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T H E C R A N E C L A S S I C S

SHAKESPEARE'S

TRAGEDY OF KING LEAR.

WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

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INTRODUCTION.

THIS play was first published in quarto form in 1608. In 1623 it was published in folio form. The time of the writing is located between 1603 and 1606. In 1603 Dr. Harsnet published his *Declaration of Popish Impostures*. It was from this work that Shakespeare took the names of the devils of whom Edgar speaks in Act III. In 1607 entry was made in the *Stationers' Registers* that the play was performed "before the kinges maiestie at Whitehall vppon Sainct Stephens night at Christmas Last;" that is, Christmas, 1606. In October, 1605, an eclipse of the sun followed one of the moon a month previous. Gloucester speaks of "these late eclipses." November 5, 1605, was the date of the "Gunpowder Plot," which to superstitious minds the eclipses might have portended.

Whatever may have been the exact date of writing, certain it is that it was produced at the time when its author was in the Titanic era of his mental vigor. Shakespeare died at the age of fifty-two. This play was composed about ten or twelve years before his death. There is a marked strength of conception and vehemence of action that are approximated only in *Othello* and equalled nowhere else in his productions. In the fullness of his later years he wrote *The Tempest*, but the intensity has given way to calmness; the gigantic activity to the subdued grandeur of the ideals of ripened scholarship. *The Tempest* was the work of Shakespeare's sunset days. *King Lear* is the product of his noontide vigor. To all lovers of this

poet *Lear* will ever be the magnificent masterpiece, worthy of repeated study and analysis.

I. LEGENDARY BASIS.

It is not difficult to find the source from which the poet-dramatist derived material for this play. Like the other productions from his pen, Shakespeare did not trouble himself to *create* conditions. He recombined conditions already made, for Shakespeare was never a literary inventor. Some old legend, some chronicle or bit of history, be it never so familiar, furnished him the fabric out of which to fashion things new and beautiful and peculiarly and intrinsically his own.

The story of King Lear and his three daughters is one of the oldest in English literature. Holinshed had it in his *Chronicle*; Spencer in his *Faerie Queen*; Geoffrey of Monmouth, in his *Historia Britonum*. Late in the sixteenth century it was dramatized as the *Chronicle History of King Leir*. Shakespeare may have found his source of material in this old drama. The Gloucester story had its base in Sidney's *Arcadia*.

Whatever may have been the origin of the drama, *King Lear* is essentially Shakesperian, and its power and usefulness come not from legends long preserved, but from its author's pen.

Briefly told, the legend runs that old King Leir lived and ruled in the Isle of Briton. He had three daughters—Gonorilla, Regan, and Cordeilla. He loved them all, but especially loved he Cordeilla, the youngest.

When he had grown old and childish, he thought to bestow his kingdom upon the daughter who loved him most. Gonerilla declared that she loved him more than her own

life; Regan, that she loved him far above all other creatures,—more than tongue could say; but Cordeilla, that she loved him as her natural father, as much as he deserved to be loved,—so much she loved him.

This angered King Leir. He married his two eldest daughters, the one to the Duke of Cornewal, and the other to the Duke of Albania. To these two at his death the land should descend, one-half of it assigned to them in hand; but the third daughter received nothing.

Cordeilla, however, was, dowerless, happily married to a Prince of France, then called Gallia.

When Leir had grown very old the two sons-in-law seized the lands from him, and with much limitation of power allowed him to retain a few servants for his needs. His daughters grew exceedingly unkind. He finally fled to Cordeilla, whom he had cast off. She sent him first servants and a sum of money, that he might array himself in state and be royally served.

Furthermore, Cordeilla's husband took up his cause, and sent armies to Briton, who overcame the armies of Albania and Cornewal, and Cordeilla was made Queen of the Isle. This was in 3155, and fifty-four years before the building of Rome when "Uzia reigned over Juda, and Jeroboam over Israel." Here she ruled well for five years. At the death of her husband, her two nephews, sons of her sisters, refused to be ruled by a woman. So they raised an army against her, and put her into prison. Here, despairing of rescue, she slew herself.

The Gloster thread of the drama is from *Arcadia*, and it is the story of a blind old king of Galacia and his faithful son who were found in sore distress by some storm-bound princes. The father greatly desired the son to leave him

to his fate, or to lead him to the cliff that he might cast himself down and be killed. The son related to the sympathetic princes how the father had been thrust from his throne by an ungrateful brother, who also cruelly put out his eyes.

But the father insisted upon telling the whole truth: how he himself had cast out this lawful son and had bestowed upon his illegitimate child all honor and power. How the favored son had driven him forth, and the faithful child had found him and cared for him. Shakespeare follows this line closely, while he departs considerably from the legend of Leir.

With this material we come to a literary analysis of Shakespeare's drama.

II. LITERARY ANALYSIS.

"He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his own spirit than he that taketh a city."—*Proverbs xvi: 32*.

King Lear falls into the class of Shakespearian drama known as legendary tragedy. In the same group with it are *Timon of Athens*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Othello*. In each play the source of the plot is in legend, not history; and the conflict portrayed is overcome by death. In *Timon of Athens* this conflict centers in the question of property. In the other three it is a question of family. In *Romeo and Juliet* it is a lovers' quarrel. In *Othello*, an estrangement of husband and wife. In *Lear*, the conflict is between parents and children.

In this class *Lear* easily holds the first rank. If, as it has been said, "every page of *Macbeth* is marked with bloody finger-prints," every page of *King Lear* is marked by violent anger, unreason, madness. It follows, then, that mighty influences grow from such portrayal of activ-

ity, that the lessons taught by the drama will be as powerful and wide-reaching as the drama itself is vigorous and intense.

The play develops along two lines of thought, embracing Gloster and his sons in one line and Lear and his daughters in the other. The two, however, have only one basis: the father destroys his family by his own mis-judgment, drives out his faithful child, and elevates the faithless ones even to giving up his property to them. The father in each case receives from the hands he has favored a punishment for his wrong-doing. But since those who bring down this punishment upon parental heads are themselves guilty, it follows that they in turn must also meet retribution, and it will come to them from those who have been banished.

The differences in the two lines are, that Lear has only daughters; Gloster, only sons. One father is king, the other subject. One is irascible, the other superstitious. Hence all phases of the family, except the mother, and all grades of society are here represented. Clearly, it is an era of *family* strife as *Julius Caesar* represents an era of *state* strife.

The action of the play also divides into two lines. The first includes the first three acts; the second, the last two. In analyzing the play the two lines of thought, Gloster and Lear, must be traced through the two phases of action, after some such diagram as this:

	ACTS I-III.	ACTS IV-V.
LEAR.....
GLOSTER.....

The curtain rises on Gloster, who lightly refers to the immorality of his youth, regardless of the fact that his unfortunate son is present to hear his own shame frivolously spoken of. It is not strange that in the bitterness of his degradation this son should turn against his father. We see at once Gloster's crime, and the instrument of his punishment. Edmund, through no fault of his own, is an outcast from society. For this condition Gloster is to blame, and he must pay the penalty. But no one can so fittingly bring him to judgment as the one against whom he has sinned. It is only natural that Edmund, who cannot be a respected member of his father's family, should turn against the family; and since he cannot *inherit* property, he naturally seeks to gain it by contriving and deception. If he is outside the law, he will use means outside of the law to come into his own. The weapons to his hand are simple. Gloster is superstitious, Edgar is credulous. Edmund is neither, but he plays the father's superstition against the son's credulity, and in the end of the game Edgar, the faithful son, is banished from his father's house and the false-hearted Edmund is installed the son and heir in his brother's stead.

Edmund, once in power, turns against the father who elevated him to power, and is a party to the cruelty that deprives the old man of his eyes and thrusts him helpless outside his own castle-gate. Could Gloster have looked forward years ago from the indiscretions of an immoral youth to this sightless, homeless old age, how different might have been his course! The inexorable law of retribution waited long to bring to him the measure due him, but it came at last, and by the only fitting means,—the one whom he had wronged.

The other line running through the first three acts is that of Lear and his daughters. When we first meet Lear he is an irascible old king in whom absolute power, a long era of ruling and the weight of fourscore years have produced a disposition as unyielding as it is unreasonable. The burden of his kingship he chooses now to lay upon other shoulders, retaining to himself the honor and appointments of a ruler. Absolutism demands adulation. Lear has long been accustomed to flattery; he now demands it as his right. It is his vanity that prompts him to require of his three daughters a protestation of their love for him. The two oldest children, Goneril and Regan, are extravagant in their declarations, but Cordelia professes to love him only as a natural father. Cordelia in her strict regard for truth is over-blunt of speech, as the painfully conscientious usually are.

Lear, the irascible, flies into a fury, and drives Cordelia, dowerless, from his presence. His kingdom he then divides between his two oldest daughters. In a brief time they turn against him, strip him of the semblance of power he had retained, drive him from their door into the pitiless darkness and storm of the night, unattended and unsheltered.

So Lear's crime against the faithful Cordelia finds retribution in being himself turned forth by those whom he had exalted to high places.

The second movement of the action, including the last two acts, shows that in each line the retribution of the first part constitutes the guilt of the second. Vengeance comes home to Gloster through Edmund, the son whom he wronged. But in bringing this retribution to his father Edmund sins against the innocent Edgar, who in turn must

be requited for that wrong. In driving Edgar out, Gloucester is punished, but Edmund must also be punished, for he has done a wrong. The last two acts exist to bring about this punishment. By Edgar's hand the traitor Edmund falls, and the eternal balance of justice attains its equilibrium.

The same is true of the Lear line. Lear, who commits a wrong toward Cordelia, is driven out by those whom he had trusted. But in bringing retribution to their father the daughters are themselves faithless to him. So the last two acts exist for them to receive their reward for the evil they have done.

There remains one point further to be considered, namely: Why Cordelia must also perish. The answer is clear. Cordelia, in avenging her father's wrongs, attacks the kingdom also. King Lear of his own volition gave up his kingdom. To have given him aid and protection and to have punished the cruel-hearted daughters were well and right. But to restore him to his kingdom, or to invade with the army of France, the Island of Britain, was a blow at the state. Cordelia went beyond her lawful bound, and perished for the going.

So much for the brief analysis of the play. The study of the individual characters remains to be taken up.

The minor characters fall into two groups: the faithless and the faithful. In the first are Edmund, Goneril, and Regan. In the second, Edgar, Kent, Albany, and Cordelia. And by some trick of affinity these people run together in the action. Edmund the usurper easily pleases Goneril and Regan, to both of whom he pledges himself. His base nature is untrue beyond his assumed need of family and property rights. Goneril, who turns against

her father, turns also against her sister and her husband, causing the death of the former and conniving at the death of the latter.

Of the other group, Edgar excites little admiration. His is a weak nature, else Edmund could not so easily have controlled him. He comes at last into as good a fortune as he deserves.

Albany, whose character grows upon the student, is the only one of the cast who is not destroyed, or sunk into oblivion. The fool "goes to bed at noon"; Kent has a long journey before him, and Edgar drops out of sight. The kingdom goes to Albany, who deserves it and logically may enjoy it. The keynote to his character is in his words,

"Where I could not be honest I never yet was valiant."

Kent and Cordelia are alike in steadfast loyalty—Kent as subject, Cordelia as daughter. But as sincerity is their code, they fall into the error of bluntness of speech that cannot accomplish entirely the ends they seek to gain. It is a trait of the extremely conscientious always, and it ever has its unfortunate effect. But aside from this, the student must always admire the integrity of Kent. Cordelia is never deeply admired. Her judgment and her tact are both deficient.

Beyond these two groups are Oswald, the tool of Goneril, a despicable knave, and the wise little fool, who even among Shakespeare's fools is pre-eminently clever.

But the central, dominant figure of the drama is King Lear, and the analysis of this character and its world-wide application is worth our while.

King Lear, like his own fool, and like all the rest of us,

kings or fools, was the product of his surroundings plus his physical, mental and ethical development. He was the sum of himself multiplied by his years of time and external circumstances. His was a monster-bearing age, an era of deep uncivilization, when the shrewdness of an unfolded intellect lacked the softening power that is not easily provoked and that seeketh not her own. Lear left the world no better than he found it. Behind him lay the long years of a powerful reign. The habit of sovereignty was upon him, fixed there by the summers and winters of almost a lifetime. His rule had been absolute. No *Wit-enagemote* had shared with him the grave burdens of state. No parliamentary nor judicial body had simplified and limited the necessity for power. Years of uncurbed authority wrought in his mental building and helped to frame and shape him. Added to long and absolute dictation was old age, when aspiration is merged into acceptance and hope is become only persistent endurance. It is not strange, then, that Lear at fourseore should be the very embodiment of unrestraint, unless the inner man be larger in his strength than the strength that lies in external conditions. For after all, it is the mind and spirit that may control the *real man*, and the crown that gilds "the straitened forehead of the fool" is no more a mark of graceful rank than the cap and bells may be.

In physical stature Lear was majestic. Even in his desolation, ragged and storm-beaten, with madness seething in his brain, he still was regal. Something in his commanding presence, his tall, splendid figure, his grand white hair and flowing beard, proclaimed him always a king. "Ay, every inch a king," whose look could command obedience.

So much for the outside of Lear. But what lay within? First, he failed to know himself, and through himself to study humanity, of which he was only a type. He developed no power of analysis. He accepted royalty, he grew insensibly into tyranny, he demanded absolute submission without ever answering to himself why he might claim them all. He wanted sovereignty, but he gave no thought to the sources of sovereignty. He craved expressions of love, with never a clear vision of that realm where love abides.

Some innate instinct drew him to Albany, the only real, decently equipped man in the play.

“I thought the king had more affected the Duke of Albany than Cornwall.”

In the opening words of the drama Kent tells us this. In an indistinct way Lear recognized Albany's merits, just as he half distrusted his own proud heart when he drove his little favorite Cordelia, dowerless from his door, and gave her only a father's curse. But inasmuch as he failed through self-analysis to comprehend the claims of either merit or love, he cast out his loyal subjects and put his trust in traitors. He took for sincerity the flattery of his two daughters, she-monsters that they were, and shut away from himself the honest, unselfish love of his true-hearted child. He lived in a seeming unreal world and he took the semblance of things for their reality. He could not know truth in others until he knew it in himself, and his proud, dominant soul never paused to hunt for it there. How much of life's dismal failures spring from never knowing its controlling motives!

With these conditions—the unrestraint of a long and absolute rule and the lack of analytic insight—the ethical

qualities of King Lear are easily understood. He was obstinate, impetuous, and selfish. Servants are natural disturbers. When his own long retinue of an hundred knights made trouble in the households of his daughters, he obstinately resented a reduction in their number. He rashly drove himself into the storm, his daughter Regan merely closing the gate after him as she declared,

“To wilful men
The injuries that they themselves procure
Must be their schoolmasters.”

Added to his craving for love was his desire for the pomp and show of royalty. He longed for adulation and the semblance of power, while he laid the care and burden of it on other shoulders.

In Lear, who might have been “every inch a king,” there developed the mean spirit of revenge. Nowhere else in literature is there a parallel to the bitter, blasting malediction and threats of vengeance that Lear calls down upon his two daughters, into whose hands he had put the power that crushed him.

Lastly, there was lacking in Lear that supreme need, a warm human sympathy. There is no touch of mother-love in all the drama. It is not until homeless old age and poverty and bitter weather come to the king that his heart melts in pity for the poor of his kingdom, and he cries out :

“Poor naked wretches wheresoe’er you are
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides,
Your loop’d and window’d raggedness defend you
From seasons such as these?”

Then in very bitterness of heart he moans :

“O, I have ta’en too little care of this.”

Such, then, is Lear. What will be the effect of his rule? What, but to beget falsehood and treason in his subjects and insanity in himself? For madness is intensified unrestraint. Lear committed intellectual suicide. He hanged his mental self with a rope of his own braiding.

With all the splendid opportunities of a magnificent kingdom, with unwavering loyalty and love at his command, with an impregnable absolutism of power, poor old Lear was the sum of himself made up of all the units of his years, and in a consuming rage, and grief sharper than a serpent's tooth, his light went out, and his life tarried not long in following.

It was long and long ago that old King Lear lived in legend and found a place in finest literature. But the lessons of his life are as potent to-day as they were in the days of misrule in Briton, and some of them may be set down here.

The force of the bearing that is kingly compared to the others is least important, and yet it is valuable. The dignity of manner that is the exponent of real kingdom has its measure of influence. Lear "had that in his face" that made men his subjects. Frivolous speech, undue familiarity, careless behavior, mar the man who would be really useful as much as stiff austerity and stilted manners may do. He who would command respect must give outward evidence of why he should deserve it.

The second lesson is the need for self-study. It is sometimes the surprise of a lifetime to find how absolutely unacquainted we are with ourselves. There are men and women who never get further than a mere speaking acquaintance with themselves. King Lear's they are who would lord it over others while they stand in absolute ig-

norance of their own souls. Self-study is the great source of power to the student. When we know what motive it is that prompts us to desire one thing and to avoid another, we first begin to know our strength. And the calm assurance born of knowing makes doing easy.

Self-study gives restraint, and restraint is wisdom. Unrestraint is madness. "Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things," says Saint Paul,—is intelligently self-controlled in soul and body.

Self-study gives insight, the power to discriminate, the power to analyze.

"I thought the king had more affected the Duke of Albany than Cornwall."

How mournfully pitiful that he went no further than a dim discernment of Albany's merits. How grave a matter that he should pass over the gentle kiss and soft caress of Cordelia for the claws and fangs of Goneril and Regan.

Self-study bestows the large blessing of understanding divine things. God made man in his own image. It is through self-knowing that man comes nearest to knowing his Creator.

So much for the physical and mental equipment: what are the ethical lessons to be learned from this analysis?

Character is the sum of life. King Lear did not spring at once into an obstinate, selfish, impetuous, show-loving, flattery-craving, unsympathetic old age. He came to it moment by moment. His manner of growing old is not changed to-day. If a man is absolutely and irreproachably honest, he is so because honesty has come to be the fixed habit of his life, and each passing year grounds him the more thoroughly in his integrity. If a man is absolutely and irreproachably moral, he makes day by day a

winning fight with immoral forces. He may not affect these virtues and hold them for a year or two, or put them on and off like summer and winter clothing. They are not garments. They come to be integument and bone and fiber.

King Lear did not *live* in the lives of those about him. Their joys and griefs, their aspirations and their failures moved him not at all. Real kinghood seeks to reproduce itself in its subjects.

“Ye are my children,” says the Great Teacher, “if ye do whatsoever I command you;” and He wisely adds, “My commandments are not grievous.” Did he not mean, “Ye are Christ-like, nay, ye are a part of the Christ, if my word that goeth forth through you shall not return unto me void, but shall accomplish the thing whereunto I sent it”?

One lesson more. King Lear lacked the warm heart of sympathy.

“O, I have ta'en too little care of this.”

How bitter is that cry of Lear's remorse when his lot is become one with the unhoused, unfed poor of his kingdom! This was the crowning defect of Lear's character, and it is the crowning defect of character always.

“Though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge,” wrote Saint Paul, “and though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor and have not charity, I am nothing.”

Dignity of bearing, self-study, a steady building-up of right principles from day to day, unselfish living and genuine heart-sympathy for humanity,—these are the things that most exalt a kingdom and turn the misrule and madness of King Lear into strength and honor.

The lessons of this drama come home not alone to the crowned head, the chief executive or the parliamentary and judicial power of a kingdom or commonwealth: they come to the kingdom of the heart, the supreme rule of the soul, enforcing home the truth of the wise old proverb—

“He that is slow to anger is better than he that is mighty ; and he that ruleth his own spirit, than he that taketh a city.”

MARGARET HILL McCARTER.

TOPEKA, KANSAS, 1905.

KING LEAR.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LEAR, king of Britain.

KING OF FRANCE.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

DUKE OF CORNWALL.

DUKE OF ALBANY.

EARL OF KENT.

EARL OF GLOSTER.

EDGAR, son to Gloster.

EDMUND, bastard son to Gloster.

CURAN, a courtier.

OSWALD, steward to Goneril.

Old Man, tenant to Gloster.

Doctor.

Fool.

A Captain employed by Edmund.

Gentleman attendant on Cordelia.

A Herald.

Servants to Cornwall.

GONERIL,)

REGAN,) daughters to Lear.

CORDELIA.)

Knights of Lear's train, Captains, Messengers, Soldiers, and Attendants.

SCENE: *Britain.*

ACT I.

SCENE I. *King Lear's Palace.*

Enter KENT, GLOSTER, *and* EDMUND.

Kent. I thought the king had more affected the Duke of Albany than Cornwall.

Gloster. It did always seem so to us: but now, in the division of the kingdom, it appears not which of the dukes he values most; for qualities are so weighed, that curiosity in neither can make choice of either's moiety.

Kent. Is not this your son, my lord?

Gloster. His breeding, sir, hath been at my charge; I have so often blushed to acknowledge him, that now I am brazed to 't. Do you smell a fault? 10

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

Gloster. But I have a son, sir, by order of law, some year elder than this, who yet is no dearer in my account; though this knave came something saucily into the world before he was sent for, yet was his mother fair, and the whoreson must be acknowledged.—Do you know this noble gentleman, Edmund?

Edmund. No, my lord.

Gloster. My lord of Kent. Remember him hereafter as my honourable friend. 21

Edmund. My services to your lordship.

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

Edmund. Sir, I shall study deserving.

Gloster. He hath been out nine years, and away he shall again.—The king is coming. [*Sennet within.*]

Enter one bearing a coronet, KING LEAR, CORNWALL, ALBANY, GONERIL, REGAN, CORDELIA, and Attendants.

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

Gloster. I shall, my liege. [*Exeunt Gloster and Edmund.*]

Lear. Meantime we shall express our darker purpose.—
Give me the map there.—Know that we have divided 30

In three our kingdom; and 't is our fast intent
To shake all cares and business from our age,
Conferring them on younger strengths, while we
Unburthen'd crawl toward death.—Our son of Cornwall,—
And you, our no less loving son of Albany,
We have this hour a constant will to publish
Our daughters' several dowers, that future strife
May be prevented now. The princes, France and Bur-
gundy,

Great rivals in our youngest daughter's love, 40

Long in our court have made their amorous sojourn,
And here are to be answer'd.—Tell me, my daughters,

Since now we will divest us both of rule,

Interest of territory, cares of state,

Which of you shall we say doth love us most?

That we our largest bounty may extend

Where nature doth with merit challenge.—Goneril,

Our eldest-born, speak first.

Goneril. Sir, I love you more than word can wield the
matter; 50

Dearer than eyesight, space, and liberty;

Beyond what can be valued, rich or rare;

No less than life, with grace, health, beauty, honour;

As much as child e'er lov'd, or father found;

A love that makes breath poor, and speech unable;

Beyond all manner of so much I love you.

Cordelia. [*Aside.*] What shall Cordelia speak? Love,
and be silent.

Lear. Of all these bounds, even from this line to this,
With shadowy forests and with champignons rich'd, 60
With plenteous rivers and wide-skirted meads,
We make thee lady. To thine and Albany's issue
Be this perpetual.—What says our second daughter,
Our dearest Regan, wife of Cornwall?

Regan. I am made of that self metal as my sister,
And prize me at her worth. In my true heart
I find she names my very deed of love;
Only she comes too short: that I profess
Myself an enemy to all other joys
Which the most precious square of sense professes, 70
And find I am alone felicitate
In your dear highness' love.

Cordelia. [*Aside*] Then poor Cordelia!
And yet not so, since I am sure my love's
More ponderous than my tongue.

Lear. To thee and thine hereditary ever
Remain this ample third of our fair kingdom,
No less in space, validity, and pleasure,
Than that conferr'd on Goneril.—Now, our joy,
Although our last and least, to whose young love 80
The vines of France and milk of Burgundy
Strive to be interest'd, what can you say to draw
A third more opulent than your sisters? Speak.

Cordelia. Nothing, my lord.

Lear. Nothing?

Cordelia. Nothing.

Lear. Nothing will come of nothing; speak again.

Cordelia. Unhappy that I am, I cannot heave

My heart into my mouth. I love your majesty
According to my bond; no more nor less. 90

Lear. How, how, Cordelia! mend your speech a little,
Lest it may mar your fortunes.

Cordelia. Good my lord,
You have begot me, bred me, lov'd me; I
Return those duties back as are right fit,
Obey you, love you, and most honour you.
Why have my sisters husbands, if they say
They love you all? Haply, when I shall wed,
That lord whose hand must take my plight shall carry
Half my love with him, half my care and duty. 100
Sure, I shall never marry like my sisters,
To love my father all.

Lear. But goes thy heart with this?

Cordelia. Ay, my good lord.

Lear. So young, and so untender?

Cordelia. So young, my lord, and true.

Lear. Let it be so; thy truth then be thy dower:
For, by the sacred radiance of the sun,
The mysteries of Hecate and the night,
By all the operation of the orbs 110
From whom we do exist and cease to be,
Here I disclaim all my parental care,
Propinquity and property of blood,
And as a stranger to my heart and me
Hold thee from this for ever. The barbarous Scythian,
Or he that makes his generation messes
To gorge his appetite, shall to my bosom
Be as well neighbour'd, pitied, and reliev'd,
As thou my sometime daughter.

Kent. Good my liege,— 120

Lear. Peace, Kent!

Come not between the dragon and his wrath.
 I lov'd her most, and thought to set my rest
 On her kind nursery.—Hence, and avoid my sight!—
 So be my grave my peace, as here I give
 Her father's heart from her!—Call France. Who stirs?
 Call Burgundy.—Cornwall and Albany,
 With my two daughters' dowers digest the third.
 Let pride, which she calls plainness, marry her.
 I do invest you jointly with my power,
 Pre-eminence, and all the large effects
 That troop with majesty. Ourselves, by monthly course,
 With reservation of an hundred knights,
 By you to be sustain'd, shall our abode
 Make with you by due turn. Only we shall retain
 The name and all the addition to a king;
 The sway, revenue, execution of the rest,
 Beloved sons, be yours: which to confirm,
 This coronet part between you.

130

Kent.

Royal Lear,

140

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

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

Kent. Let it fall rather, though the fork invade
 The region of my heart! Be Kent unmanner'y
 When Lear is mad. What wouldst thou do, old man?
 Think'st thou that duty shall have dread to speak
 When power to flattery bows? To plainness honour's
 bound,

150

When majesty falls to folly. Reserve thy state,
 And in thy best consideration check

This hideous rashness. Answer my life my judgment,
 Thy youngest daughter does not love thee least ;
 Nor are those empty-hearted whose low sound
 Reverbs no hollowness.

Lear. Kent, on thy life, no more!

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

160

Lear. Out of my sight!

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

Lear. Now, by Apollo,—

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

Lear. O, vassal! miscreant!

[*Laying his hand on his sword.*]

Albany. }
Cornwall. } Dear sir, forbear.

Kent. Kill thy physician, and the fee bestow
 Upon the foul disease. Revoke thy gift ;
 Or, whilst I can vent clamour from my throat,
 I'll tell thee thou dost evil.

170

Lear. Hear me, recreant!
 On thine allegiance, hear me!
 That thou hast sought to make us break our vow,
 Which we durst never yet, and with strain'd pride
 To come betwixt our sentence and our power,
 Which nor our nature nor our place can bear,
 Our poteny made good, take thy reward.
 Five days we do allot thee, for provision
 To shield thee from diseases of the world,
 And on the sixth to turn thy hated back

180

Upon our kingdom; if on the tenth day following
 Thy banish'd trunk be found in our dominions,
 The moment is thy death. Away! By Jupiter,
 This shall not be revok'd.

Kent. Fare thee well, king; sith thus thou wilt appear,
 Freedom lives hence, and banishment is here.—
 The gods to their dear shelter take thee, maid,
 That justly think'st and hast most rightly said!— 190
 And your large speeches may your deeds approve,
 That good effects may spring from words of love.—
 Thus Kent, O princes, bids you all adieu;
 He 'll shape his old course in a country new. [Exit.

Flourish. Re-enter GLOSTER, with FRANCE, BURGUNDY, and
 Attendants.

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

Lear. My lord of Burgundy,
 We first address toward you, who with this king
 Hath rivall'd for our daughter; what, in the least,
 Will you require in present dower with her,
 Or cease your quest of love? 200

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

Lear. Right noble Burgundy,
 When she was dear to us, we did hold her so;
 But now her price is fallen. Sir, there she stands.
 If aught within that little-seeming substance,
 Or all of it, with our displeasure piec'd,
 And nothing more, may fitly like your grace,
 She 's there, and she is yours. 210

Burgundy. I know no answer.

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

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

Lear. Then leave her, sir; for, by the power that made
me,
I tell you all her wealth.—[*To France*] For you, great king,
I would not from your love make such a stray, 221
To match you where I hate; therefore beseech you
To avert your liking a more worthier way
Than on a wretch whom nature is asham'd
Almost to acknowledge hers.

France. This is most strange,
That she, who even but now was your best object,
The argument of your praise, balm of your age,
The best, the dearest, should in this trice of time
Commit a thing so monstrous, to dismantle 230
So many folds of favour. Sure, her offence
Must be of such unnatural degree
That monsters it, or your fore-vouch'd affection
Fallen into taint; which to believe of her,
Must be a faith that reason without miracle
Should never plant in me.

Cordelia. I yet beseech your majesty,—
If for I want that glib and oily art,
To speak and purpose not, since what I well intend
I'll do't before I speak,—that you make known 240
It is no vicious blot, nor other foulness,
No unchaste action, or dishonour'd step,
That hath depriv'd me of your grace and favour;

But even for want of that for which I am richer,
 A still-soliciting eye, and such a tongue
 That I am glad I have not, though not to have it
 Hath lost me in your liking.

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

France. Is it but this? a tardiness in nature, 250
 Which often leaves the history unspoke
 That it intends to do?—My lord of Burgundy,
 What say you to the lady? Love's not love
 When it is mingled with regards that stands
 Aloof from the entire point. Will you have her?
 She is herself a dowry.

Burgundy. Royal Lear,
 Give but that portion which yourself propos'd,
 And here I take Cordelia by the hand,
 Duchess of Burgundy. 260

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

Burgundy. I am sorry then you have lost a father
 That you must lose a husband.

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

France. Fairest Cordelia, that art most rich being poor,
 Most choice forsaken, and most lov'd despis'd,
 Thee and thy virtues here I seize upon;
 Be it lawful I take up what's cast away. 270
 Gods, gods! 't is strange that from their cold'st neglect
 My love should kindle to inflam'd respect.—
 Thy dowerless daughter, king, thrown to my chance,
 Is queen of us, of ours, and our fair France.
 Not all the dukes of waterish Burgundy

Can buy this unpriz'd precious maid of me.—
 Bid them farewell, Cordelia, though unkind;
 Thou lovest here, a better where to find.

Lear. Thou hast her, France; let her be thine, for we
 Have no such daughter, nor shall ever see 280
 That face of hers again.—Therefore be gone
 Without our grace, our love, our benison.—
 Come, noble Burgundy.

[*Flourish.* *Exeunt all but France, Goneril, Regan,
 and Cordelia.*

France. Bid farewell to your sisters.

Cordelia. Ye jewels of our father, with wash'd eyes
 Cordelia leaves you. I know you what you are,
 And, like a sister, am most loath to call
 Your faults as they are nam'd. Love well our father.
 To your professed bosoms I commit him;
 But yet, alas! stood I within his grace, 290
 I would prefer him to a better place.
 So farewell to you both.

Regan. Prescribe not us our duty.

Goneril.

Let your study

Be to content your lord, who hath receiv'd you
 At fortune's alms. You have obedience scanted,
 And well are worth the want that you have wanted.

Cordelia. Time shall unfold what plighted cunning hides;
 Who cover faults, at last shame them derides.
 Well may you prosper! 300

France.

Come, my fair Cordelia.

[*Exeunt France and Cordelia.*

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

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

Goneril. You see how full of changes his age is; the observation we have made of it hath not been little. He always loved our sister most; and with what poor judgment he hath now cast her off appears too grossly. 310

Regan. 'T is the infirmity of his age; yet he hath ever but slenderly known himself.

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

Regan. Such unconstant starts are we like to have from him as this of Kent's banishment. 319

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

Regan. We shall further think of it.

Goneril. We must do something, and i' th' heat. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *The Earl of Gloster's Castle.*

Enter EDMUND, with a letter.

Edmund. Thou, Nature, art my goddess; to thy law My services are bound. Wherefore should I Stand in the plague of custom, and permit The curiosity of nations to deprive me, For that I am some twelve or fourteen moonshines Lag of a brother? Why bastard? wherefore base? When my dimensions are as well compact, My mind as generous and my shape as true,

As honest madam's issue? Why brand they us
 With base? with baseness? bastardy? base, base? 10
 Legitimate Edgar, I must have your land.
 Our father's love is to the bastard Edmund
 As to the legitimate; fine word,—legitimate!
 Well, my legitimate, if this letter speed
 And my invention thrive, Edmund the base
 Shall top the legitimate. I grow; I prosper:—
 Now, gods, stand up for bastards!

Enter GLOSTER.

Gloster. Kent banish'd thus! and France in choler parted!
 And the king gone to-night! subscrib'd his power!
 Confin'd to exhibition! All this done 20
 Upon the gad!—Edmund, how now! what news?

Edmund. So please your lordship, none.

[Putting up the letter.

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

Edmund. I know no news, my lord.

Gloster. What paper were you reading?

Edmund. Nothing, my lord.

Gloster. No? What needed then that terrible dispatch
 of it into your pocket? the quality of nothing hath not
 such need to hide itself. Let's see; come, if it be nothing,
 I shall not need spectacles. 30

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

Gloster. Give me the letter, sir.

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

Gloster. Let's see, let's see.

Edmund. I hope, for my brother's justification, he wrote this but as an essay or taste of my virtue. 39

Gloster. [*Reads*] *'This policy and reverence of age makes the world bitter to the best of our times; keeps our fortunes from us till our oldness cannot relish them. I begin to find an idle and fond bondage in the oppression of aged tyranny, who sways, not as it hath power, but as it is suffered. Come to me, that of this I may speak more. If our father would sleep till I wake him, you should enjoy half his revenue for ever, and live the beloved of your brother,*

EDGAR.'

Hum!—*Conspiracy!*—*'Sleep till I wake him, you should enjoy half his revenue,'*—My son Edgar! Had he a hand to write this? a heart and brain to breed it in?—When came this to you? who brought it? 51

Edmund. It was not brought me, my lord; there's the cunning of it: I found it thrown in at the casement of my closet.

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

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

Gloster. It is his.

Edmund. It is his hand, my lord; but I hope his heart is not in the contents. 61

Gloster. Hath he never before sounded you in this business?

Edmund. Never, my lord; but I have heard him oft maintain it to be fit, that, sons at perfect age, and fathers declined, the father should be as ward to the son, and the son manage his revenue.

Gloster. O villain, villain! His very opinion in the letter! Abhorred villain! Unnatural, detested, brutish vil-

lain! worse than brutish!—Go, sirrah, seek him; I'll apprehend him. Abominable villain! Where is he? 71

Edmund. I do not well know, my lord. If it shall please you to suspend your indignation against my brother till you can derive from him better testimony of his intent, you should run a certain course: where, if you violently proceed against him, mistaking his purpose, it would make a great gap in your own honour and shake in pieces the heart of his obedience. I dare pawn down my life for him that he hath writ this to feel my affection to your honour, and to no other pretence of danger. 80

Gloster. Think you so?

Edmund. If your honour judge it meet, I will place you where you shall hear us confer of this, and by an auricular assurance have your satisfaction: and that without any further delay than this very evening.

Gloster. He cannot be such a monster—

Edmund. Nor is not, sure.

Gloster. To his father, that so tenderly and entirely loves him. Heaven and earth! Edmund, seek him out: wind me into him, I pray you: frame the business after your own wisdom. I would unstate myself, to be in a due resolution. 92

Edmund. I will seek him, sir, presently, convey the business as I shall find means, and acquaint you with all.

Gloster. These late eclipses in the sun and moon portend no good to us. Though the wisdom of nature can reason it thus and thus, yet nature finds itself scourged by the sequent effects: love cools, friendship falls off, brothers divide; in cities, mutinies; in countries, discord; in palaces, treason; and the bond cracked 'twixt son and father. This villain of mine comes under the prediction; there's son

against father: the king falls from bias of nature; there's father against child. We have seen the best of our time: machinations, hollowness, treachery, and all ruinous disorders follow us disquietly to our graves. Find out this villain, Edmund; it shall lose thee nothing; do it carefully. And the noble and true-hearted Kent banished! his offence, honesty! 'T is strange. [Exit.

Edmund. This is the excellent foppery of the world, that, when we are sick in fortune—often the surfeit of our own behaviour—we make guilty of our disasters the sun, the moon, and the stars: as if we were villains on necessity; fools by heavenly compulsion; knaves, thieves, and traitors, by spherical predominance; drunkards, liars, and adulterers, by an enforced obedience of planetary influence; and all that we are evil in, by a divine thrusting on. Edgar—

Enter EDGAR.

and pat he comes like the catastrophe of the old comedy. My cue is villanous melancholy, with a sigh like Tom o' Bedlam. O, these eclipses do portend these divisions! fa, sol, la, mi. 120

Edgar. How now, brother Edmund! what serious contemplation are you in?

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

Edgar. Do you busy yourself with that?

Edmund. I promise you, the effects he writes of succeed unhappily: as of unnaturalness between the child and the parent; death, dearth, dissolutions of ancient amities; divisions in state, menaces and maledictions against king and nobles; needless diffidences, banishment of friends,

dissipation of cohorts, nuptial breaches, and I know not what.

132

Edgar. How long have you been a sectary astronomical?

Edmund. Come, come: when saw you my father last?

Edgar. The night gone by.

Edmund. Spake you with him?

Edgar. Ay, two hours together.

Edmund. Parted you in good terms? Found you no displeasure in him by word nor countenance?

Edgar. None at all.

140

Edmund. Bethink yourself wherein you may have offended him; and at my entreaty forbear his presence till some little time hath qualified the heat of his displeasure, which at this instant so rageth in him that with the mischief of your person it would scarcely allay.

Edgar. Some villain hath done me wrong.

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

151

Edgar. Armed, brother!

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

Edgar. Shall I hear from you anon?

Edmund. I do serve you in this business.—

[*Exit Edgar.*

160

A credulous father, and a brother noble,
Whose nature is so far from doing harms

That he suspects none; on whose foolish honesty
 My practices ride easy. I see the business.
 Let me, if not by birth, have lands by wit;
 All with me's meet that I can fashion fit. [Exit.

SCENE III. *The Duke of Albany's Palace.*

Enter GONERIL and OSWALD, her steward.

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

Oswald. Ay, madam.

Goneril. By day and night he wrongs me; every hour
 He flashes into one gross crime or other,
 That sets us all at odds. I'll not endure it.
 His knights grow riotous, and himself upbraids us
 On every trifle. When he returns from hunting,
 I will not speak with him; say I am sick.
 If you come slack of former services, 10
 You shall do well; the fault of it I'll answer.

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

[Horns within.]

Goneril. Put on what weary negligence you please,
 You and your fellows; I'd have it come to question.
 If he distaste it, let him to my sister,
 Whose mind and mine, I know, in that are one,
 Not to be over-rul'd. Idle old man,
 That still would manage those authorities
 That he hath given away! Now, by my life,
 Old fools are babes again, and must be us'd 20
 With checks as flatteries, when they are seen abus'd.
 Remember what I have said.

Oswald.

Well, madam.

Goneril. And let his knights have colder looks among you.

What grows of it, no matter; advise your fellows so.
 I would breed from hence occasions, and I shall,
 That I may speak. I'll write straight to my sister,
 To hold my very course. Prepare for dinner. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV. *A Hall in the Same.*

Enter KENT, disguised.

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

Horns within. Enter LEAR, Knights, and Attendants.

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

Kent. A man, sir. 10

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

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

Lear. What art thou?

Kent. A very honest-hearted fellow, and as poor as the king. 20

Lear. If thou be'st as poor for a subject as he is for a king, thou art poor enough. What wouldst thou?

Kent. Service.

Lear. Who wouldst thou serve?

Kent. You.

Lear. Dost thou know me, fellow?

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

Lear. What 's that?

Kent. Authority.

30

Lear. What services canst thou do?

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

Lear. How old art thou?

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

39

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

[*Exit an Attendant.*]

Enter OSWALD.

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

Oswald. So please you,—

[*Exit.*]

Lear. What says the fellow there? Call the clotpoll back.—[*Exit a Knight.*] Where's my fool, ho? I think the world's asleep.—[*Re-enter Knight.*] How now! where's that mongrel?

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

Lear. Why came not the slave back to me when I called him?

52

Knight. Sir, he answered me in the roundest manner, he would not.

Lear. He would not!

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

Lear. Ha! sayest thou so? 61

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

Lear. Thou but rememberest me of mine own conception. I have perceived a most faint neglect of late; which I have rather blamed as mine own jealous curiosity than as a very pretence and purpose of unkindness. I will look further into't. But where's my fool? I have not seen him this two days. 70

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

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

[*Exit an Attendant.*]

Re-enter OSWALD.

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

Oswald. My lady's father.

Lear. 'My lady's father'? my lord's knave. You whore-son dog! you slave! you cur!

Oswald. I am none of these, my lord; I beseech your pardon. 81

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

Oswald. I'll not be strucken, my lord.

Kent. Nor tripped neither, you base foot-ball player.

[*Tripping up his heels.*]

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

Kent. Come, sir, arise, away! I'll teach you differences; away, away! If you will measure your lubber's length again, tarry: but away! go to; have you wisdom? so.

[*Pushes Oswald out.*]

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

91

Enter Fool.

Fool. Let me hire him too.—Here's my coxcomb.

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

Fool. Sirrah, you were best take my coxcomb.

Kent. Why, fool?

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

102

Lear. Why, my boy?

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

Lear. Take heed, sirrah; the whip.

Fool. Truth's a dog must to kennel; he must be whipped out, when Lady the brach may stand by the fire and stink.

Lear. A pestilent gall to me!

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

110

Lear. Do.

Fool. Mark it, nuncle :

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

120

Kent. This is nothing, fool.

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

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

Fool. [*To Kent*] Prithee, tell him, so much the rent of his land comes to ; he will not believe a fool.

Lear. A bitter fool !

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

131

Lear. No, lad ; teach me.

Fool. That lord that counsell'd thee
 To give away thy land,
 Come place him here by me,
 Do thou for him stand :
 The sweet and bitter fool
 Will presently appear ;
 The one in motley here,
 The other found out there.

140

Lear. Dost thou call me fool, boy ?

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

Kent. This is not altogether fool, my lord.

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

Lear. What two crowns shall they be? 150

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

[Sings] *Fools had ne'er less grace in a year;*

For wise men are grown foppish,

And know not how their wits to wear, 160

Their manners are so apish.

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

Fool. I have used it, nuncle, e'er since thou madest thy daughters thy mothers: for when thou gav'st them the rod, and put'st down thine own breeches,

[Sings] *Then they for sudden joy did weep,*

And I for sorrow sung,

That such a king should play bo-peep,

And go the fools among.

Prithee, nuncle, keep a schoolmaster that can teach thy fool to lie. I would fain learn to lie. 171

Lear. An you lie, sirrah, we'll have you whipped.

Fool. I marvel what kin thou and thy daughters are; they'll have me whipped for speaking true, thou'lt have me whipped for lying, and sometimes I am whipped for

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

Enter GONERIL.

Lear. How now, daughter! what makes that frontlet on? Methinks you are too much of late i' the frown. 181

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

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

That's a shealed peascod. 190

Goneril. Not only, sir, this your all-licens'd fool, But other of your insolent retinue Do hourly carp and quarrel, breaking forth In rank and not-to-be-endured riots. Sir, I had thought, by making this well known unto you, To have found a safe redress, but now grow fearful, By what yourself too late have spoke and done, That you protect this course, and put it on By your allowance; which if you should, the fault Would not scape censure, nor the redresses sleep, 200 Which, in the tender of a wholesome weal, Might in their working do you that offence, Which else were shame, that then necessity Will call discreet proceeding.

Fool. For, you know, nuncle,
*The hedge-sparrow fed the cuckoo so long,
 That it's had it head bit off by it young.*

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

Lear. Are you our daughter?

Goneril. Come, sir,

210

I would you would make use of that good wisdom
 Whereof I know you are fraught, and put away
 These dispositions which of late transport you
 From what you rightly are.

Fool. May not an ass know when the cart draws the
 horse? Whoop, Jug! I love thee.

Lear. Does any here know me? This is not Lear.

Does Lear walk thus? speak thus? Where are his eyes?

Either his notion weakens, his discernings

Are lethargied—Ha! waking? 't is not so.

220

Who is it that can tell me who I am?

Fool. Lear's shadow.

Lear. I would learn that; for, by the marks of sover-
 eignty, knowledge, and reason, I should be false persuaded
 I had daughters.

Fool. Which they will make an obedient father.

Lear. Your name, fair gentlewoman?

Goneril. This admiration, sir, is much o' the savour

Of other your new pranks. I do beseech you

To understand my purposes aright;

230

As you are old and reverend, you should be wise.

Here do you keep a hundred knights and squires;

Men so disorder'd, so debosh'd and bold,

That this our court, infected with their manners,

Shows like a riotous inn: epicurism and lust

Makes it more like a tavern or a brothel

Than a grac'd palace. The shame itself doth speak
 For instant remedy. Be then desir'd
 By her, that else will take the thing she begs,
 A little to disquantity your train;
 And the remainder, that shall still depend,
 To be such men as may besort your age,
 Which know themselves and you.

240

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

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

Enter ALBANY.

Lear. Woe, that too late repents.—O, sir, are you come?
 Is it your will? Speak, sir.—Prepare my horses.—
 Ingratitude, thou marble-hearted fiend,
 More hideous when thou show'st thee in a child
 Than the sea-monster!

250

Albany. Pray, sir, be patient.

Lear. Detested kite! thou liest:
 My train are men of choice and rarest parts,
 That all particulars of duty know,
 And in the most exact regard support
 The worships of their name.—O most small fault,
 How ugly didst thou in Cordelia show!
 Which, like an engine, wrench'd my frame of nature
 From the fix'd place, drew from my heart all love,
 And added to the gall. O Lear, Lear, Lear!
 Beat at this gate, that let thy folly in, [*Striking his head.*]
 And thy dear judgment out!—Go, go, my people.

260

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

Lear. It may be so, my lord.—
Hear, Nature, hear; dear goddess, hear!
Suspend thy purpose, if thou didst intend 270
To make this creature fruitful;
Into her womb convey sterility;
Dry up in her the organs of increase,
And from her derogate body never spring
A babe to honour her! If she must teem,
Create her child of spleen, that it may live
And be a thwart disnatur'd torment to her!
Let it stamp wrinkles in her brow of youth,
With cadent tears fret channels in her cheeks,
Turn all her mother's pains and benefits 280
To laughter and contempt; that she may feel
How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
To have a thankless child!—Away, away! [Exit.

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

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

Re-enter LEAR.

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

Albany. What's the matter, sir? 290

Lear. I'll tell thee.—Life and death! I am asham'd
That thou hast power to shake my manhood thus;
That these hot tears, which break from me perforce,
Should make thee worth them. Blasts and fogs upon thee!
Th' untented woundings of a father's curse

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

300

[*Exeunt Lear, Kent, and Attendants.*

Goneril. Do you mark that, my lord?

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

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

310

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

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

So the fool follows after.

[*Exit.*

Goneril. This man hath had good counsel! A hundred
 knights!

'T is politic and safe to let him keep
 At point a hundred knights; yes, that, on every dream,
 Each buzz, each fancy, each complaint, dislike,
 He may enguard his dotage with their powers,
 And hold our lives in mercy.—Oswald, I say!

320

Albany. Well, you may fear too far.

Goneril.

Safer than trust too far.

Let me still take away the harms I fear,
 Not fear still to be taken. I know his heart.
 What he hath utter'd I have writ my sister;
 If she sustain him and his hundred knights,
 When I have show'd the unfitness,—

330

Re-enter OSWALD.

How now, Oswald!

What, have you writ that letter to my sister?

Oswald. Ay, madam.

Goneril. Take you some company, and away to horse;
 Inform her full of my particular fear,
 And thereto add such reasons of your own
 As may compact it more. Get you gone;
 And hasten your return.—[*Exit Oswald.*] No, no, my lord,
 This milky gentleness and course of yours,
 Though I condemn not, yet, under pardon,
 You are much more at task for want of wisdom
 Than prais'd for harmful mildness.

340

Albany. How far your eyes may pierce I cannot tell;
 Striving to better, oft we mar what's well.

Goneril. Nay, then—

Albany. Well, well; the event. [Exeunt.]

SCENE V. *Court before the Same.*

Enter LEAR, KENT, and Fool.

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

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

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

Lear. Ay, boy.

Fool. Then, I prithee, be merry; thy wit shall ne'er go slip shod. 11

Lear. Ha, ha, ha!

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

Lear. What canst tell, boy?

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

Lear. No.

Fool. Why, to keep one's eyes of either side 's nose, that what a man cannot smell out, he may spy into. 21

Lear. I did her wrong—

Fool. Canst tell how an oyster makes his shell?

Lear. No.

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

Lear. Why?

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

Lear. I will forget my nature. So kind a father!—Be my horses ready? 31

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

Lear. Because they are not eight?

Fool. Yes, indeed; thou wouldst make a good fool.

Lear. To take 't again perforce! Monster ingratitude!

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

Lear. How's that?

Fool. Thou shouldst not have been old till thou hadst been wise. 41

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

Enter Gentleman.

How now! are the horses ready?

Gentleman. Ready, my lord.

Lear. Come, boy.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I. *The Earl of Gloster's Castle.*

Enter EDMUND and CURAN, meeting.

Edmund. Save thee, Curan.

Curan. And you, sir. I have been with your father, and given him notice that the Duke of Cornwall and Regan his duchess will be here with him this night.

Edmund. How comes that?

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

Edmund. Not I; pray you, what are they?

Curan. Have you heard of no likely wars toward, 'twixt the Dukes of Cornwall and Albany? 11

Edmund. Not a word.

Curan. You may do then in time. Fare you well, sir.

[Exit.

Edmund. The duke be here to-night? The better! best! This weaves itself perforce into my business. My father hath set guard to take my brother; And I have one thing, of a queasy question, Which I must act. Briefness and fortune, work!— Brother, a word; descend! Brother, I say!

Enter EDGAR.

My father watches! O sir, fly this place!
Intelligence is given where you are hid;
You have now the good advantage of the night.

Have you not spoken 'gainst the Duke of Cornwall?
 He's coming hither, now, i' the night, i' the haste,
 And Regan with him; have you nothing said
 Upon his party 'gainst the Duke of Albany?
 Advise yourself.

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

Edmund. I hear my father coming. Pardon me;
 In cunning I must draw my sword upon you. 30
 Draw; seem to defend yourself; now quit you well.
 Yield! come before my father!—Light, ho, here!—
 Fly, brother! Torches, torches!—So, farewell.

[*Exit Edgar.*]

Some blood drawn on me would beget opinion
 Of my more fierce endeavour. I have seen drunkards
 Do more than this in sport.—Father, father!—
 Stop, stop!—No help?

Enter GLOSTER, and Servants with torches.

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

Edmund. Here stood he in the dark, his sharp sword out,
 Mumbling of wicked charms, conjuring the moon
 To stand auspicious mistress. 40

Gloster. But where is he?

Edmund. Look, sir, I bleed.

Gloster. Where is the villain, Edmund?

Edmund. Fled this way, sir, when by no means he could—

Gloster. Pursue him, ho! Go after.—[*Exeunt some Ser-*
vants.] By no means what?

Edmund. Persuade me to the murder of your lordship;
 But that I told him the revenging gods
 'Gainst parricides did all the thunder bend,
 Spoke with how manifold and strong a bond

The child was bound to the father;—sir, in fine,
 Seeing how loathly opposite I stood
 To his unnatural purpose, in fell motion
 With his prepared sword he charges home
 My unprovided body, lanc'd mine arm:
 But when he saw my best alarum'd spirits
 Bold in the quarrel's right, rous'd to the encounter,
 Or whether gasted by the noise I made,
 Full suddenly he fled.

50

Gloster. Let him fly afar:
 Not in this land shall he remain uncaught;
 And found—dispatch. The noble duke my master,
 My worthy arch and patron, comes to-night.
 By his authority I will proclaim it,
 That he which finds him shall deserve our thanks,
 Bringing the murtherous coward to the stake;
 He that conceals him, death.

60

Edmund. When I dissuaded him from his intent,
 And found him pight to do it with curst speech,
 I threaten'd to discover him: he replied:
 'Thou unpossessing bastard! dost thou think,
 If I would stand against thee, would the reposal
 Of any trust, virtue, or worth in thee
 Make thy words faith'd? No; what I should deny—
 As this I would,—ay, though thou didst produce
 My very character—I'd turn it all
 To thy suggestion, plot, and damned practice;
 And thou must make a dullard of the world,
 If they not thought the profits of my death
 Were very pregnant and potential spurs
 To make thee seek it.'

70

80

Gloster. Strong and fasten'd villain!

Would he deny his letter? I never got him. [*Tucket within.*
 Hark, the duke's trumpets! I know not why he comes.
 All ports I'll bar; the villain shall not scape:
 The duke must grant me that. Besides, his picture
 I will send far and near, that all the kingdom
 May have due note of him; and of my land,
 Loyal and natural boy, I'll work the means
 To make thee capable.

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, *and* Attendants.

Cornwall. How now, my noble friend! since I came hither,
 Which I can call but now, I have heard strange news. 91

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

Gloster. O, madam, my old heart is crack'd,—it's crack'd!

Regan. What, did my father's godson seek your life?
 He whom my father nam'd? your Edgar?

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

Regan. Was he not companion with the riotous knights
 That tend upon my father?

Gloster. I know not, madam.—'Tis too bad, too bad.

Edmund. Yes, madam, he was of that consort. 101

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

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

Edmund. 'Twas my duty, sir.

Gloster. He did bewray his practice, and receiv'd
This hurt you see, striving to apprehend him.

Cornwall. Is he pursued?

Gloster. Ay, my good lord.

Cornwall. If he be taken, he shall never more
Be fear'd of doing harm; make your own purpose,
How in my strength you please.—For you, Edmund,
Whose virtue and obedience doth this instant
So much commend itself, you shall be ours.
Natures of such deep trust we shall much need;
You we first seize on.

120

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

Gloster. For him I thank your grace.

Cornwall. You know not why we came to visit you?

Regan. Thus, out of season, threading dark-eyed night;
Occasions, noble Gloster, of some poise,
Wherein we must have use of your advice.
Our father he hath writ, so hath our sister,
Of differences, which I best thought it fit
To answer from our home; the several messengers
From hence attend dispatch. Our good old friend,
Lay comforts to your bosom, and bestow
Your needful counsel to our businesses,
Which craves the instant use.

130

Gloster. I serve you, madam.—

Your graces are quite welcome. [*Flourish. Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *Before Gloster's Castle.**Enter KENT and OSWALD, severally.**Oswald.* Good dawning to thee, friend; art of this house?*Kent.* Ay.*Oswald.* Where may we set our horses?*Kent.* I' the mire.*Oswald.* Prithee, if thou lov'st me, tell me.*Kent.* I love thee not.*Oswald.* Why then I care not for thee.*Kent.* If I had thee in Lipsbury pinfold, I would make thee care for me.*Oswald.* Why dost thou use me thus? I know thee not.*Kent.* Fellow, I know thee. 11*Oswald.* What dost thou know me for?*Kent.* A knave; a rascal; an eater of broken meats; a base, proud, shallow, beggarly, three-suited, hundred-pound, filthy, worsted-stocking knave; a lily-livered, action-taking whoreson, glass-gazing, superserviceable, finical rogue; one-trunk-inheriting slave; one that wouldst be a bawd in way of good service, and art nothing but the composition of a knave, beggar, coward, pandar, and the son and heir of a mongrel bitch; one whom I will beat into clamorous whining, if thou deniest the least syllable of thy addition. 22*Oswald.* Why, what a monstrous fellow art thou, thus to rail on one that is neither known of thee nor knows thee!*Kent.* What a brazen-faced varlet art thou, to deny thou knowest me! Is it two days ago since I tripped up thy heels, and beat thee before the king? Draw, you rogue! for, though it be night, yet the moon shines; I'll make a sop o' the moonshine of you; you whoreson cullionly barber-mongrel, draw.

Oswald. Away! I have nothing to do with thee. 31

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

Oswald. Help, ho! murther! help!

Kent. Strike, you slave! stand, rogue, stand! you neat slave, strike! [Beating him.]

Oswald. Help, ho! murther! murther!

Enter EDMUND, with his rapier drawn.

Edmund. How now! What's the matter? [Parting them.]

Kent. With you, goodman boy, if you please; come, I'll flesh ye! come on, young master! 42

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, GLOSTER, and Servants.

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

Cornwall. Keep peace, upon your lives!

He dies that strikes again! What is the matter?

Regan. The messengers from our sister and the king?

Cornwall. What is your difference? speak.

Oswald. I am scarce in breath, my lord.

Kent. No marvel, you have so bestirred your valour. You cowardly rascal, nature disclaims in thee: a tailor made thee. 51

Cornwall. Thou art a strange fellow; a tailor make a man?

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

Cornwall. Speak yet, how grew your quarrel?

Oswald. This ancient ruffian, sir, whose life I have spared at suit of his grey beard,—

Kent. Thou whoreson zed! thou unnecessary letter!—
My lord, if you will give me leave, I will tread this
unbolted villain into mortar.—Spare my grey beard, you
wagtail? 62

Cornwall. Peace, sirrah!—

You beastly knave, know you no reverence?

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

Cornwall. Why art thou angry?

Kent. That such a slave as this should wear a sword,
Who wears no honesty. Such smiling rogues as these,
Like rats, oft bite the holy cords a-twain
Which are too intrinse t' unloose; smooth every passion
That in the natures of their lords rebel, 71
Being oil to fire, snow to the colder moods;
Renege, affirm, and turn their halcyon beaks
With every gale and vary of their masters,
Knowing nought, like dogs, but following.
A plague upon your epileptic visage!
Smile you my speeches, as I were a fool?
Goose, if I had you upon Sarum plain,
I'd drive ye cackling home to Camelot.

Cornwall. What, art thou mad, old fellow? 80

Gloster. How fell you out? say that.

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

Cornwall. Why dost thou call him knave? What is his
fault?

Kent. His countenance likes me not.

Cornwall. No more, perchance, does mine, nor his, nor
hers.

Kent. Sir, 't is my occupation to be plain;
I have seen better faces in my time 90

Than stands on any shoulder that I see
Before me at this instant.

Cornwall. This is some fellow,
Who, having been prais'd for bluntness, doth affect
A saucy roughness, and constrains the garb
Quite from his nature; he cannot flatter, he,—
An honest mind and plain,—he must speak truth!
An they will take it, so; if not, he's plain.
These kind of knaves I know, which in this plainness
Harbour more craft and more corrupter ends 100
Than twenty silly-ducking observants
That stretch their duties nicely.

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

Cornwall. What mean'st by this?

Kent. To go out of my dialect, which you discommend so
much. I know, sir, I am no flatterer: he that beguiled you
in a plain accent was a plain knave; which for my part I
will not be, though I should win your displeasure to entreat
me to 't. 112

Cornwall. What was the offence you gave him?

Oswald. I never gave him any.
It pleas'd the king his master very late
To strike at me, upon his misconstruction;
When he compact, and flattering his displeasure,
Tripp'd me behind; being down, insulted, rail'd,
And put upon him such a deal of man,
That worthied him, got praises of the king 120
For him attempting who was self-subdu'd;

And in the fleshment of this dread exploit
Drew on me here again.

Kent. None of these rogues and cowards
But Ajax is their fool.

Cornwall. Fetch forth the stocks!—
You stubborn ancient knave, you reverend braggart,
We'll teach you—

Kent. Sir, I am too old to learn;
Call not your stocks for me. I serve the king, 130
On whose employment I was sent to you.
You shall do small respect, show too bold malice
Against the grace and person of my master,
Stocking his messenger.

Cornwall. Fetch forth the stocks! As I have life and
honour,
There shall he sit till noon.

Regan. Till noon! till night, my lord; and all night too.

Kent. Why, madam, if I were your father's dog,
You should not use me so. 140

Regan. Sir, being his knave, I will.

Cornwall. This is a fellow of the self-same colour
Our sister speaks of.—Come, bring away the stocks!
[Stocks brought out]

Gloster. Let me beseech your grace not to do so.
His fault is much, and the good king his master
Will check him for 't; your purpos'd low correction
Is such as basest and contemned'st wretches
For pilferings and most common trespasses
Are punish'd with. The king must take it ill,
That he, so slightly valued in his messenger, 150
Should have him thus restrain'd.

Cornwall. I'll answer that.

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

[*Kent is put in the stocks.*]

Come, my lord, away. [Exeunt all but *Gloster* and *Kent.*]

Gloster. I am sorry for thee, friend; 't is the duke's
pleasure,

Whose disposition, all the world well knows,
Will not be rubb'd nor stopp'd. I'll entreat for thee. 160

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

Gloster. [*Aside*] The duke 's to blame in this; 't will be
ill taken. [Exit.]

Kent. Good king, that must approve the common saw,
Thou out of heaven's benediction comest
To the warm sun!

Approach, thou beacon to this under globe, 170
That by thy comfortable beams I may
Peruse this letter! Nothing almost sees miracles
But misery. I know 't is from Cordelia,
Who hath most fortunately been inform'd
Of my obscured course; and shall find time
From this enormous state, seeking to give
Losses their remedies. All weary and o'er-watch'd,
Take vantage, heavy eyes, not to behold
This shameful lodging.

Fortune, good night: smile once more; turn thy wheel!

[Sleeps.]

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

Edgar. I heard myself proclaim'd;
 And by the happy hollow of a tree
 Escap'd the hunt. No port is free; no place,
 That guard and most unusual vigilance
 Does not attend my taking. Whiles I may scape
 I will preserve myself, and am bethought
 To take the basest and most poorest shape
 That ever penury, in contempt of man,
 Brought near to beast; my face I'll grime with filth,
 Blanket my loins, elf all my hair in knots, 1
 And with presented nakedness outface
 The winds and persecutions of the sky.
 The country gives me proof and precedent
 Of Bedlam beggars, who with roaring voices
 Strike in their numb'd and mortified bare arms
 Pins, wooden pricks, nails, sprigs of rosemary;
 And with this horrible object, from low farms,
 Poor pelting villages, sheep-cotes and mills,
 Sometime with lunatic bans, sometime with prayers,
 Enforce their charity. Poor Turlygod! poor Tom! 20
 That's something yet; Edgar I nothing am. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV. *Before Gloster's Castle.*KENT *in the Stocks.* *Enter* LEAR, Fool, and Gentleman.

Lear. 'T is strange that they should so depart from home,
 And not send back my messenger.

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

Kent. Hail to thee, noble master!

Lear. Ha!

Mak'st thou this shame thy pastime?

Kent. No, my lord.

Fool. Ha, ha! he wears cruel garters. Horses are tied by the heads, dogs and bears by the neck, monkeys by the loins, and men by the legs; when a man 's over-lusty at legs, then he wears wooden nether-stocks. 13

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

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

Lear. No.

Kent. Yes.

Lear. No, I say. 20

Kent. I say, yea.

Lear. No, no, they would not.

Kent. Yes, they have.

Lear. By Jupiter, I swear, no!

Kent. By Juno, I swear, ay!

Lear. They durst not do 't;
They could not, would not do 't; 't is worse than murder
To do upon respect such violent outrage.
Resolve me with all modest haste which way
Thou mightst deserve, or they impose, this usage, 30
Coming from us.

Kent. My lord, when at their home
I did commend your highness' letters to them,
Ere I was risen from the place that show'd
My duty kneeling, came there a reeking post, ³
Stew'd in his haste, half breathless, panting forth
From Goneril his mistress salutations;

Deliver'd letters, spite of intermission,
 Which presently they read: on whose contents
 They summon'd up their meiny, straight took horse, 40
 Commanded me to follow and attend
 The leisure of their answer, gave me cold looks;
 And meeting here the other messenger,
 Whose welcome I perceiv'd had poison'd mine—
 Being the very fellow which of late
 Display'd so saucily against your highness—
 Having more man than wit about me, drew:
 He rais'd the house with loud and coward cries.
 Your son and daughter found this trespass worth
 The shame which here it suffers. 50

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

Fathers that wear rags

Do make their children blind;

But fathers that bear bags

Shall see their children kind.—

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

Lear. O, how this mother swells up toward my heart!

Hysterica passio, down, thou climbing sorrow,

Thy element's below!—Where is this daughter? 60

Kent. With the earl, sir, here within.

Lear. Follow me not; stay here. [*Exit.*]

Gentleman. Made you no more offence but what you speak of?

Kent. None.—

How chance the king comes with so small a number?

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

Kent. Why, fool?

Fool. We'll set thee to school to an ant, to teach thee there's no labouring i' the winter. All that follow their noses are led by their eyes but blind men; and there's not a nose among twenty but can smell him that's stinking. Let go thy hold when a great wheel runs down a hill, lest it break thy neck with following it; but the great one that goes upward, let him draw thee after. When a wise man gives the better counsel, give me mine again; I would have none but knaves follow it, since a fool gives it.

That sir which serves and seeks for gain,

And follows but for form,

80

Will pack when it begins to rain,

And leave thee in the storm.

But I will tarry; the fool will stay,

And let the wise man fly:

The knave turns fool that runs away;

The fool no knave, perdy,

Kent. Where learned you this, fool?

Fool. Not i' the stocks, fool!

Re-enter LEAR, with GLOSTER.

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

90

They have travel'd all the night? Mere fetches,
The images of revolt and flying off.

Fetch me a better answer.

Gloster.

My dear lord,

You know the fiery quality of the duke;

How unremovable and fix'd he is

In his own course.

Lear. Vengeance! plague! death! confusion!

Fiery? what quality? Why, Gloster, Gloster,
I'd speak with the Duke of Cornwall and his wife. 100

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

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

Gloster. Ay, my good lord.

Lear. The king would speak with Cornwall; the dear
father

Would with his daughter speak, commands her service.

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

Fiery? the fiery duke? Tell the hot duke that—

No, but not yet; may be he is not well.

Infirmity doth still neglect all office 110

Whereto our health is bound; we are not ourselves

When nature being oppress'd commands the mind

To suffer with the body. I'll forbear;

And am fallen out with my more headier will,

To take the indispos'd and sickly fit

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

Should he sit here? This act persuades me

That this remotion of the duke and her

Is practice only. Give me my servant forth.

Go tell the duke and 's wife I'd speak with them, 120

Now, presently; bid them come forth and hear me,

Or at their chamber-door I'll beat the drum

Till it cry sleep to death.

Gloster. I would have all well betwixt you. [Exit.

Lear. O me, my heart, my rising heart! But, down!

Fool. Cry to it, nuncle, as the cockney did to the eels
when she put 'em i' the paste alive; she knapped 'em o'
the coxcombs with a stick, and cried 'Down, wantons, down!'
'T was her brother that, in pure kindness to his horse, but-
tered his hay. 130

Re-enter GLOSTER, with CORNWALL, REGAN, and Servants.

Lear. Good morrow to you both.

Cornwall.

Hail to your grace!

[*Kent is set at liberty.*]

Regan. I am glad to see your highness.

Lear. Regan, I think you are; I know what reason I have to think so: if thou shouldst not be glad, I would divorce me from thy mother's tomb, Sepulchring an adulteress.—[*To Kent*] O, are you free? Some other time for that.—Beloved Regan, Thy sister's naught. O Regan, she hath tied Sharp-tooth'd unkindness, like a vulture, here!

140

[*Points to his heart.*]

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

Regan. I pray you, sir, take patience; I have hope You less know how to value her desert Than she to scant her duty.

Lear. Say, how is that?

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

150

Lear. My curses on her!

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

Lear. Ask her forgiveness? 160

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

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

Lear. Never, Regan!

She hath abated me of half my train,
 Look'd black upon me, strook me with her tongue,
 Most serpent-like, upon the very heart. 170

All the stor'd vengeance of heaven fall
 On her ingrateful top! Strike her young bones,
 You taking airs, with lameness!

Cornwall. Fie, sir, fie!

Lear. You nimble lightnings, dart your blinding flames
 Into her scornful eyes! Infect her beauty,
 You fen-suck'd fogs, drawn by the powerful sun,
 To fall and blast her pride!

Regan. O the blest gods! so will you wish on me,
 When the rash mood is on. 180

Lear. No, Regan, thou shalt never have my curse ;
 Thy tender-hefted nature shall not give
 Thee o'er to harshness. Her eyes are fierce, but thine
 Do comfort and not burn. 'T is not in thee
 To grudge my pleasures, to cut off my train,
 To bandy hasty words, to scant my sizes,
 And in conclusion to oppose the bolt
 Against my coming in : thou better know'st
 The offices of nature, bond of childhood,
 Effects of courtesy, dues of gratitude ; 190
 Thy half o' the kingdom hast thou not forgot,

Wherein I thee endow'd.

Regan. Good sir, to the purpose.

Lear. Who put my man i' the stocks? [*Tucket within.*]

Cornwall. What trumpet 's that?

Regan. I know 't,—my sister's; this approves her letter,
That she would soon be here.—

Enter OSWALD.

Is your lady come?

Lear. This is a slave, whose easy-borrow'd pride
Dwells in the fickle grace of her he follows.— 200
Out, varlet, from my sight!

Cornwall. What means your grace?

Lear. Who stock'd my servant?—Regan, I have good
hope
Thou didst not know on't.—Who comes here?

Enter GONERIL.

O heavens,

If you do love old men, if your sweet sway
Allow obedience, if yourselves are old,
Make it your cause; send down, and take my part!—
Art not asham'd to look upon this beard? — 210
O Regan, will you take her by the hand?

Goneril. Why not by the hand, sir? How have I of-
fended?
All's not offence that indiscretion finds
And dotage terms so.

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

Cornwall. I set him there, sir; but his own disorders
Deserv'd much less advancement.

Lear. You! did you? 220

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

Lear. Return to her, and fifty men dismiss'd?
 No, rather I abjure all roofs, and choose
 To wage against the enmity o' the air,
 To be a comrade with the wolf and owl.— 230
 Necessity's sharp pinch!—Return with her?
 Why, the hot-blooded France, that dowerless took
 Our youngest born, I could as well be brought
 To knee his throne, and, squire-like, pension beg
 To keep base life afoot. Return with her?
 Persuade me rather to be slave and sumpter
 To this detested groom. [*Pointing at Oswald.*]

Goneril. At your choice, sir.

Lear. I prithee, daughter, do not make me mad.
 I will not trouble thee, my child; farewell. 240
 We'll no more meet, no more see one another.
 But yet thou art my flesh, my blood, my daughter;
 Or rather a disease that's in my flesh,
 Which I must needs call mine; thou art a boil,
 A plague-sore, an embossed carbuncle,
 In my corrupted blood. But I'll not chide thee;
 Let shame come when it will, I do not call it:
 I do not bid the thunder-bearer shoot,
 Nor tell tales of thee to high-judging Jove.
 Mend when thou canst; be better at thy leisure. 250
 I can be patient; I can stay with Regan,
 I and my hundred knights.

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

Lear. Is this well spoken?

Regan. I dare avouch it, sir. What, fifty followers? 260
 Is it not well? What should you need of more?
 Yea, or so many, sith that both charge and danger
 Speak 'gainst so great a number? How, in one house,
 Should many people under two commands
 Hold amity? 'T is hard, almost impossible.

Goneril. Why might not you, my lord, receive attendance
 From those that she calls servants or from mine?

Regan. Why not, my lord? If then they chanc'd to slack
 ye,
 We could control them. If you will come to me,— 270
 For now I spy a danger,—I entreat you
 To bring but five and twenty; to no more
 Will I give place or notice.

Lear. I gave you all—

Regan. And in good time you gave it.

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

Regan. And speak 't again, my lord; no more with me.

Lear. Those wicked creatures yet do look well-favour'd,
 When others are more wicked; not being the worst 282
 Stands in some rank of praise. [*To Goneril*] I 'll go with
 thee;

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

Goneril. Hear me, my lord;
What need you five and twenty, ten, or five,
To follow in a house where twice so many
Have a command to tend you?

290

Regan. What need one?

Lear. O, reason not the need; our basest beggars
Are in the poorest things superfluous.

Allow not nature more than nature needs,
Man's life is cheap as beast's. Thou art a lady;
If only to go warm were gorgeous,
Why, nature needs not what thou gorgeous wear'st,
Which scarcely keeps thee warm. But for true need—
You heavens, give me that patience, patience I need!
You see me here, you gods, a poor old man,
As full of grief as age; wretched in both.

300

If it be you that stirs these daughters' hearts
Against their father, fool me not so much
To bear it tamely; touch me with noble anger,
And let not women's weapons, water-drops,
Stain my man's cheeks!—No, you unnatural hags,
I will have such revenges on you both,
That all the world shall—I will do such things,—
What they are, yet I know not; but they shall be
The terrors of the earth. You think I'll weep;
No, I'll not weep.

310

I have full cause of weeping; but this heart
Shall break into a hundred thousand flaws,
Or ere I'll weep.—O fool, I shall go mad!

[*Exeunt, Lear, Gloster, Kent, and Fool.*
Storm and tempest.

Cornwall. Let us withdraw; 't will be a storm.

Regan. This house is little; the old man and 's people
Cannot be well bestow'd.

Goneril. 'T is his own blame; hath put himself from rest,
And must needs taste his folly.

Regan. For his particular, I'll receive him gladly, 320
But not one follower.

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

Cornwall. Follow'd the old man forth; he is return'd.

Re-enter GLOSTER.

Gloster. The king is in high rage.

Cornwall. Whither is he going?

Gloster. He calls to horse, but will I know not whither.

Cornwall. 'T is best to give him way; he leads himself.

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

Gloster. Alack! the night comes on, and the high winds
Do sorely ruffle; for many miles about 331
There's scarce a bush.

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

Cornwall. Shut up your doors, my lord; 't is a wild
night: 340

My Regan counsels well. Come out o' the storm.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I. *A Heath.*

Storm still. Enter KENT and a Gentleman, meeting.

Kent. Who 's there, besides foul weather?

Gentleman. One minded like the weather, most unquietly

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

Gentleman. Contending with the fretful elements;
Bids the wind blow the earth into the sea,
Or swell the curlèd waters 'bove the main,
That things might change or cease; tears his white hair,
Which the impetuous blasts, with eyeless rage,
Catch in their fury, and make nothing of;
Strives in his little world of man to out-scorn
The to-and-fro-conflicting wind and rain.
This night, wherein the cub-drawn bear would couch,
The lion and the belly-pinched wolf
Keep their fur dry, unbonneted he runs,
And bids what will take all.

Kent. But who is with him?

Gentleman. None but the fool, who labours to outjest
His heart-strook injuries.

Kent. Sir, I do know you,
And dare, upon the warrant of my note,
Commend a dear thing to you. There is division,
Although as yet the face of it is cover'd
With mutual cunning, 'twixt Albany and Cornwall;
Who have—as who have not, that their great stars
Thron'd and set high?—servants, who seem no less,

Which are to France the spies and speculations
 Intelligent of our state. What hath been seen,
 Either in snuffs and packings of the dukes,
 Or the hard rein which both of them have borne
 Against the old kind king, or something deeper,
 Whereof perchance these are but furnishings,—
 But, true it is, from France there comes a power
 Into this scatter'd kingdom; who already,
 Wise in our negligence, have secret feet
 In some of our best ports, and are at point
 To show their open banner. Now to you;
 If on my credit you dare build so far
 To make your speed to Dover, you shall find
 Some that will thank you, making just report
 Of how unnatural and bemaddening sorrow
 The king hath cause to plain.

30

40

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

Gentleman. I will further talk with you.

Kent.

No, do not.

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

50

Gentleman.

Give me your hand;

Have you no more to say?

Kent. Few words, but, to effect, more than all yet;

That, when we have found the king,—in which your pain
 That way, I'll this,—he that first lights on him
 Holla the other. [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II. *Another part of the Heath. Storm still.*

Enter LEAR and Fool.

Lear. Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks! rage! blow!
 You cataracts and hurricanoes, spout
 Till you have drench'd our steeples, drown'd the cocks!
 You sulphurous and thought-executing fires,
 Vaunt-couriers of oak-cleaving thunderbolts,
 Singe my white head! And thou, all-shaking thunder,
 Strike flat the thick rotundity o' the world!
 Crack nature's moulds, all germens spill at once
 That make ingrateful man! 9

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

Lear. Rumble thy bellyful! Spit, fire! spout, rain!
 Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire, are my daughters.
 I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness;
 I never gave you kingdom, call'd you children,
 You owe me no subscription: then let fall
 Your horrible pleasure; here I stand, your slave,
 A poor, infirm, weak, and despis'd old man. 20
 But yet I call you servile ministers,
 That will with two pernicious daughters join
 Your high-engender'd battles 'gainst a head
 So old and white as this. O! O! 't is foul!

Fool. He that has a house to put 's head in has a good
 head-piece.

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

30

For there was never yet fair woman but she made mouths
 in a glass.

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

Enter KENT.

Kent. Who 's there?

Fool. Marry, here 's a wise man and a fool.

Kent. Alas, sir, are you here? Things that love night
 Love not such nights as these; the wrathful skies
 Gallow the very wanderers of the dark,
 And make them keep their caves. Since I was man,
 Such sheets of fire, such bursts of horrid thunder,
 Such groans of roaring wind and rain, I never
 Remember to have heard; man's nature cannot carry
 The affliction nor the fear.

40

Lear. Let the great gods,
 That keep this dreadful pudder o'er our heads,
 Find out their enemies now. Tremble, thou wretch,
 That hast within thee undivulgèd crimes,
 Unwhipp'd of justice. Hide thee, thou bloody hand,
 Thou perjur'd, and thou simular of virtue
 That art incestuous. Caitiff, to pieces shake,
 That under covert and convenient seeming
 Has practis'd on man's life. Close pent-up guilts,
 Rive your concealing continents and cry
 These dreadful summoners grace. I am a man
 More sinn'd against than sinning.

50

Kent. Alack, bare-headed!
 Gracious my lord, hard by here is a hovel;
 Some friendship will it lend you 'gainst the tempest.
 Repose you there, while I to this hard house— 60
 More harder than the stones whereof 't is rais'd,
 Which even but now, demanding after you,
 Denied me to come in—return, and force
 Their scanted courtesy.

Lear. My wits begin to turn.—
 Come on, my boy; how dost, my boy? art cold?
 I am cold myself.—Where is this straw, my fellow?—
 The art of our necessities is strange,
 That can make vile things precious.—Come, your hovel.—
 Poor fool and knave, I have one part in my heart 70
 That's sorry yet for thee.

Fool. [Sings] *He that has and a little tiny wit,
 With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,
 Must make content with his fortunes fit,
 For the rain it raineth every day.*

Lear. True, boy.—Come, bring us to this hovel.

Exeunt Lear and Kent.

Fool. I'll speak a prophecy ere I go:
 When priests are more in word than matter;
 When brewers mar their malt with water;
 When nobles are their tailors' tutors; 80
 No heretics burn'd, but wenches' suitors;
 When every case in law is right;
 No squire in debt, nor no poor knight;
 When slanders do not live in tongues,
 Nor cutpurses come not to throngs;
 Then shall the realm of Albion
 Come to great confusion:

Then comes the time, who lives to see 't,
That going shall be us'd with feet.

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

SCENE III. *Gloster's Castle.*

Enter GLOSTER and EDMUND.

Gloster. Alack, alack, Edmund, I like not this unnatural dealing. When I desired their leave that I might pity him, they took from me the use of mine own house; charged me, on pain of perpetual displeasure, neither to speak of him, entreat for him, or any way sustain him.

Edmund. Most savage and unnatural! 6

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

Edmund. This courtesy, forbid thee, shall the duke
Instantly know, and of that letter too. 20

This seems a fair deserving, and must draw me
That which my father loses,—no less than all.
The younger rises when the old doth fall. [Exit.

SCENE IV. *The Heath. Before a Hovel.**Enter* LEAR, KENT, *and* Fool.

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

Lear. Let me alone.

Kent. Good my lord, enter here.

Lear. Wilt break my heart?

Kent. I had rather break mine own. Good my lord, enter.

Lear. Thou think'st 't is much that this contentious
storm 10

Invades us to the skin: so 't is to thee;
But where the greater malady is fix'd,
The lesser is scarce felt. Thou 'dst shun a bear;
But if thy flight lay toward the roaring sea,
Thou 'dst meet the bear i' the mouth. When the mind's
free

The body's delicate; the tempest in my mind
Doth from my senses take all feeling else
Save what beats there. Filial ingratitude!
Is it not as this mouth should tear this hand 20
For lifting food to 't? But I will punish home.
No, I will weep no more. In such a night
To shut me out! Pour on; I will endure.
In such a night as this! O Regan, Goneril!
Your old kind father, whose frank heart gave all,—
O, that way madness lies! let me shun that;
No more of that!

Kent. Good my lord, enter here.

Lear. Prithee, go in thyself; seek thine own ease.

This tempest will not give me leave to ponder
 On things would hurt me more. But I'll go in.—
 In, boy; go first.—You houseless poverty,—
 Nay, get thee in. I'll pray, and then I'll sleep.—

[*Fool goes in.*]

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

Edgar. [*Within*] Fathom and half, fathom and half!
 Poor Tom! [*The Fool runs out from the hovel.*]

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

Kent. Give me thy hand.—Who's there?

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

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

Enter EDGAR disguised as a madman.

Edgar. Away! the foul fiend follows me! Through the
 sharp hawthorn blow the winds. Hum! go to thy bed, and
 warm thee.

Lear. Didst thou give all to thy daughters? And art
 thou come to this?

Edgar. Who gives any thing to poor Tom? whom the
 foul fiend hath led through fire and through flame, through
 ford and whirlpool, o'er bog and quagmire; that hath laid

knives under his pillow, and halters in his pew; set ratsbane by his porridge; made him proud of heart, to ride on a bay trotting-horse over four-inched bridges, to course his own shadow for a traitor. Bless thy five wits! Tom's a-cold. O, do de, do de, do de. Bless thee from whirlwinds, star-blasting and taking! Do poor Tom some charity, whom the foul fiend vexes. There could I have him now, and there, and there again, and there. [*Storm still.*]

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

Couldst thou save nothing? Wouldst thou give 'em all?

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

Lear. Now, all the plagues that in the pendulous air Hang fated o'er men's faults light on thy daughters!

Kent. He hath no daughters, sir.

Lear. Death, traitor! nothing could have subdued nature To such a lowness but his unkind daughters. Is it the fashion that discarded fathers Should have thus little mercy on their flesh? Judicious punishment! 't was this flesh begot Those pelican daughters.

Edgar. Pillicock sat on Pillicock-hill; Halloo, halloo, loo, loo!

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

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

Lear. What hast thou been?

Edgar. A serving-man, proud in heart and mind; that curled my hair, wore gloves in my cap, swore as many oaths

as I spake words, and broke them in the sweet face of heaven; one that slept in the contriving of lust and waked to do it. Wine loved I deeply, dice dearly, and in woman out-paramoured the Turk: false of heart, light of ear, bloody of hand; hog in sloth, fox in stealth, wolf in greediness, dog in madness, lion in prey. Let not the creaking of shoes nor the rustling of silks betray thy poor heart to woman. Keep thy foot out of brothels, thy pen from lenders' books, and defy the foul fiend.—Still through the hawthorn blows the cold wind: says suum, mun, nonny. Dolphin my boy, boy, sessa! let him trot by. [*Storm still.*]

Lear. Thou wert better in thy grave than to answer with thy uncovered body this extremity of the skies. Is man no more than this? Consider him well. Thou owest the worm no silk, the beast no hide, the sheep no wool, the cat no perfume. Ha! here's three on 's are sophisticated! Thou art the thing itself; unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor, bare, forked animal as thou art. Off, off, you lendings! come, unbutton here. 109

Fool. Prithee, nuncle, be contented; 't is a naughty night to swim in. Now a little fire in a wide field were like an old lecher's heart, a small spark, all the rest on 's body cold. Look, here comes a walking fire.

Edgar. This is the foul Flibbertigibbet. He begins at curfew and walks at first cock; he gives the web and the pin, squints the eye, and makes the hare-lip; mildews the white wheat and hurts the poor creature of earth.

Saint Withold footed thrice the old;

He met the nightmare and her nine-fold;

Bid her alight,

And her troth plight,

And, aroint thee, witch, aroint thee!

Enter GLOSTER, with a torch.

Kent. How fares your grace?

Lear. What 's he?

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

Gloster. What are you there? Your names?

Edgar. Poor Tom, that eats the swimming frog, the toad, the tadpole, the wall-newt and the water; that in the fury of his heart, when the foul fiend rages, eats cow-dung for sallets; swallows the old rat and the ditch-dog; drinks the green mantle of the standing pool; who is whipped from tithing to tithing, and stocked, punished, and imprisoned; who hath three suits to his back, six shirts to his body;

Horse to ride, and weapon to wear; 134

But mice and rats and such small deer

Have been Tom's food for seven long year.

Beware my follower.—Peace, Smulkin! peace, thou fiend!

Gloster. What, hath your grace no better company?

Edgar. The prince of darkness is a gentleman; Modo he 's called, and Mahu.

Gloster. Our flesh and blood, my lord, is grown so vile,
That it doth hate what gets it. 142

Edgar. Poor Tom 's a-cold.

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

Lear. First let me talk with this philosopher.— 150
What is the cause of thunder?

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

Lear. I'll talk a word with this same learned Theban.—
What is your study?

Edgar. How to prevent the fiend and to kill vermin.

Lear. Let me ask you one word in private.

Kent. Importune him once more to go, my lord;
His wits begin to unsettle.

Gloster. Canst thou blame him?

[*Storm still.*

His daughters seek his death. Ah, that good Kent! 160

He said it would be thus, poor banish'd man!

Thou say'st the king grows mad; I'll tell thee, friend,

I am almost mad myself. I had a son,

Now outlaw'd from my blood; he sought my life,

But lately, very late. I lov'd him, friend,

No father his son dearer; true to tell thee,

The grief hath craz'd my wits. What a night 's this!—

I do beseech your grace,—

Lear. O, cry you mercy, sir.—

Noble philosopher, your company. 170

Edgar. Tom 's a-cold.

Gloster. In, fellow, there, into the hovel; keep thee
warm.

Lear. Come, let 's in all.

Kent. This way, my lord.

Lear. With him;

I will keep still with my philosopher.

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

Gloster. Take him you on.

Kent. Sirrah, come on; go along with us. 180

Lear. Come, good Athenian.

Gloster. No words, no words; hush!

Edgar. Child Rowland to the dark tower came;
 His word was still,—Fie, joh, and jum,
 I smell the blood of a British man. [Exeunt.]

SCENE V. *Gloster's Castle.*

Enter CORNWALL and EDMUND.

Cornwall. I will have my revenge ere I depart this house.

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

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

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

Cornwall. Go with me to the duchess. 12

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

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

Edmund. [*Aside*] If I find him comforting the king, it will stuff his suspicion more fully.—I will persevere in my course of loyalty, though the conflict be sore between that and my blood. 21

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

SCENE VI. *A Chamber in a Farmhouse adjoining the Castle.*

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

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

Kent. All the power of his wits have given way to his impatience. The gods reward your kindness! [*Exit Gloster.*]

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

Fool. Prithee, nuncle, tell me whether a madman be a gentleman or a yeoman? 10

Lear. A king, a king!

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

Lear. To have a thousand with red burning spits
Come hizzing in upon 'em,—

Edgar. The foul fiend bites my back.

Fool. He 's mad that trusts in the tameness of a wolf, a horse's health, a boy's love, or a whore's oath. 19

Lear. It shall be done; I will arraign them straight.—
[*To Edgar*] Come, sit thou here, most learned justicer.—
[*To the Fool*] Thou, sapient sir, sit here.—Now, you she
foxes!

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

Come o'er the bourn, Bessy, to me.

Fool. *Her boat hath a leak,
And she must not speak*

Why she dares not come over to thee.

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

Kent. How do you, sir? Stand you not so amaz'd. Will you lie down and rest upon the cushions?

Lear. I'll see their trial first.—Bring in their evidence.—
[To Edgar] Thou robed man of justice, take thy place,—
[To the Fool] And thou, his yoke-fellow of equity,
 Bench by his side.—*[To Kent]* You are o' the commission,
 Sit you too. 40

Edgar. Let us deal justly.

Sleepest or wakest thou, jolly shepherd?

Thy sheep be in the corn;

And for one blast of thy minikin mouth,

Thy sheep shall take no harm.

Pur! the cat is grey.

Lear. Arraign her first; 't is Goneril. I here take my oath before this honourable assembly, she kicked the poor king her father.

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

Lear. She cannot deny it. 51

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

Lear. And here's another, whose warp'd looks proclaim
 What store her heart is made on.—Stop her there!
 Arms, arms, sword, fire! Corruption in the place!
 False justicer, why has thou let her escape?

Edgar. Bless thy five wits!

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

Edgar. *[Aside]* My tears begin to take his part so much,
 They mar my counterfeiting. 61

Lear. The little dogs and all,
Tray, Blanch, and Sweetheart, see, they bark at me.

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

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

70

Do de, de, de. Sessa! Come, march to wakes and fairs
and market-towns. Poor Tom, thy horn is dry.

Lear. Then let them anatomize Regan; see what breeds
about her heart. Is there any cause in nature that makes
these hard hearts?—(*To Edgar*) You, sir, I entertain for one
of my hundred; only I do not like the fashion of your gar-
ments. You will say they are Persian; but let them be
changed.

81

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

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

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

Re-enter GLOSTER.

Gloster. Come hither, friend; where is the king my mas-
ter?

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

Gloster. Good friend, I prithee, take him in thy arms;
I have o'erheard a plot of death upon him.

90

There is a litter ready: lay him 'n 't,

And drive toward Dover, friend, where thou shalt meet
 Both welcome and protection. Take up thy master.
 If thou shouldst dally half an hour, his life,
 With thine, and all that offer to defend him,
 Stand in assured loss. Take up, take up;
 And follow me, that will to some provision
 Give thee quick conduct.

Kent. Oppress'd nature sleeps.
 This rest might yet have balm'd thy broken sinews, 100
 Which, if convenience will not allow,
 Stand in hard cure.—[*To the Fool*] Come, help to bear thy
 master;
 Thou must not stay behind.

Gloster. Come, come, away.
[*Exeunt all but Edgar.*

Edgar. When we our betters see bearing our woes,
 We scarcely think our miseries our foes.
 Who alone suffers suffers most i' the mind,
 Leaving free things and happy shows behind;
 But then the mind much sufferance doth o'erskip, 110
 When grief hath mates, and bearing fellowship.
 How light and portable my pain seems now,
 When that which makes me bend makes the king bow,
 He childed as I father'd! Tom, away!
 Mark the high noises, and thyself bewray,
 When false opinion, whose wrong thoughts defile thee,
 In thy just proof repeals and reconciles thee.
 What will hap more to-night, safe scape the king!
 Lurk, lurk. [*Exit.*

SCENE VII. *Gloster's Castle.*

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, GONERIL, EDMUND, *and* Servants.

Cornwall. [*To Goneril*] Post speedily to my lord your husband; show him this letter: the army of France is landed.—Seek out the villain Gloster. [*Exeunt some of the Servants.*

Regan. Hang him instantly.

Goneril. Pluck out his eyes.

Cornwall. Leave him to my displeasure.—Edmund, keep you our sister company. The revenges we are bound to take upon your traitorous father are not fit for your beholding. Advise the duke, where you are going, to a most festinate preparation; we are bound to the like. Our posts shall be swift and intelligent betwixt us.—Farewell, dear sister.—Farewell, my lord of Gloster.—

12

Enter OSWALD.

How now! where 's the king?

Oswald. My lord of Gloster hath convey'd him hence. Some five or six and thirty of his knights, Hot questrists after him, met him at gate; Who, with some other of the lord's dependants, Are gone with him toward Dover, where they boast To have well-armed friends.

Cornwall. Get horses for your mistress.

Goneril. Farewell, sweet lord, and sister.

21

Cornwall. Edmund, farewell.—

[*Exeunt Goneril, Edmund, and Oswald.*

Go seek the traitor Gloster.

Pinion him like a thief, bring him before us.—

[*Exeunt other Servants.*

Though well we may not pass upon his life

Without the form of justice, yet our power
 Shall do a courtesy to our wrath, which men
 May blame but not control.—Who's there? the traitor?

Enter GLOSTER, brought in by two or three.

Regan. Ingrateful fox! 't is he.

Cornwall. Bind fast his corky arms. 30

Gloster. What means your graces? Good my friends,
 consider

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

Cornwall. Bind him, I say.

Regan. Hard, hard.—O filthy traitor!

Gloster. Unmerciful lady as you are, I'm none.

Cornwall. To this chair bind him.—Villain, thou shalt
 find— [*Regan plucks his beard.*]

Gloster. By the kind gods, 't is most ignobly done
 To pluck me by the beard. 40

Regan. So white, and such a traitor!

Gloster. Naughty lady,

These hairs which thou dost ravish from my chin
 Will quicken and accuse thee. I am your host;
 With robbers' hands my hospitable favours
 You should not ruffle thus. What will you do?

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

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

Cornwall. And what confederacy have you with the trai-
 tors 51

Late footed in the kingdom?

Regan. To whose hands have you sent the lunatic king?
 Speak.

Gloster. I have a letter guessingly set down,

Which came from one that 's of a neutral heart,
And not from one oppos'd.

Cornwall. Cunning.

Regan. And false.

Cornwall. Where hast thou sent the king? 60

Gloster. To Dover.

Regan. Wherefore to Dover. Wast thou not charg'd at
peril—

Cornwall. Wherefore to Dover?—Let him first answer
that.

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

Regan. Wherefore to Dover?

Gloster. Because I would not see thy cruel nails

Pluck out his poor old eyes, nor thy fierce sister 70

In his anointed flesh stick boarish fangs.

The sea, with such a storm as his bare head

In hell-black night endur'd, would have buoy'd up,

And quench'd the stelled fires:

Yet, poor old heart, he holp the heavens to rain.

If wolves had at thy gate howl'd that stern time,

Thou shouldst have said, 'Good porter, turn the key,

All cruels else subscribe.' But I shall see

The winged vengeance overtake such children.

Cornwall. See 't shalt thou never.—Fellows, hold the
chair.— 81

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

Gloster. He that will think to live till he be old,

Give me some help!—O cruel! O you gods!

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

Cornwall. If you see vengeance—

1 *Servant.* Hold your hand, my lord!

I have serv'd you ever since I was a child;
 But better service have I never done you
 Than now to bid you hold.

90

Regan. How now, you dog!

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

Cornwall. My villain! [*They draw and fight.*

1 *Servant.* Nay, then, come on, and take the chance of
 anger.

Regan. Give me thy sword.—A peasant stands up thus!
[*Takes a sword, and runs at him behind.*

1 *Servant.* O, I am slain!—My lord, you have one eye left
 To see some mischief on him.—O! [*Dies.*

Cornwall. Lest it see more, prevent it.—Out, vile jelly!
 Where is thy lustre now? 101

Gloster. All dark and comfortless.—Where's my son Ed-
 mund?

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

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

Gloster. O my follies! then Edgar was abus'd.— 110
 Kind gods, forgive me that, and prosper him!

Regan. Go thrust him out at gates, and let him smell
 His way to Dover.—[*Exit one with Gloster.*] How is 't my
 lord? how look you?

Cornwall. I have receiv'd a hurt; follow me, lady.—
 Turn out that eyeless villain; throw this slave
 Upon the dunghill.—Regan, I bleed apace:

Untimely comes this hurt. Give me your arm.

[*Exit Cornwall, led by Regan.*]

2 *Servant*. I'll never care what wickedness I do,
If this man come to good. 120

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

2 *Servant*. Let 's follow the old earl, and get the Bedlam
To lead him where he would; his roguish madness
Allows itself to anything.

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

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *The Heath.*

Enter EDGAR.

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

Enter GLOSTER, *led by an old man.*

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

10

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

Gloster. Away, get thee away; good friend, be gone,
Thy comforts can do me no good at all;
Thee they may hurt.

Old Man. You cannot see your way.

Gloster. I have no way, and therefore want no eyes;
I stumbled when I saw. Full oft 't is seen,
Our means secure us, and our mere defects
Prove our commodities.—O dear son Edgar,

20

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

Old Man. How now! Who's there?

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

I am worse than e'er I was. 30

Old Man. 'T is poor mad Tom.

Edgar. [*Aside*] And worse I may be yet; the worst is not
So long as we can say 'This is the worst.'

Old Man. Fellow, where goest?

Gloster. Is it a beggar-man?

Old Man. Madman and beggar too.

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

I' the last night's storm I such a fellow saw,
Which made me think a man a worm. My son
Came then into my mind, and yet my mind 40
Was then scarce friends with him. I have heard more
since.

As flies to wanton boys, are we to the gods;
They kill us for their sport.

Edgar. [*Aside*] How should this be?

Bad is the trade that must play fool to sorrow,
Angering itself and others.—Bless thee, master!

Gloster. Is that the naked fellow?

Old Man. Ay, my lord.

Gloster. Then, prithee, get thee gone. If for my sake
Thou wilt o'ertake us hence a mile or twain 51
I' the way toward Dover, do it for ancient love;
And bring some covering for this naked soul,
Which I 'll entreat to lead me.

Old Man. Alack, sir, he is mad.

Gloster. 'T is the times' plague, when madmen lead the blind.

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

Old Man. I'll bring him the best 'parel that I have,
Come on 't what will. [Exit.

Gloster. Sirrah, naked fellow,— 62

Edgar. Poor Tom 's a-cold.—[*Aside*] I cannot daub it further.

Gloster. Come hither, fellow.

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

Gloster. Know'st thou the way to Dover?

Edgar. Both stile and gate, horse-way and footpath. Poor Tom hath been scared out of his good wits. Bless thee, good man's son, from the foul fiend! Five fiends have been in poor Tom at once; of lust, as Obidicut; Hobbididence, prince of dumbness; Mahu, of stealing; Modo, o murther; Flibbertigibbet, of mopping and mowing, who since possesses chambermaids and waiting-women. So, bless thee, master! 76

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

Have humbled to all strokes; that I am wretched
Makes thee the happier.—Heavens, deal so still!

Let the superfluous and lust-dieted man,
That slaves your ordinance, that will not see
Because he does not feel, feel your power quickly;
So distribution should undo excess,

And each man have enough.—Dost thou know Dover?

Edgar. Ay, master.

Gloster. There is a cliff whose high and bending head

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

90

Edgar. Give me thy arm;
 Poor Tom shall lead thee.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *Before the Duke of Albany's Palace.*

Enter GONERIL and EDMUND.

Goneril. Welcome, my lord: I marvel our mild husband
 Not met us on the way.—

Enter OSWALD.

Now, where's your master?

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

10

Goneril. [*To Edmund*] Then shall you go no further.
 It is the cowish terror of his spirit,
 That dares not undertake: he'll not feel wrongs
 Which tie him to an answer. Our wishes on the way
 May prove effects. Back, Edmund, to my brother;
 Hasten his musters and conduct his powers.
 I must change arms at home, and give the distaff
 Into my husband's hands. This trusty servant

20

Shall pass between us; ere long you are like to hear,
 If you dare venture in your own behalf,
 A mistress's command. Wear this, spare speech.

[*Giving a favour.*]

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

Edmund. Yours in the ranks of death.

Goneril. My most dear Gloster!

[*Exit Edmund.*]

O, the difference of man and man!
 To thee a woman's services are due:
 My fool usurps my body.

30

Oswald. Madam, here comes my lord.

[*Exit.*]

Enter ALBANY.

Goneril. I have been worth the whistle.

Albany. O Goneril!

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

40

Goneril. No more: the text is foolish.

Albany. Wisdom and goodness to the vile seem vile;
 Filths savour but themselves. What have you done?
 Tigers, not daughters, what have you perform'd?
 A father, and a gracious aged man,
 Whose reverence even the head-lugg'd bear would lick,
 Most barbarous, most degenerate! have you maddened.

Could my good brother suffer you to do it?
 A man, a prince, by him so benefited!
 If that the heavens do not their visible spirits
 Send quickly down to tame these vile offences,
 It will come,
 Humanity must perforce prey on itself,
 Like monsters of the deep.

50

Goneril. Milk-liver'd man!

That bear'st a cheek for blows, a head for wrongs;
 Who hast not in thy brows an eye discerning
 Thine honour from thy suffering: that not know'st
 Fools do those villains pity who are punish'd
 Ere they have done their mischief,—where's thy drum?
 France spreads his banners in our noiseless land,
 With plumèd helm thy state begins to threat,
 Whilst thou, a moral fool, sit'st still and criest
 'Alack, why does he so?'

60

Albany. See thyself, devil!

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

Goneril. O vain fool!

Albany. Thou changed and self-cover'd thing, for shame,
 Be-monster not thy feature. Were 't my fitness
 To let these hands obey my blood,
 They are apt enough to dislocate and tear
 Thy flesh and bones. Howe'er thou art a fiend,
 A woman's shape doth shield thee.

71

Goneril. Marry, your manhood now!—

Enter a Messenger.

Albany. What news?

Messenger. O, my good lord, the Duke of Cornwall's
 dead;

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

80

Albany. Gloster's eyes!

Messenger. A servant that he bred, thrill'd with remorse
Oppos'd against the act, bending his sword
To his great master; who thereat enrag'd
Flew on him and amongst them fell'd him dead,
But not without that harmful stroke which since
Hath pluck'd him after.

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

90

Messenger. Both, both, my lord.—
This letter, madam, craves a speedy answer;
'T is from your sister.

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

99

Albany. Where was his son when they did take his eyes?

Messenger. Come with my lady hither.

Albany. He is not here.

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

Albany. Knows he the wickedness?

Messenger. Ay, my good lord: 't was he inform'd against
him,

And quit the house on purpose, that their punishment
Might have the freer course.

Albany. Gloster, I live
To thank thee for the love thou show'dst the king,

110

And to revenge thine eyes.—Come hither, friend;
Tell me what more thou know'st. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *The French Camp near Dover.*

Enter KENT and a Gentleman.

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

Gentleman. Something he left imperfect in the state which
since his coming forth is thought of, which imports to the
kingdom so much fear and danger that his personal return
was most required and necessary.

Kent. Who hath he left behind him general?

Gentleman. The Marshal of France, Monsieur La Far.

Kent. Did your letters pierce the queen to any demon-
stration of grief? 10

Gentleman. Ay, sir; she took them, read them in my pres-
ence,
And now and then an ample tear trill'd down
Her delicate cheek. It seem'd she was a queen
Over her passion, who most rebel-like
Sought to be king o'er her.

Kent. O, then it mov'd her.

Gentleman. Not to a rage; patience and sorrow strove
Who should express her goodliest. You have seen
Sunshine and rain at once: her smiles and tears 20
Were like a better way; those happy smilets,
That play'd on her ripe lip, seem'd not to know
What guests were in her eyes, which parted thence
As pearls from diamonds dropp'd. In brief,
Sorrow would be a rarity most belov'd,
If all could so become it.

Kent. Made she no verbal question?

Gentleman. Faith, once or twice she heav'd the name of
father

Pantingly forth, as if it press'd her heart; 30
Cried 'Sisters! sisters! Shame of ladies! sisters!
Kent! father! sisters! What, i' the storm? i' the night?
Let pity not be believ'd!' There she shook
The holy water from her heavenly eyes,
And, clamour-moisten'd, then away she started
To deal with grief alone.

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

Gentleman. No. 41

Kent. Was this before the king return'd?

Gentleman. No, since.

Kent. Well, sir, the poor distressed Lear 's i' the town;
Who sometime in his better tune remembers
What we are come about, and by no means
Will yield to see his daughter.

Gentleman. Why, good sir?

Kent. A sovereign shame so elbows him; his own un-
kindness, 50

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

Gentleman. Alack, poor gentleman!

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

Gentleman. 'T is so, they are afoot.

Kent. Well, sir, I'll bring you to our master Lear,

And leave you to attend him. Some dear cause
 Will in concealment wrap me up awhile;
 When I am known aright, you shall not grieve
 Lending me this acquaintance. I pray you, go
 Along with me.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV. *The Same. A Tent.*

Enter, with drum and colours, CORDELIA, Doctor, and Soldiers.

Cordelia. Alack, 't is he! Why, he was met even now
 As mad as the vex'd sea; singing aloud;
 Crown'd with rank fumiter and furrow-weeds,
 With burdocks, hemlock, nettles, cuckoo-flowers,
 Darnel, and all the idle weeds that grow
 In our sustaining corn.—A century send forth;
 Search every acre in the high-grown field,
 And bring him to our eye.—[*Exit an Officer.*] What can
 man's wisdom

In the restoring his bereaved sense? 10
 He that helps him take all my outward worth.

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

Cordelia. All blest secrets,
 All you unpublish'd virtues of the earth,
 Spring with my tears! be aidant and remediate
 In the good man's distress! Seek, seek for him, 20
 Lest his ungovern'd rage dissolve the life
 That wants the means to lead it.

Enter a Messenger.

Messenger. News, madam;
The British powers are marching hitherward.

Cordelia. 'T is known before; our preparation stands
In expectation of them.—O dear father,
It is thy business that I go about;
Therefore great France
My mourning and important tears hath pitied.
No blown ambition doth our arms incite, 30
But love, dear love, and our aged father's right;
Soon may I hear and see him! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V. *Gloster's Castle.*

Enter REGAN and OSWALD.

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

Oswald. Ay, madam.

Regan. Himself in person there?

Oswald. Madam, with much ado;

Your sister is the better soldier.

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

Oswald. No, madam.

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

Oswald. I know not, lady.

Regan. Faith, he is posted hence on serious matter. 10

It was great ignorance, Gloster's eyes being out,
To let him live; where he arrives he moves
All hearts against us. Edmund, I think, is gone,
In pity of his misery, to dispatch
His nighted life; moreover, to desery
The strength o' the enemy.

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

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

Oswald. I may not, madam; 20
My lady charg'd my duty in this business.

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

Oswald. Madam, I had rather—

Regan. I know your lady does not love her husband,
I am sure of that; and at her late being here
She gave strange orillades and most speaking looks 30
To noble Edmund. I know you are of her bosom.

Oswald. I, madam?

Regan. I speak in understanding; you are, I know 't.
Therefore I do advise you, take this note:
My lord is dead; Edmund and I have talk'd,
And more convenient is he for my hand
Than for your lady's: you may gather more.
If you do find him, pray you, give him this;
And when your mistress hears thus much from you,
I pray, desire her call her wisdom to her. 40
So, fare you well.

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

Oswald. Would I could meet him, madam! I should
show

What party I do follow.

Regan. Fare thee well. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI. *Fields near Dover.*

Enter GLOSTER, and EDGAR dressed like a peasant.

Gloster. When shall I come to the top of that same hill?

Edgar. You do climb up it now; look, how we labour.

Gloster. Methinks the ground is even.

Edgar. Horrible steep.

Hark, do you hear the sea?

Gloster. No, truly.

Edgar. Why, then, your other senses grow imperfect
By your eyes' anguish.

Gloster. So may it be indeed;
Methinks thy voice is alter'd, and thou speak'st 10
In better phrase and matter than thou didst.

Edgar. You're much deceiv'd; in nothing am I chang'd
But in my garments.

Gloster. Methinks you're better spoken.

Edgar. Come on, sir; here's the place. Stand still. How
fearful

And dizzy 't is to cast one's eyes so low!
The crows and choughs that wing the midway air
Show scarce so gross as beetles. Half way down
Hangs one that gathers sampire, dreadful trade! 20
Methinks he seems no bigger than his head.
The fishermen that walk upon the beach
Appear like mice; and yond tall anchoring bark
Diminish'd to her cock; her cock, a buoy
Almost too small for sight. The murmuring surge,
That on the unnumber'd idle pebble chafes,
Cannot be heard so high. I'll look no more,
Lest my brain turn and the deficient sight
Topple down headlong.

Gloster. Set me where you stand. 30

Edgar. Give me your hand. You are now within a foot
Of the extreme verge. For all beneath the moon
Would I not leap upright.

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

Edgar. Now fare ye well, good sir.

Gloster. With all my heart.

Edgar. [*Aside*] Why I do trifle thus with his despair 41
Is done to cure it.

Gloster. [*Kneeling.*] O you mighty gods!
This world I do renounce, and in your sights
Shake patiently my great affliction off.
If I could bear it longer, and not fall
To quarrel with your great opposeless wills,
My snuff and loathèd part of nature should
Burn itself out. If Edgar live, O bless him!
Now, fellow, fare thee well. 50

Edgar. Gone, sir; farewell.

[*He falls forward.*]

[*Aside*] And yet I know not how conceit may rob
The treasury of life, when life itself
Yields to the theft. Had he been where he thought,
By this had thought been past. Alive or dead?—
Ho, you sir! friend! Hear you, sir! speak!—
[*Aside*] Thus might he pass indeed; yet he revives.—
What are you, sir?

Gloster. Away, and let me die.

Edgar. Hadst thou been aught but gossamer, feathers,
air, 60

So many fathom down precipitating,
Thou 'dst shiver'd like an egg; but thou dost breathe,
Hast heavy substance, bleed'st not, speak'st, art sound.
Ten masts at each make not the altitude
Which thou hast perpendicularly fell;
Thy life 's a mirac'e. Speak yet again.

Gloster. But have I fallen, or no?

Edgar. From the dread summit of this chalky bourn.
Look up a-height; the shrill-gorg'd lark so far
Cannot be seen or heard. Do but look up. 70

Gloster. Alack, I have no eyes.
Is wretchedness depriv'd that benefit,
To end itself by death? 'T was yet some comfort,
When misery could beguile the tyrant's rage,
And frustrate his proud will.

Edgar. Give me your arm.

Up; so. How is 't? Feel your legs? You stand.

Gloster. Too well, too well.

Edgar. This is above all strangeness.

Upon the crown o' the cliff, what thing was that 80
Which parted from you?

Gloster. A poor unfortunate beggar.

Edgar. As I stood here below, methought his eyes
Were two full moons; he had a thousand noses,
Horns whelk'd and wav'd like the enridged sea.
It was some fiend; therefore, thou happy father,
Think that the clearest gods, who make them honours
Of men's impossibilities, have preserv'd thee.

Gloster. I do remember now. Henceforth I'll bear
Affliction till it do cry out itself 90

'Enough, enough,' and die. That thing you speak of,
I took it for a man; often 't would say
'The fiend, the fiend:' he led me to that place.

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

Enter LEAR, fantastically dressed with wild flowers.

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

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

Edgar. O thou side-piercing sight! 100

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

Edgar. Sweet marjoram.

Lear. Pass.

Gloster. I know that voice. 110

Lear. Ha! Goneril,—with a white beard!—They flat-
tered me like a dog; and told me I had white hairs in my
beard ere the black ones were there. To say ay and no to
every thing that I said! Ay and no too was no good di-
vinity. When the rain came to wet me once and the wind
to make me chatter, when the thunder would not peace at
my bidding, there I found 'em, there I smelt 'em out. Go
to, they are not men o' their words: they told me I was
every thing; 't is a lie, I am not ague-proof. 119

Gloster. The trick of that voice I do well remember.
Is 't not the king? .

Lear. Ay, every inch a king.
When I do stare, see how the subject quakes.—
I pardon that man's life.—What was thy cause?
Adultery?
Thou shalt not die. Die for adultery? No;
For Gloster's bastard son
Was kinder to his father than my daughters.—
Give me an ounce of civet, good apothecary, to sweeten my
imagination; there's money for thee. 130

Gloster. O, let me kiss that hand!

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

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

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

Gloster. Were all thy letters suns, I could not see.

Edgar. [*Aside*] I would not take this from report; it is,
And my heart breaks at it. 141

Lear. Read.

Gloster. What, with the case of eyes?

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

Gloster. I see it feelingly. 148

Lear. What, art mad? A man may see how this world
goes with no eyes. Look with thine ears; see how yond
justice rails upon yond simple thief. Hark, in thine ear;

change places, and handy-dandy, which is the justice, which is the thief? Thou hast seen a farmer's dog bark at a beggar?

Gloster. Ay, sir.

Lear. And the creature run from the cur? There thou mightst behold the great image of authority; a dog's obeyed in office.—

The usurer hangs the cozener.

Through tatter'd clothes great voices do appear; 160

Robes and furr'd gowns hide all. Plate sin with gold,

And the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks;

Arm it in rags, a pigmy's straw does pierce it.

None does offend, none, I say, none; I'll able 'em:

Take that of me, my friend, who have the power

To seal the accuser's lips. Get thee glass eyes;

And, like a scurvy politician, seem

To see the things thou dost not.—

Now, now, now, now; pull off my boots. Harder, harder:

so. 170

Edgar. [*Aside*] O, matter and impertinency mix'd!
Reason in madness!

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

I know thee well enough; thy name is Gloster.

Thou must be patient; we came crying hither.

Thou know'st, the first time that we smell the air,

We wawl and cry. I will preach to thee; mark.

Gloster. Alack, alack the day!

Lear. When we are born, we cry that we are come

To this great stage of fools. This' a good block; 18

It were a delicate stratagem, to shoe

A troop of horse with felt. I'll put 't in proof;

And when I have stolen upon these sons-in-law,
Then, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill!

Enter a Gentleman, with Attendants.

Gentleman. O, here he is; lay hand upon him.—Sir,
Your most dear daughter—

Lear. No rescue? What, a prisoner? I am even
The natural fool of fortune. Use me well;
You shall have ransom. Let me have surgeons;
I am cut to the brains.

190

Gentleman. You shall have anything.

Lear. No seconds? all myself?
Why, this would make a man a man of salt,
To use his eyes for garden water-pots,
Ay, and laying autumn's dust.

Gentleman. Good sir,—

Lear. I will die bravely, like a smug bridegroom. What!
I will be jovial. Come, come; I am a king,
My masters, know you that?

Gentleman. You are a royal one, and we obey you. ²⁰⁰

Lear. Then there's life in 't. Come, an you get it, you
shall get it by running. Sa, sa, sa, sa.

[Exit running; Attendants follow.]

Gentleman. A sight most pitiful in the meanest wretch,
Past speaking of in a king! Thou hast one daughter,
Who redeems nature from the general curse
Which twain have brought her to.

Edgar. Hail, gentle sir.

Gentleman. Sir, speed you; what 's your will?

Edgar. Do you hear aught, sir, of a battle toward?

Gentleman. Most sure and vulgar; every one hears that,
Which can distinguish sound.

211

Edgar. But, by your favour,
How near 's the other army?

Gentleman. Near and on speedy foot; the main descry
Stands on the hourly thought.

Edgar. I thank you, sir; that's all.

Gentleman. Though that the queen on special cause is
here,
Her army is mov'd on.

Edgar. I thank you, sir. [*Exit Gentleman.*]

Gloster. You ever-gentle gods, take my breath from me;
Let not my worser spirit tempt me again 222
To die before you please!

Edgar. Well pray you, father.

[*Gloster.* Now, good sir, what are you?

Edgar. A most poor man, made tame to fortune's blows,
Who, by the art of known and feeling sorrows,
Am pregnant to good pity. Give me your hand,
I'll lead you to some bidding.

Gloster. Hearty thanks; 230
The bounty and the benison of heaven
To boot, and boot!

Enter OSWALD.

Oswald. A proclaim'd prize! Most happy!
That eyeless head of thine was first fram'd flesh
To raise my fortunes.—Thou old unhappy traitor,
Briefly thyself remember; the sword is out
That must destroy thee.

Gloster. Now let thy friendly hand
Put strength enough to 't. [*Edgar interposes.*]

Oswald. Wherefore, bold peasant,
Darest thou support a publish'd traitor? Hence! 241

Lest that the infection of his fortune take
Like hold on thee. Let go his arm.

Edgar. Chill not let go, zir, without vurther 'casion.

Oswald. Let go, slave, or thou diest!

Edgar. Good gentleman, go your gait, and let poor volk pass. An chud ha' bin zwaggered out of my life, 't would not ha' bin zo long as 't is by a vortnight. Nay, come not near th' old man; keep out, che vor ye, or ise try whether your costard or my ballow be the harder; chill be plain with you. 251

Oswald. Out, dunghill! [*They fight.*]

Edgar. Chill pick your teeth, zir. Come; no matter vor your foins. [*Oswald falls.*]

Oswald. Slave, thou hast slain me. Villain, take my purse:

If ever thou wilt thrive, bury my body,
And give the letters which thou find'st about me
To Edmund earl of Gloster; seek him out
Upon the English party. O, untimely death!
Death! 260

[*Dies.*]

Edgar. I know thee well; a serviceable villain,
As duteous to the vices of thy mistress
As badness would desire.

Gloster. What, is he dead?

Edgar. Sit you down, father; rest you.—
Let's see these pockets; the letters that he speaks of
May be my friends. He's dead; I am only sorry
He had no other deathsman. Let us see:
Leave, gentle wax; and, manners, blame us not. 270
To know our enemies' minds, we 'd rip their hearts;
Their papers, is more lawful.

[*Reads*] '*Let our reciprocal vows be remembered. You*

have many opportunities to cut him off; if your will want not, time and place will be fruitfully offered. There is nothing done, if he return the conqueror: then am I the prisoner, and his bed my goal; from the loathed warmth whereof deliver me, and supply the place for your labour.

'Your—wife, so I would say—affectionate servant,
'GONERIL.'

O indistinguish'd space of woman's will! 281
 A plot upon her virtuous husband's life!
 And the exchange my brother!—Here, in the sands,
 Thee I'll rake up, the post unsanctified
 Of murtherous leechers; and in the mature time
 With this ungracious paper strike the sight
 Of the death-practis'd duke. For him 't is well
 That of thy death and business I can tell.

Gloster. The king is mad. How stiff is my vile sense,
 That I stand up, and have ingenious feeling 290
 Of my huge sorrows! Better I were distract;
 So should my thoughts be sever'd from my griefs,
 And woes by wrong imaginations lose
 The knowledge of themselves. *[Drum afar off.]*

Edgar. Give me your hand;
 Far off, methinks, I hear the beaten drum.
 Come, father, I'll bestow you with a friend. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE VII. *A Tent in the French Camp.* LEAR on a bed asleep, soft music playing; Gentleman and others attending.

Enter CORDELIA, KENT, and Doctor.

Cordelia. O thou good Kent, how shall I live and work,
 To match thy goodness? My life will be too short,
 And every measure fail me.

Kent. To be acknowledg'd, madam, is o'er-paid.

All my reports go with the modest truth,
Nor more nor clipp'd, but so.

Cordelia. Be better suited;

These weeds are memories of those worsèr hours.

I prithee, put them off.

Kent. Pardon, dear madam; 10

Yet to be known shortens my made intent.

My boon I make it, that you know me not

Till time and I think meet.

Cordelia. Then be 't so, my good lord.—How does the
king?

Doctor. Madam, sleeps still.

Cordelia. O you kind gods,

Cure this great breach in his abusèd nature!

The untun'd and jarring senses, O, wind up

Of this child-changed father! 20

Doctor. So please your majesty

That we may wake the king? he hath slept long.

Cordelia. Be govern'd by your knowledge, and proceed
I' the sway of your own will.—Is he array'd? 31

Gentleman. Ay, madam; in the heaviness of sleep
We put fresh garments on him.

Doctor. Be by, good madam, when we do awake him;
I doubt not of his temperance.

Cordelia. Very well.

Doctor. Please you, draw near.—Louder the music there!

Cordelia. O my dear father! Restoration hang 31
Thy medicine on my lips, and let this kiss
Repair those violent harms that my two sisters
Have in thy reverence made!

Kent. Kind and dear princess!

Cordelia. Had you not been their father, these white
flakes

Did challenge pity of them. Was this a face
 To be oppos'd against the warring winds?
 To stand against the deep dread-bolted thunder? 40
 In the most terrible and nimble stroke
 Of quick, cross lightning? to watch—poor perdu!—
 With this thin helm? Mine enemy's dog,
 Though he had bit me, should have stood that night
 Against my fire; and wast thou fain, poor father,
 To hovel thee with swine and rogues forlorn,
 In short and musty straw? Alack, alack!
 'T is wonder that thy life and wits at once
 Had not concluded all.—He wakes; speak to him.

Doctor. Madam, do you; 't is fittest. 50

Cordelia. How does my royal lord? How fares your
 majesty?

Lear. You do me wrong to take me out o' the grave.
 Thou art a soul in bliss; but I am bound
 Upon a wheel of fire, that mine own tears
 Do scald like molten lead.

Cordelia. Sir, do you know me?

Lear. You are a spirit, I know; when did you die?

Cordelia. Still, still, far wide!

Doctor. He's scarce awake; let him alone awhile. 60

Lear. Where have I been? Where am I? Fair day-
 light?

I am mightily abus'd. I should e'en die with pity,
 To see another thus. I know not what to say.
 I will not swear these are my hands. Let 's see;
 I feel this pin prick. Would I were assur'd
 Of my condition!

Cordelia. O, look upon me, sir,

And hold your hands in benediction o'er me.

No, sir, you must not kneel.

70

Lear. Pray, do not mock me.

I am a very foolish fond old man,

Fourscore and upward, not an hour more nor less;

And, to deal plainly,

I fear I am not in my perfect mind.

Methinks I should know you and know this man;

Yet I am doubtful: for I am mainly ignorant

What place this is, and all the skill I have

Remembers not these garments, nor I know not

Where I did lodge last night. Do not laugh at me;

80

For, as I am a man, I think this lady

To be my child Cordelia.

Cordelia. And so I am, I am.

Lear. Be your tears wet? yes, faith. I pray, weep not.

If you have poison for me, I will drink it.

I know you do not love me, for your sisters

Have, as I do remember, done me wrong;

You have some cause, they have not.

Cordelia. No cause, no cause.

Lear. Am I in France?

90

Kent.

In your own kingdom, sir.

Lear. Do not abuse me.

Doctor. Be comforted, good madam: the great rage,

You see, is kill'd in him; and yet 't is danger

To make him even o'er the time he has lost.

Desire him to go in; trouble him no more

Till further settling.

Cordelia. Will 't please your highness walk?

Lear. You must bear with me. Pray you now, forget
and forgive; I am old and foolish.

100

[*Exeunt all but Kent and Gentleman.*]

Gentleman. Holds it true, sir, that the Duke of Cornwall was so slain?

Kent. Most certain, sir.

Gentleman. Who is the conductor of his people?

Kent. As 't is said, the bastard son of Gloster.

Gentleman. They say Edgar, his banished son, is with the Earl of Kent in Germany.

Kent. Report is changeable. 'T is time to look about; the powers of the kingdom approach apace. 109

Gentleman. The arbitrement is like to be bloody. Fare you well, sir. [Exit.

Kent. My point and period will be thoroughly wrought, Or well or ill, as this day's battle 's fought. [Exit.

ACT V.

SCENE I. *The British Camp, near Dover.*

Enter, with drum and colours, Edmund, Regan, Gentlemen, and Soldiers.

Edmund. Know of the duke if his last purpose hold,
Or whether since he is advis'd by aught
To change the course. He 's full of alteration
And self-reproving. Bring his constant pleasure.

[To a Gentleman, who goes out.

Regan. Our sister's man is certainly miscarried.

Edmund. 'T is to be doubted, madam.

Regan. Now, sweet lord,
You know the goodness I intend upon you;
Tell me—but truly—but then speak the truth,
Do you not love my sister? 10

Edmund. In honour'd love.

Regan. But have you never found my brother's way
To the forfended place?

Edmund. That thought abuses you.

Regan. I am doubtful that you have been conjunct
And bosom'd with her, as far as we call hers.

Edmund. No, by mine honour, madam.

Regan. I never shall endure her. Dear my lord,
Be not familiar with her.

Edmund. Fear me not.—
She and the duke her husband! 20

Enter with drum and colours, ALBANY, GONERIL, and Soldiers.

Goneril. [*Aside*] I had rather lose the battle than that sister

Should loosen him and me.

Albany. Our very loving sister, well be-met.—
Sir, this I hear: the king is come to his daughter,
With others whom the rigour of our state
Fore'd to cry out. Where I could not be honest,
I never yet was valiant; for this business,
It toucheth us, as France invades our land,
Not holds the king, with others, whom, I fear,
Most just and heavy causes make oppose.

30

Edmund. Sir, you speak nobly.

Regan.

Why is this reason'd?

Goneril. Combine together 'gainst the enemy;
For these domestic and particular broils
Are not the question here.

Albany. Let 's then determine
With the ancient of war on our proceeding.

Edmund. I shall attend you presently at your tent. 40

Regan. Sister, you 'll go with us?

Goneril. No.

Regan. 'T is most convenient; pray you, go with us.

Goneril. [*Aside*] O, ho, I know the riddle!—I will go.

As they are going out, enter EDGAR disguised.

Edgar. If e'er your grace had speech with man so poor,
Hear me one word.

Albany. I'll overtake you.—Speak.

[*Exeunt all but Albany and Edgar.*]

Edgar. Before you fight the battle, ope this letter.

If you have victory, let the trumpet sound
 For him that brought it; wretched though I seem, 50
 I can produce a champion that will prove
 What is avouched there. If you miscarry,
 Your business of the world hath so an end,
 And machination ceases. Fortune love you!

Albany. Stay till I have read the letter.

Edgar. I was forbid it.

When time shall serve, let but the herald cry,
 And I'll appear again.

Albany. Why, fare thee well; I will o'erlook thy paper.

[Exit Edgar.]

Re-enter EDMUND.

Edmund. The enemy 's in view; draw up your powers.
 Here is the guess of their true strength and forces 61
 By diligent discovery; but your haste
 Is now urg'd on you.

Albany. We will greet the time. *[Exit.]*

Edmund. To both these sister have I sworn my love;
 Each jealous of the other, as the stung
 Are of the adder. Which of them shall I take?
 Both? one? or neither? Neither can be enjoy'd,
 If both remain alive. To take the widow
 Exasperates, makes mad her sister Goneril; 70
 And hardly shall I carry out my side,
 Her husband being alive. Now then we'll use
 His countenance for the battle; which being done,
 Let her who would be rid of him devise
 His speedy taking-off. As for the mercy
 Which he intends to Lear and to Cordelia,—
 The battle done, and they within our power,

Shall never see his pardon; for my state
 Stands on me to defend, not to debate. [Exit.

SCENE II. *A field between the two Camps.*

Alarum within. Enter, with drum and colours, LEAR, CORDELIA, and Soldiers, over the stage; and exeunt.

Enter EDGAR and GLOSTER.

Edgar. Here, father, take the shadow of this tree
 For your good host; pray that the right may thrive.
 If ever I return to you again,
 I'll bring you comfort.

Gloster. Grace go with you, sir!
[Exit Edgar.

Alarum and retreat within. Re-enter EDGAR.

Edgar. Away, old man; give me thy hand; away!
 King Lear hath lost, he and his daughter ta'en.
 Give me thy hand; come on.

Gloster. No further, sir; a man may rot even here.

Edgar. What, in ill thoughts again? Men must endure
 Their going hence, even as their coming hither; 11
 Ripeness is all. Come on.

Gloster. And that 's true too. [Exeunt.

SCENE III. *The British Camp near Dover.*

*Enter, in conquest, with drum and colours, EDMUND; LEAR
 and CORDELIA, prisoners; Captain, Soldiers, etc.*

Edmund. Some officers take them away; good guard,
 Until their greater pleasures first be known
 That are to censure them.

Cordelia. We are not the first

Who, with best meaning, have incurr'd the worst.
 For thee, oppressed king, I am cast down;
 Myself could else out-frown false fortune's frown.
 Shall we not see these daughters and these sisters?

Lear. No, no, no, no! Come, let's away to prison;
 We two alone will sing like birds i' the cage. 10
 When thou dost ask me blessing, I'll kneel down,
 And ask of thee forgiveness. So we'll live,
 And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh
 At gilded butterflies, and hear poor rogues
 Talk of court news; and we'll talk with them too,
 Who loses and who wins, who's in, who's out;
 And take upon 's the mystery of things,
 As if we were God's spies: and we'll wear out,
 In a wall'd prison, packs and sects of great ones
 That ebb and flow by the moon. 20

Edmund. Take them away.

Lear. Upon such sacrifices, my Cordelia,
 The gods themselves throw incense. Have I caught thee?
 He that parts us shall bring a brand from heaven,
 And fire us hence like foxes. Wipe thine eyes;
 The good-years shall devour them, flesh and fell,
 Ere they shall make us weep: we'll see 'em starv'd first.
 Come. [*Exeunt Lear and Cordelia, guarded.*]

Edmund. Come hither, captain; hark.
 Take thou this note [*giving a paper*]; go follow them to
 prison. 31

One step I have advanc'd thee; if thou dost
 As this instructs thee, thou dost make thy way
 To noble fortunes. Know thou this, that men
 Are as the time is; to be tender-minded
 Does not become a sword: thy great employment

Will not bear question; either say thou 'lt do 't,
Or thrive by other means.

Captain. I'll do 't, my lord.

Edmund. About it; and write happy when thou hast
done. 41

Mark,—I say, instantly, and carry it so
As I have set it down.

Captain. I cannot draw a cart, nor eat dried oats;
If 't be man's work, I'll do 't. [Exit.

Flourish. Enter ALBANY, GONERIL, REGAN, another Cap-
tain, and Soldiers.

Albany. Sir, you have show'd to-day your valiant strain,
And fortune led you well; you have the captives
That were the opposites of this day's strife.
I do require them of you, so to use them
As we shall find their merits and our safety 50
May equally determine.

Edmund. Sir, I thought it fit
To send the old and miserable king
To some retention and appointed guard;
Whose age had charms in it, whose title more,
To pluck the common bosom on his side,
And turn our impress'd lances in our eyes
Which do command them. With him I sent the queen;
My reason all the same: and they are ready 60
To-morrow, or at further space, to appear
Where you shall hold your session. At this time
We sweat and bleed: the friend hath lost his friend;
And the best quarrels, in the heat, are curs'd
By those that feel their sharpness.

The question of Cordelia and her father
Requires a fitter place.

Albany. Sir, by your patience,
I hold you but a subject of this war,
Not as a brother.

Regan. That 's as we list to grace him. 70
Methinks our pleasure might have been demanded,
Ere you had spoke so far. He led our powers,
Bore the commission of my place and person;
The which immediacy may well stand up,
And call itself your brother.

Goneril. Not so hot;
In his own grace he doth exalt himself
More than in your addition.

Regan. In my rights,
By me invested, he compeers the best. 80

Albany. That were the most, if he should husband you.

Regan. Jesters do oft prove prophets.

Goneril. Holla, holla!
That eye that told you so look'd but a-squint.

Regan. Lady, I am not well; else I should answer
From a full-flowing stomach.—General,
Take thou my soldiers, prisoners, patrimony:
Dispose of them, of me; the walls are thine.
Witness the world, that I create thee here 90
My lord and master.

Goneril. Mean you to enjoy him?

Albany. The let-alone lies not in your good-will.

Edmund. Nor in thine, lord.

Albany. Half-blooded fellow, yes.

Regan. [*To* *Edmund.*] Let the drum strike, and prove
my title thine.

Albany. Stay yet; hear reason.—Edmund, I arrest thee
On capital treason; and, in thy arrest,
This gilded serpent [*pointing to Goneril*].—For your claim,
fair sister, 101

I bar it in the interest of my wife;
'T is she is sub-contracted to this lord,
And I, her husband, contradict your bans.
If you will marry, make your loves to me;
My lady is bespoke.

Goneril. An interlude!

Albany. Thou art arm'd, Gloster; let the trumpet sound.
If none appear to prove upon thy person
Thy heinous, manifest, and many treasons, 110
There is my pledge [*throwing down a glove*]. I'll prove it
on thy heart,

Ere I taste bread, thou art in nothing less
Than I have here proclaim'd thee.

Regan. Sick, O, 'sick!

Goneril. [*Aside*] If not, I'll ne'er trust medicine.

Edmund. [*Throwing down a glove.*] There's my exchange.

What in the world he is
That names me traitor, villain-like he lies.
Call by thy trumpet; he that dares approach, 120
On him, on you,—who not?—I will maintain
My truth and honour firmly.

Albany. A herald, ho!

Edmund. A herald, ho, a herald!

Albany. Trust to thy single virtue; for thy soldiers,
All levied in thy name, have in my name
Took their discharge.

Regan. My sickness grows upon me.

Albany. She is not well.—Convey her to my tent.—

[*Exit Regan, led.*]

Enter a Herald.

Come hither, herald,—Let the trumpet sound,—

130

And read out this.

Captain. Sound, trumpet! [A trumpet sounds.]

Herald. [Reads] ‘*If any man of quality or degree within the lists of the army will maintain upon Edmund, supposed Earl of Gloster, that he is a manifold traitor, let him appear by the third sound of the trumpet; he is bold in his defence.*’

Edmund. Sound! [First trumpet.]

Herald. Again! [Second trumpet.]

Herald. Again! [Third trumpet.]

[Trumpet answers within.]

Enter EDGAR, at the third sound, armed, with a trumpet before him.

Albany. Ask him his purposes, why he appears
Upon this call o’ the trumpet.

140

Herald. What are you?

Your name, your quality? and why you answer
This present summons?

Edgar. Know, my name is lost,
By treason’s tooth bare-gnawn and canker-bit;
Yet am I noble as the adversary
I come to cope.

Albany. Which is that adversary?

Edgar. What’s he that speaks for Edmund Earl of Gloster?

151

Edmund. Himself; what say’st thou to him?

Edgar. Draw thy sword,

That, if my speech offend a noble heart,
 Thy arm may do thee justice; here is mine.
 Behold, it is the privilege of mine honours,
 My oath and my profession. I protest,—
 Maugre thy strength, place, youth, and eminence,
 Despite thy victor sword and fire-new fortune,
 Thy valour and thy heart,—thou art a traitor,
 False to thy gods, thy brother, and thy father,
 Conspirant 'gainst this high illustrious prince,
 And, from the extremest upward of thy head
 To the descent and dust below thy foot,
 A most toad-spotted traitor. Say thou 'No,'
 This sword, this arm, and my best spirits are bent
 To prove upon thy heart, whereto I speak,
 Thou liest.

160

Edmund. In wisdom I should ask thy name;
 But, since thy outside looks so fair and warlike,
 And that thy tongue some say of breeding breathes,
 What safe and nicely I might well delay
 By rule of knighthood, I disdain and spurn.
 Back do I toss these treasons to thy head,
 With the hell-hated lie o'erwhelm thy heart;
 Which, for they yet glance by and scarcely bruise,
 This sword of mine shall give them instant way,
 Where they shall rest for ever.—Trumpets, speak!

170

[*Alarums. They fight. Edmund falls.*]

Albany. Save him, save him!

Goneril. This is practice, Gloster;
 By the law of arms thou wast not bound to answer
 An unknown opposite: thou art not vanquish'd,
 But cozen'd and beguil'd.

181

Albany. Shut your mouth, dame,

Or with this paper shall I stop it.—Hold, sir;
 Thou worse than any name, read thine own evil.—
 No tearing, lady; I perceive you know it.

[Gives the letter to Edmund.

Goneril. Say, if I do, the laws are mine, not thine.
 Who can arraign me for 't? [Exit.

Albany. Most monstrous! oh!—¹⁹⁰
 Know'st thou this paper?

Edmund. Ask me not what I know.

Albany. Go after her: she's desperate; govern her.

Edmund. What you have charg'd me with, that have I
 done;

And more, much more: the time will bring it out.
 'T is past, and so am I.—But what art thou
 That hast this fortune on me? If thou 'rt noble,
 I do forgive thee.

Edgar. Let's exchange charity.²⁰⁰

I am no less in blood than thou art, Edmund;
 If more, the more thou hast wrong'd me.
 My name is Edgar, and thy father's son.
 The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
 Make instruments to plague us.
 The dark and vicious place where thee he got
 Cost him his eyes.

Edmund. Thou hast spoken right, 't is true:
 The wheel is come full circle; I am here.

Albany. Methought thy very gait did prophesy³¹⁰
 A royal nobleness. I must embrace thee;
 Let sorrow split my heart, if ever I
 Did hate thee or thy father!

Edgar. Worthy prince, I know 't.

Albany. Where have you hid yourself?
How have you known the miseries of your father?

Edgar. By nursing them, my lord. List a brief tale;
And when 't is told, O that my heart would burst!
The bloody proclamation to escape,
That follow'd me so near,—O, our lives' sweetness! 220
That we the pain of death would hourly die
Rather than die at once!—taught me to shift
Into a madman's rags, to assume a semblance
That very dogs disdain'd; and in this habit
Met I my father with his bleeding rings,
Their precious stones new lost, became his guide,
Led him, begg'd for him, sav'd him from despair;
Never,—O fault!—reveal'd myself unto him,
Until some half-hour past, when I was arm'd. 230
Not sure, though hoping, of this good success,
I ask'd his blessing, and from first to last
Told him my pilgrimage; but his flaw'd heart,—
Alack, too weak the conflict to support!—
'Twixt two extremes of passion, joy and grief,
Burst smilingly.

Edmund. This speech of yours hath mov'd me,
And shall perchance do good: but speak you on;
You look as you had something more to say.

Albany. If there be more, more woful, hold it in;
For I am almost ready to dissolve, 240
Hearing of this.

Edgar. This would have seem'd a period
To such as love not sorrow; but another,
To amplify too much, would make much more,
And top extremity.
Whilst I was big in clamour came there in a man,

Who, having seen me in my worst estate,
 Shunn'd my abhorr'd society; but then, finding
 Who 't was that so endur'd, with his strong arms
 He fasten'd on my neck, and bellow'd out 250
 As he 'd burst heaven; threw him on my father;
 Told the most piteous tale of Lear and him
 That ever ear receiv'd; which in recounting
 His grief grew puissant, and the strings of life
 Began to crack. Twice then the trumpets sounded,
 And there I left him tranc'd.

Albany. But who was this?

Edgar. Kent, sir, the banish'd Kent; who in disguise
 Follow'd his enemy king, and did him service
 Improper for a slave. 260

Enter a Gentleman with a bloody knife.

Gentleman. Help, help, O, help!

Edgar. What kind of help?

Albany. Speak, man.

Edgar. What means that bloody knife?

Gentleman. 'T is hot, it smokes!

It came even from the heart of—O, she 's dead!

Albany. Who dead? speak, man.

Gentleman. Your lady, sir, your lady! and her sister
 By her is poison'd; she confesses it.

Edmund. I was contracted to them both; all three
 Now marry in an instant. 271

Edgar. Here comes Kent.

Albany. Produce the bodies, be they alive or dead.
 This judgment of the heavens, that makes us tremble,
 Touches us not with pity.— [Exit Gentleman.]

Enter KENT.

O, is this he?

The time will not allow the compliment
Which very manners urges.

Kent. I am come
To bid my king and master aye good night. 280
Is he not here?

Albany. Great thing of us forgot!
Speak, Edmund, where's the king? and where's Corde-
lia?—

See'st thou this object, Kent?

[The bodies of Goneril and Regan are brought in.]

Kent. Alack, why thus?

Edmund. Yet Edmund was belov'd.
The one the other poison'd for my sake,
And after slew herself.

Albany. Even so.—Cover their faces. 290

Edmund. I pant for life; some good I mean to do,
Despite of mine own nature.—Quickly send,
Be brief in it, to the castle! for my writ
Is on the life of Lear and on Cordelia.
Nay, send in time!

Albany. Run, run, O, run!

Edgar. To who, my lord?—Who has the office? send
Thy token of reprieve.

Edmund. Well thought on; take my sword,
Give it the captain. 300

Albany. Haste thee, for thy life!

[Exit Edgar.]

Edmund. He hath commission from thy wife and me
To hang Cordelia in the prison, and

To lay the blame upon her own despair,
That she fordid herself.

Albany. The gods defend her!—Bear him hence awhile.
[*Edmund is borne off.*]

Re-enter LEAR, with CORDELIA dead in his arms; EDGAR, Captain, and others following.

Lear. Howl, howl, howl, howl! O, you are men of stones!

Had I your tongues and eyes, I'd use them so
That heaven's vault should crack. She's gone for ever!
I know when one is dead, and when one lives. 311
She's dead as earth. Lend me a looking-glass;
If that her breath will mist or stain the stone,
Why, then she lives.

Kent. Is this the promis'd end?

Edgar. Or image of that horror?

Albany. Fall and cease!

Lear. This feather stirs! she lives! if it be so,
It is a chance which does redeem all sorrows
That ever I have felt. 320

Kent. O my good master!

Lear. Prithee, away!

Edgar. 'T is noble Kent, your friend.

Lear. A plague upon you, murderers, traitors all!
I might have sav'd her! now she's gone for ever!—
Cordelia, Cordelia! stay a little. Ha!
What is 't thou say'st?—Her voice was ever soft,
Gentle and low, an excellent thing in woman.—
I kill'd the slave that was a-hanging thee.

Captain. 'T is true, my lords, he did. 330

Lear. Did I not, fellow?

I have seen the day, with my good biting falchion
 I would have made them skip. I am old now,
 And these same crosses spoil me.—Who are you?
 Mine eyes are not o' the best; I'll tell you straight.

Kent. If fortune brag of two she lov'd and hated,
 One of them ye behold.

Lear. This is a dull sight.—Are you not Kent?

Kent. The same,
 Your servant Kent. Where is your servant Caius? 340

Lear. He's a good fellow, I can tell you that;
 He'll strike, and quickly too. He's dead and rotten.

Kent. No, my good lord; I am the very man—

Lear. I'll see that straight.

Kent. That from your first of difference and decay
 Have follow'd your sad steps—

Lear. You are welcome hither.

Kent. Nor no man else; all's cheerless, dark, and deadly.
 Your eldest daughters have fordone themselves,
 And desperately are dead. 350

Lear. Ay, so I think.

Albany. He knows not what he says, and vain it is
 That we present us to him.

Edgar. Very bootless.

Enter a Captain.

Captain. Edmund is dead, my lord.

Albany. That's but a trifle here.—
 You lords and noble friends, know our intent.
 What comfort to this great decay may come
 Shall be applied: for us, we will resign,
 During the life of this old majesty, 360

To him our absolute power;—[*To Edgar and Kent*] you, to
your rights,

With boot, and such addition as your honours
Have more than merited. All friends shall taste
The wages of their virtue, and all foes
The cup of their deservings.—O, see, see!

Lear. And my poor fool is hang'd! No, no, no life!
Why should a dog, a horse, a rat, have life,
And thou no breath at all? Thou 'lt come no more,
Never, never, never, never, never!—

370

Pray you, undo this button; thank you, sir.—
Do you see this? Look on her,—look,—her lips,—
Look there, look there!

[*Dies.*

Edgar. He faints!—My lord, my lord!

Kent. Break, heart; I prithee, break!

Edgar. Look up, my lord.

Kent. Vex not his ghost. O, let him pass! he hates him
That would upon the rack of this tough world
Stretch him out longer.

Edgar. He is gone, indeed.

380

Kent. The wonder is he hath endur'd so long;
He but usurp'd his life.

Albany. Bear them from hence.—Our present business
Is general woe.—[*To Kent and Edgar*] Friends of my soul,
you twain

Rule in this realm, and the gor'd state sustain.

Kent. I have a journey, sir, shortly to go;
My master calls me, I must not say no.

Albany. The weight of this sad time we must obey,
Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say.
The oldest hath borne most; we that are young
Shall never see so much, nor live so long.

390

[*Exeunt, with a dead march.*

NOTES
TO TRAGEDY OF KING LEAR.

NOTES.

ACT I.

Scene I.

Enter . . . GLOSTER. The first editions read "*Gloucester*," but the first quarto and the most of the modern editions have "*Gloster*."

1. *Had more affected.* Had been more partial to. =liked.

2. *Albany.* According to Holinshed, Albany is derived from *Albania*, the region north of the Humber. The name was first given to the whole island by the Celts. Later it was restricted to the Scotch country, and then to the northern English province. The root *alb* or *alp* means a height.

5-6. *Curiosity . . . moiety.* The nicest distinction is not made between them. *Moiety*=fraction other than one-half.

10. *Brazed.* Grown brazen by habit. (See *Hamlet*, III, 4-37.)

12. *Proper.* Fair, comely.

13. *Some year.* Same use as *some* minute, in *Romeo and Juliet*.

15. *Something*=somewhat. So written in some editions.

25. *Out.* Abroad. There was no opportunity for him to attain success at home, owing to his illegitimate birth.

26. *Sennet.* A succession of notes on cornet or trumpet.

29. *Darker purpose.* Our hitherto secret plans.

31. *In three.* We still use "cut in two."

Fast. Unalterable.

34. *Cornwall.* The southwest portion of England.

38. *France and Burgundy.* The Chronicle puts Lear in the time of Joash, King of Judah. The poet puts him in the time after Charlemagne, when Burgundy was a nation in itself.

43. *Both.* Shakespeare frequently used the term with more than two nouns.

47. *Where nature, etc.* "Where your natural affection deservedly claims its due."—*Crosby*.

49. *Wield.* Express.

51. *Eyesight, space, and liberty.* The power to see, the world to be seen, and the freedom to enjoy.

60. *Shadowy.* The folio reads, "shady." Notice the beautiful landscape pictured in lines 60-61.

Champaigns=plains.

Rich'd=enriched.

65. *Self*=selfsame.

66. *Prize me*=prize or value myself.

70. *Square of sense*. Rolfe says:

“Which the most precious square of sense professes. The folio reading; the quartos have ‘possesses.’ The choice between the two depends on the meaning of *square of sense*, which is not easy to make out. Warburton thought it referred to ‘the four nobler senses, sight, hearing, taste, and smell.’ Johnson says: ‘Perhaps *square* means only *compass, comprehension.*’ Edwards makes it ‘the full complement of all the senses;’ Moberly, ‘the choicest estimate of sense;’ Wright, ‘the most delicately sensitive part of my nature.’ Schmidt, in his *Lexicon*, makes *square*=‘rule, regularity, just proportion,’ if we read *professes* (as he does in his edition of the play), and paraphrases the line thus: ‘which the soundest sense acknowledges as joys.’ If we read *possesses*, he would make *square*=‘compass, range(?).’ The objection to all these interpretations is that they do not so much find a meaning in *square* as force one upon it. If Shakespeare wrote the word, it must have one of these meanings—rule, estimate, compass, or range; but we suspect some corruption. The Collier MS. has ‘sphere,’ and Singer reads ‘spacious sphere;’ but the emendations are not to our mind. For a fuller discussion of the enigma we must refer the reader to Furness, who has a full page of fine print upon it. He, by the way, reads *professes*, and remarks: ‘Whatever meaning or no-meaning we may attach to *square of sense*, it seems clear to me that Regan refers to the joys which that square *professes* to bestow.’”

71. *Felicitate*. Made happy. Used nowhere else.

75. *More ponderous*. Also written “*more richer.*”

76. *Validity*=value.

79. *Our joy*. Note Lear addresses Goneril as “*Our eldest-born;*” Regan as, “*Our dearest Regan;*” and Cordelia as, “*Our joy.*”

80. *Our last and least*. Cordelia was evidently small of stature. Lear carried her dead body in his arms although he was then over fourscore.

81. *Vines of France*, and *Milk of Burgundy*. The vineyards of France and the pastures of Burgundy.

84. *Nothing, my lord*. Cordelia’s intense devotion to truth makes her unnecessarily blunt of speech. Coleridge says of this line:

“There is something of disgust at the ruthless hypocrisy of her sisters, and some little faulty admixture of pride and sullenness in Cordelia’s ‘Nothing;’ and her tone is well contrived, indeed, to lessen the glaring absurdity of Lear’s conduct, but answers the yet more important purpose of forcing away the attention from the nursery-tale the moment it has served its end, that of supplying the canvas for the picture. This is also materially furthered by Kent’s opposition, which displays Lear’s moral incapability of resigning the sovereign power in the very act of disposing of it. Kent is, perhaps, the nearest to perfect goodness in all Shakespeare’s characters, and

yet the most individualized. There is an extraordinary charm in his bluntness, which is that only of a nobleman, arising from a contempt of overstrained courtesy, and combined with easy placability where goodness of heart is apparent. His passionate affection for, and fidelity to, Lear act on our feelings in Lear's own favor; virtue seems to be in company with him."

90. *According to my bond.* That is, as a daughter should love her father.

92. *Mar.* The opposite of "*mend.*"

98. *Love you all.* With all their love.

99. *Plight.* Pledge.

108-111. *For, by . . . be.* Lear's spiritual belief is here told. He holds to the power of astrology over human destiny.

109. *Hecate.* An ancient Thracian goddess with the power to bestow wealth and happiness. She is also accredited with being a deity of the infernal regions, able to send out all evils upon those who fell under her curse.

116. *Makes his generation messes.* Who eats his own children.

122. *Wrath.* Metonymy. The object of wrath is meant.

126. *Who stirs?* A disputed expression. One interpretation is, that it is a threat to silence those present who would resent this harshness; another, that the courtiers seemed unwilling to obey this command; a third, that all are so horror-stricken at Lear's outburst of rage they forget to move.

135-6. *Only we . . . king.* The kingly honor. The empty sound of being called a king. The burden and responsibility of ruling is laid aside.

144. *Make from.* Go from; get away from.

145. *The fork.* The barbed-arrow head.

147. *What would'st thou do?* Lear evidently puts his hand to his sword.

Kent's plea throughout is not for a softening of Lear's harshness toward Cordelia, but for Lear to keep his kingship entire.

157-159. *My life . . . motive.* The very essence of loyalty is here expressed.

163. *Blank.* The white center of the target. "Keep your eye on me," he says in effect.

164. *By Apollo.* Lear's gods are here revealed again.

173. *Recreant.* What is the distinction between this term and "*miscreant,*" line 154?

181. *Diseases.* Discomforts.

187. *Sith*=since.

189. *Take thee: i. e.*, Cordelia.
 191. *Your large speeches.* To Goneril and Reagan.
 207. *Little*=seeming. Another reference to her small stature.
 209. *Like*=please.
 212. *Owes*=owns.
 217. *Makes not up.* Reaches no decision.
 223. *Avert.* Turn away. The only instance of Shakespeare's use of this word.
 228. *Argument.* Subject of your thought and conversation.
 229. *In this trice.* We still use "*In a trice.*"
 233. *Monsters*=makes monstrous.
 238. *If for I want*="Because I want."
 244. *But even for want*, etc. The construction is faulty.
 245. *Still-soliciting*=ever begging.
 247. *Hath lost me; i. e.*, caused me to lose.
 254. *Regards.* Considerations.
 255. *Entire point.* Main point.
 256. *She is herself a dowry.* A fine compliment.
 275. *Waterish.* A term of contempt.
 276. *Unpriz'd*=not prized by others.
 278. *Here* and *where*=nouns in their use.
 291. *Prefer*=commend.
 296. *Fortune's alms.* Fortune's alms-giving.
 297. *Well are worth the want that you have wanted.* "The want that you have brought upon yourself."—*Rolfe*.
 298. *Plighted.* Folded.
 310. *Grossly.* Evident.
 315. *Ingrafted*=ingrafted.
 318. *Unconstant*=capricious.
 321. *Hit.* Agree.
 323. *Offend.* Injure.
 325. *I' the heat.* While the iron is hot. Note that the sister's condemn Lear in the case of Cordelia and of Kent.

Scene II.

1. *Thou nature.* Edmund's religion is here shown.
3. *Stand in the plague of custom.* The curse of his illegitimacy was the "*plague of custom.*"
4. *Curiosity.* Exacting nicety. Compare with note on I, 5-6.
Deprive. Disinherit.
5. *Moonshines.* Months.

6. *Lag of.* Later than.
7. *Compact.* Well built.
19. *Subscrib'd.* Surrendered.
20. *Exhibition.* Mere allowance.
21. *Upon the gad.* In a moment's time.
36. *Are to blame.* Are blamable.
39. *Essay.* Test.
40. *Policy.* Established *order.*
41. *Best of our times.* The best part of our lives.
54. *Closet.* Bedroom.
55. *Character.* Handwriting. Shakespeare with only one or two exceptions used the word in this sense. See Hamlet IV, 7-53: "And these few precepts in thy memory see thou character."
65. *Perfect age.* Majority.
69. *Detested.* Detestable.
75. *Where*=whercas.
- 89-90. *Wind me into him.* Worm your way into his confidence.
91. *Unstate myself.* Give up my rank or fortune.
To be in due resolution. To be clear on this point.
93. *Convey.* Manage skillfully.
95. *These late eclipses,* etc. Gloucester was superstitious. This belief in astrology, still common in Shakespeare's time, held the early English minds in bondage.
96. *Though the wisdom,* etc. Natural science can account for causes of eclipses, but we suffer their consequences.
102. *Bias of nature.* Natural tendency.
105. *Disquietly.* Cause disturbance to us.
109. *This is the excellent joppery,* etc. Here is Edmund's scorn of his father's superstition. He will be shrewd enough to use it for his own ends, nevertheless.
114. *Treachers.* Traitors.
115. *Spherical predominance.* A term used in astrology.
117. *Like the catastrophe in the old comedy.* Like event which determines the catastrophe of the play comes in its appointed time.
- 118-19. *Tom o'Bedlam.* The beggar afterward personated by Edgar.
124. *Succeed.* Follow.
- 127-134. *As of unnaturalness.* . . . *Come, come.* Believed by the best authorities not to have been written by Shakespeare.
- 138-9. *No displeasure in him.* That is, "no displeasure directed toward you in him?"

144-5. *Mischief of your person.* Harm to your person.

147-8. *Continent forbearance.* A restraint.

163. *Practices.* Schemes, plots.

Scene III.

1. *Chiding of.* The same construction occurs in II, 1-39, "Mumbling of;" and V, 3-204, "Hearing of."

3. "The steward should be placed in exact antithesis to Kent, as the only character of utter irredeemable baseness in Shakespeare. Even in this the judgment and invention of the poet are very observable; for what else could the willing tool of a General be? Not a vice but this of baseness was left open to him."—*Coleridge.*

15. *Distaste.* Dislike; so written in earlier volumes.

21. *With checks as flatteries.* Various critics have tried to explain this phrase, but no one has rendered the meaning any clearer than Shakespeare has expressed it.

28. *To hold my very course.* The very same course I hold.

Scene IV.

2. *Diffuse.* Disguise.

4. *Raz'd.* Erased.

6. *So may it come.* It may so come.

11. *Profess.* What is thy calling?

16. *Eat no fish.* That is, to be a Protestant. In Queen Elizabeth's time it was the mark of a Papist to eat fish on Friday. Manifestly Protestantism was unknown to Kent's day.

27. *You have that . . . master.* A fine conception of the kingliness of Lear. Many men in history have had the same distinction, the inherent dominant force that men must recognize. When it is a natural gift it marks the ruler; when it is assumed it marks the tyrant.

32. *Curious.* Elaborate; as, "curiously wrought fabrics."

46. *Clotpoll.* Clodpoll, blockhead.

53. *Roundest.* Bluntest.

64. *Rememberest.* Remindest.

65. *Most faint.* Hardly discernible.

66. *Curiosity.* "Scrupulous watchfulness."—*Stevens.* See I, 1-5.

72. *The fool hath much pined away.* Evidently Lear's fool is of a superior order, unlike the mere jesters of the times. Lear's answer shows how quickly his spirit responds to the fool's feelings. It is a significant suggestion of the first remorse in Lear.

82. *Bandy*. A term used in tennis.

83. *Strucken*. See *Julius Cæsar* II, 2, 114: "Cæsar, it is strucken eight."

84. *Foot-ball*. Moberly says: "A somewhat vulgar recreation, practiced by the London apprentices in Cheapside to the terror of respectable citizens."

91. *Earnest*. Money paid in advance to ensure the bargain.

91. *Enter Fool*. Criticisms of Lear's Fool:

" 'Now, our joy, though last, not least,' my dearest of all Fools, Lear's Fool! Ah, what a noble heart, a gentle and a loving one, lies beneath that parti-colored jerkin! . . . Look at him! It may be your eyes see him not as mine do, but he appears to me of a light delicate frame, every feature expressive of sensibility even to pain, with eyes lustrously intelligent, a mouth blandly beautiful, and withal a hectic flush upon his cheek. Oh that I were a painter! Oh that I could describe him as I knew him in my boyhood, when the Fool made me shed tears, while Lear did but terrify me! . . . When the Fool enters, throwing his coxcomb at Kent, and instantly follows it up with allusions to the miserable rashness of Lear, we ought to understand him from that moment to the last. Throughout this scene his wit, however varied, still aims at the same point, and in spite of threats, and regardless how his words may be construed by Goneril's creatures, with the eagerness of a filial love he prompts the old king to 'resume the shape which he had cast off.' 'This is not altogether fool, my lord.' But, alas! it is too late; and when driven from the scene by Goneril, he turns upon her with an indignation that knows no fear of the 'halter' for himself: 'A fox when one has caught her, And such a daughter, Should sure to the slaughter, If my cap would buy a halter.' That such a character should be distorted by players, printers, and commentators! Observe every word he speaks; his meaning, one would imagine, could not be misinterpreted; and when at length, finding his covert reproaches can avail nothing, he changes his discourse to simple mirth, in order to distract the sorrows of his master. When Lear is in the storm, who is with him? None—not even Kent—'None but the Fool; who labors to outjest His heart-struck injuries.' The tremendous agony of Lear's mind would be too painful, and even deficient in pathos, without this poor faithful servant at his side. It is he that touches our hearts with pity, while Lear fills the imagination to aching."—*C. A. Brown*.

"A youth, not a grown man."—*Charles Cowden Clarke*.

"After these long and good notes by my betters I wish merely to record humbly but firmly my conviction that the Fool, one of Shakespeare's most wonderful characters, is not a boy, but a man—one of the shrewdest, tenderest of men, whom long life had made shrewd, and whom afflictions had made tender; his wisdom is too deep for any boy, and could be found only in a man, removed by not more than a score of years from the king's own age; he had been Lear's companion from the days of Lear's early manhood."—*H. H. Furness*.

"Not only does much that he says show a shrewdness which can only be the result of long experience and observation of men and

things, but his intense sympathy for Lear seems to us beyond the capacity of boyish years. On the other hand, Lear's addressing him as 'boy' and 'pretty knave,' and the like, may be explained, partly by the force of habit—for he *was* a mere boy when he first became Lear's companion, and, it may be added, would from his very position naturally continue to be regarded and treated as a boy—and partly from his slight and fragile physique, which would make him appear more like an overgrown boy than a man."—*William J. Rolfe.*

92. *Coxcomb.* The fool's cap, the badge of his calling.

97-8. *Thou'lt catch cold.* That is, be turned out of doors in the inclement weather.

99. *Banished.* By giving them the kingdom he has lost their regard.

Blessing. Lear made Cordelia Queen of France by cursing her.

101. *Nuncle.* Possibly contracted from *mine uncle.*

108. *Brach.* Female hound.

109. *A pestilent gall to me.* This may refer to the bitterness of the fool's jesting, or to the memory of Oswald's treatment, or to the memory of Cordelia's banishment.

115. *Owest.* Ownest.

118. *Set.* Put to stake.

139. *Motley.* The parti-colored dress of the fool.

154. *Thy ass.* Refers to Æsop's fable.

180. *Frontlet.* A frown. A frontlet was a band worn on the forehead at night, to keep it smooth.

190. *Shealed peascod.* A mere husk.

201. *The tender of a wholesome weal.* The care of a commonwealth.

207. *It head.* Old form of possessive.

208. *Darkling.* In the dark.

219. *Notion.* Mind.

226. *Which.* Whom, possibly.

228. *Admiration.* Astonishment.

231. *As you . . . wise.* A proper conception of a graceful old age. A rebuke to Lear, whose years had not brought wisdom.

233. *Debosh'd.* Evidently debauched.

240. *Disquantity.* Reduce.

242. *Besort.* Befit, become.

259. *Worships.* The dignity, or honor.

265. *Dear.* Valuable, precious.

270-283. A bitter malediction for a father to pronounce upon his daughter. It has hardly a parallel in literature.

275. *Teem.* Bear children.

277. *Thwart*. Perverse.
Disnatur'd. Unnatural.
279. *Cadent*. Falling.
295. *Untented*. Unprobed, incurable. (See *Tent*, in Dictionary.)
301. *Comfortable*. Able to comfort.
310. *Yóu, sir*. To the fool.
321. *At point*. Prepared.
340. *Milky gentleness*. Macbeth, his wife says, has "too much of the milk of human kindness."

Scene V.

8. *Kibes*. Chilblains.
10. *Thy wit*, etc. "This journey shows you have no wit."
14. *Crab*. A crab-apple.
22. *I did her wrong*.

"The beautiful soul of Cordelia, that is little talked of by herself, and is but stingily set forth by circumstance, engrosses our feeling in scenes from whose threshold her filial piety is banished. We know what Lear is so pathetically remembering; the sisters tell us in their cruellest moments; it mingles with the midnight storm a sigh of the daughterhood that was repulsed. In the pining of the Fool we detect it. Through every wail or gust of this awful symphony of madness, ingratitude, and irony, we feel a woman's breath."—*Weiss*.

33. *The seven stars*. The Pleiades.

36. *To take 't again perforce*. Possibly Lear was meditating the resumption of his throne.

42. *O, let me not be mad*. Lear's first intimation of coming insanity. This is a common experience in the disease. Many instances are recorded wherein the consciousness of coming madness wears on the mind long before it loses its reason. It is one of the most poignantly pathetic things of life.

ACT II.

Scene I.

1. *Save thee*. God save thee.
10. *Toward*. In preparation.
17. *Queasy*. Delicate.
31. *Quit you*. Acquit you.
32. *Yield! come before my father!* This is spoken in a loud voice, so it may be heard outside.
44. *This way*. Pointing to the wrong way.
51. *Loathly*. For the adverb *loathingly*.
57. *Gasted*. Frightened.

68. *Pight*. Fixed.
 70. *Unpossessing*. Unable to inherit legitimately.
 75. *Character*. Writing.
 79. *Pregnant*. Ready.
 81. *Fasten'd*. Confirmed.
 82. *I never got him*. Begot him.
 85. *His picture*, etc. A custom much older than the art of photography.
 129. *Poise*. Importance.

Scene II.

1. *Dawning*. Evening.
 8. *Lipsbury pinfold*. A disputed expression. No satisfactory explanation exists concerning it.
 15. *Lily-livered*. Cowardly.
Action-taking. Resorting to lawsuits instead of fighting out an insult.
 22. *Addition*. Title.
 29. *Cullionly*. Base, cullion-like.
 33. *Vanity the puppet's part*. Evidently vanity is here the personification of Goneril's weakness as contrasted with Lear's royalty. In the old allegorical plays Vanity was personated in the puppet, Hope in the beautiful heroine, etc.
 34. *Carbonado*. To cut meat crosswise for boiling.
 37. *Neat*. Mere.
 41. *Goodman boy*. Used contemptuously.
 42. *Flesh*. To give flesh food for the first time. To initiate.
 50. *Disclaims in*. Disowns.
 59. *Zed*. Obsolete form of the letter Z. The application here is possibly that, as Z is a letter but little known, so this Oswald is a nobody, and unnecessary.
 69. *Holy cords*. Same as "sacred ties" between parent and child and husband and wife.
 70. *Intrinse*. Intricate.
 73. *Renega*. Deny.
Halcyon beaks. The kingfisher, that always turns its beak with the wind.
 76. *Epileptic*. Distorted.
 78. *Sarum*. Former name for Salisbury.
 79. *Camelot*. In the old Arthurian legends Camelot was in Somersetshire, a place noted for moors where geese were bred.
 86. *Likes*. Pleases.

101. *Observants.* Attendants.
 108. *Discommend.* Disapprove.
 117. *Compact.* In conjunction with.
 122. *Fleshment.* In the first flush of glory.
 125. *Ajax is their fool.* Is a fool to them.
 141. *Being.* That is, *you* being.
 160. *Rubb'd.* Hindered.
 163. *A good man's fortune,* etc. Even a good man may have bad luck.
 167. *The common saw.* The old saying, "Out of God's blessing into the warm sun." Meaning from good to bad. Usually applied to being turned out of doors.
 170. *Under globe.* The world.
 171. *Comjortable.* Comforting.

Scene III.

2. *Happy.* Fortunate.
 6. *Am bethought.* Think.
 10. *Elf.* Tangle, as elves were supposed to do to slovenly persons.
 14. *Bedlam beggars.* England had many stories of such people. One writes describing such a man:

"'An Abraham-man:' 'He swears he hath been in Bedlam, and will talke frantickely of purpose: you see pinnes stueck in sundry places of his naked flesh, especially in his armes, which paine he gladly puts himselfe to, only to make you believe he is out of his wits. He calls himselfe by the name of *Poore Tom*, and comming near any body cries out, *Poore Tom is a-cold.* Of these Abraham-men, some be exceeding merry, and doe nothing but sing songs fashioned out of their own braines: some will dance, others will doe nothing but either laugh or weepe: others are dogged, and so sullen both in loke and speech, that spying but a small company in a house, they boldly and bluntly enter, compelling the servants through feare to give them what they demand."

15. *Mortified.* Deadened.
 18. *Pelting.* Paltry.
 19. *Bans.* Curses.
 20. *Turlygod.* A kind of beggar.

Scene IV.

10. *Cruel garters.* A pun on crewel garters; the worsted out of which garters were often made.
 13. *Nether-stocks.* Short stockings.
 28. *Upon respect.* Upon respectability, or deliberately.

29. *Resolve me.* Inform me.
Modest. As reasonable as truth-telling will permit of.
38. *Spite of intermission.* Without waiting to give Kent answer.
40. *Meiny.* Retinue.
46. *Displayed so saucily.* Became so impudent.
56. *Dolours.* Play on the word dollars.
57. *Tell.* Count.
58. *This mother.* The only instance where mother-love has any part in this tragedy of fierce passions.
59. *Hysterica passio.* Hysterics.
86. *Perdy.* A corrupt form of par Dieu.
91. *Fetches.* Pretenses.
114. *Headier.* Impetuous, headlong.
118. *Remotion.* Removal.
119. *Practice.* Deception.
126. *Cockney.* Possibly cockney cook.
- 126-130. Absurd cruelty and absurd kindness are both shown in these lines.
142. *Quality.* Nature.
168. *Abated.* Deprived.
172. *Top.* Head.
182. *Tender-hefted.* A much-disputed term. It may mean *tender-hested.* Of a tender disposition, or *hefted* as derived from heaving; the bosom heaving with tender emotions. Other interpretations, more far-fetched, still are given by some critics.
186. *Sizes.* Allowances.
234. *Knee.* Kneel before.
236. *Sumpter.* Packhorse.
245. *Embossed.* Protuberant.
320. *Particular.* Personally.

ACT III.

Scene I.

6. *Main.* Mainland.
8. *Eyeless.* Undiscerning, blind.
12. *Cub-drawn.* Robbed of her cubs.
20. *Note.* Knowing.
28. *Snuffs and packings.* Offenses and plottings.
35. *At point.* Prepared.
48. *Out-wall.* Exterior.
57. *Pain.* Labor, effort.

Scene II.

2. *Hurricanoes*. Waterspouts.
 3. *Cocks*. Weather-vanes.
 5. *Vaunt-couriers*. Forerunners.
 8. *All germens spill*. Destroy all seed.
 10. *Court holy-water*. Compliments—even flattery.
 23. *High engender'd battles*. Engendered in the upper air.
 27. *The man that makes his toe*, etc. That sets up little, trivial things in place of vital ones.
 39. *Gallow*. Frighten. The only instance of this use of the word.
 40. *Since I was a man*, etc. Compare with Casca's description of night, in *Julius Cæsar*, I, 3.
 43. *Carry*. Endure.
 46. *Pudder*. Pother, or bother.
 50. *Simular*. Deceiver, simulator.
 55. *Summoners*. Those who summon. The officers of the law.
 62. *Demanding*. Inquiring.

Scene III.

12. *Look*. Look for.
 19. *Forbid thee*. Forbidden thee.

Scene IV.

20. *This mouth should tear*. As if this mouth, etc.
 32. *Poverty*. Abstract for concrete.
 37. *Loop'd and window'd*. Full of holes.
 41. *Superflex*. Superfluity.
 64. *Star-blasting*. The curse of the stars upon him. The same as being "born under an evil star."
 72. *Pendulous*. Impending.
 76. *Lowness*. Low estate.
 80. *Pelican*. The fable runs that young pelicans are fed with blood from the parent's breast.
 81. *Pillicock*. Sometimes a term of endearment.
 89–99. A remarkable speech.
 107. *Unaccommodated*. Without any of the conveniences of civilization—aboriginal.
 109. *Unbutton*. Very likely meant for a mere stage direction.
 110. *Naughty*. Used in a much stronger sense than now.
 113. *Walking fire*. Gloster with a torch.
 114. *Flibbertigibbet*. Shakespeare got this name from Dr. Hars-

net's *Declaration of Popish Impostures*, published in 1603. Harsnet says: "Frateretto, Fleberdigibet, Hoberdidance, Tocobatto, were four deuils of the round, or Morrice, whom Sara in her fits, tuned together, in measure and sweet cadence." It had come to be used figuratively even in that day, for Cotgrave gives it as one of the definitions of *Coquette*: "A fisking, or fliperous minx, a cocket or tatling housewife; a titifill, a flebergebit."

115. *Walks*. Goes away.

Web and the pin. Old name for a cataract on the eye.

118. *Old*. Wold.

122. *Aroint*. Away with.

128. *Wall-newt and the water*. The lizard on the wall and the water-lizard.

130. *Sallets*. Salads.

Ditch-dog. Dead dog thrown in the ditch.

132. *Tithing*. A parish or district in the country, corresponding to a ward in the city. Tramps were publicly whipped and sent from parish to parish, by statute enacted in Queen Elizabeth's time.

Stocked, punished. Old folios had *stock-punished*.

133. Where are Tom's clothes now?

135. *Deer*. General name for game.

137. *Smulkin*. Another one of Harsnet's devils.

139-140. *Modo* . . . *Maku*. Two more of Harsnet's.

142. *Gets*. Begets. Did Edgar's voice remind Gloster of his son, whom he believed to be unfilial?

183. *Child Rowland*. Same as Childe Harold. The title given in old English ballads to a young knight.

Scene V.

2. *Censured*. Judged.

Nature. Natural affection.

3. *Fears me*. Frightens me.

6. *Provoking merit*. Edgar's merit, which moved him against his father, who lacked merit.

9. *Approves*. Proves.

18. *Comforting*. "Giving aid and comfort," the legal terms of treason.

Scene VI.

6. *Frateretto* . . . *Nero*. See note on Flibbertigibbet, IV, 114.

10. *Yeoman*. A freeholder, but not a gentleman.

13. *Mad yeoman*. This is something of a reflection upon Shake-

speare himself. Hudson says "the poet obtained from the Heralds' College a coat-of-arms in his father's name; thus getting his yeoman father dubbed a gentleman, in order, no doubt, that he himself might inherit his rank."

16. *Hizzing*. Hissing.
 21. *Justicer*. Justice.
 26. *Come o'er*, etc. An English ballad by William Brich.
 31. *Hoppedance*. Harsnet's devil.
 39. *Bench*. Take place. "To bench," used sometimes for "to raise to authority."
 44. *Minikin*. Petty, small.
 46. *Pur*. Either in imitation of a cat, or Purre, one of Harsnet's devils.
 69. *Lym*. Lime-hound, or leash-led hound.
 70. *Tike*. A cur.
 85. *I'll go to bed at noon*. This is the last appearance of the fool in the play.
 100. *Balmed*. Healed.
 110. *Sufferance*. Suffering.
 117. *Repeals*. Recalls.

Scene VII.

10. *Festinate*. Speedy.
 16. *Questrists*. Seekers.
 25. *Pass upon*. Pass sentence on.
 30. *Corky*. Withered.
 44. *Quicken*. Turn to life.
 45. *Hospitable favors*. The features of your host.
 49. *Simple-answered*. Plain in answer.
 74. *Stelled*. Fixed.
 78. *All cruels else subscribe*. A phrase much studied upon and not yet satisfactorily explained by any critic.
 94. *Villain*. Serf.
 105. *Quit*. Requite.
 122. *The old course*. The ordinary death.
 126. *Allows itself to*. To be turned to or employed with.

ACT IV.

Scene I.

4. *Esperance*. Hope.
 9. *Owes nothing*. Need not care for.
 11-12. The strange changes of fortune make us hate life and render us willing to grow old and die.

22. *Our means secure us.* Make us secure and careless.

23. *Commodities.* Advantages.

39-40. *My son came then into my mind.* Why should he have done so?

74. *Mopping and mowing.* Making faces.

79. *That I am wretched,* etc. My disasters make me feel more for others.

81. *Superfluous.* Having an abundance.

82. *Slaves.* Does not obey the law of heaven, but makes it servant to him.

87. "The cliff now known as Shakespeare's Cliff is just outside of the town of Dover, to the southwest. It has been somewhat diminished in height by frequent landslips, but it is still about 350 feet high. The surge still chafes against the pebbles, and the samphire-gatherer is still let down in a basket to pursue his perilous trade; but the cliff is not so perpendicular, nor do objects below seem so small as one would infer from the poet's description. Probably he did not mean to give a picture of this particular cliff, but delineated one 'in his mind's eye,' and more or less ideal. The South Eastern Railway now runs through the Dover cliff, in a tunnel 1331 yards long.—W. J. Rolfe.

Scene II.

1. *Mild husband.* Albany from the first did not favor the schemes of Goneril.

14. *Cowish.* Easily cowed.

16. *Our wishes on the way,* etc. A hint of the unfaithfulness of Goneril to her husband is here suggested.

24. *Decline.* Incline.

26. *Conceive.* Comprehend.

33. *I have been worth the whistle.* I have been in past time worth coming to meet sooner.

37. *Contemns its origin.* Nature grown so degenerate that it contemns its origin and will break forth in more monstrous excesses.

47. *Head-lugg'd.* Bear led by the head.

61. *Where's thy drum?* Where are the forces that should rally to the cause?

62. *Noiseless land.* No sound of preparations for war.

64. *Moral.* Moralizing.

67. *Proper deformity.* "Deformity conformable to the character."—Schmidt.

70. *Self-cover'd.* The fiend completely hides the woman.

71. *Feature.* Bodily form.

96. *One way I like this well.* Goneril feels that Cornwall, one of the

rulers, is out of the way. If she can get rid of Albany and marry Edmund, she can dispose of Regan either by murder or by overcoming her in some other way. But Edmund may turn now to Regan, who is free.

104. *Back again.* Going back again.

Scene III.

39. *Self mate and mate.* The same husband and wife.

49. *Elbows.* Crowds down upon him.

60. *Some dear cause.* Some important matter.

Scene IV.

6. *A century.* A company of 100 men.

8. *Can.* Can do.

13. *Our foster-nurse of nature is repose.*

“The reply of the Physician is significant, and worthy of careful attention, as embracing a brief summary of almost the only true principles recognized by modern science, and now carried out by the most eminent physicians in the treatment of the insane. We find here no allusion to the scourgings, the charms, the invocation of saints, etc., employed by the most eminent physicians of the time of Shakespeare; neither have we any allusion to the rotary chairs, the vomitings, the purgings by hellebore, the showerings, the bleedings, scalp-shavings, and blisterings, which, even down to our own times, have been inflicted upon these unfortunates by ‘science falsely so called,’ and which stand recorded as imperishable monuments of medical folly; but in place of all this, Shakespeare, speaking through the mouth of the Physician, gives us the principle, simple, truthful, and universally applicable.” — *Dr. Kellogg, in “Shakespeare’s Delineation of Insanity.”*

15. *Simples.* Medicinal herbs.

19. *Aidant and remediate.* Healing and helpful.

29. *Important.* Importunate.

Scene V.

30. *Æillades.* Amorous looks.

In this scene Oswald, who is the very type of perfidy, shows how loyal he can be to the one whom he serves. It is a strange contradiction in nature, but the portrayal of it serves to show how keen was the writer’s grasp of human traits, common and uncommon.

Scene VI.

18. *Choughs*. Birds of the crow family.
19. *Gross*. Large.
20. *Sampire*. Samphire, sold for pickles. It grew in dangerous crevices of cliffs. Gathering it was a perilous business.
24. *Cock*. Cock-boat.
42. *Is done to cure it*. My trifling is done, etc.
48. *Snuff*. The part the candle-flame has fed upon.
68. *Bown*. Boundary.
85. *Whelked*. Knobbed.
102. *Press-money*. Money given to a soldier impressed into service.
- Crow-keeper*. One who keeps crows out of a field.
106. *Brown bills*. Halberds used by foot-soldiers.
- Well flown, bird*. A term used in falconry.
- Clout*. White mark in the center of the target.
120. *Trick*. Peculiarity.
133. *Piecc*. Masterpiece.
137. *Squiny*. Squint.
143. *Case*. Empty sockets.
152. *Handy-dandy*. A children's game, where something is passed quickly from hand to hand.
164. *Able*. Warrant.
171. *Impertinency*. What is not pertinent.
188. *The natural fool of fortune*. The sport of fortune, the play-thing of fate.
202. *Sa, sa, sa, sa*. Possibly the panting after swift running.
208. *Speed you*. May you prosper.
210. *Vulgar*. Common.
214. *Descry*. Main body.
227. *Feeling*. Heartfelt.
228. *Pregnant*. Disposed.
229. *Biding*. Abiding-place.
232. *To boot*. Above my thanks.
236. *Thyself remember*. Make you peace.
237. *Now let*, etc. Gloster wants Oswald to do his work quickly. He courts death.
244. *Chill*, etc. "I will," in the Somersetshire dialect. Edgar adopts this form of speech as a further disguise. *Chud*="I should." *Che vor ye*="I warn you." *Ise*="I shall." *Costard*=head. *Bal-low*=cudgel.

254. *Foins*. Thrusts in fencing.

270. *Leave, gentle wax*. "By your leave"—to the seal of the letter.

Manners, blame us not. Excuse this rudeness in opening other people's letters.

281. *Indistinguished space*. Unlimited range.

287. *Death-practised duke*. Duke against whose life there is a plot.

290. *Ingenious*. Conscious.

Scene VII.

8. *Weeds*. Garments.

18. *Great breach in his abused nature*. A fine line.

20. *Child-changed father*. Either changed by his children, or become childish.

28. *Temperance*. Self-restraint.

42. *Perdu*. Forlorn one.

95. *Even o'er*. To run over the time spent in madness.

110. *Arbitrement*. Decision.

ACT V.

Scene I.

4. *Constant pleasure*. Settled resolution.

5. *Miscarried*. Lost.

6. *Doubled*. Feared, or suspected.

8. *Intend upon*. Intend to confer upon.

13. *Forfended*. Forbidden.

15. *I am doubtful*. I suspect.

30. *It toucheth us, as France invades our land*. I would not fight against Lear, but I fight for England against France.

31. *Bolds*. This verbal use is found nowhere else.

32. *Make oppose*.

39. *Ancient of war*. Those old in military affairs.

44. *I know the riddle*. I know your game.

59. *O'erlook*. Look over.

Scene II.

12. *Ripeness*. Readiness is the essential thing.

Scene III.

18. *God's spies*. God's angels.

19. *Packs and sects*. Coalitions and conspiracies of court.

25. *Like foxes*. The custom of smoking foxes out of their holes was common.

30. *This note.* This warrant.
46. *Strain.* Family.
74. *Immediacy.* Next in authority.
80. *Compeers.* Is equal with.
85. *I am not well.* Evidently Regan is poisoned and by Goneril's hand.
107. *An interlude.* "A plot within a plot."—*Moberly.*
125. *Virtue.* Valor.
158. *Maugre.* In spite of.
159. *Fire-new.* Just from the mint.
175. *Hell-hated.* As hateful as hell.
187. *No tearing, lady.* No tears, or no crying.
348. *Nor no man else.* Nobody else to give him welcome.
367. *My poor fool.* Cordelia is meant here. The term is one of endearment.

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