; you may be a husband for a lady, for you are far-fetched and dear bought, I assure you. Pray how should I call your son, my cousin, here?

*Devil.* His name is Merlin.

*Clown.* Merlin! Your hand, cousin Merlin: for your father's sake I accept you to my kindred: but if you grow in all things as your beard does, you will be talked on. By your mother's side, cousin, you come of the Go-to-'ts, Suffolk bred; but our standing house is at Hockley-i'the-Hole, and Layton-Buzzard. For your father, no doubt you may from him claim titles of worship, but I cannot describe it: I think his ancestors came first from Hell-bree, in Wales, cousin.

*Devil.* No matter whence we do derive our name;

All Brittany shall ring of Merlin's fame,  
And wonder at his acts. Go hence to Wales;  
There live awhile; there Vortiger, the king,  
Builds castles and strongholds which cannot stand  
Unless supported by young Merlin's hand.  
There shall thy fame begin, wars are a breeding.  
The Saxons practise treason, yet unseen,  
Which shortly shall break out. Fair love, farewell:  
Dear son, and brother, here must I leave you all;  
Yet still I will be near at Merlin's call. [*Exit.*]

*Mer.* Will you go, uncle?

*Clown.* Yes, I'll follow you, cousin. Well, I do most horribly begin to suspect my kindred: this brother-in-law of mine is the devil, sure; and though he hide his horns with his hat and feather, I spied his cloven foot for all his cunning. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—*The British Court.*

*Enter OSTORIUS, OCTA, and PROXIMUS.*

*Osto.* Come, come, time calls our close complots to action. Go, Proximus, with winged speed fly hence: bid thee to Wales; salute great Vortiger with these our letters: bid the king to arms: tell him we have new friends, more forces landed in Norfolk and Northumberland: bid him make haste to meet us: if he keep his word we'll part the realm between us.

*Octa.* Bend all thine art to quit that late disgrace the Christian hermit gave thee; make thy revenge both sure and home.

*Prox.* That thought, sir, spurs me on till I have wrought their swift destruction. [*Exit.*]

*Osto.* Go then, and prosper. Octa, be vigilant: speak, are the forts possessed? the guards made sure? Revolve, I pray, on how large consequence the bare event and sequel of our hopes jointly consists, that have embarked our lives upon the hazard of the least miscarriage.

*Octa.* All's sure; the queen your sister hath

contrived the cunning plot so sure, as at an instant the brothers shall be both surprised and taken.

*Osto.* And both shall die, yet one awhile must live, till we by him have gathered strength and power to meet bold Edol, their stern general, that now, contrary to the king's command, hath reunited all his cashiered troops, and this way beats his drums to threaten us.

*Octa.* Then our plot's discovered.

*Osto.* Come, thou'rt a fool: his army and his life is given unto us; where is the queen, my sister?

*Octa.* In conference with the prince.

*Osto.* Bring the guards nearer, all is fair and good,

Their conference I hope shall end in blood.

[*Exeunt.*]

*Enter PRINCE and ARTESIA.*

*Art.* Come, come, you do but flatter; what you term love is but a dream of blood, wakes with enjoying, and with open eyes forgot, contemued, and lost.

*Prince.* I must be wary; her words are dangerous.

True, we'll speak of love no more, then.

*Art.* Nay, if you will you may,  
'Tis but in jest, and yet so children play  
With fiery flames, and covet what is bright,  
But feeling his effects, abhor the light;  
Pleasure is like a building, the more high,  
The narrower still it grows; cedars do die  
Soonest at top.

*Prince.* How does your instance suit?

*Art.* From art and nature to make sure the root,  
And lay a fast foundation, ere I try  
The uncertain changes of a wavering sky.  
Make your example thus—You have a kiss—was it  
not pleasing?

*Prince.* Above all name to express it.

*Art.* Yet now the pleasure's gone, and you have  
lost your joy's possession.

*Prince.* Yet when you please this flood may ebb  
again.

*Art.* But where it never ebbs, there runs the  
main.

*Prince.* Who can attain such hopes?

*Art.* I'll show the way to it; give me a taste  
once more of what you may enjoy. [*He kisses her.*]

*Prince.* Impudent whore! [*Aside.*]  
I were more false than atheism can be,  
Should I not call this high felicity.

*Art.* If I should trust your faith, alas! I fear  
you soon would change belief.

*Prince.* I would covet martyrdom to make it  
confirmed.

*Art.* Give me your hand on that; you'll keep  
your word?

*Prince.* I will.

*Art.* Enough; help, husband! king Aurelius,  
help! rescue betrayed Artesia!

*Prince.* Nay, then 'tis I that am betrayed, I see,  
Yet with thy blood I'll end thy treachery.

*Art.* How now! what troubles you? Is this  
you, sir, that but even now would suffer martyrdom  
to win your hopes, and is there now such  
terror in names of men to fright you? nay, then, I  
see what mettle you are made on.

*Prince.* Ha! was it but trial? then I ask your  
pardon. What a dull slave was I to be so fearful?  
(*Aside.*) I'll trust her now no more, yet try the  
utmost. (*Aloud.*) I am resolved no brother, no  
man breathing, were he my blood's begetter,  
should withhold me from your love; I'd leap into  
his bosom, and from his breast pull forth that hap-  
piness.

*Art.* Ay, now you speak a lover like a prince.  
Treason! treason!

*Prince.* Again!

*Art.* Help, Saxon princes! treason!

*Enter OSTORIUS, OCTA, &c.*

*Ostor.* Rescue the queen! strike down the villain.

*Enter EDOL, AURELIUS, DONOBERT, CADOR, EDWIN,  
TOCLIO; OSWOLD at the opposite side.*

*Edol.* Call in the guards: the prince in danger!  
Fall back, dear sir, my breast shall buckler you.

*Aurel.* Beat down their weapons.

*Edol.* Slave, wert thou made of brass, my sword  
shall bite thee.

*Aurel.* Withdraw on pain of death: where is  
the traitor?

*Art.* Oh, save your life, my lord! let it suffice  
my beauty forced mine own captivity.

*Aurel.* Who did attempt to wrong thee?

*Prince.* Hear me, sir!

*Aurel.* Oh, my sad soul! was't thou?

*Art.* Oh, do not stay to speak; one minute's  
stay prevents a second speech for ever.

*Aurel.* Make our guards strong. My dear Ar-  
tesia, let us know thy wrongs, and our own dangers.

*Art.* The prince your brother, with these Briton  
lords, have all agreed to take me hence by force,  
and marry me to him.

*Prince.* The devil shall wed thee first: thy base-  
ness and thy lust confound and rot thee.

*Art.* He courted me even now, and in mine ear shamed not to plead his most dishonest love, and their attempts to seize your sacred person, either to shut you up within some prison, or, which is worse, I fear to murder you.

*Omnes Britons.* 'Tis false as hell.

*Edol.* And as foul as she is.

*Art.* You know me, sir?

*Edol.* Yes, deadly sin, we know you, and shall discover all your villany.

*Aurel.* Chester, forbear.

*Osto.* Their treasons, sir, are plain. Why are their soldiers lodged so near the court?

*Octo.* Nay, why came he in arms so suddenly?

*Edol.* You fleeing antics, do not wake my fury.

*Octo.* Fury!

*Edol.* Ratsbane, do not urge me.

*Art.* Good sir, keep farther from them.

*Prince.* Oh my sick heart, she is a witch by nature, devil by art.

*Aurel.* Bite thine own slanderous tongue, 'tis thou art false; I have observed your passions long ere this.

*Osto.* Stand on your guard, my lord; we are your friends, and all our force is yours.

*Edol.* To spoil and rob the kingdom.

*Aurel.* Sir, be silent.

*Edol.* Silent! how long? till Doomsday? shall I stand by and hear mine honour blasted with foul treason, the state half-lost, and your life endangered, yet be silent?

*Art.* Yes, my blunt lord, unless you speak your treasons. Sir, let your guards, as traitors, seize them all, and then let tortures and devulsive racks force a confession from them.

*Edol.* Wild-fire and brimstone eat thee! Hear me, sir.

*Aurel.* Sir, I'll not hear you.

*Edol.* But you shall: not hear me! were the world's monarch, Cæsar, living, he should hear me. I tell you, sir, these serpents have betrayed your life and kingdom: does not every day bring tidings of more swarms of lousy knaves, the offal fugitives

of barren Germany, that land upon our coasts, and have by our neglect settled in Norfolk and Northumberland.

*Osto.* They come as aids and safeguards to the king.

*Octo.* Has he not need, when Vortiger's in arms, and you raise powers, 'tis thought to join with him?

*Edol.* Peace, you pernicious rat.

*Dono.* Prithce forbear.

*Edol.* Away! suffer a gilded rascal, a low-bred despicable creeper, an insulting toad, to spit his poisoned venom in my face!

*Octo.* Sir, sir.

*Edol.* Do not reply, you cur, for, by the gods, though the king's presence guard thee, I shall break all patience, and like a lion roused to spoil, shall run foul-mouthed upon thee, and devour thee quick. Speak, sir, will you forsake these scorpions, or stay till they have stung you to the heart?

*Aurel.* You are traitors all; this is our wife, our queen; brother Ostorius, troop your Saxons up, we'll hence to Winchester, raise more powers, to man with strength the castle Camilot:<sup>23</sup> go hence false men, join you with Vortiger, the murderer of our brother Constantine: we'll hunt both him and you with dreadful vengeance, Since Britain fails, we'll trust to foreign friends, And guard our person from your traitorous ends.

[*Exeunt* AUREL, OSTO., ART., TOCLIO, and Os.]

*Edwin.* He's sure bewitched.

*Glos.* What counsel now for safety?

*Dono.* Only this, sir, with all the speed we can, preserve the person of the king and kingdom.

*Cador.* Which to effect, 'tis best march hence to Wales, and set on Vortiger before he joins his forces with the Saxons.

*Edwin.* On, then, with speed for Wales and Vortiger; that tempest once o'erblown, we come, Ostorius, to meet thy traitorous Saxons, thee and them, that with advantage thus have won the king to back your factions, and to work our ruin, This by the gods, and my good sword, I'll set In bloody lines upon thy burgonet. [*Exeunt.*]

## ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Before a Ruined Castle in Wales.*

*Enter CLOWN, MERLIN, and a Little Antic Spirit.*

*Mer.* How now, uncle, why do you search your pockets so? do you miss anything?

*Clown.* Ha! cousin Merlin, I hope your beard does not overgrow your honesty; I pray remember you are made up of sister's thread; I am your mother's brother, whoever was your father.

*Mer.* Why, wherein can you task my duty, uncle?

*Clown.* Yourself, or your page it must be; I have kept no other company, since your mother hound your head to my protectorship; I do feel a fault of one side; either it was that sparrow-hawk, or a cast of Merlin's,<sup>24</sup> for I find a covey of cardceus<sup>25</sup> sprung out of my pocket.

*Mer.* Why, do you want any money, uncle? Sirrah, had you any from him?

*Clown.* Deny it not, for my pockets are witness against you.

*Spirit.* Yes, I had, to teach you better wit to look to it.

*Clown.* Pray use your fingers better, and my wit may serve as it is, sir.

*Mer.* Well, restore it.

*Spirit.* There it is.

*Clown.* Ay, there's some honesty in this; 'twas a token from your invisible father, cousin, which I would not have to go invisibly from me again.

*Mer.* Well, you are sure you have it now, uncle?

*Clown.* Yes, and mean to keep it now from your page's fleehing fingers too.

*Spirit.* If you have it so sure, pray show it me again.

*Clown.* Yes, my little juggler, I dare show it; ha! cleanly conveyance again; ye have no invisible fingers have ye? 'Tis gone certainly.

*Spirit.* Why, sir, I touched you not.

*Mer.* Why, look you, uncle, I have it now; how ill do you look to it! here, keep it safer.

*Clown.* Ha, ha! this is fine i'faith, I must keep some other company if you have these sleights of hand.

*Mer.* Come, come, uncle, 'tis all my art, which shall not offend you, sir, only I give you a taste of it to show you sport.

*Clown.* Oh, but 'tis ill jesting with a man's pocket though; but I am glad to see you cunning cousin, for now I will warrant thee a living till thou diest; you have heard the news in Wales here?

*Mer.* Uncle, let me prevent your care and counsel, 'twill give you better knowledge of my cunning; you would prefer me now in hope of gain to Vortiger, king of the Welsh Britons, to whom are all the artists summoned now, that seek the secrets of futurity, the bards, the druids,<sup>26</sup> wizards, conjurers, not an Aurasper with his whistling spells, no Capuomanster with his musty fumes, No witch or juggler but is thither sent, To calculate the strange and fear'd event Of this prodigious castle now in building, where all the labours of the painful day are ruined still i' th' night, and to this place you would have me go.

*Clown.* Well, if thy mother were not my sister, I would say she was a witch that begot this; but this is thy father, not thy mother wit; thou hast taken away my tale into thy mouth, and spake my thoughts before me; therefore away, shuffle thyself amongst the conjurers, and be a made man before thou comest to age.

*Mer.* Nay, but stay, uncle, you overslip my dangers: the prophecies and all the cunning wizards have certified the king, that his castle can never stand, till the foundation's laid with mortar, tempered with the fatal blood of such a child whose father was no mortal.

*Clown.* What's this to thee? if the devil were thy father, was not thy mother born at Carmarden? Diggon for that then, and then it must be a child's blood, and who will take thee for a child with such a beard of thy face? Is there not diggon for that, too, cousin?

*Mer.* I must not go; lend me your ear awhile I'll give you reasons to the contrary.

*Enter Two Gentlemen.*

*1st Gent.* Sure this is an endless piece of work the king has sent us about!

*2nd Gent.* Kings may do it, man, the like has been done to find out the unicorn.

*1st Gent.* Which will be sooner found, I think, than this fiend-begotten child we seek for.

*2nd Gent.* Pox of those conjurers that would speak of such a one, and yet all their cunning could not tell us where to find him.

*1st Gent.* In Wales they said assuredly he lives; come, let's inquire further.

*Mer.* Ueue, your persuasions must not prevail with me; I know mine enemies better than you do.

*Clown.* I say thou art a bastard, then, if thou disobey thine uncle. Was not Joan Go-to't, thy mother, my sister? If the devil were thy father, what kin art thou to any man alive but bailies and brokers? and they are but brothers-in-law to thee neither.

*1st Gent.* How's this? I think we shall speed here.

*2nd Gent.* Ay, and unlooked for too; go near and listen to them.

*Clown.* Hast thou a beard to hide it? wilt thou show thyself a child? wilt thou have more hair than wit? wilt thou deny thy mother, because nobody knows thy father? or shall thine uncle be an ass?

*1st Gent.* Bless ye friend, pray what call you this small gentleman's name?

*Clown.* Small, sir! a small man may be a great gentleman, his father may be of an ancient house for aught we know, sir.

*2nd Gent.* Why, do you not know his father?

*Clown.* No, nor you neither, I think, unless the devil be in ye.

*1st Gent.* What is his name, sir?

*Clown.* His name is my cousin, his education is my sister's son, but his manners are his own.

*Mer.* Why ask ye, gentlemen? my name is Merlin.

*Clown.* Yes, and a goshawk was his father for aught we know, for I am sure his mother was a windsucker.

*2nd Gent.* He has a mother then?

*Clown.* As sure as I have a sister, sir.

*1st Gent.* But his father you leave doubtful?

*Clown.* Well, sir, as wise men as you doubt whether he had a father or no.

*1st Gent.* Sure this is he we seek for.

*2nd Gent.* I think no less; and, sir we let you know the king hath sent for you.

*Clown.* The more child he; and he had been ruled by me he should have gone before he was sent for.

*1st Gent.* May we not see his mother?

*Clown.* Yes, and feel her, too—if you anger her. A devilish thing, I can tell you, she has been. I'll go fetch her to ye. [Exit.]

*2nd Gent.* Sir, it were fit you did resolve for speed: you must unto the king.

*Mer.* My service, sir, shall need no strict command; it shall obey most peaceably; but needless 'tis to fetch what is brought home. My journey may be stayed: the king is coming hither with the same quest you bore before him! Hark! this drum will tell ye. [Drums within beat a slow march.]

*1st Gent.* This is some cunning, indeed, sir.

*Flourish.* Enter VORTIGER reading a Letter; PROXIMUS, with Drum, and Soldiers, &c.

*Vorti.* Still in our eye your message, Proximus, we keep to spur our speed.<sup>27</sup> Ostorinus and Oeta we shall salute with succour against Prince Uter and Aurelius, whom now we hear encamps at Winchester. There's nothing interrupts our way so much as doth the erection of this famous castle; that, spite of all our art and daily labour, the night still ruins.

*Prox.* As erst I did affirm, still I maintain, the fiend-begotten child must be found out, whose blood gives strength to the foundation; it cannot stand else.

Enter CLOWN, JOAN, and MERLIN.

*Vorti.* Ha! is't so? Then, Proximus, by this intelligence he should be found. Speak! is this he you tell of?

*Clown.* Yes, sir; and I his uncle, and she his mother.

*Vorti.* And who is his father?

*Clown.* Why, she, his mother, can best tell you that; and yet I think the child be wise enough, for he has found his father.

*Vorti.* Woman, is this thy son?

*Joan.* It is, my lord.

*Vorti.* What was his father, or where lives he?

*Mer.* Mother, speak freely and unastonished; That which you dar'd to act dread not to name.

*Joan.* In which I shall betray my sin and shame. But, since it must be so, then know, great king, all that myself yet knows of him is this: In pride of blood and beauty I did live; my glass the altar was, my face the idol. Such was my peevish love unto myself that I did hate all other; such disdain was in my scornful eye, that I supposed no mortal creature worthy to enjoy me; thus, with the peacock, I beheld my train, but never saw the blackness of my feet. Oft have I chid the the winds for breathing on me, and curs'd the sun, fearing to blast my beauty. In midst of this most leprous disease, a seeming fair young man appeared unto me, in all things suiting my aspiring pride, and with him brought along a conquering power, to which my frailty yielded, from whose embraces this issue came. What more he is I know not.

*Vorti.* Some Incubus, or spirit of the night, begot him, then; for sure no mortal did it.

*Mer.* No matter who, my lord: leave further quest, since 'tis as hurtful as unnecessary more to inquire. Go to the cause, my lord, why you have sought me thus.

*Vorti.* I doubt not but thou knowest; yet, to be plain, I sought thee for thy blood.

*Mer.* By whose direction?

*Prox.* By mine! My art infallible instructed me, upon thy blood must the foundation rise of the king's building; it cannot stand else.

*Mer.* Hast thou such leisure to inquire my fate, and let thine own hang careless over thee? Know'st thou what pendulous mischief roofs thy head—how fatal, and how sudden?

*Prox.* Pish, bearded abortive! Thou foretell my danger! My lord, he trifles to delay his own.

*Mer.* No, I yield myself; and here, before the king, make good thine augury, as I shall mine. If thy fate fall not, thou hast spoke all truth, and let my blood satisfy the king's desires. If thou thyself wilt write thine epitaph, despatch it quickly; there's not a minute's space 'twixt thee and death.

*Prox.* Ha, ha, ha! [*A stone falls and kills Prox.*]

*Mer.* Aye, so thou mayst die laughing.

*Vorti.* Ha! this is above admiration. Look! is he dead?

*Clown.* Yes, sir; here's brains to make mortar on, if you'll use them. Cousin Merlin, there's no more of this stone fruit ready to fall, is there? I pray give your uncle a little fair warning.

*Mer.* Remove that shape of death. And now my lord, for clear satisfaction of your doubts, Merlin will show the fatal cause that keeps your castle down and hinders your proceedings. Stand there, and, by an apparition, see the labour and end of all your destiny. Mother and uncle, you must be absent.

*Clown.* Is your father coming, cousin?

*Mer.* Nay, you must begone.

*Joan.* Come, you'll offend him, brother.

*Clown.* I would fain see my brother-in-law: if you were married, I might lawfully call him so.

[*MER. strikes his Wand. Thunder and Lightning; two Dragons appear, a white and a red; they fight awhile and pause.*]

*Mer.* Be not amazed, my lord, for on the victory Of loss or gain, as these two champions ends, Your fate, your life and kingdom, all depends; Therefore, observe it well.

*Vorti.* I shall: heaven be auspicious to us.

[*Thunder. The two Dragons fight again, and the white Dragon drives off the red.*]

*Vorti.* The conquest is on the white dragon's part: now, Merlin, faithfully expound the meaning.

*Mer.* Your grace must, then, not be offended with me.

*Vorti.* It is the weakest part I have found in thee to doubt of me so slightly. Shall I blame my prophet that foretells me of my dangers? Thy cunning I approve most excellent.

*Mer.* Then know, my lord, there is a dampish cave, the nightly habitation of these dragons, vaulted beneath where you would build your castle, whose enmity and nightly combats there maintain a constant ruin of our labour. To make it more plain—the dragons, then, yourself betoken, and the Saxon king; the vanquished red, is, sir, your dreadful emblem.

*Vorti.* Oh, my fate!

*Mer.* Nay, you must hear with patience, royal sir. You slew the lawful king, Constantius: 'twas a red deed; your crown his blood did cement. The English Saxon, first brought in by you for aid against Constantius' brethren, is the white horror, who, now knit together, have driven and shut you up in these wild mountains; and though they now seek to unite with friendship, it is to wound your bosom, not embrace it; and, with an utter extirpation, drive the Britons out and plant the English. Seek for your safety, sir, and spend no time to build the airy castles; for Prince Uter, armed with vengeance for his brother's blood, is hard upon you. If you mistrust me, and to my words crave witness, sir, then know here comes a messenger to tell you so. [*Exit MER.*]

*Enter Messenger.*

*Mes.* My lord, Prince Uter!

*Vorti.* And who else, sir?

*Mes.* Edol, the great general.

*Vorti.* The great devil! They are coming to meet us?

*Mes.* With a full power, my lord.

*Vorti.* With a full vengeance they mean to meet us; so we are ready to their confront as full march double footing. We'll lose no ground, nor shall their numbers fright us.

If it be fate, it cannot be withstood;

We got our crown so, be it lost in blood. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*Open Country in Wales.*

*Enter PRINCE UTER, EDOL, CADOR, EDWIN, and TOCLIO, with Drum and Soldiers.*

*Prince.* Stay and advise. Hold, drum!

*Edol.* Beat, slave! why do you pause?—why make a stand? Where are our enemies? or do you mean we fight amongst ourselves?

*Prince.* Nay, noble Edol, let us here take counsel. It cannot hurt; it is the surest garrison to safety

*Edol.* Fie, on such slow delays! so fearful men, that are to pass over a flowing river, stand on the bank to parley of the danger till the tide rise, and they be swallowed. Is not the king in field?

*Cador.* Proud Vortiger, the traitor, is in field.

*Edwin.* The murderer and usurper.

*Edol.* Let him be the devil, so I may fight with him. For heaven's love, sir, march on. Oh, my patience! will you delay until the Saxons come to aid his party! [*A Tucket sounded.*]<sup>28</sup>

*Prince.* There's no such fear; prythee be calm awhile. Hark! it seems by this, he comes or sends to us.

*Edol.* If it be for parley I will drown the summons, if all our drums and hoarseness choke me not.

*Enter a Captain.*

*Prince.* Nay, prithee hear; from whence art thou?

*Cap.* From the king Vortiger.

*Edol.* Traitor, there's none such: alarm drum, striko slave, or by mine honour I will break thy head, and beat thy drum's heads both about thine ears.

*Prince.* Hold, noble Edol; let's hear what articles he can enforce.

*Edol.* What articles, or what conditions can you expect to value half your wrong, unless he kill himself by thousand tortures, and send his carcase to appease your vengeance for the foul murder of Constantius, and that's not a tenth part neither.

*Prince.* 'Tis true, my brother's blood is crying to me now:

I do applaud your counsel; hence, begone!

[*Exit Cap.*]

We'll hear no parley now but by our swords.

*Edol.* And those shall speak home in death-killing words.

Alarm to the fight! sound, sound the alarm!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*A Field of Battle.*

*Alarm.* *Enter EDOL, driving VORTIGER'S Force before him; then enter PRINCE UTER, pursuing VORTIGER.*

*Vort.* Dost follow me?

*Prince.* Yes, to the death I will.

*Vort.* Stay, be advised; I would not be the only fall of princes: I slew thy brother.

*Prince.* Thou didst, black traitor; and in that vengeance I pursue thee.

*Vorti.* Take mercy for thyself, and flee my sword: save thine own life as satisfaction, which here I give thee for thy brother's death.

*Prince.* Give what's thine own—a traitor's heart and head; that's all thou art right lord of: the kingdom which thou usurp'st, thou most unhappy tyrant, is leaving thee; the Saxons which thou brought'st to back thy usurpations are grown great, and where they seat themselves, do hourly seek to blot the records of old Brute and Britons from memory of men, calling themselves Hingest-men,<sup>29</sup> and Hingest-land, that no more the Briton name be known; all this by thee, thou base destroyer of thy native country.

*Enter EDOL.*

*Edol.* What, are you talking? [*He attacks VORTI.*]

*Prince.* Hold, Edol!

*Edol.* Hold out, my sword, and listen not to king or prince's word. There's work enough abroad; this task is mine.

[*Exit EDOL and VORTI, fighting.*]

*Prince.* Prosper thy valour as thy virtues shine. [*Exit.*]

*Enter CADOR and EDWIN.*

*Cador.* Bright Victory herself fights on our part; and, buckled in a golden beaver, rides triumphantly before us.

*Edwin.* Justice is with her, whoever takes the true and rightful cause; let us not lag behind them.

*Enter PRINCE.*

*Cador.* Here comes the prince: how goes our fortunes, sir?

*Prince.* Hopeful and fair, brave Cador; prond Vortiger, beat down by Edol's sword, was rescued by the following multitudes; and now for safety's fled unto a castle here standing on the hill; but I have sent a cry of hounds as violent as hunger, to break his strong walls, or if they fail, We'll send in wildfire to dislodge him thence, Or burn them with all-flaming violence. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*Another part of the Field. A blazing Star appears.*

*Flourish of Trumpets.* *Enter PRINCE UTER, EDOL, CADOR, EDWIN, and TOCLIO, with Drum and Soldiers.*

*Prince.* Look, Edol! still this fiery exhalation shoots his frightful horrors on the amazed world: see in the beam that's 'bout his flaming ring, a dragon's head appears, from out whose mouth two flaming snakes of fire stretch east and west.

*Edol.* And see, from forth the body of the star,



seven smaller blazing streams, directly point on this affrighted kingdom.

*Cador.* 'Tis a dreadful meteor.

*Edwin.* And doth portend strange fears.

*Prince.* This is no crown of peace; this angry fire hath something more to burn than Vortiger: if it alone were pointed at his fall, it would pull in its blazing pyramids and be appeased, for Vortiger is dead.<sup>30</sup>

*Edol.* These never come without their large effects.

*Prince.* The will of heaven be done; our sorrow's this; we want a mystic Python<sup>31</sup> to expound this fiery oracle.

*Cador.* Oh no, my lord; you have the best that ever Britain bred; and durst I prophesy of your prophet, sir, none like him shall succeed him.

*Prince.* You mean Merlin.

*Cador.* True, sir; wondrous Merlin: he met us in the way, and did foretel the fortunes of this day successful to us.

*Edwin.* He's sure about the camp; send for him, sir.

*Cador.* He told the bloody Vortiger his fate, and truly too; and if I could give faith to any wizard's skill, it should be Merlin.

*Enter MERLIN and Clown.*

*Cador.* And see, my lord; as if to satisfy your highness' pleasure, Merlin is come.

*Prince.* See, the comet's in his eye; disturb him not.

*Edol.* With what a piercing judgment he beholds it!

*Mer.* Whither will heaven and fate translate this kingdom!

What revolutions, rise and fall of nations,  
Is figur'd yonder in that star, that sings  
The change of Britain's fate and death of kings?  
Ha! he's dead already; how swiftly mischief  
creeps!<sup>32</sup>

Thy fatal end, sweet prince, even Merlin weeps.

*Prince.* He does foresee some evil; his action shows it; for ere he does expound, he weeps the story.

*Edol.* There's another weeps too. Sirrah, dost thou understand what thou lamentest for?

*Clown.* No, sir; I am his uncle, and weep because my cousin weeps; flesh and blood cannot forbear.

*Prince.* Gentle Merlin, speak thy prophetic knowledge in explanation of this fiery horror, from which we gather from thy mournful tears much sorrow and disaster in it.

*Mer.* 'Tis true, fair prince; but you must hear the rest with patience.

*Prince.* I vow I will, though it portend my ruin.

*Mer.* There's no such fear; this brought the fiery fall of Vortiger, and yet not him alone; this day is fallen a king more good—the glory of our land—the mild and gentle, sweet Aurelius.

*Prince.* Our brother!

*Edwin.* Forefend it, heaven.

*Mer.* He at his palace royal, sir, at Winchester, this day is dead and poisoned.

*Cador.* By whom? or by what means, Merlin?

*Mer.* By the traitorous Saxons.

*Edol.* I ever feared as much. That devil, Ostorius, and the damned witch, Artesia, sure have done it.

*Prince.* Poisoned! oh look further, gentle Merlin; behold the star again, and do but find revenge for me, though it cost thousand lives, and mine the foremost.

*Mer.* Comfort yourself; the heavens have given it fully: all the portentous ills to you are told; now hear a happy story, sir, from me to you and to your fair posterity.

*Clown.* Methinks I see something like a peeled onion; it makes me weep again.

*Mer.* Be silent, uncle; you'll be forced else.

*Clown.* Can you not find in the star, cousin, whether I can hold my tongue or no?

*Edol.* Yes; I must cut it out.

*Clown.* Phew! you speak without book, sir; my cousin Merlin knows.

*Mer.* True, I must tie it up: now speak your pleasure, uncle.

*Clown.* Hum—hum—hum—hum.

*Mer.* So, so! now observe my lord, and there behold above you flame-haired beam that upward shoots, appears a dragon's head, out of whose mouth two streaming lights point their flame-feathered darts contrary ways, yet both shall have their aims. Again behold from the ignisrent body seven splendid and illustrious rays are spread, all speaking heralds to this Britain isle, and thus they are expounded. The dragon's head is the hieroglyphic that figures out your princely self, that here must reign a king, those bi-formed<sup>33</sup> fires that from the dragon's mouth shoot east and west, emblem two royal babes which shall proceed from you, a son and daughter; her pointed constellation north-west bending,

Crowns her a queen in Ireland, of whom first springs

That kingdom's title to the Britain kings.

*Clown.* Hum, hum, hum.

*Mer.* But of your son, thus fate and Merlin tells: all aftertimes shall fill their chronicles with fame of his renown,<sup>34</sup> whose warlike sword shall pass through fertile France and Germany, nor shall his conquering foot be forced to stand, till Rome's imperial wreath hath crowned his fame with monarch of the west, from whose seven hills, with conquest, and contributory kings, He back returns to enlarge the Britain bounds, His heraldry adorned with thirteen crowns.

*Clown.* Hum, hum, hum.

*Mer.* He to the world shall add another worthy, and as a loadstone for his prowess, draw a train of martial lovers to his court. It shall be then the best of knighthood's honour at Winchester to fill his castle hall, and at his royal table sit and feast— In warlike orders, all their arms round hurl'd, As if they meant to circumscribe the world.

[*He touches the Clown's Mouth with his Wand.*]

*Clown.* Hum, hum, hum; oh that I could speak a little!

*Mer.* I know your mind, uncle, again be silent.

[*Strikes again.*]

*Prince.* Thou speak'st of wonders, Merlin; prithee go on, declare at full this constellation.

*Mer.* Those seven beams pointing downwards, sir, betoken the troubles of this land, which then shall meet with other fate. War and dissension strive to make division till seven kings agree to draw this kingdom to a heptarchy.<sup>35</sup>

*Prince.* Thine art hath made such proof that we believe thy words authentic; be ever near us, my prophet, and the guide of all my actions.

*Mer.* My service shall be faithful to your person, and all my studies for my country's safety.

*Clown.* Hum, hum, hum.

*Mer.* Come, you are released, sir.

*Clown.* Cousin, pray help me to my tongue again: you do not mean I shall be dumb still, I hope?

*Mer.* Why, hast thou not thy tongue?

*Clown.* Ha! yes, I feel it now; I was so long dumb I could not well tell whether I spoke or no.

*Prince.* Is it thy advice we presently pursue the bloody Saxons, that have slain my brother?

*Mer.* With your best speed, my lord; prosperity will keep your company.

*Cador.* Take then your title with you, royal prince, 'twill add unto our strength; long live king Uter.

*Edol.* Put the addition to it that heaven hath given you. The dragon is your emblem, bear it bravely, and so live long and ever happy, styled Uter-Pendragon, lawful king of Britain.

*Prince.* Thanks, Edol, we embrace the name and title; and in our shield and standard shall the figure of a red dragon still be borne before us to fright the bloody Saxons. Oh, my Aurelius, sweet rest thy soul; let thy disturbed spirit Expect revenge, think what it would, it hath, The dragon's coming in his fiery wrath. [*Exeunt.*]

## ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A barren Waste, a huge Rock appearing.*

*Thunder, then Music. Enter JOAN, fearfully, the Devil following her.*

*Joan.* Hence, thou black horror, is thy lustful fire kindled again? not thy loud-throated thunder, nor thy adulterous infernal music shall e'er bewitch me more; oh, too, too much, is past already.

*Devil.* Why dost thou fly me? I come a lover to thee, to embrace, and gently twine thy body in mine arms.

*Joan.* Out, hell-hound.

*Devil.* What hound soe'er I be, Fawning and sporting as I would with thee, Why should not I be strok'd and play'd withal? Wilt thou not thank the lion might devour thee, If he shall let thee pass?

*Joan.* Yes, thou art he; free me, and I'll thank thee.

*Devil.* Why, whither wouldst? I am at home with thee, thou art mine own, have we not charge of family together? where is your son?

*Joan.* Oh, darkness cover me.

*Devil.* There is a pride which thou hast won by me, the mother of a fame shall never die. Kings shall have need of written chronicles to keep their name alive, but Merlin none; ages to ages shall, like Sabalists—

Report the wonders of his name and glory, While there are tongues and times to tell his story.

*Joan.* Oh, rot my memory before my flesh; let him be called some hell or earth-bred monster, that ne'er had hapless woman for his mother. Sweet death deliver me—hence from my sight—why

shouldst thou now appear? I had no pride nor lustful thought about me to conjure and call thee to my ruin, when as at first thy cursed person became visible.

*Devil.* I am the same I was.

*Joan.* But I am changed.

*Devil.* Again I'll change thee to the same thou wert, quench to my lust; come forth by thunder led, my coadjutors in the spoil of mortals.

*Thunder.* Enter Spirits.

Clasp in your ebon arms that prize of mine; mount her as high as palled Hecate,<sup>36</sup> and on this rock I'll stand to cast up fumes and darkness o'er the blue-faced firmament; from Britain, and from Merlin I'll remove her; they ne'er shall meet again.

*Joan.* Help me, some saving hand, if not too late; I cry let mercy come.

Enter MERLIN.

*Mer.* Stay you black slaves of night! let loose your hold! set her down safe, or by the infernal Styx, I'll bind you up with exorcisms so strong, that all the black pentagon of hell shall ne'er release you; save yourselves and vanish.

[Exit Spirits.

*Devil.* Ha! what's he?

*Mer.* The child has found his father! do you not know me?

*Devil.* Merlin!

*Joan.* Oh, help me, gentle son.

*Mer.* Fear not, they shall not hurt you.

*Devil.* Relievest thou her to disobey thy father?

*Mer.* Obedience is no lesson in your school; nature and kind to her commands my duty; the part that you begot was against kind, so all I owe to you is to be unkind.

*Devil.* I'll blast thee, slave, to death, and on this rock stick thee an eternal monument.

*Mer.* Ha, ha! thy power's too weak; what art thou, devil, but an inferior lustful Incubus, taking advantage of the wanton flesh, wherewith thou dost beguile the ignorant? Put off the form of thy humanity, and crawl upon thy speckled belly, serpent, or I'll unclasp the jaws of Acheron,<sup>37</sup> and fix thee ever in the local fire.

*Devil.* Traitor, to hell! curse that I e'er begot thee.

*Mer.* Thou didst beget thy scourge; storm not nor stir, the power of Merlin's art is all confirmed in the Fates' decretals. I'll ransack hell, and make thy master bow unto my spells, thou first shall taste it. (*Thunder and Lightning in the*

*Rock.*) *Tenebrarum precis, divitiarum, et inferorum, Deus, hunc Incubum in ignis eterni abiscum, accipite put in hoc carcere tenebroso, in sempiternum astringere mando.*<sup>38</sup> (*The Rock encloses him.*)

So there beget earthquakes, or some noisome damps, for never shall thou touch a woman more. How cheer you, mother?

*Joan.* Oh, now my son is my deliverer, yet I must name him with my deepest sorrow.

[*Alarm afar off.*

*Mer.* Take comfort now, past times are ne'er recalled; I did foresee your mischief and prevent it. Hark, how the sounds of war now call me hence to aid Pendragon, that in battle stands against the Saxons, from whose aid Merlin must not be absent. Leave this soil, and I'll conduct you to a place retired, which I by art have raised, called Merlin's Bower; there shall you dwell with solitary sighs, with groans and passions your companions, to weep away this flesh you have offended with, and leave all bare unto your aerial soul; and when you die, I will erect a monument upon the verdant plains of Salisbury;<sup>39</sup> no king shall have so high a sepulchre, with pendulous stones that I will hang by art, where neither lime nor mortar shall be used, a dark enigma to thy memory, for none shall have the power to number them, a place that I will hallow for your rest,

Where no night-hag shall walk, nor ware-wolf tread,  
Where Merlin's mother shall be sepulchred.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The British Camp.*

Enter DONOBERT, GLOSTER, and Hermit.

*Dono.* Sincerely, Gloster, I have told you all. My daughters are both vowed to single life, and this day gone into the nunnery, though I begot them to another end, and fairly promised them in marriage,—one to earl Cador; t'other to your son, my worthy friend, the earl of Gloster. Those lost, I am lost: they are lost, all's lost. Answer me this, then,—is't a sin to marry?

*Her.* Oh, no, my lord!

*Dono.* Go to, then, I'll go no further with you. I persuade you to no ill: persuade you, then, that I persuade you well.

*Glos.* 'Twill be a good office in you, sir.

Enter CADOR and EDWIN.

*Dono.* Which, since they thus neglect, my memory shall lose them now for ever. See, see! the noble lords, their promised husbands! Had fate so pleased, you might have called me father.

*Edwin.* Those hopes are past, my lord, for ever: this minute we saw them both enter the monastery, secluded from the world and men for ever.

*Cador.* 'Tis both our griefs we cannot, sir; but, from the king, take you the time's joy from us. The Saxon king, Ostorius, slain, and Octa fled; that woman fury, queen Artesia, is fast in hold, and forced to re-deliver London and Winchester (which she had fortified) to princely Uter, lately styled Pendragon, who now triumphantly is marching hither to be invested with the British crown.

*Dono.* The joy of this shall banish from my breast all thought that I was father to two children, two stubborn daughters, that have left me thus. Let my old arms embrace and call you sons; for by the honour of my father's house, I'll part my estate most equally betwixt you.

*Edwin.* }  
*Cador.* } Sir, you are most noble.

*Flourish of trumpets.* Enter EDOL, with Drum and Colours; OSWOLD, bearing the Standard; TOCLIO, the Shield, with the Red Dragon pictured on them; Two Bishops, with the Crown; PRINCE UTER, MERLIN, ARTESIA, bound; Guards and CLOWN.

*Prince.* Set up our shield and standard, noble soldiers:

We have fair hope that though our dragon sleep, Merlin will us and our fair kingdom keep.

*Clown.* As his uncle lives I warrant you.

*Glos.* Happy restorer of the Briton's fame: up-rising sun, let us salute thy glory! Ride in a day perpetual about us, and no night be in thy throne's zodiac! Why do we stay to bind those princely brows with this imperial honour?

*Prince.* Stay, noble Gloster; that monster first must be expelled our eye, or else we take no joy in it.

*Dono.* If that be hindrance, give her quick judgment, and send her hence to death; she has long deserved it.

*Edol.* Let my sentence stand for all: Take her hence, and stake her carcase in the burning sun till it be parched and dry; and then flay off her wicked skin, and stuff the pelt with straw, to be shown up and down at fairs and markets. Twopence a-piece to see so foul a monster will be a fair monopoly.

*Artes.* Ha! ha! ha!

*Edol.* Dost laugh, Erietho?<sup>49</sup>

*Artes.* Yes, at thy poor invention; is there no better torture-monger?

*Dono.* Burn her to dust.

*Artes.* That's a phoenix-death, and glorious.

*Edol.* Ay, that's too good for her.

*Prince.* Alive she shall be buried, circled in a wall, thou murderess of a king; there starve to death.

*Artes.* Then I'll starve death when he comes for his prey; and i' the mean time I'll live upon your curses.

*Edol.* Ay, 'tis diet good enough; away with her.

*Artes.* With joy, my best of wishes is before; Thy brother's poison'd, but I wanted more. [*Exit.*]

*Prince.* Why does our prophet, Merlin, stand apart, sadly observing these our ceremonies, and not applaud our joys with thy hid knowledge? Let thy divining art now satisfy some part of my desires; for well I know 'tis in thy power to show the full event that shall both end our reign and chronicle. Speak, learned Merlin, and resolve my fears; whether by war we shall expel the Saxons, or govern what we hold with beauteous peace in Wales and Britain?

*Mer.* Long happiness attend Pendragon's reign; what heaven decrees, fate has no power to alter. The Saxons, sir, will keep the ground they have, and by supplying numbers still increase till Britain be no more. So please your grace I will, in visible apparitions, present you prophecies which shall concern

Succeeding princes, which my art shall raise, Till men shall call these times the latter days.

*Prince.* Do it, my Merlin, and crown me with much joy and wonder. [*MER. strikes with his Wand.*]

*Hautboys.* Enter a King in Armour, his Shield quartered with thirteen Crowns. At the other Door enter divers Princes who present their Crowns to him at his Feet, and do him Homage; then enters Death, and strikes him; he growing sick, crowns CONSTANTINE. [*Exeunt.*]

*Mer.* This king, my lord, presents your royal son, who, in his prime of years, shall be so fortunate, that thirteen several princes shall present their several crowns to him, and all kings else shall so admire his fame and victories, that they shall all be glad, either through fear or love, to do him homage; but death (who favours neither the weak nor valiant) in the midst of all his glories, soon shall seize him, scarcely permitting him to appoint one in all his purchased kingdoms to succeed him.

*Prince.* Thanks to our prophet for this so wished-for satisfaction, and hereby now we learn that always fate must be observed whatever that decree, All future times shall still record this story, Of Merlin's learned worth, and Arthur's glory.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

# NOTES TO THE BIRTH OF MERLIN; OR, THE CHILD HATH FOUND HIS FATHER.

## <sup>1</sup> *The parling enemy.*

The talking enemy, the enemy who is desirous of a conference.

## <sup>2</sup> *I'd be loth that any man should make a holy-day for me yet.*

The holy-days held in honour of the saints or heroes of those times were not attributed to them until after their death. Toelio, alluding to this custom, means he should be loth to die, and so give any occasion for a holy-day to his memory.

## <sup>3</sup> *If ever I change my virgin name, by you it gains or loses.*

That is, if ever I marry, you shall be my husband; my name shall either gain or lose distinction by being changed to yours.

## <sup>4</sup> *Argues desire of cure, but not knowledge of art.*

I have interpolated the word *knowledge*, which was wanting to complete the sense.

## <sup>5</sup> *Shame take thy tongue.*

In the copy of 1662, the following speech also is given to Donobert:—"I have restored it to the king, who is evidently the speaker."

## <sup>6</sup> *To deny so high and noble a proposal to my fame and country.*

The old copy reads:—"so high and noble to my fame and country." Some word seems to have been omitted: so high and noble what? I have hazarded the insertion of a *proposal*.

## <sup>7</sup> *Morry a pagan, an idolater.*

The religion of the Saxons, before they were won to the acknowledgment of Christianity, was a very wild, imaginary, and savage idolatry: indeed, Odin or Woden, the father of the gods, was called "the terrible and severe god, the father of slaughter, the god that carries desolation and fire, *the active and roaring deity*." His wife Frigga, or Frea, was the goddess of pleasure and sensuality: she was represented as an hermaphrodite. They had many children, who each presided over some portion of the world; thus Thor was the god of tempests, Balder of light, Kiord of the waters, Tyr of champions, Brage of orators and poets, while Heimdal was the door-keeper of heaven and the guardian of the rainbow. They had, besides, a long array of inferior deities and spirits, amongst which were the goddess Hela, the wolf Fenris, the great dragon, the giants, and the evil genii. To their devil, or the personification of evil, they gave

the name of Lok. Their heaven was called Valhalla where the spirits of the brave fought all day and feasted all night, their repast being the flesh of the great boar, Scrimner, which was eaten up every evening, but always renewed the next morning. Their hell was Nifheim, where the mean and cowardly dwelt with anguish and fed with famine. There was one great comfort in all this, it was not to last for ever: a terrible conflagration was, in the end, to destroy gods, men, and spirits, the earth, Valhalla, and Nifheim—when a purer God and a new and higher state of things was to arise out of the ruin. These rude ancestors of ours seem to have had good sense enough to suppose, that though their barbarous deities and sensual goblins did exist, that it was but for a time; they were not pure and good enough for eternity.

## <sup>8</sup> *Be you ambassador unto our brother, the brother of our queen Artesia: tell him for such our entertainment looks him.*

The sense would be clearer if we read "tell him as such our entertainment looks *for* him;" that is, as a brother we expect him.

## <sup>9</sup> *Speak as a man, and I shall hope to obey thee.*

That is, speak as one considering the passions and frailties of our race. Regard my affection for Artesia, not with the cold eyes of a saint, but with the yielding heart of a man.

## <sup>10</sup> *Must let no joy beneath to move his eye.*

The old copy reads—

Must leave no joy beneath, to move his eye.

This expresses exactly the reverse of what the hermit evidently means. He is desiring Modestia to leave all joy on earth and fix her eyes on heaven.

## <sup>11</sup> *Pygmalion, then I tasted thy sad fate.*

Pygmalion was a celebrated sculptor of Cyprus, who entertained an aversion to women on account of the extreme immorality of those of Amathus, to which he had been an unwilling witness. But nature was strong in the bosom of the sculptor, and he fell in love with a beautiful marble statue that he had made. The Princee means, that he, like Pygmalion, had fallen in love with a lifeless, unreal thing—with one who, as far he was concerned, might as well be a statue. But the sculptor was more fortunate than the Prince. At his earnest prayers, the goddess Venus changed his cold marble statue into a warm living woman, who was eventually married to the love-smitten artist.

## <sup>12</sup> *She's a maid yet.*

Recollecting the interesting situation of the lady, I do

not see how this could be. Perhaps we should read—she's scarce a maid yet; but you, &c.

<sup>13</sup> *Tell me, woman, what sin have you committed worthy this?*

Joan's offence was apparent enough. I think we should read—what sin have I committed, &c.; i.e., what have I done that you should slander me with being the father of your child?

<sup>14</sup> *Beats her.*

This violence is not only unprincely, but unmanly and savage. Shakspeare could not have written this: he never shocks at once our feelings and our sense of probability.

<sup>15</sup> *By the rood*; i.e. the cross.

<sup>16</sup> *Oh, the gods!*

Edol is lamenting the prevalence of idolaters and the depression of Christianity; but here and throughout the drama he not very consistently swears by the pagan deities.

<sup>17</sup> *Hector, our great ancestor.*

Alluding to the tradition that the Britons were descended from King Brute and the Trojans, who, upon the destruction of their city, fled, and eventually settled in this island. See note 4 to Loocrine.

<sup>18</sup> *And she dares owe me still.*

That is, own me still—acknowledge me. The word *owe* is invariably used in this sense by Shakspeare.

<sup>19</sup> *Vices are virtues, if so thought and seen.*

This is a very ambiguous line; but I suppose the author means that feelings which, unrestrained, hurry us into vicious excesses, are, when under the guidance of thought, productive of virtue. Thus, obstinacy is a vice, firmness a virtue; violent anger a sin, but anger upon justifiable occasions merely proper manly spirit. The poet Pope thus recognises this doctrine:

Lust through some certain strainers well refined,  
Is gentle love, and charms all womankind.

<sup>20</sup> *Let her challenge any man, the child shall call him father.*

It is scarcely necessary to say that the introduction in the present drama of this mode of affiliating illegitimate children is a gross anachronism. Although women, among the ancient Britons, appear to have been much respected—for they assumed the prophetic office, commanded armies, and governed states—yet their customs respecting the intercourse of the sexes were, if not loose, at least very singular. A sort of promiscuous polygamy appears to have prevailed among them; and ten or twelve families are reported to have lived together under the same roof, the ladies bestowing their favours indifferently upon any of the husbands of this large domestic circle. A Roman historian reports a conversation supposed to have taken place upon this subject between the wife of a British chief and the Empress Julia, where the former lady,

being reproached with the immoral habits of her countrywomen, answered proudly that the British women did openly with their best men what the Roman ladies did secretly with their worst.

<sup>21</sup> *Marriage was blest, I know, with heaven's own hand.*

So, also, Milton, in his exquisite lines on the same subject, in the fourth book of *Paradise Lost*.

Whatever hypocrites austere talk  
Of purity, and place, and innocence;  
Defaming as impure what God declares  
Pure, and commands to some, leaves free to all.  
Our Maker bids increase; who bids abstain  
But our destroyer, foe to God and man? &c.

<sup>22</sup> *Enter Lucina and the three Fates.*

Lucina presided over the birth of children, and her presence was supposed to give an easy labour; this was in consequence of her mother Juno having brought her into the world without pain. The Fates or Parcæ presided over the birth and life of all the human race.

<sup>23</sup> *The Castle Camelot.*

This was the castle in which the old romances say King Arthur kept his court in the west. Thus Drayton:

Like Camelot, what place was ever yet renown'd,  
Where, as at Carlion, oft he kept his table round?

<sup>24</sup> *A cast of Merlin's*; i.e. a trick of his.

<sup>25</sup> *A corey of cardecus.*

A *cardecu* was a corruption of *un quart d'ecu*, the fourth part of a crown.

<sup>26</sup> *The bards, the Druids.*

The Bards of that period were a branch of the Druids, who were divided into three orders, called Druids, Vates, and Bards. The first were Druids proper, and the most eminent of the class: they were priests, moral teachers, lawgivers, astronomers, and professors of the occult art. They cultivated magic, with a number of mysterious and awful ceremonies, amongst which human sacrifices were sometimes included. In the Irish language, a magician is still called Drui, and the art of magic Druidheach. The Vates were poets and sacred musicians. The Latin word *vates* is generally used to signify a poet, and sometimes a poet of a divine or prophetic character. The office of the Bards appears to have been of a similar nature.

<sup>27</sup> *Still in our eye your message, Proximus, we keep to spur our speed.*

That is, we keep the information you brought us from Ostorius constantly in mind, to spur us to further activity. Vortiger had just been reading the letter Proximus had brought from the Saxons.

<sup>28</sup> *A tucket sounded*; i.e., a toccata, a flourish on a trumpet.

<sup>29</sup> *Calling themselves Hingest-men.*

That is, followers of Hengest, the great Saxon chief,

## THE CHILD HATH FOUND HIS FATHER.

whom Vortiger, or rather Vortigern, invited to Britain to assist him against incursions of the Picts. Hengist and his brother Horsa, were supposed to be descended from their god Odin; indeed, they claimed to be the grandsons of that imaginary deity—a circumstance which added considerably to their influence over their rude countrymen.

<sup>30</sup> *For Vortiger is dead.*

Vortigern has been differently painted by the pencil of history, some writers representing him to be an exceedingly vicious man, and others calling him merely weak and unfortunate. In a tract called *Merlin's Life and Prophecies* (1755), there is the following dark charge against him; but I am ignorant what authority it rests upon:—"These two brothers, Ambrosius Aurelius and Uter Pendragon, made their speedy expedition towards Wales; where Vortigern, the Usurper, was sorely besieged by them; and in his own castle they burned him and all his people alive. Such was the fall of the wicked Vortigern; for of him it was reported that he had earned society with his own daughter, in hopes that kings should issue from them. Thus died he miserably, when he had reigned since his last inauguration (he had once been deposed), nine years and some months."

<sup>31</sup> *Some mystic Python.*

I think it should be *Pythian*. Python was the name of the monstrous serpent that Apollo killed, for which he received the name of Pythias. The priestess of Apollo's oracle at Delphi was always called the Pythia; hence, probably, the term was applied to any one supposed to possess prophetic power.

<sup>32</sup> *How swiftly mischief creeps.*

To creep swiftly is a contradiction, one of those errors which arose from a slip of the pen, and was rendered permanent by the author not having corrected the printed copy of his drama.

<sup>33</sup> *Bi-formed*; i. e. composed of two forms or bodies.

<sup>34</sup> *All after time shall fill their chronicles with fame of his renown.*

This famous son of Pendragon's was the celebrated King Arthur, glorious in nursery legends, and dear to the memory of every schoolboy. Among the fabulous acts attributed to him was a great victory over the Romans, in which he slew Prince Lucius and ten other kings, who invaded Britain with an immense army. On his death, he sent for his cousin, Constantine, and crowned him. His death and burial are supposed to have resembled those of the Hebrew prophet Moses, for he perished in solitude, and no man knows his grave.

Modern historians have conjectured that he was but a myth, invented by the bards to keep alive the valour of the Britons.

<sup>35</sup> *To a Heptarchy.*

The Heptarchy was the seven Saxon kingdoms into which Britain was divided by its northern conquerors. The word is a derivation from the Greek, signifying *seven* and *chief*.

<sup>36</sup> *As high as palled Hecate.*

Hecate appears to have been identical with the moon, for mythologists tell us she was called Luna in heaven, Diana on earth, and Hecate or Proserpine in hell. As *high* as Hecate, is, therefore, an appropriate direction. Perhaps we should read *pallid* for palled. Shakspeare has been censured for introducing Hecate among the vulgar witches in *Macbeth*, and thus confounding ancient and modern superstitions.

<sup>37</sup> *The jaws of Acheron*; i. e. the mouth of hell.

<sup>38</sup> *Tenebrarum, precis divitiarum et inferorum, &c.*

This magic spell of Merlin's is in a Latin that Virgil never sung or Pliny wrote. It is very difficult to render into English at all; yet, as the curious but unlearned reader may wish to know the meaning of the words which had such power over the devil, I offer the following translation:—"Receive this incubus, this curse of darkness, riches, and the shades below. God, into eternal fire I commit him, to be shut up for ever in a darksome prison."

<sup>39</sup> *I will erect a monument upon the verdant plains of Salisbury.*

In the tract I have already referred to in note 30, is another wonderful account, connecting the name of Merlin with the origin of Stonehenge:—"This Prince (Aurelius Ambrosius), by the help of Merlin, caused the great stones to be brought in a whirlwind, in one night, out of Ireland, and placed where they now stand on Salisbury Plain, in remembrance of the British lords there slain and after buried, in the time of the pretended treaty and communication between Vortigern and Hengist; but Polychronicon and some other writers ascribe their transportage to his brother Uter Pendragon, at whose request to Merlin that miraculous conveyance was performed."

<sup>40</sup> *Erichtho.*

The name of one of the Furies; also that of a Thessalonian woman, famous for her knowledge of poisons. Either of them forms an appropriate simile for the abandoned Artesia.

H. T.

## The Two Noble Kinsmen.

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THE epicure will often reserve the choicest morsel of his repast until the end of it, that a delightful flavour may be left upon his palate; in like manner I have chosen to conclude this series of plays with one possessing more power, beauty, and wisdom, than any other included in the volume. The authorship of this exquisite drama is a subject of the highest interest, not only to every student of Shakspeare, but to every admirer of fine poetry; nor can any edition of the works of our divine bard be considered complete without it; for it is evident, that through a very considerable portion of it his gifted pen may be clearly traced.

The earliest edition of *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, that of 1634, tells us that it was "written by the memorable worthies of their time, Mr. John Fletcher, and Mr. William Shakspeare." At this period Shakspeare had been dead eighteen years, and Fletcher nine, so that the names of these two poets were evidently placed together on the title page, upon the authority of the players of the Blackfriars' Theatre, where this drama was first performed. It has been very truly observed, that there was no motive for falsely attributing it, or any part of it, to Shakspeare, as the name of Fletcher was at that time equally popular, if not even more likely to procure a sale for the book.

Objectors to the supposition that Shakspeare was the author of a part of this drama remind us that it was not printed until 1634, while two editions of his collected works were published before that period. To this it may be answered, that it appears not to have been printed before that time in accordance with the customs of the actors, who did not generally publish a play until its novelty was past. Dramas were written for the theatre, not for the press, and were usually kept for a time in manuscript for the use of the play-house which first produced them. Of the two editions of Shakspeare's works, to which I have alluded, the second is merely a reprint of the first, and the first was collected by careless editors, who (though they had been the associates of the departed poet) were actuated, in the publication, more by a desire of personal profit than by a generous wish to present to the reading public a correct and complete edition of his works. Their indifference or negligence is shown by the fact, that *Troilus and Cressida* (a drama in which the hand of our poet is revealed in every line) was at first forgotten by them. Heminge and Condell might also have considered that their editorial duties only called upon them to publish those dramas which our poet executed entirely, and by himself. They were evidently not very anxious to collect all he had written, and probably thought, that in so large a collection the omission of one, of which he was but partially the author, was a matter of indifference.

However this may be, we possess, in the play itself, evidences of the hand of Shakspeare so frequent and distinct, that the most critical and sceptical have been convinced that a certain part, and that a large part, was written by him. Indeed, Mr. Spalding, professor of rhetoric in the University of Edinburgh, who has written a very able little volume, in the form of a letter, upon the authorship of this drama, even asserts that it belongs to that chivalrous class of tales of which Shakspeare was so fond, but which Fletcher never selected for the labours of his muse. The portions of the play which, as the result of an acute and laborious investigation, Mr. Spalding thinks were written by Shakspeare, are—the whole of the first act, a portion of the third; and, with the exception of one unimportant scene, all the fifth. I am inclined to believe that our poet had even a still greater share than this in its composition; let any one read the second scene of the fourth act, and they will admit that, if Shakspeare had no hand in it, some very noble touches were supplied by Fletcher. Emilia's reflections upon the portraits of her contending lovers are



## THE TWO NOBLE KINSMEN.

very feminine and beautiful, and reveal that subtle knowledge of the delicate variations of a woman's mind, which is so strong a characteristic of the writings of Shakspeare.

Of the parts of the play which should be assigned to Fletcher there can be but little doubt; the whole of the underplot was certainly his, not because it is inferior to the rest, but because the style is widely different from that of Shakspeare. It is, moreover, scarcely possible that so powerful a poet should have reproduced his own conceptions in a manner so immeasurably inferior to the originals. In the jailor's daughter we recognise, at a glance, a dilution of Ophelia; the doctor who attends her, and philosophises on her mental malady, is evidently suggested by the physician in *Macbeth*; the Shaksperian reader, in turning over *Love's Labour's Lost*, will see, in Holofernes, the original of the empty-headed and pedantic Master Gerrold, while the merry peasants who present their morris before the duke, are a poor copy of Master Bottom the weaver, and his histrionic friends. It is certainly true that Shakspeare sometimes produced, in his later dramas, characters of which the rude outlines were contained in his earlier works; but, as Mr. Spalding remarks, "in the case before us, it is impossible to receive the idea of Shakspeare sitting down in cold blood to imitate the Ophelia, and to transfer all the tenderness of her situation to a new drama of a far lower tone, in which also it could occupy only a subordinate station."

Turning from the question of authorship, let us bestow a few words upon the work itself; its chief imperfection is, that much in it is described instead of being represented; it is less a drama than a fine dramatic tale; but much of its language, especially those portions of it to which I have referred, has the power, thoughtfulness, and high morality of Shakspeare. Thus, in the first scene (which abounds in gems of thought and beauty) we have, among other moral aphoristic sayings, the following dignified remark of Theseus:

————— As we are men  
Thus should we do, being sensually subdued,  
We lose our human title.

Passages of this character, where a lofty and serious thought seems to have been carelessly thrown out, are very numerous in this drama; to quote even the finest, would fill some pages; but this is unnecessary, for such beauties are not scattered, but to be found in clusters, like the bright and solemn stars of heaven.

This production contains no remarkable development of character; the principal actors in it are distinguished by a certain dignity and vitality, rather than by any peculiarity of mental aspect. Theseus does not remind us very closely of the classical hero of antiquity, the destroyer of the ferocious bull of Marathon, and the conqueror of the Minotaur, but he is robed in a stern and princely loftiness. The Theban kinsmen too closely resemble each other, and the high-bred courtesy which is generally retained, even during their fiercest contention, resembles the manners of the age of chivalry, rather than the severe and simple habits of ancient Greece. Indeed, the whole play is tinctured with the spirit of that romantic knight-errantry which, at a period of more than two thousand years after the supposed date of its action, pervaded the most brave and Christian nations of Europe. The women (if we except the jailor's daughter) are drawn with the greatest amount of psychological power. Emilia is a very beautiful creation, a conception which appears to me purely Shaksperian. Hippolita, also, is boldly sketched; and the three widowed queens have a charm of dignity and impressive melancholy thrown around them. The subject of the play is the triumph of love over friendship; in the early part every page teems with instances of affection, independent of sex. Theseus and Perithous love each other with a generous attachment, Emilia believes she loves her dead friend Flavius more than she can ever love man, and Palamon and Arcite, in their exalted friendship, think, that though shut up in a dreary prison, they will be wife, children, father, friends, acquaintance, all to one another. The first breath of love blows down this airy castle, the captives are rivals, and become bitter antagonists, and Emilia forgetting the cherished memory of her dead female friend, loves both the princes with such a tender admiration, that she cannot choose either. All-powerful love! the poet shows us here what strange inconsistencies you make poor mortals guilty of.

H. T.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

THESEUS, *Duke of Athens.*

*Appears*, Act I. sc. 1 ; sc. 4. Act II. sc. 5. Act III. sc. 5 ;  
sc. 6. Act IV. sc. 2. Act V. sc. 1 ; sc. 6 ; sc. 7.

PERITHOUS, *Cousin to Theseus.*

*Appears*, Act I. sc. 1 ; sc. 3. Act II. sc. 5. Act III. sc. 5 ;  
sc. 6. Act IV. sc. 2. Act V. sc. 1 ; sc. 6 ; sc. 7.

PALAMON, *a noble Theban Youth, and Nephew of  
King Creon.*

*Appears*, Act I. sc. 2 ; sc. 4. Act II. sc. 2. Act III. sc. 1 ;  
sc. 3 ; sc. 6. Act V. sc. 1 ; sc. 3 ; sc. 7.

ARCITE, *his Friend and Cousin, also Nephew of  
King Creon.*

*Appears*, Act I. sc. 2 ; sc. 4. Act II. sc. 2 ; sc. 3 ; sc. 5.  
Act III. sc. 1 ; sc. 3 ; sc. 5 ; sc. 6. Act V. sc. 1 ; sc. 2 ;  
sc. 6 ; sc. 7.

VALERIUS, *an Attendant on King Creon.*

*Appears*, Act I. sc. 2.

KNIGHTS, *the Friends of Palamon and Arcite.*

*Appear*, Act V. sc. 1 ; sc. 2 ; sc. 3 ; sc. 7.

A GENTLEMAN.

*Appears*, Act IV. sc. 2.

A HERALD.

*Appears*, Act I. sc. 4.

A JAILER.

*Appears*, Act II. sc. 1 ; sc. 2. Act IV. sc. 1 ; sc. 3. Act V.  
sc. 5 ; sc. 7.

THE BROTHER and FRIENDS of the Jailer.

*Appear*, Act IV. sc. 1,

A DOCTOR.

*Appears*, Act IV. sc. 3. Act V. sc. 5.

A WOOER, *in love with the Jailer's Daughter.*

*Appears*, Act II. sc. 1. Act IV. sc. 1 ; sc. 3. Act V. sc. 5.

MASTER GERROLD, *a Pedantic Schoolmaster.*

*Appears*, Act III. sc. 5.

COUNTRY PEOPLE, *Morris Dancers.*

*Appear*, Act II. sc. 3. Act III. sc. 5.

A MESSENGER.

*Appears*, Act IV. sc. 2. Act V. sc. 5.

HIPPOLITA, *Queen of the Amazons, and Bride of  
Duke Theseus.*

*Appears*, Act I. sc. 1 ; sc. 3. Act II. sc. 5. Act III. sc. 5 ;  
sc. 6. Act IV. sc. 2. Act V. sc. 1 ; sc. 6 ; sc. 7.

EMILIA, *Sister of Theseus.*

*Appears*, Act I. sc. 1 ; sc. 3. Act II. c. 2 ; sc. 5. Act III.  
sc. 5 ; sc. 6. Act IV. sc. 2. Act V. sc. 4 ; sc. 6 ; sc. 7.

THREE QUEENS.

*Appear*, Act I. sc. 1 ; sc. 4 ; sc. 5.

THE JAILER'S DAUGHTER.

*Appears*, Act II. sc. 1 ; sc. 4 ; sc. 6. Act III. sc. 2 ; sc. 4 ;  
sc. 5. Act IV. sc. 1 ; sc. 3. Act V. sc. 5.

A WOMAN, *Attending on the Princess Emilia.*

*Appears*, Act II. sc. 2.

*Hymn, Nymphs, Attendants, Executioner, Guards,  
&c.*

SCENE.—ATHENS ; and, in part of the first Act,  
THEBES.

# The Two Noble Kinsmen.

## PROLOGUE.

NEW plays and maidenheads are near a-kin ;  
Much follow'd both, for both much money gi'en,  
If they stand sound, and well ; and a good play  
(Whose modest scenes blush on his marriage-

day,  
And shake to lose his honour) is like her  
That after holy tie, and first night's stir,  
Yet still is modesty, and still retains  
More of the maid to sight than husband's pains.  
We pray our play may be so ; for I'm sure  
It has a noble breeder, and a pure,  
A learned, and a poet, never went  
More famous yet 'twixt Po and silver Trent :  
Chaucer (of all admired) the story gives :  
There constant to eternity it lives !  
If we let fall the nobleness of this,  
And the first sound this child hear be a hiss,

How it will shake the bones of that good man,  
And make him cry from underground, " Oh, fau  
From me the witless chaff of such a writer,  
That blasts my bays, and my famed works makes  
lighter  
Than Robin Hood !" This is the fear we bring ;  
For to say truth, it were an endless thing,  
And too ambitious, to aspire to him.  
Weak as we are, and almost breathless swim  
In this deep water, do but you hold out  
Your helping hands, and we will tack about,  
And something do to save us : you shall hear  
Scenes, though below his art, may yet appear  
Worth two hours' travel. To his bones sweet sleep !  
Content to you ! If this play do not keep  
A little dull time from us, we perceive  
Our losses fall so thick, we needs must leave.

[Flourish.]

## ACT I.

SCENE I.—Athens. *Before the Temple.*

*Enter HYMEN with a Torch burning : a Boy, in a white Robe before, singing and strewing Flowers : after HYMEN, a Nymph, encompassed in her Tresses, bearing a wheaten Garland. Then THESEUS between two other Nymphs with wheaten Chaplets on their Heads. Then HIPPOLITA, the Bride, led by THESEUS, and another holding a Garland over her Head (her Tresses likewise hanging). After her EMILIA holding up her Train.*

THE SONG.

[Music.]

Roses, their sharp spines being gone,  
Not royal in their smells alone,  
But in their hue.  
Maiden pinks, of odour faint,  
Daisies smell-less, yet most quaint,  
And sweet thyme true.

Primrose, first-born child of Ver,  
Merry springtime's harbinger,  
With her bells dim.  
Oxlips, in their cradles growing,  
Marigolds, on death-beds blowing,  
Lark's-heels trim.

All dear Nature's children : sweet-  
Ly 'forc bride and bridegroom's feet  
Blessing their sense. [*They strew Flowers.*]  
Not an angel of the air,  
Bird melodious, or bird fair,  
Be absent hence.

The crow, the slanderous cuckoo, nor  
The boding raven, nor chough hoar,<sup>1</sup>  
Nor chattering pic,  
May on our bridehouse perch or sing,  
Or with them any discord bring,  
But from it fly.

*Enter Three QUEENS in Black, with Veils stained, with imperial Crowns. The First QUEEN falls down at the foot of THESEUS; the Second falls down at the foot of HIPPOLITA; the Third before EMILIA.*

*1st Queen.* For pity sake and true gentilities,  
Hear, and respect me.

*2nd Queen.* For your mother's sake,  
And as you wish your womb may thrive with fair  
ones,

Hear, and respect me.

*3rd Queen.* Now for the love of him whom Love  
hath mark'd

The honour of your bed, and for the sake  
Of clear virginity, be advocate  
For us, and our distresses: this good deed  
Shall raise you out o'the book of trespasses,  
All you are set down there.

*Thes.* Sad lady, rise!

*Hip.* Stand up!

*Emil.* No knees to me!

What woman I may stead that is distrest,  
Does bind me to her.

*Thes.* What's your request? Deliver you for all.

*1st Queen.* We are three queens, whose sove-  
reigns fell before

The wrath of cruel Creon; who endured  
The beaks of ravens, talons of the kites,  
And pecks of crows, in the foul fields of Thebes.  
He will not suffer us to burn their bones,  
To urn their ashes,<sup>2</sup> nor to take th' offence  
Of mortal loathsomeness from the blest eye  
Of holy Phœbus, but infects the winds  
With stench of our slain lords. O, pity, duke;  
Thou purger of the earth, draw thy fear'd sword  
That does good turns to th' world; give us the  
bones  
Of our dead kings, that we may chapel them;  
And of thy boundless goodness take some note  
That for our crown'd heads we have no roof,  
Save this which is the lion's, and the bear's,  
And vault to every thing.

*Thes.* Pray you kneel not!

I was transported with your speech, and suffer'd  
Your knees to wrong themselves; I have heard the  
fortunes

Of your dead lords, which gives me such lamenting  
As wakes my vengeance, and revenge for 'em.  
King Capanëus was your lord, the day  
That he should marry you, at such a season,  
As now it is with me, I met your groom,  
By Mars's altar; you were that time fair,  
Not Juno's mantle fairer than your tresses,

Nor in more bounty spread her;<sup>3</sup> our wheaten  
wreath

Was then nor thresh'd, nor blasted; Fortune at you  
Dimpled her cheek with smiles: Hercules our  
kinsman

(Then weaker than your eyes) laid by his club,  
He tumbled down upon his Nemean hide<sup>4</sup>  
And swore his sinews thaw'd: O grief, and time,  
Fearful consumers, you will all devour.

*1st Queen.* O, I hope some God,  
Some God hath put his mercy in your manhood,  
Whereto he'll infuse power, and press you forth  
Our undertaker.

*Thes.* O, no knees, none widow,  
Unto the helmeted Bellona use them,  
And pray for me your soldier.—Troubled I am.

[*Turns away.*]

*2nd Queen.* Honoured Hippolita,  
Most dreaded Amazonian, that hast slain  
The scythe-tusk'd boar; that with thy arm as strong  
As it is white, wast near to make the male  
To thy sex captive; but that this thy lord  
(Born to uphold creation, in that honour  
First nature styl'd it in,) shrunk thee into  
The bound thou wast o'erflowing; at once subduing  
Thy force, and thy affection: soldieress  
That equally canst poise sternness with pity,  
Whom now I know hast much more power on him  
Than ever he had on thee, who ow'st his strength,  
And his love too, who is a servant for  
The tenor of the speech; dear glass of ladies  
Bid him that we, whom flaming war doth scorch,  
Under the shadow of his sword may cool us:  
Require him he advance it o'er our heads;  
Speak 't in a woman's key: like such a woman  
As any of us three; weep ere you fail; lend us a knee;  
But touch the ground for us no longer time  
Than a dove's motion, when the head's pluck'd off;  
Tell him if he i'the blood-siz'd field, lay swollen,  
Showing the sun his teeth, grinning at the moon,  
What you would do.

*Hip.* Poor lady say no more:  
I had as leave trace this good action with you,  
As that whereto I am going, and never yet  
Went I so willing 'way. My lord is taken  
Heart-deep with your distress: let him consider:  
I'll speak anon.

*3rd Queen.* O, my petition was [*Kneels to EMIL.*]  
Set down in ice, which by hot grief uncandied  
Melts into drops, so sorrow, wanting form,  
Is prest with deeper matter.

*Emil.* Pray stand up,  
Your grief is written in your cheek,

*3rd Queen.* O woe,  
You cannot read it there; there through my tears,<sup>5</sup>  
Like wrinkled pebbles in a glassy stream  
You may behold 'em! lady, lady, alack,  
He that will all the treasure know o'the earth,  
Must know the centre too; he that will fish  
For my least minnow, let him lead his line  
To catch one at my heart. O pardon me,  
Extremity that sharpens sundry wits,  
Makes me a fool.

*Emil.* Pray you say nothing, pray you,  
Who cannot feel, nor see the rain being in't,  
Knows neither wet, nor dry; if that you were  
The ground-piece of some painter, I would buy you,  
T'instruct me 'gainst a capital grief indeed,  
Such heart-pierc'd demonstration; but, alas!  
Being a natural sister of our sex,  
Your sorrow beats so ardently upon me,  
That it shall make a counter reflect 'gainst  
My brother's heart, and warm it to some pity,  
Though it were made of stone: pray have good  
comfort!

*Thes.* Forward to the temple; leave not out a jot  
O' th' sacred ceremony.

*1st Queen.* Oh, this celebration  
Will long last, and be more costly than  
Your suppliants' war. Remember that your fame  
Knolls in the ear o' th' world: what you do quickly  
Is not done rashly. Your first thought is more  
Than other's laboured meditative;  
tating

More than their actions. But, oh, Jove! your  
actions,

Soon as they move, as ospreys do the fish,  
Subdue before they touch. Think, dear duke, think!  
What beds our slain kings have.

*2nd Queen.* What griefs our beds  
That our dear lords have none.

*3rd Queen.* None fit for th' dead.  
Those that with cords, knives, drams-precipitance,  
Weary of this world's light, have to themselves  
Been death's most horrid agents, human grace  
Affords them dust and shadow.

*1st Queen.* But our lords  
Lie blistering 'fore the visitating sun,  
And were good kings when living.

*Thes.* It is true, and I will give you comfort,  
To give your dead lords graves;  
The which to do must make some work with Creon.

*1st Queen.* And that work presents itself to th'  
doing.

Now 'twill take form; the heats are gone to-morrow.  
Then bootless toil must recompense itself

With its own sweat. Now he's secure,  
Not dreams, we stand before your puissance,  
Rinsing our holy begging in our eyes  
To make petition clear.

*2nd Queen.* Now you may take him,  
Drunk with his victory.

*3rd Queen.* And his army full  
Of bread and sloth.

*Thes.* Artesius, that best knowest  
How to draw out fit to this enterprise,  
The primest for this proceeding, and the number  
To carry such a business, forth and levy  
Our worthiest instruments, whilst we despatch  
This grand act of our life—this daring deed  
Of fate in wedlock.

*1st Queen.* Dowagers, take hands!  
Let us be widows to our woes;<sup>6</sup> delay  
Commends us to a famishing hope.

*All.* Farewell!

*2nd Queen.* We come unseasonably; but when  
could grief  
Cull forth, as unparang'd judgment can, fittest time  
For best solicitation.

*Thes.* Why, good ladies,  
This is a service whereto I am going  
Greater than any was; it more imports me  
Than all the actions that I have foregone,  
Or futurely can cope.

*1st Queen.* The more proclaiming  
Our suit shall be neglected, when her arms,  
Able to lock Jove from a synod, shall  
By warranting moonlight corslet thee, oh when  
Her twinning cherries shall their sweetness fall  
Upon thy tasteful lips, what wilt thou think  
Of rotten kings or blubbered queens? what care  
For what thou feel'st not?—what thou feel'st  
being able

To make Mars spurn his drum. Oh, if thou couch  
But one night with her, every hour iu't will  
Take hostage of thee for a hundred; and  
Thou shalt remember nothing more than what  
That banquet bids thee to.

*Hip.* Though much unlike  
You should be so transported, as much sorry  
I should be such a suitor; yet I think,  
Did I not, by th' abstaining of my joy,  
Which breeds a deeper longing, cure their surfeit,  
That craves a present medicine, I should pluck  
All ladies' scandal on me. Therefore, sir,  
As I shall here make trial of my prayers,  
Either presuming them to have some force,  
Or sentencing for aye their vigour dumb.  
Prorogue this business we are going about, and hang

Your shield afore your heart, about that neck  
Which is my fee, and which I freely lend  
To do these poor queens' service.

*All Queens.* Oh, help now!  
Our cause cries for your knee. [*To EMIL.*]

*Emil.* If you grant not  
My sister her petition in that force,  
With that celerity and nature which  
She makes it in, from henceforth I'll not dare  
To ask you anything, nor be so hardy  
Ever to take a husband.

*Thes.* Pray, stand up.  
I am entreating of myself to do  
That which you kneel to have me. Perithous,  
Lead on the bride; get you and pray the gods  
For success, and return; omit not anything  
In the pretended celebration.<sup>7</sup> Queens,  
Follow your soldier, as before; hence you,  
And at the banks of Aulis<sup>8</sup> meet us with  
The forces you can raise, where we shall find  
The moiety of a number, for a business  
More bigger look'd. Since that our theme is haste,  
I stamp this kiss upon thy courant lip:  
Sweet! keep it as my token. Set you forward,  
For I will see you gone.

[*Exeunt towards the Temple all but PERI.,  
THES., and QUEENS.*]

Farewell! my beauteous sister. Perithous,  
Keep the feast full; bate not an hour on't.

*Peri.* Sir,  
I'll follow you at heels; the feast's solemnity  
Shall want till your return.

*Thes.* Cousin, I charge you  
Budge not from Athens: we shall be returning  
Ere you can end this feast; of which, I pray you,  
Make no abatement. Once more, farewell, all!

*1st Queen.* Thus dost thou still make good the  
tongue o' th' world.

*2nd Queen.* And earn'st a deity equal with Mars.

*3rd Queen.* If not above him; for  
Thou being but mortal mak'st affections bend  
To godlike honours: they themselves, some say,  
Groan under such a mastery.

*Thes.* As we are men,  
Thus should we do; being sensually subdued,  
We lose our human title. Good cheer, ladies:  
[*Flourish.*]  
Now turn we towards your comforts. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—Thebes. *The Court of the Palace.*

*Enter PALAMON and ARCITE.*

*Arcite.* Dear Palamon, dearer in love than blood,  
450

And our prime cousin, yet unharden'd in  
The crimes of nature, let us leave the city  
Thebes, and the temptings in't, before we further  
Sully our gloss of youth;  
And here to keep in abstinence we shame  
As in incontinence; for not to swim  
I'th' aid o'th' current<sup>9</sup> were almost to sink—  
At least to frustrate striving; and to follow  
The common stream, 'twould bring us to an eddy,  
Where we should turn or drown; if labour through,  
Our gain but life and weakness.

*Pal.* Your advice  
Is cried up with example: what strange ruins,  
Since first we went to school, may we perceive  
Walking in Thebes? Scars and bare weeds,  
The gain o'th' martialist, who did propound  
To his bold ends, honour and golden ingots,  
Which, though he won, he had not; and now flirted  
By peace, for whom he fought; who then shall offer  
To Mars's so scorned altar? I do bleed  
When such I meet, and wish great Juno would  
Resume her ancient fit of jealousy,  
To get the soldier work, that peace might purge  
For her repletion, and retain anew  
Her charitable heart, now hard and harsher  
Than strife or war could be.

*Arcite.* Are you not out?  
Meet you no ruin but the soldier in  
The cranks and turns of Thebes? You did begin  
As if you met decays of many kinds:  
Perceive you none that do arouse your pity  
But th' unconsidered soldier?

*Pal.* Yes, I pity  
Decays where'er I find them; but such most  
That, sweating in an honourable toil,  
Are paid with ice to cool 'em.

*Arcite.* 'Tis not this  
I did begin to speak of: this is virtue  
Of no respect in Thebes. I spake of Thebes,  
How dangerous, if we will keep our honours,  
It is for our residing; where every evil  
Hath a good colour, where every seeming good's  
A certain evil; where, not to be even jump  
As they are here, were to be strangers, and  
Such things to be mere monsters.

*Pal.* 'Tis in our power  
(Unless we fear that apes can tutor us) to  
Be masters of our manners. What need I  
Affect another's gait, which is not catching  
Where there is faith, or to be fond upon  
Another's way of speech, when by mine own  
I may be reasonably conceiv'd—saved, too,  
Speaking it truly? Why am I bound

By any generous bond to follow him  
Follows his tailor; haply so long, until  
The follow'd make pursuit? Or let me know  
Why mine own barber is unblest, with him  
My poor chin, too? for 'tis not scissar'd just  
To such a favourite's glass. What canon is there  
That does command my rapier from my hip  
To dangle 't in my hand, or to go tip-toe  
Before the street be foul? Either I am  
The fore-horse in the team, or I am none  
That draw i' th' sequent trace: these poor slight  
sores

Need not a plantain; that which rips my bosom  
Almost to the heart's—

*Arcite.* Our uncle Creon.

*Pal.* He!

A most unbounded tyrant, whose successes  
Makes heaven unfeared, and villany assured,  
Beyond its power there's nothing—almost puts  
Faith in a fever, and deifies alone  
Vuluble chance; who only attributes  
The faculties of other instruments  
To his own nerves and act; commands men's service,  
And what they win in 't, boot and glory on;  
That fears not to do harm—good dares not. Let  
The blood of mine that's sibbe to him<sup>10</sup> be suck'd  
From me with leeches!—let them break and fall  
Off me with that corruption.

*Arcite.* Clear spirited cousin,  
Let's leave his court, that we may nothing share  
Of his loud infamy; for our milk  
Will relish of the pasture, and we must  
Be vile or disobedient, not his kinsmen  
In blood, unless in quality.

*Pal.* Nothing truer:  
I think the echoes of his shames have deaf'd  
The ears of heav'nly justice; widow's cries  
Descend again into their throats, and have not  
Due audience of the gods.

*Enter VALERIUS.*

*Val.* The king calls for you, yet be leaden-footed  
Till his great rage be off him. Phœbus, when  
He broke his whipstock, and exclaim'd against  
The horses of the sun, but whispered to  
The loudness of his fury.

*Pal.* Small winds shake him,  
But what's the matter?

*Val.* Theseus (who where he threats appals,) hath  
sent  
Deadly defiance to him, and pronounces  
Ruin to Thebes, who is at hand to seal  
The promise of his wrath.

*Arcite.* Let him approach;  
But that we fear the gods in him, he brings not  
A jot of terror to us; yet what man  
Thirds his own worth (the case is each of ours)  
When that his actions dredg'd, with mind assured,  
'Tis bad he goes about.

*Pal.* Leave that unreason'd.  
Our services stand now for Thebes, not Creon;  
Yet to be neutral to him, were dishonour;  
Rebellious to oppose; therefore, we must  
With him stand to the mercy of our fate,  
Who hath bounded our last minute.

*Arcite.* So we must.  
Is 't said this war's afoot? or it shall be  
On fail of some condition?

*Val.* 'Tis in motion;  
The intelligence of state came in the instant  
With the defier.

*Pal.* Let's to the king, who, were he  
A quarter carrier of that honour, which  
His enemy come in, the blood we venture,  
Should be as for our health, which were not spent,  
Rather laid out for purchase; but alas!  
Our hands advanc'd before our hearts, what will  
The fall o' the stroke do damage?

*Arcite.* Let th' event,  
That never erring arbitrator, tell us  
When we know all ourselves, and let us follow  
The becking of our chance. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*Before the Gates of Athens.*

*Enter PERITHOUS, HIPPOLITA, EMILIA.*

*Peri.* No further.

*Hip.* Sir, farewell, repeat my wishes  
To our great lord, of whose success I dare not  
Make any timorous question, yet I wish him  
Excess and overflow of power, and 't might be  
To 'dure ill-dealing fortune;<sup>11</sup> speed to him,  
Store never hurts good governors.

*Peri.* Though I know  
His ocean needs not my poor drops, yet they  
Must yield their tribute there. My precious maid,  
Those best affections, that the heavens infuse  
In their best tempered pieces, keep enthroned  
In your dear heart.

*Emil.* Thanks, sir, remember me  
To our all royal brother, for whose speed,  
The great Bellona I'll solicit; and  
Since, in our terrene state, petitions are not  
Without gifts understood: I'll offer to her  
What I shall be advised she likes. Our hearts  
Are in his army, in his tent.

*Hip.* In's bosom:  
We have been soldiers, and we cannot weep  
When our friends don their helms, or put to sea,  
Or tell of babes broach'd on the lance, or women  
That have sod their infants in (and after eat them)  
The brine, they wept at killing 'em; then if  
You stay to see of us such spinsters, we  
Should hold you here for ever.

*Peri.* Peace be to you  
As I pursue this war, which shall be then  
Beyond further requiring. [*Exit PERI.*]

*Emil.* How his longing  
Follows his friend, since his depart, his sports,  
Though craving seriousness and skill, pass'd slightly  
His careless execution, where nor gain  
Made him regard, or loss consider, but  
Playing one business in his hand, another  
Directing in his head, his mind, nurse equal  
To these so diffring twins; have you observ'd him  
Since our great lord departed?

*Hip.* With much labour,  
And I did love him for 't; they two have cabin'd  
In many as dangerous, as poor a corner,  
Peril and want contending, they have skiff'd  
Torrents whose roaring tyranny and power  
P'the least of these was dreadful, and they have  
Fought out together, where death's self was lodg'd;  
Yet fate hath brought them off: their knot of love  
Tied, weaved, entangled, with so true, so long,  
And with a finger of so deep a cunning,  
May be outworn, never undone. I think  
Theseus cannot be umpire to himself,  
Cleaving his conscience into twain, and doing  
Each side like justice, which he loves best.

*Emil.* Doubtless  
There is a best, and reason has no manners  
To say it is not you: I was acquainted  
Once with a time, when I enjoyed a play-fellow;  
You were at wars, when she the grave enrich'd,  
Who made too proud the bed, took leave o'th' moon  
(Which then look'd pale at parting) when our count  
Was each eleven.

*Hip.* 'Twas Flavina.

*Emil.* Yes,  
You talk of Perithous' and Theseus' love;  
Theirs has more ground, is more maturely season'd,  
More buckled with strong judgment, and their needs  
The one of th' other may be said to water  
Their intertangled roots of love, but I  
And she (I sigh and spoke of) were things innocent,  
Lov'd, for we did, and like the elements  
That know not what, nor why, yet do effect  
Rare issues by their operance; our souls

Did so to one another; what she lik'd,  
Was then of me approv'd, what not, condemn'd,  
No more arraignment; the flower that I would pluck,  
And put between my breasts, oh! (then but be-  
ginning

To swell about the blossom) she would long  
Till she had such another, and commit it  
To the like innocent cradle, where, Phoenix-like,  
They died in perfume: on my head no toy  
But was her pattern, her affections (pretty,  
Though happily her careless wear,) I followed  
For my most serious decking. Had mine ear  
Stol'n some new air, or at adventure hum'd on  
From musical coinage; why, it was a note  
Whereon her spirits would sojourn, (rather dwell on)  
And sing it in her slumbers; this rehearsal  
(Which every innocent wots well) comes in  
Like old importment's bastard, has this end,  
That the true love 'tween maid and maid, may be  
More than in sex dividual.<sup>12</sup>

*Hip.* You're out of breath,  
And this high speeded pace, is but to say  
That you shall never (like the maid Flavina)  
Love any that's call'd man.

*Emil.* I am sure I shall not.

*Hip.* Now alack, weak sister,  
I must no more believe thee in this point,  
(Though in 't I know thou dost believe thyself,  
Than I will trust a sickly appetite,  
That loathes even as it longs; but sure, my sister,  
If I were ripe for your persuasion, you  
Have said enough to shake me from the arm  
Of the all-noble Theseus, for whose fortunes,  
I will now in, and kneel with great assurance,  
That we, more than his Perithous, possess  
The high throne in his heart.

*Emil.* I am not against your faith,  
Yet I continue mine. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*The Field of Battle before Thebes.*

*A Battle struck within. Then a Retreat. Flourish.*  
*Then enter THESEUS (Victor), the three Queens*  
*meet him, and fall on their Faces before him.*

*1st Queen.* To thee no star be dark.

*2nd Queen.* Both heaven and earth  
Friend thee for ever!

*3rd Queen.* All the good that may  
Be wish'd upon thy head, I cry amen to 't.

*Thes.* Th' impartial gods, who from the mounted  
heavens

View us their mortal herd, behold who err,  
And in their time chastise: go and find out



The bones of your dead lords, and honour them  
With treble ceremony; rather than a gap  
Should be in their dear rights, we would supply it.  
But those we will depute, which shall invest  
You in your dignities, and even each thing  
Our haste does leave imperfect; so adieu,  
And heaven's good eyes look on you; what are  
those?

[*Exeunt* QUEENS.]

[ARCITE and PAL. brought in senseless from  
their Wounds.]

*Her.* Men of great quality, as may be judg'd  
By their appointment; some of Thebes have told us  
They are sisters' children, nephews to the king.

*Thes.* By th' helm of Mars, I saw them in the  
war,

Like to a pair of lions, smear'd with prey,  
Make lanes in troops aghast. I fix'd my note  
Constantly on them; for they were a mark  
Worth a god's view: what prisoner was't that told  
me

When I inquired their names?

*Her.* We leave; they're called  
Arcite and Palamen.

*Thes.* 'Tis right, those, those,  
They are not dead?

*Her.* Nor in a state of life; had they been taken  
When their last hurts were given, 'twas possible  
They might have been recovered; yet they breatho  
And have the name of men.

*Thes.* Then like men use 'em;  
The very lees of such (millions of rates)  
Exceed the wine of others. All our surgeons  
Convent in their behoof, our richest balms  
Rather than niggard, waste, their lives concern us  
Much more than Thebes is worth, rather than  
have 'em

Freed of this plight, and in their morning state  
(Sound and at liberty) I would 'em dead,

But forty thousand fold, we had rather have 'em  
Prisoners to us, than death; bear 'em speedily  
From our kind air, to them unkind, and minister  
What man to man may do, for our sake more,  
Since I have known frights, fury, friends, behests,  
Loves, provocations, zeal, a mistress' task,  
Desire of liberty, a fever, madness,  
Hath set a mark which nature could not reach to  
Without some imposition, sickness in will  
Or wrestling strength in reason, for our love  
And great Apollo's mercy, all our best,  
Their best skill tender. Lead into the city,  
Where, having bound things scattered, we will pest  
To Athens 'fore our army. [*Flourish.* *Exeunt.*]

## SCENE V.

*Enter the* QUEENS, *with the Hearses of their* Knights,  
*in a funeral solemnity, &c.*

Urns and odours bring away, [*Music.*]  
Vapours, sighs, darken the day;  
Our dole more deadly looks than dying,  
Balmes, and gums, and heavy cheers,  
Sacred vials, fill'd with tears,  
And clamours through the wild air flying.

Come all sad, and solemn shows,  
That are quick-ey'd pleasure's foes;  
We convent nought else but woes.  
We convent, &c.

*3rd Queen.* This funeral path brings to your  
household's grave:  
Joy seize on you again: peace sleep with him.  
*2nd Queen.* And this to yours.  
*1st Queen.* Yours this way: Heavens lend  
A thousand differing ways, to one sure end.  
*3rd Queen.* This world's a city full of straying  
streets,  
And death's the market-place, where each one  
meets. [*Exeunt severally.*]

## ACT II.

SCENE I.—Athens. *A Garden, with a Tower in  
the Back-ground.*

*Enter* JAILER and WOOER.

*Jailer.* I may depart with little, while I live;<sup>13</sup>  
something I may cast to you, not much: Alas!  
the prison I keep, though it be for great ones, yet  
they seldom come; before one salmon, you shall  
take a number of minnows: I am given out to be  
better lin'd than it can appear, to me report is a  
true speaker: I would I were really that I am

delivered to be: marry, what I have (be it what it  
will) I will assure upon my daughter at the day of  
my death.

*Wooer.* Sir, I demand no more than your own  
offer, and I will estate your daughter in what I  
have promised.

*Jailer.* Well, we will talk more of this, when the  
solemnity

Is past; but have you a full promise of her?  
When that shall be seen, I tender my consent.

*Wooer.* I have, sir; here she comes.

*Enter Daughter, with Rushes.*

*Jailer.* Your friend and I have chanced to name  
You here upon the old business; but no more of  
that.

Now, so soon as the court hurry is over, we will  
Have an end of it: i' the mean time look tenderly  
To the two prisoners. I can tell you they are princes.

*Daug.* These strewings are for their chamber;  
'tis pity they

Are in prison, and 'twere pity they should be out: I  
Do think they have patience to make any adversity  
Asham'd; the prison itself is proud of 'em; and  
They have all the world in their chamber;<sup>14</sup>

*Jailer.* They are fam'd to be a pair of absolute  
men.

*Daug.* By my troth, I think fame but stammers  
'em;<sup>15</sup> they

Stand a greise above the reach of report.

*Jailer.* I heard them reported in the battle, to  
be the only doers.

*Daug.* Nay, most likely, for they are noble suf-  
ferers; I

Marvel how they would have look'd had they been  
Victors, that with such a constant nobility, enforce  
A freedom out of bondage, making misery their  
Mirth, and affliction, a toy to jest at.

*Jailer.* Do they so?

*Daug.* It seems to me they have no more sense  
of their

Captivity, than I of ruling Athens: they eat  
Well, look merrily, discourse of many things,  
But nothing of their own restraint, and disasters:  
Yet sometimes a divided sigh, martyr'd as 'twere  
P' the deliverance, will break from one of them.

When the other presently gives it so sweet a re-  
buke,

That I could wish myself a sigh to be so chid,  
Or at least a sigher to be comforted.

*Woocer.* I never saw 'em.

*Jailer.* The duke himself came privately in the  
night, [PAL. and ARCITE appear at the  
*Window of the Prison.*

And so did they; what the reason of it is, I  
Know not: look, yonder they are; that's  
Arcite looks out.

*Daug.* No, sir, no, that's Palamon: Arcite is the  
Lower of the twain; you may perceive a part  
Of him.

*Jailer.* Go to, leave your pointing; they would not  
Make us their object; out of their sight.

*Daug.* It is a holiday to look on them; Lord, the  
difference of men! [Exit.

SCENE II.—*Dungeon in the Tower.*

*Enter PALAMON and ARCITE.*

*Pal.* How do you, noble cousin?

*Arcite.* How do you, sir?

*Pal.* Why strong enough to laugh at misery,  
And bear the chance of war yet; we are prisoners  
I fear for ever, cousin.

*Arcite.* I believe it,  
And to that destiny have patiently  
Laid up my hour to come.

*Pal.* Oh, cousin Arcite!  
Where is Thebes now? where is our noble country?  
Where are our friends and kindreds? never more  
Must we behold those comforts, never see  
The hardy youths strive for the games of honour  
(Hung with the painted favours of their ladies)  
Like tall ships under sail; then start amongst 'em,  
And as an east wind leave 'em all behind us,  
Like lazy clouds, whilst Palamon and Arcite,  
Even in the wagging of a wanton leg,  
Outstrip the people's praises, won the garlands,  
Ere they have time to wish 'em ours. O, never  
Shall we two exercise, like twins of honour,  
Our arms again, and feel our fiery horses  
Like proud seas under us; our good swords, now  
(Better the red-ey'd god of war ne'er wore)  
Bravish'd our sides, like age must run to rust,  
And deck the temples of those gods that hate us;  
These hands shall never draw 'em out like lightning  
To blast whole armies more.

*Arcite.* No, Palamon,  
Those hopes are prisoners with us: here we are,  
And here the graces of our youth must wither,  
Like a too-timely spring; here age must find us,  
And, which is heaviest, (Palamon) unmarried;  
The sweet embraces of a loving wife,  
Laden with kisses, arm'd with thousand cupids,  
Shall never clasp our necks, no issue know us,  
No figures of ourselves shall we e'er see,  
To glad our age, and like young eagles teach 'em  
Boldly to gaze against bright armies, and say,  
Remember what your fathers were, and conquer.  
The fair-ey'd maids shall weep our banishments,  
And in their songs curse ever-blinded fortune  
Till she for shame see what a wrong she has done  
To youth and nature; this is all our world;  
We shall know nothing here but one another,  
Hear nothing but the clock that tells our woes.  
The vine shall grow, but we shall never see it:  
Summer shall come, and with her all delights;  
But dead-cold winter must inhabit here still.

*Pal.* 'Tis too true, Arcite. To our Theban  
 bounds,  
 That shook the aged forest with their echoes,  
 No more now must we holloa, no more shake  
 Our pointed javelins, whilst the angry swine  
 Flies like a Parthian quiver from our rages,  
 Struck with our well-steel'd darts: all valiant uses,  
 (The food and nourishment of noble minds,)  
 In us two here shall perish; we shall die  
 (Which is the curse of honour) lastly,<sup>16</sup>  
 Children of grief, and ignorance.

*Arcite.* Yet, cousin,  
 Even from the bottom of these miseries,  
 From all that fortune can inflict upon us,  
 I see two comforts rising, two mere blessings,  
 If the gods please, to hold here a brave patience,  
 And the enjoying of our griefs together.  
 Whilst Palamon is with me, let me perish  
 If I think this our prison.

*Pal.* Certainly;  
 'Tis a main goodness, cousin, that our fortunes  
 Were twined together; 'tis most true, two souls  
 Put in two noble bodies, let 'em suffer  
 The gall of hazard, so they grow together,  
 Will never sink: they must not, say they could.  
 A willing man dies sleeping, and all's done.

*Arcite.* Shall we make worthy uses of this place,  
 That all men hate so much?

*Pal.* How, gentle cousin?

*Arcite.* Let's think this prison holy sanctuary,  
 To keep us from corruption of worse men;  
 We are young, and yet desire the ways of honour,  
 That liberty and common conversation,  
 (The poison of pure spirits,) might, like women,  
 Woo us to wander from. What worthy blessing  
 Can be, but our imaginations  
 May make it ours? And here, being thus together,  
 We are an endless mine to one another:  
 We are one another's wife, ever begetting  
 New births of love; we are father, friends, acquaint-  
 ance;

We are in one another, families;  
 I am your heir, and you are mine: this place  
 Is our inheritance: no hard oppressor  
 Dare take this from us; here, with a little patience,  
 We shall live long, and loving: no surfeits seek us:  
 The hand of war hurts none here, nor the seas  
 Swallow their youth: were we at liberty,  
 A wife might part us lawfully, or business  
 Quarrels consume us, envy of ill men  
 Crave our acquaintance; I might sicken, cousin,  
 Where you should never know it, and so perish  
 Without your noble hand to close mine eyes,

Or prayers to the gods; a thousand chances  
 Were we from hence, would sever us.

*Pal.* You have made me  
 (I thank you, cousin Arcite,) almost wanton  
 With my captivity: what a misery  
 It is to live abroad! and every where:  
 'Tis like a beast methinks: I find the court here,  
 I am sure a more content, and all those pleasures  
 That woo the wills of men to vanity,  
 I see through now, and am sufficient  
 To tell the world, 'tis but a gaudy shadow,  
 That old Time, as he passes by, takes with him.  
 What had we been old in the court of Creon,  
 Where sin is justice—lust and ignorance  
 The virtues of the great ones: cousin Arcite,  
 Had not the loving gods found this place for us,  
 We had died as they do, ill old men, unwept,  
 And had their epitaphs, the people's curses.  
 Shall I say more?

*Arcite.* I would hear you still.

*Pal.* Ye shall.  
 Is there record of any two that lov'd  
 Better than we do, Arcite?

*Arcite.* Sure there cannot.

*Pal.* I do not think it possible our friendship  
 Should ever leave us.

*Arcite.* Till our deaths it cannot,

*Enter EMILIA and her Woman in the Garden.*

And after death our spirits shall be led  
 To those that love eternally. Speak on, sir.  
 This garden has a world of pleasures in 't.

*Emil.* What flower is this?

*Wom.* 'Tis called Narcissus, madam.

*Emil.* That was a fair boy certain, but a fool;  
 To love himself; were there not maids enough?

*Arcite.* Pray forward.

*Pal.* Yes.

*Emil.* Or were they all hard-hearted?

*Wom.* They could not be to one so fair.

*Emil.* Thou wouldst not?

*Wom.* I think I should not, madam.

*Emil.* That's a good wench:

But take heed to your kindness, though.

*Wom.* Why, madam?

*Emil.* Men are mad things.

*Arcite.* Will you go forward, cousin?

*Emil.* Canst not thou work such flowers in silk,  
 wench?

*Wom.* Yes.

*Emil.* I'll have a gown full of 'em and of these;  
 This is a pretty colour; wil't not do  
 Rarely upon a skirt, wench?

*Wom.* Dainty, madam.

*Arcite.* Cousin, cousin, how do you, sir? Why, Palamon?

*Pal.* Never till now I was in prison, Arcite.

*Arcite.* Why, what's the matter, man?

*Pal.* Behold, and wonder.

By heaven, she is a goddess!

*Arcite.* Ha!

*Pal.* Do reverence.

She is a goddess, Arcite.

*Emil.* Of all flowers,  
Methinks a rose is best.

*Wom.* Why, gentle madam?

*Emil.* It is the very emblem of a maid;  
For when the west wind courts her gently,  
How modestly she blows, and paints the sun  
With her chaste blushes? When the north comes  
near her,

Rude and impatient, then, like Chastity,  
She locks her beauties in her bud again,  
And leaves him to base briars.

*Wom.* Yet, good madam,  
Sometimes her modesty will blow so far  
She falls for't; a maid

If she have any honour, would be loth  
To take example by her.

*Emil.* Thou art wanton.

*Arcite.* She is wondrous fair!

*Pal.* She is all the beauty extant!

*Emil.* The sun grows high, let's walk in; keep  
these flowers,

We'll see how near art can come near their colours:  
I am wondrous merry-hearted, I could laugh now.

*Wom.* I could lie down, I am sure.

*Emil.* And take one with you?

*Wom.* That's as we bargain, madam.

*Emil.* Well, agree then. [*Exeunt EMIL. and WOM.*]

*Pal.* What think you of this beauty?

*Arcite.* 'Tis a rare one.

*Pal.* Is't but a rare one?

*Arcite.* Yes, a matchless beauty.

*Pal.* Might not a man well lose himself and love  
her?

*Arcite.* I cannot tell what you have done, I have,  
Beshrew mine eyes for't, now I feel my shackles.

*Pal.* You love her, then?

*Arcite.* Who would not?

*Pal.* And desire her?

*Arcite.* Before my liberty.

*Pal.* I saw her first.

*Arcite.* That's nothing.

*Pal.* But it shall be.

*Arcite.* I saw her too.

*Pal.* Yes, but you must not love her.

*Arcite.* I will not as you do; to worship her;  
As she is heavenly, and a blessed goddess;  
(I love her as a woman, to enjoy her)  
So both may love.

*Pal.* You shall not love at all.

*Arcite.* Not love at all?

Who shall deny me?

*Pal.* I that first saw her; I that took possession  
First with mine eye of all those beauties  
In her reveal'd to mankind: if thou lov'st her,  
Or entertain'st a hope to blast my wishes,  
Thou art a traitor, Arcite, and a fellow  
False as thy title to her: friendship, blood,  
And all the ties between us I disclaim,  
If thou once think upon her.

*Arcite.* Yes, I love her,  
And if the lives of all my name lay on it,  
I must do so. I love her with my soul!

If that will lose ye, farewell, Palamon.  
I say again I love, and, in loving her, maintain  
I am as worthy and as free a lover,  
And have as just a title to her beauty  
As any Palamon, or any living  
That is a man's son.

*Pal.* Have I called thee friend?

*Arcite.* Yes, and have found me so. Why are  
you mov'd thus?  
Let me deal coldly with you: am not I  
Part of your blood—part of your soul? You have  
told me

That I was Palamon and you were Arcite.

*Pal.* Yes.

*Arcite.* Am not I liable to those affections,  
Those joys, griefs, angers, fears, my friend shall  
suffer?

*Pal.* Ye may be.

*Arcite.* Why, then, would you deal so cunningly,  
So strangely, so unlike a noble kinsman,  
To love alone? Speak truly: do you think me  
Unworthy of her sight?

*Pal.* No; but unjust  
If thou pursue that sight.

*Arcite.* Because another  
First sees the enemy, shall I stand still,  
And let mine honour down, and never charge?

*Pal.* Yes, if he be but one.

*Arcite.* But say that one  
Had rather combat me!

*Pal.* Let that one say so,  
And use thy freedom; else if thou pursnest her,  
Be as that cursed man that hates his country,  
A branded villain!

*Arcite.* You are mad.

*Pal.* I must be,  
Till thou art worthy, *Arcite*; it concerns me.  
And in this madness, if I hazard thee  
And take thy life, I deal but truly.

*Arcite.* Fie, sir!  
You play the child extremely. I will love her;  
I must, I ought to do so, and I dare,  
And all this justly.

*Pal.* Oh, that now! that now!  
Thy false self and thy friend had but this fortune,  
To be one hour at liberty, and grasp  
Our good swords in our hands! I would quickly  
teach thee

What 'twere to filch affection from another.  
Thou art baser in it than a cutpurse!  
Put but thy head out of this window more,  
And, as I have a soul, I'll nail thy life to 't.

*Arcite.* Thou dar'st not, fool! Thou can'st not!  
thou art feeble.  
Put my head out! I'll throw my body out,  
And leap the garden, when I see her next,  
And pitch between her arms to anger thee.

*Enter Jailer.*

*Pal.* No more! the jailor's coming. I shall live  
To knock thy brains out with my shackles.

*Arcite.* Do!

*Jailor.* By your leave, gentlemen!

*Pal.* Now, honest keeper?

*Jailor.* Lord *Arcite*, you must presently to th'  
duke:

The cause I know not yet.

*Arcite.* I am ready, keeper.

*Jailor.* Prince *Palamon*, I must awhile bereave  
you  
Of your fair cousin's company.

[*Exeunt ARSITE and Jailer.*

*Pal.* And me too,  
Even when you please, of life. Why is he sent for?  
It may be he shall marry her: he's goodly,  
And like enough the duke hath taken notice  
Both of his blood and body. But his falsehood!  
Why should a friend be treacherous? If that  
Get him a wife so noble and so fair,  
Let honest men ne'er love again. Once more  
I would but see this fair one: blessed garden,  
And fruit, and flowers more blessed, that still blos-  
som

As her bright eyes shine on ye! Would I were,  
For all the fortune of my life hereafter,  
Yon little tree, yon blooming apricot!  
How I would spread and fling my wanton arms

In at her window. I would bring her fruit  
Fit for the gods to feed on: youth and pleasure,  
Still as she tasted, should be doubled on her;  
And if she be not heavenly, I would make her  
So near the gods in nature, they should fear her,

*Enter Jailer.*

And then I am sure she would love me. How now  
keeper?

Where's *Arcite*?

*Jailor.* Banished. Prince *Perithous*  
Obtained his liberty; but never more,  
Upon his oath and life, must he set foot  
Upon this kingdom.

*Pal.* He's a blessed man!  
He shall see *Thebes* again, and call to arms  
The bold young men that, when he bids 'em charge,  
Fall on like fire. *Arcite* shall have a fortune,  
If he dare make himself a worthy lover,  
Yet in the field to strike a battle for her;  
And if he lose her then, he's a cold coward.  
How bravely may he bear himself to win her,  
If he be noble *Arcite*! Thousand ways.  
Were I at liberty, I would do things  
Of such a virtuous greatness, that this lady—  
This blushing virgin—should take manhood to her,  
And seek to ravish me.

*Jailor.* My lord, for you  
I have this charge, too.

*Pal.* To discharge my life?

*Jailor.* No; but from this place to remove your  
lordship.

The windows are too open.

*Pal.* Devils take 'em,  
That are so envious to me. *Prithee* kill me.

*Jailor.* And hang for't afterward?

*Pal.* By this good light,  
Had I a sword I would kill thee.

*Jailor.* Why, my lord?

*Pal.* Thou bring'st such pelting scurvy news  
continually,  
Thou art not worthy life. I will not go.

*Jailor.* Indeed, you must, my lord.

*Pal.* May I see the garden?

*Jailor.* No.

*Pal.* Then I am resolved I will not go.

*Jailor.* I must constrain you, then; and for you  
are dangerous,

I'll clap more irons on you.

*Pal.* Do, good keeper!

I'll shake 'em so, ye shall not sleep.

I'll make ye a new morris. Must I go?

*Jailor.* There is no remedy.

*Pal.* Farewell, kind window!  
 May rude wind never hurt thee. Oh, my lady!  
 If ever thou hast felt what sorrow was,  
 Dream how I suffer. Come, now bury me!  
 [*Exeunt PAL. and Jailor.*]

SCENE III.—*The Country near Athens.*

*Enter ARSITE.*

*Arcite.* Banish'd the kingdom! 'Tis a benefit,  
 A mercy I must thank 'em for; but banish'd  
 The free enjoying of that face I die for—  
 Oh, 'twas a studied punishment—a death  
 Beyond imagination. Such a vengeance,  
 That were I old and wicked, all my sins  
 Could never pluck upon me. Palamon,  
 Thou hast the start now; thou shalt stay and see  
 Her bright eyes break each morning 'gainst thy  
 window,

And let in life unto thee: thou shalt feed  
 Upon the sweetness of a noble beauty,  
 That nature ne'er exceeded, nor ever shall.  
 Good gods! what happiness has Palamon!  
 Twenty to one, he'll come to speak to her,  
 And if she be as gentle as she's fair,  
 I know she's his. He has a tongue will tame  
 Tempests, and make the wild rocks wanton. Come  
 what can come,  
 The worst is death. I will not leave the kingdom:  
 I know mine own is but a heap of ruins,  
 And no redress there. If I go, he has her!  
 I am resolv'd another shape shall make me,  
 Or end my fortunes. Either way I am happy:  
 I'll see her, and be near her, or no more.

*Enter Four Country People, and one with a Garland  
 before them.*

*1st Cou.* My masters, I'll be there, that's certain.

*2nd Cou.* And I'll be there.

*3rd Cou.* And I.

*4th Cou.* Why, then, have with ye, boys! 'Tis  
 but a chiding.

Let the plough play to-day; I'll tickle 't out  
 Of the jades' tails to-morrow.

*1st Cou.* I am sure  
 To have my wife as jealous as a Turkey:  
 But that's all one; I'll go through; let her  
 mumble.

*2nd Cou.* Clap her aboard to-morrow night, and  
 stow her,  
 And all's made up again.

*3rd Cou.* Aye, do but put a fescue in her fist,<sup>17</sup>  
 and you shall see her

Take a new lesson out, and be a good wench.  
 Do we all hold against the Maying?

*4th Cou.* Hold! What should ail us?

*3rd Cou.* Arcas will be there.

*2nd Cou.* And Sennois,  
 And Ryeas; and three better lads never danced  
 under green tree;  
 And ye know what wenches—ha!  
 But will the dainty domine, the schoolmaster, keep  
 touch,

Do you think? for he does all, ye know.

*3rd Cou.* He'll eat a horn-book ere he fail: go to,  
 The matter's too far driven between  
 Him and the tanner's daughter, to let slip now;  
 And she must see the duke, and she must dance,  
 too.

*4th Cou.* Shall we be lusty?

*2nd Cou.* All the boys in Athens  
 Blow wind i' th' breach on us; and here I'll be,  
 And there I'll be,  
 For our town; and here again, and there again.  
 Ha! boys! heigh for the weavers!

*1st Cou.* This must be done i' th' woods.

*4th Cou.* Oh, pardon me.

*2nd Cou.* By any means; our thing of learning  
 says so;

Where he himself will edify the duke  
 Most parlously in our behalfs. He's excellent  
 i' th' woods;

Bring him to the plains: his learning makes no cry.

*3rd Cou.* We'll see the sports; then every man  
 to 's tackle: and,  
 Sweet companions, let's rehearse by any means,  
 before

The ladies see us, and do sweetly; and God knows  
 what

May come on't.

*4th Cou.* Content: the sports once ended, we'll  
 perform.

Away, boys, and hold.

*Arcite.* By your leaves, honest friends: pray you,  
 whither go you?

*4th Cou.* Whither? Why, what a question's  
 that!

*Arcite.* Yes, 'tis a question to me that know not.

*3rd Cou.* To the games, my friend.

*2nd Cou.* Where were you bred, you know it  
 not?

*Arcite.* Not far sir:

Are there such games to day?

*1st Cou.* Yes, marry, are there,  
 And such as you ne'er saw. The duke himself  
 Will be in person there.

*Arcite.* What pastimes are they?

*2nd Cou.* Wrestling and running. 'Tis a pretty fellow.

*3rd Cou.* Thou wilt not go along?

*Arcite.* Not yet, sir.

*4th Cou.* Well, sir,

Take your own time. Come, boys!

*1st Cou.* My mind misgives me,

This fellow has a vengeance trick o' th' hip:

Mark how his body's made for 't.

*2nd Cou.* I'll be hanged, though,

If he dare venture. Hang him! plum porridge!

He wrestle? he roast eggs? Come, let's be gone, lads. [*Exeunt.*]

*Arcite.* This is an offered opportunity I durst not wish for. Well, I could have wrestled, The best men call'd it excellent, and run Swifter, than wind upon a field of corn (Curling the wealthy ears) never flew: I'll venture, And in some poor disguise be there; who knows Whether my brows may not be girt with garlands? And happiness prefer me to a place, Where I may ever dwell in sight of her. [*Exit ARSITE.*]

SCENE IV.—Athens. *A Room in the Prison.*

*Enter Jailer's Daughter alone.*

*Daugh.* Why should I love this gentleman? 'Tis odd

He never will affect me; I am base,  
My father the mean keeper of his prison,  
And he a prince; to marry him is hopeless;  
To be his whore, is witless; out upon 't;  
What pushes are we wenches driven to  
When fifteen once has found us; first I saw him,  
I (seeing) thought he was a goodly man;  
He has as much to please a woman in him,  
(If he please to bestow it so) as ever  
These eyes yet look'd on; next, I pitied him,  
And so would any young wench o' my conscience,  
That ever dream'd, or vow'd her maidenhead  
To a young handsome man; then I lov'd him,  
(Extremely lov'd him) infinitely lov'd him;  
And yet he had a cousin, fair as he too.  
But in my heart was Palamon, and there,  
Lord, what a coil he keeps! To hear him  
Sing in an evening, what a heaven it is!  
And yet his songs are sad ones; fairer spoken,  
Was never gentlemans. When I come in  
To bring him water in a morning, first  
He bows his noble body, then salutes me, thus:  
"Fair, gentle maid, good morrow! may thy goodness,  
Get thee a happy husband!" Once he kissed me;

I lov'd my lips the better ten days after.

Would he would do so every day! He grieves much,  
And me as much to see his misery.

What should I do, to make him know I love him?

For I would fain enjoy him. Say I ventur'd

To set him free: what says the law then?—Thus much

For law, or kindred: I will do it,

And this night, or to-morrow, he shall love me. [*Exit.*]

SCENE V.—*An Open Place in the City.*

*A short Flourish of Cornets, and shouts within.*

*Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLITA, PERITHOUS, EMILIA, ARSITE, in the Habit of a Wrestler, with a Garland, &c.*

*Thes.* You have done worthily; I have not seen,  
Since Hercules, a man of tougher sinews;  
Whate'er you are, you run the best, and wrestle,  
That these times can allow.

*Arcite.* I am proud to please you.

*Thes.* What country bred you?

*Arcite.* This; but far off, prince.

*Thes.* Are you a gentleman?

*Arcite.* My father said so;  
And to those gentle uses gave me life.<sup>18</sup>

*Thes.* Are you his heir?

*Arcite.* His youngest, sir.

*Thes.* Your father  
Sure is a happy sire then: what proves you?<sup>19</sup>

*Arcite.* A little of all noble qualities:  
I could have kept a hawk, and well have hollow'd  
To a deep cry of dogs; I dare not praise  
My feat in horsemanship: yet they that knew me,  
Would say it was my best piece: last and greatest,  
I would be thought a soldier.

*Thes.* You are perfect.

*Peri.* Upon my soul, a proper man.

*Emil.* He is so.

*Peri.* How do you like him, lady?  
*Hip.* I admire him.  
I have not seen so young a man, so noble  
(If he say true) of his sort.

*Emil.* Believe me,  
His mother was a wondrous handsome woman:  
His face, methinks, goes that way.

*Hip.* But his body  
And fiery mind, illustrate a brave father.

*Peri.* Mark how his virtue, like a hidden sun,  
Breaks through his baser garments.

*Hip.* He's well got, sure.

*Thes.* What made you seek this place, sir?

*Arcite.* Noble Theseus,

To purchase name, and do my ablest service  
To such a well-found wonder, as thy worth;  
For only in thy court, of all the world,  
Dwells fair-eyed honour.

*Peri.* All his words are worthy.

*Thes.* Sir, we are much indebted to your travel,  
Nor shall you lose your wish: Perithous,  
Dispose of this fair gentleman.

*Peri.* Thanks, Theseus.

Whate'er you are, you're mine, and I shall give you  
To a most noble service,—to this lady,  
This bright young virgin; pray observe her goodness;  
You have honoured her fair birth-day with your  
virtues,

And as your due you're hers: kiss her fair hand, sir.

*Arcite.* Sir, you're a noble giver: dearest beauty,  
Thus let me seal my vow'd faith: when your servant  
(Your most unworthy creature) but offends you,  
Command him die, he shall.

*Emil.* That were too cruel.

If you deserve well, sir, I shall soon see't;  
You're mine, and somewhat better than your rank,  
I'll use you.

*Peri.* I'll see you furnish'd; and because you  
say

You are a horseman, I must needs entreat you  
This afternoon to ride, but 'tis a rough one.

*Arcite.* I like him better (Prince) I shall not then  
freeze in my saddle.

*Thes.* Sweet, you must be ready,  
And you Emilia, and you (friend) and all,  
To-morrow by the sun, to do observance  
To flowery May, in Dian's wood: wait well, sir,  
Upon your mistress: Emilia, I hope  
He shall not go a-foot.

*Emil.* That were a shame, sir,  
While I have horses; take your choice, and what  
You want at any time, let me but know it;  
If you serve faithfully, I dare assure you,  
You'll find a loving mistress.

*Arcite.* If do not,  
Let me find that my father ever hated,  
Disgrace and blows.

*Thes.* Go, lead the way, you have won it:  
It shall be so; you shall receive all dues  
Fit for the honour you have won; 'twere wrong  
else.

Sister, beshrew my heart, you have a servant,

That if I were a woman, would be master.  
But you are wise.

*Emil.* I hope too wise for that, sir.  
[*Flourish. Excunt omnes.*]

SCENE VI.—*A Room in the Prison.*

*Enter Jailor's Daughter alone.*

*Daugh.* Let all the dukes, and all the devils roar,  
He is at liberty: I have ventur'd for him,  
And out I have brought him to a little wood  
A mile hence; I have sent him, where a cedar,  
Higher than all the rest, spreads like a plain,<sup>20</sup>  
Fast by a brook, and there he shall keep close,  
Till I provide him files, and food, for yet  
His iron bracelets are not off. Oh, love,  
What a stout-hearted child thou art! My father  
Durst better have endur'd cold iron, than done it:  
I love him beyond love, and beyond reason,  
Or wit, or safety: I have made him know it;  
I care not, I am desperate; if the law  
Find me, and then condemn me for't, some wenches,  
Some honest-hearted maids, will sing my dirge,  
And tell to memory my death was noble,  
Dying almost a martyr: that way he takes,  
I purpose is my way too: sure he cannot  
Be so unmanly, as to leave me here;  
If he do, maids will not so easily  
Trust men again: and yet he has not thank'd me  
For what I have done: no, not so much as kiss'd me,  
And that, methinks, is not so well; nor scarcely  
Could I persuade him to become a freeman,  
He made such scruples of the wrong he did  
To me and to my father. Yet, I hope,  
When he considers more, this love of mine  
Will take more root within him. Let him do  
What he will with me, so he use me kindly;  
For use me so he shall, or I'll proclaim him,  
And to his face, no man. I'll presently  
Provide him necessaries, and pack my clothes up,  
And where there is a path of ground I'll venture,  
So he be with me. By him, like a shadow,  
I'll ever dwell. Within this hour, the hubbub  
Will be all o'er the prison: I am then  
Kissing the man they look for. Farewell, father!  
Get many more such prisoners, and such daughters,  
And shortly you may keep yourself. Now to him.  
[*Exit.*]



## ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Forest. Cornets in sundry places.  
Noise and hallooing, as of People Maying.*

*Enter ARCITE alone.*

*Arcite.* The duke has lost Hippolita; each took  
A several laund. This is a solemn rite  
They owe bloom'd May, and the Athenians pay it  
To th' heart of ceremony. Oh, queen Emilia!  
Fresher than May! sweeter  
Than her gold buttons on the boughs! or all  
Th' enamell'd knacks o' th' mead or garden! Yea,  
We challenge, too, the bank of any nymph  
That makes the stream seem flowers. Thou, oh,  
jewel  
O' th' wood—o' th' world—hast likewise blest a  
place  
With thy sole presence, in thy rumination,  
That I, poor man! might eftsouous come between,  
And chop on some cold thought. Thrice blessed  
chance!

To drop on such a mistress! expectation  
Most guiltless on 't. Tell me, oh, lady Fortune,  
Next after Emily, my sovereign, how far  
I may be proud. She takes strong note of me,  
Hath made me near her; and this beauteous morn,  
The primest of all the year, presents me with  
A brace of horses: two such steeds might well  
Be, by a pair of kings, backed in a field  
That their crowns' titles tried. Alas, alas!  
Poor cousin Palamon! poor prisoner! thou  
So little dream'st upon my fortune, that thou  
Think'st thyself the happier thing to be  
So near Emilia: me thou deem'st at Thebes,  
And therein wretched, although free. But if  
Thou knew'st my mistress breathed on me, and  
that  
I ear'd her language, lived in her eye—oh, coz,  
What passion would enclose thee.

*Enter PALAMON, as out of a Bush, with his Shackles:  
bends his Fist at Arcite.*

*Pal.* Traitor kinsman,  
Thou shouldst perceive my passion, if these signs  
Of prisonment were off me, and this hand  
But owner of a sword. By all oaths in one,  
I and the justice of my love would make thee  
A confess'd traitor. Oh, thou most perfidious  
That ever gently look'd! the void'st of honour,  
That e'er bore gentle token! Falsest cousin

That ever blood made kin, call'st thou her thine?  
I'll prove it in my shackles, with these hands,  
Void of appointment, that thou liest, and art  
A very thief in love—a chaffy lord,  
Nor worth the name of villain.<sup>21</sup> Had I a sword,  
And these house clogs away—

*Arcite.* Dear cousin, Palamon—

*Pal.* Cousiner Arcite, give me language such  
As thou hast shewed me feat!

*Arcite.* Not finding in  
The circuit of my breast any gross stuff  
To form me like your blazon, holds me to  
This gentleness of answer: 'tis your passion  
That thus mistakes, the which to you being enemy,  
Cannot to me be kind. Honour and honesty  
I cherish and depend on, howsoe'er  
You skip them in me; and with them, fair coz,  
I'll maintain my proceedings. Pray, be pleased  
To show, in generous terms, your griefs, since  
That your question's with your equal, who professes  
To clear his own way with the mind and sword  
Of a true gentleman.

*Pal.* That thou durst, Arcite.

*Arcite.* My coz, my coz! you have been well ad-  
vertis'd

How much I dare: you've seen me use my sword  
Against the advice of fear. Sure, of another  
You would not hear me doubted; but your silence  
Should break out, though i' th' sanctuary.

*Pal.* Sir,

I have seen you move in such a place, which well  
Might justify your manhood: you were called  
A good knight and a bold. But the whole week's  
not fair  
If any day it rain. Their valiant temper  
Men lose when they incline to treachery;  
And then they fight like compell'd bears; would fly  
Were they not tied.

*Arcite.* Kinsman, you might as well  
Speak this, and act it in your glass, as to  
His ear, which now disdainus you.

*Pal.* Come up to me,  
Quit me of these cold gyves, give me a sword,  
Though it be rusty, and the charity  
Of one meal lend me: come before me, then,  
A good sword in thy hand, and do but say  
That Emily is thine, I will forgive  
The trespass thou hast done me; yea, my life,  
If then thou carry't, and brave souls in shades

That have died manly, which will seek of me  
Some news from earth, they shall get none but this,  
That thou art brave and noble.

*Arcite.* Be content ;  
Again betake you to your hawthorn house :  
With counsel of the night I will be here,  
With wholesome viands : these impediments  
Will I file off, you shall have garments and  
Perfumes to kill the smell o' th' prison, after  
When you shall stretch yourself, and say but "Arcite  
I am in plight," there shall be at your choice  
Both sword and armour.

*Pal.* Oh, you heavens ! dares any  
So noble bear a guilty business ? None,  
But only Arcite ; therefore, none but Arcite  
In this kind is so bold.

*Arcite.* Sweet Palamon !

*Pal.* I do embrace you and your offer ; for  
Your offer do't I only. Sir, your person,  
Without hypocrisy, I may not wish  
[*Sound of Horns without.*  
More than my sword's edge on 't.

*Arcite.* You hear the horns :  
Enter your music quick,<sup>22</sup> lest this match between's  
Be cross'd or met. Give me your hand ; farewell !  
I'll bring you every needful thing. I pray you  
Take comfort and be strong.

*Pal.* Pray hold your promise ;  
And do the deed, with a bent brow ; most certain  
You love me not ; be rough with me, and pour  
This oil out of your language ; by this air  
I could for each word give a cuff, my stomach  
Not reconciled by reason.

*Arcite.* Plainly spoken ;  
Yet pardon me hard language : when I spur  
[*Horns again.*

My horse I chide him not—content and anger  
In me have but one face. Hark, sir ! they call  
The scattered to the banquet : you must guess  
I have an office there.

*Pal.* Sir, your attendance  
Cannot please heaven ; and I know your office  
Unjustly is achieved.

*Arcite.* I've a good title,<sup>23</sup>  
I am persuaded. This question sick between us  
By bleeding must be cured. I am a suitor,  
That to your sword you will bequeath this plea,  
And talk of it no more.

*Pal.* But this one word :  
You are going now to gaze upon my mistress,  
For, note you, mine she is !

*Arcite.* Nay, then—

*Pal.* Nay, pray you :

You talk of feeding me to breed me strength ;  
You are going now to look upon a sun  
That strengthens what it looks on :  
There you have a 'vantage o'er me ; but enjoy 't  
till  
I may enforce my remedy. Farewell ! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Another part of the Forest.*

*Enter Jailer's Daughter alone.*

*Daugh.* He has mistook the brake I meant ;<sup>24</sup>  
is gone  
After his fancy. 'Tis now well nigh morning .  
No matter ; would it were perpetual night,  
And darkness lord o' th' world ! Hark ! 'tis a  
wolf :

In me hath grief slain fear, and but for one thing,  
I care for nothing, and that's Palamon.  
I reckon not if the wolves would jaw me, so  
He had this file. What if I halloo'd for him ?  
I cannot halloo. If I whoop'd, what then ?  
If he not answered, I should call a wolf,  
And do him but that service. I have heard  
Strange howls this live-long night : why may't  
not be

They have made prey of him ? He has no weapons,  
He cannot run, the jingling of his gyves  
Might call fell things to listen, who have in them  
A sense to know a man unarm'd, and can  
Smell where resistance is. I'll set it down  
He's torn to pieces ; they howl'd many together,  
And then they fed on him. So much for that.  
Be bold to ring the bell ; how stand I then ?  
All's char'd when he is gone. No, no, I lie !  
My father's to be hanged for his escape,  
Myself to beg, if I priz'd life so much  
As to deny my act ; but that I would not,  
Should I try death by dozens. I am mop'd :  
Food took I none these two days,  
'Cept some water. I have not clos'd mine eyes,  
Save when my lids scoured off their brine. Alas !  
Dissolve my life. Let not my sense unsettle,  
Lest I should drown, or stab, or hang myself.  
Oh, state of nature ! fail together in me,  
Since thy best props are warp'd. So, which way  
now ?

The best way is the next way to a grave ;  
Each errant step beside is torment. Lo !  
The moon is down, the crickets chirp, the screech  
owl

Calls in the dawn ; all offices are done  
Save what I fail in. But the point is this,  
An end, and that is all. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*The Forest as in Scene I.**Enter ARCITE, with Meat, Wine, and Files.*

*Arcite.* I should be near the place. Ho! cousin Palamon!

*Enter PALAMON.*

*Pal.* Arcite!

*Arcite.* The same! I have brought you food and files.

Come forth, and fear not! Here's no Theseus.

*Pal.* Nor none so honest, Arcite.

*Arcite.* That's no matter;

We'll argue that hereafter. Come, take courage, You shall not die thus beastly: here, sir, drink, I know you are faint, then I'll talk further with you.

*Pal.* Arcite, thou mightst now poison me.

*Arcite.* I might;

But I must fear you first. Sit down, and good now, No more of these vain parleys; let us not, Having our ancient reputation with us,

Make talk for fools and cowards. To your health.

*Pal.* Do. [*Drinks.*]

*Arcite.* Pray, sit down, then, and let me entreat you,

By all the honesty and honour in you, No mention of this woman: 'twill disturb us. We shall have time enough.

*Pal.* Well, sir, I'll pledge you.

*Arcite.* Drink a good hearty draught; it breeds good blood, man.

Do not you feel it thaw you?

*Pal.* Stay, I'll tell you after a draught or two more.

*Arcite.* Spare it not, the duke has more, coz: eat now.

*Pal.* Yes.

*Arcite.* I am glad you have so good a stomach.

*Pal.* I am gladder I have so good meat to 't.

*Arcite.* Is't not mad lodging here in the wild woods, cousin?

*Pal.* Yes, for them that have wild consciences.

*Arcite.* How tastes your victuals? your hunger needs no sauce, I see.

*Pal.* Not much.

But if it did, yours is too tart: sweet cousin, what is this?

*Arcite.* Venison.

*Pal.* 'Tis a lusty meat:

Give me more wine. Here, Arcite, to the wenches

We have known in our days. The lord steward's daughter;

Do you remember her?

*Arcite.* After you, coz.

*Pal.* She lov'd a black-hair'd man.

*Arcite.* She did so; well, sir.

*Pal.* And I have heard some call him Arcite, and —

*Arcite.* Out with 't faith.

*Pal.* She met him in an arbour:

What did she there, coz? play o'the virginals?

*Arcite.* Something she did, sir.

*Pal.* Made her groan a month for 't, or two, or three, or ten.

*Arcite.* The marshal's sister

Had her share too, as I remember, cousin,

Else there be tales abroad; you'll pledge her?

*Pal.* Yes.

*Arcite.* A pretty brown wench 'tis. There was a time

When young men went a hunting, and a wood, And a broad beech: and thereby hangs a tale: heigh, ho!

*Pal.* For Emily, upon my life!—Fool, Away with this strain'd mirth; I say again, That sigh was breath'd for Emily; base cousin, Dar'st thou break first?

*Arcite.* Your are wide.

*Pal.* By heaven and earth, there's nothing in thee honest!

*Arcite.* Then I'll leave you: you are a beast now.

*Pal.* As thou mak'st me, traitor.

*Arcite.* There's all things needful, files, and shirts, and perfumes:

I'll come again some two hours hence, and bring That that shall quiet all.

*Pal.* A sword and armour.

*Arcite.* Fear me not; you are now too foul: farewell.

Get off your trinkets, you shall want nought.

*Pal.* Sirrah!

*Arcite.* I'll hear no more. [*Exit.*]

*Pal.* If he keep touch, he dies for 't. [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.—*Another part of the Forest.**Enter Jailor's Daughter.*

*Daugh.* I am very cold, and all the stars are out, too;

The little stars, and all, that look like aiglets:

The sun has seen my folly: Palamon!

Alas, no! he's in heaven! where am I now?

Yonder's the sea, and there's a ship; how't tumbles,

And there's a rock lies watching under water;  
Now, now, it beats upon it; now, now now,  
There's a leak sprung, a sound one, how they cry—  
Upon her before the wind, you'll lose all else:  
Up with a course or two, and tack about, boys.  
Good night, good night, you're gone: I am very  
hungry,

Would I could find a fine frog; he would tell me  
News from all parts of the world; then would I  
make

A earrack of a cockle-shell, and sail  
By east and north-east to the king of Pigmies,  
For he tells fortunes rarely. Now, my father,  
Twenty to one is trussed up in a trice  
To-morrow morning, I'll say never a word.

For I'll cut my green coat, a foot above my knee, [*Sings.*  
And I'll clip my yellow locks, an inch below mine e'e.

Hey, nonny, nonny, nonny.

He'll buy me a white cut, forth for to ride,  
And I'll go seek him through the world that is so wide.

Hey, nonny, nonny, nonny.

O for a prick now like a nightingale, to put my  
breast against:<sup>25</sup>

I shall sleep like a top else.

SCENE V.—*Another part of the Forest.*

*Enter a Schoolmaster, four Countrymen, and  
Bavian,<sup>26</sup> two or three Wenches, with a Taborer.*

*School.* Fie, fie,

What tediousity and dissensanity  
Is here among ye! Have my rudiments  
Been labour'd so long with ye? milk'd unto ye,  
And, by a figure, even the very plumbroth  
And marrow of my understanding laid upon ye,  
And do you still cry where, and how, and where-  
fore?

You most coarse frieze capacities, ye jave judg-  
ments,<sup>27</sup>

Have I said, thus let be, and there let be,  
And then let be, and no man understand me;

*Prob Deum, medius fidius,* ye are all dunces:  
For why? here stand I; here the duke comes;  
there are you

Close in the thicket; the duke appears, I meet him,  
And unto him I utter learned things,  
And many figures; he hears, and nods, and hums,  
And then cries rare, and I go forward; at length  
I fling my cap up; mark there; then do you  
As once did Meleager, and the boar  
Break comely out before him; like true lovers,

Cast yourselves in a body decently,  
And sweetly, by a figure trace, and turn boys.

*1st Cou.* And sweetly we will do it, master Ger-  
rold.

*2nd Cou.* Draw up the company; where's the  
taborer?

*3rd Cou.* Why, Timothy?

*Tab.* Here, my mad boys, have at ye.

*School.* But I say, where's the women?

*4th Cou.* Here's Friz and Maudlin.

*2nd Cou.* And little Luce with the white legs,  
and bouncing Barbara.

*1st Cou.* And freckled Nell, that never failed her  
master.

*School.* Where be your ribands, maids? swim  
with your bodies,

And carry it sweetly, and deliverly,  
And now and then a favour, and a frisk.

*Nell.* Let us alone, sir.

*School.* Where's the rest of the music?

*3rd Cou.* Dispers'd as you commanded.

*School.* Couple then,

And see what's wanting; where's the Bavian?  
My friend, carry your tail without offence  
Or scandal to the ladies; and be sure  
You tumble with audacity, and mauhood;  
And when you bark, do it with judgment.

*Bav.* Yes, sir.

*School.* *Quo usque tandem?* Here is a woman  
wanting.

*4th Cou.* We may go whistle: all the fat's i' th'  
fire.

*School.* We have,

As learned authors utter, wash'd a tile;  
We have been *fatuus*, and laboured vainly.

*2nd Cou.* This is that scornful piece, that scurvey  
hilding,

That gave her promise faithfully, she would be  
here,

Cicely the sempster's daughter:  
The next gloves that I give her shall be dog-skin;  
Nay, and she fail me once; you can tell Arcas  
She swore by wine, and bread, she would not break.

*School.* An eel and woman,

A learned poet says, unless by th' tail  
And with thy teeth thou hold, will either fail  
In manners; this was false position.

*1st Cou.* A fire ill take her; does she flinch now?

*2nd Cou.* What

Shall we determine, sir?

*School.* Nothing,

Our business is become a nullity;  
Yea, and a woeful, and a piteous nullity.

4th Cou. Now when the credit of our town lay  
on it,  
Now to be frampall, now to piss o' th' nettle;  
Go thy ways; I'll remember thee, I'll fit thee.

*Enter Jailer's Daughter.*

Daugh. The George alow, came from the south, [*Sings.*  
From the coast of Barbary-a;  
And there he met with brave gallants of war,  
By one, by two, by three-a.

Well hail'd, well hail'd, you jolly gallants,  
And whither now are you bound-a,  
O, let me have your company till  
We come to the sound-a.

There was three fools, fell out about a howlet,  
The one said it was an owl,  
The other he said nay,

The third he said it was a hawk, and her bells were cut away.

3rd Cou. There's a dainty mad woman, master,  
Comes i' th' nick, as mad as a March hare:  
If we can get her dance, we are made again:  
I warrant her, she'll do the rarest gambols.

1st Cou. A mad woman? we are made, boys.

School. And are you mad, good woman?

Daugh. I would be sorry else;  
Give me your hand.

School. Why?

Daugh. I can tell your fortune.

You are a fool: tell ten, I have posed him: buz,  
Friend, you must eat no white bread; if you do,  
Your teeth will bleed extremely; shall we dance, ho?  
I know you; you're a tinker: sirrah tinker,  
Stop no more holes but what you should.

School. *Dii boni!* A tinker, damsel?

Daugh. Or a conjuror: raise me a devil now,  
and let him play

*Qui-passa* o' th' bells and bones.

School. Go take her, and fluently persuade her  
to a peace:

*Atque opus exegi, quod nec Jovis ira, nec ignis.*

Strike up, and lead her in.

2nd Cou. Come lass, let's trip it.

Daugh. I'll lead. [*A sound of Horns.*

3rd Cou. Do, do.

School. Persuasively and cunningly; away, boys.  
[*Exit all but School.*

I hear the horns: give me some  
Meditation, and mark your cue;  
Pallas inspire me!

*Enter THESEUS, PERITHOUS, HIPPOLITA, EMILIA,  
ARCITE, and Train.*

Thes. This way the stag took.

School. Stay and edify.

D. P. 3 0

Thes. What have we here?

Peri. Some country sport, upon my life, sir.

Thes. Well, sir, go forward, we will edify.

Ladies, sit down; we'll stand.

School. Thou doughty duke, all hail! all hail,  
sweet ladies!

Thes. This is a cold beginning.

School. If you but favour, our country pastime  
made is;

We are a few of those collected here,  
That ruder tongues distinguish villager;  
And, to say verity, and not a fable,  
We are a merry rout, or else a rabble,  
Or company, or, by a figure, Choris,  
That 'fore thy dignity will dance a morris.  
And I, that am the rectifier of all,  
By title pedagogus, that let fall  
The birch upon the breeches of the small ones,  
And humble with a ferula the tall ones,  
Do here present this machine, or this frame.  
And dainty duke, whose doughty dismal fame  
From Dis to Dedalus, from post to pillar,  
Is blown abroad, help me, thy poor well-willer,  
And with thy twinkling eyes, look right and  
straight

Upon this mighty Morr—of mickle weight  
Is—now comes in, which, being glued together,  
Make morris, and the cause that we came hither.  
The body of our sport, of no small study,  
I first appear, though rude, and raw, and muddy,  
To speak before thy noble grace, this tenner:  
At whose great feet I offer up my penner.  
The next the lord of May, and lady bright,  
The chambermaid, and serving man by night,  
That seek out silent hanging: Then mine host,  
And his fat spouse, that welcomes to their cost  
The galled traveller, and, with a beek'ning,  
Informs the tapster to inflame the reck'ning:  
Then the beast-eating clown, and next the fool,  
The Bavian with long tail, and eke long tool  
*Cum multis aliis* that make a dance,  
Say I, and all shall presently advance.

Thes. Ay, ay, by any means, dear domine.

School. Produce.

*Intrate filii*, come forth, and foot it.

*Enter Countrymen, Wenches, &c. They dance a  
Morris.*

Ladies, if we have been merry,  
And have pleas'd thee with a derry,  
And a derry, and a down,  
Say the Schoolmaster's no clown:  
Duke, if we have pleas'd thee too,  
And have done as good boys should do,

Give us but a tree or twain  
For a Maypole, and again,  
Ere another year run out,  
We'll make thee laugh, and all this rout.

*Thes.* Take twenty, Domue; how does my sweet-heart?

*Hip.* Never so pleas'd, sir.

*Emil.* 'Twas an excellent dauce, and for a preface I never heard a better.

*Thes.* Schoolmaster, I thank you, one see 'em all rewarded.

*Peri.* And here's something to painit your pole withal.

*Thes.* Now to our sports again.

*School.* May the stag thou hunt'st stand long,  
And thy dogs be swift and strong:

May they kill him without lets,

And the ladies eat his dowsets:

Come, we are all made. [*Wind Horns.*

*Dii Deaque, omnes,* ye have danc'd rarely, weneches.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.—*Another Part of the Forest.*

*Enter PALAMON from the Bush.*

*Pal.* About this hour my cousin gave his faith  
To visit me again, and with him bring  
Two swords, and two good armours; if he fail  
He's neither man nor soldier; when he left me  
I did not think a week could have restored  
My lost strength to me, I was grown so low,  
And crest-fallen with my wants: I thank thee,

*Arcite,*

Thou art yet a fair foe; and I feel myself,  
With this refreshing, able once again  
To outdure danger. To delay it longer  
Would make the world think, when it comes to  
hearing,

That I lay fattig like a swine to fight,  
And not a soldier. Therefore this blest morning  
Shall be the last; and that sword he refuses,  
If it but hold, I kill him with; 'tis justice:  
So, love and fortune for me. Oh, good morrow!

*Enter ARCITE with Armour and Swords.*

*Arcite.* Good morrow, noble kinsman.

*Pal.* I have put you  
To too much pains, sir.

*Arcite.* That too much, fair cousin,  
Is but a debt to honour, and my duty.

*Pal.* Would you were so in all, sir; I could  
wish ye

As kind a kinsman, as you force me find

A beneficial foe, that my embraces  
Might thank ye, not my blows.

*Arcite.* I shall think either  
Well done, a noble recompense.

*Pal.* Then I shall quit you.

*Arcite.* Defy me in these fair terms, and you show  
More than a mistress to me, no more anger,  
As you love any thing that's honourable;  
We were not bred to talk, man, when we are arm'd,  
And both upon our guards, then let our fury,  
Like meeting of two tides, fly strongly from us,  
And then to whom the birthright of this beauty  
Truly pertains (without upbraidings, scorns,  
Despisings of our persons, and such poutings,  
Fitter for girls and school-boys) will be seen,  
And quickly, yours or mine; wil't please you  
arm, sir,

Or if you feel yourself not fitting yet,  
And furnish'd with your old strength, I'll stay cousin,  
And ev'ry day discourse you into health,  
As I am spar'd; your person I am friends with,  
And I could wish I had not said I lov'd her,  
Though I had died: but loving such a lady,  
And justifying my love, I must not fly from 't.

*Pal.* *Arcite,* thou art so brave an enemy,  
That no man but thy cousin's fit to kill thee.  
I am well and lusty, choose your arms.

*Arcite.* Choose you, sir.

*Pal.* Wilt thou exceed in all, or dost thou do it,  
To make me spare thee?

*Arcite.* If you think so, cousin,  
You are deceived, for as I am a soldier,  
I will not spare you.

*Pal.* That's well said.

*Arcite.* You'll find it.

*Pal.* Then, as I am an honest man, and love,  
With all the justice of affection,  
I'll pay thee soundly. This I'll take.

*Arcite.* That's mine, then,  
I'll arm you first.

*Pal.* Do; pray thee, tell me, cousin,  
Whero got'st thou this good armour?

*Arcite.* 'Tis the duke's,  
And to say true, I stole it; do I pinch you?

*Pal.* No.

*Arcite.* Is't not too heavy?

*Pal.* I have worn a lighter,  
But I shall make it serve.

*Arcite.* I'll buckle it close.

*Pal.* By any means.

*Arcite.* You care not for a grand guard?

*Pal.* No, no, we'll use no horses; I perceive  
You would fain be at that fight.

*Arcite.* I am indifferent.

*Pal.* Faith so am I: good cousin, thrust the  
bnckle

Through far enough.

*Arcite.* I warrant you.

*Pal.* My casque, now.

*Arcite.* Will you fight bare-arm'd?

*Pal.* We shall be the nimbler.

*Arcite.* But use your gauntlets, though; those  
are o'the least:

Prithee take mine, good cousin.

*Pal.* Thank you, *Arcite*;

How do I look? am I fallen much away?

*Arcite.* Faith, very little; love has used you  
kindly.

*Pal.* I'll warrant thee I'll strike home.

*Arcite.* Do, and spare not:  
I'll give you cause, sweet cousin.

*Pal.* Now, to you, sir;  
Methinks this armour's very like that, *Arcite*,  
Thou wor'st that day the three kings fell, but lighter.

*Arcite.* That was a very good one; and that day  
I well remember you outdid me, cousin.

I never saw such valour: when you charged

Upon the left wing of the enemy,

I spurr'd hard to come up, and under me

I had a right good horse.

*Pal.* You had indeed:

A bright bay, I remember.

*Arcite.* Yes; but all

Was vainly labour'd in me; you outwent me;

Nor could my wishes reach you: yet a little

I did by imitation.

*Pal.* More by virtue;

You are modest, cousin.

*Arcite.* When I saw you charge first,  
Methought I heard a dreadful clap of thunder  
Break from the troop.

*Pal.* But still, before that flew  
The lightning of your valour. Stay a little;  
Is not this piece too straight?

*Arcite.* No, no, 'tis well.

*Pal.* I would have nothing hurt thee but my  
sword;

A bruise would be dishonour.

*Arcite.* Now I am perfect.

*Pal.* Stand off, then.

*Arcite.* Take my sword; I hold it better.

*Pal.* I thank ye, no; keep it, your life lies  
on it.

Here's one, if it but hold, I ask no more,

For all my hopes: my cause and honour guard  
me.

*Arcite.* And me my love. Is there aught else  
to say?

[*They bow several ways; then advance and stand*

*Pal.* This only, and no more: thou art mine  
aunt's son:

And that blood we desire to shed is mutual;

In me thine, and in thee mine: my sword

Is in my hand, and if thou kill'st me,

The gods and I forgive thee. If there be

A place prepar'd for those that sleep in honour,

I wish his weary soul that falls may win it.

Fight bravely, cousin; give me thy noble hand.

*Arcite.* Here, *Palamen*; this hand shall never  
more

Come near thee with such friendship.

*Pal.* I commend thee.

*Arcite.* If I fall, curse me, and say I was a coward:  
For none but such dare die in these just trials.

Once more, farewell, my cousin.

*Pal.* Farewell, *Arcite*.

[*They fight. Horns within; they stand.*

*Arcite.* Lo, cousin, lo, our folly has undone us!

*Pal.* Why?

*Arcite.* This is the duke, a hunting, as I told  
you;

If we be found, we are wretched; O retire,

For honour's sake, and safely presently

Into your bush again. Sir, we shall find

Too many hours to die in, gentle cousin:

If you be seen you perish instantly

For breaking prison; and I, if you reveal me,

For my contempt: then all the world will scorn us,

And say we had a noble difference,

But base disposers of it.

*Pal.* No, no, cousin;

I will no more be hidden, nor put off

This great adventure to a second trial.

I know your cunning, and I know your cause:

He that faints now, shame take him: put thyself

Upon thy present guard.

*Arcite.* You are not mad?

*Pal.* Or I will make th' advantage of this hour

Mine own; and what to come shall threaten me,

I fear less than my fortune: know, weak cousin,

I love *Emilia*; and in that I'll bury

Thee, and all crosses else.

*Arcite.* Then come what can come;

Thou shalt know, *Palamon*, I dare as well

Die, as discourse, or sleep. Only this fears me;

The law will have the honour of our ends.

Have at thy life.

*Pal.* Look to thine own, well, *Arcite*.

[*They fight again. Horns.*

*Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLITA, EMILIA, PERITHOUS,  
and Train.*

*Thes.* What ignorant and mad malicious traitors  
Are you ; that 'gainst the tenor of my laws  
Are making battle, thus like knights appointed,  
Without my leave, and officers of arms ?  
By Castor, both shall die.

*Pal.* Hold thy word, Theseus :  
We are certainly both traitors, both despisers  
Of thee, and of thy goodness. I am Palamon,  
That cannot love thee ; he that broke thy prison :  
Think well what that deserves : and this is Arcite.  
A bolder traitor never trod thy ground ;  
A fals'er ne'er seem'd friend. This is the man  
Was begg'd and banish'd ; this is he contemns  
thee

And what thou dar'st do ; and in this disguise,  
Against this known edict, follows thy sister,  
That fortunate bright star, the fair Emilia,  
Whose servant (if there be a right in seeing,  
And first bequeathing of the soul to,) justly  
I am ; and which is more, dares think her his.  
This treachery, like a most trusty lover,  
I call'd him now to answer. If thou be'st  
As thou art spoken, great and virtuous,  
The true decider of all injuries,  
Say—" fight again!" and thou shalt see me, Theseus,  
Do such a justice, thou thyself wilt envy :  
Then take my life ; I'll woo thee to't.

*Peri.* O heaven!

What more than man is this ?

*Thes.* I have sworn.

*Arcite.* We seek not  
Thy breath of mercy, Theseus ; 'tis to me  
A thing as soon to die, as thee to say it,  
And no more mov'd : where this man calls me  
traitor,

Let me say thus much : if in love be treason,  
In service of so excellent a beauty,  
As I love most, and in that faith will perish ;  
As I have brought my life here to confirm it ;  
As I have served her truest, worthiest ;  
As I dare kill this cousin that denies it ;  
So let me be most traitor, and ye please me :  
For scorning thy edict, duke, ask that lady  
Why she is fair, and why her eyes command me  
Stay here to love her ; and if she say traitor,  
I am a villain fit to lie unburied.

*Pal.* Thou shalt have pity of us both, O Theseus ;  
If unto neither thou show mercy, stop  
(As thou art just) thy noble ear against us ;  
As thou art valiant, for thy cousin's soul,

Whose twelve strong labours crown his memory,<sup>28</sup>  
Let's die together, at one instant, duke ;  
Only a little let him fall before me,  
That I may tell my soul he shall not have her.

*Thes.* I grant your wish ; for to say true, your  
cousin

Has ten times more offended ; for I gave him  
More mercy than you found, sir, your offences  
Being no more than his. None here speak for 'em ;  
For ere the sun set both shall sleep for ever.

*Hip.* Alas, the pity ! now or never, sister,  
Speak not to be denied : that face of yours  
Will bear the curses else of after ages  
For these lost cousins.

*Emil.* In my face, dear sister,  
I find no anger to them, nor no ruin ;  
The misadventure of their own eyes kill them ;  
Yet that I will be woman, and have pity,  
My knees shall grow to the ground but I'll get  
mercy.

Help me, dear sister, in a deed so virtuous ;  
The powers of all women will be with us,  
Most royal brother.

*Hip.* Sir, by our tie of marriage—

*Emil.* By your own spotless honour—

*Hip.* By that faith,  
That fair hand, and that honest heart you gave me—

*Emil.* By that you would have pity in another,  
By your own virtues infinite—

*Hip.* By valour,  
By all the chaste nights I have ever pleas'd you.

*Thes.* These are strange conjurings.

*Peri.* Nay, then, I'll in too. By all our friend-  
ship, sir, by all our dangers,  
By all you love most, war, and this sweet lady—

*Emil.* By that you would have trembled to deny,  
A blushing maid—

*Hip.* By your own eyes : by strength,  
In which you swore I went beyond all women,<sup>29</sup>  
Almost all men, and yet I yielded Theseus—

*Peri.* To crown all this ; by your most noble soul,  
Which cannot want due mercy, I beg first.

*Hip.* Next hear my prayers.

*Emil.* Last let me entreat, sir.

*Peri.* For mercy !

*Hip.* Mercy !

*Emil.* Mercy on these princes !  
*Thes.* Ye make my faith reel. Say I felt  
Compassion to 'em both, how would you place it ?

*Emil.* Upon their lives ; but with their banish-  
ments.

*Thes.* You are a right woman, sister, you have pity,  
But want the understanding where to use it.



If you desire their lives, invent a way  
Safer than banishment. Can these two live  
And have the agony of love about 'em,  
And not kill one another? Every day  
They'd fight about you; hourly bring your honour  
In public question with their swords be wise,  
then,

And here forget 'em; it concerns your credit,  
And my oath equally; I have said they die:  
Better they fall by the law than one another.  
Bow not my honour.

*Emil.* O, my noble brother,  
That oath was rashly made; and in your anger;  
Your reason will not hold it; if such vows  
Stand for express will, all the world must perish.  
Beside, I have another oath 'gainst yours,  
Of more authority, I am sure more love,  
Not made in passion, neither, but good heed.

*Thes.* What is it, sister?

*Peri.* Urge it home, brave lady.

*Emil.* That you would never deny me anything  
Fit for my modest suit and your free granting.  
I tie you to your word now; if you fail in it,  
Think how you maim your honour;  
(For now I am set a begging, sir, I am deat  
To all but your compassion) how their lives  
Might breed the ruin of my name; Opinion!<sup>30</sup>  
Shall anything that loves me perish for me?  
That were a cruel wisdom; do men prune  
The straight young boughs that blush with thou-  
sand blossoms

Because they may be rotten? O, duke Theseus,  
The goodly mothers that have groan'd for these,  
And all the longing maids that ever lov'd,  
If your vow stand, shall curse me and my beauty;  
And in their funeral songs, for these two cousins,  
Despise my cruelty, and cry woe worth me,  
Till I am nothing but the scorn of women;  
For heaven's sake save their lives, and banish 'em.

*Thes.* On what conditions?

*Emil.* Swear 'em never more  
To make me their contention, or to know me,  
To tread upon thy dukedom, and to be  
Wherever they shall travel, ever strangers to one  
another.

*Pal.* I'll be cut a pieces  
Before I take this oath; forget I love her!  
O, all ye gods, despise me then: Thy banishment  
I not mislike, so we may fairly carry  
Our swords and cause along: else never trifle,  
But take our lives, duke; I must love and will,  
And for that love, must and dare kill this cousin  
On any piece the earth has.

*Thes.* Will you, Arcite,  
Take these conditions?

*Pal.* He's a villain then.

*Peri.* These are men.

*Arcite.* No, never, duke: 'Tis worse to me than  
begging,

To take my life so basely; though I think  
I never shall enjoy her, yet I'll preserve  
The honour of affection, and die for her,  
Make death a devil.

*Thes.* What may be done? for now I feel com-  
passion.

*Peri.* Let it not fall again, sir.

*Thes.* Say, Emilia,  
If one of them were dead, as one must, are you  
Content to take th' other to your husband?

They cannot both enjoy you; they are princes,  
As goodly as your own eyes, and as noble  
As ever fame yet spoke of: look upon 'em,  
And if you can love, end this difference;  
I give consent—are you content, too, princes?

*Both.* With all our souls.

*Thes.* He that she refuses  
Must die then.

*Both.* Any death thou thou canst invent, duke.

*Pal.* If I fall from that mouth, I fall with  
favour,

And lovers yet unborn shall bless my ashes.

*Arcite.* If she refuse me, yet my grave will wed me,  
And soldiers sing my epitaph.

*Thes.* Make choice then.

*Emil.* I cannot, sir, they are both too excellent;  
For me, a hair shall never fall of these men.

*Hip.* What will become of 'em?

*Thes.* Thus I ordain it,  
And by mine honour, once again it stands,  
Or both shall die. You shall both to your country,  
And each within this month, accompanied  
With three fair knights, appear again in this  
place,

In which I'll plant a pyramid; and whether  
Before us that are here, can force his cousin  
By fair and knightly strength, to touch the pillar,  
He shall enjoy her; the other lose his head,  
And all his friends;<sup>31</sup> nor shall he grudge to fall,  
Nor think he dies with interest in this lady.  
Will this content ye?

*Pal.* Yes: here, cousin Arcite,  
I am friends again till that hour.

*Arcite.* I embrace ye.

*Thes.* Are you content, sister?

*Emil.* Yes, I must, sir,  
Else both miscarry.

*Thes.* Come, shake hands again, then;  
And take heed, as you are gentlemen, this quarrel  
Sleep till the hour prefix'd, and hold your course.

*Pal.* We dare not fail thee, Theseus.

*Thes.* Come, I'll give ye  
Now usage like to princes and to friends.  
When ye return, who wins I'll settle here;  
Who loses, yet I'll weep upon his bier. [*Exeunt.*]

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 ACT IV.

SCENE I.—Athens. *A Room in the Prison.*

*Enter Jailor and his Friend.*

*Jailor.* Hear you no more? Was nothing said  
of me

Concerning the escape of Palamon?  
Good sir, remember.

*1st Friend.* Nothing that I heard,  
For I came home before the business  
Was fully ended: yet I might perceive,  
Ere I departed, a great likelihood  
Of both their pardons; for Hippolita  
And fair ey'd Emily, upon their knees,  
Begg'd with such handsome pity, that the duke,  
Methought, stood staggering, whether he should  
follow

His rash oath or the sweet compassion  
Of those two ladies; and, to second them,  
That truly noble prince, Perithous,  
Half his own heart set in, too; that I hope  
All shall be well. Neither heard I one question  
Of your name or his escape.

*Enter Second Friend.*

*Jailor.* Pray heaven it hold so.

*2nd Friend.* Be of good comfort, man:  
I bring you news; good news.

*Jailor.* They are welcome.

*2nd Friend.* Palamon has cleared you  
And got your pardon; and discovered  
How and by whose means he escap'd, which was  
your daughter's,

Whose pardon is procured, too; and the prisoner,  
Not to be held ungrateful to her goodness,  
Has given a sum of money to her marriage—  
A large one I'll assure you.

*Jailor.* You are a good man,  
And ever bring good news.

*1st Friend.* How was it ended?

*2nd Friend.* Why, as it should be: they that  
never begg'd

But they prevail'd, had their suits fairly granted.  
The prisoners have their lives.

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*1st Friend.* I knew 'twould be so.  
*2nd Friend.* But there be new conditions, which  
You'll hear of at better time.

*Jailor.* I hope they are good.  
*2nd Friend.* They are honourable;  
How good they'll prove I know not.

*Enter Wooer.*

*1st Friend.* 'Twill be known.

*Wooer.* Alas, sir! where's your daughter?

*Jailor.* Why do you ask?

*Wooer.* Oh, sir! when did you see her?

*2nd Friend.* How he looks!

*Jailor.* This morning.

*Wooer.* Was she well? Was she in health, sir?  
When did she sleep?

*1st Friend.* These are strange questions.

*Jailor.* I do not think she was very well, for now  
You make me mind her. But this very day  
I ask'd her questions, and she answer'd me  
So far from what she was, so childishly,  
So sillily, as if she were a fool,  
An innocent, and I was very angry.  
But what of her, sir?

*Wooer.* Nothing but my pity; but you must  
Know it, and as good by me as by another  
That less loves her.

*Jailor.* Well, sir?

*1st Friend.* Not right?

*2nd Friend.* Not well?

*Wooer.* No, sir, not well.

'Tis too true, she is mad.

*1st Friend.* It cannot be.

*Wooer.* Believe you'll find it so.

*Jailor.* I half suspected

What you told me. The gods comfort her!  
Either this was her love to Palamon,  
Or fear of my miscarrying on his 'scape,  
Or both.

*Wooer.* 'Tis likely.

*Jailor.* But why all this haste, sir?

*Wooer.* I'll tell you quickly. As I late was  
angling

In the great lake that lies behind the palace,  
From the far shore, thick set with reeds and sedges,  
As patiently I was attending sport,  
I heard a voice, a shrill one, and attentive  
I gave my ear, when I might well perceive  
'Twas one that sung, and, by the smallness of it,  
A boy or woman. I then left my angle  
To his own skill, came near, but yet perceiv'd not  
Who made the sound, the rushes and the reeds  
Had so encompass'd it. I laid me down  
And listened to the words she sung; for then,  
Through a small glade, cut by the fishermen,  
I saw it was your daughter.

*Jailor.* Pray, go on, sir.

*Wooser.* She sung much, but no sense; only I  
heard her

Repeat this often: "Palamon is gone,  
Is gone to th' wood to gather mulberries;  
I'll find him out to-morrow."

*1st Friend.* Pretty soul!

*Wooser.* "His shackles will betray him; he'll be  
taken,

And what shall I do then? I'll bring a bevy,  
A hundred black-ey'd maids that love as I do,  
With chaplets on their heads of daffodillies,  
With cherry lips and cheeks of damask roses;  
And all we'll dance an antic 'fore the duke,  
And beg his pardon." Then she talk'd of you, sir:  
That you must lose your head to-morrow morning,  
And she must gather flowers to bury you  
And see the house made handsome. Then she sung  
Nothing but, "Willow, willow, willow!"<sup>32</sup> and be-  
tween

Ever was, "Palamon, fair Palamon!"  
And "Palamon was a tall young man!" The place  
Was knee-deep where she sat; her careless tresses  
A wreath of bulrush rounded; about her stuck  
Thousand fresh-water flowers of several colours;  
That methought she appeared like the fair nymph  
That feeds the lake with waters, or as Iris  
Newly dropp'd down from heaven. Rings she made  
Of rushes that grew by, and to 'em spoke  
The prettiest posies—"Thus our true love's tied;  
This you may loose, not me;" and many a one;  
And then she wept, and sung again, and sigh'd,  
And with the same breath smil'd, and kiss'd her  
hand.

*2nd Friend.* Alas, what pity it is!

*Wooser.* I made in to her;  
She saw me, and straight sought the flood. I  
sav'd her,  
And set her safe to land; when presently  
She slipp'd away, and to the city made,

With such a cry and swiftness, that, believe me,  
She left me far behind her. Three or four  
I saw from far off cross her: one of 'em  
I knew to be your brother; where she stay'd  
And fell, scarce to be got away. I left them with  
her,

*Enter Brother, Daughter, and Others.*

And hither came to tell you. Here they are!

*Daugh.* "May you never more enjoy the light,"  
&c. [*Sings.*

Is not this a fine song?

*Bro.* Oh, a very fine one.

*Daugh.* I can sing twenty more.

*Bro.* I think you can.

*Daugh.* Yes, truly can I, I can sing the Broom,  
And Bonny Robin. Are not you a tailor?

*Bro.* Yes.

*Daugh.* Where's my wedding gown?

*Bro.* I'll bring it to-morrow.

*Daugh.* Do, very rarely,<sup>33</sup> I must be abroad else  
To call the maids, and pay the minstrels,  
For I must lose my maidenhead by cocklight,  
'Twill never thrive else.

"O fair, O sweet," &c. [*Sings.*

*Bro.* You must ev'n take it patiently.

*Jailor.* 'Tis true.

*Daugh.* Good even, good men; pray, did you ever  
hear

Of one young Palamon?

*Jailor.* Yes, wench, we know him.

*Daugh.* Is 't not a fine young gentleman?

*Jailor.* 'Tis, love.

*Bro.* By no mean cross her, she is then dis-  
temper'd,

For worse than now she shows.

*1st Friend.* Yes, he's a fine man.

*Daugh.* Oh, is he so? You have a sister?

*1st Friend.* Yes.

*Daugh.* But she shall never have him, tell her so,  
For a trick that I know, ye had best look to her,  
For if she see him once, she's gone, she's done,  
And undone in an hour. All the young maids  
Of our town are in love with him, but I laugh at 'em,  
And let 'em all alone; is 't not a wise course?

*1st Friend.* Yes.

*Daugh.* There is at least two hundred now with  
child by him,

There must be four; yet I keep close for all this,  
Close as a cockle; and all these must be boys;  
He has the trick on 't, and at ten years old  
They must be all gelt for musicians,  
And sing the wars of Theseus.

*2nd Friend.* This is strange.

*Daugh.* As ever you heard, but say nothing.

*1st Friend.* No.

*Daugh.* They come from all parts of the dukedom to him,

I'll warrant ye; he had not so few last night

As twenty to despatch, he'll tickle't up

In two hours, if his hand be in.

*Jailor.* She's lost,

Past all cure!

*Bro.* Heaven forbid, man.

*Daugh.* Come hither, you are a wise man.

*1st Friend.* Does she know him?

*2nd Friend.* No! would she did.

*Daugh.* Your are master of a ship?

*Jailor.* Yes.

*Daugh.* Where's your compass?

*Jailor.* Here.

*Daugh.* Set it to the north.

And now direct your course to the wood, where

Palamon

Lies longing for me; for the tackling

Let me alone; come, weigh, my hearts, cheerly.

*All.* Owgh, owgh, owgh! 'tis up, the wind's fair; top the bowling; out with the mainsail; where's your whistle, master?

*Bro.* Let's get her in.

*Jailor.* Up to the top, boy.

*Bro.* Where's the pilot?

*1st Friend.* Here.

*Daugh.* What ken'st thou?

*2nd Friend.* A fair wood.

*Daugh.* Bear for it, master; taek about:

"When Cynthia with her borrowed light," &c. [*Sings.*  
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Room in the Palace.*

*Enter EMILIA alone with two Pictures.*

*Emil.* Yet I may bind those wounds up, that must open,

And bleed to death for my sake else; I'll choose  
And end their strife. Two such young handsome men

Shall never fall for me; their weeping mothers,  
Following the dead cold ashes of their sons,  
Shall never curse my cruelty. Good heaven,  
What a sweet face has Arcite! If wise nature,  
With all her best endowments, all those beauties  
She sows into the births of noble bodies,  
Were here a mortal woman, and had in her  
The coy denials of young maids, yet, doubtless,  
She would run mad for this man. What an eye!

Of what a fiery sparkle, and quick sweetness,  
Has this young prince! Here Love himself sits smiling,

Just such another wanton Ganymede,  
Set Jove a-fire,<sup>34</sup> and enfore'd the god,<sup>1</sup>  
Snatch up the goodly boy, and set him by him  
A shining constellation. What a brow,  
Of what a spacious majesty he carries!  
Arch'd like the great ey'd Juno's; but far sweeter,  
Smoother than Pelop's shoulder! Fame and honour,  
Methinks from hence, as from a promonotory  
Pointed in heaven, should clap their wings, and sing  
To all the under world, the loves and fights  
Of gods, and such men near 'em. Palamon  
Is but his foil, to him a mere dull shadow,  
He's swarth and meagre, of an eye as heavy  
As if he had lost his mother; a still temper,  
No stirring in him, no alacrity,  
Of all this sprightly sharpness, not a smile;  
Yet these that we count errors may become him:  
Narcissus was a sad boy, but a heavenly:  
Oh, who can find the bent of woman's fancy!  
I am a fool, my reason is lost in me,  
I have no choice, and I have lied so lewdly,  
That women ought to beat me. On my knees  
I ask thy pardon. Palamon, thou art alone,  
And only beautiful, and these the eyes,  
These the bright lamps of beauty, that command  
And threaten love, and what young maid dare  
cross 'em.

What a bold gravity, and yet inviting,  
Has this brown manly face! Oh, love, this only  
From this hour is complexion! Lie there, Arcite,  
Thou art a eangling to him, a mere gipsy,  
And this the noble body; I am sotted,  
Utterly lost. My virgin's faith has fled me.  
For if my brother but even now had ask'd me  
Whether I lov'd, I had run mad for Arcite.  
Now if my sister—more for Palamon;  
Stand both together. Now, come, ask me brother;  
Alas! I know not; ask me now, sweet sister,  
I may go look. What a mere child is Faney,  
That having two fair gauds of equal sweetness,  
Cannot distinguish, but must cry for both.

*Enter Gentleman.*

*Emil.* How, now, sir?

*Gent.* From the noble duke, your brother,  
Madam, I bring you news; the knights are come.

*Emil.* To end the quarrel?

*Gent.* Yes.

*Emil.* Would I might end first:  
What sins have I committed, chaste Diana,

That my unspotted youth must now be soiled  
With blood of princes? and my chastity  
Be made the altar, where the lives of lovers,  
Two greater, and two better, never yet  
Made mothers joy, must be the sacrifice  
To my unhappy beauty?

*Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLITA, PERITHOUS, and Attendants.*

*Thes.* Bring 'em in quickly,  
By any means, I long to see 'em,  
Your two contending lovers are return'd,  
And with them their fair knights; now, my fair  
sister,  
You must love one of them.

*Emil.* I had rather both,  
So neither for my sake should fall untimely.

*Enter Messenger.*

*Thes.* Who saw 'em?

*Peri.* I awhile.

*Gent.* And I.

*Thes.* From whence come you, sir?

*Mes.* From the knights.

*Thes.* Pray speak,  
You that have seen them, what they are.

*Mes.* I will, sir,  
And truly what I think: six braver spirits  
Than these they have brought (if we judge by the  
outside)

I never saw, nor read of: He that stands  
In the first place with Arcite, by his seeming  
Should be a stout man, by his face a prince,  
(His very looks so say him); his complexion,  
Nearer a brown than black; stern, and yet noble,  
Which shows him hardy, fearless, proud of dangers;  
The circles of his eyes show far within him,<sup>35</sup>  
And as a heated lion, so he looks;  
His hair hangs long behind him, black and shining,  
Like raven's wings: his shoulders broad, and strong,  
Arms long and round, and on his thigh a sword  
Hung by a curious baldric; when he frowns,  
To seal his will with, better o' my conscience  
Was never soldier's friend.

*Thes.* Thou hast well describ'd him.

*Peri.* Yet a great deal short  
Methinks of him that's first with Palamon.

*Thes.* Pray speak him, friend.

*Peri.* I guess he is a prince, too,  
And if it may be, greater; for his show  
Has all the ornament of honour in 't;  
He's somewhat bigger than the knight he spoke of,  
But of a face far sweeter: his complexion

Is (as a ripe grape) ruddy: he has felt  
Without doubt what he fights for, and so apter  
To make this cause his own: In's face appears  
All the fair hopes of what he undertakes;  
And when he's angry, then a settled valour  
(Not tainted with extremes) runs through his body,  
And guides his arm to brave things: Fear he cannot,  
He shows no such soft temper; his head's yellow,  
Hard hair'd, and curl'd, thick twin'd like ivy tops,  
Not to undo with thuuuder: In his face  
The livery of the warlike maid appears,  
Pure red and white, for yet no heard has bless'd him;  
And in his rolling eyes, sits Victory,  
As if she ever meant to correct his valour:<sup>36</sup>  
His nose stands high, a character of honour.  
His red lips, after fights, are fit for ladies.

*Emil.* Must these men die too?

*Peri.* When he speaks, his tongue  
Sounds like a trumpet; all his lineaments  
Are as a man would wish 'em, strong and clean;  
He wears a well-steel'd axe, the staff of gold;  
His age some five and twenty.

*Mes.* There's another,  
A little man, but of a tough soul, seeming  
As great as any: fairer promises  
In such a body yet I never look'd on.

*Peri.* O, he that's freckle-fac'd?

*Mes.* The same, my lord;  
Are they not sweet ones?

*Peri.* Yes, they are well.

*Mes.* Methinks,  
Being so few, and well dispos'd, they show  
Great and fine art in nature; he's white hair'd,  
Not wanton white, but such a manly colour,  
Next to an auburn, tough, and nimble set,  
Which shows an active soul; his arms are brawny,  
Lin'd with strong sinews; To the shoulder-piece,  
Gently they swell, like women new conceived,  
Which speaks him prone to labour, never fainting  
Under the weight of arms, stout-hearted, still,  
But when he stirs, a tiger; he's gray-ey'd,  
Which yields compassion where he conquers: sharp  
To spy advantages, and where he finds 'em,  
He's swift to make 'em his: He does no wrongs,  
Nor takes none; he's round-fac'd, and when he  
smiles

He shows a lover, when he frowns, a soldier:  
About his head he wears the winner's oak,  
And in it stuck the favour of his lady:

His age, some six and thirty. In his hand  
He bears a charging staff, emboss'd with silver

*Thes.* Are they all thus?

*Peri.* They are all the sons of honour.

*Thes.* Now, as I have a soul, I long to see 'em ;  
Lady, you shall see men fight now.

*Hip.* I wish it,  
But not the cause, my lord ; they would show  
Bravely about the titles of two kingdoms ;  
'Tis pity love should be so tyrannous :  
O my soft-hearted sister, what think you ?  
Weep not till they weep blood ; wench, it must be.

*Thes.* You have steel'd 'em with your beauty :  
honour'd friend  
To you I give the field ; pray order it,  
Fitting the persons that must use it.

*Peri.* Yes, sir.

*Thes.* Come, I'll go visit 'em : I cannot stay,  
Their fame has fir'd me so ; till they appear,  
Good friend be royal.

*Peri.* There shall want no bravery.

*Emil.* Poor wench, go weep ; for whosoever wins,  
Loses a noble cousin for thy sins. [ *Exeunt.* ]

SCENE III.—*A Room in the Prison.*

*Enter Jailor, Wooer, and Doctor.*

*Doctor.* Her distraction is more at some time of  
the moon,  
Than at other some ; is it not ?

*Jailor.* She is continually in a harmless distem-  
per, sleeps  
Little, altogether without appetite, save often drink-  
ing,  
Dreaming of another world, and a better ; and what  
Broken piece of matter soe'er she 's about, the name  
Palamon lards it, that she farces ev'ry business,

*Enter Daughter.*

Withal fits it to every question ; Look where  
She comes, you shall perceive her behaviour.

*Daugh.* I have forgot it quite ; the burden o't  
was "Down

A down a," and penn'd by no worse man  
Than Giraldo, Emilius schoolmaster ; he 's as  
Fantastical too, as ever he may go upon legs,  
For in the next world will Dido see Palamon, and  
Then will she be out of love with Æneas.

*Doctor.* What stuff's here ! poor soul !

*Jailor.* Even thus all day long.

*Daugh.* Now for this charm, that I told you of,  
you must

Bring a piece of silver on the tip of your tongue,  
Or no ferry : then if it be your chance to come where  
The blessed spirit's, as there's a sight now ; we  
maids

That have our livers perish'd, crack'd to pieces with

Love, we shall come there, and do nothing all day  
long

But pick flowers with Proserpine, then will I make  
Palamon a nosegay, then let him mark me—then.

*Doctor.* How prettily she's amiss ! note her a  
little further.

*Daugh.* Faith I'll tell you, sometime we go to  
Barley-break,

We of the blessed ; alas, 'tis a sore life they have i'th'  
Other place ! such burning, frying, boiling, hissing,  
Howling, chattering, cursing ! oh, they have shrewd  
Measure, take heed ; if one be mad, or hang, or  
Drown themselves, thither they go, Jupiter bless  
Us, and there shall we be put in a caldron of  
Lead, and usurers' grease, amongst a whole mil-  
lion of

Cutpurses, and there boil like a gammon of bacon  
That will never be enough.

*Doctor.* How her brain coins !

*Daugh.* Lords and courtiers, that have got maids  
with child,

They are in this place ; they shall stand in fire  
Up to the navel, and in ice up to the heart,  
And there th' offending part burns, and the de-  
ceiving part

Freezes ; in troth a very grievous punishment,  
As one would think, for such a trifle, believe me  
One would marry a leprous witch, to be rid on 't,  
I'll assure you.

*Doctor.* How she continues this fancy ! 'Tis not  
an engrafted  
Madness, but a most thick and profound melancholy.

*Daugh.* To hear there  
A proud lady, and a proud city wife, howl together :  
I were a beast and I'll call it good sport :  
One cries, O this smoke ! another, this fire ! one cries,  
O, that ever I did it behind the arras !  
And then howls ; th' other curses a suing fellow,  
And her garden-house.

"I will be true, my stars, my fate," &c. [ *Sings.*  
[ *Exit Daugh.* ]

*Jailor.* What think you of her, sir ?

*Doctor.* I think she has a perturbed mind, which  
I cannot minister to.

*Jailor.* Alas ! what then ?

*Doctor.* Understand you she ever affected any  
man, ere  
She beheld Palamon ?

*Jailor.* I was once, sir, in great hope she had  
fix'd her

Liking on this gentleman, my friend.

*Wooer.* I did think so too ; and would account  
I had a great

Penny-worth on't, to give half my state, that both  
She and I at this present stood unfeignedly on the  
Same terms.

*Doctor.* That intemperate surfeit of her eye hath  
distemper'd the

Other senses: they may return and settle again, to  
Execute their pre-ordained faculties; but they are  
Now in a most extravagant vagary. This you  
Must do: confine her to a place where the light  
May rather seem to steal in than be permitted: take  
Upon you (young sir, her friend) the name of  
Palamon; say you come to eat with her, and to  
Commune of love: this will catch her attention; for  
This her mind beats upon; other objects that are  
Inserted 'tween her mind and eye, become the  
pranks

And friskings of her madness; sing to her such  
green

Songs of love, as she says Palamon hath sung in  
Prison: come to her, stuck in as sweet flowers as the  
Season is mistress of, and thereto make an addi-  
tion of

Some other compounded odours, which are grateful  
to the

Sense: all this shall become Palamon; for Palamon  
can

Sing, and Palamon is sweet, and every good thing;  
desire

To eat with her, crave her, drink to her, and still  
Among, intermingle your petition of grace and ac-  
ceptance

Into her favour: learn what maids have been her  
Companions and play-pheeres, and let them repair to  
Her with Palamon in their months, and appear with  
Tokens, as if they suggested for him: it is a false-  
hood

She is in, which is with falsehoods to be combated.  
This may bring her to eat, to sleep, and reduce  
what's

Now out of square in her, into their former law and  
Regiment;<sup>37</sup> I have seen it approv'd, how many  
times

I know not; but to make the number more, I have  
Great hope in this. I will, between the passages of  
This project, come in with my appliance: let us  
Put it in execution, and hasten the success; which,  
doubt not,

Will bring forth comfort.

[*Exeunt.*]

## ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Before the Temple of Mars.*

*Enter THESEUS, PERITHOUS, HIPPOLITA, and  
Attendants.*

*Thes.* Now let 'em enter, and before the gods  
Tender their holy prayers: let the temples  
Burn bright with sacred fires, and the altars  
In hallow'd clouds commend their swelling incense  
To those above us: let no due be wanting.

[*Flourish of Cornets.*]

They have a noble work in hand, will honour  
The very powers that love 'em.

*Enter PALAMON and ARCITE, and their Knights.*

*Peri.* Sir, they enter.

*Thes.* You valiant, and strong-hearted enemies;  
You royal germane foes, that this day come  
To blow that nearness out that flames between ye,  
Lay by your anger for an hour; and, dove-like,  
Lay the holy altars of your helpers,  
(The all-fear'd gods,) bow down your stubborn  
bodies:

Your ire is more than mortal, so your help be:  
And as the gods regard ye, fight with justice:

I'll leave you to your prayers; and betwixt ye  
I part my wishes.

*Peri.* Honour crown the worthiest.

[*Exit THES. and his Train.*]

*Pal.* The glass is running now that cannot finish  
Till one of us expire: think you but thus,  
That were there aught in me which strove to show  
Mine enemy in this business, wer't one eye  
Against another, arm oppress'd by arm,  
I would destroy the offender, coz; I would,  
Though parcel of myself: then, from this gather  
How I should tender you!

*Arcite.* I am in labour

To push your name, your ancient love, our kindred  
Out of my memory; and i'the selfsame place  
To seat something I would confound: so hoist we  
The sails that must these vessels port, even where  
The heavenly Limiter pleases.

*Pal.* You speak well.  
Before I turn, let me embrace thee, cousin!  
This I shall never do again.

*Arcite.* One farewell.

*Pal.* Why, let it be so: farewell, coz. [*Exit.*]

*Arcite.* Farewell, sir. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*Interior of the Temple.**Enter ARCITE and his Knights.**Arcite.* Knights, kinsmen, lovers, yea, my sacrifices,

True worshippers of Mars, whose spirit in you  
Expels the seeds of fear, and th' apprehension  
Which still is farther off it, go with me  
Before the god of our profession: there  
Require of him the hearts of lions, and  
The breath of tigers; yea, the fierceness too:  
Yea, the speed also, to go on, I mean;  
Else wish we to be snails: you know my prize  
Must be dragg'd out of blood; force and great feat  
Must put my garland on; where she sticks  
The queen of flowers: our intercession, then,  
Must be to him that makes the camp a eistern  
Brimmed with the blood of men. Give me your aid,  
And bend your spirits towards him. [*They kneel.*  
Thou mighty one! that with thy power hast turn'd  
Green Neptune into purple; whose approach  
Comets prewarn; whose haroc in vast field<sup>38</sup>  
Unearthed skulls proclaim; whose breath blows  
down

The teeming Ceres' foyzon;<sup>39</sup> who dost pluck  
With hand omnipotent from forth blue clouds,  
The mason'd turrets; that both mak'st and break'st  
The stony girths of cities! me, thy pupil,  
Youngest follower of thy drum; instruct this day  
With military skill, that to thy laud  
I may advance my streamer, and by thee  
Be styl'd the lord o'the day: give me, great Mars,  
Some token of thy pleasure.

[*Here they fall on their Faces as formerly; and  
there is heard clanging of Armour, with a  
short Thunder, as the burst of Battle; where-  
upon they all rise and bow to the Altar.*

O great corrector of enormous times!  
Shaker of o'er-rank states! thou grand decider  
Of dusty and old titles; that heal'st with blood  
The earth when it is sick; and cur'st the world  
O'the pleurisy of people! I do take  
Thy sigus auspiciously; and in thy name  
To my design, march boldly; let us go. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*The Temple of Venus.**Enter PALAMON and his Knights, with the former Observancee.*

*Pal.* Our stars must glisten with new fire, or be  
To-day extinct: our argument is love,  
Which, if the goddess of it grant, she gives

Victory too; then blend your spirits with mine,  
You, whose free nobleness do make my cause  
Your personal hazard; to the goddess VENUS  
Commend we our proceeding, and implore  
Her power unto our party. [*They kneel.*  
Hail, sovereign queen of secrets! who hast power  
To call the fiercest tyrant from his rage,  
And weep unto a girl; that hast the might,  
Even with an eye-glance, to choke Mars's drum,  
And turn the alarm to whispers, that canst make  
A cripple flourish with his crutch, and cure him  
Before Apollo; that mayst force the king  
To be his subjects' vassal, and induce  
Stale gravity to dance; the polled bachelor<sup>40</sup>  
(Whose youth, like wanton boys, through bonfires  
Have skip'd thy flame) at seventy, thou canst catch  
And make him to the scorn of his hearse throat,  
Abuse young lays of love; what godlike power  
Hast thou not power upon! To Phœbus thou  
Add'st flames hotter than his, the heavenly fires  
Didst scorch his mortal son, thine him; the hun-  
tress,

All moist and cold, some say began to throw  
Her bow away, and sigh: take to thy grace  
Me, thy vow'd soldier, who do bear thy yoke  
As 'twere a wreath of roses, yet is heavier  
Than lead itself, stings more than nettles.  
I have never been foul-mouth'd against thy law;  
Never reveal'd secret, for I knew none; would not  
Had I ken'd all that were; I never practised  
Upon man's wife, nor would the libels read  
Of liberal wits; I never at great feasts  
Sought to betray a beauty, but have blush'd  
At simpering sirs that did: I have been harsh  
To large confessors, and have hotly ask'd them  
If they had mothers; I had one, a woman,  
And women 'twere they wrong'd. I knew a man  
Of eighty winters, this I told them, who  
A lass of fourteen bridged; 'twas thy power  
To put life into dust, the aged cramp  
Had screw'd his square foot round;  
The gout had knit his fingers into knots,  
Torturing convulsions from his globy eyes,  
Had almost drawn their spheres, that what was life  
In him seem'd torture: this anatomy  
Had, by his young fair pheere, a boy; and I  
Believ'd it was his, for she swore it was,  
And who would not believe her? Brief I am  
To those that prate and have done; no companion  
To those that boast and have not; a defier  
To those that would and cannot; a rejoicer!  
Yea, him do I not love that tells close offices  
The foulest way, nor names concealments in



The boldest language. Such a one I am,  
And vow that lover never yet made sigh  
Truer than I. Oh, then, most soft, sweet goddess!

Give me the victory of this question, which  
Is true love's merit, and bless me with a sign  
Of thy great pleasure.

[*Music is heard; Doves are seen to flutter;  
they fall again upon their Faces, then on  
their Knees.*

*Pal.* Oh, thou that from eleven to ninety reign'st  
In mortal bosoms, whose chase is this world,  
And we, in herds, thy game, I give thee thanks  
For this fair token, which, being laid unto  
Mine innocent true heart, arms in assurance

[*They bow.*

My body to this business. Let us rise,  
And bow before the goddess. Time comes on.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*The Temple of Diana. Still Music  
of Recorders.*

*Enter EMILIA, in white, her Hair about her Shoulders,  
a wheaten Wreath upon her Head; one in white  
holding up her Train, her Hair stuck with Flowers;  
one before her, carrying a Silver Hind, in which  
is conveyed Incense and Sweet Odours, which, being  
set upon the Altar, her Maids standing aloof, she  
sets fire to it; then they curtsey and kneel.*

*Emil.* Oh, sacred shadowy, cold and constant  
queen!

Abandoner of revels!—mute, contemplative,  
Sweet, solitary, white as chaste, and pure  
As wind fan'd snow!—who, to thy female knights,  
Allow'st no more blood than will make a blush,  
Which is their order's robe, I here, thy priest,  
Am humbled 'fore thine altar. Oh, vouchsafe  
With that thy rare green eye,<sup>41</sup> which never yet  
Beheld thing maculate, look on thy virgin  
And sacred silver. Mistress, lend thine ear!  
(Which never heard scurril term—into whose port  
Ne'er entered wanton sound) to my petition,  
Season'd with holy fear. This is my last  
Of vestal office. I am bride habited,  
But maiden hearted. A husband I have 'pointed,  
But do not know him. Out of two I should  
Choose one, and pray for his success, but I  
Am guiltless of election of mine eyes.  
Were I to lose one, they are equal precious;  
I could doom neither; that which perish'd should  
Go to't unsentenced. Therefore, most modest  
queen,

He of the two pretenders that best loves me,  
And has the truest title in't, let him  
Take off my wheaten garland, or else grant  
The file and quality I hold, I may  
Continue in thy band.

[*Here the Hind vanishes under the Altar;  
and in the place ascends a Rose Tree, hav-  
ing one Rose upon it.*

See what our general of ebbs and flows,  
Out from the bowels of her holy altar,  
With sacred act advances. But one rose,  
If well inspir'd, this battle shall confound  
Both these brave knights, and I a virgin flower,  
Must grow alone unpluck'd.

[*Here is heard a sudden twang of Instru-  
ments, and the Rose falls from the Tree.*

The flower is fallen—the tree descends. Oh, mis-  
tress,

Thou here discharged me. I shall be gathered,  
I think so; but I know not thine own will.  
Unelasp thy mystery! I hope she's pleas'd:  
Her signs were gracious.

[*They curtsey and exeunt.*

SCENE V.—*A darkened Room in the Prison.*

*Enter Doctor, Jailor, and Wooer, in Habit of Pal-  
amon.*

*Doctor.* Has this advice I told you done any  
good upon her?

*Wooer.* Oh, very much. The maids that kept  
her company  
Have half persuaded her that I am Palamon; within  
this

Half hour she came smiling to me, and asked me  
what I

Would eat, and when I would kiss her. I told her  
Presently, and kiss'd her twice.

*Doctor.* 'Twas well done: twenty times had been  
far better,

For there the cure lies mainly.

*Wooer.* Then she told me  
She would watch with me to-night, for well she  
knew

What hour my fit would take me.

*Doctor.* Let her do so,  
And when your fit comes, fit her home,  
And presently.

*Wooer.* She would have me sing.

*Doctor.* You did so?

*Wooer.* No.

*Doctor.* 'Twas very ill done, then:  
You should observe her every way.

*Woer.* Alas!

I have no voice, sir, to confirm her that way.

*Doctor.* That's all one, if you make a noise.

If she entreat again, do anything;

Lie with her if she ask you.

*Jailor.* Ho! there, doctor!

*Doctor.* Yes, in the way of cure.

*Jailor.* But first, by your leave,

I' th' way of honesty.

*Doctor.* That's but a niceness.

Ne'er east your child away for honesty:

Cure her first this way; then, if she will be honest,

She has the path before her.

*Jailor.* Thank you, doctor.

*Doctor.* Pray, bring her in,

And let's see how she is.

*Jailor.* I will, and tell her

Her Palamon stays for her; but, doctor,

Methinks you are i' th' wrong still. [*Exit Jailor.*]

*Doctor.* Go, go! you fathers are fine fools! her honesty!

And we should give her physic till we find that.

*Woer.* Why, do you think she is not honest, sir?

*Doctor.* How old is she?

*Woer.* She's eighteen.

*Doctor.* She may be;

But that's all one—'tis nothing to our purpose,

Whate'er her father says. If you perceive

Her mood inclining that way that I spoke of,

*Videlicet*, the way of flesh—you have me?

*Woer.* Yes, very well, sir.

*Doctor.* Please her appetite,

And do it home: it cures her, *ipso facto*,

The melancholy humour that infects her.

*Woer.* I am of your mind, doctor.

*Enter Jailor, Daughter, and Maid.*

*Doctor.* You'll find it so. She comes; pray humour her.<sup>42</sup>

*Jailor.* Come, your love, Palamon, stays for you, child,

And has done this long hour, to visit you.

*Daugh.* I thank him for his gentle patience.

He's a kind gentleman, and I am much bound to him.

Did you never see the horse he gave me?

*Jailor.* Yes.

*Daugh.* How do you like him?

*Jailor.* He's a very fair one.

*Daugh.* You never saw him dance?

*Jailor.* No.

*Daugh.* I have often.

He dauces very finely, very comely,

And for a jig, come cut and long tail to him,

He turns ye like a top.

*Jailor.* That's fine, indeed.

*Daugh.* He'll dance the morris twenty mile an hour,

And that will founder the best hobby-horse,

If I have any skill, in all the parish;

And gallops to the turn of Light-a-love!

What think you of this horse?

*Jailor.* Having these virtues,

I think he might be brought to play at tennis.

*Daugh.* Alas! that's nothing.

*Jailor.* Can he write and read, too.

*Daugh.* A very fair hand, and casts himself th' accounts

Of all his hay and provender: that ostler

Must rise betimes that cozens him. You know

The chestnut mare the duke has?

*Jailor.* Very well.

*Daugh.* She is horribly in love with him, poor beast;

But he is, like his master, coy and scornful.

*Jailor.* What dowry has she?

*Daugh.* Some two hundred bottles,<sup>43</sup>

And twenty strike of oats; but he'll ne'er have her.

He lisps in 's neighing, able to entice

A miller's mare. He'll be the death of her.

*Doctor.* What stuff she utters!

*Jailor.* Make curtsey, here your love comes.

*Woer.* Pretty soul!

How do you? That's a fine maid; there's a curtsey!

*Daugh.* Your's to command, i' th' way of honesty. How far is't now to the end o' th' world, my masters?

*Doctor.* Why, a day's journey, wench.

*Daugh.* Will you go with me?

*Woer.* What shall we do there, wench?

*Daugh.* Why, play at stool-ball;

What is there else to do?

*Woer.* I am content,

If we shall keep our wedding there.

*Daugh.* 'Tis true;

For there, I will assure you, we shall find

Some blind priest for the purpose that will venture

To marry us; for here they are nice and foolish.

Besides, my father must be hang'd to-morrow,

And that would be a blot i' th' business.

Are not you Palamon?

*Woer.* Do not you know me?

*Daugh.* Yes, but you care not for me. I have nothing  
But this poor petticoat, and two coarse smocks.

*Woocer.* That's all one; I will have you.

*Daugh.* Will you surely?

*Woocer.* Yes, by this fair hand will I.

*Daugh.* We'll to bed, then.

*Woocer.* E'en when you will.

*Daugh.* Oh, sir, you would fain be nibbling.

*Woocer.* Why do you rub my kiss off?

*Daugh.* 'Tis a sweet one,

And will perfume me finely against the wedding.

Is not this your cousin Arcite?

*Doctor.* Yes, sweetheart!

And I am glad my cousin Palamon  
Has made so fair a choice.

*Daugh.* Do you think he'll have me?

*Doctor.* Yes, without doubt.

*Daugh.* Do you think so, too?

*Jailor.* Yes.

*Daugh.* We shall have many children. Lord, how  
you're grown!

My Palamon I hope will grow, too, finely,

Now he's at liberty: alas! poor chicken,

He was kept down with hard meat, and ill lodging,

But I'll kiss him up again.

*Enter Messenger.*

*Mes.* What do you here, you'll lose the noblest sight  
That e'er was seen.

*Jailor.* Are they i'the field?

*Mes.* They are.

You hear a charge there, too.

*Jailor.* I'll away straight,

I must even leave you here.

*Doctor.* Nay, we'll go with you,

I will not lose the fight.

*Jailor.* How did you like her?

*Doctor.* I'll warrant you, within these three or  
four days

I'll make her right again. You must not from her,  
But still preserve her in this way.

*Woocer.* I will.

*Doctor.* Let's get her in.

*Woocer.* Come, sweet, we'll go to dinner,

And then we'll play at cards.

*Daugh.* And shall we kiss, too?

*Woocer.* A hundred times.

*Daugh.* And twenty.

*Woocer.* Ay, and twenty.

*Daugh.* And then we'll sleep together.

*Doctor.* Take her offer.

*Woocer.* Yes, marry will we.

*Daugh.* But you shall not hurt me.

*Woocer.* I will not, sweet.

*Daugh.* If you do (love) I'll cry. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI.—*A Place near the Lists.*

*Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLITA, EMILIA, PERITHOUS,  
and some Attendants.*

*Emil.* I'll no step further.

*Peri.* Will you lose this sight?

*Emil.* I had rather see a wren hawk at a fly,  
Than this decision; every blow that falls,  
Threats a brave life, each stroke laments  
The place whereon it falls, and sounds more like  
A bell, than blade: I will stay here;  
It is enough my hearing shall be punished,  
With what shall happen, 'gainst the which there is  
No deafening, but to hear; not taint mine eye  
With dread sights it may shun.

*Peri.* Sir, my good lord,  
Your sister will no further.

*Thes.* Oh, she must.  
She shall see deeds of honour in their kind,  
Which sometime show well pencil'd. Nature now  
Shall make, and act the story, the belief  
Both seal'd with eye and ear; you must be present,  
You are the victor's meed, the price and garland  
To crown the question's title.

*Emil.* Pardon me,  
If I were there, I'd wink.

*Thes.* You must be there;  
This trial is as 'twere i'the night, and you  
The only star to shine.

*Emil.* I am extinct;  
There is but envy in that light, which shows  
The one the other: darkness which ever was  
The dam of horror, who does stand accurst  
Of many mortal millions, may even now,  
By casting her black mantle over both,  
That neither could find other, get herself  
Some part of a good name, and many a murder  
Set off whereto she's guilty.

*Hip.* You must go.

*Emil.* In faith I will not.

*Thes.* Why, the knights must kiudle  
Their valour at your eye: know of this war,  
Your are the treasure, and must needs be by  
To give the service pay.

*Emil.* Sir, pardon me,  
The title of a kingdom may be tried  
Out of itself.

*Thes.* Well, well, then, at your pleasure;  
Those that remain with you, could wish their office  
To any of their enemies.

*Hip.* Farewell, sister,  
I am like to know your husband 'fore yourself,  
By some small start of time, he whom the gods  
Do of the two know best, I pray them he  
Be made your lot. [*Exeunt THESEUS, HIP., PERI., &c.*]

*Emil.* Arcite is gently visag'd; yet his eye  
Is like an engine bent, or a sharp weapon  
In a soft sheath; mercy and manly courage  
Are bedfellows in his visage: Palamon  
Has a most menaeing aspect; his brow  
Is grav'd, and seems to bury what it frowns on;  
Yet sometime 'tis not so; but alters to  
The quality of his thoughts; long time his eye  
Will dwell upon his object. Melancholy  
Becomes him nobly; so does Arcite's mirth.  
But Palamon's sadness is a kind of mirth,  
So mingled, as if mirth did make him sad,  
And sadness merry; those darker humours that  
Stick misbecomingly on others, on them  
Live in fair dwelling. [*Cornets sound, as to a Charge.*]  
Hark, how yon spurs to spirit do incite  
The princes to their proof; Arcite may win me,  
And yet may Palamon wound Arcite to  
The spoiling of his figure. Oh, what pity,  
Enough for such a chance; if I were by  
I might do hurt, for they would glance their eyes  
Toward my seat, and in that motion might  
Omit a ward, or forfeit an offence,<sup>44</sup>  
Which crav'd that very time: it is much better,  
[*Cornets. Noise within, crying, "A Palamon!"*]  
I am not there; oh, better never born,  
Than minister to such harm; what is the chance?

*Enter Servant.*

*Ser.* The cry 's "A Palamon!"

*Emil.* Then he has won: 'twas ever likely,  
He look'd all grace and sneess, and he is  
Doubtless the prim'st of men: I prithee run,  
And tell me how it goes. [*Shouts, "A Palamon!"*]

*Ser.* Still Palamon!

*Emil.* Run and inquire; poor servant thou has lost,  
Upon my right side still I wore thy picture,  
Palamon's on the left, why so, I know not,  
I had no end in 't; chance would have it so.

[*Another Cry, and Shouts within, and Cornets.*]  
On the sinister side, the heart lies; Palamon  
Had the best boding chance. This burst of clamour  
Is snre the end o'the combat.

*Enter Servant.*

*Ser.* They said that Palamon had Arcite's body  
Within a inch o'the pyramid, that the cry  
Was general, "A Palamon!" But anon,  
Th' assistants made a brave redemption, and

The two bold tilters, at this instant are  
Hand to hand at it.

*Emil.* Were they metamorphos'd  
Both into one! oh, why? there were no woman  
Worth so compos'd a man: their single share,  
Their nobleness peculiar to them, gives  
The prejudice of disparity, values shortness,  
[*Cornets. Cry within, "Arcite! Arcite!"*]  
To any lady breathing. More exulting?  
Palamon still!

*Ser.* Nay, now the sound is Arcite.

*Emil.* I prithee lay attention to the cry.

[*Cornets: a great Shout and Cry, "Arcite, victory!"*]  
Set both thine ears to th' business.

*Ser.* The cry is

"Arcite and victory!" Hark! Arcite, victory!  
The combat's consummation is proclaim'd  
By the wind instruments.

*Emil.* Half sights saw  
That Arcite was no babe: God's 'lid, his richness  
And costliness of spirit look'd through him; it could  
No more be hid in him, than fire in flax;  
Than humble banks can go to law with waters,  
That drift-winds force to raging: I did think  
Good Palamon would miscarry, yet I knew not  
Why I did think so; our reasons are not prophets  
When oft our fancies are: They are coming off:  
Alas, poor Palamon! [*Cornets.*]

*Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLITA, PERITHOUS, ARCITE  
as Victor, and Attendants, &c.*

*Thes.* Lo, where our sister is in expectation,  
Yet quaking, and unsettled: Fairest Emily,  
The gods, by their divine arbitrement,  
Have given you this knight; he is a good one  
As ever struck at head: Give me your hands;  
Receive you her, you him; be plighted with  
A love that grows, as you decay.

*Arcite.* Emily,  
To buy you, I have lost what's dearest to me,  
Save what is bought, and yet I purchase cheaply,  
As I do rate your value.

*Thes.* O loved sister,  
He speaks now of as brave a knight as e'er  
Did spur a noble steed: Surely the gods  
Would have him die a bachelor, lest his race  
Should show i' the world too godlike: his behaviour  
So charmed me, that methought Alcides was  
To him a sow of lead: if I could praise  
Each part of him to thee. All I have spoke, your Arcite  
Did not lose by 't; for he that was thus good,  
Encountered yet his better; I have heard  
Two emulous Philomels beat the ear o' the night

With their contentious throats, now one the higher,  
 Anon the other, then again the first,  
 And by and by out-breasted, that the sense could  
 Not be judge between 'em: So it far'd  
 Good space between these kiusmen; till heavens did  
 Make hardly one the winner: wear the garland  
 With joy that you have won. For the subdued,  
 Give them our present justice, since I know  
 Their lives but pinch 'em: let it here be done.  
 The scene 's not for our seeing: go we hence,  
 Right joyful, with some sorrow. Arm your prize,<sup>45</sup>  
 I know you will not lose her. Hippolita,  
 I see one eye of yours conceives a tear,  
 The which it will deliver. [*Flourish.*]

*Emil.* Is this winning?  
 Oh, all you heavenly powers, where is your mercy?  
 But that your wills have said it must be so,  
 And charge me live to comfort this unfriended,  
 This miserable prince, that cuts away  
 A life more worthy from him, than all women;  
 I should and would die too.

*Hip.* Infinite pity  
 That four such eyes should be so fix'd on one  
 That two must needs be blind for 't.

*Thes.* So it is. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VII.—*An Open Place, with a Scaffold.*

*Enter PALAMON, and Knights, pinioned; Jailor, &c.*

*Pal.* There 's many a man alive that hath outliv'd  
 The love o' th' people: yea, i' th' self-same state  
 Stands many a father with his child. Some comfort  
 We have by so considering. We expire,  
 And not without men's pity. To live still,  
 Have their good wishes, we prevent  
 The loathsome misery of age, beguile  
 The gout and rheum, that in lag hours attend  
 For grey approachers. We come towards the gods  
 Young and unwarp'd, not halting under crimes  
 Many and stale. That sure shall please the gods  
 Sooner than such, to give us nectar with 'em,  
 For we are more clear spirits. My dear kinsmen,  
 Whose lives, for this poor comfort, are laid down,  
 You have sold 'em too, too cheap.

*1st Knight.* What ending could be  
 Of more content? O'er us the victors have  
 Fortune, whose title is as momentary  
 As to us death is certain: a graiu of honour  
 They not o'erweigh us.

*2nd Knight.* Let us bid farewell!  
 And, with our patience, anger tott'ring fortune,  
 Who at her certain'st reels.

*3rd Knight.* Come, who begins?

*Pal.* Even he that led you to this banquet shall

Taste to you all. Ah, ha! my friend! my friend!  
 Your gentle daughter gave me freedom once:  
 You'll see't done now for ever. Pray, how dees she?  
 I heard she was not well: her kind of ill  
 Gave me some sorrow.

*Jailor.* Sir, she is well restor'd,  
 And to be married shortly.

*Pal.* By my short life,  
 I am most glad on 't. 'Tis the latest thing  
 I shall be glad of: prithee tell her so.  
 Commend me to her; and, to piece her portion,  
 Tender her this.

*1st Knight.* Nay, let's be offerers all.

*2nd Knight.* Is it a maid?

*Pal.* Verily, I think so.  
 A right good creature; more to me deserving  
 Than I can 'quite or speak of.

*All Knights.* Commend us to her.  
 [*They give their Purses.*]

*Jailor.* The gods requite you all, and make her  
 thankful.

*Pal.* Adieu! and let my life be now as short  
 As my leave taking. [*Lies on the Block.*]

*1st Knight.* Lead, courageous cousin!

*2nd and 3rd Knights.* We'll follow cheerfully.  
 [*A great noise within, crying "Run! save! hold!"*]

*Enter in haste a Messenger.*

*Mes.* Hold! hold! Oh, hold, hold, hold!

*Enter PERITHOUS in haste.*

*Peri.* Hold, ho! It is a cursed haste you made  
 If you have done so quickly: noble Palamon,  
 The gods will show their glory in a life  
 That thou art yet to lead.

*Pal.* Can that be  
 When Venus I have said is false? How do things fare?

*Peri.* Arise, great sir, and give the tidings ear  
 That are most dearly sweet, and bitter.

*Pal.* What  
 Hath wak'd us from our dream?

*Peri.* List then: your cousin  
 Mounted upon a steed that Emily  
 Did first bestow on him, a black one, owing  
 Not a hair-worth of white, which some will say  
 Weakens his price, and many will not buy  
 His goodness with this note: Which superstition  
 Here finds allowance: On this horse is Arcite  
 Trotting the stones of Athens, which the calkins  
 Did rather tell, than trample; for the horse  
 Would make his length a mile, if't pleas'd his rider  
 To put pride in him: as he thus went counting  
 The flinty pavement, dancing as 'twere to th' music  
 His own hoofs made (for as they say from iron

Came music's origin); what envious flint,  
Cold as old Saturn, and like him possess'd  
With fire malevolent, darted a spark,  
Or what fierce sulphur else, to this end made,  
I comment not; the hot horse, hot as fire,  
Took toy at this, and fell to what disorder  
His power could give his will, bounds, comes on end,  
Forgets school doing, being therein train'd,  
And of kind manage, pig-like he whines  
At the sharp rowel, which he frets at rather  
Than any jot obeys; seeks all foul means  
Of hoisterous and rough jadery, to disseat  
His lord, that kept it bravely: when nought serv'd,  
When neither curb would crack, girth break, nor  
differing plunges

Disroot his rider whence he grew, but that  
He kept him 'tween his legs, on his hind hoofs on  
end he stands,

That Arcite's legs being higher than his head,  
Seem'd with strange art to hang: his victor's wreath  
Even then fell off his head: and presently  
Backward the jade comes o'er, and his full poise  
Becomes the rider's load: yet is he living,  
But such a vessel 'tis, that floats but for  
The surge that next approaches: he much desires  
To have some speech with you. Lo, he appears!

*Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLITA, EMILIA, and ARCITE.*

*Pal.* Oh, miserable end of our alliance,  
The gods are mighty! Arcite, if thy heart,  
Thy worthy manly heart be yet unbroken,  
Give me thy last words; I am Palamon,  
One that yet loves thee dying.

*Arcite.* Take Emilia,  
And with her all the world's joy. Reach thy hand.  
Farewell: I have told my last hour; I was false,  
Yet never treacherous. Forgive me, cousin;  
One kiss from fair Emilia. 'Tis done:  
Take her. I die. [*Dies.*]

*Pal.* Thy brave soul seek Elysium.

*Emil.* I'll close thine eyes, prince; blessed souls  
be with thee.

Thou art a right good man, and while I live,  
This day I give to tears.

*Pal.* And I to honour.

*Thes.* In this place first you fought: even very here  
I sunder'd you: Acknowledge to the gods,  
Our thanks that you are living:  
His part is play'd, and though it were too short,  
He did it well: your day is lengthen'd, and  
The blissful dew of heaven does arouse you.  
The powerful Venus well hath grac'd her altar,  
And given you your love. Our master, Mars,

Hast vouch'd his oracle, and to Arcite gave  
The grace of the contention: so the deities  
Have showed due justice: bear this hence.

*Pal.* Oh, cousin!

That we should things desire, which do cost us  
The loss of our desire; that nought could buy  
Dear love, but loss of dear love.

*Thes.* Never fortune

Did play a subtler game. The conquered triumphs,  
The victor has the loss; yet in the passage,  
The gods have been most equal; Palamon,  
Your kinsman hath confess'd the right o' the lady  
Did lie in you, for you first saw her, and  
Even then proclaim'd your fancy. He restor'd her  
As your stolen jewel, and desir'd your spirit  
To send him hence forgiven. The gods my justice  
Take from my hand, and they themselves become  
The executioners: lead your lady off,  
And call your lovers from the stage of death,  
Whom I adopt my friends. A day or two  
Let us look sadly, and give grace unto  
The funeral of Arcite, in whose end  
The visages of bridegrooms we'll put on,  
And smile with Palamon: for whom an hour,  
But one hour since, I was as dearly sorry,  
As glad of Arcite; and am now as glad,  
As for him sorry. Oh, you heavenly charmers,  
What things you make of us! For what we lack,  
We laugh, for what we have, are sorry still,  
Are children in some kind. Let us be thankful  
For that which is, and with you leave dispute  
That are above our question: let's go off,  
And bear us like the time. [*Flourish. Exeunt.*]

#### EPILOGUE.

I WOULD now ask ye how ye like the play;  
But, as it is with schoolboys, cannot say,  
I am cruel fearful! Pray, yet stay awhile,  
And let me look upon ye! No man smile?  
Then it goes hard, I see. He that has  
Loved a young handsome wench, then, show his face!  
'Tis strange if none be here; and if he will  
Against his conscience, let him hiss, and kill  
Our market! 'Tis in vain. I see, to stay ye;  
Have at the worst can come, then! Now, what saye?  
And yet mistake me not: I am not bold;  
We have no such cause. If the tale we have told,  
(For 'tis no other) any way content ye,  
(For to that honest purpose it was meant ye)  
We have our end; and ye shall have, e'er long,  
I dare say, many a better, to prolong  
Your old loves to us. We, and all our might,  
Rest at your service; gentlemen, good night.

## NOTES TO THE TWO NOBLE KINSMEN.

<sup>1</sup> *The boding raven, nor chough hour.*

*Clough hee* is the reading of all the old copies; but this gives neither sense nor rhyme. The chough is the daw or rook, which frequently has grey feathers on the head and back.

<sup>2</sup> *To urn their ashes.*

This expression has been noticed by Mr. W. Spalding, in his *Letter on Shakspeare's Authorship of the Drama entitled "The Two Noble Kinsmen,"* as "one of those bold coinages of words forced on a mind, for whose force of conception common terms were too weak." In the same speech we have another instance of this kind—

————— Give us the bones

Of our dead kings, that we may *chapel* them.

Mr. Spalding adds—"It has been said of Milton, that language sunk under him; and it is true of him in one sense, but of Shakspeare in two. Shakspeare's strength of conception, to which, not less than to Milton's, existing language was inadequate, compelled him either to use old words in unusual meanings, or to coin new words for himself. But his mind had another quality, powerful over his style, which Milton's wanted. Milton's conception was comparatively slow, and allowed him time for deliberate expression; Shakspeare's was rapid to excess, and hurried his words after it. When a truth presented itself to his mind, all its qualities burst in upon him at once; and his instantaneousness of conception could be represented only by words as brief and quick as thought itself."

<sup>3</sup> *His Nemean hide.*

Numerous expressions in this play point to Shakspeare as their author. Here we have an allusion to the *hide* of the Nemean lion; and Hamlet speaks of his *nerve*.

<sup>4</sup> *Not Juno's mantle, fairer than your tresses,  
Nor in more bounty spread her.*

Mr. Seward observes, and I think correctly—"The reader will see that *her* is prejudicial to the sense and measure, and ought to be discarded."

<sup>5</sup> *You cannot read it there: there through my tears.*

Mr. Seward would read *here* for the second *there* in this line; as he says the queen evidently points at her heart, and so explains herself in the sequel.

<sup>6</sup> *Let us be widows to our woes.*

The expression is not a very clear one; Mr. Symson suggests that we should read—

Let us be *wedded* to our woes.

<sup>7</sup> *The pretended celebration, i.e., intended celebration.*

<sup>8</sup> *At the banks of Aulis.*

The old copy erroneously reads *Anly*. Aulis was a seaport between Athens and Thebes.

<sup>9</sup> *I' th' aid o' th' current.*

Mr. Theobald would read—I th' *head* o' th' current. Perhaps it should be—*With* the aid, &c.

<sup>10</sup> *That's sibbe to him, i.e. kin to him.*

<sup>11</sup> *To 'dure ill-dealing fortune.*

M. Seward would read—to *cure* ill-dealing fortune; that is, to take from Fortune all desire or power of ever dealing ill to him again.

<sup>12</sup> *That the true love 'tween maid and maid, may be  
More than in sex dividuall.*

The old copy reads—*individual*; apparently an error of the printer. The meaning, though rather obscure, is, that a truer love may exist between maids than between those of different sexes.

<sup>13</sup> *I may depart with little, while I live.*

*Depart* is here used as *part*. So Ben Jonson, in his *Bartholomew Fair*—"the author having now *departed* with his right."

<sup>14</sup> *They have all the world in their chamber.*

A metaphorical expression; meaning that they possess in their own persons the virtues of all men.

<sup>15</sup> *Fame but stammers 'em.*

That is, does not do them justice; describes them in a feeble, hesitating, and ineloquent manner.

<sup>16</sup> ————— *We shall die,*

*(Which is the curse of honour) lastly, &c.*

For *lastly*, a word of no great expression or propriety in this place, Mr. Seward would read *lazily*.

<sup>17</sup> *Ay, do but put a fescue in her fist.*

A fescue was a sort of wire, or pointer, used by teachers to direct children's attention to their letters.

<sup>18</sup> *And to those gentle uses gave me life.*

That is, gave me life purposely to devote it to noble accomplishments; perhaps we should read—

And to those gentle uses gave *my* life.

<sup>19</sup> *What proves you?*

That is, what proof have you of your assertion that you are nobly born? In answer to this question, Arcite enumerates his accomplishments, which were of a nature only bestowed upon the youth of high rank.

<sup>20</sup> *Spreads like a plane, i.e., like a plane-tree.*

<sup>21</sup> *A very thief in love, a chaffy lord  
Not worth the name of villain.*

The volubility and massive weight of the epithets which, in the paragraph terminating here, Palamon heaps on his kinsman, without doubt point to Shakspeare as the author of the scene.

<sup>22</sup> *Enter your muse quick.*

A *muse* is the haunt of a hare. The old copy reads—*enter your musie*, evidently a corruption.

<sup>23</sup> *I've a good title.*

Old copy reads—*If a good title.*

<sup>24</sup> *He has mistook the brake I meant.*

The old copy reads *beake*. Seward alters it to *beek*, which he says "is an old English word, and now in use in all the northern counties; it signifies a brook or river; and some towns, as Welbeek, Holbeek, &c., take their names from it."

<sup>25</sup> *O for a prick now like a nightingale, to put my breast against.*

An allusion to the nightingale, whom poets feign sometimes presses its bosom against a thorn to prevent drowsiness from cutting short its melody.

<sup>26</sup> *Bavian.*

Mr. Douce, in his *Dissertation on the Ancient English Morris Dance*, says that the Bavian "might have been the *idiot* fool, and so denominated from his wearing a bib, in French, *baron*, because he drivelled."

<sup>27</sup> *Ye jave judgments.*

Mr. Seward is doubtful whether *jave* is some sort of coarse cloth, like frieze, or whether the word crept in by an error of the press.

<sup>28</sup> ———— *For thy cousin's soul,*

*Whose twelve strong labours crown his memory.*

Theseus was the cousin of Hercules, and almost rivalled the strength and bravery of that celebrated hero.

<sup>29</sup> ———— *By strength,*

*In which you swore I went beyond all women, &c.*

According to the ancient historians, the Amazons, of whom Hippolita was queen at the time they were conquered by Theseus, were a nation of women who devoted their lives to war and many exercises. Their strength and courage was remarkable, and they never shrunk from encountering the best and bravest troops in the world. They held no communion with the other sex except for the sake of propagation, and the male children they gave to their fathers.

<sup>30</sup> *Opinion!*

*Opinion* is here, and elsewhere, by many of our old writers, used to denote reputation. Emilia will not permit an over-strained love of reputation to hurry her on to cruelty. She would rather lose her fame than the princes should lose their lives.

<sup>31</sup> *He shall enjoy her: the other lose his head,  
And all his friends.*

Mr. Seward, with humorous acuteness, remarks—"As to the probability of their procuring each three seconds upon such odd terms, it may shock us to suppose any such gallant idiots; but even so late as our author's age it was reckoned cowardice to refuse any man, even a stranger, to be a second in almost any duel whatever, of which there is a most inimitable burlesque in *The Little French Lawyer*. Mankind were mad

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after knight-errantry; and the reader must catch a little of the spirit himself, or he will lose a great part of the beauties of this play; he must kindle with the flames of military glory, think life a small stake to hazard in such a combat, and death desirable to the conquered, as a refuge from shame.

<sup>32</sup> *Nothing but willow, willow, willow.*

See *Othello*, (Act iv. sc. 3.) The song here alluded to is contained in *Percy's Reliques of English Poetry*.

<sup>33</sup> *Do very rarely.*

Mr. Seward says—"I had put *early* into the text here before I received Mr. Sympson's reading *rearily*, i.e. betimes in the morning." He adds that being doubtful of the existence of any such word as *rearily*, he has let his emendation stand. After all the text may be right—bring it rarely, i.e. finely.

<sup>34</sup> *Just such another wanton Ganimede  
Set Jove afire.*

The old copy, probably by an error of the press, reads, "Set *Loce* a-fire with." We are indebted to Mr. Seward for the corrected reading.

<sup>35</sup> *The circles of his eyes show far within him.*

The old copy has, *fair* within him; but as the whole description is of a dark, black-haired, fierce-looking man, *fair* is evidently a corruption of *far*; that is, deep set.

<sup>36</sup> *To correct his valour.*

It is difficult to say in what manner victory corrects valour; perhaps we should read—*crown* his valour.

<sup>37</sup> *Regiment*, i.e. government.

<sup>38</sup> *Green Neptune into purple; whose approach  
Comets prewarn, whose havoc in vast field.*

The old copy reads—

Green Neptune into purple,

Comets prewarn, whose havoc, &c.

The words *whose approach* are necessary both to the metre and meaning; they were added by Mr. Seward.

<sup>39</sup> *Foyzon*, i.e. abundance.

<sup>40</sup> *The polled bachelor*, i.e. the bald-headed.

<sup>41</sup> *Thy rare green eye.*

Seward would read *sheen eye*, i.e. lustrous; but green is doubtless correct: I have seen eyes of a greenish colour, which have a cold, stern, uninviting aspect; such we may naturally suppose to have belonged to the goddess of chastity.

<sup>42</sup> *Pray humour her.*

The old copy reads—*honour* her.

<sup>43</sup> *Some two hundred bottles*, i.e. bundles of hay.

<sup>44</sup> *Onit a ward or forfeit an offence.*

Sympson would read *defence*, but *ward* and *defence* are the same thing. *Offence* is the reverse of to *ward*, as weapons of offence and defence. To forfeit an offence, therefore, is to miss the opportunity of striking some advantageous blow, that might give the victory.

<sup>45</sup> *Arm your prize*, i.e. take her by the arm.

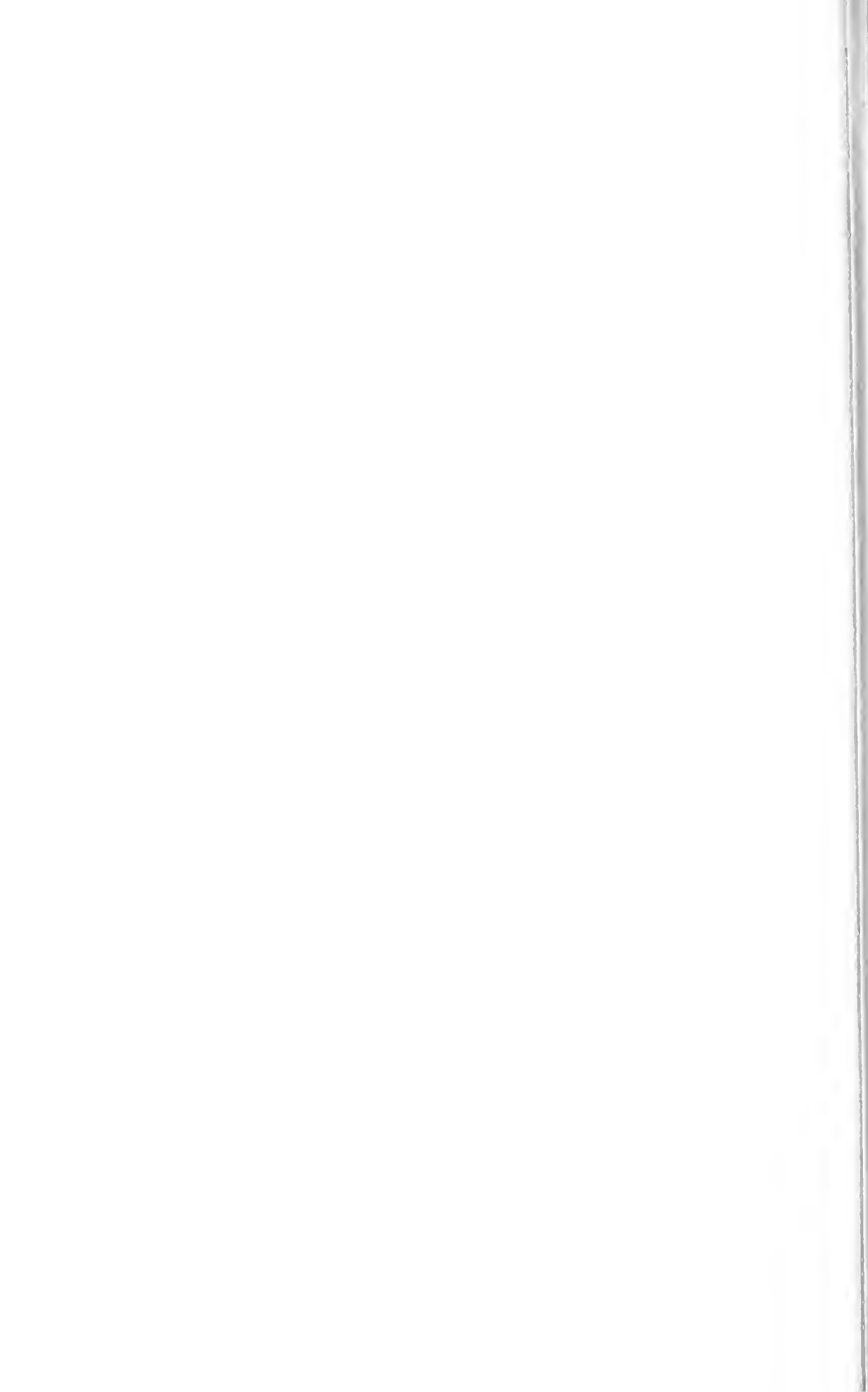
<sup>46</sup> *Culkins*, i.e. hoofs, from the Latin *calx*. H. T.











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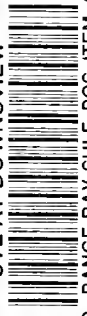
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