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# GREAT BOOKS OF THE WESTERN WORLD

ROBERT MAYNARD HUTCHINS, *EDITOR IN CHIEF*

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BY ROBERT MAYER  
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## Volume Two

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is devoted to the history of the

book, from its origin to the

present time, and is written

by the author of the first

part, and is written in a

very interesting and

concise manner.

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# TWELFTH NIGHT Or, What You Will

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

ORSINO, DUKE OF ILLYRIA  
 SEBASTIAN, *brother to Viola*  
 ANTONIO, *a sea captain, friend to Sebastian*  
 A SEA CAPTAIN, *friend to Viola*  
 VALENTINE | *gentlemen attending on the Duke*  
 CURIO  
 SIR TOBY BELCH, *uncle to Olivia*  
 SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK  
 MALVOLIO, *steward to Olivia*  
 FABIAN  
 FESTE, A CLOWN | *servants to Olivia*

TWO OFFICERS  
 A PRIEST  
 A SERVANT *to Olivia*

OLIVIA  
 VIOLA  
 MARIA, *Olivia's woman*

NON-SPEAKING: *Lords, Sailors, Officers, Musicians,  
 and other Attendants*

SCENE: *A city in Illyria, and the sea-coast near it*



## ACT I

### SCENE I. *The Duke's palace*

*Enter DUKE, CURIO, and other Lords; Musicians  
 attending.*

*Duke.* If music be the food of love, play on;  
 Give me excess of it, that, surfeiting,  
 The appetite may sicken, and so die.  
 That strain again! it had a dying fall:  
 O, it came o'er my ear like the sweet sound,  
 That breathes upon a bank of violets,  
 Stealing and giving odour! Enough; no more:  
 'Tis not so sweet now as it was before.  
 O spirit of love! how quick and fresh art thou,  
 That, notwithstanding thy capacity 10  
 Receiveth as the sea, nought enters there,  
 Of what validity and pitch so'er,  
 But falls into abatement and low price,  
 Even in a minute: so full of shapes is fancy  
 That it alone is high fantastical.  
*Cur.* Will you go hunt, my lord?  
*Duke.* What, Curio?  
*Cur.* The hart.  
*Duke.* Why, so I do, the noblest that I have:  
 O, when mine eyes did see Olivia first,  
 Methought she purged the air of pestilence! 20  
 That instant was I turn'd into a hart;  
 And my desires, like fell and cruel hounds,  
 E'er since pursue me.

*Enter VALENTINE.*

How now! what news from her?

*Val.* So please my lord, I might not be admitted;  
 But from her handmaid do return this answer:

The element itself, till seven years' heat,  
 Shall not behold her face at ample view;  
 But, like a cloistress, she will veiled walk  
 And water once a day her chamber round  
 With eye-offending brine: all this to season 30  
 A brother's dead love, which she would keep  
 fresh  
 And lasting in her sad remembrance.  
*Duke.* O, she that hath a heart of that fine frame  
 To pay this debt of love but to a brother,  
 How will she love, when the rich golden shaft  
 Hath kill'd the flock of all affections else  
 That live in her; when liver, brain, and heart,  
 These sovereign thrones, are all supplied, and  
 fill'd  
 Her sweet perfections with one self king!  
 Away before me to sweet beds of flowers: 40  
 Love-thoughts lie rich when canopied with  
 bowers. [Exeunt.]

### SCENE II. *The sea-coast*

*Enter VIOLA, a CAPTAIN, and Sailors.*

*Vio.* What country, friends, is this?  
*Cap.* This is Illyria, lady.  
*Vio.* And what should I do in Illyria?  
 My brother he is in Elysium.  
 Perchance he is not drown'd: what think you,  
 sailors?  
*Cap.* It is perchance that you yourself were  
 saved.  
*Vio.* O my poor brother! and so perchance may  
 he be.  
*Cap.* True, madam: and, to comfort you with  
 chance,

Assure yourself, after our ship did split,  
 When you and those poor numbers saved with  
 you 10  
 Hung on our driving boat, I saw your brother,  
 Most provident in peril, bind himself,  
 Courage and hope both teaching him the prac-  
 tice,

To a strong mast that lived upon the sea;  
 Where, like Arion on the dolphin's back,  
 I saw him hold acquaintance with the waves  
 So long as I could see.

*Vio.* For saying so, there's gold:  
 Mine own escape unfoldeth to my hope,  
 Whereto thy speech serves for authority, 20  
 The like of him. Know'st thou this country?

*Cap.* Ay, madam, well; for I was bred and born  
 Not three hours' travel from this very place.

*Vio.* Who governs here?

*Cap.* A noble duke, in nature as in name.

*Vio.* What is his name?

*Cap.* Orsino.

*Vio.* Orsino! I have heard my father name him:  
 He was a bachelor then.

*Cap.* And so is now, or was so very late; 30  
 For but a month ago I went from hence,  
 And then 'twas fresh in murmur—as, you know,  
 What great ones do the less will prattle of—  
 That he did seek the love of fair Olivia.

*Vio.* What's she?

*Cap.* A virtuous maid, the daughter of a count  
 That died some twelvemonth since, then leaving  
 her

In the protection of his son, her brother,  
 Who shortly also died: for whose dear love,  
 They say, she hath abjured the company 40  
 And sight of men.

*Vio.* O that I served that lady  
 And might not be delivered to the world,  
 Till I had made mine own occasion mellow,  
 What my estate is!

*Cap.* That were hard to compass;  
 Because she will admit no kind of suit,  
 No, not the Duke's.

*Vio.* There is a fair behaviour in thee, captain;  
 And though that nature with a beauteous wall  
 Doth oft close in pollution, yet of thee 50  
 I will believe thou hast a mind that suits  
 With this thy fair and outward character.  
 I prithee, and I'll pay thee bounteously,  
 Conceal me what I am, and be my aid  
 For such disguise as haply shall become  
 The form of my intent. I'll serve this duke:  
 Thou shalt present me as an eunuch to him:  
 It may be worth thy pains; for I can sing  
 And speak to him in many sorts of music  
 That will allow me very worth his service.

What else may hap to time I will commit; 60  
 Only shape thou thy silence to my wit.

*Cap.* Be you his eunuch, and your mute  
 I'll be:

When my tongue blabs, then let mine eyes not  
 see.

*Vio.* I thank thee: lead me on. [*Exeunt.*]

### SCENE III. *Olivia's house*

*Enter SIR TOBY BELCH and MARIA.*

*Sir To.* What a plague means my niece, to take  
 the death of her brother thus? I am sure care's an  
 enemy to life.

*Mar.* By my troth, Sir Toby, you must come in  
 earlier o' nights: your cousin, my lady, takes  
 great exceptions to your ill hours.

*Sir To.* Why, let her except, before excepted.

*Mar.* Ay, but you must confine yourself within  
 the modest limits of order. 9

*Sir To.* Confine! I'll confine myself no finer than  
 I am: these clothes are good enough to drink in;  
 and so be these boots too: an they be not, let  
 them hang themselves in their own straps.

*Mar.* That quaffing and drinking will undo you:  
 I heard my lady talk of it yesterday: and of a  
 foolish knight that you brought in one night here  
 to be her wooer.

*Sir To.* Who, Sir Andrew Aguecheek?

*Mar.* Ay, he.

*Sir To.* He's as tall a man as any's in Illyria.

*Mar.* What's that to the purpose? 21

*Sir To.* Why, he has three thousand ducats a  
 year.

*Mar.* Ay, he'll have but a year in all these  
 ducats: he's a very fool and a prodigal.

*Sir To.* Fie, that you'll say so! he plays o' the  
 viol-de-gamboys, and speaks three or four lan-  
 guages word for word without book, and hath  
 all the good gifts of nature. 29

*Mar.* He hath indeed, almost natural: for be-  
 sides that he's a fool, he's a great quarreller; and  
 but that he hath the gift of a coward to allay the  
 gust he hath in quarrelling, 'tis thought among  
 the prudent he would quickly have the gift of a  
 grave.

*Sir To.* By this hand, they are scoundrels and  
 substractors that say so of him. Who are they?

*Mar.* They that add, moreover, he's drunk  
 nightly in your company. 39

*Sir To.* With drinking healths to my niece: I'll  
 drink to her as long as there is a passage in my  
 throat and drink in Illyria: he's a coward and a  
 coysrill that will not drink to my niece till his  
 brains turn o' the toe like a parish-top. What,  
 wench! *Castiliano vulgo!* for here comes Sir  
 Andrew Agueface.



*Enter* SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK.

*Sir And.* Sir Toby Belch! how now, Sir Toby Belch!

*Sir To.* Sweet Sir Andrew!

*Sir And.* Bless you, fair shrew. 50

*Mar.* And you too, sir.

*Sir To.* Accost, Sir Andrew, accost.

*Sir And.* What's that?

*Sir To.* My niece's chambermaid.

*Sir And.* Good Mistress Accost, I desire better acquaintance.

*Mar.* My name is Mary, sir.

*Sir And.* Good Mistress Mary Accost—

*Sir To.* You mistake, knight: "accost" is front her, board her, woo her, assail her. 60

*Sir And.* By my troth, I would not undertake her in this company. Is that the meaning of "accost"?

*Mar.* Fare you well, gentlemen.

*Sir To.* An thou let part so, Sir Andrew, would thou mightst never draw sword again.

*Sir And.* An you part so, mistress, I would I might never draw sword again. Fair lady, do you think you have fools in hand?

*Mar.* Sir, I have not you by the hand. 70

*Sir And.* Marry, but you shall have; and here's my hand.

*Mar.* Now, sir, "thought is free." I pray you, bring your hand to the buttery-bar and let it drink.

*Sir And.* Wherefore, sweetheart? what's your metaphor?

*Mar.* It's dry, sir.

*Sir And.* Why, I think so: I am not such an ass but I can keep my hand dry. But what's your jest? 80

*Mar.* A dry jest, sir.

*Sir And.* Are you full of them?

*Mar.* Ay, sir, I have them at my fingers' ends: marry, now I let go your hand, I am barren. *[Exit.]*

*Sir To.* O knight, thou lackest a cup of canary: when did I see thee so put down?

*Sir And.* Never in your life, I think; unless you see canary put me down. Methinks sometimes I have no more wit than a Christian or an ordinary man has: but I am a great eater of beef and I believe that does harm to my wit. 91

*Sir To.* No question.

*Sir And.* An I thought that, I'd forswear it. I'll ride home to-morrow, Sir Toby.

*Sir To.* *Pourquoi*, my dear knight?

*Sir And.* What is *pourquoi*? do or not do? I would I had bestowed that time in the tongues that I have in fencing, dancing, and bear-baiting: O, had I but followed the arts!

*Sir To.* Then hadst thou had an excellent head of hair. 101

*Sir And.* Why, would that have mended my hair?

*Sir To.* Past question; for thou seest it will not curl by nature.

*Sir And.* But it becomes me well enough, doesn't it?

*Sir To.* Excellent; it hangs like flax on a distaff; and I hope to see a housewife take thee between her legs and spin it off. 110

*Sir And.* Faith, I'll home to-morrow, Sir Toby: your niece will not be seen; or if she be, it's four to one she'll none of me: the Count himself here hard by woos her.

*Sir To.* She'll none o' the Count: she'll not match above her degree, neither in estate, years, nor wit; I have heard her swear't. Tut, there's life in't, man.

*Sir And.* I'll stay a month longer. I am a fellow o' the strangest mind i' the world; I delight in masques and revels sometimes altogether. 121

*Sir To.* Art thou good at these kickshawses, knight?

*Sir And.* As any man in Illyria, whatsoever he be, under the degree of my betters; and yet I will not compare with an old man.

*Sir To.* What is thy excellence in a galliard, knight?

*Sir And.* Faith, I can cut a caper.

*Sir To.* And I can cut the mutton to't. 130

*Sir And.* And I think I have the back-trick simply as strong as any man in Illyria.

*Sir To.* Wherefore are these things hid? wherefore have these gifts a curtain before 'em? are they like to take dust, like Mistress Mall's picture? why dost thou not go to church in a galliard and come home in a coranto? My very walk should be a jig; I would not so much as make water but in a sink-a-pace. What dost thou mean? Is it a world to hide virtues in? I did think, by the excellent constitution of thy leg, it was formed under the star of a galliard.

*Sir And.* Ay, 'tis strong, and it does indifferent well in a flame-coloured stock. Shall we set about some revels?

*Sir To.* What shall we do else? were we not born under Taurus?

*Sir And.* Taurus! That's sides and heart.

*Sir To.* No, sir; it is legs and thighs. Let me see thee caper: ha! higher: ha, ha! excellent! 151

*[Exeunt.]*

SCENE IV. *The Duke's palace*

*Enter* VALENTINE, and VIOLA in man's attire.

*Val.* If the Duke continue these favours to—

wards you, Cesario, you are like to be much advanced: he hath known you but three days, and already you are no stranger.

*Vio.* You either fear his humour or my negligence, that you call in question the continuance of his love: is he inconstant, sir, in his favours?

*Val.* No, believe me.

*Vio.* I thank you. Here comes the count.

*Enter DUKE, CURIO, and Attendants.*

*Duke.* Who saw Cesario, ho?

*Vio.* On your attendance, my lord; here.

*Duke.* Stand you a while aloof. Cesario, Thou know'st no less but all; I have unclasp'd To thee the book even of my secret soul: Therefore, good youth, address thy gait unto her; Be not denied access, stand at her doors, And tell them, there thy fixed foot shall grow Till thou have audience.

*Vio.* Sure, my noble lord, If she be so abandon'd to her sorrow As it is spoke, she never will admit me.

*Duke.* Be clamorous and leap all civil bounds Rather than make unprofit return.

*Vio.* Say I do speak with her, my lord, what then?

*Duke.* O, then unfold the passion of my love, Surprise her with discourse of my dear faith: It shall become thee well to act my woes; She will attend it better in thy youth Than in a nuncio's of more grave aspect.

*Vio.* I think not so, my lord.

*Duke.* Dear lad, believe it; For they shall yet belie thy happy years, That say thou art a man: Diana's lip Is not more smooth and rubious; thy small pipe Is as the maiden's organ, shrill and sound, And all is semblative a woman's part. I know thy constellation is right apt For this affair. Some four or five attend him; All, if you will; for I myself am best When least in company. Prosper well in this, And thou shalt live as freely as thy lord, To call his fortunes thine.

*Vio.* I'll do my best To woo your lady: [*Aside*] yet, a barful strife! Whoe'er I woo, myself would be his wife.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V. *Olivia's house*

*Enter MARIA and CLOWN.*

*Mar.* Nay, either tell me where thou hast been, or I will not open my lips so wide as a bristle may enter in way of thy excuse: my lady will hang thee for thy absence.

*Clo.* Let her hang me: he that is well hanged in

this world needs to fear no colours.

*Mar.* Make that good.

*Clo.* He shall see none to fear.

*Mar.* A good lenten answer: I can tell thee where that saying was born, of "I fear no colours."

*Clo.* Where, good Mistress Mary?

*Mar.* In the wars; and that may you be bold to say in your foolery.

*Clo.* Well, God give them wisdom that have it; and those that are fools, let them use their talents.

*Mar.* Yet you will be hanged for being so long absent; or to be turned away, is not that as good as a hanging to you?

*Clo.* Many a good hanging prevents a bad marriage; and, for turning away, let summer bear it out.

*Mar.* You are resolute, then?

*Clo.* Not so, neither; but I am resolved on two points.

*Mar.* That if one break, the other will hold; or, if both break, your gaskins fall.

*Clo.* Apt, in good faith; very apt. Well, go thy way; if Sir Toby would leave drinking, thou wert as witty a piece of Eve's flesh as any in Illyria.

*Mar.* Peace, you rogue, no more o' that. Here comes my lady: make your excuse wisely, you were best.

*Clo.* Wit, an't be thy will, put me into good fooling! Those wits, that think they have thee, do very oft prove fools; and I, that am sure I lack thee, may pass for a wise man: for what says Quinapalus? "Better a witty fool than a foolish wit."

*Enter LADY OLIVIA with MALVOLIO.*

God bless thee, lady!

*Oli.* Take the fool away.

*Clo.* Do you not hear, fellows? Take away the lady.

*Oli.* Go to, you're a dry fool; I'll no more of you: besides, you grow dishonest.

*Clo.* Two faults, madonna, that drink and good counsel may amend: for give the dry fool drink, then is the fool not dry: bid the dishonest man mend himself; if he mend, he is no longer dishonest; if he cannot let the butcher mend him. Any thing that's mended is but patched: virtue that transgresses is but patched with sin; and sin that amends is but patched with virtue. If that this simple syllogism will serve, so; if it will not, what remedy? As there is no true cuckold but calamity, so beauty's a flower. The lady bade take away the fool; therefore, I say again, take her away.



*Oli.* Sir, I bade them take away you. 60

*Clo.* Misprision in the highest degree! Lady, *cucullus non facit monachum*; that's as much to say as I wear not motley in my brain. Good madonna, give me leave to prove you a fool.

*Oli.* Can you do it?

*Clo.* Dexteriously, good madonna.

*Oli.* Make your proof.

*Clo.* I must catechize you for it, madonna: good my mouse of virtue, answer me.

*Oli.* Well, sir, for want of other idleness, I'll bide your proof. 71

*Clo.* Good madonna, why mournest thou?

*Oli.* Good fool, for my brother's death.

*Clo.* I think his soul is in hell, madonna.

*Oli.* I know his soul is in heaven, fool.

*Clo.* The more fool, madonna, to mourn for your brother's soul being in heaven. Take away the fool, gentlemen.

*Oli.* What think you of this fool, Malvolio? doth he not mend? 80

*Mal.* Yes, and shall do till the pangs of death shake him: infirmity, that decays the wise, doth ever make the better fool.

*Clo.* God send you, sir, a speedy infirmity, for the better increasing your folly! Sir Toby will be sworn that I am no fox; but he will not pass his word for two pence that you are no fool.

*Oli.* How say you to that, Malvolio?

*Mal.* I marvel your ladyship takes delight in such a barren rascal: I saw him put down the other day with an ordinary fool that has no more brain than a stone. Look you now, he's out of his guard already; unless you laugh and minister occasion to him, he is gagged. I protest, I take these wise men, that crow so at these set kind of fools, no better than the fools' zanies.

*Oli.* O, you are sick of self-love, Malvolio, and taste with a distempered appetite. To be generous, guiltless, and of free disposition, is to take those things for bird-bolts that you deem cannon-bullets: there is no slander in an allowed fool, though he do nothing but rail; nor no railing in a known discreet man, though he do nothing but reprove.

*Clo.* Now Mercury endue thee with leasing, for thou speakest well of fools!

*Re-enter MARIA.*

*Mar.* Madam, there is at the gate a young gentleman much desires to speak with you.

*Oli.* From the Count Orsino, is it?

*Mar.* I know not, madam: 'tis a fair young man, and well attended. 111

*Oli.* Who of my people hold him in delay?

*Mar.* Sir Toby, madam, your kinsman.

*Oli.* Fetch him off, I pray you; he speaks nothing but madman: fie on him! [*Exit MARIA.*] Go you, Malvolio: if it be a suit from the Count, I am sick, or not at home; what you will, to dismiss it. [*Exit MALVOLIO.*] Now you see, sir, how your fooling grows old, and people dislike it.

*Clo.* Thou hast spoke for us, madonna, as if thy eldest son should be a fool; whose skull Jove cram with brains! for—here he comes—one of thy kin has a most weak *pia mater*.

*Enter SIR TOBY.*

*Oli.* By mine honour, half drunk. What is he at the gate, cousin?

*Sir To.* A gentleman.

*Oli.* A gentleman! what gentleman?

*Sir To.* 'Tis a gentleman here—a plague o' these pickle-herring! How now, sot!

*Clo.* Good Sir Toby! 130

*Oli.* Cousin, cousin, how have you come so early by this lethargy?

*Sir To.* Lechery! I defy lechery. There's one at the gate.

*Oli.* Ay, marry, what is he?

*Sir To.* Let him be the devil, an he will, I care not: give me faith, say I. Well, it's all one.

[*Exit.*]

*Oli.* What's a drunken man like, fool?

*Clo.* Like a drowned man, a fool, and a mad man: one draught above heat makes him a fool; the second mads him; and a third drowns him.

*Oli.* Go thou and seek the crowner, and let him sit o' my coz; for he's in the third degree of drink, he's drowned: go, look after him.

*Clo.* He is but mad yet, madonna; and the fool shall look to the madman. [*Exit.*]

*Re-enter MALVOLIO.*

*Mal.* Madam, yond young fellow swears he will speak with you. I told him you were sick; he takes on him to understand so much, and therefore comes to speak with you. I told him you were asleep; he seems to have a foreknowledge of that too, and therefore comes to speak with you. What is to be said to him, lady? he's fortified against any denial.

*Oli.* Tell him he shall not speak with me.

*Mal.* Has been told so; and he says he'll stand at your door like a sheriff's post and be the supporter to a bench, but he'll speak with you.

*Oli.* What kind o' man is he?

*Mal.* Why, of mankind. 160

*Oli.* What manner of man?

*Mal.* Of very ill manner; he'll speak with you, will you or no.

*Oli.* Of what personage and years is he?

*Mal.* Not yet old enough for a man, nor young enough for a boy; as a squash is before 'tis a peascod, or a codling when 'tis almost an apple: 'tis with him in standing water, between boy and man. He is very well-favoured and he speaks very shrewishly; one would think his mother's milk were scarce out of him. 171

*Oli.* Let him approach: call in my gentlewoman.

*Mal.* Gentlewoman, my lady calls. [*Exit.*]

*Re-enter MARIA.*

*Oli.* Give me my veil: come, throw it o'er my face.

We'll once more hear Orsino's embassy.

*Enter VIOLA, and Attendants.*

*Vio.* The honourable lady of the house, which is she?

*Oli.* Speak to me; I shall answer for her. Your will? 180

*Vio.* Most radiant, exquisite, and unmatchable beauty—I pray you, tell me if this be the lady of the house, for I never saw her: I would be loath to cast away my speech, for besides that it is excellently well penned, I have taken great pains to con it. Good beauties, let me sustain no scorn; I am very comptible, even to the least sinister usage.

*Oli.* Whence came you, sir? 189

*Vio.* I can say little more than I have studied, and that question's out of my part. Good gentle one, give me modest assurance if you be the lady of the house, that I may proceed in my speech.

*Oli.* Are you a comedian?

*Vio.* No, my profound heart: and yet, by the very fangs of malice I swear, I am not that I play. Are you the lady of the house?

*Oli.* If I do not usurp myself, I am.

*Vio.* Most certain, if you are she, you do usurp yourself; for what is yours to bestow is not yours to reserve. But this is from my commission: I will on with my speech in your praise, and then show you the heart of my message.

*Oli.* Come to what is important in't: I forgive you the praise.

*Vio.* Alas, I took great pains to study it, and 'tis poetical.

*Oli.* It is the more like to be feigned: I pray you, keep it in. I heard you were saucy at my gates, and allowed your approach rather to wonder at you than to hear you. If you be not mad, be gone; if you have reason, be brief: 'tis not that time of moon with me to make one in so skipping a dialogue.

*Mar.* Will you hoist sail, sir? here lies your way.

*Vio.* No, good swabber; I am to hull here a little longer. Some mollification for your giant, sweet lady. Tell me your mind: I am a messenger. 220

*Oli.* Sure, you have some hideous matter to deliver, when the courtesy of it is so fearful. Speak your office.

*Vio.* It alone concerns your ear. I bring no overture of war, no taxation of homage: I hold the olive in my hand; my words are as full of peace as matter.

*Oli.* Yet you began rudely. What are you? what would you? 229

*Vio.* The rudeness that hath appeared in me have I learned from my entertainment. What I am, and what I would, are as secret as maiden-head; to your ears, divinity, to any other's profanation.

*Oli.* Give us the place alone: we will hear this divinity. [*Exeunt MARIA and Attendants.*] Now, sir, what is your text?

*Vio.* Most sweet lady—

*Oli.* A comfortable doctrine, and much may be said of it. Where lies your text? 240

*Vio.* In Orsino's bosom.

*Oli.* In his bosom! In what chapter of his bosom?

*Vio.* To answer by the method, in the first of his heart.

*Oli.* O, I have read it: it is heresy. Have you no more to say?

*Vio.* Good madam, let me see your face.

*Oli.* Have you any commission from your lord to negotiate with my face? You are now out of your text: but we will draw the curtain and show you the picture. Look you, sir, such a one I was this present: is't not well done? [*Unveiling.*]

*Vio.* Excellently done, if God did all.

*Oli.* 'Tis in grain, sir; 'twill endure wind and weather.

*Vio.* 'Tis beauty truly blent, whose red and white

Nature's own sweet and cunning hand laid on:

Lady, you are the cruell'st she alive,  
If you will lead these graces to the grave 260  
And leave the world no copy.

*Oli.* O, sir, I will not be so hard-hearted; I will give out divers schedules of my beauty: it shall be inventoried, and every particle and utensil labelled to my will: as, item, two lips, indifferent red; item, two grey eyes, with lids to them; item, one neck, one chin, and so forth. Were you sent hither to praise me?

*Vio.* I see you what you are, you are too proud;

But, if you were the devil, you are fair. 270  
My lord and master loves you. O such love



Could be but recompensed, though you were crown'd

The nonpareil of beauty!

*Oli.* How does he love me?

*Vio.* With adorations, fertile tears,

With groans that thunder love, with sighs of fire.

*Oli.* Your lord does know my mind; I cannot love him:

Yet I suppose him virtuous, know him noble,

Of great estate, of fresh and stainless youth;

In voices well divulged, free, learn'd, and valiant;

And in dimension and the shape of nature 280

A gracious person: but yet I cannot love him;

He might have took his answer long ago.

*Vio.* If I did love you in master's flame,

With such a suffering, such a deadly life,

In your denial I would find no sense;

I would not understand it.

*Oli.* Why, what would you?

*Vio.* Make me a willow cabin at your gate,

And call upon my soul within the house;

Write loyal cantons of contemned love

And sing them loud even in the dead of night;

Halloo your name to the reverberate hills 291

And make the babbling gossip of the air

Cry out "Olivia!" O, you should not rest

Between the elements of air and earth,

But you should pity me!

*Oli.* You might do much.

What is your parentage?

*Vio.* Above my fortunes, yet my state is well:

I am a gentleman.

*Oli.* Get you to your lord:

I cannot love him: let him send no more;

Unless, perchance, you come to me again, 300

To tell me how he takes it. Fare you well:

I thank you for your pains: spend this for me.

*Vio.* I am no fee'd post, lady; keep your purse:

My master, not myself, lacks recompense.

Love make his heart of flint that you shall love;

And let your fervour, like my master's, be

Placed in contempt! Farewell, fair cruelty.

[*Exit.*]

*Oli.* "What is your parentage?"

"Above my fortunes, yet my state is well:

I am a gentleman." I'll be sworn thou art; 310

Thy tongue, thy face, thy limbs, actions, and

spirit,

Do give thee five-fold blazon: not too fast: soft, soft!

Unless the master were the man. How now!

Even so quickly may one catch the plague?

Methinks I feel this youth's perfections

With an invisible and subtle stealth

To creep in at mine eyes. Well, let it be.

What ho, Malvolio!

*Re-enter MALVOLIO.*

*Mal.* Here, madam, at your service.

*Oli.* Run after that same peevish messenger,  
The County's man: he left this ring behind him,  
Would I or not: tell him I'll none of it. 321

Desire him not to flatter with his lord,

Nor hold him up with hopes; I am not for him:

If that the youth will come this way to-morrow,

I'll give him reasons for't: hie thee, Malvolio.

*Mal.* Madam, I will. [*Exit.*]

*Oli.* I do I know not what, and fear to find

Mine eye too great a flatterer for my mind.

Fate, show thy force: ourselves we do not

owe;

What is decreed must be, and be this so. [*Exit.*]

## ACT II

### SCENE I. *The sea-coast*

*Enter ANTONIO and SEBASTIAN.*

*Ant.* Will you stay no longer? nor will you not that I go with you?

*Seb.* By your patience, no. My stars shine darkly over me: the malignancy of my fate might perhaps distemper yours; therefore I shall crave of your leave that I may bear my evils alone: it were a bad recompense for your love, to lay any of them on you.

*Ant.* Let me yet know of you whither you are bound. 10

*Seb.* No, sooth, sir: my determinate voyage is mere extravagancy. But I perceive in you so excellent a touch of modesty that you will not extort from me what I am willing to keep in; therefore it charges me in manners the rather to express myself. You must know of me then, Antonio, my name is Sebastian, which I called Roderigo. My father was that Sebastian of Messina, whom I know you have heard of. He left behind him myself and a sister, both born in an hour: if the heavens had been pleased, would we had so ended! but you, sir, altered that; for some hour before you took me from the breach of the sea was my sister drowned.

*Ant.* Alas the day!

*Seb.* A lady, sir, though it was said she much resembled me, was yet of many accounted beautiful: but, though I could not with such estimable wonder overfar believe that, yet thus far I will boldly publish her; she bore a mind that envy could not but call fair. She is drowned already, sir, with salt water, though I seem to drown her remembrance again with more.

*Ant.* Pardon me, sir, your bad entertainment.

*Seb.* O good Antonio, forgive me your trouble.

*Ant.* If you will not murder me for my love, let me be your servant.

*Seb.* If you will not undo what you have done, that is, kill him whom you have recovered, desire it not. Fare ye well at once: my bosom is full of kindness, and I am yet so near the manners of my mother, that upon the least occasion more mine eyes will tell tales of me. I am bound to the Count Orsino's court: farewell. *[Exit.]*

*Ant.* The gentleness of all the gods go with thee!

I have many enemies in Orsino's court, Else would I very shortly see thee there. But, come what may, I do adore thee so, That danger shall seem sport, and I will go. 49

*[Exit.]*

### SCENE II. A street

*Enter VIOLA, MALVOLIO following.*

*Mal.* Were not you even now with the Countess Olivia?

*Vio.* Even now, sir; on a moderate pace I have since arrived but hither.

*Mal.* She returns this ring to you, sir: you might have saved me my pains, to have taken it away yourself. She adds, moreover, that you should put your lord into a desperate assurance she will none of him: and one thing more, that you be never so hardy to come again in his affairs, unless it be to report your lord's taking of this. Receive it so.

*Vio.* She took the ring of me: I'll none of it.

*Mal.* Come, sir, you peevishly threw it to her; and her will is, it should be so returned: if it be worth stooping for, there it lies in your eye; if not, be it his that finds it. *[Exit.]*

*Vio.* I left no ring with her: what means this lady?

Fortune forbid my outside have not charm'd her! She made good view of me; indeed, so much, 20 That sure methought her eyes had lost her tongue,

For she did speak in starts distractedly.

She loves me, sure; the cunning of her passion Invites me in this churlish messenger.

None of my lord's ring! why, he sent her none. I am the man: if he be so, as 'tis,

Poor lady, she were better love a dream.

Disguise, I see, thou art a wickedness, Wherein the pregnant enemy does much.

How easy is it for the proper-false

In women's waxen hearts to set their forms! 30

Alas, our frailty is the cause, not we!

For such as we are made of, such we be.

How will this fadge? my master loves her dearly;

And I, poor monster, fond as much on him;

And she, mistaken, seems to dote on me.

What will become of this? As I am man,

My state is desperate for my master's love;

As I am woman—now alas the day!—

What thriftless sighs shall poor Olivia breathe!

O time! thou must untangle this, not I; 41

It is too hard a knot for me to untie! *[Exit.]*

### SCENE III. Olivia's house

*Enter SIR TOBY and SIR ANDREW.*

*Sir To.* Approach, Sir Andrew: not to be abed after midnight is to be up betimes; and "*diluculo surgere*," thou know'st—

*Sir And.* Nay, by my troth, I know not: but I know, to be up late is to be up late.

*Sir To.* A false conclusion: I hate it as an unfilled can. To be up after midnight and to go to bed then, is early: so that to go to bed after midnight is to go bed betimes. Does not our life consist of the four elements? 10

*Sir And.* Faith, so they say; but I think it rather consists of eating and drinking.

*Sir To.* Thou'rt a scholar; let us therefore eat and drink. Marian, I say! a stoup of wine!

*Enter CLOWN.*

*Sir And.* Here comes the fool, i' faith.

*Clo.* How now, my hearts! did you never see the picture of "we three"?

*Sir To.* Welcome, ass. Now let's have a catch.

*Sir And.* By my troth, the fool has an excellent breast. I had rather than forty shillings I had such a leg, and so sweet a breath to sing, as the fool has. In sooth, thou wast in very gracious fooling last night, when thou spokest of Picrogromitus, of the Vapians passing the equinoctial of Queubus: 'twas very good, i' faith. I sent thee sixpence for thy leman: hadst it?

*Clo.* I did impeticoes thy gratillity; for Malvolio's nose is no whipstock: my lady has a white hand, and the Myrmidons are no bottle-ale houses.

*Sir And.* Excellent! why, this is the best fooling, when all is done. Now, a song. 31

*Sir To.* Come on; there is sixpence for you: let's have a song.

*Sir And.* There's a testril of me too: if one knight give a—

*Clo.* Would you have a love-song, or a song of good life?

*Sir To.* A love-song, a love-song.

*Sir And.* Ay, ay: I care not for good life.

*Clo.* *[Sings]*

"O mistress, where are you roaming?" 40

O, stay and hear; your true love's coming,



That can sing both high and low:

Trip no further, pretty sweeting;

Journeys end in lovers meeting,

Every wise man's son doth know."

*Sir And.* Excellent good, i' faith.

*Sir To.* Good, good.

*Clo.* [*Sings*]

"What is love? 'tis not hereafter;

Present mirth hath present laughter;

What's to come is still unsure: 50

In delay there lies no plenty;

Then come kiss me, sweet and twenty,

Youth's a stuff will not endure."

*Sir And.* A mellifluous voice, as I am true knight.

*Sir To.* A contagious breath.

*Sir And.* Very sweet and contagious, i' faith.

*Sir To.* To hear by the nose, it is dulcet in contagion. But shall we make the welkin dance indeed? shall we rouse the night-owl in a catch that will draw three souls out of one weaver? shall we do that?

*Sir And.* An you love me, let's do't: I am dog at a catch.

*Clo.* By'r lady, sir, and some dogs will catch well.

*Sir And.* Most certain. Let our catch be, "Thou knave."

*Clo.* "Hold thy peace, thou knave," knight? I shall be constrained in't to call thee knave, knight. 70

*Sir And.* 'Tis not the first time I have constrained one to call me knave. Begin, fool: it begins "Hold thy peace."

*Clo.* I shall never begin if I hold my peace.

*Sir And.* Good, i' faith. Come, begin.

*Catch sung.*

*Enter MARIA.*

*Mar.* What a caterwauling do you keep here! If my lady have not called up her steward Malvolio and bid him turn you out of doors, never trust me. 79

*Sir To.* My lady's a Cataian, we are politicians, Malvolio's a Peg-a-Ramsey, and "Three merry men be we." Am not I consanguineous? am I not of her blood? Tilly-vally. Lady! [*Sings*]  
"There dwelt a man in Babylon, lady, lady!"

*Clo.* Beshrew me, the knight's in admirable fooling.

*Sir And.* Ay, he does well enough if he be disposed, and so do I too: he does it with a better grace, but I do it more natural.

*Sir To.* [*Sings*] "O, the twelfth day of December"— 91

*Mar.* For the love o' God, peace!

*Enter MALVOLIO.*

*Mal.* My masters, are you mad? or what are you? Have you no wit, manners, nor honesty, but to gabble like tinkers at this time of night? Do ye make an alehouse of my lady's house, that ye squeak out your coziers' catches without any mitigation or remorse of voice? Is there no respect of place, persons, nor time in you?

*Sir To.* We did keep time, sir, in our catches. Sneek up! 101

*Mal.* Sir Toby, I must be round with you. My lady bade me tell you, that, though she harbours you as her kinsman, she's nothing allied to your disorders. If you can separate yourself and your misdemeanours, you are welcome to the house; if not, an it would please you to take leave of her, she is very willing to bid you farewell.

*Sir To.* "Farewell, dear heart, since I must needs be gone." 110

*Mar.* Nay, good Sir Toby.

*Clo.* "His eyes do show his days are almost done."

*Mal.* Is't even so?

*Sir To.* "But I will never die."

*Clo.* Sir Toby, there you lie.

*Mal.* This is much credit to you.

*Sir To.* "Shall I bid him go?"

*Clo.* "What an if you do?"

*Sir To.* "Shall I bid him go, and spare not?"

*Clo.* "O no, no, no, no, you dare not." 121

*Sir To.* Out o' tune, sir: ye lie. Art any more than a steward? Dost thou think, because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more cakes and ale?

*Clo.* Yes, by Saint Anne, and ginger shall be hot i' the mouth too.

*Sir To.* Thou'rt i' the right. Go, sir, rub your chain with crumbs. A stoup of wine, Maria!

*Mal.* Mistress Mary, if you prized my lady's favour at any thing more than contempt, you would not give means for this uncivil rule: she shall know of it, by this hand. [*Exit.*]

*Mar.* Go shake your ears.

*Sir And.* 'Twere as good a deed as to drink when a man's a-hungry, to challenge him the field, and then to break promise with him and make a fool of him.

*Sir To.* Do't, knight: I'll write thee a challenge; or I'll deliver thy indignation to him by word of mouth. 141

*Mar.* Sweet Sir Toby, be patient for to-night: since the youth of the Count's was to-day with my lady, she is much out of quiet. For Monsieur Malvolio, let me alone with him: if I do not gull him into a yawner, and make him a common

recreation, do not think I have wit enough to lie straight in my bed: I know I can do it.

*Sir To.* Possess us, possess us; tell us something of him. 150

*Mar.* Marry, sir, sometimes he is a kind of puritan.

*Sir And.* O, if I thought that, I'd beat him like a dog!

*Sir To.* What, for being a puritan? thy exquisite reason, dear knight?

*Sir And.* I have no exquisite reason for't, but I have reason good enough.

*Mar.* The devil a puritan that he is, or any thing constantly, but a time-pleaser; an affectioned ass, that cons state without book and utters it by great swarths: the best persuaded of himself, so crammed, as he thinks, with excellencies, that it is his grounds of faith that all that look on him love him; and on that vice in him will my revenge find notable cause to work.

*Sir To.* What wilt thou do?

*Mar.* I will drop in his way some obscure epistles of love; wherein, by the colour of his beard, the shape of his leg, the manner of his gait, the expressure of his eye, forehead, and complexion, he shall find himself most feelingly personated. I can write very like my lady your niece: on a forgotten matter we can hardly make distinction of our hands.

*Sir To.* Excellent! I smell a device.

*Sir And.* I have't in my nose too.

*Sir To.* He shall think, by the letters that thou wilt drop, that they come from my niece, and that she's in love with him. 180

*Mar.* My purpose is, indeed, a horse of that colour.

*Sir And.* And your horse now would make him an ass.

*Mar.* Ass, I doubt not.

*Sir And.* O, 'twill be admirable!

*Mar.* Sport royal, I warrant you: I know my physic will work with him. I will plant you two, and let the fool make a third, where he shall find the letter: observe his construction of it. For this night, to bed, and dream on the event. Farewell. [Exit.

*Sir To.* Good night, Penthesilea.

*Sir And.* Before me, she's a good wench.

*Sir To.* She's a beagle, true-bred, and one that adores me: what o' that?

*Sir And.* I was adored once too.

*Sir To.* Let's to bed, knight. Thou hadst need send for more money.

*Sir And.* If I cannot recover your niece, I am a foul way out. 201

*Sir To.* Send for money, knight: if thou hast her not i' the end, call me cut.

*Sir And.* If I do not, never trust me, take it how you will.

*Sir To.* Come, come, I'll go burn some sack; 'tis too late to go to bed now: come, knight; come, knight. [Exeunt.

#### SCENE IV. *The Duke's palace*

*Enter DUKE, VIOLA, CURIO, and others.*

*Duke.* Give me some music. Now, good morrow, friends.

Now, good Cesario, but that piece of song, That old and antique song we heard last night: Methought it did relieve my passion much, More than light airs and recollected terms Of these most brisk and giddy-paced times: Come, but one verse.

*Cur.* He is not here, so please your lordship, that should sing it.

*Duke.* Who was it? 10

*Cur.* Feste, the jester, my lord; a fool that the lady Olivia's father took much delight in. He is about the house.

*Duke.* Seek him out, and play the tune the while. [Exit CURIO. Music plays.

Come hither, boy: if ever thou shalt love, In the sweet pangs of it remember me; For such as I am all true lovers are, Unstaid and skittish in all motions else, Save in the constant image of the creature That is beloved. How dost thou like this tune?

*Vio.* It gives a very echo to the seat 21  
Where Love is throned.

*Duke.* Thou dost speak masterly: My life upon't, young though thou art, thine eye Hath stay'd upon some favour that it loves: Hath it not, boy?

*Vio.* A little, by your favour.

*Duke.* What kind of woman is 't?

*Vio.* Of your complexion.

*Duke.* She is not worth thee, then. What years, i' faith?

*Vio.* About your years, my lord.

*Duke.* Too old, by heaven: let still the woman take 30

An elder than herself: so wears she to him, So sways she level in her husband's heart: For, boy, however we do praise ourselves, Our fancies are more giddy and unfirm, More longing, wavering, sooner lost and worn, Than women's are.

*Vio.* I think it well, my lord.

*Duke.* Then let thy love be younger than thyself,

Or thy affection cannot hold the bent;



For women are as roses, whose fair flower  
Being once display'd, doth fall that very hour. 40  
*Vio.* And so they are: alas, that they are so;  
To die, even when they to perfection grow!

*Re-enter CURIO and CLOWN.*

*Duke.* O, fellow, come, the song we had last night.

Mark it, Cesario, it is old and plain;  
The spinsters and the knitters in the sun  
And the free maids that weave their thread with bones

Do use to chant it: it is silly sooth,  
And dallies with the innocence of love,  
Like the old age.

*Clo.* Are you ready, sir? 50

*Duke.* Ay; prithee, sing.

*Music.*

SONG.

*Clo.* "Come away, come away, death,  
And in sad cypress let me be laid;  
Fly away, fly away, breath;  
I am slain by a fair cruel maid.  
My shroud of white, stuck all with yew,  
O, prepare it!  
My part of death, no one so true  
Did share it.

Not a flower, not a flower sweet, 60

On my black coffin let there be strown;  
Not a friend, not a friend greet

My poor corpse, where my bones shall  
be thrown:

A thousand thousand sighs to save,

Lay me, O, where

Sad true lover never find my grave,

To weep there!"

*Duke.* There's for thy pains.

*Clo.* No pains, sir; I take pleasure in singing, 70

*Duke.* I'll pay thy pleasure then.

*Clo.* Truly, sir, and pleasure will be paid, one time or another.

*Duke.* Give me now leave to leave thee.

*Clo.* Now, the melancholy god protect thee;  
and the tailor make thy doublet of changeable  
taffeta, for thy mind is a very opal. I would  
have men of such constancy put to sea, that  
their business might be everything and their  
intent everywhere; for that's it that always  
makes a good voyage of nothing. Farewell. 81

[Exit.

*Duke.* Let all the rest give place.

[CURIO and Attendants retire.

Once more, Cesario,

Get thee to yond same sovereign cruelty:  
Tell her, my love, more noble than the world,  
Prizes not quantity of dirty lands;  
The parts that fortune hath bestow'd upon  
her,

Tell her, I hold as giddily as fortune;  
But 'tis that miracle and queen of gems  
That nature pranks her in attracts my soul.

*Vio.* But if she cannot love you, sir? 90

*Duke.* I cannot be so answer'd.

*Vio.* Sooth, but you must.

Say that some lady, as perhaps there is,  
Hath for your love as great a pang of heart  
As you have for Olivia: you cannot love her;  
You tell her so; must she not then be answer'd?

*Duke.* There is no woman's sides  
Can bide the beating of so strong a passion  
As love doth give my heart; no woman's  
heart

So big, to hold so much; they lack retention.

Alas, their love may be call'd appetite, 100

No motion of the liver, but the palate,  
That suffer surfeit, cloyment, and revolt;  
But mine is all as hungry as the sea,  
And can digest as much: make no compare  
Between that love a woman can bear me  
And that I owe Olivia.

*Vio.* Ay, but I know—

*Duke.* What dost thou know?

*Vio.* Too well what love women to men may  
owe:

In faith, they are as true of heart as we.

My father had a daughter loved a man, 110

As it might be, perhaps, were I a woman,  
I should your lordship

*Duke.* And what's her history?

*Vio.* A blank, my lord. She never told her  
love,

But let concealment, like a worm i' the bud,  
Feed on her damask cheek: she pined in thought,

And with a green and yellow melancholy

She sat like patience on a monument,

Smiling at grief. Was not this love indeed?

We men may say more, swear more: but in-  
deed

Our shows are more than will, for still we  
prove

Much in our vows, but little in our love. 121

*Duke.* But died thy sister of her love, my boy?

*Vio.* I am all the daughters of my father's house,  
And all the brothers too: and yet I know not.

Sir, shall I to this lady?

*Duke.* Ay, that's the theme.

To her in haste; give her this jewel; say

My love can give no place, bide no deny.

[Exeunt.

SCENE V. *Olivia's garden**Enter* SIR TOBY, SIR ANDREW, and FABIAN.*Sir To.* Come thy ways, Signior Fabian.*Fab.* Nay, I'll come: if I lose a scruple of this sport, let me be boiled to death with melancholy.*Sir To.* Wouldst thou not be glad to have the niggardly rascally sheep-biter come by some notable shame?*Fab.* I would exult, man: you know, he brought me out o' favour with my lady about a bear-baiting here. 10*Sir To.* To anger him we'll have the bear again; and we will fool him black and blue: shall we not, Sir Andrew?*Sir And.* An we do not, it is pity of our lives.*Sir To.* Here comes the little villain.*Enter* MARIA.

How now, my metal of India!

*Mar.* Get ye all three into the box-tree: Malvolio's coming down this walk: he has been yonder i' the sun practising behaviour to his own shadow this half hour: observe him, for the love of mockery; for I know this letter will make a contemplative idiot of him. Close, in the name of jesting! Lie thou there [*throws down a letter*]; for here comes the trout that must be caught with tickling. [Exit.]*Enter* MALVOLIO.*Mal.* 'Tis but fortune; all is fortune. Maria once told me she did affect me: and I have heard herself come thus near, that, should she fancy, it should be one of my complexion. Besides, she uses me with a more exalted respect than any one else that follows her. What should I think on't?*Sir To.* Here's an overweening rogue!*Fab.* O, peace! Contemplation makes a rare turkey-cock of him: how he jets under his advanced plumes!*Sir And.* 'Slight, I could so beat the rogue!*Sir To.* Peace, I say.*Mal.* There is example for't; the lady of the 40*Sir To.* Ah, rogue!*Sir And.* Pistol him, pistol him.*Sir To.* Peace, peace!*Mal.* There is example for't; the lady of the Strachy married the yeoman of the wardrobe.*Sir And.* Fie on him, Jezebel!*Fab.* O, peace! now he's deeply in: look how imagination blows him.*Mal.* Having been three months married to her, sitting in my state— 50*Sir To.* O, for a stone-bow, to hit him in the eye!*Mal.* Calling my officers about me, in my branched velvet gown; having come from a day-bed, where I have left Olivia sleeping—*Sir To.* Fire and brimstone!*Fab.* O, peace, peace!*Mal.* And then to have the humour of state; and after a demure travel of regard, telling them I know my place as I would they should do theirs, to ask for my kinsman Toby— 61*Sir To.* Bolts and shackles!*Fab.* O peace, peace, peace! now, now.*Mal.* Seven of my people, with an obedient start, make out for him: I frown the while; and perchance wind up my watch, or play with my—some rich jewel. Toby approaches; courtesies there to me—*Sir To.* Shall this fellow live?*Fab.* Though our silence be drawn from us with cars, yet peace. 71*Mal.* I extend my hand to him thus, quenching my familiar smile with an austere regard of control—*Sir To.* And does not Toby take you a blow o' the lips then?*Mal.* Saying, "Cousin Toby, my fortunes having cast me on your niece give me this prerogative of speech"—*Sir To.* What, what? 80*Mal.* "You must amend your drunkenness."*Sir To.* Out, scab!*Fab.* Nay, patience, or we break the sinews of our plot.*Mal.* "Besides, you waste the treasure of your time with a foolish knight"—*Sir And.* That's me, I warrant you.*Mal.* "One Sir Andrew"—*Sir And.* I knew 'twas I; for many do call me fool. 90*Mal.* What employment have we here?*Taking up the letter.**Fab.* Now is the woodcock near the gin.*Sir To.* O, peace! and the spirit of humours intimate reading aloud to him!*Mal.* By my life, this is my lady's hand: these be her very C's, her U's and her T's; and thus makes she her great P's. It is, in contempt of question, her hand.*Sir And.* Her C's, her U's and her T's: why that? 100*Mal.* [*Reads*] "To the unknown beloved, this, and my good wishes"—her very phrases! By your leave, wax. Soft! and the impressure her Lucrece, with which she uses to seal: 'tis my lady. To whom should this be?



*Fab.* This wins him, liver and all.

*Mal.* [*Reads*] "Jove knows I love:

But who?

Lips, do not move;

No man must know." 110

"No man must know." What follows? the numbers altered! "No man must know." If this should be thee, Malvolio?

*Sir To.* Marry, hang thee, brock!

*Mal.* [*Reads*]

"I may command where I adore;

But silence, like a Lucrece knife,

With bloodless stroke my heart doth gore:

M, O, A, I, doth sway my life."

*Fab.* A fustian riddle!

*Sir To.* Excellent wench, say I. 120

*Mal.* "M, O, A, I, doth sway my life." Nay, but first, let me see, let me see, let me see.

*Fab.* What dish o' poison has she dressed him!

*Sir To.* And with what wing the staniel checks at it!

*Mal.* "I may command where I adore." Why, she may command me: I serve her; she is my lady. Why, this is evident to any formal capacity; there is no obstruction in this: and the end—what should that alphabetical position portend? If I could make that resemble something in me—Softly! *M, O, A, I—*

*Sir To.* O, ay, make up that: he is now at a cold scent.

*Fab.* Sowter will cry upon't for all this, though it be as rank as a fox.

*Mal.* *M—Malvolio; M—why, that begins my name.*

*Fab.* Did not I say he would work it out? the cur is excellent at faults. 140

*Mal.* *M—but then there is no consonancy in the sequel; that suffers under probation: A should follow, but O does.*

*Fab.* And *O* shall end, I hope.

*Sir To.* Ay, or I'll cudgel him, and make him cry *O!*

*Mal.* And then *I* comes behind.

*Fab.* Ay, an you had any eye behind you, you might see more detraction at your heels than fortunes before you. 150

*Mal.* *M, O, A, I;* this simulation is not as the former: and yet, to crush this a little, it would bow to me, for every one of these letters are in my name. Soft! here follows prose.

[*Reads*] "If this fall into thy hand, revolve. In my stars I am above thee; but be not afraid of greatness: some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon 'em. Thy Fates open their hands; let thy blood

and spirit embrace thee; and, to inure thyself to what thou art like to be, cast thy humble slough and appear fresh. Be opposite with a kinsman, surly with servants; let thy tongue tang arguments of state; put thyself into the trick of singularity: she thus advises thee that sighs for thee. Remember who commended thy yellow stockings, and wished to see thee ever cross-gartered: I say, remember. Go to, thou art made, if thou desirest to be so; if not, let me see thee a steward still, the fellow of servants, and not worthy to touch Fortune's fingers. Farewell. She that would alter services with thee,

The Fortunate-Unhappy"

Daylight and champaign discovers not more: this is open. I will be proud, I will read politic authors, I will baffle Sir Toby, I will wash off gross acquaintance, I will be point-devise the very man. I do not now fool myself, to let imagination jade me; for every reason excites to this, that my lady loves me. She did commend my yellow stockings of late, she did praise my leg being cross-gartered; and in this she manifests herself to my love, and with a kind of injunction drives me to these habits of her liking. I thank my stars I am happy. I will be strange, stout, in yellow stockings, and cross-gartered, even with the swiftness of putting on. Jove and my stars be praised! Here is yet a postscript.

[*Reads*] "Thou canst not choose but know who I am. If thou entertainest my love, let it appear in thy smiling; thy smiles become thee well; therefore in my presence still smile, dear my sweet, I prithee."

Jove, I thank thee: I will smile; I will do everything that thou wilt have me. [*Exit.*]

*Fab.* I will not give my part of this sport for a pension of thousands to be paid from the Sophy.

*Sir To.* I could marry this wench for this device. 200

*Sir And.* So could I too.

*Sir To.* And ask no other dowry with her but such another jest.

*Sir And.* Nor I neither.

*Fab.* Here comes my noble gull-catcher.

*Re-enter MARIA.*

*Sir To.* Wilt thou set thy foot o' my neck?

*Sir And.* Or o' mine either?

*Sir To.* Shall I play my freedom at tray-trip, and become thy bond-slave?

*Sir And.* I' faith, or I either? 210

*Sir To.* Why, thou hast put him in such a dream, that when the image of it leaves him he must run mad.

*Mar.* Nay, but say true; does it work upon him?

*Sir To.* Like aqua-vitæ with a midwife.

*Mar.* If you will then see the fruits of the sport, mark his first approach before my lady: he will come to her in yellow stockings, and 'tis a colour she abhors, and cross-gartered, a fashion she detests; and he will smile upon her, which will now be so unsuitable to her disposition, being addicted to a melancholy as she is, that it cannot but turn him into a notable contempt. If you will see it, follow me.

*Sir To.* To the gates of Tartar, thou most excellent devil of wit!

*Sir And.* I'll make one too.

[*Exeunt.*]

### ACT III

#### SCENE I. *Olivia's garden*

*Enter VIOLA, and CLOWN with a tabor.*

*Vio.* Save thee, friend, and thy music: dost thou live by thy tabor?

*Clo.* No, sir, I live by the church.

*Vio.* Art thou a churchman?

*Clo.* No such matter, sir: I do live by the church; for I do live at my house, and my house doth stand by the church.

*Vio.* So thou mayst say, the king lies by a beggar, if a beggar dwell near him; or, the church stands by thy tabor, if thy tabor stand by the church. 11

*Clo.* You have said, sir. To see this age! A sentence is but a cheveril glove to a good wit: how quickly the wrong side may be turned outward!

*Vio.* Nay, that's certain; they that dally nicely with words may quickly make them wanton.

*Clo.* I would, therefore, my sister had had no name, sir. 20

*Vio.* Why, man?

*Clo.* Why, sir, her name's a word; and to dally with that word might make my sister wanton. But indeed words are very rascals since bonds disgraced them.

*Vio.* Thy reason, man?

*Clo.* Troth, sir, I can yield you none without words; and words are grown so false, I am loath to prove reason with them.

*Vio.* I warrant thou art a merry fellow and carest for nothing. 31

*Clo.* Not so, sir, I do care for something; but in my conscience, sir, I do not care for you: if that be to care for nothing, sir, I would it would make you invisible.

*Vio.* Art not thou the Lady Olivia's fool?

*Clo.* No, indeed, sir; the Lady Olivia has no

folly: she will keep no fool, sir, till she be married; and fools are as like husbands as pilchards are to herrings; the husband's the bigger. I am indeed not her fool, but her corrupter of words.

*Vio.* I saw thee late at the Count Orsino's.

*Clo.* Foolery, sir, does walk about the orb like the sun, it shines everywhere. I would be sorry, sir, but the fool should be as oft with your master as with my mistress: I think I saw your wisdom there.

*Vio.* Nay, an thou pass upon me, I'll no more with thee. Hold, there's expenses for thee.

*Clo.* Now Jove, in his next commodity of hair, send thee a beard! 51

*Vio.* By my troth, I'll tell thee, I am almost sick for one; [*Aside*] though I would not have it grow on my chin. Is thy lady within?

*Clo.* Would not a pair of these have bred, sir?

*Vio.* Yes, being kept together and put to use.

*Clo.* I would play Lord Pandarus of Phrygia, sir, to bring a Cressida to this Troilus.

*Vio.* I understand you, sir; 'tis well begged.

*Clo.* The matter, I hope, is not great, sir, begging but a beggar: Cressida was a beggar. My lady is within, sir. I will construe to them whence you come; who you are and what you would are out of my welkin, I might say "element," but the word is over-worn. [*Exit.*]

*Vio.* This fellow is wise enough to play the fool;

And to do that well craves a kind of wit. He must observe their mood on whom he jests, The quality of persons, and the time, 70 And, like the haggard, check at every feather That comes before his eye. This is a practice As full of labour as a wise man's art: For folly that he wisely shows is fit; But wise men, folly-fall'n, quite taint their wit.

*Enter SIR TOBY, and SIR ANDREW.*

*Sir To.* Save you, gentleman.

*Vio.* And you, sir.

*Sir And.* *Dieu vous garde, monsieur.*

*Vio.* *Et vous aussi; votre serviteur.*

*Sir And.* I hope, sir, you are; and I am yours. 81

*Sir To.* Will you encounter the house? my niece is desirous you should enter, if your trade be to her.

*Vio.* I am bound to your niece, sir; I mean, she is the list of my voyage.

*Sir To.* Taste your legs, sir; put them to motion.

*Vio.* My legs do better understand me, sir, than I understand what you mean by bidding me taste my legs. 91

*Sir To.* I mean, to go, sir, to enter.



*Vio.* I will answer you with gait and entrance.  
But we are prevented.

*Enter OLIVIA and MARIA.*

Most excellent accomplished lady, the heavens  
rain odours on you!

*Sir And.* That youth's a rare courtier: "Rain  
odours"; well.

*Vio.* My matter hath no voice, lady, but to  
your own most pregnant and vouchsafed ear. 100

*Sir And.* "Odours," "pregnant," and "vouch-  
safed"; I'll get 'em all three all ready.

*Oli.* Let the garden door be shut, and leave  
me to my hearing. [*Exeunt SIR TOBY, SIR AN-  
DREW, and MARIA.*] Give me your hand, sir.

*Vio.* My duty, madam, and most humble serv-  
ice.

*Oli.* What is your name?

*Vio.* Cesario is your servant's name, fair prin-  
cess.

*Oli.* My servant, sir! 'Twas never merry world  
Since lowly feigning was call'd compliment: 110  
You're servant to the Count Orsino, youth.

*Vio.* And he is yours, and his must needs be  
yours:

Your servant's servant is your servant, madam.

*Oli.* For him, I think not on him: for his  
thoughts,

Would they were blanks, rather than fill'd with  
me!

*Vio.* Madam, I come to whet your gentle  
thoughts

On his behalf.

*Oli.* O, by your leave, I pray you,  
I bade you never speak again of him:  
But, would you undertake another suit,  
I had rather hear you to solicit that 120  
Than music from the spheres.

*Vio.* Dear lady—

*Oli.* Give me leave, beseech you. I did send,  
After the last enchantment you did here,  
A ring in chase of you: so did I abuse  
Myself, my servant, and, I fear me, you:  
Under your hard construction must I sit,  
To force that on you, in a shameful cunning,  
Which you knew none of yours: what might you  
think?

Have you not set mine honour at the stake  
And baited it with all the unmuzzled thoughts 130  
That tyrannous heart can think? To one of your  
receiving

Enough is shown: a cypress, not a bosom,  
Hideth my heart. So, let me hear you speak.

*Vio.* I pity you.

*Oli.* That's a degree to love.

*Vio.* No, not a grize; for 'tis a vulgar proof,

That very oft we pity enemies.

*Oli.* Why, then, methinks 'tis time to smile  
again.

O world, how apt the poor are to be proud!

If one should be a prey, how much the better

To fall before the lion than the wolf! 140

*Clock strikes.*

The clock upbraids me with the waste of time.

Be not afraid, good youth, I will not have you:

And yet, when wit and youth is come to harvest,

Your wife is like to reap a proper man:

There lies your way, due west.

*Vio.* Then westward-ho! Grace and good dis-  
position

Attend your ladyship!

You'll nothing, madam, to my lord by me?

*Oli.* Stay:

I prithee, tell me what thou think'st of me. 150

*Vio.* That you do think you are not what you  
are.

*Oli.* If I think so, I think the same of you.

*Vio.* Then think you right: I am not what I am.

*Oli.* I would you were as I would have you be!

*Vio.* Would it be better, madam, than I am?

I wish it might, for now I am your fool.

*Oli.* O, what a deal of scorn looks beautiful

In the contempt and anger of his lip!

A murderous guilt shows not itself more soon

Than love that would seem hid: love's night is  
noon. 160

Cesario, by the roses of the spring,

By maidhood, honour, truth, and everything,

I love thee so, that, maugre all thy pride,

Nor wit nor reason can my passion hide.

Do not extort thy reasons from this clause,

For that I woo, thou therefore hast no cause;

But rather reason thus with reason fetter,

Love sought is good, but given unsought is better.

*Vio.* By innocence I swear, and by my youth,  
I have one heart, one bosom, and one truth, 170

And that no woman has; nor never none

Shall mistress be of it, save I alone.

And so adieu, good madam: never more

Will I my master's tears to you deplore.

*Oli.* Yet come again; for thou perhaps mayst  
move

That heart, which now abhors, to like his love.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *Olivio's house*

*Enter SIR TOBY, SIR ANDREW, and FABIAN.*

*Sir And.* No, faith, I'll not stay a jot longer.

*Sir To.* Thy reason, dear venom, give thy  
reason.

*Fab.* You must needs yield your reason, Sir  
Andrew.

*Sir And.* Marry, I saw your niece do more favours to the Count's serving-man than ever she bestowed upon me; I saw 't i' the orchard.

*Sir To.* Did she see thee the while, old boy?

Tell me that.

10

*Sir And.* As plain as I see you now.

*Fab.* This was a great argument of love in her toward you.

*Sir And.* 'Slight, will you make an ass o' me?

*Fab.* I will prove it legitimate, sir, upon the oaths of judgement and reason.

*Sir To.* And they have been grand-jurymen since before Noah was a sailor.

*Fab.* She did show favour to the youth in your sight only to exasperate you, to awake your dormouse valour, to put fire in your heart and brimstone in your liver. You should then have accosted her; and with some excellent jests, fire-new from the mint, you should have banged the youth into dumbness. This was looked for at your hand, and this was balked: the double gilt of this opportunity you let time wash off, and you are now sailed into the north of my lady's opinion; where you will hang like an icicle on a Dutchman's beard, unless you do redeem it by some laudable attempt either of valour or policy.

31

*Sir And.* An't be any way, it must be with valour; for policy I hate. I had as lief be a Brownist as a politician.

*Sir To.* Why, then, build me thy fortunes upon the basis of valour. Challenge me the Count's youth to fight with him; hurt him in eleven places; my niece shall take note of it; and assure thyself, there is no love-broker in the world can more prevail in man's commendation with woman than report of valour.

41

*Fab.* There is no way but this, Sir Andrew.

*Sir And.* Will either of you bear me a challenge to him?

*Sir To.* Go, write it in a martial hand; be curt and brief; it is no matter how witty, so it be eloquent and full of invention: taunt him with the license of ink: if thou thou'st him some thrice, it shall not be amiss; and as many lies as will lie in thy sheet of paper, although the sheet were big enough for the bed of Ware in England, set 'em down: go, about it. Let there be gall enough in thy ink, though thou write with a goose-pen, no matter. About it.

*Sir And.* Where shall I find you?

*Sir To.* We'll call thee at the cubiculo: go.

[Exit SIR ANDREW.]

*Fab.* This is a dear manikin to you, Sir Toby.

*Sir To.* I have been dear to him, lad, some two thousand strong, or so.

*Fab.* We shall have a rare letter from him: but you'll not deliver't?

61

*Sir To.* Never trust me, then; and by all means stir on the youth to an answer. I think oxen and wainropes cannot hale them together. For Andrew, if he were opened, and you find so much blood in his liver as will clog the foot of a flea, I'll eat the rest of the anatomy.

*Fab.* And his opposite, the youth, bears in his visage no great presage of cruelty.

Enter MARIA.

*Sir To.* Look, where the youngest wren of nine comes.

71

*Mar.* If you desire the spleen, and will laugh yourselves into stitches, follow me. Yond gull Malvolio is turned heathen, a very renegado; for there is no Christian, that means to be saved by believing rightly, can ever believe such impossible passages of grossness. He's in yellow stockings.

*Sir To.* And cross-gartered?

79

*Mar.* Most villainously; like a pedant that keeps a school i' the church. I have dogged him, like his murderer. He does obey every point of the letter that I dropped to betray him. He does smile his face into more lines than is in the new map with the augmentation of the Indies: You have not seen such a thing as 'tis. I can hardly forbear hurling things at him. I know my lady will strike him: if she do, he'll smile and take't for a great favour.

*Sir To.* Come, bring us, bring us where he is.

[Exeunt. 90]

### SCENE III. A street

Enter SEBASTIAN and ANTONIO.

*Seb.* I would not by my will have troubled you; But, since you make your pleasure of your pains, I will no further chide you.

*Ant.* I could not stay behind you: my desire, More sharp than filed steel, did spur me forth; And not all love to see you, though so much As might have drawn one to a longer voyage, But jealousy what might befall your travel, Being skillless in these parts; which to a stranger, Unguided and unfriended, often prove  
Rough and unhospitable: my willing love,  
The rather by these arguments of fear,  
Set forth in your pursuit.

10

*Seb.* My kind Antonio,

I can no other answer make but thanks, And thanks; and ever thanks; and oft good turns Are shuffled off with such uncurrent pay: But, were my worth as is my conscience firm, You should find better dealing. What's to do?



Shall we go see the reliques of this town?

*Ant.* To-morrow, sir: best first go see your lodging. 20

*Seb.* I am not weary, and 'tis long to night:

I pray you, let us satisfy our eyes

With the memorials and the things of fame

That do renoun this city.

*Ant.* Would you'ld pardon me;

I do not without danger walk these streets:

Once, in a sea-fight, 'gainst the Count his galleys

I did some service; of such note indeed,

That were I ta'en here it would scarce be answer'd.

*Seb.* Belike you slew great number of his people.

*Ant.* The offence is not of such a bloody nature; 30

Albeit the quality of the time and quarrel

Might well have given us bloody argument.

It might have since been answer'd in repaying

What we took from them; which, for traffic's sake,

Most of our city did: only myself stood out;

For which, if I be lapsed in this place,

I shall pay dear.

*Seb.* Do not then walk too open.

*Ant.* It doth not fit me. Hold, sir, here's my purse.

In the south suburbs, at the Elephant,

Is best to lodge: I will bespeak our diet, 40

Whiles you beguile the time and feed your knowledge

With viewing of the town: there shall you have me.

*Seb.* Why I your purse?

*Ant.* Haply your eye shall light upon some toy

You have desire to purchase; and your store,

I think, is not for idle markets, sir.

*Seb.* I'll be your purse-bearer and leave you

For an hour.

*Ant.* To the Elephant.

*Seb.* I do remember. [Exeunt.]

SCENE IV. *Olivia's garden*

*Enter OLIVIA and MARIA.*

*Oli.* I have sent after him: he says he'll come;

How shall I feast him? what bestow of him?

For youth is bought more oft than begg'd or borrow'd.

I speak too loud.

Where is Malvolio? he is sad and civil,

And suits well for a servant with my fortunes:

Where is Malvolio?

*Mar.* He's coming, madam; but in very

strange manner. He is, sure, possessed, madam.

*Oli.* Why, what's the matter? does he rave?

*Mar.* No, madam, he does nothing but smile: your ladyship were best to have some guard about you, if he come; for, sure, the man is tainted in his wits.

*Oli.* Go call him hither. [Exit MARIA.] I am as mad as he,

If sad and merry madness equal be.

*Re-enter MARIA, with MALVOLIO.*

How now, Malvolio!

*Mal.* Sweet lady, ho, ho.

*Oli.* Smilest thou?

I sent for thee upon a sad occasion.

*Mal.* Sad, lady! I could be sad: this does make some obstruction in the blood, this cross-gartering; but what of that? if it please the eye of one, it is with me as the very true sonnet is, "Please one, and please all."

*Oli.* Why, how dost thou, man? what is the matter with thee?

*Mal.* Not black in my mind, though yellow in my legs. It did come to his hands, and commands shall be executed: I think we do know the sweet Roman hand. 31

*Oli.* Wilt thou go to bed, Malvolio?

*Mal.* To bed! ay, sweetheart, and I'll come to thee.

*Oli.* God comfort thee! Why dost thou smile so and kiss thy hand so oft?

*Mar.* How do you, Malvolio?

*Mal.* At your request! yes; nightingales answer daws.

*Mar.* Why appear you with this ridiculous boldness before my lady? 41

*Mal.* "Be not afraid of greatness": 'twas well writ.

*Oli.* What meanest thou by that, Malvolio?

*Mal.* "Some are born great"—

*Oli.* Ha!

*Mal.* "Some achieve greatness"—

*Oli.* What sayest thou?

*Mal.* "And some have greatness thrust upon them." 50

*Oli.* Heaven restore thee!

*Mal.* "Remember who commended thy yellow stockings"—

*Oli.* Thy yellow stockings!

*Mal.* "And wished to see thee cross-gartered."

*Oli.* Cross-gartered!

*Mal.* "Go to, thou art made, if thou desirest to be so"—

*Oli.* Am I made?

*Mal.* "If not, let me see thee a servant still." 59

*Oli.* Why, this is very midsummer madness.

*Enter SERVANT.*

*Ser.* Madam, the young gentleman of the Count Orsino's is returned: I could hardly entreat him back: he attends your ladyship's pleasure.

*Oli.* I'll come to him. [*Exit SERVANT.*]  
Good Maria, let this fellow be looked to. Where's my cousin Toby? Let some of my people have a special care of him: I would not have him miscarry for the half of my dowry. 70

[*Exeunt OLIVIA and MARIA.*]

*Mal.* O, ho! do you come near me now? no worse man than Sir Toby to look to me! This concurs directly with the letter: she sends him on purpose, that I may appear stubborn to him; for she incites me to that in the letter. "Cast thy humble slough," says she; "be opposite with a kinsman, surly with servants; let thy tongue tang with arguments of state; put thyself into the trick of singularity"; and consequently sets down the manner how; as, a sad face, a reverend carriage, a slow tongue, in the habit of some sir of note, and so forth. I have limed her; but it is Jove's doing, and Jove make me thankful! And when she went away now, "Let this fellow be looked to": "fellow!" not Malvolio, nor after my degree, but "fellow." Why, every thing adheres together, that no dram of a scruple, no scruple of a scruple, no obstacle, no incredulous or unsafe circumstance—What can be said? Nothing that can be can come between me and the full prospect of my hopes. Well, Jove, not I, is the doer of this, and he is to be thanked.

*Re-enter MARIA, with SIR TOBY and FABIAN.*

*Sir To.* Which way is he, in the name of sanctity? If all the devils of hell be drawn in little, and Legion himself possessed him, yet I'll speak to him.

*Fab.* Here he is, here he is. How is't with you, sir? how is't with you, man?

*Mal.* Go off; I discard you: let me enjoy my private: go off. 100

*Mar.* Lo, how hollow the fiend speaks within him! did not I tell you? Sir Toby, my lady prays you to have a care of him.

*Mal.* Ah, ha! does she so?

*Sir To.* Go to, go to; peace, peace; we must deal gently with him: let me alone. How do you, Malvolio? how is't with you? What, man! defy the devil: consider, he's an enemy to mankind.

*Mal.* Do you know what you say? 110

*Mar.* La you, an you speak ill of the devil, how he takes it at heart! Pray God, he be not bewitched!

*Fab.* Carry his water to the wise woman.

*Mar.* Marry, and it shall be done to-morrow

morning, if I live. My lady would not lose him for more than I'll say.

*Mal.* How now, mistress!

*Mar.* O Lord!

*Sir To.* Prithee, hold thy peace; this is not the way: do you not see you move him? let me alone with him. 122

*Fab.* No way but gentleness; gently, gently: the fiend is rough, and will not be roughly used.

*Sir To.* Why, how now, my bawcock! how dost thou, chuck?

*Mal.* Sir!

*Sir To.* Ay, Biddy, come with me. What, man! 'tis not for gravity to play at cherry-pit with Satan: hang him, foul collier! 130

*Mar.* Get him to say his prayers, good Sir Toby, get him to pray.

*Mal.* My prayers, minx!

*Mar.* No, I warrant you, he will not hear of godliness.

*Mal.* Go, hang yourselves all! you are idle shallow things: I am not of your element: you shall know more hereafter. [*Exit.*]

*Sir To.* Is't possible?

*Fab.* If this were played upon a stage now, I could condemn it as an improbable fiction. 141

*Sir To.* His very genius hath taken the infection of the device, man.

*Mar.* Nay, pursue him now, lest the device take air and taint.

*Fab.* Why, we shall make him mad indeed.

*Mar.* The house will be the quieter.

*Sir To.* Come, we'll have him in a dark room and bound. My niece is already in the belief that he's mad: we may carry it thus, for our pleasure and his penance, till our very pastime, tired out of breath, prompt us to have mercy on him: at which time we will bring the device to the bar and crown thee for a finder of madmen. But see, but see.

*Enter SIR ANDREW.*

*Fab.* More matter for a May morning.

*Sir And.* Here's the challenge, read it. I warrant there's vinegar and pepper in't.

*Fab.* Is't so saucy?

*Sir And.* Ay, is't, I warrant him: do but read. 161

*Sir To.* Give me. [*Reads*] "Youth, whatsoever thou art, thou art but a scurvy fellow."

*Fab.* Good, and valiant.

*Sir To.* [*Reads*] "Wonder not, nor admire not in thy mind, why I do call thee so, for I will show thee no reason for't."

*Fab.* A good note; that keeps you from the blow of the law. 169



*Sir To. [Reads]* "Thou comest to the lady Olivia, and in my sight she uses thee kindly: but thou liest in thy throat; that is not the matter I challenge thee for."

*Fab.* Very brief, and to exceeding good sense—less.

*Sir To. [Reads]* "I will waylay thee going home; where if it be thy chance to kill me"—

*Fab.* Good.

*Sir To. [Reads]* "Thou killest me like a rogue and a villain." 180

*Fab.* Still you keep o' the windy side of the law: good.

*Sir To. [Reads]* "Fare thee well; and God have mercy upon one of our souls! He may have mercy upon mine; but my hope is better, and so look to thyself. Thy friend, as thou usest him, and thy sworn enemy. ANDREW AGUECHEEK." If this letter move him not, his legs cannot: I'll give't him.

*Mar.* You may have very fit occasion for't. He is now in some commerce with my lady, and will by and by depart.

*Sir To.* Go, Sir Andrew; scout me for him at the corner of the orchard like a bum-bailly: so soon as ever thou seest him, draw; and, as thou drawest, swear horrible; for it comes to pass oft that a terrible oath, with a swaggering accent sharply twanged off, gives manhood more approbation than ever proof itself would have earned him. Away! 200

*Sir And.* Nay, let me alone for swearing.

[*Exit.*]

*Sir To.* Now will not I deliver his letter: for the behaviour of the young gentleman gives him out to be of good capacity and breeding; his employment between his lord and my niece confirms no less: therefore this letter, being so excellently ignorant, will breed no terror in the youth: he will find it comes from a clodpole. But, sir, I will deliver his challenge by word of mouth; set upon Auguecheek a notable report of valour; and drive the gentleman, as I know his youth will aptly receive it, into a most hideous opinion of his rage, skill, fury, and impetuosity. This will so fright them both that they will kill one another by the look, like cockatrices.

*Re-enter OLIVIA, with VIOLA.*

*Fab.* Here he comes with your niece: give them way till he take leave, and presently after him.

*Sir To.* I will meditate the while upon some horrid message for a challenge 220

[*Exeunt SIR TOBY, FABIAN, and MARIA.*]

*Oli.* I have said too much unto a heart of stone

And laid mine honour too unchary out:

There's something in me that reproves my fault;  
But such a headstrong potent fault it is  
That it but mocks reproof.

*Vio.* With the same 'haviour that your passion bears

Goes on my master's grief.

*Oli.* Here, wear this jewel for me, 'tis my picture;

Refuse it not; it hath no tongue to vex you;

And I beseech you come again to-morrow. 230

What shall you ask of me that I'll deny,  
That honour saved may upon asking give?

*Vio.* Nothing but this; your true love for my master.

*Oli.* How with mine honour may I give him that

Which I have given to you?

*Vio.* I will acquit you.

*Oli.* Well, come again to-morrow. Fare thee well:

A fiend like thee might bear my soul to hell.

[*Exit.*]

*Re-enter SIR TOBY and FABIAN.*

*Sir To.* Gentleman, God save thee.

*Vio.* And you, sir. 239

*Sir To.* That defence thou hast, betake thee to't: of what nature the wrongs are thou hast done him, I know not; but thy interceptor, full of despite, bloody as the hunter, attends thee at the orchard-end: dismount thy tuck, be yare in thy preparation, for thy assailant is quick, skilful and deadly.

*Vio.* You mistake, sir; I am sure no man hath any quarrel to me: my remembrance is very free and clear from any image of offence done to any man. 250

*Sir To.* You'll find it otherwise, I assure you: therefore, if you hold your life at any price, betake you to your guard; for your opposite hath in him what youth, strength, skill, and wrath can furnish man withal.

*Vio.* I pray you, sir, what is he?

*Sir To.* He is knight, dubbed with unhatched rapier and on carpet consideration; but he is a devil in private brawl; souls and bodies hath he divorced three; and his incensement at this moment is so implacable that satisfaction can be none but by pangs of death and sepulchre. Hob, nob, is his word; give't or take't.

*Vio.* I will return again into the house and desire some conduct of the lady. I am no fighter. I have heard of some kind of men that put quarrels purposely on others, to taste their valour: belike this is a man of that quirk.



*Sir To.* Sir, no; his indignation derives itself out of a very competent injury: therefore, get you on and give him his desire. Back you shall not to the house, unless you undertake that with me which with as much safety you might answer him: therefore, on, or strip your sword stark naked; for meddle you must, that's certain, or forswear to wear iron about you.

*Vio.* This is as uncivil as strange. I beseech you, do me this courteous office, as to know of the knight what my offence to him is: it is something of my negligence, nothing of my purpose.

*Sir To.* I will do so. Signior Fabian, stay you by this gentleman till my return. *[Exit.]*

*Vio.* Pray you, sir, do you know of this matter?

*Fab.* I know the knight is incensed against you, even to a mortal arbitrement; but nothing of the circumstance more.

*Vio.* I beseech you, what manner of man is he? 289

*Fab.* Nothing of that wonderful promise, to read him by his form, as you are like to find him in the proof of his valour. He is, indeed, sir, the most skilful, bloody, and fatal opposite that you could possibly have found in any part of Illyria. Will you walk towards him? I will make your peace with him if I can.

*Vio.* I shall be much bound to you for't. I am one that had rather go with sir priest than sir knight. I care not who knows so much of my mettle. *[Exeunt.]* 300

*Re-enter SIR TOBY, with SIR ANDREW.*

*Sir To.* Why, man, he's a very devil; I have not seen such a firago. I had a pass with him, rapier, scabbard, and all, and he gives me the stuck in with such a mortal motion that it is inevitable; and on the answer, he pays you as surely as your feet hit the ground they step on. They say he has been fencer to the Sophy.

*Sir And.* Pox on't, I'll not meddle with him.

*Sir To.* Ay, but he will not now be pacified: Fabian can scarce hold him yonder. 310

*Sir And.* Plague on't, an I thought he had been valiant and so cunning in fence, I'd have seen him damned ere I'd have challenged him. Let him let the matter slip and I'll give him my horse, grey Capilet.

*Sir To.* I'll make the motion: stand here, make a good show on't: this shall end without the perdition of souls. *[Aside]* Marry, I'll ride your horse as well as I ride you. 319

*Re-enter FABIAN and VIOLA.*

*[To Fabian]* I have his horse to take up the quarrel: I have persuaded him the youth's a devil.

*Fab.* He is as horribly conceited of him; and pants and looks pale, as if a bear were at his heels.

*Sir To.* *[To VIOLA]* There's no remedy, sir; he will fight with you for's oath sake: marry, he hath better bethought him of his quarrel, and he finds that now scarce to be worth talking of; therefore draw, for the supportance of his vow; he protests he will not hurt you. 330

*Vio.* *[Aside]* Pray God defend me! A little thing would make me tell them how much I lack of a man.

*Fab.* Give ground, if you see him furious.

*Sir To.* Come, Sir Andrew, there's no remedy; the gentleman will, for his honour's sake, have one bout with you; he cannot by the duello avoid it: but he has promised me, as he is a gentleman and a soldier, he will not hurt you. Come on; to't. 340

*Sir And.* Pray God, he keep his oath!

*Vio.* I do assure you, 'tis against my will. *They draw.*

*Enter ANTONIO.*

*Ant.* Put up your sword. If this young gentleman

Have done offence, I take the fault on me; If you offend him, I for him defy you.

*Sir To.* You, sir! why, what are you?

*Ant.* One, sir, that for his love dares yet do more

Than you have heard him brag to you he will.

*Sir To.* Nay, if you be an undertaker, I am for you. 350

*They draw.*

*Enter OFFICERS.*

*Fab.* O good Sir Toby, hold! Here come the officers.

*Sir To.* I'll be with you anon.

*Vio.* Pray, sir, put your sword up, if you please.

*Sir And.* Marry, will I, sir; and, for that I promised you, I'll be as good as my word: he will bear you easily and reins well.

*1st Off.* This is the man; do thy office.

*2nd Off.* Antonio, I arrest thee at the suit of Count Orsino. 361

*Ant.* You do mistake me, sir.

*1st Off.* No, sir, no jot; I know your favour well,

Though now you have no sea-cap on your head. Take him away: he knows I know him well.

*Ant.* I must obey. *[To VIOLA]* This comes with seeking you.

But there's no remedy; I shall answer it. What will you do, now my necessity

Makes me to ask you for my purse? It grieves me  
 Much more for what I cannot do for you 370  
 Than what befalls myself. You stand amazed;  
 But be of comfort.

*2nd Off.* Come, sir, away.

*Ant.* I must entreat of you some of that money.

*Vio.* What money, sir?

For the fair kindness you have show'd me here,  
 And, part, being prompted by your present  
 trouble,

Out of my lean and low ability  
 I'll lend you something: my having is not much;  
 I'll make division of my present with you: 380  
 Hold, there's half my coffer.

*Ant.* Will you deny me now?

Is't possible that my deserts to you  
 Can lack persuasion? Do not tempt my misery,  
 Lest that it make me so unsound a man  
 As to upbraid you with those kindnesses  
 That I have done for you.

*Vio.* I know of none;

Nor know I you by voice or any feature.

I hate ingratitude more in a man  
 Than lying, vainness, babbling, drunkenness,  
 Or any taint of vice whose strong corruption 390  
 Inhabits our frail blood.

*Ant.* O heavens themselves!

*2nd Off.* Come, sir, I pray you, go.

*Ant.* Let me speak a little. This youth that you  
 see here

I snatch'd one half out of the jaws of death,  
 Relieved him with such sanctity of love,  
 And to his image, which methought did promise  
 Most venerable worth, did I devotion.

*1st Off.* What's that to us? The time goes by:  
 away!

*Ant.* But O how vile an idol proves this god!  
 Thou hast, Sebastian, done good feature shame.  
 In nature there's no blemish but the mind; 401

None can be call'd deform'd but the unkind:

Virtue is beauty, but the beauteous evil  
 Are empty trunks o'erflourish'd by the devil.

*1st Off.* The man grows mad: away with him!

Come, come, sir.

*Ant.* Lead me on. [*Exit with OFFICERS.*]

*Vio.* Methinks his words do from such passion  
 fly,

That he believes himself: so do not I.

Prove true, imagination, O, prove true,

That I, dear brother, be now ta'en for you! 410

*Sir To.* Come hither, knight; come hither, Fabian:  
 we'll whisper o'er a couplet or two of most  
 sage saws.

*Vio.* He named Sebastian: I my brother know  
 Yet living in my glass; even such and so  
 In favour was my brother, and he went

Still in this fashion, colour, ornament,  
 For him I imitate. O, if it prove,  
 Tempests are kind and salt waves fresh in love.

[*Exit.*]

*Sir To.* A very dishonest paltry boy, and more a  
 coward than a hare: his dishonesty appears in  
 leaving his friend here in necessity and denying  
 him; and for his cowardship, ask Fabian.

*Fab.* A coward, a most devout coward, religious  
 in it.

*Sir And.* 'Slid, I'll after him again and beat him.

*Sir To.* Do; cuff him soundly, but never draw  
 thy sword.

*Sir And.* An I do not— [*Exit.* 430

*Fab.* Come, let's see the event.

*Sir To.* I dare lay any money 'twill be nothing  
 yet. [*Exeunt.*]

## ACT IV

### SCENE I. Before Olivia's house

*Enter SEBASTIAN and CLOWN.*

*Clo.* Will you make me believe that I am not  
 sent for you?

*Seb.* Go to, go to, thou art a foolish fellow:  
 Let me be clear of thee.

*Clo.* Well held out, i' faith! No, I do not know  
 you; nor I am not sent to you by my lady, to bid  
 you come speak with her; nor your name is not  
 Master Cesario; nor this is not my nose neither.  
 Nothing that is so is so.

*Seb.* I prithee, vent thy folly somewhere else:  
 Thou know'st not me. 11

*Clo.* Vent my folly! He has heard that word of  
 some great man and now applies it to a fool. Vent  
 my folly! I am afraid this great lubber, the world,  
 will prove a cockney. I prithee now, ungird thy  
 strangeness and tell me what I shall vent to my  
 lady: shall I vent to her that thou art coming?

*Seb.* I prithee, foolish Greek, depart from me:  
 There's money for thee: if you tarry longer, 20  
 I shall give worse payment.

*Clo.* By my troth, thou hast an open hand. These  
 wise men that give fools money get themselves a  
 good report—after fourteen years' purchase.

*Enter SIR ANDREW, SIR TOBY, and FABIAN.*

*Sir And.* Now, sir, have I met you again?  
 there's for you.

*Seb.* Why, there's for thee, and there, and there.  
 Are all the people mad?

*Sir To.* Hold, sir, or I'll throw your dagger o'er  
 the house. 31

*Clo.* This will I tell my lady straight: I would  
 not be in some of your coats for two pence. [*Exit.*]

*Sir To.* Come on, sir; hold.



*Sir And.* Nay, let him alone: I'll go another way to work with him; I'll have an action of battery against him, if there be any law in Illyria: though I struck him first, yet it's no matter for that.

*Seb.* Let go thy hand. 40

*Sir To.* Come, sir, I will not let you go. Come, my young soldier, put up your iron: you are well fleshed; come on.

*Seb.* I will be free from thee. What wouldst thou now?

If thou darest tempt me further, draw thy sword.

*Sir To.* What, what? Nay, then I must have an ounce or two of this malapert blood from you.

*Enter OLIVIA.*

*Oli.* Hold, Toby; on thy life I charge thee, hold!

*Sir To.* Madam! 50

*Oli.* Will it be ever thus? Ungracious wretch, Fit for the mountains and the barbarous caves, Where manners ne'er were preach'd! out of my sight!

Be not offended, dear Cesario.

Rudesby, be gone!

[*Exeunt SIR TOBY, SIR ANDREW, and FABIAN.*]

I prithee, gentle friend,

Let thy fair wisdom, not thy passion, sway In this uncivil and unjust extent

Against thy peace. Go with me to my house, And hear thou there how many fruitless pranks This ruffian hath borch'd up, that thou thereby 60 Mayst smile at this: thou shalt not choose but go: Do not deny. Beshrew his soul for me, He started one poor heart of mine in thee.

*Seb.* What relish is in this? how runs the stream? Or I am mad, or else this is a dream:

Let fancy still my sense in Lethe steep;

If it be thus to dream, still let me sleep!

*Oli.* Nay, come, I prithee; would thou'ldst be ruled by me!

*Seb.* Madam, I will.

*Oli.* O, say so, and so be! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *Olivia's house*

*Enter MARIA and CLOWN.*

*Mar.* Nay, I prithee, put on this gown and this beard; make him believe thou art Sir Topas the curate: do it quickly; I'll call Sir Toby the whilst. [*Exit.*]

*Clo.* Well, I'll put it on, and I will dissemble myself in 't; and I would I were the first that ever dissembled in such a gown. I am not tall enough to become the function well, nor lean enough to be thought a good student; but to be said an honest man and a good housekeeper goes as fairly as to say a careful man and a great scholar. The competitors enter.

*Enter SIR TOBY and MARIA.*

*Sir To.* Jove bless thee, master Parson.

*Clo.* *Bonos dies*, Sir Toby: for, as the old hermit of Prague, that never saw pen and ink, very wittily said to a niece of King Gorboduc, "That that is is"; so I, being master Parson, am master Parson; for, what is "that" but "that," and "is" but "is"?

*Sir To.* To him, Sir Topas. 20

*Clo.* What, ho, I say! peace in this prison!

*Sir To.* The knave counterfeits well; a good knave.

*Mal.* [*Within*] Who calls there?

*Clo.* Sir Topas the curate, who comes to visit Malvolio the lunatic.

*Mal.* Sir Topas, Sir Topas, good Sir Topas, go to my lady.

*Clo.* Out, hyperbolical fiend! how vexest thou this man! talkest thou nothing but of ladies? 30

*Sir To.* Well said, master Parson.

*Mal.* Sir Topas, never was man thus wronged: good Sir Topas, do not think I am mad: they have laid me here in hideous darkness.

*Clo.* Fie, thou dishonest Satan! I call thee by the most modest terms; for I am one of those gentle ones that will use the devil himself with courtesy: sayest thou that house is dark?

*Mal.* As hell, Sir Topas. 39

*Clo.* Why, it hath bay windows transparent as barricadoes, and the clearstores toward the south north are as lustrous as ebony; and yet complainest thou of obstruction?

*Mal.* I am not mad, Sir Topas: I say to you, this house is dark.

*Clo.* Madman, thou errest: I say, there is no darkness but ignorance; in which thou art more puzzled than the Egyptians in their fog.

*Mal.* I say, this house is as dark as ignorance, though ignorance were as dark as hell; and I say, there was never man thus abused. I am no more mad than you are: make the trial of it in any constant question.

*Clo.* What is the opinion of Pythagoras concerning wild fowl?

*Mal.* That the soul of our grandam might haply inhabit a bird.

*Clo.* What thinkest thou of his opinion?

*Mal.* I think nobly of the soul, and no way approve his opinion. 60

*Clo.* Fare thee well. Remain thou still in darkness: thou shalt hold the opinion of Pythagoras ere I will allow of thy wits, and fear to kill a woodcock, lest thou dispossess the soul of thy grandam. Fare thee well.

*Mal.* Sir Topas, Sir Topas!



*Sir To.* My most exquisite Sir Topas!

*Clo.* Nay, I am for all waters.

*Mar.* Thou mightst have done this without thy beard and gown: he sees thee not. 70

*Sir To.* To him in thine own voice, and bring me word how thou findest him: I would we were well rid of this knavery. If he may be conveniently delivered, I would he were, for I am now so far in offence with my niece that I cannot pursue with any safety this sport to the upshot. Come by and by to my chamber.

[*Exeunt SIR TOBY and MARIA.*]

*Clo.* [*Singing*] "Hey, Robin, jolly Robin,  
Tell me how thy lady does." 80

*Mal.* Fool!

*Clo.* "My lady is unkind, perdy."

*Mal.* Fool!

*Clo.* "Alas, why is she so?"

*Mal.* Fool, I say!

*Clo.* "She loves another"—Who calls, ha?

*Mal.* Good fool, as ever thou wilt deserve well at my hand, help me to a candle, and pen, ink and paper: as I am a gentleman, I will live to be thankful to thee for't.

*Clo.* Master Malvolio? 90

*Mal.* Ay, good fool.

*Clo.* Alas, sir, how fell you besides your five wits?

*Mal.* Fool, there was never man so notoriously abused: I am as well in my wits, fool, as thou art.

*Clo.* But as well? then you are mad indeed, if you be no better in your wits than a fool.

*Mal.* They have here propertyed me; keep me in darkness, send ministers to me, asses, and do all they can to face me out of my wits. 101

*Clo.* Advise you what you say; the minister is here. Malvolio, Malvolio, thy wits the heavens restore! endeavour thyself to sleep, and leave thy vain bibble babble.

*Mal.* Sir Topas!

*Clo.* Maintain no words with him, good fellow. Who, I, sir? not I, sir. God be wi' you, good Sir Topas. Marry, amen. I will, sir, I will.

*Mal.* Fool, fool, fool, I say! 110

*Clo.* Alas, sir, be patient. What say you, sir? I am shent for speaking to you.

*Mal.* Good fool, help me to some light and some paper: I tell thee, I am as well in my wits as any man in Illyria.

*Clo.* Well-a-day that you were, sir!

*Mal.* By this hand, I am. Good fool, some ink, paper, and light; and convey what I will set down to my lady: it shall advantage thee more than ever the bearing of letter did. 120

*Clo.* I will help you to't. But tell me true, are you not mad indeed? or do you but counterfeit?

*Mal.* Believe me, I am not; I tell thee true.

*Clo.* Nay, I'll ne'er believe a madman till I see his brains. I will fetch you light and paper and ink.

*Mal.* Fool, I'll requite it in the highest degree: I prithee, be gone.

*Clo.* [*Singing*] "I am gone, sir, 130

And anon, sir,  
I'll be with you again,  
In a trice,  
Like to the old Vice,  
Your need to sustain;

Who, with dagger of lath,  
In his rage and his wrath,  
Cries, ah, ha! to the devil:  
Like a mad lad,  
Pare thy nails, dad; 140  
Adieu, good man devil."

[*Exit.*]

### SCENE III. *Olivia's garden*

*Enter SEBASTIAN.*

*Seb.* This is the air; that is the glorious sun;  
This pearl she gave me, I do feel't and see't;  
And though 'tis wonder that enwraps me thus,  
Yet 'tis not madness. Where's Antonio, then?  
I could not find him at the Elephant:  
Yet there he was; and there I found this credit,  
That he did range the town to seek me out.  
His counsel now might do me golden service;  
For though my soul disputes well with my sense  
That this may be some error, but no madness, 10  
Yet doth this accident and flood of fortune  
So far exceed all instance, all discourse,  
That I am ready to distrust mine eyes  
And wrangle with my reason that persuades me  
To any other trust but that I am mad  
Or else the lady's mad; yet, if 'twere so,  
She could not sway her house, command her  
followers,  
Take and give back affairs and their dispatch  
With such a smooth, discreet, and stable bearing  
As I perceive she does: there's something in't 20  
That is deceivable. But here the lady comes.

*Enter OLIVIA and PRIEST.*

*Oli.* Blame not this haste of mine. If you mean well,

Now go with me and with this holy man  
Into the chantry by: there, before him,  
And underneath that consecrated roof,  
Plight me the full assurance of your faith;  
That my most jealous and too doubtful soul  
May live at peace. He shall conceal it  
Whiles you are willing it shall come to note,

What time we will our celebration keep 30  
According to my birth. What do you say?

*Seb.* I'll follow this good man and go with you;

And, having sworn truth, ever will be true.

*Oliv.* Then lead the way, good father; and heavens so shine,

That they may fairly note this act of mine!

[*Exeunt.*]

## ACT V

### SCENE I. Before *Olivia's house*

*Enter CLOWN and FABIAN.*

*Fab.* Now, as thou lovest me, let me see his letter.

*Clo.* Good Master Fabian, grant me another request.

*Fab.* Anything.

*Clo.* Do not desire to see this letter.

*Fab.* This is, to give a dog, and in recompense desire my dog again.

*Enter DUKE, VIOLA, CURIO, and Lords.*

*Duke.* Belong you to the Lady Olivia, friends?

*Clo.* Ay, sir; we are some of her trappings. 10

*Duke.* I know thee well: how dost thou, my good fellow?

*Clo.* Truly, sir, the better for my foes and the worse for my friends.

*Duke.* Just the contrary; the better for thy friends.

*Clo.* No, sir, the worse.

*Duke.* How can that be?

*Clo.* Marry, sir, they praise me and make an ass of me; now my foes tell me plainly I am an ass: so that by my foes, sir, I profit in the knowledge of myself, and by my friends I am abused: so that, conclusions to be as kisses, if your four negatives make your two affirmatives, why then, the worse for my friends and the better for my foes.

*Duke.* Why, this is excellent.

*Clo.* By my troth, sir, no; though it please you to be one of my friends.

*Duke.* Thou shalt not be the worse for me: there's gold. 31

*Clo.* But that it would be double-dealing, sir, I would you could make it another.

*Duke.* O, you give me ill counsel.

*Clo.* Put your grace in your pocket, sir, for this once, and let your flesh and blood obey it.

*Duke.* Well, I will be so much a sinner, to be a double-dealer: there's another.

*Clo.* Primo, secundo, tertio, is a good play; and the old saying is, the third pays for all: the triplex, sir, is a good tripping measure; or the

bells of Saint Bennet, sir, may put you in mind; one, two, three.

*Duke.* You can fool no more money out of me at this throw: if you will let your lady know I am here to speak with her, and bring her along with you, it may awake my bounty further.

*Clo.* Marry, sir, lullaby to your bounty till I come again. I go, sir; but I would not have you to think that my desire of having is the sin of covetousness: but, as you say, sir, let your bounty take a nap, I will awake it anon. [*Exit.*]

*Vio.* Here comes the man, sir, that did rescue me.

*Enter ANTONIO and OFFICERS.*

*Duke.* That face of his I do remember well; Yet, when I saw it last, it was besmear'd As black as Vulcan in the smoke of war: A bawbling vessel was he captain of, For shallow draught and bulk unprizable, With which such scathful grapple did he make With the most noble bottom of our fleet, 60 That very envy and the tongue of loss Cried fame and honour on him. What's the matter?

*1st Off.* Orsino, this is that Antonio That took the *Phoenix* and her fraught from Candy;

And this is he that did the *Tiger* board, When your young nephew Titus lost his leg: Here in the streets, desperate of shame and state, In private brabble did we apprehend him.

*Vio.* He did me kindness, sir, drew on my side; But in conclusion put strange speech upon me: 70 I know not what 'twas but distraction.

*Duke.* Notable pirate! thou salt-water thief! What foolish boldness brought thee to their mercies,

Whom thou, in terms so bloody and so dear, Hast made thine enemies?

*Ant.*

Orsino, noble sir, Be pleased that I shake off these names you give me:

Antonio never yet was thief or pirate, Though I confess, on base and ground enough, Orsino's enemy. A witchcraft drew me hither: That most ingrateful put there by your side, 80 From the rude sea's enraged and foamy mouth Did I redeem; a wreck past hope he was. His life I gave him and did thereto add My love, without retention or restraint, All his in dedication; for his sake Did I expose myself, pure for his love, Into the danger of this adverse town; Drew to defend him when he was beset: Where being apprehended, his false cunning,



Not meaning to partake with me in danger, 90  
 Taught him to face me out of his acquaintance,  
 And grew a twenty years removed thing  
 While one would wink; denied me mine own  
 purse,  
 Which I had recommended to his use  
 Not half an hour before.

*Vio.* How can this be?

*Duke.* When came he to this town?

*Ant.* To-day, my lord; and for three months  
 before,  
 No interim, not a minute's vacancy,  
 Both day and night did we keep company.

*Enter OLIVIA and Attendants.*

*Duke.* Here comes the Countess: now heaven  
 walks on earth. 100

But for thee, fellow; fellow, thy words are mad-  
 ness:

Three months this youth hath tended upon me;  
 But more of that anon. Take him aside.

*Oli.* What would my lord, but that he may not  
 have,

Wherein Olivia may seem serviceable?  
 Cesario, you do not keep promise with me.

*Vio.* Madam!

*Duke.* Gracious Olivia—

*Oli.* What do you say, Cesario? Good my  
 lord— 109

*Vio.* My lord would speak; my duty hushes me.

*Oli.* If it be aught to the old tune, my lord,  
 It is as fat and fulsome to mine ear  
 As howling after music.

*Duke.* Still so cruel?

*Oli.* Still so constant, lord.

*Duke.* What, to perverseness? you uncivil lady,  
 To whose ingrate and unauspicious altars  
 My soul the faithfull'st offerings hath breathed  
 out

That e'er devotion tender'd! What shall I do?

*Oli.* Even what it please my lord, that shall be-  
 come him.

*Duke.* Why should I not, had I the heart to do  
 it, 120

Like to the Egyptian thief at point of death,  
 Kill what I love?—a savage jealousy  
 That sometime savours nobly. But hear me this:  
 Since you to non-regardance cast my faith,  
 And that I partly know the instrument  
 That screws me from my true place in your  
 favour,

Live you the marble-breasted tyrant still;  
 But this your minion, whom I know you love,  
 And whom, by heaven I swear, I tender dearly,  
 Him will I tear out of that cruel eye, 130  
 Where he sits crowned in his master's spite.

Come, boy, with me; my thoughts are ripe in  
 mischief:

I'll sacrifice the lamb that I do love,  
 To spite a raven's heart within a dove.

*Vio.* And I, most jocund, apt, and willingly,  
 To do you rest, a thousand deaths would die.

*Oli.* Where goes Cesario?

*Vio.* After him I love  
 More than I love these eyes, more than my life,  
 More, by all mores, than e'er I shall love wife.  
 If I do feign, you witnesses above 140  
 Punish my life for tainting of my love!

*Oli.* Ay me, detested! how am I beguiled!

*Vio.* Who does beguile you? who does do you  
 wrong?

*Oli.* Hast thou forgot thyself? is it so long?  
 Call forth the holy father.

*Duke.* Come, away!

*Oli.* Whither, my lord? Cesario, husband, stay.

*Duke.* Husband!

*Oli.* Ay, husband: can he that deny?

*Duke.* Her husband, sirrah!

*Vio.* No, my lord, not I.

*Oli.* Alas, it is the baseness of thy fear  
 That makes thee strangle thy propriety: 150  
 Fear not, Cesario; take thy fortunes up;  
 Be that thou know'st thou art, and then thou art  
 As great as that thou fear'st.

*Enter PRIEST.*

O, welcome, father!

Father, I charge thee, by thy reverence,  
 Here to unfold, though lately we intended  
 To keep in darkness what occasion now  
 Reveals before 'tis ripe, what thou dost know  
 Hath newly pass'd between this youth and me.

*Priest.* A contract of eternal bond of love,  
 Confirm'd by mutual joinder of your hands, 160  
 Attested by the holy close of lips,  
 Strengthen'd by interchangement of your rings;  
 And all the ceremony of this compact  
 Seal'd in my function, by my testimony:  
 Since when, my watch hath told me, toward my  
 grave

I have travell'd but two hours.

*Duke.* O thou dissembling cub! what wilt thou  
 be

When time hath sow'd a grizzle on thy case?  
 Or will not else thy craft so quickly grow,  
 That thine own trip shall be thine overthrow? 170  
 Farewell, and take her; but direct thy feet  
 Where thou and I henceforth may never meet.

*Vio.* My lord, I do protest—

*Oli.* O, do not swear!  
 Hold little faith, though thou hast too much  
 fear.



*Enter* SIR ANDREW.

*Sir And.* For the love of God, a surgeon! Send one presently to Sir Toby.

*Oli.* What's the matter?

*Sir And.* He has broke my head across and has given Sir Toby a bloody coxcomb too: for the love of God, your help! I had rather than forty pound I were at home. 181

*Oli.* Who has done this, Sir Andrew?

*Sir And.* The Count's gentleman, one Cesario: we took him for a coward, but he's the very devil incardinate.

*Duke.* My gentleman, Cesario?

*Sir And.* 'Od's lifelings, here he is! You broke my head for nothing; and that that I did, I was set on to do't by Sir Toby.

*Vio.* Why do you speak to me? I never hurt you: 190

You drew your sword upon me without cause;

But I bespake you fair, and hurt you not.

*Sir And.* If a bloody coxcomb be a hurt, you have hurt me: I think you set nothing by a bloody coxcomb.

*Enter* SIR TOBY and CLOWN.

Here comes Sir Toby halting; you shall hear more: but if he had not been in drink, he would have tickled you othergates than he did.

*Duke.* How now, gentleman! how is't with you? 200

*Sir To.* That's all one: has hurt me, and there's the end on't. Sot, didst see Dick surgeon, sot?

*Clo.* O, he's drunk, Sir Toby, an hour ago; his eyes were set at eight i' the morning.

*Sir To.* Then he's a rogue, and a passy measures panyn: I hate a drunken rogue.

*Oli.* Away with him! Who hath made this havoc with them?

*Sir And.* I'll help you, Sir Toby, because we'll be dressed together. 211

*Sir To.* Will you help? an ass-head and a coxcomb and a knave, a thin-faced knave, a gull!

*Oli.* Get him to bed, and let his hurt be look'd to.

[*Exeunt* CLOWN, FABIAN, SIR TOBY, and SIR ANDREW.]

*Enter* SEBASTIAN.

*Seb.* I am sorry, madam, I have hurt your kinsman;

But, had it been the brother of my blood, I must have done no less with wit and safety.

You throw a strange regard upon me, and by that I do perceive it hath offended you: 220

Pardon me, sweet one, even for the vows

We made each other but so late ago.

*Duke.* One face, one voice, one habit, and two persons,

A natural perspective, that is and is not!

*Seb.* Antonio, O my dear Antonio!

How have the hours rack'd and tortured me, Since I have lost thee!

*Ant.* Sebastian are you?

*Seb.* Fear'st thou that, Antonio?

*Ant.* How have you made division of yourself?

An apple, cleft in two, is not more twin 230

Than these two creatures. Which is Sebastian?

*Oli.* Most wonderful!

*Seb.* Do I stand there? I never had a brother;

Nor can there be that deity in my nature,

Of here and everywhere. I had a sister,

Whom the blind waves and surges have devour'd.

Of charity, what kin are you to me?

What countryman? what name? what parentage?

*Vio.* Of Messaline: Sebastian was my father;

Such a Sebastian was my brother too, 240

So went he suited to his watery tomb.

If spirits can assume both form and suit

You come to fright us.

*Seb.*

A spirit I am indeed;

But am in that dimension grossly clad

Which from the womb I did participate.

Were you a woman, as the rest goes even,

I should my tears let fall upon your cheek,

And say "Thrice-welcome, drowned Viola!"

*Vio.* My father had a mole upon his brow.

*Seb.* And so had mine. 250

*Vio.* And died that day when Viola from her birth

Had number'd thirteen years.

*Seb.* O, that record is lively in my soul!

He finished indeed his mortal act

That day that made my sister thirteen years.

*Vio.* If nothing lets to make us happy both

But this my masculine usurp'd attire,

Do not embrace me till each circumstance

Of place, time, fortune, do cohere and jump

That I am Viola: which to confirm, 260

I'll bring you to a captain in this town, Where lie my maiden weeds; by whose gentle help

I was preserved to serve this noble count.

All the occurrence of my fortune since

Hath been between this lady and this lord.

*Seb.* [To OLIVIA] So comes it, lady, you have been mistook:

But nature to her bias drew in that.

You would have been contracted to a maid;

Nor are you therein, by my life, deceived,

You are betroth'd both to a maid and man. 270

*Duke.* Be not amazed; right noble is his blood.

If this be so, as yet the glass seems true,  
I shall have share in this most happy wreck.  
[To VIOLA] Boy, thou hast said to me a thousand  
times

Thou never shouldst love woman like to me.  
Vio. And all those sayings will I over-swear;

And all those swearings keep as true in soul  
As doth that orb'd continent the fire  
That severs day from night.

Duke. Give me thy hand;  
And let me see thee in thy woman's weeds. 280  
Vio. The captain that did bring me first on  
shore

Hath my maid's garments: he upon some action  
Is now in durance, at Malvolio's suit,  
A gentleman, and follower of my lady's.

Oli. He shall enlarge him: fetch Malvolio  
hither:

And yet, alas, now I remember me,  
They say, poor gentleman, he's much distract.

*Re-enter CLOWN with a letter, and FABIAN.*

A most extracting frenzy of mine own  
From my remembrance clearly banish'd his.

How does he, sirrah? 290

Clo. Truly, madam, he holds Belzebub at the  
stave's end as well as a man in his case may do:  
has here writ a letter to you; I should have given  
't you to-day morning, but as a madman's epis-  
tles are no gospels, so it skills not much when  
they are delivered.

Oli. Open 't, and read it.

Clo. Look then to be well edified when the fool  
delivers the madman. [Reads] "By the Lord, ma-  
dam"— 300

Oli. How now! art thou mad?

Clo. No, madam, I do but read madness: an  
your ladyship will have it as it ought to be, you  
must allow Vox.

Oli. Prithee, read i' thy right wits.

Clo. So I do, madonna; but to read his right wits  
is to read thus: therefore perpend, my princess,  
and give ear.

Oli. Read it you, sirrah. [To FABIAN.]

Fab. [Reads] "By the Lord, madam, you wrong  
me, and the world shall know it: though you  
have put me into darkness and given your drunk-  
en cousin rule over me, yet have I the benefit of  
my senses as well as your ladyship. I have your  
own letter that induced me to the semblance I  
put on; with the which I doubt not but to do my-  
self much right, or you much shame. Think of me  
as you please. I leave my duty a little unthought  
of and speak out of my injury.

The madly-used Malvolio."

Clo. Ay, madam.

Duke. This savours not much of distraction.

Oli. See him deliver'd, Fabian; bring him hither.  
[Exit FABIAN.]

My lord, so please you, these things further  
thought on,

To think me as well a sister as a wife,  
One day shall crown the alliance on't, so please  
you,

Here at my house and at my proper cost.

Duke. Madam, I am most apt to embrace your  
offer.

[To VIOLA] Your master quits you; and for your  
service done him,

So much against the mettle of your sex, 330  
So far beneath your soft and tender breed-  
ing,

And since you call'd me master for so long,  
Here is my hand: you shall from this time be  
Your master's mistress.

Oli. A sister! you are she.

*Re-enter FABIAN, with MALVOLIO.*

Duke. Is this the madman?

Oli. Ay, my lord, this same.

How now, Malvolio!

Mal. Madam, you have done me wrong,  
Notorious wrong.

Oli. Have I, Malvolio? no.

Mal. Lady, you have. Pray you, peruse that  
letter.

You must not now deny it is your hand:

Write from it, if you can, in hand or phrase; 340

Or say 'tis not your seal, not your invention:

You can say none of this: well, grant it then

And tell me, in the modesty of honour,

Why you have given me such clear lights of  
favour,

Bade me come smiling and cross-garter'd to  
you,

To put on yellow stockings and to frown

Upon Sir Toby and the lighter people;

And, acting this in an obedient hope,

Why have you suffer'd me to be imprison'd,

Kept in a dark house, visited by the priest, 350

And made the most notorious geck and gull

That e'er invention play'd on? tell me why.

Oli. Alas, Malvolio, this is not my writing,  
Though, I confess, much like the character:  
But out of question 'tis Maria's hand.

And now I do bethink me, it was she  
First told me thou wast mad; then camest in  
smiling,

And in such forms which here were presup-  
posed



This practice hath most shrewdly pass'd upon thee;  
 But when we know the grounds and authors of it,  
 Thou shalt be both the plaintiff and the judge  
 Of thine own cause.

*Fab.* Good madam, hear me speak,  
 And let no quarrel nor no brawl to come  
 Taint the condition of this present hour,  
 Which I have wonder'd at. In hope it shall not,  
 Most freely I confess, myself and Toby  
 Set this device against Malvolio here,  
 Upon some stubborn and uncourteous parts  
 We had conceived against him: Maria writ  
 The letter at Sir Toby's great importance;  
 In recompense whereof he hath married her.  
 How with a sportful malice it was follow'd,  
 May rather pluck on laughter than revenge;  
 If that the injuries be justly weigh'd  
 That have on both sides pass'd.

*Oli.* Alas, poor fool, how have they baffled thee!

*Clo.* Why, "some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrown upon them." I was one, sir, in this interlude; one Sir Topas, sir; but that's all one. "By the Lord, fool, I am not mad." But do you remember? "Madam, why laugh you at such a barren rascal? an you smile not, he's gagged"; and thus the whirligig of time brings in his revenges.

*Mal.* I'll be revenged on the whole pack of you.

[*Exit.*]

*Oli.* He hath been most notoriously abused.

*Duke.* Pursue him, and entreat him to a peace:  
 He hath not told us of the captain yet:  
 When that is known and golden time convents,

A solemn combination shall be made  
 Of our dear souls. Meantime, sweet sister,  
 We will not part from hence. Cesario, come;  
 For so you shall be, while you are a man;  
 But when in other habits you are seen,  
 Orsino's mistress and his fancy's queen.

[*Exeunt all, except CLOWN.*]

*Clo.* [*Sings*]

"When that I was and a little tiny boy,  
 With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,  
 A foolish thing was but a toy,  
 For the rain it raineth every day.

400

But when I came to man's estate,  
 With hey, ho, &c.  
 'Gainst knaves and thieves men shut their  
 gate,  
 For the rain, &c.

But when I came, alas! to wive,  
 With hey, ho, &c.  
 By swaggering could I never thrive,  
 For the rain, &c.

But when I came unto my beds,  
 With hey, ho, &c.  
 With toss-pots still had drunken heads,  
 For the rain, &c.

410

A great while ago the world begun,  
 With hey, ho, &c.  
 But that's all one, our play is done,  
 And we'll strive to please you every day."  
 [*Exit.*]



# 2 HAMLET, Prince of Denmark

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

CLAUDIUS, *King of Denmark*  
 HAMLET, *son to the late, and nephew to the present,*  
*King*  
 POLONIUS, *Lord Chamberlain*  
 HORATIO, *friend to Hamlet*  
 LAERTES, *son to Polonius*  
 VOLTIMAND  
 CORNELIUS  
 ROSENCRANTZ  
 GUILDENSTERN  
 OSRIC  
 A GENTLEMAN  
 A PRIEST  
 MARCELLUS  
 BERNARDO  
 FRANCISCO, *a soldier*  
 REYNALDO, *servant to Polonius*  
 FIVE PLAYERS

*Courtiers*

*Officers*

TWO CLOWNS, *gravediggers*  
 FORTINBRAS, *Prince of Norway*  
 A CAPTAIN  
 ENGLISH AMBASSADORS  
 A LORD  
 A SOLDIER  
 TWO MESSENGERS  
 A SERVANT to Horatio  
 DANES  
 GHOST of Hamlet's father

GERTRUDE, *Queen of Denmark, and mother to Hamlet*  
 OPHELIA, *daughter to Polonius*

NON-SPEAKING: *Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers,  
 Sailors, and other Attendants*

SCENE: *Denmark*



## ACT I

SCENE 1. *Elsinore: a platform before the castle*

FRANCISCO at his post. Enter to him BERNARDO.

Ber. Who's there?

Fran. Nay, answer me: stand, and unfold your-  
 self.

Ber. Long live the king!

Fran. Bernardo?

Ber. He.

Fran. You come most carefully upon your hour.

Ber. 'Tis now struck twelve; get thee to bed,  
 Francisco.

Fran. For this relief much thanks: 'tis bitter  
 cold,

And I am sick at heart.

Ber. Have you had quiet guard?

Fran. Not a mouse stirring. 10

Ber. Well, good night.

If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,  
 The rivals of my watch, bid them make haste.

Fran. I think I hear them. Stand, ho! Who's  
 there?

Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS.

Hor. Friends to this ground.

Mar. And liegemen to the Dane.

Fran. Give you good night.

Mar. O, farewell, honest soldier:

Who hath relieved you?

Fran. Bernardo has my place.  
 Give you good night. [Exit.]

Mar. Holla! Bernardo!

Ber. Say,

What, is Horatio there?

Hor. A piece of him.

Ber. Welcome, Horatio: welcome, good Mar-  
 cellus. 20

Mar. What, has this thing appear'd again to-  
 night?

Ber. I have seen nothing.

Mar. Horatio says 'tis but our fantasy,  
 And will not let belief take hold of him  
 Touching this dreaded sight, twice seen of us:

Therefore I have entreated him along  
 With us to watch the minutes of this night,  
 That if again this apparition come,

He may approve our eyes and speak to it.

Hor. Tush, tush, 'twill not appear.

Ber. Sit down awhile; 30  
 And let us once again assail your ears,  
 That are so fortified against our story,  
 What we have two nights seen.

Hor. Well, sit we down,  
 And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.

Ber. Last night of all,  
 When yond same star that's westward from the  
 pole

Had made his course to illume that part of heaven  
Where now it burns, Marcellus and myself,  
The bell then beating one—

*Enter GHOST.*

*Mar.* Peace, break thee off; look, where it comes again!

*Ber.* In the same figure, like the King that's dead.

*Mar.* Thou art a scholar; speak to it, Horatio.

*Ber.* Looks it not like the King? mark it, Horatio.

*Hor.* Most like: it harrows me with fear and wonder.

*Ber.* It would be spoke to.

*Mar.* Question it, Horatio.

*Hor.* What art thou that usurp'st this time of night,

Together with that fair and warlike form  
In which the majesty of buried Denmark  
Did sometimes march? by heaven I charge thee,  
speak!

*Mar.* It is offended.

*Ber.* See, it stalks away! 50

*Hor.* Stay! speak, speak! I charge thee, speak!  
[*Exit GHOST.*]

*Mar.* 'Tis gone, and will not answer.

*Ber.* How now, Horatio! you tremble and look pale:

Is not this something more than fantasy?

What think you on't?

*Hor.* Before my God, I might not this believe  
Without the sensible and true avouch  
Of mine own eyes.

*Mar.* Is it not like the King?

*Hor.* As thou art to thyself:

Such was the very armour he had on 60  
When he the ambitious Norway combated;  
So frown'd he once, when, in an angry parle,  
He smote the sledded Polacks on the ice.  
'Tis strange.

*Mar.* Thus twice before, and jump at this dead hour,

With martial stalk hath he gone by our watch.

*Hor.* In what particular thought to work I know not;

But in the gross and scope of my opinion,  
This bodes some strange eruption to our state.

*Mar.* Good now, sit down, and tell me, he that knows, 70

Why this same strict and most observant watch  
So nightly toils the subject of the land,  
And why such daily cast of brazen cannon,  
And foreign mart for implements of war;  
Why such impress of shipwrights, whose sore task

Does not divide the Sunday from the week;  
What might be toward, that this sweaty haste  
Doth make the night joint-labourer with the day:  
Who is't that can inform me?

*Hor.* That can I;

At least, the whisper goes so. Our last king, 80  
Whose image even but now appear'd to us,  
Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,  
Thereto prick'd on by a most emulate pride,  
Dared to the combat; in which our valiant Ham-  
let—

For so this side of our known world esteem'd him—

Did slay this Fortinbras; who, by a seal'd compact,

Well ratified by law and heraldry,  
Did forfeit, with his life, all those his lands  
Which he stood seized of, to the conqueror:

Against the which, a moiety competent 90

Was gaged by our king; which had return'd  
To the inheritance of Fortinbras,  
Had he been vanquisher; as, by the same coven-  
ant,

And carriage of the article design'd,  
His fell to Hamlet. Now, sir, young Fortinbras,

Of unimproved mettle hot and full,  
Hath in the skirts of Norway here and there

Shark'd up a list of lawless resolute,  
For food and diet, to some enterprise

That hath a stomach in't; which is no other—  
As it doth well appear unto our state— 101

But to recover of us, by strong hand  
And terms compulsory, those foresaid lands

So by his father lost: and this, I take it,  
Is the main motive of our preparations,

The source of this our watch and the chief head  
Of this post-haste and romage in the land.

*Ber.* I think it be no other but e'en so:  
Well may it sort that this portentous figure  
Comes armed through our watch; so like the 110  
King

That was and is the question of these wars.

*Hor.* A mote it is to trouble the mind's eye.

In the most high and palmy state of Rome,

A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,

The graves stood tenantless and the sheeted  
dead

Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets.

As stars with trains of fire and dews of blood,

Disasters in the sun; and the moist star

Upon whose influence Neptune's empire  
stands

Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse. 120

And even the like precurse of fierce events,

As harbingers preceding still the fates

And prologue to the omen coming on,

Have heaven and earth together demonstrated  
 Unto our climatures and countrymen.  
 But soft, behold! lo, where it comes again!

*Re-enter GHOST.*

I'll cross it, though it blast me. Stay, illusion!  
 If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,  
 Speak to me:

If there be any good thing to be done,  
 That may to thee do ease and grace to me,  
 Speak to me:

If thou art privy to thy country's fate,  
 Which, happily, foreknowing may avoid,  
 O, speak!

Or if thou hast uphoarded in thy life  
 Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,  
 For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in  
 death,

Speak of it: [*Cock crows.*] stay, and speak!  
 Stop it, Marcellus.

*Mar.* Shall I strike at it with my partisan?

*Hor.* Do, if it will not stand.

*Ber.* 'Tis here!

*Hor.* 'Tis here!

*Mar.* 'Tis gone! [*Exit GHOST.*]

We do it wrong, being so majestical,  
 To offer it the show of violence;

For it is, as the air, invulnerable,  
 And our vain blows malicious mockery.

*Ber.* It was about to speak, when the cock crew.

*Hor.* And then it started like a guilty thing

*Mar.* Let's do't, I pray; and I this morning  
 know

Where we shall find him most conveniently.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *A room of state in the castle*

*Enter the KING, QUEEN, HAMLET, POLONIUS,  
 LAERTES, VOLTIMAND, CORNELIUS, Lords, and  
 Attendants.*

*King.* Though yet of Hamlet our dear bro-  
 ther's death

The memory be green, and that it us befitted  
 To bear our hearts in grief and our whole king-  
 dom

To be contracted in one brow of woe,  
 Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature  
 That we with wisest sorrow think on him,

Together with remembrance of ourselves.

Therefore our sometime sister, now our queen,

The imperial jointress to this warlike state,

Have we, as 'twere with a defeated joy— 10

With an auspicious and a dropping eye,

With mirth in funeral and with dirge in marriage,

In equal scale weighing delight and dole—

Taken to wife: nor have we herein barr'd

Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone

With this affair along. For all, our thanks.

Now follows, that you know, young Fortinbras,

Holding a weak supposal of our worth,

Or thinking by our late dear brother's death

Our state to be disjoint and out of frame



You cannot speak of reason to the Dane,  
And lose your voice: what wouldst thou beg,  
Laertes,

That shall not be my offer, not thy asking?  
The head is not more native to the heart,  
The hand more instrumental to the mouth,  
Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.  
What wouldst thou have, Laertes?

*Laer.* My dread lord, 50  
Your leave and favour to return to France;  
From whence though willingly I came to Den-  
mark,

To show my duty in your coronation,  
Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,  
My thoughts and wishes bend again toward  
France

And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.

*King.* Have you your father's leave? What  
says Polonius?

*Pol.* He hath, my lord, wrung from me my  
slow leave

By laboursome petition, and at last  
Upon his will I seal'd my hard consent: 60  
I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

*King.* Take thy fair hour, Laertes; time be  
thine,

And thy best graces spend it at thy will!

But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son—

*Ham. [Aside]* A little more than kin, and less  
than kind.

*King.* How is it that the clouds still hang on  
you?

*Ham.* Not so, my lord; I am too much i' the  
sun.

*Queen.* Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,  
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.  
Do not for ever with thy veiled lids 70

Seek for thy noble father in the dust.  
Thou know'st 'tis common; all that lives must  
die,

Passing through nature to eternity.

*Ham.* Ay, madam, it is common.

*Queen.* If it be,

Why seems it so particular with thee?

*Ham.* Seems, madam! nay, it is; I know not  
"seems."

'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,  
Nor customary suits of solemn black,  
Nor windy suspiration of forced breath,  
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye, 80  
Nor the dejected 'haviour of the visage,  
Together with all forms, moods, shapes of grief,  
That can denote me truly: these indeed seem,  
For they are actions that a man might play:  
But I have that within which passeth show;  
These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

*King.* 'Tis sweet and commendable in your  
nature, Hamlet,

To give these mourning duties to your father:  
But, you must know, your father lost a father;  
That father lost, lost his, and the survivor bound  
In filial obligation for some term 91

To do obsequious sorrow: but to persever  
In obstinate condolement is a course  
Of impious stubbornness; 'tis unmanly grief;  
It shows a will most incorrect to heaven,  
A heart unfortified, a mind impatient,  
An understanding simple and unschool'd:  
For what we know must be and is as common  
As any the most vulgar thing to sense,  
Why should we in our peevish opposition 100  
Take it to heart? Fie! 'tis a fault to heaven,  
A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,  
To reason most absurd; whose common theme  
Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,  
From the first corse till he that died to-day,  
"This must be so." We pray you, throw to  
earth

This unprevailing woe, and think of us  
As of a father: for let the world take note,  
You are the most immediate to our throne;  
And with no less nobility of love 110

Than that which dearest father bears his son,  
Do I impart toward you. For your intent  
In going back to school in Wittenberg,  
It is most retrograde to our desire:  
And we beseech you, bend you to remain  
Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye,  
Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

*Queen.* Let not thy mother lose her prayers,  
Hamlet:

I pray thee, stay with us; go not to Witten-  
berg.

*Ham.* I shall in all my best obey you, madam.

*King.* Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply: 121  
Be as ourself in Denmark. Madam, come;  
This gentle and unforced accord of Hamlet  
Sits smiling to my heart: in grace whereof,  
No jocund health that Denmark drinks to-day,  
But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell,  
And the King's rouse the heavens shall bruit  
again,

Re-speaking earthly thunder. Come away.  
[*Exeunt all but HAMLET.*]

*Ham.* O, that this too too solid flesh would  
melt,

Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew! 130  
Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd  
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! O God! God!  
How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable,  
Seem to me all the uses of this world!  
Fie on't! ah fie! 'tis an unweeded garden,

That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature

Possess it merely. That it should come to this!

But two months dead: nay, not so much, not two:

So excellent a king; that was, to this,

Hyperion to a satyr; so loving to my mother 140

That he might not be teen the winds of heaven

Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth!

Must I remember? why, she would hang on him,

As if increase of appetite had grown

By what it fed on: and yet, within a month—

Let me not think on't—Frailty, thy name is woman!—

A little month, or ere those shoes were old

With which she follow'd my poor father's body,

Like Niobe, all tears: why she, even she— 149

O God! a beast, that wants discourse of reason,

Would have mourn'd longer—married with my uncle,

My father's brother, but no more like my father

Than I to Hercules: within a month:

Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears

Had left the flushing in her galled eyes,

She married. O, most wicked speed, to post

With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!

It is not nor it cannot come to good:

But break, my heart; for I must hold my tongue.

*Enter HORATIO, MARCELLUS, and BERNARDO.*

*Hor.* Hail to your lordship!

*Ham.* I am glad to see you well: 160

Horatio—or I do forget myself.

*Hor.* The same, my lord, and your poor servant ever.

*Ham.* Sir, my good friend; I'll change that name with you:

And what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio? Marcellus?

*Mar.* Good lord—

*Ham.* I am very glad to see you. Good even, sir.

But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg?

*Hor.* A truant disposition, good my lord.

*Ham.* I would not hear your enemy say so,

Nor shall you do mine ear that violence, 171

To make it truster of your own report

Against yourself: I know you are no truant.

But what is your affair in Elsinore?

We'll teach you to drink deep ere you depart.

*Hor.* My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.

*Ham.* I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow-student;

I think it was to see my mother's wedding.

*Hor.* Indeed, my lord, it follow'd hard upon.

*Ham.* Thrift, thrift, Horatio! the funeral baked meats 180

Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.

Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven

Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio!

My father!—methinks I see my father.

*Hor.* Where, my lord?

*Ham.* In my mind's eye, Horatio.

*Hor.* I saw him once; he was a goodly king.

*Ham.* He was a man, take him for all in all,

I shall not look upon his like again.

*Hor.* My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.

*Ham.* Saw? who? 190

*Hor.* My lord, the King your father.

*Ham.* The King my father!

*Hor.* Season your admiration for a while

With an attent ear, till I may deliver,

Upon the witness of these gentlemen,

This marvel to you.

*Ham.* For God's love, let me hear.

*Hor.* Two nights together had these gentlemen,

Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,

In the dead vast and middle of the night,

Been thus encounter'd. A figure like your father,

Armed at point exactly, cap-a-pie, 200

Appears before them, and with solemn march

Goes slow and stately by them: thrice he walk'd

By their oppress'd and fear-surprised eyes,

Within his truncheon's length; whilst they, dis-  
till'd

Almost to jelly with the act of fear,

Stand dumb and speak not to him. This to me

In dreadful secrecy impart they did;

And I with them the third night kept the watch:

Where, as they had deliver'd, both in time,

Form of the thing, each word made true and good,

The apparition comes: I knew your father; 211

These hands are not more like.

*Ham.* But where was this?

*Mar.* My lord, upon the platform where we  
watch'd.

*Ham.* Did you not speak to it?

*Hor.* My lord, I did;

But answer made it none: yet once methought

It lifted up its head and did address

Itself to motion, like as it would speak;

But even then the morning cock crew loud,

And at the sound it shrunk in haste away,

And vanish'd from our sight.

*Ham.* 'Tis very strange. 220

*Hor.* As I do live, my honour'd lord, 'tis true;

And we did think it writ down in our duty

To let you know of it.

*Ham.* Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this troubles me.

Hold you the watch to-night?

*Mar.* }

*Ber.* }

We do, my lord.

*Ham.* Arm'd, say you?



Mar. { Arm'd, my lord.  
Ber. }

Ham. From top to toe?

Mar. { My lord, from head to foot.  
Ber. }

Ham. Then saw you not his face?

Hor. O, yes, my lord; he wore his beaver up.

Ham. What, look'd he frowningly? 231

Hor. A countenance more in sorrow than in anger.

Ham. Pale or red?

Hor. Nay, very pale.

Ham. And fix'd his eyes upon you?

Hor. Most constantly.

Ham. I would I had been there.

Hor. It would have much amazed you.

Ham. Very like, very like. Stay'd it long?

Hor. While one with moderate haste might tell a hundred.

Mar. { Longer, longer.  
Ber. }

Hor. Not when I saw't.

Ham. His beard was grizzled, no? 240

Hor. It was, as I have seen it in his life, A sable silver'd.

Ham. I will watch to-night; Perchance 'twill walk again.

Hor. I warrant it will.

Ham. If it assume my noble father's person, I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape And bide me hold my peace. I pray you all, If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight, Let it be tenable in your silence still; 250 And whatsoever else shall hap to-night, Give it an understanding, but no tongue: I will requite your loves. So, fare you well: Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve, I'll visit you.

All. Our duty to your honour.

Ham. Your loves, as mine to you: farewell.

[*Exeunt all but HAMLET.*]

My father's spirit in arms! all is not well; I doubt some foul play. Would the night were come!

Till then sit still, my soul. Foul deeds will rise, Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes. [Exit.]

### SCENE III. A room in Polonius' house

Enter LAERTES and OPHELIA.

Laer. My necessities are embark'd: farewell:

And, sister, as the winds give benefit And convoy is assistant, do not sleep, But let me hear from you.

Oph. Do you doubt that?

Laer. For Hamlet and the trifling of his favour, Hold it a fashion and a toy in blood, A violet in the youth of primy nature, Forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting, The perfume and suppliance of a minute; No more.

Oph. No more but so?

Laer. Think it no more: 10 For nature, crescent, does not grow alone In thews and bulk, but, as this temple waxes, The inward service of the mind and soul Grows wide withal. Perhaps he loves you now, And now no soil nor cautel doth besmirch The virtue of his will: but you must fear, His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own; For he himself is subject to his birth. He may not, as unvalued persons do, Carve for himself; for on his choice depends 20 The safety and health of this whole state; And therefore must his choice be circumscribed Unto the voice and yielding of that body Whereof he is the head. Then if he says he loves you,

It fits your wisdom so far to believe it As he in his particular act and place May give his saying deed; which is no further Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal. Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain, If with too credent ear you list his songs, 30 Or lose your heart, or your chaste treasure open To his unmaster'd importunity. Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister, And keep you in the rear of your affection, Out of the shot and danger of desire. The chariest maid is prodigal enough, If she unmask her beauty to the moon: Virtue itself 'scapes not calumnious strokes: The canker galls the infants of the spring, Too oft before their buttons be disclosed, 40 And in the morn and liquid dew of youth Contagious blastments are most imminent. Be wary then; best safety lies in fear: Youth to itself rebels, though none else near.

Oph. I shall the effect of this good lesson keep, As watchman to my heart. But, good my brother, Do not, as some ungracious pastors do, Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven; Whiles, like a puff'd and reckless libertine, Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads, 50 And recks not his own rede.

Laer. O, fear me not. I stay too long: but here my father comes.

Enter POLONIUS.

A double blessing is a double grace; Occasion smiles upon a second leave.



*Pol.* Yet here, Laertes! aboard, aboard, for shame!

The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,  
And you are stay'd for. There; my blessing with thee!

And these few precepts in thy memory  
See thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,  
Nor any unproportion'd thought his act. 60  
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.  
Those friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,  
Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel;  
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment  
Of each new-hatch'd, unfledged comrade. Beware

Of entrance to a quarrel, but being in,  
Bear't that the opposed may beware of thee.  
Give every man thy ear, but few thy voice;  
Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgement.

Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy, 70  
But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy;  
For the apparel oft proclaims the man,  
And they in France of the best rank and station  
Are of a most select and generous chief in that.  
Neither a borrower nor a lender be;  
For loan oft loses both itself and friend,  
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.  
This above all: to thine own self be true,  
And it must follow, as the night the day,  
Thou canst not then be false to any man. 80  
Farewell: my blessing season this in thee!

*Laer.* Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.

*Pol.* The time invites you; go; your servants tend.

*Laer.* Farewell, Ophelia; and remember well  
What I have said to you.

*Oph.* 'Tis in my memory lock'd,  
And you yourself shall keep the key of it.

*Laer.* Farewell. [Exit.]

*Pol.* What is't, Ophelia, he hath said to you?

*Oph.* So please you, something touching the Lord Hamlet.

*Pol.* Marry, well bethought: 90  
'Tis told me, he hath very oft of late

Given private time to you; and you yourself  
Have of your audience been most free and bounteous:

If it be so, as so 'tis put on me,  
And that in way of caution, I must tell you,  
You do not understand yourself so clearly  
As it behoves my daughter and your honour.  
What is between you? give me up the truth.

*Oph.* He hath, my lord, of late made many  
tenders

Of his affection to me. 100

*Pol.* Affection! pooh! you speak like a green girl,

Unsuited in such perilous circumstance.

Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?

*Oph.* I do not know, my lord, what I should think.

*Pol.* Marry, I'll teach you: think yourself a baby;

That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay,  
Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more dearly;

Or—not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,  
Running it thus—you'll tender me a fool.

*Oph.* My lord, he hath importuned me with love 110

In honourable fashion.

*Pol.* Ay, fashion you may call it; go to, go to.

*Oph.* And hath given countenance to his speech, my lord,

With almost all the holy vows of heaven.

*Pol.* Ay, springes to catch woodcocks. I do know,  
When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul  
Lends the tongue vows: these blazes, daughter,  
Giving more light than heat, extinct in both,  
Even in their promise, as it is a-making,  
You must not take for fire. From this time 120

Be somewhat scancer of your maiden presence;  
Set your entreatments at a higher rate  
Than a command to parley. For Lord Hamlet,  
Believe so much in him, that he is young,

And with a larger tether may he walk  
Than may be given you: in few, Ophelia,  
Do not believe his vows; for they are brokers,  
Not of that dye which their investments show,  
But mere implorators of unholy suits,  
Breathing like sanctified and pious bawds, 130  
The better to beguile. This is for all:

I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,  
Have you so slander any moment leisure,  
As to give words or talk with the Lord Hamlet.  
Look to't, I charge you: come your ways.

*Oph.* I shall obey, my lord. [Exeunt.]

#### SCENE IV. *The platform*

Enter HAMLET, HORATIO, and MARCELLUS.

*Ham.* The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold.

*Hor.* It is a nipping and an eager air.

*Ham.* What hour now?

*Hor.* I think it lacks of twelve.

*Mar.* No, it is struck.

*Hor.* Indeed? I heard it not: then it draws near the season

Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.

*A flourish of trumpets, and ordnance shot off, within.*

What does this mean, my lord?

*Ham.* The King doth wake to-night and takes his rouse,  
Keeps wassail, and the swaggering up-spring reels;

And, as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,  
The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out   *11*  
The triumph of his pledge.

*Hor.* Is it a custom?

*Ham.* Ay, marry, is't:

But to my mind, though I am native here  
And to the manner born, it is a custom  
More honour'd in the breach than the observance.  
This heavy-headed revel east and west  
Makes us traduced and tax'd of other nations:  
They clepe us drunkards, and with swinish phrase  
Soil our addition; and indeed it takes   *20*  
From our achievements, though perform'd at  
height,

The pith and marrow of our attribute.  
So, oft it chanceth in particular men,  
That for some vicious mole of nature in them,  
As, in their birth—wherein they are not guilty,  
Since nature cannot choose his origin—  
By the o'ergrowth of some complexion,  
Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason,  
Or by some habit that too much o'er-leavens  
The form of plausive manners, that these men,   *30*  
Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,  
Being nature's livery, or fortune's star—  
Their virtues else—be they as pure as grace,  
As infinite as man may undergo—  
Shall in the general censure take corruption  
From that particular fault: the dram of eale  
Doth all the noble substance of a doubt  
To his own scandal.

*Hor.* Look, my lords, it comes!

*Enter GHOST.*

*Ham.* Angels and ministers of grace defend us!  
Be thou a spirit of health or goblin damn'd,   *40*  
Bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts from  
hell,

Be thy intents wicked or charitable,  
Thou comest in such a questionable shape  
That I will speak to thee. I'll call thee Hamlet,  
King, father, royal Dane: O, answer me!  
Let me not burst in ignorance; but tell  
Why thy canonized bones, hearsed in death,  
Have burst their cerements; why the sepulchre,  
Wherein we saw thee quietly inurn'd,  
Hath oped his ponderous and marble jaws,   *50*  
To cast thee up again. What may this mean,  
That thou, dead corse, again in complete steel  
Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,  
Making night hideous; and we fools of nature  
So horribly to shake our disposition

With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?  
Say, why is this? wherefore? what should we  
do?

*GHOST beckons HAMLET.*

*Hor.* It beckons you to go away with it,  
As if it some impartment did desire  
To you alone.

*Mar.* Look, with what courteous action   *60*  
It waves you to a more removed ground:  
But do not go with it.

*Hor.* No, by no means.

*Ham.* It will not speak; then I will follow it.

*Hor.* Do not, my lord.

*Ham.* Why what should be the fear?  
I do not set my life at a pin's fee;  
And for my soul, what can it do to that,  
Being a thing immortal as itself?  
It waves me forth again: I'll follow it.

*Hor.* What if it tempt you toward the flood,  
my lord,

Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff   *70*  
That beetles o'er his base into the sea,  
And there assume some other horrible form,  
Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason  
And draw you into madness? think of it.  
The very place puts toys of desperation,  
Without more motive, into every brain  
That looks so many fathoms to the sea  
And hears it roar beneath.

*Ham.* It waves me still.  
Go on; I'll follow thee.

*Mar.* You shall not go, my lord.

*Ham.* Hold off your hands.   *80*

*Hor.* Be ruled; you shall not go.

*Ham.* My fate cries out,  
And makes each petty artery in this body  
As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve.  
Still am I call'd. Unhand me, gentlemen.  
By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets me!  
I say, away! Go on; I'll follow thee.

[*Exeunt GHOST and HAMLET.*]

*Hor.* He waxes desperate with imagination.

*Mar.* Let's follow; 'tis not fit thus to obey him.

*Hor.* Have after. To what issue will this come?

*Mar.* Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.

*Hor.* Heaven will direct it.   *90*

*Mar.* Nay, let's follow him. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V. *Another part of the platform*

*Enter GHOST and HAMLET.*

*Ham.* Where wilt thou lead me? speak; I'll  
go no further.

*Ghost.* Mark me.

*Ham.* I will.

*Ghost.* My hour is almost come,



When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames  
Must render up myself.

*Ham.* Alas, poor ghost!

*Ghost.* Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing  
To what I shall unfold.

*Ham.* Speak; I am bound to hear.

*Ghost.* So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt  
hear.

*Ham.* What?

*Ghost.* I am thy father's spirit,  
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night, 10  
And for the day confined to fast in fires,  
Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature  
Are burnt and purged away. But that I am forbid  
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,  
I could a tale unfold whose lightest word  
Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young  
blood,

Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their  
spheres,

Thy knotted and combined locks to part  
And each particular hair to stand an end,  
Like quills upon the fretful porpentine. 20

But this eternal blazon must not be  
To ears of flesh and blood. List, list, O, list!

If thou didst ever thy dear father love—

*Ham.* O God!

*Ghost.* Revenge his foul and most unnatural  
murder.

*Ham.* Murder!

*Ghost.* Murder most foul, as in the best it is;  
But this most foul, strange, and unnatural.

*Ham.* Haste me to know't, that I, with wings  
as swift

As meditation or the thoughts of love, 30  
May sweep to my revenge.

*Ghost.* I find thee apt;  
And duller shouldst thou be than the fat weed  
That roots itself in ease on Lethe wharf,  
Wouldst thou not stir in this. Now, Hamlet,  
hear:

'Tis given out that, sleeping in my orchard,  
A serpent stung me; so the whole ear of Denmark  
Is by a forged process of my death  
Rankly abused: but know, thou noble youth,  
The serpent that did sting thy father's life  
Now wears his crown.

*Ham.* O my prophetic soul! 40  
My uncle!

*Ghost.* Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate  
beast,

With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts—  
O wicked wit and gifts, that have the power  
So to seduce!—won to his shameful lust  
The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen:  
O Hamlet, what a falling-off was there!

From me, whose love was of that dignity  
That it went hand in hand even with the vow  
I made to her in marriage, and to decline 50  
Upon a wretch whose natural gifts were poor  
To those of mine!

But virtue, as it never will be moved,  
Though lewdness court it in a shape of heaven,  
So lust, though to a radiant angel link'd,  
Will sate itself in a celestial bed,  
And prey on garbage.

But, soft! methinks I scent the morning air;  
Brief let me be. Sleeping within my orchard,  
My custom always of the afternoon, 60

Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,  
With juice of cursed hebenon in a vial,  
And in the porches of my ears did pour  
The leperous distilment; whose effect  
Holds such an enmity with blood of man  
That swift as quicksilver it courses through  
The natural gates and alleys of the body,  
And with a sudden vigour it doth posset  
And curd, like eager droppings into milk,

The thin and wholesome blood. So did it mine; 70  
And a most instant tetter bark'd about,  
Most Lazar-like, with vile and loathsome crust,  
All my smooth body.

Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand  
Of life, of crown, of queen, at once dispatch'd:  
Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,  
Unhousel'd, disappointed, unaneled,  
No reckoning made, but sent to my account  
With all my imperfections on my head.

O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible! 80  
If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not;  
Let not the royal bed of Denmark be  
A couch for luxury and damned incest.

But, howsoever thou pursuest this act,  
Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive  
Against thy mother aught: leave her to heaven  
And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,  
To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once!  
The glow-worm shows the matin to be near,  
And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire: 90

Adieu, adieu! Hamlet, remember me. [*Exit.*]

*Ham.* O all you host of heaven! O earth! what  
else?

And shall I couple hell? O, fie! Hold, hold, my  
heart;

And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,  
But bear me stiffly up. Remember thee!  
Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat  
In this distracted globe. Remember thee!  
Yea, from the table of my memory  
I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,  
All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past,  
That youth and observation copied there; 101

And thy commandment all alone shall live  
 Within the book and volume of my brain,  
 Unmix'd with baser matter. Yes, by heaven!  
 O most pernicious woman!  
 O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!  
 My tables—meet it is I set it down,  
 That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain;  
 At least I'm sure it may be so in Denmark:

*Writing.*

So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word;  
 It is "Adieu, adieu! remember me."

I have sworn't.

*Mar.* { *[Within]* My lord, my lord—  
*Hor.* }

*Mar.* { *[Within]* Lord Hamlet—

*Hor.* { *[Within]* Heaven secure him!

*Ham.* So be it!

*Hor.* *[Within]* Hillo, ho, ho, my lord!

*Ham.* Hillo, ho, ho, boy! come, bird, come.

*Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS.*

*Mar.* How is't, my noble lord?

*Hor.* What news, my lord?

*Ham.* O, wonderful!

*Hor.* Good my lord, tell it.

*Ham.* No; you'll reveal it.

*Hor.* Not I, my lord, by heaven.

*Mar.* Nor I, my lord. 120

*Ham.* How say you, then; would heart of man  
 once think it?

But you'll be secret?

*Hor.* {  
*Mar.* } Ay, by heaven, my lord.

*Ham.* There's ne'er a villain dwelling in all  
 Denmark

But he's an arrant knave.

*Hor.* There needs no ghost, my lord, come from  
 the grave

To tell us this.

*Ham.* Why, right; you are i' the right;  
 And so, without more circumstance at all,  
 I hold it fit that we shake hands and part:  
 You, as your business and desire shall point you;  
 For every man has business and desire, 130  
 Such as it is; and for mine own poor part,  
 Look you, I'll go pray.

*Hor.* These are but wild and whirling words,  
 my lord.

*Ham.* I'm sorry they offend you, heartily;  
 Yes, 'faith, heartily.

*Hor.* There's no offence, my lord.

*Ham.* Yes, by Saint Patrick, but there is,  
 Horatio,  
 And much offence too. Touching this vision here,  
 It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you,  
 For your desire to know what is between us,

O'ermaster't as you may. And now, good friends,  
 As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers, 141  
 Give me one poor request.

*Hor.* What is't, my lord? we will.

*Ham.* Never make known what you have seen  
 to-night.

*Hor.* { My Lord, we will not.  
*Mar.* }

*Ham.* Nay, but swear't.

*Hor.* In faith,

111 My lord, not I.

*Mar.* Nor I, my lord, in faith.

*Ham.* Upon my sword.

*Mar.* We have sworn, my lord, already.

*Ham.* Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.

*Ghost.* *[Beneath]* Swear.

*Ham.* Ah, ha, boy! say'st thou so? art thou  
 there, truepenny? 150

Come on—you hear this fellow in the cellarage—  
 Consent to swear.

*Hor.* Propose the oath, my lord.

*Ham.* Never to speak of this that you have seen,  
 Swear by my sword.

*Ghost.* *[Beneath]* Swear.

*Ham.* *Hic et ubique?* then we'll shift our ground.

Come higher, gentlemen,

And lay your hands again upon my sword:

Never to speak of this that you have heard,

Swear by my sword. 160

*Ghost.* *[Beneath]* Swear.

*Ham.* Well said, old mole! canst work i' the  
 earth so fast?

A worthy pioner! Once more remove, good  
 friends.

*Hor.* O day and night, but this is wondrous  
 strange!

*Ham.* And therefore as a stranger give it wel-  
 come.

There are more things in heaven and earth,  
 Horatio,

Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

But come;

Here, as before, never, so help you mercy,

How strange or odd soe'er I bear myself, 170

As I perchance hereafter shall think meet

To put an antic disposition on,

That you, at such times seeing me, never shall,

With arms encumber'd thus, or this head-  
 shake,

Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,

As "Well, well, we know," or "We could, an if  
 we would,"

Or "If we list to speak," or "There be, an if  
 they might,"

Or such ambiguous giving out, to note

That you know aught of me: this not to do,



So grace and mercy at your most need help you,  
Swear. 181

*Ghost.* [*Beneath*] Swear.

*Ham.* Rest, rest, perturbed spirit! [*They swear.*] So, gentlemen,

With all my love I do commend me to you:

And what so poor a man as Hamlet is

May do, to express his love and friending to you,

God willing, shall not lack. Let us go in together;

And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.

The time is out of joint: O cursed spite,

That ever I was born to set it right! 190

Nay, come, let's go together. [*Exeunt.*]

## ACT II

### SCENE I. *A room in Polonius' house*

*Enter POLONIUS and REYNALDO.*

*Pol.* Give him this money and these notes,  
Reynaldo.

*Rey.* I will, my lord.

*Pol.* You shall do marvellous wisely, good  
Reynaldo,

Before you visit him, to make inquire  
Of his behaviour.

*Rey.* My lord, I did intend it.

*Pol.* Marry, well said; very well said. Look  
you, sir,

Inquire me first what Danskers are in Paris;

And how, and who, what means, and where they  
keep,

What company, at what expense; and finding  
By this encompassment and drift of question 10

That they do know my son, come you more  
nearer

Than your particular demands will touch it.

Take you, as 'twere, some distant knowledge of  
him;

As thus, "I know his father and his friends,  
And in part him": do you mark this, Reynaldo?

*Rey.* Ay, very well, my lord.

*Pol.* "And in part him; but" you may say  
"not well:

But, if't be he I mean, he's very wild;

Addicted so and so": and there put on him 19

What forgeries you please; marry, none so rank

As may dishonour him; take heed of that;

But, sir, such wanton, wild, and usual slips

As are companions noted and most known

To youth and liberty.

*Rey.* As gaming, my lord.

*Pol.* Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing, quar-  
relling,

Drabbing: you may go so far.

*Rey.* My lord, that would dishonour him.

*Pol.* 'Faith, no; as you may season it in the  
charge.

You must not put another scandal on him,

That he is open to incontinency; 30

That's not my meaning. But breathe his faults so  
quaintly

That they may seem the taints of liberty,

The flash and outbreak of a fiery mind,

A savageness in unreclaimed blood,

Of general assault.

*Rey.* But, my good lord—

*Pol.* Wherefore should you do this?

*Rey.* Ay, my lord,

I would know that.

*Pol.*

Marry, sir, here's my drift;

And, I believe, it is a fetch of wit.

You laying these slight sullies on my son,

As 'twere a thing a little soil'd i' the working, 40

Mark you,

Your party in converse, him you would sound,

Having ever seen in the prenominate crimes

The youth you breathe of guilty, be assured

He closes with you in this consequence;

"Good sir," or so, or "friend," or "gentleman,"

According to the phrase or the addition

Of man and country.

*Rey.*

Very good, my lord.

*Pol.* And then, sir, does he this—he does—

what was I about to say? By the mass, I was  
about to say something. Where did I leave? 51

*Rey.* At "closes in the consequence," at "friend  
or so," and "gentleman."

*Pol.* At "closes in the consequence," ay, marry;

He closes thus: "I know the gentleman;

I saw him yesterday, or t'other day,

Or then, or then; with such, or such; and, as you  
say,

There was a' gaming; there o'ertook in's rouse;

There falling out at tennis": or perchance,

"I saw him enter such a house of sale," 60

*Videlicet*, a brothel, or so forth.

See you now;

Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth:

And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,

With windlasses and with assays of bias,

By indirections find directions out.

So by my former lecture and advice,

Shall you my son. You have me, have you not?

*Rey.* My lord, I have.

*Pol.*

God be wi' you; fare you well.

*Rey.* Good my lord!

*Pol.* Observe his inclination in yourself. 70

*Rey.* I shall, my lord.

*Pol.* And let him ply his music.

*Rey.*

Well, my lord.

*Pol.* Farewell!

[*Exit REYNALDO.*]

*Enter OPHELIA.*

How now, Ophelia! what's the matter?

*Oph.* O, my lord, my lord, I have been so afflicted!

*Pol.* With what, i' the name of God?

*Oph.* My lord, as I was sewing in my closet,  
Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbraced;  
No hat upon his head; his stockings foul'd,  
Ungarter'd, and down-gyved to his ancle; 80  
Pale as his shirt; his knees knocking each other;  
And with a look so piteous in purport  
As if he had been loosed out of hell  
To speak of horrors—he comes before me.

*Pol.* Mad for thy love?

*Oph.* My lord, I do not know;  
But truly, I do fear it.

*Pol.* What said he?

*Oph.* He took me by the wrist and held me hard;  
Then goes he to the length of all his arm;  
And, with his other hand thus o'er his brow,  
He falls to such perusal of my face 90  
As he would draw it. Long stay'd he so;  
At last, a little shaking of mine arm  
And thrice his head thus waving up and down,  
He raised a sigh so piteous and profound  
As it did seem to shatter all his bulk  
And end his being. That done, he lets me go;  
And, with his head over his shoulder turn'd,  
He seem'd to find his way without his eyes;  
For out o' doors he went without their helps,  
And, to the last, bended their light on me. 100

*Pol.* Come, go with me: I will go seek the King.

This is the very ecstasy of love,  
Whose violent property fordoes itself  
And leads the will to desperate undertakings  
As oft as any passion under heaven  
That does afflict our natures. I am sorry.  
What, have you given him any hard words of late?

*Oph.* No, my good lord, but, as you did command,

I did repel his letters and denied  
His access to me.

*Pol.* That hath made him mad. 110  
I am sorry that with better heed and judgement  
I had not quoted him. I fear'd he did but trifle,  
And meant to wreck thee; but, beshrew my jealousy!

By heaven, it is as proper to our age  
To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions  
As it is common for the younger sort  
To lack discretion. Come, go we to the King:  
This must be known; which, being kept close,  
might move

More grief to hide than hate to utter love.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *A room in the castle*

*Enter KING, QUEEN, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and Attendants.*

*King.* Welcome, dear Rosencrantz and Guildenstern!

Moreover that we much did long to see you,  
The need we have to use you did provoke  
Our hasty sending. Something have you heard  
Of Hamlet's transformation; so call it,  
Sith nor the exterior nor the inward man  
Resembles that it was. What it should be,  
More than his father's death, that thus hath put  
him

So much from the understanding of himself,  
I cannot dream of. I entreat you both 10  
That, being of so young days brought up with  
him,

And sith so neighbour'd to his youth and humour,  
That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court  
Some little time; so by your companies  
To draw him on to pleasures, and to gather,  
So much as from occasion you may glean,  
Whether aught, to us unknown, afflicts him  
thus,

That, open'd, lies within our remedy.

*Queen.* Good gentlemen, he hath much talk'd  
of you;

And sure I am two men there are not living 20  
To whom he more adheres. If it will please you  
To show us so much gentry and good will  
As to expend your time with us awhile,  
For the supply and profit of our hope,  
Your visitation shall receive such thanks  
As fits a king's remembrance.

*Ros.* Both your Majesties

Might, by the sovereign power you have of us,  
Put your dread pleasures more into command  
Than to entreaty.

*Guil.* But we both obey,  
And here give up ourselves, in the full bent 30  
To lay our service freely at your feet,  
To be commanded.

*King.* Thanks, Rosencrantz and gentle Guildenstern.

*Queen.* Thanks, Guildenstern and gentle Rosencrantz:

And I beseech you instantly to visit  
My too much changed son. Go, some of you,  
And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.

*Guil.* Heavens make our presence and our  
practices

Pleasant and helpful to him!

*Queen.* Ay, amen!



[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and  
some Attendants.]

*Enter* POLONIUS.

*Pol.* The ambassadors from Norway, my good  
lord, 40  
Are joyfully return'd.

*King.* Thou still hast been the father of good  
news.

*Pol.* Have I, my lord? I assure my good liege,  
I hold my duty, as I hold my soul,  
Both to my God and to my gracious king:  
And I do think, or else this brain of mine  
Hunts not the trail of policy so sure  
As it hath used to do, that I have found  
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy. 49

*King.* O, speak of that; that do I long to hear.

*Pol.* Give first admittance to the ambassadors;  
My news shall be the fruit to that great feast.

*King.* Thyself do grace to them, and bring  
them in. [*Exit* POLONIUS.]

He tells me, my dear Gertrude, he hath found  
The head and source of all your son's distemper.

*Queen.* I doubt it is no other but the main;  
His father's death, and our o'erhasty marriage.

*King.* Well, we shall sift him.

*Re-enter* POLONIUS, with VOLTIMAND and  
CORNELIUS.

Welcome, my good friends!

Say, Voltimand, what from our brother Norway?

*Volt.* Most fair return of greetings and desires.  
Upon our first, he sent out to suppress 61

His nephew's levies; which to him appear'd  
To be a preparation 'gainst the Polack;  
But, better look'd into, he truly found  
It was against your Highness: whereat grieved,  
That so to his sickness, age and impotence  
Was falsely borne in hand, sends out arrests  
On Fortinbras; which he, in brief, obeys;  
Receives rebuke from Norway, and in fine  
Makes vow before his uncle never more 70

To give the assay of arms against your Majesty.

Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,  
Gives him three thousand crowns in annual fee,  
And his commission to employ those soldiers,  
So levied as before, against the Polack:

With an entreaty, herein further shown,

*Giving a paper.*

That it might please you to give quiet pass  
Through your dominions for this enterprise,  
On such regards of safety and allowance  
As therein are set down.

*King.* It likes us well; 80  
And at our more consider'd time we'll read,  
Answer, and think upon this business.

Meantime we thank you for your well-took  
labour.

Go to your rest; at night we'll feast together.  
Most welcome home!

[*Exeunt* VOLTIMAND and CORNELIUS.]

*Pol.* This business is well ended.

My liege, and madam, to expostulate  
What majesty should be, what duty is,  
Why day is day, night night, and time is time,  
Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time.  
Therefore, since brevity is the soul of wit, 90  
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,  
I will be brief: your noble son is mad.  
Mad call I it; for, to define true madness,  
What is't but to be nothing else but mad?  
But let that go.

*Queen.* More matter, with less art.

*Pol.* Madam, I swear I use no art at all.

That he is mad, 'tis true: 'tis true 'tis pity;

And pity 'tis 'tis true. A foolish figure;

But farewell it, for I will use no art.

Mad let us grant him, then; and now remains

That we find out the cause of this effect, 101

Or rather say, the cause of this defect,

For this effect defective comes by cause.

Thus it remains and the remainder thus.

Perpend.

I have a daughter—have while she is mine—

Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,

Hath given me this. Now gather, and surmise.

*Reads.*

"To the celestial and my soul's idol, the most  
beautified Ophelia"— 110

That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase; "beautified" is  
a vile phrase: but you shall hear. Thus: [*Reads.*]

"In her excellent white bosom, these, &c."

*Queen.* Came this from Hamlet to her?

*Pol.* Good madam, stay awhile; I will be faith-  
ful. [*Reads.*]

"Doubt thou the stars are fire;

Doubt that the sun doth move;

Doubt truth to be a liar;

But never doubt I love. 119

"O dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers; I  
have not art to reckon my groans: but that I love  
thee best, O most best, believe it. Adieu.

"Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst this  
machine is to him, Hamlet"

This, in obedience, hath my daughter shown me,  
And more above, hath his solicitings,  
As they fell out by time, by means, and place,  
All given to mine ear.

*King.* But how hath she

Received his love?

*Pol.* What do you think of me?

*King.* As of a man faithful and honourable.

*Pol.* I would fain prove so. But what might you think, 131

When I had seen this hot love on the wing—  
As I perceived it, I must tell you that,  
Before my daughter told me—what might you,  
Or my dear Majesty your queen here, think,  
If I had play'd the desk or table-book,  
Or given my heart a winking, mute and dumb,  
Or look'd upon this love with idle sight;  
What might you think? No, I went round to work,  
And my young mistress thus I did bespeak: 140  
"Lord Hamlet is a prince, out of thy star;  
This must not be": and then I prescripts gave her,  
That she should lock herself from his resort,  
Admit no messengers, receive no tokens.  
Which done, she took the fruits of my advice;  
And he, repulsed—a short tale to make—  
Fell into a sadness, then into a fast,  
Thence to a watch, thence into a weakness,  
Thence to a lightness, and, by this declension,  
Into the madness wherein now he raves, 150  
And all we mourn for.

*King.* Do you think 'tis this?

*Queen.* It may be, very likely.

*Pol.* Hath there been such a time—I'd fain know that—

That I have positively said "'Tis so,"

When it proved otherwise?

*King.* Not that I know.

*Pol.* [Pointing to his head and shoulder] Take this from this, if this be otherwise:

If circumstances lead me, I will find  
Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed  
Within the centre.

*King.* How may we try it further?

*Pol.* You know, sometimes he walks four hours together 160  
Here in the lobby.

*Queen.* So he does indeed.

*Pol.* At such a time I'll loose my daughter to him:

Be you and I behind an arras then;  
Mark the encounter. If he love her not  
And be not from his reason fall'n thereon,  
Let me be no assistant for a state,  
But keep a farm and carters.

*King.* We will try it.

*Queen.* But, look, where sadly the poor wretch comes reading.

*Pol.* Away, I do beseech you, both away:  
I'll board him presently.

[*Exeunt KING, QUEEN, and Attendants.*]

*Enter HAMLET, reading.*

O, give me leave, 170  
How does my good Lord Hamlet?

*Ham.* Well, God-a-mercy.

*Pol.* Do you know me, my lord?

*Ham.* Excellent well; you are a fishmonger.

*Pol.* Not I, my lord.

*Ham.* Then I would you were so honest a man.

*Pol.* Honest, my lord!

*Ham.* Ay, sir; to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man picked out of ten thousand.

*Pol.* That's very true, my lord. 180

*Ham.* For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a god kissing carrion—Have you a daughter?

*Pol.* I have, my lord.

*Ham.* Let her not walk i' the sun. Conception is a blessing, but not as your daughter may conceive. Friend, look to 't.

*Pol.* [Aside] How say you by that? Still harping on my daughter: yet he knew me not at first; he said I was a fishmonger: he is far gone, far gone, and truly in my youth I suffered much extremity for love; very near this. I'll speak to him again. What do you read, my lord?

*Ham.* Words, words, words.

*Pol.* What is the matter, my lord?

*Ham.* Between who?

*Pol.* I mean, the matter that you read, my lord.

*Ham.* Slanders, sir: for the satirical rogue says here that old men have grey beards, that their faces are wrinkled, their eyes purging thick amber and plum-tree gum and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams; all which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down, for yourself, sir, should be old as I am, if like a crab you could go backward.

*Pol.* [Aside] Though this be madness, yet there is method in't. Will you walk out of the air, my lord?

*Ham.* Into my grave. 210

*Pol.* Indeed, that is out o' the air. [Aside] How pregnant sometimes his replies are! a happiness that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be delivered of. I will leave him, and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter.—My honourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you.

*Ham.* You cannot, sir, take from me any thing that I will more willingly part withal: except my life, except my life, except my life. 221

*Pol.* Fare you well, my lord.

*Ham.* These tedious old fools!

*Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN*

*Pol.* You go to seek the Lord Hamlet; there he is.



*Ros.* [To *Polonius*] God save you, sir!

[*Exit Polonius.* 230

*Guil.* My honoured lord!

*Ros.* My most dear lord!

*Ham.* My excellent good friends! How dost thou, Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz! Good lads, how do ye both? 230

*Ros.* As the indifferent children of the earth.

*Guil.* Happy, in that we are not over-happy; On fortune's cap we are not the very button.

*Ham.* Nor the soles of her shoe?

*Ros.* Neither, my lord.

*Ham.* Then you live about her waist, or in the middle of her favours?

*Guil.* Faith, her privates we.

*Ham.* In the secret parts of fortune? O, most true; she is a strumpet. What's the news? 240

*Ros.* None, my lord, but that the world's grown honest.

*Ham.* Then is doomsday near. But your news is not true. Let me question more in particular. What have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of fortune, that she sends you to prison hither?

*Guil.* Prison, my lord!

*Ham.* Denmark's a prison.

*Ros.* Then is the world one. 250

*Ham.* A goodly one; in which there are many confines, wards, and dungeons, Denmark being one o' the worst.

*Ros.* We think not so, my lord.

*Ham.* Why, then, 'tis none to you; for there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so. To me it is a prison.

*Ros.* Why then, your ambition makes it one; 'tis too narrow for your mind. 259

*Ham.* O God, I could be bounded in a nutshell and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that I have bad dreams.

*Guil.* Which dreams indeed are ambition, for the very substance of the ambitious is merely the shadow of a dream.

*Ham.* A dream itself is but a shadow.

*Ros.* Truly, and I hold ambition of so airy and light a quality that it is but a shadow's shadow.

*Ham.* Then are our beggars bodies, and our monarchs and outstretched heroes the beggars' shadows. Shall we to the court? for, by my fay, I cannot reason.

*Ros.* } We'll wait upon you.  
*Guil.* }

*Ham.* No such matter. I will not sort you with the rest of my servants, for, to speak to you like an honest man, I am most dreadfully attended. But, in the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinore?

*Ros.* To visit you, my lord; no other occasion.

*Ham.* Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks; but I thank you: and sure, dear friends, my thanks are too dear a halfpenny. Were you not sent for? Is it your own inclining? Is it a free visitation? Come, deal justly with me. Come, come; nay, speak.

*Guil.* What should we say, my lord?

*Ham.* Why, any thing, but to the purpose. You were sent for; and there is a kind of confession in your looks which your modesties have not craft enough to colour. I know the good king and queen have sent for you. 291

*Ros.* To what end, my lord?

*Ham.* That you must teach me. But let me conjure you, by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for, or no?

*Ros.* [Aside to *GUILDENSTERN*] What say you? 300

*Ham.* [Aside] Nay, then, I have an eye of you.—If you love me, hold not off.

*Guil.* My lord, we were sent for.

*Ham.* I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the king and queen moult no feather. I have of late—but wherefore I know not—lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises; and indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory, this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is a man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? man delights not me: no, nor woman neither, though by your smiling you seem to say so.

*Ros.* My lord, there was no such stuff in my thoughts.

*Ham.* Why did you laugh then, when I said "man delights not me"?

*Ros.* To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what lenten entertainment the players shall receive from you. We coted them on the way; and hither are they coming, to offer you service.

*Ham.* He that plays the king shall be welcome; his majesty shall have tribute of me; the adventurous knight shall use his foil and target; the

lover shall not sigh *gratis*; the humorous man shall end his part in peace; the clown shall make those laugh whose lungs are tickle o' the sere; and the lady shall say her mind freely, or the blank verse shall halt for't. What players are they? 340

*Ros.* Even those you were wont to take delight in, the tragedians of the city.

*Ham.* How chanceth it they travel? their residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways.

*Ros.* I think their inhibition comes by the means of the late innovation.

*Ham.* Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city? are they so followed? 350

*Ros.* No, indeed, are they not.

*Ham.* How comes it? do they grow rusty?

*Ros.* Nay, their endeavour keeps in the wonted pace; but there is, sir, an aery of children, little eyases, that cry out on the top of question, and are most tyrannically clapped for't. These are now the fashion, and so berattle the common stages—so they call them—that many wearing rapiers are afraid of goose-quills and dare scarce come thither. 360

*Ham.* What, are they children? who maintains 'em? how are they escoted? Will they pursue the quality no longer than they can sing? will they not say afterwards, if they should grow themselves to common players—as it is most like, if their means are no better—their writers do them wrong, to make them exclaim against their own succession?

*Ros.* 'Faith, there has been much to do on both sides; and the nation holds it no sin to tarre them to controversy. There was, for a while, no money bid for argument, unless the poet and the player went to cuffs in the question.

*Ham.* Is't possible?

*Guil.* O, there has been much throwing about of brains.

*Ham.* Do the boys carry it away?

*Ros.* Ay, that they do, my lord; Hercules and his load too. 379

*Ham.* It is not very strange; for mine uncle is King of Denmark, and those that would make mows at him while my father lived, give twenty, forty, fifty, an hundred ducats a-piece for his picture in little. 'Sblood, there is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out.

*Flourish of trumpets within.*

*Guil.* There are the players.

*Ham.* Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. Your hands, come then. The appurtenance of welcome is fashion and ceremony. Let me com-

ply with you in this garb, lest my extent to the players, which, I tell you, must show fairly outward, should more appear like entertainment than yours. You are welcome; but my uncle-father and aunt-mother are deceived.

*Guil.* In what, my dear lord?

*Ham.* I am but mad north-north-west. When the wind is southerly I know a hawk from a handsaw.

*Re-enter* POLONIUS.

*Pol.* Well be with you, gentlemen!

*Ham.* Hark you, Guildenstern; and you too: at each ear a hearer: that great baby you see there is not yet out of his swaddling-clouts.

*Ros.* Happily he's the second time come to them; for they say an old man is twice a child.

*Ham.* I will prophesy he comes to tell me of the players; mark it. [*Aloud.*] You say right, sir: o'Monday morning; 'twas so indeed.

*Pol.* My lord, I have news to tell you.

*Ham.* My lord, I have news to tell you. When Roscius was an actor in Rome— 410

*Pol.* The actors are come hither, my lord.

*Ham.* Buz, buz!

*Pol.* Upon mine honour—

*Ham.* Then came each actor on his ass—

*Pol.* The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral, scene indivisible, or poem unlimited; Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light. For the law of writ and the liberty, these are the only men. 421

*Ham.* O Jephthah, judge of Israel, what a treasure hadst thou!

*Pol.* What a treasure had he, my lord?

*Ham.* Why,

"One fair daughter, and no more,

The which he loved passing well."

*Pol.* [*Aside*] Still on my daughter.

*Ham.* Am I not i' the right, old Jephthah?

*Pol.* If you call me Jephthah, my lord, I have a daughter that I love passing well. 431

*Ham.* Nay, that follows not.

*Pol.* What follows, then, my lord?

*Ham.* Why,

"As by lot, God wot,"

and then, you know,

"It came to pass, as most like it was"—  
the first row of the pious chanson will show you more; for look, where my abridgement comes.

*Enter four or five* PLAYERS.

You are welcome, masters; welcome, all. I am glad to see thee well. Welcome, good friends.



O, my old friend! thy face is valanced since I saw thee last; comest thou to beard me in Denmark? What, my young lady and mistress! By'r lady, your ladyship is nearer to heaven than when I saw you last, by the altitude of a chopine. Pray God, your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not cracked within the ring. Masters, you are all welcome. We'll e'en to't like French falconers, fly at anything we see: we'll have a speech straight. Come, give us a taste of your quality; come, a passionate speech.

*1st Play.* What speech, my lord?

*Ham.* I heard thee speak me a speech once, but it was never acted; or, if it was, not above once; for the play, I remember, pleased not the million; 'twas caviare to the general; but it was—as I received it, and others, whose judgements in such matters cried in the top of mine—an excellent play, well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning. I remember, one said there were no sallets in the lines to make the matter savoury, nor no matter in the phrase that might indict the author of affectation; but called it an honest method, as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more handsome than fine. One speech in it I chiefly loved: 'twas *Aeneas'* tale to Dido; and thereabout of it especially, where he speaks of Priam's slaughter. If it live in your memory, begin at this line: let me see, let me see—

471

"The rugged Pyrrhus, like the Hyrcanian beast"—it is not so. It begins with Pyrrhus:

"The rugged Pyrrhus, he whose sable arms,  
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble  
When he lay couched in the ominous horse,  
Hath now this dread and black complexion  
smear'd

With heraldry more dismal; head to foot  
Now is he total gules; horribly trick'd

With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters,  
sons,

Baked and impasted with the parching streets,  
That lend a tyrannous and damned light  
To their lord's murder: roasted in wrath and  
fire,

And thus o'er-sized with coagulate gore,  
With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus  
Old grandsire Priam seeks."

So, proceed you.

*Pol.* 'Fore God, my lord, well spoken, with good accent and good discretion.

*1st Play.* "Anon he finds him  
Striking too short at Greeks; his antique  
sword,

Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,  
Repugnant to command. Unequal match'd,

Pyrrhus at Priam drives; in rage strikes wide;  
But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword  
The unnerved father falls. Then senseless  
Ilium,

Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top  
Stoops to his base, and with a hideous crash  
Takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear; for, lo! his  
sword,

Which was declining on the milky head 500  
Of reverend Priam, seem'd i' the air to stick.  
So, as a painted tyrant, Pyrrhus stood,  
And like a neutral to his will and matter,  
Did nothing.

But, as we often see, against some storm,  
A silence in the heavens, the rack stand still,  
The bold winds speechless, and the orb below  
As hush as death, anon the dreadful thunder  
Doth rend the region, so, after Pyrrhus' pause,  
Aroused vengeance sets him new a-work; 510  
And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall  
On Mars's armour forged for proof eterne  
With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding  
sword

Now falls on Priam.

Out, out, thou strumpet, Fortune! All you  
gods,

In general synod, take away her power;  
Break all the spokes and fellies from her wheel,  
And bow! the round nave down the hill of  
heaven,

As low as to the fiends!"

*Pol.* This is too long. 520

*Ham.* It shall to the barber's, with your beard.  
Prithee, say on; he's for a jig or a tale of bawdry,  
or he sleeps. Say on; come to Hecuba.

*1st Play.* "But who, O, who had seen the mobled  
queen—"

*Ham.* "The mobled queen"?

*Pol.* That's good; "mobled queen" is good.

*1st Play.* "Run barefoot up and down, threaten-  
ing the flames

With bisson rheum; a clout upon that head  
Where late the diadem stood, and for a robe,  
About her lank and all o'er-teemed loins, 531  
A blanket, in the alarm of fear caught up;  
Who this had seen, with tongue in venom  
steep'd,

'Gainst Fortune's state would treason have  
pronounced:

But if the gods themselves did see her then  
When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport  
In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs,  
The instant burst of clamour that she made,  
Unless things mortal move them not at all,  
Would have made milch the burning eyes of  
heaven,

540

And passion in the gods."

*Pol.* Look, whether he has not turned his colour and has tears in's eyes. Pray you, no more.

*Ham.* 'Tis well; I'll have thee speak out the rest soon. Good my lord, will you see the players well bestowed? Do you hear, let them be well used; for they are the abstract and brief chronicles of the time; after your death you were better have a bad epitaph than their ill report while you live. 551

*Pol.* My lord, I will use them according to their desert.

*Ham.* God's bodykins, man, much better. Use every man after his desert, and who should 'scape whipping? Use them after your own honour and dignity; the less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. Take them in.

*Pol.* Come, sirs. 559

*Ham.* Follow him, friends: we'll hear a play to-morrow. [*Exit* *Polonius* with all the *PLAYERS* but the *FIRST*.] Dost thou hear me, old friend; can you play "The Murder of Gonzago"?

*1st Play.* Ay, my lord.

*Ham.* We'll ha't to-morrow night. You could, for a need, study a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines, which I would set down and insert in't, could you not?

*1st Play.* Ay, my lord. 569

*Ham.* Very well. Follow that lord; and look you mock him not. [*Exit* *FIRST PLAYER*.] My good friends, I'll leave you till night: you are welcome to Elsinore.

*Ros.* Good my lord!

*Ham.* Ay, so, God be wi' ye; [*Exeunt* *ROSENCRANTZ* and *GUILDENSTERN*.] Now I am alone.

O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!

Is it not monstrous that this player here, But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,

Could force his soul so to his own conceit

That from her working all his visage wann'd, 580

Tears in his eyes, distraction in's aspect,

A broken voice, and his whole function suiting

With forms to his conceit? and all for nothing!

For Hecuba!

What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,

That he should weep for her? What would he do,

Had he the motive and the cue for passion

That I have? He would drown the stage with tears

And cleave the general ear with horrid speech,

Make mad the guilty and appal the free, 590

Confound the ignorant, and amaze indeed

The very faculties of eyes and ears.

Yet I,

A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,

Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,

And can say nothing; no, not for a king,  
Upon whose property and most dear life  
A damn'd defeat was made. Am I a coward?  
Who calls me villain? breaks my pate across?  
Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face?  
Tweaks me by the nose? gives me the lie i' the  
throat, 601

As deep as to the lungs? who does me this?  
Ha!

'Swounds, I should take it: for it cannot be  
But I am pigeon-liver'd and lack gall  
To make oppression bitter, or ere this  
I should have fatted all the region kites  
With this slave's offal. Bloody, bawdy villain!  
Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless vil-  
lain!

O, vengeance! 610

Why, what an ass am I! This is most brave,  
That I, the son of a dear father murder'd,  
Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,  
Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words,  
And fall a-cursing, like a very drab,  
A scullion!

Fie upon't! foh! About, my brain! I have heard  
That guilty creatures sitting at a play  
Have by the very cunning of the scene  
Been struck so to the soul that presently 620  
They have proclaim'd their malefactions;  
For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak  
With most miraculous organ. I'll have these  
players

Play something like the murder of my father  
Before mine uncle. I'll observe his looks;  
I'll tent him to the quick. If he but blench,  
I know my course. The spirit that I have seen  
May be the devil; and the devil hath power  
To assume a pleasing shape; yea, and perhaps 630  
Out of my weakness and my melancholy,  
As he is very potent with such spirits,  
Abuses me to damn me. I'll have grounds  
More relative than this. The play's the thing  
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the King.

[*Exit*.]

## ACT III

### SCENE I. A room in the castle

*Enter* *KING*, *QUEEN*, *Polonius*, *OPHELIA*,  
*ROSENCRANTZ*, and *GUILDENSTERN*.

*King.* And can you, by no drift of circumstance,  
Get from him why he puts on this confusion,  
Grating so harshly all his days of quiet  
With turbulent and dangerous lunacy?

*Ros.* He does confess he feels himself distracted;  
But from what cause he will by no means speak.

*Guil.* Nor do we find him forward to be sounded,



But, with a crafty madness, keeps aloof,  
When we would bring him on to some confession  
Of his true state.

*Queen.* Did he receive you well? 10

*Ros.* Most like a gentleman.

*Guil.* But with much forcing of his disposition.

*Ros.* Niggard of question; but, of our demands,  
Most free in his reply.

*Queen.* Did you assay him

To any pastime?

*Ros.* Madam, it so fell out, that certain players  
We o'er-raught on the way; of these we told  
him,

And there did seem in him a kind of joy  
To hear of it. They are about the court,  
And, as I think, they have already order 20  
This night to play before him.

*Pol.* 'Tis most true.

And he beseech'd me to entreat your Majesties  
To hear and see the matter.

*King.* With all my heart; and it doth much content me

To hear him so inclined.

Good gentlemen, give him a further edge,  
And drive his purpose on to these delights.

*Ros.* We shall, my lord.

[*Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*]

*King.* Sweet Gertrude, leave us too;  
For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither,

That he, as 'twere by accident, may here 30  
Affront Ophelia.

Her father and myself, lawful espials,  
Will so bestow ourselves that, seeing, unseen,  
We may of their encounter frankly judge,  
And gather by him, as he is behaved,  
If't be the affliction of his love or no  
That thus he suffers for.

*Queen.* I shall obey you.

And for your part, Ophelia, I do wish  
That your good beauties be the happy cause  
Of Hamlet's wildness: so shall I hope your virtues 40

Will bring him to his wonted way again,  
To both your honours.

*Oph.* Madam, I wish it may. [*Exit QUEEN.*]

*Pol.* Ophelia, walk you here. Gracious, so  
please you,

We will bestow ourselves. [*To OPHELIA*] Read  
on this book;

That show of such an exercise may colour  
Your loneliness. We are oft to blame in this—  
'Tis too much proved—that with devotion's visage

And pious action we do sugar o'er  
The devil himself.

*King.* [*Aside*] O, 'tis too true!

How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience! 50

The harlot's cheek, beautied with plastering art,  
Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it  
Than is my deed to my most painted word:  
O heavy burthen!

*Pol.* I hear him coming: let's withdraw, my lord.  
[*Exeunt KING and POLONIUS.*]

*Enter HAMLET.*

*Ham.* To be, or not to be: that is the question.  
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer  
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,  
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,  
And by opposing end them? To die; to sleep; 60  
No more; and by a sleep to say we end  
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks  
That flesh is heir to, 'tis a consummation  
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, to sleep;  
To sleep? perchance to dream. Ay, there's the  
rub;

For in that sleep of death what dreams may come  
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,  
Must give us pause. There's the respect  
That makes calamity of so long life;  
For who would bear the whips and scorns of  
time, 70

The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,

The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,  
The insolence of office and the spurs  
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,  
When he himself might his quietus make  
With a bare bodkin? who would fardels bear,  
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,  
But that the dread of something after death,  
The undiscover'd country from whose bourn 80  
No traveller returns, puzzles the will

And makes us rather bear those ills we have  
Than fly to others that we know not of?  
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;  
And thus the native hue of resolution  
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,  
And enterprises of great pitch and moment  
With this regard their currents turn awry,  
And lose the name of action.—Soft you now!  
The fair Ophelia! Nymph, in thy orisons  
Be all my sins remember'd.

*Oph.* Good my lord, 90  
How does your honour for this many a day?

*Ham.* I humbly thank you; well, well, well.

*Oph.* My lord, I have remembrances of yours,  
That I have longed long to re-deliver;  
I pray you, now receive them.

*Ham.* No, not I;  
I never gave you aught.

*Oph.* My honour'd lord, you know right well  
you did;  
And, with them, words of so sweet breath compos'd  
As made the things more rich. Their perfume  
lost,

Take these again; for to the noble mind 100  
Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.  
There, my lord.

*Ham.* Ha, ha! are you honest?

*Oph.* My lord?

*Ham.* Are you fair?

*Oph.* What means your lordship?

*Ham.* That if you be honest and fair, your honesty  
should admit no discourse to your beauty.

*Oph.* Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce  
than with honesty? 110

*Ham.* Ay, truly; for the power of beauty will  
sooner transform honesty from what it is to a  
bawd than the force of honesty can translate  
beauty into his likeness. This was sometime a  
paradox, but now the time gives it proof. I did  
love you once.

*Oph.* Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

*Ham.* You should not have believed me; for  
virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock but we  
shall relish of it. I loved you not. 120

*Oph.* I was the more deceived.

*Ham.* Get thee to a nunnery; why wouldst thou  
be a breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent  
honest; but yet I could accuse me of such things  
that be better my mother had not borne me.  
I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious, with  
more offences at my beck than I have thoughts  
to put them in, imagination to give them shape,  
or time to act them in. What should such fellows  
as I do crawling between earth and heaven? We  
are arrant knaves, all; believe none of us. Go thy  
ways to a nunnery. Where's your father?

*Oph.* At home, my lord.

*Ham.* Let the doors be shut upon him, that he  
may play the fool nowhere but in's own house.  
Farewell.

*Oph.* O, help him, you sweet heavens!

*Ham.* If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this  
plague for thy dowry: be thou as chaste as ice,  
as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny.  
Get thee to a nunnery, go. Farewell. Or, if thou  
wilt needs marry, marry a fool; for wise men  
know well enough what monsters you make of  
them. To a nunnery, go, and quickly too. Fare-  
well.

*Oph.* O heavenly powers, restore him!

*Ham.* I have heard of your paintings too, well  
enough; God has given you one face, and you  
make yourselves another. You jig, you amble,

and you lisp, and nick-name God's creatures, and  
make your wantonness your ignorance. Go to,  
I'll no more on't; it hath made me mad. I say, we  
will have no more marriages. Those that are  
married already, all but one, shall live; the rest  
shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go.

[Exit.]

*Oph.* O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!  
The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue,  
sword,

The expectancy and rose of the fair state, 160  
The glass of fashion and the mould of form,  
The observed of all observers, quite, quite  
down!

And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,  
That suck'd the honey of his music vows,  
Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,  
Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh;  
That unmatch'd form and feature of blown  
youth

Blasted with ecstasy: O, woe is me,  
To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

*Re-enter KING and POLONIUS.*

*King.* Love! his affections do not that way  
tend; 170

Nor what he spake, though it lack'd form a little,  
Was not like madness. There's something in his  
soul,

O'er which his melancholy sits on brood;  
And I do doubt the hatch and the disclose  
Will be some danger; which for to prevent,  
I have in quick determination  
Thus set it down: he shall with speed to  
England,

For the demand of our neglected tribute.  
Haply the seas and countries different 180  
With variable objects shall expel  
This something-settled matter in his heart,  
Whereon his brains still beating puts him thus  
From fashion of himself. What think you on't?

*Pol.* It shall do well: but yet do I believe  
The origin and commencement of his grief  
Sprung from neglected love. How now, Ophelia!  
You need not tell us what Lord Hamlet said;  
We heard it all. My lord, do as you please;  
But, if you hold it fit, after the play  
Let his queen mother all alone entreat him 190  
To show his grief: let her be round with him;  
And I'll be placed, so please you, in the ear  
Of all their conference. If she find him not,  
To England send him, or confine him where  
Your wisdom best shall think.

*King.* It shall be so.  
Madness in great ones must not unwatch'd go.  
[Exeunt.]



SCENE II. *A hall in the castle**Enter HAMLET and PLAYERS.*

*Ham.* Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue: but if you mouth it, as many of your players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus, but use all gently; for in the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, the whirlwind of passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings, who for the most part are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb-shows and noise. I would have such a fellow whipped for o'erdoing Termagant. It out-herods Herod. Pray you, avoid it.

*1st Play.* I warrant your honour.

*Ham.* Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor. Suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature; for anything so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure. Now this overdone, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of the which one must in your allowance o'erweigh a whole theatre of others. O, there be players that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly, not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the accent of Christians nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted and bellowed that I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made men and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

*1st Play.* I hope we have reformed that indifferently with us, sir. 41

*Ham.* O, reform it altogether. And let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them; for there be of them that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too; though, in the mean time, some necessary question of the play be then to be considered: that's villainous, and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready. [*Exeunt PLAYERS.*]

*Enter* POLONIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, and

GUILDENSTERN.

How now, my lord! will the King hear this piece of work?

*Pol.* And the Queen too, and that presently.

*Ham.* Bid the players make haste. [*Exit POLONIUS.*] Will you two help to hasten them?

*Ros.* { We will, my lord.

*Guil.* }

[*Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*]

*Ham.* What ho! Horatio!

*Enter* HORATIO.

*Hor.* Here, sweet lord, at your service.

*Ham.* Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man As e'er my conversation coped withal. 60

*Hor.* O, my dear lord—

*Ham.* Nay, do not think I flatter; For what advancement may I hope from thee That no revenue hast but thy good spirits, To feed and clothe thee? Why should the poor be flatter'd?

No, let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp, And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee Where thrift may follow fawning. Dost thou hear?

Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice And could of men distinguish, her election Hath seal'd thee for herself; for thou hast been As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing, 71 A man that fortune's buffets and rewards Hast ta'en with equal thanks; and blest are those Whose blood and judgement are so well commingled,

That they are not a pipe for fortune's finger To sound what stop she please. Give me that man That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart, As I do thee.—Something too much of this.— 80

There is a play to-night before the King. One scene of it comes near the circumstance Which I have told thee of my father's death: I prithee, when thou seest that act afoot, Even with the very comment of thy soul Observe mine uncle. If his occulted guilt Do not itself unkennel in one speech, It is a damned ghost that we have seen, And my imaginations are as foul As Vulcan's stithy. Give him heedful note; For I mine eyes will rivet to his face, 90 And after we will both our judgements join In censure of his seeming.

*Hor.* Well, my lord.

If he steal aught the whilst this play is playing, And 'scape detecting, I will pay the theft.

*Ham.* They are coming to the play; I must be idle.

Get you a place.

*Danish march. A flourish. Enter KING, QUEEN, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and others.*

*King.* How fares our cousin Hamlet?

*Ham.* Excellent, i' faith; of the chameleon's dish. I eat the air, promise-crammed. You cannot feed capons so. 100

*King.* I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet; these words are not mine.

*Ham.* No, nor mine now. [*To POLONIUS*] My lord, you played once i' the university, you say?

*Pol.* That did I, my lord; and was accounted a good actor.

*Ham.* What did you enact?

*Pol.* I did enact Julius Cæsar. I was killed i' the Capitol; Brutus killed me.

*Ham.* It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf there. Be the players ready? 111

*Ros.* Ay, my lord; they stay upon your patience.

*Queen.* Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me.

*Ham.* No, good mother, here's metal more attractive.

*Pol.* [*To the KING*] O, ho! do you mark that?

*Ham.* Lady, shall I lie in your lap?

[*Lying down at OPHELIA's feet.*]

*Oph.* No, my lord. 120

*Ham.* I mean, my head upon your lap?

*Oph.* Ay, my lord.

*Ham.* Do you think I meant country matters?

*Oph.* I think nothing, my lord.

*Ham.* That's a fair thought to lie between maids' legs.

*Oph.* What is, my lord?

*Ham.* Nothing.

*Oph.* You are merry, my lord.

*Ham.* Who, I? 130

*Oph.* Ay, my lord.

*Ham.* O God, your only jig-maker. What should a man do but be merry? for, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within these two hours.

*Oph.* Nay, 'tis twice two months, my lord.

*Ham.* So long? Nay then, let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of sables. O heavens! die two months ago, and not forgotten yet? Then there's hope a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year; but, by'r lady, he must build churches, then; or else shall he suffer not thinking on, with the hobby-horse, whose epitaph is "For, O, for, O, the hobby-horse is forgot."

*Hautboys play. The dumb-show enters.*

*Enter a King and a Queen very lovingly; the Queen embracing him, and he her. She kneels and makes show of protestation unto him. He takes her up,*

*and declines his head upon her neck; lays him down upon a bank of flowers. She, seeing him asleep, leaves him. Anon comes in a fellow, takes off his crown, kisses it, and pours poison in the King's ears, and exit. The Queen returns; finds the King dead, and makes passionate action. The Poisoner, with some two or three Mutes, comes in again, seeming to lament with her. The dead body is carried away. The Poisoner wooes the Queen with gifts; she seems loath and unwilling awhile, but in the end accepts his love. [Exeunt.]*

*Oph.* What means this, my lord?

*Ham.* Marry, this is miching mallecho; it means mischief.

*Oph.* Belike this show imports the argument of the play. 150

*Enter PROLOGUE.*

*Ham.* We shall know by this fellow. The players cannot keep counsel; they'll tell all.

*Oph.* Will he tell us what this show meant?

*Ham.* Ay, or any show that you'll show him. Be not you ashamed to show, he'll not shame to tell you what it means.

*Oph.* You are naught, you are naught: I'll mark the play.

*Pro.* For us, and for our tragedy,  
Here stooping to your clemency, 160  
We beg your hearing patiently. [Exit.]

*Ham.* Is this a prologue, or the posy of a ring?

*Oph.* 'Tis brief, my lord.

*Ham.* As woman's love.

*Enter two Players as KING and QUEEN.*

*P. King.* Full thirty times hath Phœbus' cart gone round

Neptune's salt wash and Tellus' orb'd ground,  
And thirty dozen moons with borrow'd sheen  
About the world have times twelve thirties been,  
Since love our hearts and Hymen did our hands  
Unite commutual in most sacred bands. 170

*P. Queen.* So many journeys may the sun and moon

Make us again count o'er ere love be done!  
But, woe is me, you are so sick of late,  
So far from cheer and from your former state,  
That I distrust you. Yet, though I distrust,  
Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must;  
For women's fear and love holds quantity,  
In neither aught, or in extremity.  
Now, what my love is, proof hath made you know;

And as my love is sized, my fear is so. 180  
Where love is great, the littlest doubts are fear;  
Where little fears grow great, great love grows there.



*P. King.* 'Faith, I must leave thee, love, and shortly too;

My operant powers their functions leave to do;  
And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,  
Honour'd, beloved; and haply one as kind  
For husband shalt thou—

*P. Queen.* O, confound the rest!  
Such love must needs be treason in my breast.  
In second husband let me be accurst! 189

None wed the second but who kill'd the first.  
*Ham.* [*Aside*] Wormwood, wormwood.

*P. Queen.* The instances that second marriage move

Are base respects of thrift, but none of love:  
A second time I kill my husband dead,  
When second husband kisses me in bed.

*P. King.* I do believe you think what now you speak;

But what we do determine oft we break.  
Purpose is but the slave to memory,  
Of violent birth, but poor validity: 199

Which now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree;

But fall, unshaken, when they mellow be.  
Most necessary 'tis that we forget  
To pay ourselves what to ourselves is debt:  
What to ourselves in passion we propose,  
The passion ending, doth the purpose lose.  
The violence of either grief or joy  
Their own enactures with themselves destroy.  
Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament;

Grief joys, joy grieves, on slender accident.  
This world is not for aye, nor 'tis not strange  
That even our loves should with our fortunes change;

For 'tis a question left us yet to prove,  
Whether love lead fortune, or else fortune love.

The great man down, you mark his favourite flies;

The poor advanced makes friends of enemies.  
And hitherto doth love on fortune tend;  
For who not needs shall never lack a friend,  
And who in want a hollow friend doth try,  
Directly seasons him his enemy.

But, orderly to end where I begun, 220  
Our wills and fates do so contrary run  
That our devices still are overthrown;  
Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own.

So think thou wilt no second husband wed;  
But die thy thoughts when thy first lord is dead.

*P. Queen.* Nor earth to me give food, nor heaven light!

Sport and repose lock from me day and night!  
To desperation turn my trust and hope!  
An anchor's cheer in prison be my scope!  
Each opposite that blanks the face of joy 230  
Meet what I would have well and it destroy!  
Both here and hence pursue me lasting strife,  
If, once a widow, ever I be wife!

*Ham.* If she should break it now!

*P. King.* 'Tis deeply sworn. Sweet, leave me here awhile;

My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile  
The tedious day with sleep. [*Sleeps.*]

*P. Queen.* Sleep rock thy brain;  
And never come mischance between us twain!

[*Exit.*]

*Ham.* Madam, how like you this play? 239

*Queen.* The lady doth protest too much, methinks.

*Ham.* O, but she'll keep her word.

*King.* Have you heard the argument? Is there no offence in't?

*Ham.* No, no, they do but jest, poison in jest;  
no offence i' the world.

*King.* What do you call the play?

*Ham.* "The Mouse-trap." Marry, how? Tropically. This play is the image of a murder done in Vienna. Gonzago is the duke's name; his wife, Baptista. You shall see anon; 'tis a knavish piece of work, but what o' that? your Majesty and we that have free souls, it touches us not. Let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung.

*Enter* LUCIANUS.

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

*Oph.* You are as good as a chorus, my lord.

*Ham.* I could interpret between you and your love, if I could see the puppets dallying.

*Oph.* You are keen, my lord, you are keen.

*Ham.* It would cost you a groaning to take off my edge. 260

*Oph.* Still better, and worse.

*Ham.* So you must take your husbands. Begin, murderer; pox, leave thy damnable faces, and begin. Come, "the croaking raven doth bellow for revenge."

*Luc.* Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing;

Confederate season, else no creature seeing;  
Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,  
With Hecate's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,  
Thy natural magic and dire property, 270  
On wholesome life usurp immediately.

*Pours the poison into the sleeper's ears.*

*Ham.* He poisons him i' the garden for's estate.  
His name's Gonzago; the story is extant, and writ in choice Italian. You shall see anon how

the murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

*Oph.* The King rises.

*Ham.* What, frightened with false fire!

*Queen.* How fares my lord?

*Pol.* Give o'er the play.

*King.* Give me some light. Away! 280

*All.* Lights, lights, lights!

[*Exeunt all but HAMLET and HORATIO.*]

*Ham.* Why, let the stricken deer go weep,

The hart ungalled play;

For some must watch, while some must sleep;

So runs the world away.

Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers—if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me—with two Provincial roses on my razed shoes, get me a fellowship in a cry of players, sir?

*Hor.* Half a share. 290

*Ham.* A whole one, I.

For thou dost know, O Damon dear,

This realm dismantled was

Of Jove himself; and now reigns here

A very, very—pajock.

*Hor.* You might have rhymed.

*Ham.* O good Horatio, I'll take the ghost's word for a thousand pound. Didst perceive?

*Hor.* Very well, my lord.

*Ham.* Upon the talk of the poisoning? 300

*Hor.* I did very well note him.

*Ham.* Ah, ha! Come, some music! come, the recorders!

For if the king like not the comedy,

Why then, belike, he likes it not, perdy.

Come, some music!

*Re-enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*

*Guil.* Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

*Ham.* Sir, a whole history.

*Guil.* The King, sir— 310

*Ham.* Ay, sir, what of him?

*Guil.* Is in his retirement marvellous distempered.

*Ham.* With drink, sir?

*Guil.* No, my lord, rather with choler.

*Ham.* Your wisdom should show itself more richer to signify this to his doctor; for, for me to put him to his purgation would perhaps plunge him into far more choler. 319

*Guil.* Good my lord, put your discourse into some frame and start not so wildly from my affair.

*Ham.* I am tame, sir; pronounce.

*Guil.* The Queen, your mother, in most great affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you.

*Ham.* You are welcome.

*Guil.* Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not

of the right breed. If it shall please you to make me a wholesome answer, I will do your mother's commandment; if not, your pardon and my return shall be the end of my business. 330

*Ham.* Sir, I cannot.

*Guil.* What, my lord?

*Ham.* Make you a wholesome answer; my wit's diseased. But, sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command; or, rather, as you say, my mother. Therefore no more, but to the matter. My mother, you say,—

*Ros.* Then thus she says; your behaviour hath struck her into amazement and admiration. 339

*Ham.* O wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother! But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration? Impart.

*Ros.* She desires to speak with you in her closet, ere you go to bed.

*Ham.* We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any further trade with us?

*Ros.* My lord, you once did love me.

*Ham.* So I do still, by these pickers and stealers. 349

*Ros.* Good my lord, what is your cause of distemper? you do, surely, bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

*Ham.* Sir, I lack advancement.

*Ros.* How can that be, when you have the voice of the King himself for your succession in Denmark?

*Ham.* Ay, sir, but, "While the grass grows"—the proverb is something musty. 359

*Re-enter PLAYERS with recorders.*

O, the recorders! let me see one. To withdraw with you:—why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil?

*Guil.* O, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

*Ham.* I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe?

*Guil.* My lord, I cannot.

*Ham.* I pray you.

*Guil.* Believe me, I cannot.

*Ham.* I do beseech you. 370

*Guil.* I know no touch of it, my lord.

*Ham.* 'Tis as easy as lying. Govern these ventages with your fingers and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music. Look you, these are the stops.

*Guil.* But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill.

*Ham.* Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me! You would play upon



me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass; and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ, yet cannot you make it speak. 'Sblood, do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, yet you cannot play upon me.

*Enter* POLONIUS.

God bless you, sir! 390

*Pol.* My lord, the Queen would speak with you, and presently.

*Ham.* Do you see yonder cloud that's almost in shape of a camel?

*Pol.* By the mass, and 'tis like a camel, indeed.

*Ham.* Methinks it is like a weasel.

*Pol.* It is backed like a weasel.

*Ham.* Or like a whale?

*Pol.* Very like a whale. 399

*Ham.* Then I will come to my mother by and by. They fool me to the top of my bent. I will come by and by.

*Pol.* I will say so.

*Ham.* By and by is easily said. [*Exit* POLONIUS.]  
Leave me, friends.

[*Exeunt all but* HAMLET.]

'Tis now the very witching time of night,  
When churchyards yawn and hell itself breathes  
out

Contagion to this world. Now could I drink hot  
blood,

And do such bitter business as the day  
Would quake to look on. Soft! now to my  
mother. 410

O heart, lose not thy nature; let not ever  
The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom.

Let me be cruel, not unnatural.

I will speak daggers to her, but use none;

My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites;

How in my words soever she be shent,

To give them seals never, my soul, consent!

[*Exit.*]

SCENE III. *A room in the castle*

*Enter* KING, ROSENCRANTZ, and  
GUILDENSTERN.

*King.* I like him not, nor stands it safe with us  
To let his madness range. Therefore prepare  
you;

I your commission will forthwith dispatch,

And he to England shall along with you:

The terms of our estate may not endure

Hazard so near us as doth hourly grow

Out of his lunacies.

*Guil.*

We will ourselves provide.

Most holy and religious fear it is

To keep those many many bodies safe

That live and feed upon your Majesty. 10

*Ros.* The single and peculiar life is bound,

With all the strength and armour of the mind,

To keep itself from noyance; but much more

That spirit upon whose weal depend and rest

The lives of many. The cease of majesty

Dies not alone; but, like a gulf, doth draw

What's near it with it. It is a massy wheel,

Fix'd on the summit of the highest mount,

To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things

Are mortised and adjoin'd; which, when it falls,

Each small annexment, petty consequence, 21

Attends the boisterous ruin. Never alone

Did the King sigh, but with a general groan.

*King.* Arm you, I pray you, to this speedy voyage;

For we will fetters put upon this fear,

Which now goes too free-footed.

*Ros.* } We will haste us.

*Guil.* }

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.]

*Enter* POLONIUS.

*Pol.* My lord, he's going to his mother's closet:

Behind the arras I'll convey myself,

To hear the process; I'll warrant she'll tax him  
home:

And, as you said, and wisely was it said, 30

'Tis meet that some more audience than a mother,

Since nature makes them partial, should o'erhear

The speech, of vantage. Fare you well, my liege.

I'll call upon you ere you go to bed,

And tell you what I know.

*King.* Thanks, dear my lord.

[*Exit* POLONIUS.]

O, my offence is rank, it smells to heaven;

It hath the primal eldest curse upon't,

A brother's murder. Pray can I not,

Though inclination be as sharp as will.

My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent; 40

And, like a man to double business bound,

I stand in pause where I shall first begin,

And both neglect. What if this cursed hand

Were thicker than itself with brother's blood,

Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens

To wash it white as snow? Whereto serves mercy

But to confront the visage of offence?

And what's in prayer but this two-fold force,

To be forestalled ere we come to fall,

Or pardon'd being down? Then I'll look up; 50

My fault is past. But, O, what form of prayer

Can serve my turn? "Forgive me my foul murder"?

That cannot be; since I am still possess'd  
 Of those effects for which I did the murder,  
 My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.  
 May one be pardon'd and retain the offence?  
 In the corrupted currents of this world  
 Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice,  
 And oft 'tis seen the wicked prize itself  
 Buys out the law: but 'tis not so above; 60  
 'There is no shuffling here: the action lies  
 In his true nature; and we ourselves compell'd,  
 Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,  
 To give in evidence. What then? what rests?  
 Try what repentance can. What can it not?  
 Yet what can it when one can not repent?  
 O wretched state! O bosom black as death!  
 O limed soul, that, struggling to be free,  
 Art more engaged! Help, angels! Make assay!  
 Bow, stubborn knees; and, heart with strings of  
 steel, 70  
 Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe!  
 All may be well. [*Retires and kneels.*]

*Enter HAMLET.*

*Ham.* Now might I do it pat, now he is praying;  
 And now I'll do't. And so he goes to heaven;  
 And so am I revenged. That would be scann'd.  
 A villain kills my father; and for that,  
 I, his sole son, do this same villain send  
 To heaven.  
 O, this is hire and salary, not revenge.  
 He took my father grossly, full of bread; 80  
 With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May;  
 And how his audit stands who knows save heaven?  
 But in our circumstance and course of thought,  
 'Tis heavy with him. And am I then revenged,  
 To take him in the purging of his soul,  
 When he is fit and season'd for his passage?  
 No!  
 Up, sword; and know thou a more horrid hent.  
 When he is drunk asleep, or in his rage,  
 Or in the incestuous pleasure of his bed; 90  
 At gaming, swearing, or about some act  
 That has no relish of salvation in't;  
 Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven,  
 And that his soul may be as damn'd and black  
 As hell, whereto it goes. My mother stays.  
 This physic but prolongs thy sickly days. [*Exit.*]  
*King.* [*Rising*] My words fly up, my thoughts  
 remain below.  
 Words without thoughts never to heaven go.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE IV. *The Queen's closet*

*Enter QUEEN and POLONIUS.*

*Pol.* He will come straight. Look you lay home  
 to him.

Tell him his pranks have been too broad to bear  
 with,  
 And that your Grace hath screen'd and stood be-  
 tween  
 Much heat and him. I'll sconce me even here  
 Pray you, be round with him.

*Ham.* [*Within*] Mother, mother, mother!

*Queen.* I'll warrant you,  
 Fear me not. Withdraw, I hear him coming.

[*POLONIUS hides behind the arras.*]

*Enter HAMLET.*

*Ham.* Now, mother, what's the matter?

*Queen.* Hamlet, thou hast thy father much  
 offended.

*Ham.* Mother, you have my father much  
 offended. 10

*Queen.* Come, come, you answer with an idle  
 tongue.

*Ham.* Go, go, you question with a wicked  
 tongue.

*Queen.* Why, how now, Hamlet!

*Ham.* What's the matter now?

*Queen.* Have you forgot me?

*Ham.* No, by the rood, not so:  
 You are the Queen, your husband's brother's  
 wife;  
 And—would it were not so!—you are my  
 mother.

*Queen.* Nay, then, I'll set those to you that can  
 speak.

*Ham.* Come, come, and sit you down; you  
 shall not budge;

You go not till I set you up a glass  
 Where you may see the inmost part of you. 20

*Queen.* What wilt thou do? thou wilt not mur-  
 der me?

Help, help, ho!

*Pol.* [*Behind*] What, ho! help, help, help!

*Ham.* [*Drawing*] How now! a rat? Dead, for a  
 ducat, dead!

*Makes a pass through the arras.*

*Pol.* [*Behind*] O, I am slain! [*Falls and dies.*]

*Queen.* O me, what hast thou done?

*Ham.* Nay, I know not:  
 Is it the King?

*Queen.* O, what a rash and bloody deed is this!

*Ham.* A bloody deed! almost as bad, good  
 mother,

As kill a king, and marry with his brother.

*Queen.* As kill a king!

*Ham.* Ay, lady, 'twas my word. 30

*Lifts up the arras and discovers Polonius.*

Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!

I took thee for thy better. Take thy fortune;

Thou find'st to be too busy is some danger.



Leave wringing of your hands. Peace! sit you down,

And let me wring your heart; for so I shall,  
If it be made of penetrable stuff,  
If damned custom have not brass'd it so  
That it be proof and bulwark against sense.

*Queen.* What have I done, that thou darest wag thy tongue

In noise so rude against me?

*Ham.* Such an act 40  
That blurs the grace and blush of modesty,  
Calls virtue hypocrite, takes off the rose  
From the fair forehead of an innocent love  
And sets a blister there, makes marriage-vows  
As false as dicers' oaths; O, such a deed  
As from the body of contraction plucks  
The very soul, and sweet religion makes  
A rhapsody of words. Heaven's face doth glow;  
Yea, this solidity and compound mass,  
With tristful visage, as against the doom, 50  
Is thought-sick at the act.

*Queen.* Ay me, what act,  
That roars so loud, and thunders in the index?

*Ham.* Look here, upon this picture, and on this,

The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.  
See, what a grace was seated on this brow;  
Hyperion's curls; the front of Jove himself;  
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command;  
A station like the herald Mercury  
New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill;  
A combination and a form indeed, 60  
Where every god did seem to set his seal,  
To give the world assurance of a man.  
This was your husband. Look you now, what follows:

Here is your husband; like a mildew'd ear,  
Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes?

Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,  
And batten on this moor? Ha! have you eyes?  
You cannot call it love; for at your age  
The hey-day in the blood is tame, it's humble,  
And waits upon the judgement; and what judgement 70

Would step from this to this? Sense, sure, you have,  
Else could you not have motion; but sure, that sense

Is apoplex'd; for madness would not err,  
Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thrall'd  
But it reserved some quantity of choice,  
To serve in such a difference. What devil was't  
That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind?  
Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,  
Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all,

Or but a sickly part of one true sense 80  
Could not so mope.

O shame! where is thy blush? Rebellious hell,  
If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,  
To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,  
And melt in her own fire. Proclaim no shame  
When the compulsive ardour gives the charge,  
Since frost itself as actively doth burn  
And reason panders will.

*Queen.* O Hamlet, speak no more.  
Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul;  
And there I see such black and grained spots 90  
As will not leave their tinct.

*Ham.* Nay, but to live  
In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed,  
Stew'd in corruption, honeying and making  
love

Over the nasty sty—

*Queen.* O, speak to me no more;  
These words, like daggers, enter in mine ears;  
No more, sweet Hamlet!

*Ham.* A murderer and a villain;  
A slave that is not twentieth part the tithe  
Of your precedent lord; a vice of kings;  
A cutpurse of the empire and the rule,  
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole, 100  
And put it in his pocket!

*Queen.* No more!

*Ham.* A king of shreds and patches—

*Enter GHOST.*

Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,  
You heavenly guards! What would your gracious  
figure?

*Queen.* Alas, he's mad!

*Ham.* Do you not come your tardy son to  
chide,

That, lapsed in time and passion, lets go by  
The important acting of your dread command?  
O, say!

*Ghost.* Do not forget! This visitation 110  
Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.  
But, look, amazement on thy mother sits.  
O, step between her and her fighting soul.  
Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works.  
Speak to her, Hamlet.

*Ham.* How is it with you, lady?

*Queen.* Alas, how is't with you,  
That you do bend your eye on vacancy  
And with the incorporal air do hold discourse?  
Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep;  
And, as the sleeping soldiers in the alarm, 120  
Your bedded hair, like life in excrements,  
Start up, and stand an end. O gentle son,  
Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper  
Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?

*Ham.* On him, on him! Look you, how pale he glares!

His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones,  
Would make them capable. Do not look upon me;

Lest with this piteous action you convert  
My stern effects; then what I have to do 129  
Will want true colour, tears perchance for blood.

*Queen.* To whom do you speak this?

*Ham.* Do you see nothing there?

*Queen.* Nothing at all; yet all that is I see.

*Ham.* Nor did you nothing hear?

*Queen.* No, nothing but ourselves.

*Ham.* Why, look you there! look, how it steals away!

My father, in his habit as he lived!

Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal!

[*Exit GHOST.*]

*Queen.* This is the very coinage of your brain.

This bodiless creation ecstasy

Is very cunning in.

*Ham.* Ecstasy! 139

My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,  
And makes as healthful music. It is not madness  
That I have utter'd. Bring me to the test,  
And I the matter will re-word; which madness  
Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace,  
Lay not that flattering unction to your soul,  
That not your trespass, but my madness speaks.

It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,  
Whiles rank corruption, mining all within,  
Infects unseen. Confess yourself to heaven;

Repent what's past; avoid what is to come; 150  
And do not spread the compost on the weeds,  
To make them ranker. Forgive me this my

virtue;

For in the fatness of these pury times  
Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg,

Yea, curb and woo for leave to do him good.

*Queen.* O Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in twain.

*Ham.* O, throw away the worser part of it,  
And live the purer with the other half.

Good night; but go not to mine uncle's bed.

Assume a virtue, if you have it not. 160

That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat,

Of habits devil, is angel yet in this,

That to the use of actions fair and good

He likewise gives a frock or livery,

That aptly is put on. Refrain to-night,

And that shall lend a kind of easiness

To the next abstinence; the next more easy;

For use almost can change the stamp of nature,

And either master the devil, or throw him out 169

With wondrous potency. Once more, good night;

And when you are desirous to be bless'd,

I'll blessing beg of you. For this same lord,

[*Pointing to Polonius.*]

I do repent; but heaven hath pleased it so,  
To punish me with this and this with me,  
That I must be their scourge and minister.  
I will bestow him, and will answer well  
The death I gave him. So, again, good night.

I must be cruel, only to be kind.

Thus bad begins and worse remains behind.

One word more, good lady.

*Queen.* What shall I do? 180

*Ham.* Not this, by no means, that I bid you do:

Let the bloat king tempt you again to bed;

Pinch wanton on your cheek; call you his

mouse;

And let him, for a pair of reechy kisses,

Or paddling in you neck with his damn'd fingers,

Make you to ravel all this matter out,

That I essentially am not in madness,

But mad in craft. 'Twere good you let him

know;

For who, that's but a queen, fair, sober, wise, 189

Would from a paddock, from a bat, a gib,

Such dear concerns hide? who would do so?

No, in despite of sense and secrecy,

Unpeg the basket on the house's top,

Let the birds fly, and, like the famous ape,

To try conclusions, in the basket creep,

And break your own neck down.

*Queen.* Be thou assured, if words be made of

breath,

And breath of life, I have no life to breathe

What thou hast said to me.

*Ham.* I must to England; you know that?

*Queen.* Alack, 200

I had forgot. 'Tis so concluded on.

*Ham.* There's letters seal'd, and my two school-fellows,

Whom I will trust as I will adders fang'd,

They bear the mandate; they must sweep my

way,

And marshal me to knavery. Let it work;

For 'tis the sport to have the engineer

Hoist with his own petar; and 't shall go hard

But I will delve one yard below their mines,

And blow them at the moon. O, 'tis most sweet,

When in one line two crafts directly meet. 210

This man shall set me packing.

I'll lug the guts into the neighbour room.

Mother, good night. Indeed this counsellor

Is now most still, most secret, and most grave,

Who was in life a foolish prating knave.

Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you.

Good night, mother.

[*Exeunt severally; HAMLET dragging in Polonius.*]



## ACT IV

SCENE I. *A room in the castle*

*Enter KING, QUEEN, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.*

*King.* There's matter in these sighs; these profound heaves

You must translate; 'tis fit we understand them. Where is your son?

*Queen.* Bestow this place on us a little while.

*[Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.]*

Ah, mine own lord, what have I seen to-night!

*King.* What, Gertrude? How does Hamlet?

*Queen.* Mad as the sea and wind, when both contend

Which is the mightier. In his lawless fit, Behind the arras hearing something stir, Whips our his rapier, cries, "A rat, a rat!" 10 And, in this brainish apprehension, kills The unseen good old man.

*King.* O heavy deed!

It had been so with us, had we been there.

His liberty is full of threats to all;

To you yourself, to us, to every one.

Alas, how shall this bloody deed be answer'd?

It will be laid to us, whose providence

Should have kept short, restrain'd, and out of haunt,

This mad young man. But so much was our love, We would not understand what was most fit; 20

But, like the owner of a foul disease,

To keep it from divulging, let it feed

Even on the pith of life. Where is he gone?

*Queen.* To draw apart the body he hath kill'd,

O'er whom his very madness, like some ore

Among a mineral of metals base,

Shows itself pure; he weeps for what is done.

*King.* O Gertrude, come away!

The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch,

But we will ship him hence, and this vile deed 30

We must, with all our majesty and skill,

Both countenance and excuse. Ho, Guildenstern!

*Re-enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*

Friends both, go join you with some further aid.

Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,

And from his mother's closet hath he dragg'd him.

Go seek him out; speak fair, and bring the body Into the chapel. I pray you, haste in this.

*[Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.]*

Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends;

And let them know, both what we mean to do,

And what's untimely done; so, haply, slander, 40

Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,

As level as the cannon to his blank, Transports his poison'd shot, may miss our name,

And hit the woundless air. O, come away!

My soul is full of discord and dismay. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE II. *Another room in the castle*

*Enter HAMLET.*

*Ham.* Safely stowed.

*Ros.* } *[Within]* Hamlet! Lord Hamlet!

*Guil.* }

*Ham.* But soft, what noise? who calls on Hamlet? O, here they come.

*Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*

*Ros.* What have you done, my lord, with the dead body?

*Ham.* Compounded it with dust, whereto 'tis kin.

*Ros.* Tell us where 'tis, that we may take it thence

And bear it to the chapel.

*Ham.* Do not believe it.

*Ros.* Believe what? 10

*Ham.* That I can keep your counsel and not mine own. Besides, to be demanded of a sponge, what replication should be made by the son of a king?

*Ros.* Take you me for a sponge, my lord?

*Ham.* Ay, sir, that soaks up the King's countenance, his rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the King best service in the end. He keeps them, like an ape, in the corner of his jaw; first mouthed, to be last swallowed. When he needs what you have gleaned, it is but squeezing you, and, sponge, you shall be dry again.

*Ros.* I understand you not, my lord.

*Ham.* I am glad of it. A knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear.

*Ros.* My lord, you must tell us where the body is, and go with us to the King.

*Ham.* The body is with the King, but the King is not with the body. The King is a thing—

*Guil.* A thing, my lord! 31

*Ham.* Of nothing. Bring me to him. Hide fox, and all after. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE III. *Another room in the castle*

*Enter KING attended.*

*King.* I have sent to seek him, and to find the body.

How dangerous is it that this man goes loose!

Yet must not we put the strong law on him.

He's loved of the distracted multitude,

Who like not in their judgement, but their eyes:

And where 'tis so, the offender's scourge is weigh'd,  
But never the offence. To bear all smooth and even,  
This sudden sending him away must seem  
Deliberate pause. Diseases desperate grown  
By desperate appliance are relieved, 10  
Or not at all.

*Enter ROSENCRANTZ.*

How now! what hath befall'n?

*Ros.* Where the dead body is bestow'd, my lord,

We cannot get from him.

*King.* But where is he?

*Ros.* Without, my lord; guarded, to know your pleasure.

*King.* Bring him before us.

*Ros.* Ho, Guildenstern! bring in my lord.

*Enter HAMLET and GUILDENSTERN.*

*King.* Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius?

*Ham.* At supper.

*King.* At supper! where? 19

*Ham.* Not where he eats, but where he is eaten. A certain convocation of politic worms are e'en at him. Your worm is your only emperor for diet. We fat all creatures else to fat us, and we fat ourselves for maggots. Your fat king and your lean beggar is but variable service, two dishes, but to one table; that's the end.

*King.* Alas, alas!

*Ham.* A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a king, and eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm. 30

*King.* What dost thou mean by this?

*Ham.* Nothing but to show you how a king may go a progress through the guts of a beggar.

*King.* Where is Polonius?

*Ham.* In heaven; send thither to see. If your messenger find him not there, seek him i' the other place yourself. But indeed, if you find him not within this month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.

*King.* Go seek him there. 40

*[To some Attendants.]*

*Ham.* He will stay till you come.

*[Exeunt Attendants.]*

*King.* Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety—

Which we do tender, as we dearly grieve  
For that which thou hast done—must send thee  
hence

With fiery quickness. Therefore prepare thyself;

The bark is ready, and the wind at help,

The associates tend, and everything is bent  
For England.

*Ham.* For England!

*King.* Ay, Hamlet.

*Ham.* Good.

*King.* So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes.

*Ham.* I see a cherub that sees them. But, come;  
for England! Farewell, dear mother. 51

*King.* Thy loving father, Hamlet.

*Ham.* My mother. Father and mother is man  
and wife; man and wife is one flesh; and so, my  
mother. Come, for England! *[Exit.]*

*King.* Follow him at foot; tempt him with  
speed aboard;

Delay it not; I'll have him hence to-night.

Away! for every thing is seal'd and done

That else leans on the affair. Pray you, make  
haste.

*[Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.]*

And, England, if my love thou hold'st at aught—  
As my great power thereof may give thee  
sense,

Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red  
After the Danish sword, and thy free awe  
Pays homage to us—thou mayst not coldly set  
Our sovereign process; which imports at full,  
By letters congruing to that effect,  
The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England;  
For like the hectic in my blood he rages,  
And thou must cure me. Till I know 'tis done,  
Howe'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun. 70  
*[Exit.]*

#### SCENE IV. *A plain in Denmark*

*Enter FORTINBRAS, a CAPTAIN, and Soldiers,  
marching.*

*For.* Go, captain, from me greet the Danish  
king:

Tell him that, by his license, Fortinbras  
Craves the conveyance of a promised march  
Over his kingdom. You know the rendezvous.  
If that his Majesty would aught with us,  
We shall express our duty in his eye;  
And let him know so.

*Cap.* I will do't, my lord.

*For.* Go softly on.

*[Exeunt FORTINBRAS and Soldiers.]*

*Enter HAMLET, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN,  
and others.*

*Ham.* Good sir, whose powers are these?

*Cap.* They are of Norway, sir. 10

*Ham.* How purposed, sir, I pray you?

*Cap.* Against some part of Poland.

*Ham.* Who commands them, sir?

*Cap.* The nephew to old Norway, Fortinbras.



*Ham.* Goes it against the main of Poland, sir,  
Or for some frontier?

*Cap.* Truly to speak, and with no addition,  
We go to gain a little patch of ground  
That hath in it no profit but the name.  
To pay five ducats, five, I would not farm it; 20  
Nor will it yield to Norway or the Pole  
A ranker rate, should it be sold in fee.

*Ham.* Why, then the Polack never will defend  
it.

*Cap.* Yes, it is already garrison'd.

*Ham.* Two thousand souls and twenty thousand  
ducats

Will not debate the question of this straw.

This is the imposthume of much wealth and  
peace,

That inward breaks, and shows no cause without  
Why the man dies. I humbly thank you, sir.

*Cap.* God be wi' you, sir. *[Exit.]*

*Ros.* Will't please you go, my lord? 30

*Ham.* I'll be with you straight. Go a little  
before. *[Exeunt all except HAMLET.]*

How all occasions do inform against me,  
And spur my dull revenge! What is a man,  
If his chief good and market of his time  
Be but to sleep and feed? a beast, no more.  
Sure, he that made us with such large discourse,  
Looking before and after, gave us not  
That capability and god-like reason  
To fust in us unused. Now, whether it be  
Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple 40  
Of thinking too precisely on the event,  
A thought which, quarter'd, hath but one part  
wisdom

And ever three parts coward, I do not know  
Why yet I live to say "This thing's to do";  
Sith I have cause and will and strength and means  
To do't. Examples gross as earth exhort me;  
Witness this army of such mass and charge  
Led by a delicate and tender prince,  
Whose spirit with divine ambition puff'd  
Makes mouths at the invisible event, 50  
Exposing what is mortal and unsure  
To all that fortune, death, and danger dare,  
Even for an egg-shell. Rightly to be great  
Is not to stir without great argument,  
But greatly to find quarrel in a straw  
When honour's at the stake. How stand I then,  
That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd,  
Excitements of my reason and my blood,  
And let me sleep? while, to my shame, I see  
The imminent death of twenty thousand men, 60  
That, for a fantasy and trick of fame,  
Go to their graves like beds, fight for a plot  
Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,  
Which is not tomb enough and continent

To hide the slain? O, from this time forth,  
My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth!  
*[Exit.]*

SCENE V. *Elsinore: a room in the castle*

*Enter* QUEEN, HORATIO, and a GENTLEMAN.

*Queen.* I will not speak with her.

*Gent.* She is importunate, indeed distract.  
Her mood will needs be pitied.

*Queen.* What would she have?

*Gent.* She speaks much of her father; says she  
hears

There's tricks i' the world; and hems, and beats  
her heart;

Spurns enviously at straws; speaks things in  
doubt,

That carry but half sense. Her speech is nothing,  
Yet the unshaped use of it doth move

The hearers to collection; they aim at it,  
And botch the words up fit to their own thoughts;  
Which, as her winks, and nods, and gestures  
yield them, 11

Indeed would make one think there might be  
thought,

Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily.

*Hor.* 'Twere good she were spoken with; for  
she may strew

Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds.

*Queen.* Let her come in. *[Exit* HORATIO.

To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,  
Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss;  
So full of artless jealousy is guilt,  
It spills itself in fearing to be spilt. 20

*Re-enter* HORATIO, with OPHELIA.

*Oph.* Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark?

*Queen.* How now, Ophelia!

*Oph.* *[Sings]* "How should I your true love  
know

From another one?

By his cockle hat and staff,  
And his sandal shoon."

*Queen.* Alas, sweet lady, what imports this  
song?

*Oph.* Say you? nay, pray you, mark.

*[Sings]* "He is dead and gone, lady,  
He is dead and gone; 30  
At his head a grass-green turf,  
At his heels a stone."

*Queen.* Nay, but, Ophelia—

*Oph.* Pray you, mark.

*[Sings]* "White his shroud as the mountain  
snow"—

*Enter* KING.

*Queen.* Alas, look here, my lord.

*Oph.* [*Sings*] "Larded with sweet flowers;  
Which bewept to the grave did go  
With true-love showers."

*King.* How do you, pretty lady? 40

*Oph.* Well, God 'ild you! They say the owl  
was a baker's daughter. Lord, we know what we  
are, but know not what we may be. God be at  
your table!

*King.* Conceit upon her father.

*Oph.* Pray you, let's have no words of this; but  
when they ask you what it means, say you this:

[*Sings*] "To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day,

All in the morning betime,  
And I a maid at your window,  
To be your Valentine. 50

Then up he rose, and donn'd his clothes,  
And dupp'd the chamber-door;  
Let in the maid, that out a maid  
Never departed more."

*King.* Pretty Ophelia!

*Oph.* Indeed, la, without an oath, I'll make an  
end on't:

[*Sings*] "By Gis and by Saint Charity,  
Alack, and fie for shame! 60

Young men will do't, if they come to't;  
By cock, they are to blame.

Quoth she, before you tumbled me,  
You promised me to wed.

So would I ha' done, by yonder sun,  
An thou hadst not come to my bed."

*King.* How long hath she been thus?

*Oph.* I hope all will be well. We must be  
patient; but I cannot choose but weep, to think  
they should lay him i' the cold ground. My  
brother shall know of it; and so I thank you for  
your good counsel. Come, my coach! Good  
night, ladies; good night, sweet ladies; good  
night, good night. [*Exit.*]

*King.* Follow her close; give her good watch,  
I pray you. [*Exit* HORATIO.]

O, this is the poison of deep grief; it springs  
All from her father's death. O Gertrude, Gertrude,  
When sorrows come, they come not single  
spies,

But in battalions. First, her father slain;  
Next, your son gone; and he most violent author  
Of his own just remove; the people muddied, 81  
Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and  
whispers,  
For good Polonius' death; and we have done but  
greenly,

In hugger-mugger to inter him; poor Ophelia  
Divided from herself and her fair judgement,  
Without the which we are pictures, or mere  
beasts;

Last, and as much containing as all these,

Her brother is in secret come from France;  
Feeds on his wonder, keeps himself in clouds,  
And wants not buzzers to infect his ear 90  
With pestilent speeches of his father's death;  
Wherein necessity, of matter beggar'd,  
Will nothing stick our person to arraign  
In ear and ear. O my dear Gertrude, this,  
Like to a murdering-piece, in many places  
Gives me superfluous death.

*A noise within.*

*Queen.* Alack, what noise is this?

*Enter another GENTLEMAN.*

*King.* Where are my Switzers? Let them  
guard the door.

What is the matter?

*Gent.* Save yourself, my lord:  
The ocean, overpeering of his list,  
Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste 100  
Than young Laertes, in a riotous head,  
O'erbears your officers. The rabble call him  
lord;

And, as the world were now but to begin,  
Antiquity forgot, custom not known,  
The ratifiers and props of every word,  
They cry, "Choose we: Laertes shall be king:"  
Caps, hands, and tongues, applaud it to the  
clouds:

"Laertes shall be king, Laertes king!"

*Queen.* How cheerfully on the false trail they  
cry!

O, this is counter, you false Danish dogs! 110

*King.* The doors are broke.

*Noise within.*

*Enter* LAERTES, armed; DANES following.

*Laer.* Where is this king? Sirs, stand you all  
without.

*Danes.* No, let's come in.

*Laer.* I pray you, give me leave.

*Danes.* We will, we will.

[*They retire without the door.*]

*Laer.* I thank you; keep the door. O thou vile  
king,

Give me my father!

*Queen.* Calmly, good Laertes.

*Laer.* That drop of blood that's calm proclaims  
me bastard,

Cries cuckold to my father, brands the harlot  
Even here, between the chaste unsmirched brow  
Of my true mother.

*King.* What is the cause, Laertes, 120  
That thy rebellion looks so giant-like?

Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person:  
There's such divinity doth hedge a king,  
That treason can but peep to what it would,



Acts little of his will. Tell me, Laertes,  
Why thou art thus incensed. Let him go, Gertrude.

Speak, man.

*Laer.* Where is my father?

*King.* Dead.

*Queen.* But not by him.

*King.* Let him demand his fill.

*Laer.* How came he dead? I'll not be juggled with. 130

To hell, allegiance! vows, to the blackest devil!  
Conscience and grace, to the profoundest pit!  
I dare damnation. To this point I stand,  
That both the worlds I give to negligence,  
Let come what comes; only I'll be revenged  
Most thoroughly for my father.

*King.* Who shall stay you?

*Laer.* My will, not all the world:

And for my means, I'll husband them so well,  
They shall go far with little.

*King.* Good Laertes,

If you desire to know the certainty 140

Of your dear father's death, is't writ in your  
revenge,

That, swoopstake, you will draw both friend and  
foe,

Winner and loser?

*Laer.* None but his enemies.

*King.* Will you know them then?

*Laer.* To his good friends thus wide I'll ope  
my arms;

And like the kind life-rendering pelican,  
Repast them with my blood.

*King.* Why, now you speak

Like a good child and a true gentleman.

That I am guiltless of your father's death,

And am most sensibly in grief for it, 150  
It shall as level to your judgement pierce

As day does to your eye

*Danes.* [*Within*] Let her come in.

*Laer.* How now! what noise is that?

*Re-enter OPHELIA.*

O heat, dry up my brains! tears seven times salt,  
Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye!  
By heaven, thy madness shall be paid with weight,  
Till our scale turn the beam. O rose of May!  
Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!  
O heavens! is't possible, a young maid's wits 160  
Should be as mortal as an old man's life?  
Nature is fine in love, and where 'tis fine,  
It sends some precious instance of itself  
After the thing it loves.

*Oph.* [*Sings*]

"They bore him barefaced on the bier;  
Hey non nonny, nonny, hey nonny;

And in his grave rain'd many a tear"—

Fare you well, my dove!

*Laer.* Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade  
revenge,

It could not move thus.

*Oph.* [*Sings*] "You must sing a-down a-down,  
An you call him a-down-a." 171

O, how the wheel becomes it! It is the false steward,  
that stole his master's daughter.

*Laer.* This nothing's more than matter.

*Oph.* There's rosemary, that's for remembrance; pray, love, remember; and there is pansies, that's for thoughts.

*Laer.* A document in madness, thoughts and remembrance fitted. 179

*Oph.* There's fennel for you, and columbines; there's rue for you, and here's some for me; we may call it herb-grace o'Sundays. O, you must wear your rue with a difference. There's a daisy. I would give you some violets, but they withered all when my father died. They say he made a good end—

[*Sings*] "For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy."

*Laer.* Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself,  
She turns to favour and to prettiness.

*Oph.* [*Sings*] "And will he not come again?

And will he not come again?

No, no, he is dead;

Go to thy death-bed;

He never will come again.

His beard was as white as snow,

All flaxen was his poll.

He is gone, he is gone,

And we cast away moan.

God ha' mercy on his soul!"

And of all Christian souls, I pray God. God be  
wi' ye. [*Exit.* 200

*Laer.* Do you see this, O God?

*King.* Laertes, I must commune with your  
grief,

Or you deny me right. Go but apart,

Make choice of whom your wisest friends you  
will,

And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and  
me.

If by direct or by collateral hand

They find us touch'd, we will our kingdom  
give,

Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,

To you in satisfaction; but if not,

Be you content to lend your patience to us, 210

And we shall jointly labour with your soul  
To give it due content.

*Laer.* Let this be so;

His means of death, his obscure funeral—

No trophy, sword, nor hatchment o'er his bones,  
 No noble rite nor formal ostentation—  
 Cry to be heard, as 'twere from heaven to  
 earth,  
 That I must call't in question.  
*King.* So you shall;  
 And where the offence is let the great axe fall.  
 I pray you, go with me. [*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE VI. Another room in the castle

Enter HORATIO and a SERVANT.

*Hor.* What are they that would speak with me?  
*Serv.* Sailors, sir. They say they have letters for  
 you.  
*Hor.* Let them come in. [*Exit SERVANT.*]  
 I do not know from what part of the world  
 I should be greeted, if not from lord Hamlet.

Enter SAILORS.

*1st Sail.* God bless you, sir.  
*Hor.* Let him bless thee too.  
*1st Sail.* He shall, sir, an't please Him.  
 There's a letter for you, sir. It comes from the  
 ambassador that was bound for England; if your  
 name be Horatio, as I am let to know it is. 11  
*Hor.* [*Reads*] "Horatio, when thou shalt have  
 overlooked this, give these fellows some means  
 to the King; they have letters for him. Ere we  
 were two days old at sea, a pirate of very warlike  
 appointment gave us chase. Finding ourselves  
 too slow of sail, we put on a compelled valour,  
 and in the grapple I boarded them. On the instant  
 they got clear of our ship; so I alone became  
 their prisoner. They have dealt with me like  
 thieves of mercy, but they knew what they did;  
 I am to do a good turn for them. Let the King  
 have the letters I have sent; and repair thou  
 to me with as much speed as thou wouldst fly death.  
 I have words to speak in thine ear will make thee  
 dumb; yet are they much too light for the bore  
 of the matter. These good fellows will bring  
 thee where I am. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern  
 hold their course for England; of them I have  
 much to tell thee. Farewell. 30

"He that thou knowest thine, Hamlet"  
 Come, I will make you way for these your  
 letters;  
 And do't the speedier, that you may direct me  
 To him from whom you brought them. [*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE VII. Another room in the castle

Enter KING and Laertes.

*King.* Now must your conscience my acquit-  
 tance seal,  
 And you must put me in your heart for friend,  
 Sith you have heard, and with a knowing ear,

That he which hath your noble father slain  
 Pursued my life.

*Laer.* It well appears: but tell me  
 Why you proceeded not against these feats,  
 So crimeful and so capital in nature,  
 As by your safety, wisdom, all things else,  
 You mainly were stirr'd up.

*King.* O, for two special reasons;  
 Which may to you, perhaps, seem much un-  
 sinew'd,

But yet to me they are strong. The Queen his  
 mother 11

Lives almost by his looks; and for myself—  
 My virtue or my plague, be it either which—  
 She's so conjunctive to my life and soul,  
 That, as the star moves not but in his sphere,  
 I could not but by her. The other motive,  
 Why to a public count I might not go,  
 Is the great love the general gender bear him;  
 Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,  
 Would, like the spring that turneth wood to  
 stone,

Convert his gyves to graces; so that my arrows,  
 Too slightly timber'd for so loud a wind,  
 Had set my reverend to my bow again,  
 And not where I had aim'd them.

*Laer.* And so have I a noble father lost;  
 A sister driven into desperate terms,  
 Whose worth, if praises may go back again,  
 Stood challenger on mount of all the age  
 For her perfections. But my revenge will come.

*King.* Break not your sleeps for that. You must  
 not think 30

That we are made of stuff so flat and dull  
 That we can let our beard be shook with danger  
 And think it pastime. You shortly shall hear  
 more.

I loved your father, and we love ourself;  
 And that, I hope, will teach you to imagine—

Enter a MESSENGER.

How now! what news?

*Mess.* Letters, my lord, from Hamlet.  
 This to your Majesty; this to the Queen.

*King.* From Hamlet! who brought them?

*Mess.* Sailors, my lord, they say; I saw them  
 not:

They were given me by Claudio; he received  
 them 40

Of him that brought them.

*King.* Laertes, you shall hear them.  
 Leave us. [*Exit MESSENGER.*]

[*Reads*] "High and mighty, You shall know I  
 am set naked on your kingdom. To-morrow shall  
 I beg leave to see your kingly eyes, when I shall,  
 first asking your pardon thereunto, recount the



occasion of my sudden and more strange return.

"Hamlet"

What should this mean? Are all the rest come  
back? 50

Or is it some abuse, and no such thing?

*Laer.* Know you the hand?

*King.* 'Tis Hamlet's character. "Naked!"

And in a postscript here, he says "alone."

Can you advise me?

*Laer.* I'm lost in it, my lord. But let him come;  
It warms the very sickness in my heart,  
That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,  
"Thus didest thou."

*King.* If it be so, Laertes—

As how should it be so? how otherwise?—

Will you be ruled by me?

*Laer.* Ay, my lord; 60

So you will not o'errule me to a peace.

*King.* To thine own peace. If he be now re-  
turn'd,

As checking at his voyage, and that he means  
No more to undertake it, I will work him  
To an exploit, now ripe in my device,  
Under the which he shall not choose but fall;  
And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe,  
But even his mother shall uncharge the practice  
And call it accident.

*Laer.* My lord, I will be ruled;  
The rather, if you could devise it so 70  
That I might be the organ.

*King.* It falls right.

You have been talk'd of since your travel much,  
And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a quality  
Wherein, they say, you shine: your sum of  
parts

Did not together pluck such envy from him  
As did that one, and that, in my regard,  
Of the unworthiest siege.

*Laer.* What part is that, my lord?

*King.* A very riband in the cap of youth,  
Yet needful too; for youth no less becomes  
The light and careless livery that it wears 80  
Than settled age his sables and his weeds,  
Importing health and graveness. Two months  
since,

Here was a gentleman of Normandy;  
I've seen myself, and served against, the French,  
And they can well on horseback: but this gallant  
Had witchcraft in't; he grew unto his seat;  
And to such wondrous doing brought his horse,  
As had he been incorp'd and demi-natured  
With the brave beast. So far he topp'd my  
thought,

That I, in forgery of shapes and tricks, 90  
Come short of what he did.

*Laer.* A Norman was't?

*King.* A Norman.

*Laer.* Upon my life, Lamond.

*King.*

The very same.

*Laer.* I know him well. He is the brooch indeed  
And gem of all the nation.

*King.* He made confession of you,  
And gave you such a masterly report  
For art and exercise in your defence  
And for your rapier most especial,  
That he cried out, 'twould be a sight indeed, 100  
If one could match you. The scrimers of their  
nation,

He swore, had neither motion, guard, nor eye,  
If you opposed them. Sir, this report of his  
Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy  
That he could nothing do but wish and beg  
Your sudden coming o'er, to play with him.

Now, out of this—

*Laer.* What out of this, my lord?

*King.* Laertes, was your father dear to you?  
Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,  
A face without a heart?

*Laer.* Why ask you this? 110

*King.* Not that I think you did not love your  
father;

But that I know love is begun by time;  
And that I see, in passages of proof,  
Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.  
There lives within the very flame of love  
A kind of wick or snuff that will abate it;  
And nothing is at a like goodness still;  
For goodness, growing to a plurisy,  
Dies in his own too much. That we would do,  
We should do when we would; for this "would"  
changes 120

And hath abatements and delays as many  
As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents;  
And then this "should" is like a spendthrift sigh,  
That hurts by easing. But, to the quick o' the  
ulcer—

Hamlet comes back. What would you undertake,  
To show yourself your father's son in deed  
More than in words?

*Laer.* To cut his throat i' the church.

*King.* No place, indeed, should murder sanc-  
tuarize;

Revenge should have no bounds. But, good

Laertes, 129  
Will you do this, keep close within your cham-  
ber.

Hamlet return'd shall know you are come home.  
We'll put on those shall praise your excellence  
And set a double varnish on the fame  
The Frenchman gave you, bring you in fine to-  
gether

And wager on your heads. He, being remiss.

Most generous and free from all contriving,  
Will not peruse the foils; so that, with ease,  
Or with a little shuffling, you may choose  
A sword unbated, and in a pass of practice  
Require him for your father.

*Laer.* I will do 't; 140  
And, for that purpose, I'll anoint my sword.  
I bought an unction of a mountebank,  
So mortal that, but dip a knife in it,  
Where it draws blood no cataplasm so rare,  
Collected from all simples that have virtue  
Under the moon, can save the thing from death  
That is but scratch'd withal. I'll touch my point  
With this contagion, that, if I gall him slightly,  
It may be death.

*King.* Let's further think of this; 149  
Weigh what convenience both of time and means  
May fit us to our shape: if this should fail,  
And that our drift look through our bad per-  
formance,

'Twere better not assay'd: therefore this project  
Should have a back or second, that might hold,  
If this should blast in proof. Soft! let me see:  
We'll make a solemn wager on your cunning's.  
I ha't:

When in your motion you are hot and dry—  
As make your bouts more violent to that end—  
And that he calls for drink, I'll have prepared  
him 160  
A chalice for the nonce, whereon but sipping,  
If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck,  
Our purpose may hold there.

*Enter QUEEN.*

How now, sweet queen!

*Queen.* One woe doth tread upon another's heel,  
So fast they follow. Your sister's drown'd,  
Laertes.

*Laer.* Drown'd! O, where?

*Queen.* There is a willow grows aslant a brook,  
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream;  
There with fantastic garlands did she come 169  
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long  
purples

That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,  
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call  
them;

There, on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds  
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke;  
When down her weedy trophies and herself  
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread  
wide;

And, mermaid-like, awhile they bore her up;  
Which time she chanted snatches of old tunes;  
As one incapable of her own distress,  
Or like a creature native and indued 180

Unto that element. But long it could not be  
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,  
Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay  
To muddy death.

*Laer.* Alas, then, she is drown'd?

*Queen.* Drown'd, drown'd.

*Laer.* Too much of water hast thou, poor

Ophelia,

And therefore I forbid my tears. But yet  
It is our trick; Nature her custom holds,  
Let shame say what it will; when these are gone,  
The woman will be out. Adieu, my lord: 190  
I have a speech of fire, that fain would blaze,  
But that this folly douts it. [*Exit.*]

*King.* Let's follow, Gertrude.  
How much I had to do to calm his rage!  
Now fear I this will give it start again;  
Therefore let's follow. [*Exeunt.*]

## ACT V

### SCENE I. *A churchyard*

*Enter TWO CLOWNS, with spades, &c.*

*1st Clo.* Is she to be buried in Christian burial  
that wilfully seeks her own salvation?

*2nd Clo.* I tell thee she is; and therefore make  
her grave straight. The crowner hath sat on her,  
and finds it Christian burial.

*1st Clo.* How can that be, unless she drowned  
herself in her own defence?

*2nd Clo.* Why, 'tis found so.

*1st Clo.* It must be *se offendendo*; it cannot be  
else. For here lies the point: if I drown myself  
wittingly, it argues an act, and an act hath three  
branches; it is, to act, to do, and to perform:  
argal, she drowned herself wittingly.

*2nd Clo.* Nay, but hear you, Goodman delver—

*1st Clo.* Give me leave. Here lies the water;  
good. Here stands the man; good. If the man go  
to this water, and drown himself, it is, will he,  
nill he, he goes—mark you that. But if the water  
come to him and drown him, he drowns not him-  
self; argal, he that is not guilty of his own death  
shortens not his own life.

*2nd Clo.* But is this law?

*1st Clo.* Ay, marry, is't; crowner's quest law.

*2nd Clo.* Will you ha' the truth on't? If this had  
not been a gentlewoman, she should have been  
buried out o' Christian burial.

*1st Clo.* Why, there thou say'st; and the more  
pity that great folk should have countenance in  
this world to drown or hang themselves, more  
than their even Christian. Come, my spade.  
There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners,  
ditchers, and grave-makers; they hold up Adam's  
profession.



2nd Clo. Was he a gentleman?

1st Clo. A' was the first that ever bore arms.

2nd Clo. Why, he had none. 39

1st Clo. What, art a heathen? How dost thou understand the Scripture? The Scripture says "Adam digged"; could he dig without arms? I'll put another question to thee. If thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself—

2nd Clo. Go to.

1st Clo. What is he that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

2nd Clo. The gallows-maker; for that frame outlives a thousand tenants. 50

1st Clo. I like thy wit well, in good faith. The gallows does well; but how does it well? it does well to those that do ill. Now thou dost ill to say the gallows is built stronger than the church; argal, the gallows may do well to thee. To't again, come.

2nd Clo. "Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?"

1st Clo. Ay, tell me that, and unyoke. 60

2nd Clo. Marry, now I can tell.

1st Clo. To't.

2nd Clo. Mass, I cannot tell.

*Enter HAMLET and HORATIO, at a distance.*

1st Clo. Cudgel thy brains no more about it, for your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating; and, when you are asked this question next, say "a grave-maker": the houses that he makes last till doomsday. Go, get thee to Yaughan: fetch me a stoup of liquor.

[*Exit SECOND CLOWN.*]

*He digs, and sings.*

"In youth, when I did love, did love,

Methought it was very sweet, 70

To contract, O, the time, for, ah, my be-  
hove,

O, methought, there was nothing meet."

Ham. Has this fellow no feeling of his business, that he sings at grave-making?

Hor. Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

Ham. 'Tis e'en so. The hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.

1st Clo. [*Sings*]

"But age, with his stealing steps,

Hath claw'd me in his clutch, 80

And hath shipped me intil the land,

As if I had never been such."

*Throws up a skull.*

Ham. That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing once. How the knave jowls it to the ground, as if it were Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first

murder! It might be the pate of a politician, which this ass now o'er-reaches; one that would circumvent God, might it not?

Hor. It might, my lord. 89

Ham. Or of a courtier; which could say "Good morrow, sweet lord! How dost thou, good lord?" This might be my Lord Such-a-one, that praised my Lord Such-a-one's horse, when he meant to beg it; might it not?

Hor. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Why, e'en so; and now my Lady Worm's; chapless, and knocked about the mazzard with a sexton's spade. Here's fine revolution, an we had the trick to see't. Did these bones cost no more the breeding, but to play at loggats with 'em? mine ache to think on't. 101

1st Clo. [*Sings*]

"A pick-axe, and a spade, a spade,

For and a shrouding sheet;

O, a pit of clay for to be made

For such a guest is meet."

*Throws up another skull.*

Ham. There's another. Why may not that be the skull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddities now, his quillets, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? Why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? Hum! This fellow might be in's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes, his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries. Is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries, to have his fine pate full of fine dirt? Will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the length and breadth of a pair of indentures? The very conveyances of his lands will hardly lie in this box; and must the inheritor himself have no more, ha?

Hor. Not a jot more, my lord.

Ham. Is not parchment made of sheep-skins?

Hor. Ay, my lord, and of calf-skins too.

Ham. They are sheep and calves which seek out assurance in that. I will speak to this fellow. Whose grave's this, sirrah?

1st Clo. Mine, sir.

[*Sings*] "O, a pit of clay for to be made

For such a guest is meet." 130

Ham. I think it be thine, indeed; for thou liest in't.

1st Clo. You lie out on't, sir, and therefore it is not yours. For my part, I do not lie in't, and yet it is mine.

Ham. Thou dost lie in't, to be in't and say it is thine. 'Tis for the dead, not for the quick; therefore thou liest.

*1st Clo.* 'Tis a quick lie, sir; 'twill away again, from me to you. 140

*Ham.* What man dost thou dig it for?

*1st Clo.* For no man, sir.

*Ham.* What woman, then?

*1st Clo.* For none, neither.

*Ham.* Who is to be buried in't?

*1st Clo.* One that was a woman, sir; but, rest her soul, she's dead.

*Ham.* How absolute the knave is! we must speak by the card, or equivocation will undo us. By the Lord, Horatio, these three years I have taken note of it; the age is grown so picked that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier, he galls his kibe. How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

*1st Clo.* Of all the days i' the year, I came to 't that day that our last king Hamlet overcame Fortinbras.

*Ham.* How long is that since?

*1st Clo.* Cannot you tell that? every fool can tell that. It was the very day that young Hamlet was born; he that is mad, and sent into England.

*Ham.* Ay, marry, why was he sent into England?

*1st Clo.* Why, because he was mad. He shall recover his wits there; or, if he do not, it's no great matter there.

*Ham.* Why?

*1st Clo.* 'Twill not be seen in him there; there the men are as mad as he. 170

*Ham.* How came he mad?

*1st Clo.* Very strangely, they say.

*Ham.* How strangely?

*1st Clo.* Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

*Ham.* Upon what ground?

*1st Clo.* Why, here in Denmark. I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years.

*Ham.* How long will a man lie i' the earth ere he rot? 179

*1st Clo.* I' faith, if he be not rotten before he die—as we have many pocky corsers now-a-days, that will scarce hold the laying in—he will last you some eight year or nine year. A tanner will last you nine year.

*Ham.* Why he more than another?

*1st Clo.* Why, sir, his hide is so tanned with his trade, that he will keep out water a great while; and your water is a sore decayer of your whoreson dead body. Here's a skull now; this skull has lain in the earth three and twenty years. 191

*Ham.* Whose was it?

*1st Clo.* A whoreson mad fellow's it was. Whose do you think it was?

*Ham.* Nay, I know not.

*1st Clo.* A pestilence on him for a mad rogue! a'

poured a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same skull, sir, was Yorick's skull, the King's jester.

*Ham.* This?

200

*1st Clo.* E'en that.

*Ham.* Let me see. [*Takes the skull.*] Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio; a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy. He hath borne me on his back a thousand times; and now, how abhorred in my imagination it is! my gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips that I have kissed I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one now, to mock your own grinning? quite chap-fallen? Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must come; make her laugh at that. Prithee, Horatio, tell me one thing.

*Hor.* What's that, my lord?

*Ham.* Dost thou think Alexander looked o' this fashion i' the earth?

*Hor.* E'en so. 220

*Ham.* And smelt so? pah!

*Puts down the skull.*

*Hor.* E'en so, my lord.

*Ham.* To what base uses we may return, Horatio! Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander, till he find it stopping a bung-hole?

*Hor.* 'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so.

*Ham.* No, faith, not a jot; but to follow him thither with modesty enough, and likelihood to lead it; as thus: Alexander died, Alexander was buried, Alexander returneth into dust; the dust is earth; of earth we make loam; and why of that loam, whereto he was converted, might they not stop a beer-barrel?

Imperious Cæsar, dead and turn'd to clay,

Might stop that hole to keep the wind away.

O, that that earth, which kept the world in awe,

Should patch a wall to expel the winter's flaw!

But soft, but soft! aside: here comes the King,

*Enter PRIESTS, &c. in procession; the corpse of OPHELIA, LAERTES and Mourners following; KING, QUEEN, their trains, &c.*

The Queen, the courtiers. Who is this they follow?

And with such maimed rites? This doth betoken The corse they follow did with desperate hand Fordo it own life. 'Twas of some estate.

Couch we awhile, and mark.

[*Retiring with HORATIO.*]



*Laer.* What ceremony else?

*Ham.* That is Laertes,

A very noble youth; mark.

*Laer.* What ceremony else?

*1st Priest.* Her obsequies have been as far enlarged 249

As we have warranty. Her death was doubtful;  
And, but that great command o'ersways the order,

She should have in ground unsanctified have lodged  
Till the last trumpet; for charitable prayers,  
Shards, flints, and pebbles should be thrown on her:

Yet here she is allow'd her virgin crants,  
Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home  
Of bell and burial.

*Laer.* Must there no more be done?

*First Priest.* No more be done.  
We should profane the service of the dead  
To sing a requiem and such rest to her 260  
As to peace-parted souls.

*Laer.* Lay her i' the earth,  
And from her fair and unpolluted flesh  
May violets spring! I tell thee, churlish priest,  
A ministering angel shall my sister be,  
When thou liest howling.

*Ham.* What, the fair Ophelia!

*Queen.* Sweetens to the sweet; farewell!

*Scattering flowers.*

I hoped thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's  
wife;

I thought thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet  
maid,

And not have strew'd thy grave.

*Laer.* O, treble woe  
Fall ten times treble on that cursed head, 270  
Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense  
Deprived thee of! Hold off the earth awhile,  
Till I have caught her once more in mine arms.

*Leaps into the grave.*

Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead,  
Till of this flat a mountain you have made,  
To o'ertop old Pelion, or the skyish head  
Of blue Olympus.

*Ham.* [*Advancing*] What is he whose grief  
Bears such an emphasis? whose phrase of sorrow  
Conjures the wandering stars, and makes them  
stand

Like wonder-wounded hearers? This is I, 280  
Hamlet the Dane. [*Leaps into the grave.*]

*Laer.* The devil take thy soul!

*Grappling with him.*

*Ham.* Thou pray'st not well.  
I prithee, take thy fingers from my throat;  
For, though I am not splenitive and rash,  
Yet have I something in me dangerous,

Which let thy wiseness fear: hold off thy hand.

*King.* Pluck them asunder.

*Queen.*

Hamlet, Hamlet!

*All.* Gentlemen—

*Hor.* Good my lord, be quiet.

*The Attendants part them, and they come out of the grave.*

*Ham.* Why, I will fight with him upon this  
theme

Until my eyelids will no longer wag. 290

*Queen.* O my son, what theme?

*Ham.* I loved Ophelia. Forty thousand broth-  
ers

Could not, with all their quantity of love,  
Make up my sum. What wilt thou do for her?

*King.* O, he is mad, Laertes.

*Queen.* For love of God, forbear him.

*Ham.* 'Swords, show me what thou'lt do.

Woo't weep? woo't fight? woo't fast? woo't tear  
thyself?

Woo't drink up eisel? eat a crocodile? 300

I'll do't. Dost thou come here to whine?

To outface me with leaping in her grave?

Be buried quick with her, and so will I;

And, if thou prate of mountains, let them throw

Millions of acres on us, till our ground,

Singeing his pate against the burning zone,

Make Ossa like a wart! Nay, an thou'lt mouth,

I'll rant as well as thou.

*Queen.* This is mere madness,  
And thus awhile the fit will work on him;

Anon, as patient as the female dove,

When that her golden couplets are disclosed, 310  
His silence will sit drooping.

*Ham.* Hear you, sir;

What is the reason that you use me thus?

I loved you ever. But it is no matter;

Let Hercules himself do what he may,

The cat will mew and dog will have his day.

[*Exit.*]

*King.* I pray you, good Horatio, wait upon him.

[*Exit HORATIO.*]

[*TO LAERTES*] Strengthen your patience in our  
last night's speech;

We'll put the matter to the present push.

Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.

This grave shall have a living monument. 320

An hour of quiet shortly shall we see;

Till then, in patience our proceeding be. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *A hall in the castle*

*Enter HAMLET and HORATIO.*

*Ham.* So much for this, sir; now shall you see  
the other;

You do remember all the circumstance?

*Hor.* Remember it, my lord!

*Ham.* Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting,

That would not let me sleep. Methought I lay  
Worse than the mutines in the bilboes. Rashly,  
And praised be rashness for it, let us know,  
Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,  
When our deep plots do pall; and that should  
teach us

There's a divinity that shapes our ends, 10  
Rough-hew them how we will—

*Hor.* That is most certain.

*Ham.* Up from my cabin,  
My sea-gown scarf'd about me, in the dark  
Groped I to find out them; had my desire,  
Finger'd their packet, and in fine withdrew  
To mine own room again; making so bold,  
My fears forgetting manners, to unseal  
Their grand commission; where I found, Ho-  
ratio—

O royal knavery!—an exact command,  
Larded with many several sorts of reasons 20  
Importing Denmark's health and England's too,  
With, ho! such bugs and goblins in my life,  
That, on the supervise, no leisure bated,  
No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,  
My head should be struck off.

*Hor.* Is't possible?

*Ham.* Here's the commission; read it at more  
leisure.

But wilt thou hear me how I did proceed?

*Hor.* I beseech you.

*Ham.* Being thus be-netted round with vil-  
lainies—

Ere I could make a prologue to my brains, 30  
They had begun the play—I sat me down,  
Devised a new commission, wrote it fair.  
I once did hold it, as our statist do,  
A baseness to write fair and labour'd much  
How to forget that learning, but, sir, now  
It did me yeoman's service. Wilt thou know  
The effect of what I wrote?

*Hor.* Ay, good my lord.

*Ham.* An earnest conjuration from the King,  
As England was his faithful tributary,  
As love between them like the palm might flour-  
ish, 40

As peace should still her wheaten garland wear  
And stand a comma 'tween their amities,  
And many such-like as's of great charge,  
That, on the view and knowing of these contents,  
Without debatement further, more or less,  
He should the bearers put to sudden death,  
Not shriving-time allow'd.

*Hor.* How was this seal'd?

*Ham.* Why, even in that was heaven ordain'd.  
I had my father's signet in my purse,

Which was the model of that Danish seal; 50  
Folded the writ up in form of the other,  
Subscribed it, gave't the impression, placed it  
safely,

The changeling never known. Now, the next  
day

Was our sea-fight; and what to this was sequent  
Thou know'st already.

*Hor.* So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to't.

*Ham.* Why, man, they did make love to this  
employment;

They are not near my conscience; their defeat  
Does by their own insinuation grow.

'Tis dangerous when the baser nature comes 60  
Between the pass and fell incensed points  
Of mighty opposites.

*Hor.* Why, what a king is this!

*Ham.* Does it not, thinks't thee, stand me now  
upon—

He that hath kill'd my king and whored my  
mother,

Popp'd in between the election and my hopes,  
Thrown out his angle for my proper life,  
And with such cozenage—is't not perfect con-  
science,

To quit him with this arm? and is't not to be  
damn'd,

To let this canker of our nature come  
In further evil? 70

*Hor.* It must be shortly known to him from  
England

What is the issue of the business there.

*Ham.* It will be short; the interim is mine,  
And a man's life's no more than to say "One."  
But I am very sorry, good Horatio,  
That to Laertes I forgot myself;  
For, by the image of my cause, I see  
The portraiture of his. I'll court his favours.  
But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me  
Into a towering passion.

*Hor.* Peace! who comes here? 80

*Enter OSRIC.*

*Os.* Your lordship is right welcome back to  
Denmark.

*Ham.* I humbly thank you, sir. Dost know this  
water-fly?

*Hor.* No, my good lord.

*Ham.* Thy state is the more gracious; for 'tis a  
vice to know him. He hath much land, and fer-  
tile; let a beast be lord of beasts, and his crib  
shall stand at the King's mess. 'Tis a chough;  
but, as I say, spacious in the possession of dirt. 90

*Os.* Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure,  
I should impart a thing to you from his majesty.

*Ham.* I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of



spirit. Put your bonnet to his right use; 'tis for the head.

*Osr.* I thank your lordship, it is very hot.

*Ham.* No, believe me, 'tis very cold; the wind is northerly. 99

*Osr.* It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

*Ham.* But yet methinks it is very sultry and hot for my complexion.

*Osr.* Exceedingly, my lord; it is very sultry—as 'twere—I cannot tell how. But, my lord, his Majesty bade me signify to you that he has laid a great wager on your head. Sir, this is the matter,—

*Ham.* I beseech you, remember—

*HAMLET moves him to put on his hat.*

*Osr.* Nay, good my lord; for mine ease, in good faith. Sir, here is newly come to court Laertes; believe me, an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differences, of very soft society and great showing; indeed, to speak feelingly of him, he is the card or calendar of gentry, for you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see.

*Ham.* Sir, his definement suffers no perdition in you; though, I know, to divide him inventorially would dizzy the arithmetic of memory, and yet but yaw neither, in respect of his quick sail. But, in the verity of extolment, I take him to be a soul of great article; and his infusion of such dearth and rareness, as, to make true diction of him, his semblable is his mirror; and who else would trace him, his umbrage, nothing more.

*Osr.* Your lordship speaks most infallibly of him.

*Ham.* The concernancy, sir? why do we wrap the gentleman in our more rawer breath?

*Osr.* Sir? 130

*Hor.* Is't not possible to understand in another tongue? You will do't, sir, really.

*Ham.* What imports the nomination of this gentleman?

*Osr.* Of Laertes?

*Hor.* His purse is empty already; all's golden words are spent.

*Ham.* Of him, sir.

*Osr.* I know you are not ignorant—

*Ham.* I would you did, sir; yet, in faith, if you did, it would not much approve me. Well, sir?

*Osr.* You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is—

*Ham.* I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him in excellence; but, to know a man well, were to know himself.

*Osr.* I mean, sir, for his weapon; but in the imputation laid on him by them, in his meed he's unfollowed. 150

*Ham.* What's his weapon?

*Osr.* Rapier and dagger.

*Ham.* That's two of his weapons; but, well.

*Osr.* The King, sir, hath wagered with him six Barbary horses, against the which he has imposed, as I take it, six French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hangers, and so. Three of the carriages, in faith, are very dear to fancy, very responsive to the hilts, most delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit.

*Ham.* What call you the carriages?

*Hor.* I knew you must be edified by the margent ere you had done.

*Osr.* The carriages, sir, are the hangers.

*Ham.* The phrase would be more german to the matter, if we could carry cannon by our sides; I would it might be hangers till then. But, on: six Barbary horses against six French swords, their assigns, and three liberal-conceited carriages; that's the French bet against the Danish. Why is this "imposed," as you call it? 171

*Osr.* The King, sir, hath laid, that in a dozen passes between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you three hits. He hath laid on twelve for nine; and it would come to immediate trial, if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer.

*Ham.* How if I answer "no"?

*Osr.* I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in trial. 179

*Ham.* Sir, I will walk here in the hall; if it please his Majesty, 'tis the breathing time of day with me; let the foils be brought, the gentleman willing, and the King hold his purpose, I will win for him an I can; if not, I will gain nothing but my shame and the odd hits.

*Osr.* Shall I re-deliver you e'en so?

*Ham.* To this effect, sir; after what flourish your nature will.

*Osr.* I commend my duty to your lordship.

*Ham.* Yours, yours. [*Exit OSRIC.*] He does well to commend it himself; there are no tongues else for's turn.

*Hor.* This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.

*Ham.* He did comply with his dug, before he sucked it. Thus has he—and many more of the same breed that I know the drossy age dotes on—only got the tune of the time and outward habit of encounter; a kind of yesty collection, which carries them through and through the most fond and winnowed opinions; and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out.

*Enter A LORD.*

*Lord.* My Lord, his Majesty commended him to you by young Osric, who brings back to him,

that you attend him in the hall. He sends to know if your pleasure hold to play with Laertes, or that you will take longer time.

*Ham.* I am constant to my purposes; they follow the King's pleasure. If his fitness speaks, mine is ready; now or whensoever, provided I be so able as now. 211

*Lord.* The King and Queen and all are coming down.

*Ham.* In happy time.

*Lord.* The Queen desires you to use some gentle entertainment to Laertes before you fall to play.

*Ham.* She well instructs me. [*Exit LORD.*]

*Hor.* You will lose this wager, my lord.

*Ham.* I do not think so; since he went into France, I have been in continual practice; I shall win at the odds. But thou wouldst not think how ill all's here about my heart. But it is no matter.

*Hor.* Nay, good my lord—

*Ham.* It is but foolery; but it is such a kind of gain-giving, as would perhaps trouble a woman.

*Hor.* If your mind dislike anything, obey it. I will forestall their repair hither, and say you are not fit. 229

*Ham.* Not a whit, we defy augury. There's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come; the readiness is all. Since no man has aught of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes? Let be.

*Enter KING, QUEEN, LAERTES, OSRIC, Lords, and Attendants with foils and gauntlets; a table and flags of wine on it.*

*King.* Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me.

*The KING puts LAERTES' hand into HAMLET'S.*

*Ham.* Give me your pardon, sir. I've done you wrong;

But pardon't, as you are a gentleman.

This presence knows,

And you must needs have heard, how I am punish'd 240

With sore distraction. What I have done, That might your nature, honour, and exception Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.

Was't Hamlet wrong'd Laertes? Never Hamlet:

If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away,

And when he's not himself does wrong Laertes,

Then Hamlet does it not, Hamlet denies it.

Who does it, then? His madness. If't be so,

Hamlet is of the faction that is wrong'd;

His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy. 250

Sir, in this audience,

Let my disclaiming from a purposed evil

Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,

That I have shot mine arrow o'er the house, And hurt my brother.

*Laer.* I am satisfied in nature, Whose motive, in this case, should stir me most To my revenge; but in my terms of honour I stand aloof, and will no reconciliation, Till by some elder masters, of known honour, I have a voice and precedent of peace, 260 To keep my name ungored. But till that time, I do receive your offer'd love like love, And will not wrong it.

*Ham.* I embrace it freely; And will this brother's wager frankly play. Give us the foils. Come on.

*Laer.* Come, one for me.

*Ham.* I'll be your foil, Laertes; in mine ignorance

Your skill shall, like a star i' the darkest night, Stick fiery off indeed.

*Laer.* You mock me, sir.

*Ham.* No, by this hand.

*King.* Give them the foils, young Osric. Cousin Hamlet, 270

You know the wager?

*Ham.* Very well, my lord; Your Grace hath laid the odds o' the weaker side.

*King.* I do not fear it; I have seen you both; But since he is better'd, we have therefore odds.

*Laer.* This is too heavy, let me see another.

*Ham.* This likes me well. These foils have all a length?

*They prepare to play.*

*Osric.* Ay, my good lord.

*King.* Set me the stoups of wine upon that table.

If Hamlet give the first or second hit, Or quit in answer of the third exchange, 280

Let all the battlements their ordnance fire;

The King shall drink to Hamlet's better breath;

And in the cup an union shall he throw,

Richer than that which four successive kings In Denmark's crown have worn. Give me the cups;

And let the kettle to the trumpet speak, The trumpet to the cannoneer without, The cannons to the heavens, the heavens to earth, "Now the King drinks to Hamlet." Come, begin;

And you, the judges, bear a wary eye. 290

*Ham.* Come on, sir.

*Laer.* Come, my lord.

*They play.*

*Ham.* One.

*Laer.* No.

*Ham.* Judgement.

*Osric.* A hit, a very palpable hit.

*Laer.* Well; again.



King. Stay; give me drink. Hamlet, this pearl is thine;

Here's to thy health.

*Trumpets sound, and cannon shot off within.*

Give him the cup.

Ham. I'll play this bout first; set it by awhile.

Come. [*They play.*] Another hit; what say you?

Laer. A touch, a touch, I do confess.

King. Our son shall win.

Queen. He's fat, and scant of breath.

Here, Hamlet, take my napkin, rub thy brows.

The Queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet. 300

Ham. Good madam!

King. Gertrude, do not drink.

Queen. I will, my lord; I pray you, pardon me.

King. [*Aside*] It is the poison'd cup; it is too late.

Ham. I dare not drink yet, madam; by and by.

Queen. Come, let me wipe thy face.

Laer. My lord, I'll hit him now.

King. I do not think't.

Laer. [*Aside*] And yet 'tis almost 'gainst my conscience.

Ham. Come, for the third, Laertes; you but dally.

I pray you, pass with your best violence;

I am afeard you make a wanton of me. 310

Laer. Say you so? come on.

*They play.*

Osr. Nothing, neither way.

Laer. Have at you now!

LAERTES wounds HAMLET; then, in scuffling, they change rapiers, and HAMLET wounds LAERTES.

King. Part them; they are incensed.

Ham. Nay, come, again.

*The QUEEN falls.*

Osr. Look to the Queen there, ho!

Hor. They bleed on both sides. How is it, my lord?

Osr. How is't, Laertes?

Laer. Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe, Osr;

I am justly kill'd with mine own treachery.

*Ham. How does the Queen?*

Never to rise again. Thy mother's poison'd.

I can no more. The King, the King's to blame.

Ham. The point envenom'd too!

Then, venom, to thy work.

*Stabs the KING.*

All. Treason! treason!

King. O, yet defend me, friends; I am but hurt.

Ham. Here, thou incestuous, murderous, damned Dane,

Drink off this potion. Is thy union here?

Follow my mother. [KING dies.

Laer. He is justly served;

It is a poison temper'd by himself. 339

Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet.

Mine and my father's death come not upon thee,

Nor thine on me! [Dies.

Ham. Heaven make thee free of it! I follow thee.

I am dead, Horatio. Wretched Queen, adieu!

You that look pale and tremble at this chance,

That are but mutes or audiences to this act,

Had I but time—as this fell sergeant, Death,

Is strict in his arrest—O, I could tell you—

But let it be. Horatio, I am dead;

Thou livest; report me and my cause aright

To the unsatisfied.

Hor. Never believe it. 351

I am more an antique Roman than a Dane;

Here's yet some liquor left.

Ham. As thou'rt a man,

Give me the cup. Let go! By heaven, I'll have't.

O good Horatio, what a wounded name,

Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me!

If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,

Absent thee from felicity awhile,

And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,

To tell my story.

*March afar off, and shot within.*

What warlike noise is this? 360

Osr. Young Fortinbras, with conquest come

from Poland,

To the ambassadors of England gives

This warlike yell—

*Enter FORTINBRAS, the ENGLISH AMBASSADORS,  
and others.*

*Fort.* Where is this sight?

*Hor.* What is it ye would see?  
If aught of woe or wonder, cease your search.

*Fort.* This quarry cries on havoc. O proud  
Death,

What feast is toward in thine eternal cell,  
That thou so many princes at a shot  
So bloodily hast struck?

*1st Amb.* The sight is dismal;  
And our affairs from England come too late.  
The ears are senseless that should give us hear-  
ing,

To tell him his commandment is fulfill'd, 381  
That Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead.  
Where should we have our thanks?

*Hor.* Not from his mouth,  
Had it the ability of life to thank you.  
He never gave commandment for their death.  
But since, so jump upon this bloody question,  
You from the Polack wars, and you from Eng-  
land,

Are here arrived, give order that these bodies  
High on a stage be placed to the view; 389  
And let me speak to the yet unknowing world  
How these things came about. So shall you hear  
Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts,  
Of accidental judgements, casual slaughters,

Of deaths put on by cunning and forced cause,  
And, in this upshot, purposes mistook  
Fall'n on the inventors' heads: all this can I  
Truly deliver.

*Fort.* Let us haste to hear it,  
And call the noblest to the audience.  
For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune.  
I have some rights of memory in this kingdom,  
Which now to claim my vantage doth invite  
me.

*Hor.* Of that I shall have also cause to speak,  
And from his mouth whose voice will draw on  
more.

But let this same be presently perform'd,  
Even while men's minds are wild; lest more mis-  
chance,

On plots and errors, happen.

*Fort.* Let four captains  
Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage;  
For he was likely, had he been put on,  
To have proved most royally; and, for his pas-  
sage,

The soldiers' music and the rites of war 410  
Speak loudly for him.

Take up the bodies. Such a sight as this  
Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss.  
Go, bid the soldiers shoot.

*[A dead march. Exeunt, bearing off the  
dead bodies; after which a peal of ord-  
nance is shot off.]*



# THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

SIR JOHN FALSTAFF  
FENTON, *a gentleman*  
SHALLOW, *a country justice*  
SLENDER, *cousin to Shallow*  
FORD  
PAGE | *two gentlemen dwelling at Windsor*  
WILLIAM PAGE, *a boy, son to Page*  
SIR HUGH EVANS, *a Welsh parson*  
DOCTOR CAIUS, *a French physician*  
HOST of the Garter Inn  
BARDOLPH  
PISTOL | *sharpers attending on Falstaff*  
NYM

ROBIN, *page to Falstaff*  
SIMPLE, *servant to Slender*  
JOHN RUGBY, *servant to Doctor Caius*  
TWO SERVANTS to Ford

MISTRESS FORD  
MISTRESS PAGE  
ANNE PAGE, *her daughter*  
MISTRESS QUICKLY, *servant to Doctor Caius*  
SOME CHILDREN, *as fairies*

NON-SPEAKING: *Servants to Page and Ford*

SCENE: *Windsor, and the neighborhood*



## ACT I

### SCENE I. *Windsor: before Page's house*

*Enter JUSTICE SHALLOW, SLENDER, and SIR  
HUGH EVANS.*

*Shal.* Sir Hugh, persuade me not; I will make a Star chamber matter of it. If he were twenty Sir John Falstuffs, he shall not abuse Robert Shallow, esquire.

*Slen.* In the county of Gloucester, justice of peace and "Coram."

*Shal.* Ay, cousin Slender, and "Custalorum."

*Slen.* Ay, and "Rato-lorum" too; and a gentleman born, master parson; who writes himself "Armigero," in any bill, warrant, quittance, or obligation, "Armigero." 11

*Shal.* Ay, that I do; and have done any time these three hundred years.

*Slen.* All his successors gone before him hath done't; and all his ancestors that come after him may. They may give the dozen white luses in their coat.

*Shal.* It is an old coat.

*Evans.* The dozen white luses do become an old coat well; it agrees well, passant; it is a familiar beast to man, and signifies love. 21

*Shal.* The luse is the fresh fish; the salt fish is an old coat.

*Slen.* I may quarter, coz.

*Shal.* You may, by marrying.

*Evans.* It is marring indeed, if he quarter it.

*Shal.* Not a whit.

*Evans.* Yes, py'r lady; if he has a quarter of your coat, there is but three skirts for yourself, in my simple conjectures. But that is all one. If Sir John Falstaff have committed disparagements unto you, I am of the church, and will be glad to do my benevolence to make atonements and compromises between you.

*Shal.* The council shall hear it; it is a riot.

*Evans.* It is not meet the council hear a riot; there is no fear of Got in a riot. The council, look you, shall desire to hear the fear of Got, and not to hear a riot; take your vizaments in that.

*Shal.* Ha! o' my life, if I were young again, the sword should end it. 41

*Evans.* It is petter that friends is the sword, and end it; and there is also another device in my prain, which peradventure prings goot discrecions with it: there is Anne Page, which is daughter to Master Thomas Page, which is pretty virginity.

*Slen.* Mistress Anne Page? She has brown hair, and speaks small like a woman.

*Evans.* It is that fery person for all the orld, as just as you will desire; and seven hundred pounds of moneys, and gold and silver, is her grandsire upon his death's-bed—Got deliver to a joyful resurrections!—give, when she is able to overtake seventeen years old. It were a goot motion if we leave our pribbles and prabbles, and desire a marriage between Master Abraham and Mistress Anne Page.

*Slen.* Did her grandsire leave her seven hundred pound? 60

*Evans.* Ay, and her father is make her a petter penny.

*Slen.* I know the young gentlewoman; she has good gifts.

*Evans.* Seven hundred pounds and possibilities is goot gifts.

*Shal.* Well, let us see honest Master Page. Is Falstaff there?

*Evans.* Shall I tell you a lie? I do despise a liar as I do despise one that is false, or as I despise one that is not true. The knight, Sir John, is there; and, I beseech you, be ruled by your well-willers. I will peat the door for Master Page. [*Knocks*] What, ho! Got pless your house here!

*Page.* [*Within*] Who's there?

*Enter PAGE.*

*Evans.* Here is Got's plessing, and your friend, and Justice Shallow; and here young Master Slender, that peradventures shall tell you another tale, if matters grow to your likings.

*Page.* I am glad to see your worships well. I thank you for my venison, Master Shallow. 81  
*Shal.* Master Page, I am glad to see you. Much good do it your good heart! I wished your venison better; it was ill killed. How doth good Mistress Page?—and I thank you always with my heart, la! with my heart.

*Page.* Sir, I thank you.

*Shal.* Sir, I thank you; by yea and no, I do.

*Page.* I am glad to see you, good Master Slender. 90

*Slen.* How does your fallow greyhound, sir? I heard say he was outrun on Cotsall.

*Page.* I could not be judged, sir.

*Slen.* You'll not confess, you'll not confess.

*Shal.* That he will not. 'Tis your fault, 'tis your fault; 'tis a good dog.

*Page.* A cur, sir.

*Shal.* Sir, he's a good dog, and a fair dog; can there be more said? he is good and fair. Is Sir John Falstaff here? 100

*Page.* Sir, he is within; and I would I could do a good office between you.

*Evans.* It is spoke as a Christians ought to speak.

*Shal.* He hath wronged me, Master Page.

*Page.* Sir, he doth in some sort confess it.

*Shal.* If it be confessed, it is not redressed. Is not that so, Master Page? He hath wronged me; indeed he hath; at a word, he hath, believe me: Robert Shallow, esquire, saith, he is wronged.

*Page.* Here comes Sir John. 111

*Enter SIR JOHN FALSTAFF, BARDOLPH, NYM, and PISTOL.*

*Fal.* Now, Master Shallow, you'll complain of me to the King?

*Shal.* Knight, you have beaten my men, killed my deer, and broke open my lodge.

*Fal.* But not kissed your keeper's daughter?

*Shal.* Tut, a pin! this shall be answered.

*Fal.* I will answer it straight; I have done all this.

That is now answered.

*Shal.* The council shall know this. 120

*Fal.* 'Twere better for you if it were known in counsel: you'll be laughed at.

*Evans.* *Pauca verba*, Sir John; goot worts.

*Fal.* Good worts! good cabbage. Slender, I broke your head; what matter have you against me?

*Slen.* Marry, sir, I have matter in my head against you; and against your cony-catching rascals, Bardolph, Nym, and Pistol.

*Bard.* You Banbury cheese! 130

*Slen.* Ay, it is no matter.

*Pist.* How now, Mephostophilus!

*Slen.* Ay, it is no matter.

*Nym.* Slice, I say! *pauca, pauca*. Slice! that's my humour.

*Slen.* Where's Simple, my man? Can you tell, cousin?

*Evans.* Peace, I pray you. Now let us understand. There is three umpires in this matter, as I understand; that is, Master Page, *fidelicet* Master Page; and there is myself, *fidelicet* myself; and the three party is, lastly and finally, mine host of the Garter.

*Page.* We three, to hear it and end it between them.

*Evans.* Fery goot. I will make a prief of it in my note-book; and we will afterwards ork upon the cause with as great discreetly as we can.

*Fal.* Pistol!

*Pist.* He hears with ears. 150

*Evans.* The tevil and his tam! what phrase is this, "He hears with ear"? why, it is affectations.

*Fal.* Pistol, did you pick Master Slender's purse?

*Slen.* Ay, by these gloves, did he, or I would I might never come in mine own great chamber again else, of seven groats in mill-sixpences, and two Edward shovel-boards, that cost me two shilling and two pence a-piece of Yead Miller, by these gloves. 161

*Fal.* Is this true, Pistol?

*Evans.* No; it is false, if it is a pick-purse.



*Pist.* Ha, thou mountain-foreigner! Sir John and master mine,

I combat challenge of this latten bilbo.

Word of denial in thy *labras* here!

Word of denial! Froth and scum, thou liest!

*Slen.* By these gloves, then, 'twas he.

*Nym.* Be avised, sir, and pass good humours.

I will say "marry trap" with you, if you run the nuthook's humour on me; that is the very note of it.

*Slen.* By this hat, then, he in the red face had it; for though I cannot remember what I did when you made me drunk, yet I am not altogether an ass.

*Fal.* What say you, Scarlet and John?

*Bard.* Why, sir, for my part, I say the gentleman had drunk himself out of his five sentences. 180

*Evans.* It is his five senses. Fie, what the ignorance is!

*Bard.* And being fap, sir, was, as they say, cashiered; and so conclusions passed the careires.

*Slen.* Ay, you spake in Latin then too; but 'tis no matter; I'll ne'er be drunk whilst I live again, but in honest, civil, godly company, for this trick. If I be drunk, I'll be drunk with those that have the fear of God, and not with drunken knaves. 190

*Evans.* So Got udge me, that is a virtuous mind.

*Fal.* You hear all these matters denied, gentlemen; you hear it.

*Enter ANNE PAGE, with wine; MISTRESS FORD and MISTRESS PAGE, following.*

*Page.* Nay, daughter, carry the wine in; we'll drink within. [*Exit ANNE PAGE.*]

*Slen.* O heaven! this is Mistress Anne Page.

*Page.* How now, Mistress Ford!

*Fal.* Mistress Ford, by my troth, you are very well met. By your leave, good mistress. 200

*Kisses her.*

*Page.* Wife, bid these gentlemen welcome. Come, we have a hot venison pasty to dinner. Come, gentlemen, I hope we shall drink down all unkindness.

[*Exeunt all except SHALLOW, SLENDER, and EVANS.*]

*Slen.* I had rather than forty shillings I had my Book of Songs and Sonnets here.

*Enter SIMPLE.*

How now, Simple! where have you been? I must wait on myself, must I? You have not the Book of Riddles about you, have you?

*Sim.* Book of Riddles! why, did you not lend it to Alice Shortcake upon All-hallowmas last, a fortnight afore Michaelmas?

*Shal.* Come, coz; come, coz; we stay for you. A word with you, coz; marry, this, coz: there is, as 'twere, a tender, a kind of tender, made afar off by Sir Hugh here. Do you understand me?

*Slen.* Ay, sir, you shall find me reasonable; if it be so, I shall do that that is reason.

*Shal.* Nay, but understand me.

*Slen.* So I do, sir. 220

*Evans.* Give ear to his motions, Master Slender. I will description the matter to you, if you be capacity of it.

*Slen.* Nay, I will do as my cousin Shallow says. I pray you, pardon me; he's a justice of peace in his country, simple though I stand here.

*Evans.* But that is not the question. The question is concerning your marriage.

*Shal.* Ay, there's the point, sir.

*Evans.* Marry, is it; the very point of it; to Mistress Anne Page. 231

*Slen.* Why, if it be so, I will marry her upon any reasonable demands.

*Evans.* But can you affection the 'oman? Let us command to know that of your mouth or of your lips; for divers philosophers hold that the lips is parcel of the mouth. Therefore, precisely, can you carry your good will to the maid?

*Shal.* Cousin Abraham Slender, can you love her? 240

*Slen.* I hope, sir, I will do as it shall become one that would do reason.

*Evans.* Nay, Got's lords and his ladies! you must speak possitable, if you can carry her your desires towards her.

*Shal.* That you must. Will you, upon good dowry, marry her?

*Slen.* I will do a greater thing than that, upon your request, cousin, in any reason.

*Shal.* Nay, conceive me, conceive me, sweet coz; what I do is to pleasure you, coz. Can you love the maid?

*Slen.* I will marry her, sir, at your request; but if there be no great love in the beginning, yet heaven may decrease it upon better acquaintance, when we are married and have more occasion to know one another. I hope, upon familiarity will grow more contempt. But if you say, "Marry her," I will marry her; that I am freely dissolved, and dissolutely. 260

*Evans.* It is a fery discretion answer; save the fall is in the ort "dissolutely": the ort is, according to our meaning, "resolutely." His meaning is good.

*Shal.* Ay, I think my cousin meant well.

*Slen.* Ay, or else I would I might be hanged, la!

*Shal.* Here comes fair Mistress Anne.

*Re-enter ANNE PAGE.*

Would I were young for your sake, Mistress Anne!

*Anne.* The dinner is on the table; my father desires your worships' company. 271

*Shal.* I will wait on him, fair Mistress Anne.

*Evans.* Od's plessed will! I will not be absence at the grace. [*Exeunt SHALLOW and EVANS.*]

*Anne.* Will't please your worship to come in, sir?

*Slén.* No, I thank you, forsooth, heartily; I am very well.

*Anne.* The dinner attends you, sir.

*Slén.* I am not a-hungry, I thank you, forsooth. Go, sirrah, for all you are my man, go wait upon my cousin Shallow. [*Exit SIMPLE.*] A justice of peace sometime may be beholding to his friend for a man. I keep but three men and a boy yet, till my mother be dead. But what though? Yet I live like a poor gentleman born.

*Anne.* I may not go in without your worship. They will not sit till you come.

*Slén.* I' faith, I'll eat nothing; I thank you as much as though I did. 291

*Anne.* I pray you, sir, walk in.

*Slén.* I had rather walk here, I thank you. I bruised my shin th' other day with playing at sword and dagger with a master of fence; three veneys for a dish of stewed prunes; and, by my troth, I cannot abide the smell of hot meat since. Why do your dogs bark so? be there bears i' the town?

*Anne.* I think there are, sir; I heard them talked of. 301

*Slén.* I love the sport well; but I shall as soon quarrel at it as any man in England. You are afraid, if you see the bear loose, are you not?

*Anne.* Ay, indeed, sir.

*Slén.* That's meat and drink to me, now. I have seen Sackerson loose twenty times, and have taken him by the chain; but, I warrant you, the women have so cried and shrieked at it, that it passed. But women, indeed, cannot abide 'em; they are very ill-favoured rough things.

*Re-enter PAGE.*

*Page.* Come, gentle Master Slender, come; we stay for you.

*Slén.* I'll eat nothing, I thank you, sir.

*Page.* By cock and pie, you shall not choose, sir! come, come.

*Slén.* Nay, pray you, lead the way.

*Page.* Come on, sir.

*Slén.* Mistress Anne, yourself shall go first.

*Anne.* Not I, sir; pray you, keep on. 321

*Slén.* Truly, I will not go first; truly, la! I will not do you that wrong.

*Anne.* I pray you, sir.

*Slén.* I'll rather be unmannerly than troublesome. You do yourself wrong, indeed, la!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *The same*

*Enter SIR HUGH EVANS and SIMPLE.*

*Evans.* Go your ways, and ask of Doctor Caius' house which is the way; and there dwells one Mistress Quickly, which is in the manner of his nurse, or his dry nurse, or his cook, or his laundry, his washer, and his wringer.

*Sim.* Well, sir.

*Evans.* Nay, it is petter yet. Give her this letter; for it is a 'oman that altogether's acquaintance with Mistress Anne Page; and the letter is, to desire and require her to solicit your master's desires to Mistress Anne Page. I pray you, be gone. I will make an end of my dinner; there's pippins and cheese to come. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *A room in the Garter Inn*

*Enter FALSTAFF, HOST, BARDOLPH, NYM, PISTOL, and ROBIN.*

*Fal.* Mine host of the Garter!

*Host.* What says my bully-rook? speak scholarly and wisely.

*Fal.* Truly, mine host, I must turn away some of my followers.

*Host.* Discard, bully Hercules; cashier. Let them wag; trot, trot.

*Fal.* I sit at ten pounds a week.

*Host.* Thou'rt an emperor, Cæsar, Keisar, and Pheeazar. I will entertain Bardolph; he shall draw, he shall tap. Said I well, bully Hector?

*Fal.* Do so, good mine host.

*Host.* I have spoke; let him follow. [*To BARDOLPH.*] Let me see thee froth and lime. I am at a word; follow. [*Exit.*]

*Fal.* Bardolph, follow him. A tapster is a good trade; an old cloak makes a new jerkin; a withered serving-man a fresh tapster. Go; adieu. 20

*Bard.* It is a life that I have desired. I will thrive.

*Pist.* O base Hungarian wight! wilt thou the spigot wield? [*Exit BARDOLPH.*]

*Nym.* He was gotten in drink. Is not the humour conceited?

*Fal.* I am glad I am so acquit of this tinderbox; his thefts were too open; his filching was like an unskilful singer; he kept not time.

*Nym.* The good humour is to steal at a minute's rest. 31

*Pist.* "Convey," the wise it call. "Steal!" foh! a fico for the phrase!



*Fal.* Well, sirs, I am almost out at heels.

*Pist.* Why, then, let kibes ensue.

*Fal.* There is no remedy; I must cony-catch; I must shift.

*Pist.* Young ravens must have food.

*Fal.* Which of you know Ford of this town?

*Pist.* I ken the wight. He is of substance good. 41

*Fal.* My honest lads, I will tell you what I am about.

*Pist.* Two yards, and more.

*Fal.* No quips now, Pistol! Indeed, I am in the waist two yards about; but I am now about no waste; I am about thrift. Briefly, I do mean to make love to Ford's wife. I spy entertainment in her; she discourses, she carves, she gives the leer of invitation. I can construe the action of her familiar style; and the hardest voice of her behaviour, to be Englished rightly, is, "I am Sir John Falstaff's."

*Pist.* He hath studied her will, and translated her will, out of honesty into English.

*Nym.* The anchor is deep: will that humour pass?

*Fal.* Now, the report goes she has all the rule of her husband's purse. He hath a legion of angels. 60

*Pist.* As many devils entertain; and "To her, boy," say I.

*Nym.* The humour rises; it is good. Humour me the angels.

*Fal.* I have writ me here a letter to her; and here another to Page's wife, who even now gave me good eyes too, examined my parts with most judicious ceillades; sometimes the beam of her view gilded my foot, sometimes my portly belly.

*Pist.* Then did the sun on dunghill shine. 70

*Nym.* I thank thee for that humour.

*Fal.* O, she did so course o'er my exteriors with such a greedy intention, that the appetite of her eye did seem to scorch me up like a burning-glass! Here's another letter to her. She bears the purse too; she is a region in Guiana, all gold and bounty. I will be cheater to them both, and they shall be exchequers to me; they shall be my East and West Indies, and I will trade to them both. Go bear thou this letter to Mistress Page; and thou this to Mistress Ford. We will thrive, lads, we will thrive.

*Pist.* Shall I Sir Pandarus of Troy become, And by my side wear steel? then, Lucifer take all!

*Nym.* I will run no base humour. Here, take the humour-letter; I will keep the haviour of reputation.

*Fal.* [To ROBIN] Hold, sirrah, bear you these letters tightly;

Sail like my pinnacle to these golden shores.

Rogues, hence, avaunt! vanish like hailstones go; Trudge, plod away o' the hoof; seek shelter, pack!

Falstaff will learn the humour of the age, French thrift, you rogues; myself and skirled page. [Exeunt FALSTAFF and ROBIN.]

*Pist.* Let vultures gripe thy guts! for gourd and fullam holds,

And high and low beguiles the rich and poor.

Tester I'll have in pouch when thou shalt lack, Base Phrygian Turk!

*Nym.* I have operations which be humours of revenge.

*Pist.* Wilt thou revenge? 100

*Nym.* By welkin and her star!

*Pist.* With wit or steel?

*Nym.* With both the humours, I.

I will discuss the humour of this love to Page.

*Pist.* And I to Ford shall eke unfold

How Falstaff, varlet vile,

His dove will prove, his gold will hold,

And his soft couch defile.

*Nym.* My humour shall not cool. I will incense Page to deal with poison; I will possess him with yellowness, for the revolt of mine is dangerous. That is my true humour.

*Pist.* Thou art the Mars of malecontents. I second thee; troop on. [Exeunt.]

#### SCENE IV. A room in Doctor Caius's house.

Enter MISTRESS QUICKLY, SIMPLE, and RUGBY.

*Quick.* What, John Rugby! I pray thee, go to the casement, and see if you can see my master, Master Doctor Caius, coming. If he do, i' faith, and find any body in the house, here will be an old abusing of God's patience and the King's English.

*Rug.* I'll go watch.

*Quick.* Go; and we'll have a posset for't soon at night, in faith, at the latter end of a sea-coal fire. [Exit RUGBY.] An honest, willing, kind fellow, as ever servant shall come in house withal, and, I warrant you, no tell-tale nor no breed-bate: his worst fault is, that he is given to prayer; he is something peevish that way; but nobody but has his fault; but let that pass. Peter Simple, you say your name is?

*Sim.* Ay, for fault of a better.

*Quick.* And Master Slender's your master?

*Sim.* Ay, forsooth.

*Quick.* Does he not wear a great round beard, like a glover's paring-knife? 21

*Sim.* No, forsooth; he hath but a little wee face, with a little yellow beard, a Cain-coloured beard.

*Quick.* A softly-sprighted man, is he not?

*Sim.* Ay, forsooth; but he is as tall a man of his

hands as any is between this and his head; he hath fought with a warrener.

*Quick.* How say you? O, I should remember him. Does he not hold up his head, as it were, and strut in his gait?

*Sim.* Yes, indeed, does he.

*Quick.* Well, heaven send Anne Page no worse fortune! Tell Master Parson Evans I will do what I can for your master. Anne is a good girl, and I wish—

*Re-enter RUGBY.*

*Rug.* Out, alas! here comes my master.

*Quick.* We shall all be shent. Run in here, good young man; go into this closet. He will not stay long. [*Shuts SIMPLE in the closet.*] What, John Rugby! John! what, John, I say! Go, John, go inquire for my master; I doubt he be not well, that he comes not home. 43

[*Singing*] And down, down, adown-a, &c.

*Enter DOCTOR CAIUS.*

*Caius.* Vat is you sing? I do not like des toys. Pray you, go and vetch me in my closet un boitier vert, a box, a green-a box: do intend vat I speak? a green-a box.

*Quick.* Ay, forsooth; I'll fetch it you. [*Aside*] I am glad he went not in himself: if he had found the young man, he would have been horn-mad. 52

*Caius.* Fe, fe, fe, fe! *ma foi, il fait fort chaud.* Je m'en vais à la cour—la grande affaire.

*Quick.* Is it this, sir?

*Caius.* Oui; mette le au mon pocket: *déprêche*, quickly. Vere is dat knave Rugby?

*Quick.* What, John Rugby! John!

*Rug.* Here, sir!

*Caius.* You are John Rugby, and you are Jack Rugby. Come, take-a your rapier, and come after my heel to the court. 62

*Rug.* 'Tis ready, sir, here in the porch.

*Caius.* By my trot, I tarry too long. Od's me! *Qu' ai-joublé!* dere is some simples in my closet, dat I vill not for the varld I shall leave behind.

*Quick.* Ay me, he'll find the young man there, and be mad!

*Caius.* O diable, diable! vat is in my closet? Villain! larron! [*Pulling SIMPLE out.*] Rugby, my rapier! 72

*Quick.* Good master, be content.

*Caius.* Wherefore shall I be content-a?

*Quick.* The young man is an honest man.

*Caius.* What shall de honest man do in my closet? dere is no honest man dat shall come in my closet.

*Quick.* I beseech you, be not so phlegmatic.

Hear the truth of it: he came of an errand to me from Parson Hugh. 81

*Caius.* Vell.

*Sim.* Ay, forsooth; to desire her to—

*Quick.* Peace, I pray you.

*Caius.* Peace-a your tongue. Speak-a your tale.

*Sim.* To desire this honest gentlewoman, your maid, to speak a good word to Mistress Anne Page for my master in the way of marriage.

*Quick.* This is all, indeed, la! but I'll ne'er put my finger in the fire, and need not. 91

*Caius.* Sir Hugh send-a you? Rugby, baillez me some paper. Tarry you a little-a while.

*Writes.*

*Quick.* [*Aside to SIMPLE*] I am glad he is so quiet. If he had been throughly moved, you should have heard him so loud and so melancholy. But notwithstanding, man, I'll do you your master what good I can; and the very yea and the no is, the French doctor, my master—I may call him my master, look you, for I keep his house; and I wash, wring, brew, bake, scour, dress meat and drink, make the beds, and do all myself—

*Sim.* [*Aside to QUICKLY*] 'Tis a great charge to come under one body's hand.

*Quick.* [*Aside to SIMPLE*] Are you avised o' that? you shall find it a great charge; and to be up early and down late; but notwithstanding—to tell you in your ear; I would have no words of it—my master himself is in love with Mistress Anne Page; but notwithstanding that, I know Anne's mind—that's neither here nor there.

*Caius.* You jack'nape, give-a this letter to Sir Hugh; by gar, it is a shallenge: I will cut his throat in de park; and I will teach a scurvy jack-a-nape priest to meddle or make. You may be gone; it is not good you tarry here. By gar, I will cut all his two stones; by gar, he shall not have a stone to throw at his dog. [*Exit SIMPLE.*]

*Quick.* Alas, he speaks but for his friend. 120

*Caius.* It is no matter-a ver dat. Do not you tell-a me dat I shall have Anne Page for myself? By gar, I vill kill de Jack priest; and I have appointed mine host of de Jartee to measure our weapon. By gar, I will myself have Anne Page.

*Quick.* Sir, the maid loves you, and all shall be well. We must give folks leave to prate; what, the good-jer!

*Caius.* Rugby, come to the court with me. By gar, if I have not Anne Page, I shall turn your head out of my door. Follow my heels Rugby.

[*Exeunt CAIUS and RUGBY.*]

*Quick.* You shall have An fool's-head of your own. No, I know Anne's mind for that. Never a woman in Windsor knows more of Anne's



mind than I do; nor can do more than I do with her, I thank heaven.

*Fent.* [*Within*] Who's within there? ho!

*Quick.* Who's there, I trow! Come near the house, I pray you. 141

*Enter FENTON.*

*Fent.* How now, good woman! how dost thou?

*Quick.* The better that it pleases your good worship to ask.

*Fent.* What news? how does pretty Mistress Anne?

*Quick.* In truth, sir, and she is pretty, and honest, and gentle; and one that is your friend, I can tell you that by the way; I praise heaven for it. 151

*Fent.* Shall I do any good, thinkest thou? shall I not lose my suit?

*Quick.* Troth, sir, all is in His hands above. But notwithstanding, Master Fenton. I'll be sworn on a book, she loves you. Have not your worship a wart above your eye?

*Fent.* Yes, marry, have I; what of that?

*Quick.* Well, thereby hangs a tale. Good faith, it is such another Nan; but, I detest, an honest maid as ever broke bread. We had an hour's talk of that wart. I shall never laugh but in that maid's company! But indeed she is given too much to allicholy and musing; but for you—well, go to.

*Fent.* Well, I shall see her to-day. Hold, there's money for thee; let me have thy voice in my behalf. If thou seest her before me, commend me.

*Quick.* Will I? i' faith, that we will; and I will tell your worship more of the wart the next time we have confidence; and of other wooers.

*Fent.* Well, farewell; I am in great haste now.

*Quick.* Farewell to your worship. [*Exit FENTON.*] Truly, an honest gentleman; but Anne loves him not; for I know Anne's mind as well as another does. Out upon't! what have I forgot? [*Exit.* 180

## ACT II

### SCENE I. *Before Page's house*

*Enter MISTRESS PAGE, with a letter.*

*Mrs. Page.* What, have I 'scaped love-letters in the holiday-time of my beauty, and am I now a subject for them? Let me see. [*Reads.*] "Ask me no reason why I love you; for though Love use Reason for his physician, he admits him not for his counsellor. You are not young, no more am I; go to then, there's sympathy. You are merry, so am I; ha, ha! then there's more sympathy. You love sack, and so do I; would you

desire better sympathy? Let it suffice thee, Mistress Page—at the least, if the love of soldier can suffice—that I love thee. I will not say, pity me; 'tis not a soldier-like phrase: but I say, love me. By me,

Thine own true knight,  
By day or night,  
Or any kind of light,  
With all his might  
For thee to fight,

John Falstaff"

What a Herod of Jewry is this! O wicked, wicked world! One that is well-nigh worn to pieces with age to show himself a young gallant! What an unweighed behaviour hath this Flemish drunkard picked—with the devil's name!—out of my conversation, that he dares in this manner assay me? Why, he hath not been thrice in my company! What should I say to him? I was then frugal of my mirth. Heaven forgive me! Why, I'll exhibit a bill in the parliament for the putting down of men. How shall I be revenged on him? for revenged I will be, as sure as his guts are made of puddings.

*Enter MISTRESS FORD.*

*Mrs. Ford.* Mistress Page! trust me, I was going to your house.

*Mrs. Page.* And, trust me, I was coming to you. You look very ill.

*Mrs. Ford.* Nay, I'll ne'er believe that; I have to show to the contrary.

*Mrs. Page.* Faith, but you do, in my mind.

*Mrs. Ford.* Well, I do then; yet I say I could show you to the contrary. O Mistress Page, give me some counsel!

*Mrs. Page.* What's the matter, woman?

*Mrs. Ford.* O woman, if it were not for one trifling respect, I could come to such honour!

*Mrs. Page.* Hang the trifle, woman! take the honour. What is it? dispense with trifles; what is it?

*Mrs. Ford.* If I would but go to hell for an eternal moment or so, I could be knighted. 50

*Mrs. Page.* What? thou liest! Sir Alice Ford! These knights will hack; and so thou shouldst not alter the article of thy gentry.

*Mrs. Ford.* We burn daylight. Here, read, read; perceive how I might be knighted. I shall think the worse of fat men, as long as I have an eye to make difference of men's liking; and yet he would not swear; praised women's modesty; and gave such orderly and well-behaved reproof to all uncomeliness, that I would have sworn his disposition would have gone to the truth of his words; but they do no more adhere and keep place together than the Hundredth Psalm to the

tune of "Green Sleeves." What tempest, I trow, threw this whale, with so many tuns of oil in his belly, ashore at Windsor? How shall I be revenged on him? I think the best way were to entertain him with hope, till the wicked fire of lust have melted him in his own grease. Did you ever hear the like? 70

*Mrs. Page.* Letter for letter, but that the name of Page and Ford differs! To thy great comfort in this mystery of ill opinions, here's the twin-brother of thy letter: but let thine inherit first; for, I protest, mine never shall. I warrant he hath a thousand of these letters, writ with blank space for different names—sure, more—and these are of the second edition. He will print them, out of doubt; for he cares not what he puts into the press, when he would put us two. I had rather be a giantess, and lie under Mount Pelion. Well, I will find you twenty lascivious turtles ere one chaste man.

*Mrs. Ford.* Why, this is the very same; the very hand, the very words. What doth he think of us?

*Mrs. Page.* Nay, I know not. It makes me almost ready to wrangle with mine own honesty. I'll entertain myself like one that I am not acquainted withal; for, sure, unless he know some strain in me that I know not myself, he would never have boarded me in this fury.

*Mrs. Ford.* "Boarding," call you it? I'll be sure to keep him above deck.

*Mrs. Page.* So will I. If he come under my hatches, I'll never to sea again. Let's be revenged on him. Let's appoint him a meeting, give him a show of comfort in his suit and lead him on with a fine-baited delay, till he hath pawned his horse to mine host of the Garter. 100

*Mrs. Ford.* Nay, I will consent to act any villainy against him, that may not sully the chariness of our honesty. O, that my husband saw this letter! it would give eternal food to his jealousy.

*Mrs. Page.* Why, look where he comes; and my good man too. He's as far from jealousy as I am from giving him cause; and that I hope is an unmeasurable distance.

*Mrs. Ford.* You are the happier woman. 110

*Mrs. Page.* Let's consult together against this greasy knight. Come hither. [*They retire.*]

*Enter FORD with PISTOL, and PAGE with NYM.*

*Ford.* Well, I hope it be not so.

*Pist.* Hope is a curtal dog in some affairs.

Sir John affects thy wife.

*Ford.* Why, sir, my wife is not young.

*Pist.* He woos both high and low, both rich and poor,

Both young and old, one with another, Ford;

He loves the gallimaufry. Ford, perpend. 170

*Ford.* Love my wife!

120

*Pist.* With liver burning hot. Prevent, or go thou,

Like Sir Actæon he, with Ringwood at thy heels, O, odious is the name!

*Ford.* What name, sir?

*Pist.* The horn, I say. Farewell.

Take heed, have open eye, for thieves do foot by night.

Take heed, ere summer comes or cuckoo-birds do sing.

Away, Sir Corporal Nym!

Believe it, Page; he speaks sense.

[Exit.]

*Ford.* [*Aside*] I will be patient; I will find out this. 131

*Nym.* [*To PAGE*] And this is true; I like not the humour of lying. He hath wronged me in some humours. I should have borne the humoured letter to her; but I have a sword and it shall bite upon my necessity. He loves your wife; there's the short and the long. My name is Corporal Nym; I speak and I avouch; 'tis true; my name is Nym and Falstaff loves your wife. Adieu. I love not the humour of bread and cheese, and there's the humour of it. Adieu. 141

*Page.* "The humour of it," quoth a'! Here's a fellow frights English out of his wits.

*Ford.* I will seek out Falstaff.

*Page.* I never heard such a drawling, affecting rogue.

*Ford.* If I do find it! Well.

*Page.* I will not believe such a Cataian, though the priest o' the town commended him for a true man. 150

*Ford.* 'Twas a good sensible fellow. Well.

*Page.* How how, Meg!

MISTRESS PAGE and MISTRESS FORD come forward.

*Mrs. Page.* Whither go you, George? Hark you.

*Mrs. Ford.* How now, sweet Frank! why art thou melancholy?

*Ford.* I melancholy! I am not melancholy. Get you home, go.

*Mrs. Ford.* Faith, thou hast some crotchets in thy head. Now, will you go, Mistress Page?

*Mrs. Page.* Have with you. You'll come to dinner, George. [*Aside to MISTRESS FORD*] Look who comes yonder. She shall be our messenger to this paltry knight.

*Mrs. Ford.* [*Aside to MISTRESS PAGE*] Trust me, I thought on her: she'll fit it.

*Enter MISTRESS QUICKLY.*

*Mrs. Page.* You are come to see my daughter Anne?

*Quick.* Ay, forsooth; and, I pray, how does good Mistress Anne? 170



*Mrs. Page.* Go in with us and see. We have an hour's talk with you.

[*Exeunt* MISTRESS PAGE, MISTRESS FORD, and MISTRESS QUICKLY.]

*Page.* How now, Master Ford!

*Ford.* You heard what this knave told me, did you not?

*Page.* Yes; and you heard what the other told me?

*Ford.* Do you think there is truth in them?

*Page.* Hang 'em, slaves! I do not think the knight would offer it; but these that accuse him in his intent towards our wives are a yoke of his discarded men; very rogues, now they be out of service.

*Ford.* Were they his men?

*Page.* Marry, were they.

*Ford.* I like it never the better for that. Does he lie at the Garter?

*Page.* Ay, marry, does he. If he should intend this voyage towards my wife, I would turn her loose to him; and what he gets more of her than sharp words, let it lie on my head. 191

*Ford.* I do not misdoubt my wife; but I would be loath to turn them together. A man may be too confident. I would have nothing lie on my head. I cannot be thus satisfied.

*Page.* Look where my ranting host of the Garter comes. There is either liquor in his pate or money in his purse when he looks so merrily.

*Enter* HOST.

How now, mine host!

*Host.* How now, bully-rook! thou'rt a gentleman. Cavaleiro-justice, I say! 201

*Enter* Shallow.

*Shal.* I follow, mine host, I follow. Good even and twenty, good Master Page! Master Page, will you go with us? we have sport in hand.

*Host.* Tell him, cavaleiro-justice; tell him, bully-rook.

*Shal.* Sir, there is a fray to be fought between Sir Hugh the Welsh priest and Caius the French doctor. 210

*Ford.* Good mine host o' the Garter, a word with you. [*Drawing him aside.*]

*Host.* What sayest thou, my bully-rook?

*Shal.* [*To PAGE*] Will you go with us to behold it? My merry host hath had the measuring of their weapons; and, I think, hath appointed them contrary places; for, believe me, I hear the parson is no jester. Hark, I will tell you what our sport shall be. [*They converse apart.*]

*Host.* Hast thou no suit against my knight, my guest-cavaleire? 221

*Ford.* None, I protest; but I'll give you a pottle of burnt sack to give me recourse to him and tell him my name is Brook; only for a jest.

*Host.* My hand, bully; thou shalt have egress and regress—said I well?—and thy name shall be Brook. It is a merry knight. Will you go, An-heires?

*Shal.* Have with you, mine host.

*Page.* I have heard the Frenchman hath good skill in his rapier. 231

*Shal.* Tut, sir, I could have told you more. In these times you stand on distance, your passes, stoccadoes, and I know not what. 'Tis the heart, Master Page; 'tis here, 'tis here. I have seen the time, with my long sword I would have made you four tall fellows skip like rats.

*Host.* Here, boys, here, here! shall we wag?

*Page.* Have with you. I had rather hear them scold than fight. 240

[*Exeunt* HOST, SHALLOW, and PAGE.]

*Ford.* Though Page be a secure fool, and stands so firmly on his wife's frailty, yet I cannot put off my opinion so easily. She was in his company at Page's house; and what they made there, I know not. Well, I will look further into 't; and I have a disguise to sound Falstaff. If I find her honest, I lose not my labour; if she be otherwise, 'tis labour well bestowed. [*Exit.*]

## SCENE II. *A room in the Garter Inn*

*Enter* FALSTAFF and PISTOL.

*Fal.* I will not lend thee a penny.

*Pist.* Why, then the world's mine oyster, Which I with sword will open.

*Fal.* Not a penny. I have been content, sir, you should lay my countenance to pawn. I have grated upon my good friends for three reprieves for you and your coach-fellow Nym; or else you had looked through the grate, like a geminy of baboons. I am damned in hell for swearing to gentlemen my friends, you were good soldiers and tall fellows; and when Mistress Bridget lost the handle of her fan, I took't upon mine honour thou hadst it not.

*Pist.* Didst not thou share? hadst thou not fifteen pence?

*Fal.* Reason, you rogue, reason: thinkest thou I'll endanger my soul gratis? At a word, hang no more about me, I am no gibbet for you. Go. A short knife and a throng! To your manor of Pickt-hatch! Go. You'll not bear a letter for me, you rogue! you stand upon your honour. Why thou unconfinable baseness, it is as much as I can do to keep the terms of my honour precise. I, I, I myself sometimes, leaving the fear of God on the left hand and hiding mine honour in my

necessity, am fain to shuffle, to hedge and to lurch; and yet you, rogue, will ensconce your rags, your cat-a-mountain looks, your red-lattice phrases, and your bold-beating oaths, under the shelter of your honour! You will not do it, you! 30

*Pist.* I do relent. What would thou more of man?

*Enter ROBIN.*

*Rob.* Sir, here's a woman would speak with you.

*Fal.* Let her approach.

*Enter MISTRESS QUICKLY.*

*Quick.* Give your worship good morrow.

*Fal.* Good morrow, good wife.

*Quick.* Not so, an't please your worship.

*Fal.* Good maid, then.

*Quick.* I'll be sworn,

As my mother was, the first hour I was born.

*Fal.* I do believe the swearer. What with me?

*Quick.* Shall I vouchsafe your worship a word or two?

*Fal.* Two thousand, fair woman; and I'll vouchsafe thee the hearing.

*Quick.* There is one Mistress Ford, sir—I pray, come a little nearer this ways—I myself dwell with Master Doctor Caius—

*Fal.* Well, on. Mistress Ford, you say—

*Quick.* Your worship says very true. I pray your worship, come a little nearer this ways. 50

*Fal.* I warrant thee, nobody hears; mine own people, mine own people.

*Quick.* Are they so? God bless them and make them His servants!

*Fal.* Well, Mistress Ford; what of her?

*Quick.* Why, sir, she's a good creature. Lord, Lord! your worship's a wanton! Well, heaven forgive you and all of us, I pray!

*Fal.* Mistress Ford; come, Mistress Ford—

*Quick.* Marry, this is the short and the long of it; you have brought her into such a canaries as 'tis wonderful. The best courtier of them all, when the court lay at Windsor, could never have brought her to such a canary. Yet there has been knights, and lords, and gentlemen, with their coaches, I warrant you, coach after coach, letter after letter, gift after gift; smelling so sweetly, all musk, and so rushling, I warrant you, in silk and gold; and in such alligant terms; and in such wine and sugar of the best and the fairest, that would have won any woman's heart; and, I warrant you, they could never get an eye-wink of her. I had myself twenty angels given me this morning; but I defy all angels, in any such sort, as they say, but in the way of honesty; and, I

warrant you, they could never get her so much as sip on a cup with the proudest of them all; and yet there has been earls, nay which is more, pensioners; but, I warrant you all is one with her. 80

*Fal.* But what says she to me? be brief, my good she-Mercury.

*Quick.* Marry, she hath received your letter, for the which she thanks you a thousand times; and she gives you to notify that her husband will be absence from his house between ten and eleven.

*Fal.* Ten and eleven?

*Quick.* Ay, forsooth; and then you may come and see the picture, she says, that you wot of. Master Ford, her husband, will be from home. Alas! the sweet woman leads an ill life with him. He's a very jealousy man. She leads a very fram-pold life with him, good heart.

*Fal.* Ten and eleven. Woman, commend me to her; I will not fail her.

*Quick.* Why, you say well. But I have another messenger to your worship. Mistress Page hath her hearty commendations to you too; and let me tell you in your ear, she's as fartuous a civil modest wife, and one, I tell you, that will not miss you morning nor evening prayer, as any is in Windsor, whoe'er be the other; and she bade me tell your worship that her husband is seldom from home; but she hopes there will come a time. I never knew a woman so dote upon a man. Surely I think you have charms, la; yes, in truth.

*Fal.* Not I, I assure thee. Setting the attraction of my good parts aside I have no other charms. 111

*Quick.* Blessing on your heart for't!

*Fal.* But, I pray thee, tell me this: has Ford's wife and Page's wife acquainted each other how they love me?

*Quick.* That were a jest indeed! they have not so little grace, I hope. That were a trick indeed! But Mistress Page would desire you to send her your little page, of all loves. Her husband has a marvellous infection to the little page; and truly Master Page is an honest man. Never a wife in Windsor leads a better life than she does: do what she will, say what she will, take all, pay all, go to bed when she list, rise when she list, all is as she will; and truly she deserves it; for if there be a kind woman in Windsor, she is one. You must send her your page; no remedy.

*Fal.* Why, I will.

*Quick.* Nay, but do so, then; and, look you, he may come and go between you both; and in any case have a nay-word, that you may know one another's mind, and the boy never need to understand any thing; for 'tis not good that children should know any wickedness. Old folks, you



know, have discretion, as they say, and know the world.

*Fal.* Fare thee well. Commend me to them both. There's my purse; I am yet thy debtor. Boy, go along with this woman. [*Exeunt MISTRESS QUICKLY and ROBIN.*] This news distracts me!

*Pist.* This punk is one of Cupid's carriers. Clap on more sails; pursue; up with your fights; Give fire; she is my prize, or ocean whelm them all! [*Exit.*]

*Fal.* Sayest thou so, old Jack? go thy ways; I'll make more of thy old body than I have done. Will they yet look after thee? Wilt thou, after the expense of so much money, be now a gainer? Good body, I thank thee. Let them say 'tis grossly done; so it be fairly done, no matter.

*Enter BARDOLPH.*

*Bard.* Sir John, there's one Master Brook below would fain speak with you, and be acquainted with you; and hath sent your worship a mornin'g's draught of sack.

*Fal.* Brook is his name?

*Bard.* Ay, sir.

*Fal.* Call him in. [*Exit BARDOLPH.*] Such Brooks are welcome to me, that o'erflow such liquor. Ah, ha! Mistress Ford and Mistress Page, have I encompassed you? go to; via!

*Re-enter BARDOLPH, with FORD disguised.*

*Ford.* Bless you, sir! 160

*Fal.* And you, sir! Would you speak with me?

*Ford.* I make bold to press with so little preparation upon you.

*Fal.* You're welcome. What's your will? Give us leave, drawer. [*Exit BARDOLPH.*]

*Ford.* Sir, I am a gentleman that have spent much; my name is Brook.

*Fal.* Good Master Brook, I desire more acquaintance of you.

*Ford.* Good Sir John, I sue for yours, not to charge you; for I must let you understand I think myself in better plight for a lender than you are, the which hath something emboldened me to this unseasoned intrusion; for they say, if money go before, all ways do lie open.

*Fal.* Money is a good soldier, sir, and will on.

*Ford.* Troth, and I have a bag of money here troubles me. If you will help to bear it, Sir John, take all, or half, for easing me of the carriage.

*Fal.* Sir, I know not how I may deserve to be your porter. 181

*Ford.* I will tell you, sir, if you will give me the hearing.

*Fal.* Speak, good Master Brook. I shall be glad to be your servant.

*Ford.* Sir, I hear you are a scholar—I will be brief with you—and you have been a man long known to me, though I had never so good means, as desire, to make myself acquainted with you. I shall discover a thing to you, wherein I must very much lay open mine own imperfection; but, good Sir John, as you have one eye upon my follies, as you hear them unfolded, turn another into the register of your own; that I may pass with a reproof the easier, sith you yourself know how easy it is to be such an offender.

*Fal.* Very well, sir; proceed.

*Ford.* There is a gentlewoman in this town; her husband's name is Ford.

*Fal.* Well, sir. 200

*Ford.* I have long loved her, and, I protest to you, bestowed much on her; followed her with a doting observance; engrossed opportunities to meet her; fee'd every slight occasion that could but niggardly give me sight of her; not only bought many presents to give her, but have given largely to many to know what she would have given; briefly, I have pursued her as love hath pursued me; which hath been on the wing of all occasions. But whatsoever I have merited, either in my mind or in my means, meed, I am sure, I have received none; unless experience be a jewel that I have purchased at an infinite rate, and that hath taught me to say this:

"Love like a shadow flies when substance love pursues;

Pursuing that that flies, and flying what pursues."

*Fal.* Have you received no promise of satisfaction at her hands?

*Ford.* Never.

*Fal.* Have you importuned her to such a purpose? 221

*Ford.* Never.

*Fal.* Of what quality was your love, then?

*Ford.* Like a fair house built on another man's ground; so that I have lost my edifice by mistaking the place where I erected it.

*Fal.* To what purpose have you unfolded this to me?

*Ford.* When I have told you that, I have told you all. Some say, that though she appear honest to me, yet in other places she enlargeth her mirth so far that there is shrewd construction made of her. Now, Sir John, here is the heart of my purpose: you are a gentleman of excellent breeding, admirable discourse, of great admittance, authentic in your place and person, generally allowed for your many war-like, court-like, and learned preparations.

*Fal.* O, sir!

*Ford.* Believe it, for you know it. There is money; spend it, spend it; spend more; spend all I have; only give me so much of your time in exchange of it, as to lay an amiable siege to the honesty of this Ford's wife. Use your art of wooing; win her to consent to you; if any man may, you may as soon as any.

*Fal.* Would it apply well to the vehemency of your affection, that I should win what you would enjoy? Methinks you prescribe to yourself very preposterously. 250

*Ford.* O, understand my drift. She dwells so securely on the excellency of her honour, that the folly of my soul dares not present itself. She is too bright to be looked against. Now, could I come to her with any detection in my hand, my desires had instance and argument to commend themselves. I could drive her then from the ward of her purity, her reputation, her marriage-vow, and a thousand other her defences, which now are too too strongly embattled against me. What say you to't, Sir John? 261

*Fal.* Master Brook, I will first make bold with your money; next, give me your hand; and last, as I am a gentleman, you shall, if you will, enjoy Ford's wife.

*Ford.* O good sir!

*Fal.* I say you shall.

*Ford.* Want no money, Sir John; you shall want none.

*Fal.* Want no Mistress Ford, Master Brook; you shall want none. I shall be with her, I may tell you, by her own appointment; even as you came in to me, her assistant or go-between parted from me. I say I shall be with her between ten and eleven; for at that time the jealous rascally knave her husband will be forth. Come you to me at night; you shall know how I speed.

*Ford.* I am blest in your acquaintance. Do you know Ford, sir? 280

*Fal.* Hang him, poor cuckoldly knave! I know him not. Yet I wrong him to call him poor; they say the jealous wittolly knave hath masses of money; for the which his wife seems to me well-favoured. I will use her as the key of the cuckoldly rogue's coffer; and there's my harvest-home.

*Ford.* I would you knew Ford, sir, that you might avoid him if you saw him.

*Fal.* Hang him, mechanical salt-butter rogue! I will stare him out of his wits; I will awe him with my cudgel; it shall hang like a meteor o'er the cuckold's horns. Master Brook, thou shalt know I will predominate over the peasant, and thou shalt lie with his wife. Come to me soon at night. Ford's a knave, and I will aggravate his

style; thou, Master Brook, shalt know him for knave and cuckold. Come to me soon at night.

[Exit.]

*Ford.* What a damned Epicurean rascal is this! My heart is ready to crack with impatience. Who says this is improvident jealousy? my wife hath sent to him; the hour is fixed; the match is made. Would any man have thought this? See the hell of having a false woman! My bed shall be abused, my coffers ransacked, my reputation gnawn at; and I shall not only receive this villainous wrong, but stand under the adoption of abominable terms, and by him that does me this wrong. Terms! names! Amaimon sounds well; Lucifer, well; Barbason, well; yet they are devils' additions, the names of fiends; but Cuckold! Wittol! —Cuckold! the devil himself hath not such a name. Page is an ass, a secure ass. He will trust his wife; he will not be jealous. I will rather trust a Fleming with my butter, Parson Hugh the Welshman with my cheese, an Irishman with my aqua-vitæ bottle, or a thief to walk my ambling gelding, than my wife with herself. Then she plots, then she ruminates, then she devises; and what they think in their hearts they may effect, they will break their hearts but they will effect. God be praised for my jealousy! Eleven o'clock the hour. I will prevent this, detect my wife, be revenged on Falstaff, and laugh at Page. I will about it; better three hours too soon than a minute too late. Fie, fie, fie! cuckold! cuckold! cuckold! [Exit.]

### SCENE III. A field near Windsor

Enter CAIUS and RUGBY.

*Caius.* Jack Rugby!

*Rug.* Sir?

*Caius.* Vat is de clock, Jack?

*Rug.* 'Tis past the hour, sir, that Sir Hugh promised to meet.

*Caius.* By gar, he has save his soul, dat he is no come; he has pray his Pible well, dat he is no come. By gar, Jack Rugby, he is dead already, if he be come.

*Rug.* He is wise, sir; he knew your worship would kill him, if he came. 11

*Caius.* By gar, de herring is no dead so as I vill kill him. Take your rapier, Jack; I vill tell you how I vill kill him.

*Rug.* Alas, sir, I cannot fence.

*Caius.* Villainy, take your rapier.

*Rug.* Forbear; here's company.

Enter HOST, SHALLOW, SLENDER, and PAGE.

*Host.* Bless thee, bully doctor!

*Shal.* Save you, Master Doctor Caius!



*Page.* Now, good master doctor! 20

*Slen.* Give you good morrow, sir.

*Caius.* Vat be all you, one, two, tree, four, come for?

*Host.* To see thee fight, to see thee foin, to see thee traverse; to see thee here, to see thee there; to see thee pass thy punto, thy stock, thy reverse, thy distance, thy montant. Is he dead, my Ethiopian? is he dead, my Francisco? ha, bully! What says my Æsculapius? my Galen? my heart of elder? ha! is he dead, bully stale? is he dead?

*Caius.* By gar, he is de coward Jack priest of de world; he is not show his face. 32

*Host.* Thou art a Castalion-King-Urinal. Hector of Greece, my boy!

*Caius.* I pray you, bear vitness that me have stay six or seven, two, tree hours for him, and he is no come.

*Shal.* He is the wiser man, master doctor. He is a curer of souls, and you a curer of bodies; if you should fight, you go against the hair of your professions. Is it not true, Master Page?

*Page.* Master Shallow, you have yourself been a great fighter, though now a man of peace.

*Shal.* Bodykins, Master Page, though I now be old and of the peace, if I see a sword out, my finger itches to make one. Though we are justices and doctors and churchmen, Master Page, we have some salt of our youth in us; we are the sons of women, Master Page. 51

*Page.* 'Tis true, Master Shallow.

*Shal.* It will be found so, Master Page. Master Doctor Caius, I am come to fetch you home. I am sworn of the peace. You have showed yourself a wise physician, and Sir Hugh hath shown himself a wise and patient churchman. You must go with me, master doctor.

*Host.* Pardon, guest-justice. A word, Mounseur Mockwater. 60

*Caius.* Mock-vater! vat is dat?

*Host.* Mock-water, in our English tongue, is valour, bully.

*Caius.* By gar, den, I have as mush mock-vater as de Englishman. Scurvy jack-dog priest! by gar, me vill cut his ears.

*Host.* He will clapper-claw thee tightly, bully.

*Caius.* Clapper-de-claw! vat is dat?

*Host.* That is, he will make thee amends. 70

*Caius.* By gar, me do look he shall clapper-de-claw me; for, by gar, me vill have it.

*Host.* And I will provoke him to't, or let him wag.

*Caius.* Me tank you for dat.

*Host.* And, moreover, bully—but first, master guest, and Master Page, and eke Cavaleiro Slen-

der, go you through the town to Frogmore. [*Aside to them.*]

*Page.* Sir Hugh is there, is he?

*Host.* He is there. See what humour he is in; and I will bring the doctor about by the fields. Will it do well?

*Shal.* We will do it.

*Page, Shal., and Slen.* Adieu, good master doctor.

[*Exeunt PAGE, SHALLOW, and SLENDER.*]

*Caius.* By gar, me vill kill de priest; for he speak for a jack-an-ape to Anne Page.

*Host.* Let him die; sheathe thy impatience, throw cold water on thy choler; go about the fields with me through Frogmore. I will bring thee where Mistress Anne Page is, at a farmhouse a-feasting; and thou shalt woo her. Cried I aim? said I well?

*Caius.* By gar, me dank you vor dat. By gar, I love you; and I shall procure-a you de good guest, de earl, de knight, de lords, de gentlemen, my patients.

*Host.* For the which I will be thy adversary toward Anne Page. Said I well?

*Caius.* By gar, 'tis good; vell said. 100

*Host.* Let us wag, then.

*Caius.* Come at my heels, Jack Rugby. [*Exeunt.*]

## ACT III

### SCENE I. *A field near Frogmore*

*Enter SIR HUGH EVANS and SIMPLE.*

*Evans.* I pray you now, good Master Slender's serving-man, and friend Simple by your name, which way have you looked for Master Caius, that calls himself doctor of physic?

*Sim.* Marry, sir, the pittance-ward, the parkward, every way; old Windsor way, and every way but the town way.

*Evans.* I most feheemently desire you you will also look that way.

*Sim.* I will, sir.

[*Exit.* 10

*Evans.* 'Pless my soul, how full of chollors I am, and trempling of mind! I shall be glad if he have deceived me. How melancholies I am! I will knog his urinals about his knave's costard when I have good opportunities for the ork. 'Pless my soul! [*Sings.*]

"To shallow rivers, to whose falls

Melodious birds sings madrigals;

There will we make our peds of roses,

And a thousand fragrant posies. 20

To shallow!"—

Mercy on me! I have a great dispositions to cry. [*Sings.*]

"Melodious birds sing madrigals—

When as I sat in Pabylon—  
And a thousand vagram posies.  
To shallow" &c.

*Re-enter SIMPLE.*

*Sim.* Yonder he is coming, this way, Sir Hugh.

*Evans.* He's welcome. [*Sings.*]

"To shallow rivers, to whose falls"—  
Heaven prosper the right! What weapons is  
he?

*Sim.* No weapons, sir. There comes my master,  
Master Shallow, and another gentleman, from  
Frogmore, over the stile, this way.

*Evans.* Pray you, give me my gown; or else  
keep it in your arms.

*Enter PAGE, SHALLOW, and SLENDER.*

*Shal.* How now, master Parson! Good morrow,  
good Sir Hugh. Keep a gamester from the dice,  
and a good student from his book, and it is wonder-  
ful.

*Slen.* [*Aside*] Ah, sweet Anne Page! 40

*Page.* 'Save you, good Sir Hugh!

*Evans.* 'Pless you from his mercy sake, all of  
you!

*Shal.* What, the sword and the word! do you  
study them both, master parson?

*Page.* And youthful still! in your doublet and  
hose this raw rheumatic day!

*Evans.* There is reasons and causes for it.

*Page.* We are come to you to do a good office,  
master parson. 50

*Evans.* Fery well; what is it?

*Page.* Yonder is a most reverend gentleman,  
who, belike having received wrong by some per-  
son, is at most odds with his own gravity and  
patience that ever you saw.

*Shal.* I have lived fourscore years and upward;  
I never heard a man of his place, gravity and  
learning, so wide of his own respect.

*Evans.* What is he?

*Page.* I think you know him; Master Doctor  
Caius, the renowned French physician. 61

*Evans.* Got's will, and his passion of my heart!  
I had as lief you would tell me of a mess of  
porridge.

*Page.* Why?

*Evans.* He has no more knowledge in Hibo-  
crates and Galen—and he is a knave besides; a  
cowardly knave as you would desires to be ac-  
quainted withal.

*Page.* I warrant you, he's the man should fight  
with him. 71

*Slen.* [*Aside*] O sweet Anne Page!

*Shal.* It appears so by his weapons. Keep them  
asunder; here comes Doctor Caius.

*Enter HOST, CAIUS, and RUGBY.*

*Page.* Nay, good master parson, keep in your  
weapon.

*Shal.* So do you, good master doctor.

*Host.* Disarm them, and let them question. Let  
them keep their limbs whole and hack our Eng-  
lish. 80

*Caius.* I pray you, let-a me speak a word with  
your ear. Wherefore vill you not meet-a me?

*Evans.* [*Aside to CAIUS*] Pray you, use your pa-  
tience. In good time.

*Caius.* By gar, you are de coward, de Jack dog,  
John ape.

*Evans.* [*Aside to CAIUS*] Pray you, let us not be  
laughing-stocks to other men's humours; I desire  
you in friendship, and I will one way or other  
make you amends. [*Aloud*] I will knog your  
urinals about your knave's cogscomb for miss-  
ing your meetings and appointments. 92

*Caius.* *Diab!e!* Jack Rugby—mine host de Jar-  
teer—have I not stay for him to kill him? have I  
not, at de place I did appoint?

*Evans.* As I am a Christians soul now, look you,  
this is the place appointed. I'll be judgement by  
mine host of the Garter.

*Host.* Peace, I say, Gallia and Gaul, French and  
Welsh, soul-curer and body-curer! 100

*Caius.* Ay, dat is very good; excellent.

*Host.* Peace, I say! hear mine host of the Garter.  
Am I politic? am I subtle? am I a Machiavel?  
Shall I lose my doctor? no; he gives me the po-  
tions and the motions. Shall I lose my parson,  
my priest, my Sir Hugh? no; he gives me the  
proverbs and the no-verbs. Give me thy hand  
terrestrial; so. Give me thy hand, celestial; so.  
Boys of art, I have deceived you both; I have  
directed you to wrong places. Your hearts are  
mighty, your skins are whole, and let burnt  
sack be the issue. Come, lay their swords to  
paw. Follow me, lads of peace; follow, follow,  
follow.

*Shal.* Trust me, a mad host. Follow, gentlemen,  
follow.

*Slen.* [*Aside*] O sweet Anne Page!

[*Exeunt SHALLOW, SLENDER, PAGE, and HOST.*]

*Caius.* Ha, do I perceive dat? have you make-a  
de sot of us, ha, ha?

*Evans.* This is well; he has made us his vlour-  
ing-stog. I desire you that we may be friends;  
and let us knog our prains together to be revenge  
on this same scall, scurvy, cogging companion,  
the host of the Garter

*Caius.* By gar, with all my heart. He promise to  
bring me where is Anne Page; by gar, he deceive  
me too.



*Evans.* Well, I will smite his noddles. Pray you, follow.  
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *A street*

*Enter MISTRESS PAGE and ROBIN.*

*Mrs. Page.* Nay, keep your way, little gallant; you were wont to be a follower, but now you are a leader. Whether had you rather lead mine eyes, or eye your master's heels?

*Rob.* I had rather, forsooth, go before you like a man than follow him like a dwarf.

*Mrs. Page.* O, you are a flattering boy. Now I see you'll be a courtier.

*Enter FORD.*

*Ford.* Well met, Mistress Page. Whither go you? 10

*Mrs. Page.* Truly, sir, to see your wife. Is she at home?

*Ford.* Ay; and as idle as she may hang together, for want of company. I think, if your husbands were dead, you two would marry.

*Mrs. Page.* Be sure of that—two other husbands.

*Ford.* Where had you this pretty weathercock?

*Mrs. Page.* I cannot tell what the dickens his name is my husband had him of. What do you call your knight's name, sirrah? 21

*Rob.* Sir John Falstaff.

*Ford.* Sir John Falstaff!

*Mrs. Page.* He, he; I can never hit on's name. There is such a league between my good man and he! Is your wife at home indeed?

*Ford.* Indeed she is.

*Mrs. Page.* By your leave, sir. I am sick till I see her.  
[*Exeunt MISTRESS PAGE and ROBIN.*]

*Ford.* Has Page any brains? hath he any eyes? hath he any thinking? Sure, they sleep; he hath no use of them. Why, this boy will carry a letter twenty mile, as easy as a cannon will shoot point-blank twelve score. He pieces out his wife's inclination; he gives her folly motion and advantage; and now she's going to my wife, and Falstaff's boy with her. A man may hear this shower sing in the wind. And Falstaff's boy with her! Good plots, they are laid; and our revolted wives share damnation together. Well; I will take him, then torture my wife, pluck the borrowed veil of modesty from the so seeming Mistress Page, divulge Page himself for a secure and wilful Actæon; and to these violent proceedings all my neighbours shall cry aim. [Clock heard.] The clock gives me my cue, and my assurance bids me search. There I shall find Falstaff. I shall be rather praised for this than mocked; for it is as positive as the earth is firm that Falstaff is there.  
I will go. 50

*Enter PAGE, SHALLOW, SLENDER, HOST, SIR HUGH EVANS, CAIUS, and RUGBY.*

*Shal., Page, &c.* Well met, Master Ford.

*Ford.* Trust me, a good knot. I have good cheer at home; and I pray you all go with me.

*Shal.* I must excuse myself, Master Ford

*Slen.* And so must I, sir. We have appointed to dine with Mistress Anne, and I would not break with her for more money than I'll speak of.

*Shal.* We have lingered about a match between Anne Page and my cousin Slender, and this day we shall have our answer. 60

*Slen.* I hope I have your good will, father Page.

*Page.* You have, Master Slender; I stand wholly for you; but my wife, master doctor, is for you altogether.

*Caius.* Ay, be-gar; and de maid is love-a me. My nursh-a Quickly tell me so mush.

*Host.* What say you to young Master Fenton? he capers, he dances, he has eyes of youth, he writes verses, he speaks holiday, he smells April and May. He will carry't, he will carry't; 'tis in his buttons; he will carry't. 71

*Page.* Not by my consent, I promise you. The gentleman is of no having. He kept company with the wild prince and Poins; he is of too high a region; he knows too much. No, he shall not knit a knot in his fortunes with the finger of my substance. If he take her, let him take her simply; the wealth I have waits on my consent, and my consent goes not that way.

*Ford.* I beseech you heartily, some of you go home with me to dinner. Besides your cheer, you shall have sport; I will show you a monster. Master doctor, you shall go; so shall you, Master Page; and you, Sir Hugh.

*Shal.* Well, fare you well. We shall have the freer wooing at Master Page's.

[*Exeunt SHALLOW and SLENDER.*]

*Caius.* Go home, John Rugby; I come anon.

[*Exit RUGBY.*]

*Host.* Farewell, my hearts. I will to my honest knight Falstaff, and drink canary with him.

[*Exit.*]

*Ford.* [*Aside*] I think I shall drink in pipewine first with him; I'll make him dance. Will you go, gentles?

*All.* Have with you to see this monster.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *A room in Ford's house*

*Enter MISTRESS FORD and MISTRESS PAGE.*

*Mrs. Ford.* What, John! What, Robert!

*Mrs. Page.* Quickly, quickly! Is the buck-basket—

*Mrs. Ford.* I warrant. What, Robin, I say!

*Enter Servants with a basket.*

*Mr. Page.* Come, come, come.

*Mrs. Ford.* Here, set it down.

*Mrs. Page.* Give your men the charge; we must be brief.

*Mrs. Ford.* Marry, as I told you before, John and Robert, be ready here hard by in the brew-house; and when I suddenly call you, come forth, and without any pause or staggering take this basket on your shoulders. That done, trudge with it in all haste, and carry it among the whistlers in Datchet-mead, and there empty it in the muddy ditch close by the Thames side.

*Mrs. Page.* You will do it?

*Mrs. Ford.* I ha' told them over and over; they lack no direction. Be gone, and come when you are called

*[Exeunt Servants. 20]*

*Mrs. Page.* Here comes little Robin.

*Enter ROBIN.*

*Mrs. Ford.* How now, my eyas-musket! what news with you?

*Rob.* My master, Sir John, is come in at your back-door, Mistress Ford, and requests your company.

*Mrs. Page.* You little Jack-a-Lent, have you been true to us?

*Rob.* Ay, I'll be sworn. My master knows not of your being here and hath threatened to put me into everlasting liberty if I tell you of it; for he swears he'll turn me away.

*Mrs. Page.* Thou'rt a good boy. This secrecy of thine shall be a tailor to thee and shall make thee a new doublet and hose. I'll go hide me.

*Mrs. Ford.* Do so. Go tell thy master I am alone. *[Exit ROBIN.]* Mistress Page, remember you your cue.

*Mrs. Page.* I warrant thee; if I do not act it, hiss me.

*[Exit. 41]*

*Mrs. Ford.* Go to, then. We'll use this unwholesome humidity, this gross watery pumpion; we'll teach him to know turtles from jays.

*Enter FALSTAFF.*

*Fal.* "Have I caught thee, my heavenly jewel?" Why, now let me die, for I have lived long enough. This is the period of my ambition. O this blessed hour!

*Mrs. Ford.* O sweet Sir John!

*Fal.* Mistress Ford, I cannot cog, I cannot prate, Mistress Ford. Now shall I sin in my wish: I would thy husband were dead. I'll speak it before the best lord; I would make thee my lady.

*Mrs. Ford.* I your lady, Sir John! alas, I should be a pitiful lady!

*Fal.* Let the court of France show me such another. I see how thine eye would emulate the diamond. Thou hast the right arched beauty of the brow that becomes the ship-tire, the tire-valiant, or any tire of Venetian admittance. 61

*Mrs. Ford.* A plain kerchief, Sir John. My brows become nothing else; nor that well neither.

*Fal.* By the Lord, thou art a traitor to say so. Thou wouldst make an absolute courtier; and the firm fixture of thy foot would give an excellent motion to thy gait in a semi-circled farthingale. I see what thou wert, if Fortune thy foe were not, Nature thy friend. Come, thou canst not hide it. 71

*Mrs. Ford.* Believe me, there's no such thing in me.

*Fal.* What made me love thee? let that persuade thee there's something extraordinary in thee. Come, I cannot cog and say thou art this and that, like a many of these lipping hawthorn-buds, that come like women in men's apparel, and smell like Bucklersbury in simple time; I cannot. But I love thee; none but thee; and thou deservest it. 81

*Mrs. Ford.* Do not betray me, sir. I fear you love Mistress Page.

*Fal.* Thou mightst as well say I love to walk by the Counter-gate, which is as hateful to me as the reek of a lime-kiln.

*Mrs. Ford.* Well, heaven knows how I love you; and you shall one day find it.

*Fal.* Keep in that mind; I'll deserve it.

*Mrs. Ford.* Nay, I must tell you, so you do; or else I could not be in that mind. 91

*Rob.* *[Within]* Mistress Ford, Mistress Ford! here's Mistress Page at the door, sweating and blowing and looking wildly, and would needs speak with you presently.

*Fal.* She shall not see me. I will ensconce me behind the arras.

*Mrs. Ford.* Pray you, do so. She's a very tattling woman. *[FALSTAFF hides himself.]*

*Re-enter MISTRESS PAGE and ROBIN.*

What's the matter? how now! 100

*Mrs. Page.* O Mistress Ford, what have you done? You're shamed, you're overthrown, you're undone for ever!

*Mrs. Ford.* What's the matter, good Mistress Page?

*Mrs. Page.* O well-a-day, Mistress Ford! having an honest man to your husband, to give him such cause of suspicion!

*Mrs. Ford.* What cause of suspicion?



*Mrs. Page.* What cause of suspicion! Out upon you! how am I mistook in you! 111

*Mrs. Page.* Why, alas, what's the matter?

*Mrs. Page.* Your husband's coming hither, woman, with all the officers in Windsor, to search for a gentleman that he says is here now in the house by your consent, to take an ill advantage of his absence. You are undone.

*Mrs. Ford.* 'Tis not so, I hope.

*Mrs. Page.* Pray heaven it be not so, that you have such a man here! but 'tis most certain your husband's coming, with half Windsor at his heels, to search for such a one. I come before to tell you. If you know yourself clear, why, I am glad of it; but if you have a friend here, convey, convey him out. Be not amazed; call all your senses to you; defend your reputation, or bid farewell to your good life for ever.

*Mrs. Ford.* What shall I do? There is a gentleman my dear friend; and I fear not mine own shame so much as his peril. I had rather than a thousand pound he were out of the house.

*Mrs. Page.* For shame! never stand "you had rather" and "you had rather." Your husband's here at hand; bethink you of some conveyance. In the house you cannot hide him. O, how have you deceived me! Look, here is a basket. If he be of any reasonable stature, he may creep in here; and throw foul linen upon him, as if it were going to bucking, or—it is whiting-time—send him by your two men to Datchet-mead. 141

*Mrs. Ford.* He's too big to go in there. What shall I do?

*Fal.* [*Coming forward*] Let me see't, let me see't, O, let me see't! I'll in, I'll in. Follow your friend's counsel. I'll in.

*Mrs. Page.* What, Sir John Falstaff! Are these your letters, knight?

*Fal.* I love thee. Help me away. Let me creep in here. I'll never— 150

*Gets into the basket; they cover him with foul linen.*

*Mrs. Page.* Help to cover your master, ooy. Call your men, Mistress Ford. You dissembling knight!

*Mrs. Ford.* What, John! Robert! John!

[*Exit* ROBIN.]

*Re-enter Servants.*

Go take up these clothes here quickly. Where's the cowl-staff? look, how you drumble! Carry them to the laundress in Datchet-mead; quickly, come.

*Enter* FORD, PAGE, CAIUS, and SIR HUGH EVANS.

*Ford.* Pray you, come near. If I suspect without cause, why then make sport at me; then let

me be your jest; I deserve it. How now! whither bear you this?

*Serv.* To the laundress, forsooth.

*Mrs. Ford.* Why, what have you to do whither they bear it? You were best meddle with buck-washing.

*Ford.* Buck! I would I could wash myself of the buck! Buck, buck, buck! Ay, buck; I warrant you, buck; and of the season too, it shall appear. [*Exeunt Servants with the basket.*] Gentlemen, I have dreamed to-night; I'll tell you my dream. Here, here, here be my keys. Ascend my chambers; search, seek, find out. I'll warrant we'll unkennel the fox. Let me stop this way first. [*Locking the door.*] So, now uncape.

*Page.* Good Master Ford, be contented. You wrong yourself too much.

*Ford.* True, Master Page. Up, gentlemen; you shall see sport anon: follow me, gentlemen.

[*Exit.* 180

*Evans.* This is fery fantastical humours and jealousies.

*Caius.* By gar, 'tis not the fashion of France; it is not jealous in France.

*Page.* Nay, follow him, gentlemen; see the issue of his search.

[*Exeunt* PAGE, CAIUS, and EVANS.]

*Mrs. Page.* Is there not a double excellency in this?

*Mrs. Ford.* I know not which pleases me better, that my husband is deceived, or Sir John.

*Mrs. Page.* What a taking was he in when your husband asked who was in the basket!

*Mrs. Ford.* I am half afraid he will have need of washing; so throwing him into the water will do him a benefit.

*Mrs. Page.* Hang him, dishonest rascal! I would all of the same strain were in the same distress.

*Mrs. Ford.* I think my husband hath some special suspicion of Falstaff's being here; for I never saw him so gross in his jealousy till now.

*Mrs. Page.* I will lay a plot to try that; and we will yet have more tricks with Falstaff. His dissolute disease will scarce obey this medicine.

*Mrs. Ford.* Shall we send that foolish carrion, Mistress Quickly, to him, and excuse his throwing into the water; and give him another hope, to betray him to another punishment?

*Mrs. Page.* We will do it. Let him be sent for tomorrow, eight o'clock, to have amends. 210

*Re-enter* FORD, PAGE, CAIUS, and SIR HUGH EVANS.

*Ford.* I cannot find him. May be the knave bragged of that he could not compass.

*Mrs. Page.* [*Aside to* MISTRESS FORD] Heard you that?

*Mrs. Ford.* You use me well, Master Ford, do you?

*Ford.* Ay, I do so.

*Mrs. Ford.* Heaven make you better than your thoughts!

*Ford.* Amen! 220

*Mrs. Page.* You do yourself mighty wrong, Master Ford.

*Ford.* Ay, ay; I must bear it.

*Evans.* If there be any pody in the house, and in the chambers, and in the coffers, and in the presses, heaven forgive my sins at the day of judgment!

*Caius.* By gar, nor I too. There is no bodies.

*Page.* Fie, fie, Master Ford! are you not ashamed? What spirit, what devil suggests this imagination? I would not ha' your distemper in this kind for the wealth of Windsor Castle.

*Ford.* 'Tis my fault, Master Page. I suffer for it.

*Evans.* You suffer for a pad conscience. Your wife is as honest a'omans as I will desires among five thousand, and five hundred too.

*Caius.* By gar, I see 'tis an honest woman.

*Ford.* Well, I promised you a dinner. Come, come, walk in the Park. I pray you, pardon me; I will hereafter make known to you why I have done this. Come, wife; come, Mistress Page. I pray you, pardon me; pray heartily, pardon me. *Page.* Let's go in, gentlemen; but, trust me, we'll mock him. I do invite you to-morrow morning to my house to breakfast. After, we'll a-birding together; I have a fine hawk for the bush. Shall it be so?

*Ford.* Anything.

*Evans.* If there is one, I shall make two in the company. 251

*Caius.* If dere be one or two, I shall make-a the turd.

*Ford.* Pray you, go, Master Page.

*Evans.* I pray you now, remembrance to-morrow on the lousy knave, mine host.

*Caius.* Dat is good; by gar, with all my heart!

*Evans.* A lousy knave, to have his gibes and his mockeries! *Exeunt.* 260

SCENE IV. *A room in Page's house*

*Enter FENTON and ANNE PAGE.*

*Fent.* I see I cannot get thy father's love; Therefore no more turn me to him, sweet Nan.

*Anne.* Alas, how then?

*Fent.* Why, thou must be thyself. He doth object I am too great of birth; And that, my state being gall'd with my expense, I seek to heal it only by his wealth.

Besides these, other bars he lays before me, My riots past, my wild societies;

And tells me 'tis a thing impossible I should love thee but as a property. 10

*Anne.* May be he tells you true.

*Fent.* No, heaven so speed me in my time to come!

Albeit I will confess thy father's wealth Was the first motive that I woo'd thee, Anne; Yet, wooing thee, I found thee of more value Than stamps in gold or sums in sealed bags; And 'tis the very riches of thyself That now I aim at.

*Anne.* Gentle Master Fenton, Yet seek my father's love; still seek it, sir. If opportunity and humblest suit Cannot attain it, why, then—hark you hither! 20

[*They converse apart.*]

*Enter SHALLOW, SLENDER, and MISTRESS QUICKLY.*

*Shal.* Break their talk, Mistress Quickly. My kinsman shall speak for himself.

*Slen.* I'll make a shaft or a bolt on't. 'Slid, 'tis but venturing.

*Shal.* Be not dismayed.

*Slen.* No, she shall not dismay me. I care not for that, but that I am afraid.

*Quick.* Hark ye; Master Slender would speak a word with you. 30

*Anne.* I come to him. [*Aside*] This is my father's choice.

O, what a world of vile ill-favour'd faults Looks handsome in three hundred pounds a-year!

*Quick.* And how does good Master Fenton?

Pray you, a word with you.

*Shal.* She's coming; to her, coz. O boy, thou hadst a father!

*Slen.* I had a father, Mistress Anne; my uncle can tell you good jests of him. Pray you, uncle, tell Mistress Anne the jest, how my father stole two geese out of a pen, good uncle. 41

*Shal.* Mistress Anne, my cousin loves you.

*Slen.* Ay, that I do; as well as I love any woman in Gloucestershire.

*Shal.* He will maintain you like a gentlewoman.

*Slen.* Ay, that I will, come cut and long-tail, under the degree of a squire.

*Shal.* He will make you a hundred and fifty pounds jointure. 50

*Anne.* Good Master Shallow, let him woo for himself.

*Shal.* Marry, I thank you for it; I thank you for that good comfort. She calls you, coz. I'll leave you.

*Anne.* Now, Master Slender—

*Slen.* Now, good Mistress Anne—

*Anne.* What is your will?

*Slen.* My will! 'od's heartlings, that's a pretty



jest indeed! I ne'er made my will yet, I thank heaven; I am not such a sickly creature, I give heaven praise. 62

*Anne.* I mean, Master Slender, what would you with me?

*Slen.* Truly, for mine own part, I would little or nothing with you. Your father and my uncle hath made motions. If it be my luck, so; if not, happy man be his dole! They can tell you how things go better than I can. You may ask your father; here he comes. 70

*Enter PAGE and MISTRESS PAGE.*

*Page.* Now, Master Slender. Love him, daughter Anne.

Why, how now! what does Master Fenton here?

You wrong me, sir, thus still to haunt my house. I told you, sir, my daughter is disposed of.

*Fent.* Nay, Master Page, be not impatient.

*Mrs. Page.* Good Master Fenton, come not to my child.

*Page.* She is no match for you.

*Fent.* Sir, will you hear me?

*Page.* No, good Master Fenton. Come, Master Shallow; come, son Slender, in. Knowing my mind, you wrong me, Master Fenton.

[*Exeunt PAGE, SHALLOW and SLENDER.*]

*Quick.* Speak to Mistress Page.

*Fent.* Good Mistress Page, for that I love your daughter

In such a righteous fashion as I do, Perforce, against all checks, rebukes and manners, I must advance the colours of my love And not retire. Let me have your good will.

*Anne.* Good mother, do not marry me to yond fool.

*Mrs. Page.* I mean it not; I seek you a better husband.

*Quick.* That's my master, master doctor.

*Anne.* Alas, I had rather be set quick i' the earth 90

And bowl'd to death with turnips!

*Mrs. Page.* Come, trouble not yourself. Good Master Fenton,

I will not be your friend nor enemy.

My daughter will I question how she loves you,

And as I find her, so am I affected.

Till then farewell, sir; she must needs go in;

Her father will be angry.

*Fent.* Farewell, gentle mistress: farewell, Nan.

[*Exeunt MISTRESS PAGE and ANNE.*]

*Quick.* This is my doing, now: "Nay," said I, "will you cast away your child on a fool, and a physician? Look on Master Fenton." This is my doing.

*Fent.* I thank thee; and I pray thee, once to-night

Give my sweet Nan this ring. There's for thy pains.

*Quick.* Now heaven send thee good fortune! [*Exit FENTON.*] A kind heart he hath. A woman would run through fire and water for such a kind heart. But yet I would my master had Mistress Anne; or I would Master Slender had her; or, in sooth, I would Master Fenton had her. I will do what I can for them all three; for so I have promised, and I'll be as good as my word; but speciously for Master Fenton. Well, I must of another errand to Sir John Falstaff from my two mistresses. What a beast am I to slack it! [*Exit.*]

SCENE V. *A room in the Garter Inn*

*Enter FALSTAFF and BARDOLPH.*

*Fal.* Bardolph, I say—

*Bard.* Here, sir.

*Fal.* Go fetch me a quart of sack; put a toast in't. [*Exit BARDOLPH.*] Have I lived to be carried in a basket, like a barrow of butcher's offal, and to be thrown in the Thames? Well, if I be served such another trick, I'll have my brains ta'en out and buttered, and give them to a dog for a new year's gift. The rogues slighted me into the river with as little remorse as they would have drowned a blind bitch's puppies, fifteen i' the litter; and you may know by my size that I have a kind of alacrity in sinking; if the bottom were as deep as hell, I should down. I had been drowned, but that the shore was shelvy and shallow—a death that I abhor; for the water swells a man; and what a thing should I have been when I had been swelled! I should have been a mountain of mummy.

*Re-enter BARDOLPH with sack.*

*Bard.* Here's Mistress Quickly, sir, to speak with you. 21

*Fal.* Come, let me pour in some sack to the Thames water; for my belly's as cold as if I had swallowed snowballs for pills to cool the reins. Call her in.

*Bard.* Come in, woman!

*Enter MISTRESS QUICKLY.*

*Quick.* By your leave; I cry you mercy. Give your worship good morrow.

*Fal.* Take away these chalices. Go brew me a pottle of sack finely. 30

*Bard.* With eggs, sir?

*Fal.* Simple of itself; I'll no pullet-sperm in my brewage. [*Exit BARDOLPH.*] How now!

*Quick.* Marry, sir, I come to your worship from Mistress Ford.

*Fal.* Mistress Ford! I have had ford enough; I was thrown into the ford; I have my belly full of ford.

*Quick.* Alas the day! good heart, that was not her fault. She does so take on with her men; they mistook their erection. 41

*Fal.* So did I mine, to build upon a foolish woman's promise.

*Quick.* Well, she laments, sir, for it, that it would yearn your heart to see it. Her husband goes this morning a-birding; she desires you once more to come to her between eight and nine. I must carry her word quickly. She'll make you amends, I warrant you.

*Fal.* Well, I will visit her. Tell her so; and bid her think what a man is. Let her consider his frailty, and then judge of my merit. 52

*Quick.* I will tell her.

*Fal.* Do so. Between nine and ten, sayest thou?

*Quick.* Eight and nine, sir.

*Fal.* Well, be gone. I will not miss her.

*Quick.* Peace be with you, sir. [Exit.

*Fal.* I marvel I hear not of Master Brook; he sent me word to stay within. I like his money well. O, here he comes. 60

*Enter FORD.*

*Ford.* Bless you, sir!

*Fal.* Now, master Brook, you come to know what hath passed between me and Ford's wife?

*Ford.* That, indeed, Sir John, is my business.

*Fal.* Master Brook, I will not lie to you. I was at her house the hour she appointed me.

*Ford.* And sped you, sir?

*Fal.* Very ill-favourably, Master Brook.

*Ford.* How so, sir? Did she change her determination? 70

*Fal.* No, Master Brook; but the peaking Cornuto her husband, Master Brook, dwelling in a continual 'larum of jealousy, comes me in the instant of our encounter, after we had embraced, kissed, protested, and, as it were, spoke the prologue of our comedy; and at his heels a rabble of his companions, thither provoked and instigated by his distemper, and, forsooth, to search his house for his wife's love.

*Ford.* What, while you were there? 80

*Fal.* While I was there.

*Fal.* And did he search for you, and could not find you?

*Fal.* You shall hear. As good luck would have it, comes in one Mistress Page; gives intelligence of Ford's approach; and, in her invention

and Ford's wife's distraction, they conveyed me into a buck-basket.

*Ford.* A buck-basket!

*Fal.* By the Lord, a buck-basket! rammed me in with foul shirts and smocks, socks, foul stockings, greasy napkins; that, Master Brook, there was the rankest compound of villainous smell that ever offended nostril.

*Ford.* And how long lay you there?

*Fal.* Nay, you shall hear, Master Brook, what I have suffered to bring this woman to evil for your good. Being thus crammed in the basket, a couple of Ford's knaves, his hinds, were called forth by their mistress to carry me in the name of foul clothes to Datchet-lane. They took me on their shoulders; met the jealous knave their master in the door, who asked them once or twice what they had in their basket; I quaked for fear, lest the lunatic knave would have searched it; but fate, ordaining he should be a cuckold, held his hand. Well, on went he for a search, and away went I for foul clothes. But mark the sequel, Master Brook. I suffered the pangs of three several deaths; first, an intolerable fright, to be detected with a jealous rotten bell-wether; next, to be compassed, like a good bilbo, in the circumference of a peck, hilt to point, heel to head; and then, to be stopped in, like a strong distillation, with stinking clothes that fretted in their own grease. Think of that—a man of my kidney—think of that—that am as subject to heat as butter; a man of continual dissolution and thaw—it was a miracle to 'scape suffocation. And in the height of this bath, when I was more than half stewed in grease, like a Dutch dish, to be thrown into the Thames, and cooled, glowing hot, in that surge, like a horse-shoe; think of that—hissing hot—think of that, Master Brook.

*Ford.* In good sadness, sir, I am sorry that for my sake you have suffered all this. My suit then is desperate; you'll undertake her no more?

*Fal.* Master Brook, I will be thrown into Etna, as I have been into Thames, ere I will leave her thus. Her husband is this morning gone a-birding. I have received from her another embassy of meeting; 'twixt eight and nine is the hour, Master Brook.

*Ford.* 'Tis past eight already, sir.

*Fal.* Is it? I will then address me to my appointment. Come to me at your convenient leisure, and you shall know how I speed; and the conclusion shall be crowned with your enjoying her. Adieu. You shall have her, Master Brook; Master Brook, you shall cuckold Ford. [Exit.

*Ford.* Hum! ha! is this a vision? is this a dream?



do I sleep? Master Ford, awake! awake, Master Ford! there's a hole made in your best coat, Master Ford. This 'tis to be married! this 'tis to have linen and buck-baskets! Well, I will proclaim myself what I am. I will now take the lecher; he is at my house; he cannot 'scape me; 'tis impossible he should. He cannot creep into a halfpenny purse, nor into a pepper-box; but, lest the devil that guides him should aid him, I will search impossible places. Though what I am I cannot avoid, yet to be what I would not shall not make me tame. If I have horns to make one mad, let the proverb go with me: I'll be horn-mad. [Exit.]

## ACT IV

## SCENE I. A street

Enter MISTRESS PAGE, MISTRESS QUICKLY, and WILLIAM.

Mrs. Page. Is he at Master Ford's already, think'st thou?

Quick. Sure he is by this, or will be presently. But, truly, he is very courageous mad about his throwing into the water. Mistress Ford desires you to come suddenly.

Mrs. Page. I'll be with her by and by; I'll but bring my young man here to school. Look, where his master comes; 'tis a playing-day, I see.

Enter SIR HUGH EVANS.

How now, Sir Hugh! no school to-day? 10

Evans. No; Master Slender is let the boys leave to play.

Quick. Blessing of his heart!

Mrs. Page. Sir Hugh, my husband says my son profits nothing in the world at his book. I pray you, ask him some questions in his accidence.

Evans. Come hither, William; hold up your head; come.

Mrs. Page. Come on, sirrah; hold up your head; answer your master, be not afraid. 20

Evans. William, how many numbers is in nouns?

Will. Two.

Quick. Truly, I thought there had been one number more, because they say, "Od's nouns."

Evans. Peace your tattlings! What is "fair," William?

Will. Pulcher.

Quick. Polecats! there are fairer things than polecats, sure. 30

Evans. You are a very simplicity 'oman. I pray you, peace. What is *lapis*, William?

Will. A stone.

Evans. And what is "a stone," William?

Will. A pebble.

Evans. No, it is *lapis*. I pray you, remember in your prain.

Will. *Lapis*.

Evans. That is a good William. What is he, William, that does lend articles? 40

Will. Articles are borrowed of the pronoun, and be thus declined: *Singulariter, nominativo, hic, hæc, hoc*.

Evans. *Nominativo, hig, hag, hog*; pray you, mark: *genitivo, hujus*. Well, what is your accusative case?

Will. *Accusativo, hinc*.

Evans. I pray you, have your remembrance, child; *accusativo, hung, hang, hog*.

Quick. "Hang-hog" is Latin for bacon, I warrant you. 51

Evans. Leave your prabbles, 'oman, What is the focative case, William?

Will. O—*vocativo, O*.

Evans. Remember, William; focative is *caret*.

Quick. And that's a good root.

Evans. 'Oman, forbear.

Mrs. Page. Peace!

Evans. What is your genitive case plural, William?

Will. Genitive case!

Evans. Ay.

Will. Genitive—*horum, harum, horum*.

Quick. Vengeance of Jenny's case! fie on her! never name her, child, if she be a whore.

Evans. For shame, 'oman.

Quick. You do ill to teach the child such words. He teaches him to hick and to hack, which they'll do fast enough of themselves, and to call "horum." Fie upon you! 70

Evans. 'Oman, art thou lunatics? hast thou no understandings for thy cases and the numbers of the genders? Thou art as foolish Christian creatures as I would desires.

Mrs. Page. Prithee, hold thy peace.

Evans. Show me now, William, some declensions of your pronouns.

Will. Forsooth, I have forgot.

Evans. It is *qui, quæ, quod*. If you forget your *quies*, your *quæ*s, and your *quods*, you must be preeches. Go your ways, and play; go.

Mrs. Page. He is a better scholar than I thought he was.

Evans. He is a good sprag memory. Farewell, Mistress Page.

Mrs. Page. Adieu, good Sir Hugh.

[Exit SIR HUGH.]

Get you home, boy. Come, we stay too long.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II. *A room in Ford's house**Enter FALSTAFF and MISTRESS FORD.*

*Fal.* Mistress Ford, your sorrow hath eaten up my suffrance. I see you are obsequious in your love, and I profess requital to a hair's breadth; not only, Mistress Ford, in the simple office of love, but in all the accoutrement, complement and ceremony of it. But are you sure of your husband now?

*Mrs. Ford.* He's a-birding, sweet Sir John.

*Mrs. Page.* [*Within*] What, ho, gossip Ford! what, ho! 10

*Mrs. Ford.* Step into the chamber, Sir John.

[*Exit FALSTAFF.*]

*Enter MISTRESS PAGE.*

*Mrs. Page.* How now, sweetheart! who's at home besides yourself?

*Mrs. Ford.* Why, none but mine own people.

*Mrs. Page.* Indeed!

*Mrs. Ford.* No, certainly. [*Aside to her*] Speak louder.

*Mrs. Page.* Truly, I am so glad you have nobody here.

*Mrs. Ford.* Why? 20

*Mrs. Page.* Why, woman, your husband is in his old lines again. He so takes on yonder with my husband; so rails against all married mankind; so curses all Eve's daughters, of what complexion soever; and so buffets himself on the forehead, crying, "Peer out, peer out!" that any madness I ever yet beheld seemed but tameness, civility, and patience, to this his distemper he is in now. I am glad the fat knight is not here.

*Mrs. Ford.* Why, does he talk of him? 30

*Mrs. Page.* Of none but him; and swears he was carried out, the last time he searched for him, in a basket; protests to my husband he is now here, and hath drawn him and the rest of their company from their sport, to make another experiment of his suspicion. But I am glad the knight is not here; now he shall see his own foolery.

*Mrs. Ford.* How near is he, Mistress Page?

*Mrs. Page.* Hard by; at street end; he will be here anon. 41

*Mrs. Ford.* I am undone! The knight is here.

*Mrs. Page.* Why then you are utterly shamed, and he's but a dead man. What a woman are you!—Away with him, away with him! better shame than murder.

*Mrs. Ford.* Which way should he go? how should I bestow him? Shall I put him into the basket again?

*Re-enter FALSTAFF.*

*Fal.* No, I'll come no more i' the basket. May I not go out ere he come? 51

*Mrs. Page.* Alas, three of Master Ford's brothers watch the door with pistols, that none shall issue out; otherwise you might slip away ere he came. But what make you here?

*Fal.* What shall I do? I'll creep up into the chimney.

*Mrs. Ford.* There they always use to discharge their birding-pieces. Creep into the kiln-hole.

*Fal.* Where is it? 60

*Mrs. Ford.* He will seek there, on my word. Neither press, coffer, chest, trunk, well, vault, but he hath an abstract for the remembrance of such places, and goes to them by his note. There is no hiding you in the house.

*Fal.* I'll go out then.

*Mrs. Page.* If you go out in your own semblance, you die, Sir John. Unless you go out disguised—

*Mrs. Ford.* How might we disguise him? 70

*Mrs. Page.* Alas the day, I know not! There is no woman's gown big enough for him; otherwise he might put on a hat, a muffler and a kerchief, and so escape.

*Fal.* Good hearts, devise something. Any extremity rather than a mischief.

*Mrs. Ford.* My maid's aunt, the fat woman of Brentford, has a gown above.

*Mrs. Page.* On my word, it will serve him; she's as big as he is; and there's her thrummed hat and her muffler too. Run up, Sir John.

*Mrs. Ford.* Go, go, sweet Sir John. Mistress Page and I will look some linen for your head.

*Mrs. Page.* Quick, quick! we'll come dress you straight. Put on the gown the while. 85

[*Exit FALSTAFF.*]

*Mrs. Ford.* I would my husband would meet him in this shape. He cannot abide the old woman of Brentford; he swears she's a witch; forbade her my house and hath threatened to beat her.

*Mrs. Page.* Heaven guide him to thy husband's cudgel, and the devil guide his cudgel afterwards!

*Mrs. Ford.* But is my husband coming?

*Mrs. Page.* Ay, in good sadness, is he; and talks of the basket too, howsoever he hath had intelligence.

*Mrs. Ford.* We'll try that; for I'll appoint my men to carry the basket again, to meet him at the door with it, as they did last time.

*Mrs. Page.* Nay, but he'll be here presently. Let's go dress him like the witch of Brentford.

*Mrs. Ford.* I'll first direct my men what they



shall do with the basket. Go up; I'll bring linen for him straight. *[Exit.]*

*Mrs. Page.* Hang him, dishonest varlet! we cannot misuse him enough.

We'll leave a proof, by that which we will do, Wives may be merry, and yet honest too.

We do not act that often jest and laugh; 'Tis old, but true, Still swine eats all the draff.

*[Exit.]*

*Re-enter MISTRESS FORD with TWO SERVANTS.*

*Mrs. Ford.* Go, sirs, take the basket again on your shoulders. Your master is hard at door; if he bid you set it down, obey him. Quickly, dispatch. *[Exit.]*

*1st Serv.* Come, come, take it up.

*2nd Serv.* Pray heaven it be not full of knight again.

*1st Serv.* I hope not; I had as lief bear so much lead.

*Enter FORD, PAGE, SHALLOW, CAIUS, and SIR HUGH EVANS.*

*Ford.* Ay, but if it prove true, Master Page, have you any way then to unfool me again? Set down the basket, villain! Somebody call my wife. Youth in a basket! O you pandarous rascals! there's a knot, a ging, a pack, a conspiracy against me. Now shall the devil be shamed. What, wife, I say! Come, come forth! Behold what honest clothes you send forth to bleaching!

*Page.* Why, this passes, Master Ford; you are not to go loose any longer; you must be pinioned.

*Evans.* Why, this is lunatics! this is mad as a mad dog! 131

*Shal.* Indeed, Master Ford, this is not well, indeed.

*Ford.* So say I too, sir.

*Re-enter MISTRESS FORD.*

Come hither, Mistress Ford; Mistress Ford, the honest woman, the modest wife, the virtuous creature, that hath the jealous fool to her husband! I suspect without cause, mistress, do I?

*Mrs. Ford.* Heaven be my witness you do, if you suspect me in any dishonesty. 140

*Ford.* Well said, brazen-face! hold it out. Come forth, sirrah!

*Pulling clothes out of the basket.*

*Page.* This passes!

*Mrs. Ford.* Are you not ashamed? let the clothes alone.

*Ford.* I shall find you anon.

*Evans.* 'Tis unreasonable! Will you take up your wife's clothes? Come away.

*Ford.* Empty the basket, I say!

*Mrs. Ford.* Why, man, why? 150

*Ford.* Master Page, as I am a man, there was one conveyed out of my house yesterday in this basket. Why may not he be there again? In my house I am sure he is. My intelligence is true; my jealousy is reasonable. Pluck me out all the linen.

*Mrs. Ford.* If you find a man there, he shall die a flea's death.

*Page.* Here's no man.

*Shal.* By my fidelity, this is not well, Master Ford; this wrongs you. 161

*Evans.* Master Ford, you must pray, and not follow the imaginations of your own heart. This is jealousies.

*Ford.* Well, he's not here I seek for.

*Page.* No, nor nowhere else but in your brain.

*Ford.* Help to search my house this one time. If I find not what I seek, show no colour for my extremity; let me for ever be your table-sport; let them say of me, "As jealous as Ford, that searched a hollow walnut for his wife's leman." Satisfy me once more; once more search with me.

*Mrs. Ford.* What, ho, Mistress Page! come you and the old woman down; my husband will come into the chamber.

*Ford.* Old woman! what old woman's that?

*Mrs. Ford.* Why, it is my maid's aunt of Brentford.

*Ford.* A witch, a quean, an old cozening quean! Have I not forbid her my house? She comes of errands, does she? We are simple men; we do not know what's brought to pass under the profession of fortune-telling. She works by charms, by spells, by the figure, and such daubery as this is, beyond our element. We know nothing. Come down, you witch, you hag, you; come down, I say!

*Mrs. Ford.* Nay, good, sweet husband! Good gentlemen, let him not strike the old woman. 190

*Re-enter FALSTAFF in woman's clothes, and MISTRESS PAGE.*

*Mrs. Page.* Come, Mother Prat; come, give me your hand.

*Ford.* I'll prat her. *[Beating him]* Out of my door, you witch, you hag, you baggage, you polecat, you ronyon! out, out! I'll conjure you, I'll fortune-tell you. *[Exit FALSTAFF.]*

*Mrs. Page.* Are you not ashamed? I think you have killed the poor woman.

*Mrs. Ford.* Nay, he will do it. 'Tis a goodly credit for you. 200

*Ford.* Hang her, witch!

*Evans.* By yea and no, I think the 'oman is a

witch indeed. I like not when a 'oman has a great peard; I spy a great peard under his muffler.

*Ford.* Will you follow, gentlemen? I beseech you, follow; see but the issue of my jealousy. If I cry out thus upon no trail, never trust me when I open again.

*Page.* Let's obey his humour a little further. Come, gentlemen. 211

[*Exeunt FORD, PAGE, SHALLOW, CAIUS, and EVANS.*]

*Mrs. Page.* Trust me, he beat him most pitifully.

*Mrs. Ford.* Nay, by the mass, that he did not; he beat him most unpitifully, methought.

*Mrs. Page.* I'll have the cudgel hallowed and hung o'er the altar; it hath done meritorious service.

*Mrs. Ford.* What think you? may we, with the warrant of womanhood and the witness of a good conscience, pursue him with any further revenge? 222

*Mrs. Page.* The spirit of wantonness is, sure, scared out of him. If the devil have him not in fee-simple, with fine and recovery, he will never, I think, in the way of waste, attempt us again.

*Mrs. Ford.* Shall we tell our husbands how we have served him?

*Mrs. Page.* Yes, by all means; if it be but to scrape the figures out of your husband's brains. If they can find in their hearts the poor unvirtuous fat knight shall be any further afflicted, we two will still be the ministers.

*Mrs. Ford.* I'll warrant they'll have him publicly shamed; and methinks there would be no period to the jest, should he not be publicly shamed.

*Mrs. Page.* Come, to the forge with it then; shape it. I would not have things cool. [*Exeunt.*]

### SCENE III. *A room in the Garter Inn*

*Enter HOST and BARDOLPH.*

*Bard.* Sir, the Germans desire to have three of your horses. The Duke himself will be tomorrow at court, and they are going to meet him.

*Host.* What duke should that be comes so secretly? I hear not of him in the court. Let me speak with the gentlemen. They speak English?

*Bard.* Ay, sir; I'll call them to you.

*Host.* They shall have my horses; but I'll make them pay; I'll sauce them. They have had my house a week at command; I have turned away my other guests. They must come off; I'll sauce them. Come. [*Exeunt.*]

### SCENE IV. *A room in Ford's house*

*Enter PAGE, FORD, MISTRESS PAGE, MISTRESS FORD, and SIR HUGH EVANS.*

*Evans.* 'Tis one of the best discretions of a 'oman as ever I did look upon.

*Page.* And did he send you both these letters at an instant?

*Mrs. Page.* Within a quarter of an hour.

*Ford.* Pardon me, wife. Henceforth do what thou wilt.

I rather will suspect the sun with cold  
Than thee with wantonness. Now doth thy honour stand,

In him that was of late an heretic,  
As firm as faith.

*Page.* 'Tis well, 'tis well; no more. 20

Be not as extreme in submission  
As in offence.

But let our plot go forward. Let our wives  
Yet once again, to make us public sport,  
Appoint a meeting with this old fat fellow,  
Where we may take him and disgrace him for it.

*Ford.* There is no better way than that they spoke of.

*Page.* How? to send him word they'll meet him in the park at midnight? Fie, fie! he'll never come.

*Evans.* You say he has been thrown in the rivers and has been grievously peaten as an old 'oman. Methinks there should be terrors in him that he should not come; methinks his flesh is punished, he shall have no desires.

*Page.* So think I too.

*Mrs. Ford.* Devise but how you'll use him when he comes,

And let us two devise to bring him thither.

*Mrs. Page.* There is an old tale goes that Herne the hunter,

Sometime a keeper here in Windsor forest,  
Doth all the winter-time, at still midnight, 30  
Walk round about an oak, with great ragged horns;

And there he blasts the tree and takes the cattle  
And makes milch-kine yield blood and shakes a chain

In a most hideous and dreadful manner.

You have heard of such a spirit, and well you know

The superstitious idle-headed old  
Received and did deliver to our age

This tale of Herne the hunter for a truth.

*Page.* Why, yet there want not many that do fear

In deep of night to walk by this Herne's oak. 40  
But what of this?

*Mrs. Ford.* Marry, this is our device;  
That Falstaff at that oak shall meet with us.

*Page.* Well, let it not be doubted but he'll come;

And in this shape when you have brought him  
thither,

What shall be done with him? what is your plot?



*Mrs. Page.* That likewise have we thought upon,  
and thus

Nan Page, my daughter, and my little son  
And three or four more of their growth we'll  
dress

Like urchins, ouphes, and fairies, green and  
white,

With rounds of waxen tapers on their heads, 50  
And rattles in their hands. Upon a sudden,  
As Falstaff, she, and I are newly met,  
Let them from forth a sawpit rush at once  
With some diffused song. Upon their sight,  
We two in great amazedness will fly.

Then let them all encircle him about  
And, fairy-like, to pinch the unclean knight,  
And ask him why, that hour of fairy revel,  
In their so sacred paths he dares to tread  
In shape profane.

*Mrs. Ford.* And till he tell the truth, 60  
Let the supposed fairies pinch him sound  
And burn him with their tapers.

*Mrs. Page.* The truth being known,  
We'll all present ourselves, dis-horn the spirit,  
And mock him home to Windsor.

*Ford.* The children must  
Be practised well to this, or they'll ne'er do't.

*Evans.* I will teach the children their behaviors;  
And I will be like a jack-an-apes also, to burn the  
knight with my taber.

*Ford.* That will be excellent. I'll go buy them  
vizards. 70

*Mrs. Page.* My Nan shall be the queen of all the  
fairies,

Finely attired in a robe of white.

*Page.* That silk will I go buy. [*Aside*] And in  
that time

Shall Master Slender steal my Nan away  
And marry her at Eton. Go send to Falstaff  
straight.

*Ford.* Nay, I'll to him again in name of  
Brook.

He'll tell me all his purpose. Sure, he'll come.

*Mrs. Page.* Fear not you that. Go get us proper-  
ties

And tricking for our fairies.

*Evans.* Let us about it. It is admirable pleasures  
and fery honest knaveries. 81

[*Exeunt PAGE, FORD, and EVANS.*]

*Mrs. Page.* Go, mistress Ford,  
Send quickly to Sir John, to know his mind.

[*Exit MISTRESS FORD.*]

I'll to the doctor. He hath my good will,  
And none but he, to marry with Nan Page.  
That Slender, though well landed, is an idiot;  
And he my husband best of all affects.  
The doctor is well money'd, and his friends

Potent at court. He, none but he, shall have her,  
Though twenty thousand worthier come to crave  
her. [*Exit.* 90

SCENE V. *A room in the Garter Inn*

*Enter HOST and SIMPLE.*

*Host.* What wouldst thou have, boor? what,  
thick-skin? speak, breathe, discuss; brief, short,  
quick, snap.

*Sim.* Marry, sir, I come to speak with Sir John  
Falstaff from Master Slender.

*Host.* There's his chamber, his house, his castle,  
his standing-bed and truckle-bed; 'tis painted  
about with the story of the Prodigal, fresh and  
new. Go knock and call; he'll speak like an  
Anthrophaginian unto thee. Knock, I say. 11

*Sim.* There's an old woman, a fat woman, gone  
up into his chamber. I'll be so bold as stay, sir,  
till she come down; I come to speak with her,  
indeed.

*Host.* Ha! a fat woman! the knight may be  
robbed. I'll call. Bully knight! bully Sir John!  
speak from thy lungs military. Art thou there? it  
is thine host, thine Ephesian, calls.

*Fal.* [*Above*] How now, mine host! 20

*Host.* Here's a Bohemian-Tartar carries the  
coming down of thy fat woman. Let her descend,  
bully, let her descend; my chambers are honour-  
able. Fie! privacy? fie!

*Enter FALSTAFF.*

*Fal.* There was, mine host, an old fat woman  
even now with me; but she's gone.

*Sim.* Pray you, sir, was't not the wise woman of  
Brentford?

*Fal.* Ay, marry, was it, mussel-shell. What  
would you with her? 30

*Sim.* My master, sir, Master Slender, sent to  
her, seeing her go through the streets, to know,  
sir, whether one Nym, sir, that beguiled him of  
a chain, had the chain or no.

*Fal.* I spake with the old woman about it.

*Sim.* And what says she, I pray, sir?

*Fal.* Marry, she says that the very same man  
that beguiled Master Slender of his chain cozened  
him of it.

*Sim.* I would I could have spoken with the  
woman herself; I had other things to have spoken  
with her too from him. 42

*Fal.* What are they? let us know.

*Host.* Ay, come; quick.

*Sim.* I may not conceal them, sir.

*Host.* Conceal them, or thou diest.

*Sim.* Why, sir, they were nothing but about  
Mistress Anne Page; to know if it were my mas-  
ter's fortune to have her or no.

*Fal.* 'Tis, 'tis his fortune.

50

*Sim.* What, sir?

*Fal.* To have her, or no. Go; say the woman told me so.

*Sim.* May I be bold to say so, sir?

*Fal.* Ay, sir; like who more bold.

*Sim.* I thank your worship. I shall make my master glad with these tidings. *[Exit.]*

*Host.* Thou art clerkly, thou art clerkly, Sir John. Was there a wise woman with thee?

*Fal.* Ay, that there was, mine host; one that hath taught me more wit than ever I learned before in my life; and I paid nothing for it neither, but was paid for my learning.

*Enter BARDOLPH.*

*Bard.* Out, alas, sir! cozenage, mere cozenage!

*Host.* Where be my horses? speak well of them, varletto.

*Bard.* Run away with the cozeners; for so soon as I came beyond Eton, they threw me off from behind one of them, in a slough of mire; and set spurs and away, like three German devils, three Doctor Faustuses. 71

*Host.* They are gone but to meet the Duke, villain. Do not say they be fled; Germans are honest men.

*Enter SIR HUGH EVANS.*

*Evans.* Where is mine host?

*Host.* What is the matter, sir?

*Evans.* Have a care of your entertainments. There is a friend of mine come to town, tells me there is three cozen-germans that has cozened all the hosts of Readins, of Maidenhead, of Colebrook, of horses and money. I tell you for good will, look you. You are wise and full of gibes and vlouting-stocks, and 'tis not convenient you should be cozened. Fare you well. *[Exit.]*

*Enter DOCTOR CAIUS.*

*Caius.* Vere is mine host de Jarteer?

*Host.* Here, master doctor, in perplexity and doubtful dilemma.

*Caius.* I cannot tell vat is dat; but it is tell-a me dat you make grand preparation for a duke de Jamany. By my trot, dere is no duke dat the court is know to come. I tell you for good vill: adieu. *[Exit.]* 91

*Host.* Hue and cry, villain, go! Assist me, knight. I am undone! Fly, run, hue and cry, villain! I am undone! *[Exeunt HOST and BARDOLPH.]*

*Fal.* I would all the world might be cozened; for I have been cozened and beaten too. If it should come to the ear of the court, how I have been transformed and how my transformation hath

been washed and cudgelled, they would melt me out of my fat drop by drop and liquor fishermen's boots with me. I warrant they would whip me with their fine wits till I were as crestfallen as a dried pear. I never prospered since I forswore myself at primero. Well, if my wind were but long enough to say my prayers, I would repent.

*Enter MISTRESS QUICKLY.*

Now, whence come you?

*Quick.* From the two parties, forsooth.

*Fal.* The devil take one party and his dam the other! and so they shall be both bestowed. I have suffered more for their sakes, more than the villainous inconstancy of man's disposition is able to bear.

*Quick.* And have not they suffered? Yes, I warrant; speciously one of them; Mistress Ford, good heart, is beaten black and blue, that you cannot see a white spot about her.

*Fal.* What tellest thou me of black and blue? I was beaten myself into all the colours of the rainbow; and I was like to be apprehended for the witch of Brentford. But that my admirable dexterity of wit, my counterfeiting the action of an old woman, delivered me, the knave constable had set me i' the stocks, i' the common stocks, for a witch.

*Quick.* Sir, let me speak with you in your chamber. You shall hear how things go; and, I warrant, to your content. Here is a letter will say somewhat. Good hearts, what ado here is to bring you together! Sure, one of you does not serve heaven well, that you are so crossed. 130

*Fal.* Come up into my chamber. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE VI. *Another room in the Garter Inn*

*Enter FENTON and HOST.*

*Host.* Master Fenton, talk not to me; my mind is heavy. I will give over all.

*Fent.* Yet hear me speak. Assist me in my purpose,

And, as I am a gentleman, I'll give thee A hundred pound in gold more than your loss.

*Host.* I will hear you, Master Fenton; and I will at the least keep your counsel.

*Fent.* From time to time I have acquainted you With the dear love I bear to fair Anne Page; Who mutually hath answer'd my affection, 10  
So far forth as herself might be her chooser, Even to my wish. I have a letter from her Of such contents as you will wonder at; The mirth whereof so larded with my matter, That neither singly can be manifested, Without the show of both. Fat Falstaff Hath a great scene. The image of the jest



I'll show you here at large. Hark, good mine host.

To-night at Herne's oak, just 'twixt twelve and one,

Must my sweet Nan present the Fairy Queen; 20  
The purpose why, is here; in which disguise,  
While other jests are something rank on foot,  
Her father hath commanded her to slip  
Away with Slender and with him at Eton  
Immediately to marry. She hath consented.  
Now, sir,

Her mother, ever strong against that match  
And firm for Doctor Caius, hath appointed  
That he shall likewise shuffle her away,  
While other sports are tasking of their minds, 30  
And at the deanery, where a priest attends,  
Straight marry her. To this her mother's plot  
She seemingly obedient likewise hath  
Made promise to the doctor. Now, thus it rests:  
Her father means she shall be all in white,  
And in that habit, when Slender sees his time  
To take her by the hand and bid her go,  
She shall go with him. Her mother hath intended,  
The better to denote her to the doctor,  
For they must all be mask'd and vizarded, 40  
That quaint in green she shall be loose enrobed,  
With ribands pendent, flaring 'bout her head;  
And when the doctor spies his vantage ripe,  
To pinch her by the hand, and, on that token,  
The maid hath given consent to go with him.

*Host.* Which means she to deceive, father or mother?

*Fent.* Both, my good host, to go along with me.  
And here it rests, that you'll procure the vicar  
To stay for me at church 'twixt twelve and one,  
And, in the lawful name of marrying, 50  
To give our hearts united ceremony.

*Host.* Well, husband your device; I'll to the vicar.

Bring you the maid, you shall not lack a priest.

*Fent.* So shall I evermore be bound to thee;  
Besides, I'll make a present recompense. [*Exeunt.*]

## ACT V

### SCENE I. A room in the Garter Inn

*Enter FALSTAFF and MISTRESS QUICKLY.*

*Fal.* Prithee, no more prattling; go. I'll hold.  
This is the third time; I hope good luck lies in  
odd numbers. Away! go. They say there is di-  
vinity in odd numbers, either in nativity, chance,  
or death. Away!

*Quick.* I'll provide you a chain; and I'll do what  
I can to get you a pair of horns.

*Fal.* Away, I say; time wears. Hold up your  
head, and mince. [*Exit MISTRESS QUICKLY.*]

*Enter FORD.*

How now, Master Brook! Master Brook, the  
matter will be known to-night, or never. Be you  
in the Park about midnight, at Herne's oak, and  
you shall see wonders.

*Ford.* Went you not to her yesterday, sir, as  
you told me you had appointed?

*Fal.* I went to her, Master Brook, as you see,  
like a poor old man; but I came from her, Master  
Brook, like a poor old woman. That same knave  
Ford, her husband, hath the finest mad devil of  
jealousy in him, Master Brook, that ever gov-  
erned frenzy. I will tell you. He beat me griev-  
ously, in the shape of a woman; for in the shape  
of man, Master Brook, I fear not Goliath with a  
weaver's beam; because I know also life is a  
shuttle. I am in haste; go along with me. I'll tell  
you all, Master Brook. Since I plucked geese,  
played truant, and whipped top, I knew not what  
'twas to be beaten till lately. Follow me. I'll tell  
you strange things of this knave Ford, on whom  
to-night I will be revenged, and I will deliver his  
wife into your hand. Follow. Strange things in  
hand, Master Brook! Follow. [*Exeunt.*]

### SCENE II. Windsor Park

*Enter PAGE, SHALLOW, and SLENDER.*

*Page.* Come, come; we'll couch i' the castle-  
ditch till we see the light of our fairies. Remem-  
ber, son Slender, my daughter.

*Slen.* Ay, forsooth; I have spoke with her and  
we have a nay-word how to know one another.  
I come to her in white, and cry "mum"; she cries  
"budget"; and by that we know one another.

*Shal.* That's good too; but what needs either  
your "mum" or her "budget"? the white will de-  
cipher her well enough. It hath struck ten  
o'clock.

*Page.* The night is dark; light and spirits will  
become it well. Heaven prosper our sport! No  
man means evil but the devil, and we shall know  
him by his horns. Let's away; follow me.

[*Exeunt.*]

### SCENE III. A street leading to the Park

*Enter MISTRESS PAGE, MISTRESS FORD, and  
DOCTOR CAIUS.*

*Mrs. Page.* Master doctor, my daughter is in  
green. When you see your time, take her by the  
hand, away with her to the deanery, and dispatch  
it quickly. Go before into the Park. We two  
must go together.

*Caius.* I know vat I have to do. Adieu.

*Mrs. Page.* Fare you well, sir. [*Exit CAIUS.*] My  
husband will not rejoice so much at the abuse of

Falstaff as he will chafe at the doctor's marrying my daughter. But 'tis no matter; better a little chiding than a great deal of heart-break. 11

*Mrs. Ford.* Where is Nan now and her troop of fairies, and the Welsh devil Hugh?

*Mrs. Page.* They are all couched in a pit hard by Herne's oak, with obscured lights; which, at the very instant of Falstaff's and our meeting, they will at once display to the night.

*Mrs. Ford.* That cannot choose but amaze him.

*Mrs. Page.* If he be not amazed, he will be mocked; if he be amazed, he will every way be mocked. 21

*Mrs. Ford.* We'll betray him finely.

*Mrs. Page.* Against such lewdsters and their lechery

Those that betray them do no treachery.

*Mrs. Ford.* The hour draws on. To the oak, to the oak! *[Exeunt.]*

#### SCENE IV. Windsor Park

*Enter* SIR HUGH EVANS *disguised, with others as Fairies.*

*Evans.* Trib, trib, fairies; come; and remember your parts. Be pold, I pray you; follow me into the pit; and when I give the watch-words, do as I did you. Come, come; trib, trib. *[Exeunt.]*

#### SCENE V. Another part of the Park

*Enter* FALSTAFF *disguised as Herne with a buck's head upon him.*

*Fal.* The Windsor bell hath struck twelve; the minute draws on. Now, the hot-blooded gods assist me! Remember, Jove, thou wast a bull for thy Europa; love set on thy horns. O powerful love! that, in some respects, makes a beast a man, in some other, a man a beast. You were also, Jupiter, a swan for the love of Leda. O omnipotent Love! how near the god drew to the complexion of a goose! A fault done first in the form of a beast. O Jove, a beastly fault! And then another fault in the semblance of a fowl; think on't, Jove; a fowl fault! When gods have hot backs, what shall poor men do? For me, I am here a Windsor stag; and the fattest, I think, i' the forest. Send me a cool rut-time, Jove, or who can blame me to piss my tallow? Who comes here? my doe?

*Enter* MISTRESS FORD *and* MISTRESS PAGE.

*Mrs. Ford.* Sir John! art thou there, my deer? my male deer?

*Fal.* My doe with the black scut! Let the sky rain potatoes; let it thunder to the tune of "Green Sleeves," hail kissing-comfits and snow eringoos;

let there come a tempest of provocation, I will shelter me here.

*Mrs. Ford.* Mistress Page is come with me, sweetheart.

*Fal.* Divide me like a bribe buck, each a haunch. I will keep my sides to myself, my shoulders for the fellow of this walk, and my horns I bequeath your husbands. Am I a woodman, ha? Speak I like Herne the hunter? Why, now is Cupid a child of conscience; he makes restitution. As I am a true spirit, welcome!

*Noise within.*

*Mrs. Page.* Alas, what noise?

*Mrs. Ford.* Heaven forgive our sins!

*Fal.* What should this be?

*Mrs. Ford.* }

*Mrs. Page.* } Away, away! *[They run off.]*

*Fal.* I think the devil will not have me damned, lest the oil that's in me should set hell on fire; he would never else cross me thus. 40

*Enter* SIR HUGH EVANS, *disguised as a Satyr; PISTOL, as Hobgoblin; MISTRESS QUICKLY, ANNE PAGE, and others, as Fairies, with tapers.*

*Quick.* Fairies, black, grey, green, and white, You moonshine revellers, and shades of night, You orphan heirs of fixed destiny, Attend your office and your quality. Crier Hobgoblin, make the fairy oyes.

*Pist.* Elves, list your names; silence, you airy toys.

Cricket, to Windsor chimneys shalt thou leap: Where fires thou find'st unraked and hearths unswept,

There pinch the maids as blue as bilberry; Our radiant queen hates sluts and sluttery. 50

*Fal.* They are fairies; he that speaks to them shall die.

I'll wink and couch; no man their works must eye.

*Lies down upon his face.*

*Evans.* Where's Bede? Go you, and where you find a maid

That, ere she sleep, has thrice her prayers said, Raise up the organs of her fantasy; Sleep she as sound as careless infancy. But those as sleep and think not on their sins, Pinch them, arms, legs, backs, shoulders, sides, and shins.

*Quick.* About, about;

Search Windsor Castle, elves, within and out. 60 Strew good luck, ouphes, on every sacred room; That it may stand till the perpetual doom In state as wholesome as in state 'tis fit, Worthy the owner, and the owner it. The several chairs of order look you scour



With juice of balm and every precious flower;  
Each fair instalment, coat, and several crest,  
With loyal blazon, evermore be blest!

And nightly, meadow-fairies, look you sing,  
Like to the Garter's compass, in a ring. 70  
The expressure that it bears, green let it be,  
More fertile-fresh than all the field to see;  
And "*Honi soit qui mal y pense*" write  
In emerald tufts, flowers purple, blue, and  
white;

Like sapphire, pearl, and rich embroidery,  
Buckled below fair knighthood's bending knee.  
Fairies use flowers for their character.

Away; disperse. But till 'tis one o'clock,  
Our dance of custom round about the oak  
Of Herne the hunter, let us not forget. 80

*Evans.* Pray you, lock hand in hand; yourselves  
in order set;

And twenty glow-worms shall our lanterns be,  
To guide our measure round about the tree.  
But, stay; I smell a man of middle-earth.

*Fal.* Heavens defend me from that Welsh fairy,  
lest he transform me to a piece of cheese!

*Pist.* Vile worm, thou wast o'erlook'd even in  
thy birth.

*Quick.* With trial-fire touch me his finger-end.  
If he be chaste, the flame will back descend  
And turn him to no pain; but if he start, 90  
It is the flesh of a corrupted heart.

*Pist.* A trial, come.

*Evans.* Come, will this wood take fire?

*They burn him with their tapers.*

*Fal.* Oh, Oh, Oh!

*Quick.* Corrupt, corrupt, and tainted in desire!  
About him, fairies; sing a scornful rhyme;  
And, as you trip, still pinch him to your time.

## SONG

Fie on sinful fantasy!  
Fie on lust and luxury!  
Lust is but a bloody fire,  
Kindled with unchaste desire, 100  
Fed in heart, whose flames aspire  
As thoughts do blow them, higher and higher.  
Pinch him, fairies, mutually;  
Pinch him for his villainy;  
Pinch him, and burn him, and turn him about,  
Till candles and starlight and moonshine be out.

*During this song they pinch FALSTAFF. DOCTOR CAIUS comes one way, and steals away a boy in green; SLENDER another way, and takes off a boy in white; and FENTON comes, and steals away ANNE PAGE. A noise of hunting is heard within. All the Fairies run away. FALSTAFF pulls off his buck's head, and rises.*

*Enter PAGE, FORD, MISTRESS PAGE and MISTRESS FORD.*

*Page.* Nay, do not fly; I think we have watch'd you now.

Will none but Herne the hunter serve your turn?

*Mrs. Page.* I pray you, come, hold up the jest no higher.

Now, good Sir John, how like you Windsor wives?

See you these, husband? do not these fair yokes  
Become the forest better than the town?

*Ford.* Now, sir, who's a cuckold now? Master Brook, Falstaff's a knave, a cuckoldly knave; here are his horns, Master Brook; and, Master Brook, he hath enjoyed nothing of Ford's but his buck-basket, his cudgel, and twenty pounds of money, which must be paid to Master Brook; his horses are arrested for it, Master Brook.

*Mrs. Ford.* Sir John, we have had ill luck; we could never meet. I will never take you for my love again; but I will always count you my deer.

*Fal.* I do begin to perceive that I am made an ass.

*Ford.* Ay, and an ox too; both the proofs are extant.

*Fal.* And these are not fairies? I was three or four times in the thought they were not fairies; and yet the guiltiness of my mind, the sudden surprise of my powers, drove the grossness of the foppery into a received belief, in despite of the teeth of all rhyme and reason, that they were fairies. See now how wit may be made a Jack-a-Lent, when 'tis upon ill employment!

*Evans.* Sir John Falstaff, serve Got, and leave your desires, and fairies will not pinse you.

*Ford.* Well said, fairy Hugh.

*Evans.* And leave your jealousies too, I pray you. 140

*Ford.* I will never mistrust my wife again, till thou art able to woo her in good English.

*Fal.* Have I laid my brain in the sun and dried it, that it wants matter to prevent so gross o'er-reaching as this? Am I ridden with a Welsh goat too? shall I have a coxcomb of frize? 'Tis time I were choked with a piece of toasted cheese.

*Evans.* Seese is not good to give putter; your belly is all putter.

*Fal.* "Seese" and "putter"! have I lived to stand at the taunt of one that makes fritters of English? This is enough to be the decay of lust and late-walking through the realm.

*Mrs. Page.* Why, Sir John, do you think, though we would have thrust virtue out of our hearts by the head and shoulders and have given ourselves without scruple to hell, that ever the devil could have made you our delight?

*Ford.* What, a hodge-pudding? a bag of flax?

*Mrs. Page.* A puffed man? 160

*Page.* Old, cold, withered, and of intolerable entails?

*Ford.* And one that is as slanderous as Satan?

*Page.* And as poor as Job?

*Ford.* And as wicked as his wife?

*Evans.* And given to fornications, and to taverns and sack and wine and metheglins, and to drink-igns and swearings and starings, pribbles and prabbles?

*Fal.* Well, I am your theme; you have the start of me. I am dejected; I am not able to answer the Welsh flannel; ignorance itself is a plummet o'er me. Use me as you will.

*Ford.* Marry, sir, we'll bring you to Windsor, to one Master Brook, that you have cozened of money, to whom you should have been a pandar. Over and above that you have suffered, I think to repay that money will be a biting affliction.

*Page.* Yet be cheerful, knight. Thou shalt eat a posset to-night at my house; where I will desire thee to laugh at my wife, that now laughs at thee. Tell her Master Slender hath married her daughter.

*Mrs. Page.* [*Aside*] Doctors doubt that. If Anne Page be my daughter, she is, by this, Doctor Caius' wife.

*Enter SLENDER.*

*Slén.* Whoa, ho! ho, father Page!

*Page.* Son, how now! how now, son! have you dispatched?

*Slén.* Dispatched! I'll make the best in Gloucestershire know on't; would I were hanged, la, else!

*Page.* Of what, son?

*Slén.* I came yonder at Eton to marry Mistress Anne Page, and she's a great lubberly boy. If it had not been i' the church, I would have swung him, or he should have swung me. If I did not think it had been Anne Page, would I might never stir!—and 'tis a postmaster's boy. 200

*Page.* Upon my life, then, you took the wrong.

*Slén.* What need you tell me that? I think so, when I took a boy for a girl. If I had been married to him, for all he was in woman's apparel, I would not have had him.

*Page.* Why, this is your own folly. Did not I tell you how you should know my daughter by her garments?

*Slén.* I went to her in white, and cried "mum," and she cried "budget," as Anne and I had appointed; and yet it was not Anne, but a postmaster's boy.

*Mrs. Page.* Good George, be not angry: I knew of your purpose; turned my daughter into green; and, indeed, she is now with the doctor at the deanery, and there married.

*Enter CAIUS.*

*Caius.* Vere is Mistress Page? By gar, I am cozened. I ha' married *un garcon*, a boy; *un pay-san*, by gar, a boy; it is not Anne Page. By gar, I am cozened. 220

*Mrs. Page.* Why, did you take her in green?

*Caius.* Ay, by gar, and 'tis a boy. By gar, I'll raise all Windsor. [*Exit.*]

*Ford.* This is strange. Who hath got the right Anne?

*Page.* My heart misgives me. Here comes Master Fenton.

*Enter FENTON and ANNE PAGE.*

How now, Master Fenton!

*Anne.* Pardon, good father! good my mother, pardon!

*Page.* Now, mistress, how chance you went not with Master Slender? 231

*Mrs. Page.* Why went you not with master doctor, maid?

*Fent.* You do amaze her. Hear the truth of it. You would have married her most shamefully, Where there was no proportion held in love. The truth is, she and I, long since contracted, Are now so sure that nothing can dissolve us. The offence is holy that she hath committed; And this deceit loses the name of craft, Of disobedience, or unduteous title, 240 Since therein she doth evitate and shun A thousand irreligious cursed hours, Which forced marriage would have brought upon her.

*Ford.* Stand not amazed; here is no remedy. In love the heavens themselves do guide the state;

Money buys lands, and wives are sold by fate.

*Fal.* I am glad, though you have ta'en a special stand to strike at me, that your arrow hath glanced.

*Page.* Well, what remedy? Fenton, heaven give thee joy! 250

What cannot be eschew'd must be embraced.

*Fal.* When night-dogs run, all sorts of deer are chased.

*Mrs. Page.* Well, I will must not further. Master Fenton,

Heaven give you many, many merry days!

Good husband, let us every one go home,

And laugh this sport o'er by a country fire;

Sir John and all.

*Ford.* Let it be so. Sir John, To Master Brook you yet shall hold your word; For he to-night shall lie with Mistress Ford.

[*Exeunt.*]



# TROILUS AND CRESSIDA

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

PRIAM, *King of Troy*

HECTOR

TROILUS

PARIS

*his sons*

DEIPHOBUS

HELENUS

MARGARELON, *a bastard son of Priam*

ÆNEAS

*Trojan commanders*

ANTENOR

CALCHAS, *a Trojan priest, taking part with the Greeks*

PANDARUS, *uncle to Cressida*

AGAMEMNON, *the Grecian general*

MENELAUS, *his brother*

ACHILLES

AJAX

ULYSSES

*Grecian commanders*

NESTOR

DIOMEDES

PATROCLUS

THERSITES, *a deformed and scurrilous Grecian*

ALEXANDER, *servant to Cressida*

A BOY, *servant to Troilus*

A SERVANT *to Paris*

A SERVANT *to Diomedes*

A MYRMIDON

HELEN, *wife to Menelaus*

ANDROMACHE, *wife to Hector*

CASSANDRA, *daughter to Priam, a prophetess*

CRESSIDA, *daughter to Calchas*

NON-SPEAKING: *Trojan and Greek soldiers, Myrmidons, and Attendants*

SCENE: *Troy, and the Grecian camp before it*

## PROLOGUE

In Troy, there lies the scene. From isles of Greece

The princes orgulous, their high blood chafed,  
 Have to the port of Athens sent their ships,  
 Fraught with the ministers and instruments  
 Of cruel war. Sixty and nine, that wore  
 Their crowns regal, from the Athenian bay  
 Put forth toward Phrygia; and their vow is made  
 To ransack Troy, within whose strong immures  
 The ravish'd Helen, Menelaus' queen,  
 With wanton Paris sleeps; and that's the quarrel.  
 To Tenedos they come;  
 And the deep-drawing barks do there disgorge  
 Their warlike freightage. Now on Dardan plains

The fresh and yet unbruised Greeks do pitch  
 Their brave pavilions. Priam's six-gated city,  
 Dardan, and Tymbria, Helias, Chetas, Troien,  
 And Antenorides, with massy staples  
 And corresponsive and fulfilling bolts,  
 Sperr up the sons of Troy.

Now expectation, tickling skittish spirits, 20  
 On one and other side, Trojan and Greek,  
 Sets all on hazard: and hither am I come  
 A prologue arm'd, but not in confidence  
 Of author's pen or actor's voice, but suited  
 In like conditions as our argument,  
 To tell you, fair beholders, that our play  
 Leaps o'er the vaunt and firstlings of those  
 broils,

Beginning in the middle, starting thence away  
 To what may be digested in a play.  
 Like or find fault; do as your pleasures are; 30  
 Now good or bad, 'tis but the chance of war.

## ACT I

SCENE I. *Troy: before Priam's palace*

*Enter TROILUS armed, and PANDARUS.*

Tro. Call here my varlet; I'll unarm again.  
 Why should I war without the walls of Troy,  
 That find such cruel battle here within?  
 Each Trojan that is master of his heart,  
 Let him to field; Troilus, alas! hath none.  
 Pan. Will this gear ne'er be mended?  
 Tro. The Greeks are strong and skilful to their  
 strength,  
 Fierce to their skill and to their fierceness vali-  
 ant;

But I am weaker than a woman's tear,  
 Tamer than sleep, fonder than ignorance, 10  
 Less valiant than the virgin in the night,  
 And skillless as unpractised infancy.

Pan. Well, I have told you enough of this. For  
 my part, I'll not meddle nor make no further. He  
 that will have a cake out of the wheat must needs  
 tarry the grinding.

Tro. Have I not tarried?

Pan. Ay, the grinding; but you must tarry the  
 bolting.

Tro. Have I not tarried?

*Pan.* Ay, the bolting, but you must tarry the leavening. 20

*Tro.* Still have I tarried.

*Pan.* Ay, to the leavening; but here's yet in the word "hereafter" the kneading, the making of the cake, the heating of the oven, and the baking; nay, you must stay the cooling too, or you may chance to burn your lips.

*Tro.* Patience herself, what goddess e'er she be, Doth lesser blench at sufferance than I do.

At Priam's royal table do I sit;

And when fair Cressid comes into my thoughts—  
So, traitor! "When she comes!" When is she thence? 31

*Pan.* Well, she looked yesternight fairer than ever I saw her look, or any woman else.

*Tro.* I was about to tell thee:—when my heart,

As wedged with a sigh, would rive in twain,

Lest Hector or my father should perceive me,

I have, as when the sun doth light a storm,

Buried this sigh in wrinkle of a smile.

But sorrow, that is couch'd in seeming gladness,  
Is like that mirth fate turns to sudden sadness. 40

*Pan.* An her hair were not somewhat darker than Helen's—well, go to—there were no more comparison between the women. But, for my part, she is my kinswoman; I would not, as they term it, praise her, but I would somebody had heard her talk yesterday, as I did. I will not dispraise your sister Cassandra's wit, but—

*Tro.* O Pandarus! I tell thee, Pandarus—

When I do tell thee, there my hopes lie drown'd,  
Reply not in how many fathoms deep 50

They lie indrench'd. I tell thee I am mad

In Cressid's love. Thou answer'st, "She is fair";

Pour'st in the open ulcer of my heart

Her eyes, her hair, her cheek, her gait, her voice,

Handlest in thy discourse, O, that her hand,

In whose comparison all whites are ink,  
Writing their own reproach, to whose soft seizure

The cygnet's down is harsh and spirit of sense  
Hard as the palm of ploughman. This thou tell'st me,

As true thou tell'st me, when I say I love her; 60  
But, saying thus, instead of oil and balm,  
Thou lay'st in every gash that love hath given me  
The knife that made it.

*Pan.* I speak no more than truth.

*Tro.* Thou dost not speak so much.

*Pan.* Faith, I'll not meddle in't. Let her be as she is. If she be fair, 'tis the better for her; and she be not, she has the mends in her own hands.

*Tro.* Good Pandarus, how now, Pandarus!

*Pan.* I have had my labour for my travail; ill-thought on of her and ill-thought on of you; gone

between and between, but small thanks for my labour.

*Tro.* What, art thou angry, Pandarus? what, with me?

*Pan.* Because she's kin to me, therefore she's not so fair as Helen. An she were not kin to me, she would be as fair on Friday as Helen is on Sunday. But what care I? I care not an she were a black-a-moor; 'tis all one to me. 80

*Tro.* Say I she is not fair?

*Pan.* I do not care whether you do or no. She's a fool to stay behind her father; let her to the Greeks; and so I'll tell her the next time I see her. For my part, I'll meddle nor make no more i' the matter.

*Tro.* Pandarus—

*Pan.* Not I.

*Tro.* Sweet Pandarus—

*Pan.* Pray you, speak no more to me. I will leave all as I found it, and there an end. 91

[Exit PANDARUS. *An alarum.*]

*Tro.* Peace, you ungracious clamours! peace, rude sounds!

Fools on both sides! Helen must needs be fair,  
When with your blood you daily paint her thus.

I cannot fight upon this argument;

It is too starved a subject for my sword.

But Pandarus—O gods, how do you plague me!

I cannot come to Cressid but by Pandar;

And he's as tetchy to be woo'd to woo

As she is stubborn-chaste against all suit. 100

Tell me, Apollo, for thy Daphne's love,

What Cressid is, what Pandar, and what we?

Her bed is India; there she lies, a pearl;

Between our Ilium and where she resides,

Let it be call'd the wild and wandering flood,

Ourselves the merchant, and this sailing Pandar

Our doubtful hope, our convoy, and our bark.

*Alarum. Enter ÆNEAS.*

*Æne.* How now, Prince Troilus! wherefore not afield?

*Tro.* Because not there. This woman's answer sorts,

For womanish it is to be from thence. 110

What news, Æneas, from the field to-day?

*Æne.* That Paris is returned home and hurt.

*Tro.* By whom, Æneas?

*Æne.*

Troilus, by Menelaus.

*Tro.* Let Paris bleed; 'tis but a scar to scorn;

Paris is gored with Menelaus' horn.

*Alarum.*

*Æne.* Hark, what good sport is out of town to-day!

*Tro.* Better at home, if "would I might" were "may."



But to the sport abroad. Are you bound thither?

*Ene.* In all swift haste.

*Tro.* Come, go we then together.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *The same: a street*

*Enter CRESSIDA and her man ALEXANDER.*

*Cres.* Who were those went by?

*Alex.* Queen Hecuba and Helen.

*Cres.* And whither go they?

*Alex.* Up to the eastern tower,

Whose height commands as subject all the  
vale,

To see the battle. Hector, whose patience

Is, as a virtue, fix'd, to-day was moved.

He chid Andromache and struck his armorer,

And, like as there were husbandry in war,

Before the sun rose he was harness'd light,

And to the field goes he; where every flower

Did, as a prophet, weep what it foresaw 10

In Hector's wrath.

*Cres.* What was his cause of anger?

*Alex.* The noise goes, this: there is among the

Greeks

A lord of Trojan blood, nephew to Hector;

They call him Ajax.

*Cres.* Good; and what of him?

*Alex.* They say he is a very man *per se*,

And stands alone.

*Cres.* So do all men, unless they are drunk, sick,  
or have no legs.

*Alex.* This man, lady, hath robbed many beasts  
of their particular additions; he is as valiant as  
the lion, churlish as the bear, slow as the ele-  
phant; a man into whom nature hath so crowded  
humours that his valour is crushed into folly, his  
folly sauced with discretion. There is no man  
hath a virtue that he hath not a glimpse of, nor  
any man an attainment but he carries some stain of it.  
He is melancholy without cause, and merry  
against the hair; he hath the joints of everything,  
but everything so out of joint that he is a gouty  
Briareus, many hands and no use, or purblind  
Argus, all eyes and no sight. 31

*Cres.* But how should this man, that makes me  
smile, make Hector angry?

*Alex.* They say he yesterday coped Hector in  
the battle and struck him down, the disdain and  
shame whereof hath ever since kept Hector fast-  
ing and waking.

*Cres.* Who comes here?

*Alex.* Madam, your uncle Pandarus.

*Enter PANDARUS.*

*Cres.* Hector's a gallant man.

*Alex.* As may be in the world, lady. 40

*Pan.* What's that? what's that?

*Cres.* Good morrow, uncle Pandarus.

*Pan.* Good morrow, cousin Cressid. What do  
you talk of? Good morrow, Alexander. How do  
you, cousin? When were you at Ilium?

*Cres.* This morning, uncle.

*Pan.* What were you talking of when I came?  
Was Hector armed and gone ere ye came to  
Ilium? Helen was not up, was she? 50

*Cres.* Hector was gone, but Helen was not up.

*Pan.* E'en so. Hector was stirring early.

*Cres.* That were we talking of, and of his anger.

*Pan.* Was he angry?

*Cres.* So he says here.

*Pan.* True, he was so. I know the cause too.  
He'll lay about him to-day, I can tell them that;  
and there's Troilus will not come far behind him;  
let them take heed of Troilus, I can tell them  
that too. 61

*Cres.* What, is he angry too?

*Pan.* Who, Troilus? Troilus is the better man of  
the two.

*Cres.* O Jupiter! there's no comparison.

*Pan.* What, not between Troilus and Hector?

Do you know a man if you see him?

*Cres.* Ay, if I ever saw him before and knew  
him.

*Pan.* Well, I say Troilus is Troilus. 70

*Cres.* Then you say as I say; for, I am sure, he is  
not Hector.

*Pan.* No, nor Hector is not Troilus in some de-  
grees.

*Cres.* 'Tis just to each of them; he is himself.

*Pan.* Himself! Alas, poor Troilus! I would he  
were.

*Cres.* So he is.

*Pan.* Condition, I had gone barefoot to India.

*Cres.* He is not Hector. 81

*Pan.* Himself! no, he's not himself; would a'  
were himself! Well, the gods are above; time  
must friend or end. Well, Troilus, well; I would  
my heart were in her body. No, Hector is not a  
better man than Troilus.

*Cres.* Excuse me.

*Pan.* He is elder.

*Cres.* Pardon me, pardon me. 89

*Pan.* Th' other's not come to't; you shall tell  
me another tale, when th' other's come to't.  
Hector shall not have his wit this year.

*Cres.* He shall not need it, if he have his own.

*Pan.* Nor his qualities.

*Cres.* No matter.

*Pan.* Nor his beauty.

*Cres.* 'Twould not become him; his own's better.

*Pan.* You have no judgement, niece. Helen her-  
self swore th' other day that Troilus, for a brown

favour—for so 'tis, I must confess—not brown neither—

*Cres.* No, but brown.

*Pan.* 'Faith, to say truth, brown and not brown.

*Cres.* To say the truth, true and not true.

*Pan.* She praised his complexion above Paris.

*Cres.* Why, Paris hath colour enough.

*Pan.* So he has.

109

*Cres.* Then Troilus should have too much. If she praised him above, his complexion is higher than his; he having colour enough, and the other higher, is too flaming a praise for a good complexion. I had as lief Helen's golden tongue had commended Troilus for a copper nose.

*Pan.* I swear to you, I think Helen loves him better than Paris.

*Cres.* Then she's a merry Greek indeed.

*Pan.* Nay, I am sure she does. She came to him th' other day into the compassed window—and, you know, he has not past three or four hairs on his chin—

*Cres.* Indeed, a tapster's arithmetic may soon bring his particulars therein to a total.

*Pan.* Why, he is very young; and yet will he, within three pound, lift as much as his brother Hector.

*Cres.* Is he so young a man and so old a lifter?

129

*Pan.* But to prove to you that Helen loves him: she came and puts me her white hand to his cloven chin—

*Cres.* Juno have mercy! how came it cloven?

*Pan.* Why, you know, 'tis dimpled. I think his smiling becomes him better than any man in all Phrygia.

*Cres.* O, he smiles valiantly.

*Pan.* Does he not?

*Cres.* O yes, an 'twere a cloud in autumn.

139

*Pan.* Why, go to, then. But to prove to you that Helen loves Troilus—

*Cres.* Troilus will stand to the proof, if you'll prove it so.

*Pan.* Troilus! why, he esteems her no more than I esteem an addle egg.

*Cres.* If you love an addle egg as well as you love an idle head, you would eat chickens i' the shell.

*Pan.* I cannot choose but laugh, to think how she tickled his chin; indeed, she has a marvellous white hand, I must needs confess—

151

*Cres.* Without the rack.

*Pan.* And she takes upon her to spy a white hair on his chin.

*Cres.* Alas, poor chin! many a wart is richer.

*Pan.* But there was such laughing! Queen Hector's laughed that her eyes ran o'er.

*Cres.* With mill-stones.

*Pan.* And Cassandra laughed.

*Cres.* But there was more temperate fire under the pot of her eyes. Did her eyes run o'er too?

161

*Pan.* And Hector laughed.

*Cres.* At what was all this laughing?

*Pan.* Marry, at the white hair that Helen spied on Troilus' chin.

*Cres.* An't had been a green hair, I should have laughed too.

*Pan.* They laughed not so much at the hair as at his pretty answer.

*Cres.* What was his answer?

170

*Pan.* Quoth she, "Here's but two and fifty hairs on your chin, and one of them is white."

*Cres.* This is her question.

*Pan.* That's true; make no question of that. "Two and fifty hairs," quoth he, "and one white. That white hair is my father, and all the rest are his sons." "Jupiter!" quoth she, "which of these hairs is Paris my husband?" "The forked one," quoth he, "pluck't out, and give it him." But there was such laughing! and Helen so blushed, and Paris so chafed, and all the rest so laughed, that it passed.

*Cres.* So let it now; for it has been a great while going by.

*Pan.* Well, cousin, I told you a thing yesterday; think on't.

*Cres.* So I do.

*Pan.* I'll be sworn 'tis true; he will weep you, an 'twere a man born in April.

189

*Cres.* And I'll spring up in his tears, an 'twere a nettle against May.

*A retreat sounded.*

*Pan.* Hark! they are coming from the field: shall we stand up here, and see them as they pass toward Ilium? good niece, do, sweet niece Cressida.

*Cres.* At your pleasure.

*Pan.* Here, here, here's an excellent place; here we may see most bravely. I'll tell you them all by their names as they pass by; but mark Troilus above the rest.

200

*Cres.* Speak not so loud.

*ÆNEAS passes.*

*Pan.* That's Æneas; is not that a brave man? he's one of the flowers of Troy, I can tell you. But mark Troilus; you shall see anon.

*ANTENOR passes.*

*Cres.* Who's that?

*Pan.* That's Antenor; he has a shrewd wit, I can tell you; and he's a man good enough; he's one o' the soundest judgements in Troy, whosoever, and a proper man of person. When comes Troil-



us? I'll show you Troilus anon. If he see me, you shall see him nod at me.

*Cres.* Will he give you the nod?

*Pan.* You shall see.

*Cres.* If he do, the rich shall have more.

*HECTOR passes.*

*Pan.* That's Hector, that, that, look you, that; there's a fellow! Go thy way, Hector! There's a brave man, niece. O brave Hector! Look how he looks! there's a countenance! is't not a brave man?

*Cres.* O, a brave man! 220

*Pan.* Is a' not? it does a man's heart good. Look you what hacks are on his helmet! Look you yonder, do you see? Look you there; there's no jesting; there's laying on, take't off who will, as they say. There be hacks!

*Cres.* Be those with swords?

*Pan.* Swords! anything, he cares not; an the devil come to him, it's all one. By God's lid, it does one's heart good. Yonder comes Paris, yonder comes Paris. 230

*PARIS passes.*

Look ye yonder, niece; is't not a gallant man too, is't not? Why, this is brave now. Who said he came hurt home to-day? he's not hurt. Why, this will do Helen's heart good now, ha! Would I could see Troilus now! You shall see Troilus anon.

*HELENUS passes.*

*Cres.* Who's that?

*Pan.* That's Helenus. I marvel where Troilus is. That's Helenus. I think he went not forth to-day. That's Helenus. 240

*Cres.* Can Helenus fight, uncle?

*Pan.* Helenus? no. Yes, he'll fight indifferent well. I marvel where Troilus is. Hark! do you not hear the people cry "Troilus"? Helenus is a priest.

*Cres.* What sneaking fellow comes yonder?

*TROILUS passes.*

*Pan.* Where? yonder? that's Deiphobus. 'Tis Troilus! there's a man, niece! Hem! Brave Troilus! the prince of chivalry!

*Cres.* Peace, for shame, peace! 250

*Pan.* Mark him; note him. O brave Troilus! Look well upon him, niece. Look you how his sword is bloodied, and his helm more hacked than Hector's, and how he looks, and how he goes! O admirable youth! he ne'er saw three and twenty. Go thy way, Troilus, go thy way! Had I a sister were a grace, or a daughter a goddess,

he should take his choice. O admirable man! Paris? Paris is dirt to him; and, I warrant, Helen, to change, would give an eye to boot. 260

*Cres.* Here come more.

*Forces pass.*

*Pan.* Asses, fools, dolts! chaff and bran, chaff and bran! porridge after meat! I could live and die i' the eyes of Troilus. Ne'er look, ne'er look; the eagles are gone; crows and daws, crows and daws! I had rather be such a man as Troilus than Agamemnon and all Greece.

*Cres.* There is among the Greeks Achilles, a better man than Troilus. 269

*Pan.* Achilles! a drayman, a porter, a very camel.

*Cres.* Well, well.

*Pan.* "Well, well!" Why, have you any discretion? have you any eyes? do you know what a man is? Is not birth, beauty, good shape, discourse, manhood, learning, gentleness, virtue, youth, liberality, and such like, the spice and salt that season a man?

*Cres.* Ay, a minced man; and then to be baked with no date in the pie, for then the man's date's out. 281

*Pan.* You are such a woman! one knows not at what ward you lie.

*Cres.* Upon my back, to defend my belly; upon my wit, to defend my wiles; upon my secrecy, to defend mine honesty; my mask, to defend my beauty; and you, to defend all these; and at all these wards I lie, at a thousand watches.

*Pan.* Say one of your watches. 290

*Cres.* Nay, I'll watch you for that; and that's one of the chiefest of them too. If I cannot ward what I would not have hit, I can watch you for telling how I took the blow; unless it swell past hiding, and then it's past watching.

*Pan.* You are such another!

*Enter TROILUS'S BOY.*

*Boy.* Sir, my lord would instantly speak with you.

*Pan.* Where? 299

*Boy.* At your own house; there he unarms him.

*Pan.* Good boy, tell him I come. [*Exit BOY.*] I doubt he be hurt. Fare ye well, good niece.

*Cres.* Adieu, uncle.

*Pan.* I'll be with you, niece, by and by.

*Cres.* To bring, uncle?

*Pan.* Ay, a token from Troilus.

*Cres.* By the same token, you are a bawd.

[*Exit PANDARUS.*]

Words, vows, gifts, tears, and love's full sacrifice,

He offers in another's enterprise.

But more in Troilus thousand fold I see 310  
Than in the glass of Pandar's praise may be;  
Yet hold I off. Women are angels, wooing.  
Things won are done; joy's soul lies in the doing.  
That she beloved knows nought that knows not  
this:

Men prize the thing ungain'd more than it is.

That she was never yet that ever knew  
Love got so sweet as when desire did sue.

Therefore this maxim out of love I teach:

Achievement is command; ungain'd, beseech.

Then though my heart's content firm love doth  
bear, 320

Nothing of that shall from mine eyes appear.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *The Grecian camp: before  
Agamemnon's tent*

*Sennet. Enter* AGAMEMNON, NESTOR, ULYSSES,  
MENELAUS, *and others.*

*Agam.* Princes,

What grief hath set the jaundice on your cheeks?  
The ample proposition that hope makes  
In all designs begun on earth below  
Fails in the promised largeness. Checks and dis-  
asters

Grow in the veins of actions highest rear'd,  
As knots, by the conflux of meeting sap,  
Infect the sound pine and divert his grain  
Tortive and errant from his course of growth.  
Nor, princes, is it matter new to us 10  
That we come short of our suppose so far  
That after seven years' siege yet Troy walls  
stand;

Sith every action that hath gone before,  
Whereof we have record, trial did draw  
Bias and thwart, not answering the aim,  
And that unbodied figure of the thought  
That gave't surmised shape. Why then, you  
princes,

Do you with cheeks abash'd behold our works,  
And call them shames? which are indeed nought  
else

But the protractive trials of great Jove 20  
To find persistive constancy in men;  
The fineness of which metal is not found  
In fortune's love; for then the bold and coward,  
The wise and fool the artist and unread,  
The hard and soft, seem all affined and kin.  
But, in the wind and tempest of her frown,  
Distinction, with a broad and powerful fan,  
Puffing at all, winnows the light away;  
And what hath mass or matter, by itself  
Lies rich in virtue and unmingled. 30

*Nest.* With due observance of thy godlike seat,

Great Agamemnon, Nestor shall apply  
Thy latest words. In the reproof of chance  
Lies the true proof of men. The sea being smooth,  
How many shallow bauble boats dare sail  
Upon her patient breast, making their way  
With those of nobler bulk!

But let the ruffian Boreas once enrage  
The gentle Thetis, and anon behold  
The strong-ribb'd bark through liquid mountains  
cut, 40

Bounding between the two moist elements,  
Like Perseus' horse; where's then the saucy boat  
Whose weak untimber'd sides but even now  
Co-rivall'd greatness? Either to harbour fled,  
Or made a toast for Neptune. Even so  
Doth valour's show and valour's worth divide  
In storms of fortune; for in her ray and bright-  
ness

The herd hath more annoyance by the breese  
Than by the tiger; but when the splitting wind  
Makes flexible the knees of knotted oaks, 50  
And flies fled under shade, why, then the thing of  
courage

As roused with rage, with rage doth sympathize,  
And with an accent tuned in selfsame key  
Retorts to chiding fortune.

*Ulyss.*

Agamemnon,  
Thou great commander, nerve and bone of  
Greece,  
Heart of our numbers, soul and only spirit,  
In whom the tempers and the minds of all  
Should be shut up, hear what Ulysses speaks.  
Besides the applause and approbation  
The which, [*To* AGAMEMNON] most mighty for  
thy place and sway, 60

[*To* NESTOR] And thou most reverend for thy  
stretch'd-out life,

I give to both your speeches, which were such  
As Agamemnon and the hand of Greece  
Should hold up high in brass, and such again  
As venerable Nestor, hatch'd in silver,  
Should with a bond of air, strong as the axle-tree  
On which heaven rides, knit all the Greekish  
ears

To his experienced tongue, yet let it please both,  
Thou great, and wise, to hear Ulysses speak.

*Agam.* Speak, Prince of Ithaca; and be't of less  
expect 70

That matter needless, of importless burden,  
Divide thy lips, than we are confident,  
When rank Thersites opens his mastic jaws,  
We shall hear music, wit, and oracle.

*Ulyss.* Troy, yet upon his basis, had been down,  
And the great Hector's sword had lack'd a mas-  
ter,

But for these instances.



The specialty of rule hath been neglected;  
 And, look, how many Grecian tents do stand  
 Hollow upon this plain, so many hollow factions.  
 When that the general is not like the hive 81  
 To whom the foragers shall all repair,  
 What honey is expected? Degree being vizarded,  
 The unwhorliest shows as fairly in the mask.  
 The heavens themselves, the planets, and this  
 centre

Observe degree, priority, and place,  
 Insisture, course, proportion, season, form,  
 Office, and custom, in all line of order;  
 And therefore is the glorious planet Sol 90  
 In noble eminence enthroned and sphered  
 Amidst the other; whose medicinable eye  
 Corrects the ill aspects of planets evil,  
 And posts, like the commandment of a king,  
 Sans check, to good and bad. But when the  
 planets

In evil mixture to disorder wander,  
 What plagues and what portents! what mutiny!  
 What raging of the sea! shaking of earth!  
 Commotion in the winds! frights, changes, hor-  
 rors,

Divert and crack, rend and deracinate 100  
 The unity and married calm of states  
 Quite from their fixure! O, when degree is  
 shaken,

Which is the ladder to all high designs,  
 The enterprise is sick! How could communities,  
 Degrees in schools and brotherhoods in cities,  
 Peaceful commerce from dividable shores,  
 The primogenitive and due of birth,  
 Prerogative of age, crowns, sceptres, laurels,  
 But by degree, stand in authentic place?  
 Take but degree away, untune that string,  
 And, hark, what discord follows! Each thing 110  
 meets

In mere oppugnancy. The bounded waters  
 Should lift their bosoms higher than the shores  
 And make a sop of all this solid globe.  
 Strength should be lord of imbecility,  
 And the rude son should strike his father dead.  
 Force should be right; or rather, right and wrong,  
 Between whose endless jar justice resides,  
 Should lose their names, and so should justice too.  
 Then everything includes itself in power,  
 Power into will, will into appetite; 120  
 And appetite, an universal wolf,  
 So doubly seconded with will and power,  
 Must make perforce an universal prey,  
 And last eat up himself. Great Agamemnon,  
 This chaos, when degree is suffocate,  
 Follows the choking.

And this neglect of degree it is  
 That by a pace goes backward, with a purpose

It hath to climb. The general's disdain'd  
 By him one step below, he by the next, 130  
 That next by him beneath; so every step,  
 Exemplary by the first pace that is sick  
 Of his superior, grows to an envious fever  
 Of pale and bloodless emulation.

And 'tis this fever that keeps Troy on foot,  
 Not her own sinews. To end a tale of length,  
 Troy in our weakness stands, not in her strength.  
*Nest.* Most wisely hath Ulysses here discover'd  
 The fever whereof all our power is sick.

*Agam.* The nature of the sickness found,  
 Ulysses, 140

What is the remedy?

*Ulyss.* The great Achilles, whom opinion  
 crowns

The sinew and the forehand of our host,  
 Having his ear full of his airy fame,  
 Grows dainty of his worth and in his tent  
 Lies mocking our designs. With him Patroclus  
 Upon a lazy bed the livelong day  
 Breaks scurril jests,

And with ridiculous and awkward action,  
 Which, slanderer, he imitation calls, 150  
 He pageants us. Sometime, great Agamemnon,  
 Thy toposse deputation he puts on,

And, like a strutting player, whose conceit  
 Lies in his hamstring, and doth think it rich  
 To twixt the wooden dialogue and sound  
 'T'wixt his stretch'd footing and the scaffold-  
 age—

Such to-be-pitied and o'er-wrested seeming  
 He acts thy greatness in; and when he speaks,  
 'Tis like a chime a-mending; with terms un-  
 squared,

Which, from the tongue of roaring Typhon  
 dropp'd, 160

Would seem hyperboles. At this fusty stuff  
 The large Achilles, on his press'd bed lolling,  
 From his deep chest laughs out a loud applause;  
 Cries "Excellent! 'tis Agamemnon just.  
 Now play me Nestor; hem, and stroke thy  
 beard,

As he being drest to some oration."  
 That's done, as near as the extremest ends  
 Of parallels, as like as Vulcan and his wife.  
 Yet god Achilles still cries "Excellent!  
 'Tis Nestor right. Now play him me, Patroclus,  
 Arming to answer in a night alarm." 171

And then, forsooth, the faint defects of age  
 Must be the scene of mirth; to cough and spit,  
 And, with a palsy-fumbling on his gorget,  
 Shake in and out the rivet. And at this sport  
 Sir Valour dies; cries "O, enough, Patroclus;  
 Or give me ribs of steel! I shall split all  
 In pleasure of my spleen." And in this fashion,

All our abilities, gifts, natures, shapes,  
 Severals and generals of grace exact, 180  
 Achievements, plots, orders, preventions,  
 Excitements to the field, or speech for truce,  
 Success or loss, what is or is not, serves  
 As stuff for these two to make paradoxes.

*Nest.* And in the imitation of these twain—  
 Who, as Ulysses says, opinion crowns  
 With an imperial voice—many are infect.  
 Ajax is grown self-will'd, and bears his head  
 In such a rein, in full as proud a place 190  
 As broad Achilles; keeps his tent like him;  
 Makes factious feasts; rails on our state of  
 war,

Bold as an oracle, and sets Thersites,  
 A slave whose gall coins slanders like a mint,  
 To match us in comparisons with dirt,  
 To weaken and discredit our exposure,  
 How rank soever rounded in with danger.

*Ulyss.* They tax our policy, and call it coward-  
 ice,

Count wisdom as no member of the war,  
 Forestall prescience, and esteem no act  
 But that of hand. The still and mental parts, 200  
 That do contrive how many hands shall strike,  
 When fitness calls them on, and know by meas-  
 ure

Of their observant toil the enemies' weight—  
 Why, this hath not a finger's dignity.  
 They call this bed-work, mappery, closet-war;  
 So that the ram that batters down the wall,  
 For the great swing and rudeness of his poise,  
 They place before his hand that made the engine,  
 Or those that with the fineness of their souls  
 By reason guide his execution. 210

*Nest.* Let this be granted, and Achilles' horse  
 Makes many Thetis' sons.

*A tucket.*

*Agam.* What trumpet? look, Menelaus.

*Men.* From Troy.

*Enter ÆNEAS.*

*Agam.* What would you 'fore our tent?

*Æne.* Is this great Agamemnon's tent, I pray  
 you?

*Agam.* Even this.

*Æne.* May one that is a herald and a prince  
 Do a fair message to his kingly ears?

*Agam.* With surety stronger than Achilles'  
 arm 220

'Fore all the Greekish heads, which with one  
 voice

Call Agamemnon head and general.

*Æne.* Fair leave and large security. How may  
 A stranger to those most imperial looks  
 Know them from eyes of other mortals?

*Agam.*

How!

*Æne.* Ay;

I ask, that I might waken reverence,  
 And bid the cheek be ready with a blush  
 Modest as morning when she coldly eyes  
 The youthful Phœbus. 230

Which is that god in office, guiding men?  
 Which is the high and mighty Agamemnon?

*Agam.* This Trojan scorns us; or the men of  
 Troy

Are ceremonious courtiers.

*Æne.* Courtiers as free, as debonair, unarm'd,  
 As bending angels; that's their fame in peace.  
 But when they would seem soldiers, they have  
 galls,

Good arms, strong joints, true swords; and,  
 Jove's accord,

Nothing so full of heart. But peace, Æneas,  
 Peace, Trojan; lay thy finger on thy lips! 240

The worthiness of praise distains his worth,  
 If that the praised himself bring the praise forth.  
 But what the repining enemy commends,  
 That breath fame blows; that praise, sole pure,  
 transcends.

*Agam.* Sir, you of Troy, call you yourself  
 Æneas?

*Æne.* Ay, Greek, that is my name.

*Agam.* What's your affair, I pray you?

*Æne.* Sir, pardon; 'tis for Agamemnon's ears.

*Agam.* He hears nought privately that comes  
 from Troy.

*Æne.* Nor I from Troy come not to whisper  
 him. 250

I bring a trumpet to awake his ear,  
 To set his sense on the attentive bent,  
 And then to speak.

*Agam.* Speak frankly as the wind;

It is not Agamemnon's sleeping hour.

That thou shalt know, Trojan, he is awake,  
 He tells thee so himself.

*Æne.*

Trumpet, blow loud,  
 Send thy brass voice through all these lazy tents;  
 And every Greek of mettle, let him know,  
 What Troy means fairly shall be spoke aloud.

*Trumpet sounds.*

We have, great Agamemnon, here in Troy 260

A prince call'd Hector—Priam is his father—

Who in this dull and long-continued truce

Is rusty grown. He bade me take a trumpet,

And to this purpose speak. Kings, princes, lords!

If there be one among the fair'st of Greece

That holds his honour higher than his ease,

That seeks his praise more than he fears his peril,

That knows his valour, and knows not his fear,

That loves his mistress more than in confession,

With truant vows to her own lips he loves, 270



And dare avow her beauty and her worth  
In other arms than hers—to him this challenge.

Hector, in view of Trojans and of Greeks,  
Shall make it good, or do his best to do it,  
He hath a lady, wiser, fairer, truer,  
Than ever Greek did compass in his arms,  
And will to-morrow with his trumpet call  
Midway between your tents and walls of Troy,  
To rouse a Grecian that is true in love.  
If any come, Hector shall honour him; 280  
If none, he'll say in Troy when he retires,  
The Grecian dames are sunburnt and not worth  
The splinter of a lance. Even so much.

*Agam.* This shall be told our lovers, Lord  
Æneas;

If none of them have soul in such a kind,  
We left them all at home. But we are soldiers;  
And may that soldier a mere recreant prove,  
That means not, hath not, or is not in love!  
If then one is, or hath, or means to be, 289  
That one meets Hector; if none else, I am he.

*Nest.* Tell him of Nestor, one that was a man  
When Hector's grandsire suck'd. He is old  
now;

But if there be not in our Grecian host  
One noble man that hath one spark of fire  
To answer for his love, tell him from me  
I'll hide my silver beard in a gold beaver  
And in my vantbrace put this wither'd brawn,  
And meeting him will tell him that my lady  
Was fairer than his grandam and as chaste  
As may be in the world. His youth in flood, 300  
I'll prove this truth with my three drops of blood.

*Æne.* Now heavens forbid such scarcity of  
youth!

*Ulyss.* Amen.

*Agam.* Fair Lord Æneas, let me touch your  
hand;

To our pavilion shall I lead you, sir.  
Achilles shall have word of this intent;  
So shall each lord of Greece, from tent to tent.  
Yourself shall feast with us before you go  
And find the welcome of a noble foe.

[*Exeunt all but ULYSSES and NESTOR.*

*Ulyss.* Nestor! 310

*Nest.* What says Ulysses?

*Ulyss.* I have a young conception in my brain;  
Be you my time to bring it to some shape.

*Nest.* What is't?

*Ulyss.* This 'tis:  
Blunt wedges rive hard knots. The seeded pride  
That hath to this maturity blown up  
In rank Achilles must or now be cropp'd,  
Or, shedding, breed a nursery of like evil,  
To overbulk us all.

*Nest.* Well, and how?

320

*Ulyss.* This challenge that the gallant Hector  
sends,

However it is spread in general name,  
Relates in purpose only to Achilles.

*Nest.* The purpose is perspicuous even as sub-  
stance,

Whose grossness little characters sum up.  
And, in the publication, make no strain,  
But that Achilles, were his brain as barren  
As banks of Libya—though, Apollo knows,  
'Tis dry enough—will with great speed of judge-  
ment,

Ay, with celerity, find Hector's purpose 330  
Pointing on him.

*Ulyss.* And wake him to the answer, think  
you?

*Nest.* Yes, 'tis most meet. Whom may you else  
oppose,

That can from Hector bring his honour off,  
If not Achilles? Though't be a sportful combat,  
Yet in the trial much opinion dwells;  
For here the Trojans taste our dear'st repute  
With their finest palate; and trust to me, Ulys-  
ses,

Our imputation shall be oddly poised  
In this wild action; for the success, 340

Although particular, shall give a scantling  
Of good or bad unto the general;  
And in such indexes, although small pricks  
To their subsequent volumes, there is seen  
The baby figure of the giant mass  
Of things to come at large. It is supposed  
He that meets Hector issues from our choice;  
And choice, being mutual act of all our souls,  
Makes merit her election, and doth boil,  
As 'twere from forth us all, a man distill'd 350  
Out of our virtues; who miscarrying,  
What heart receives from hence the conquering  
part,

To steel a strong opinion to themselves?  
Which entertain'd, limbs are his instruments,  
In no less working than are swords and bows  
Directive by the limbs.

*Ulyss.* Give pardon to my speech.

Therefore 'tis meet Achilles meet not Hector.  
Let us, like merchants, show our foulest wares,  
And think, perchance, they'll sell; if not, 360  
The lustre of the better yet to show,  
Shall show the better. Do not consent  
That ever Hector and Achilles meet;  
For both our honour and our shame in this  
Are dogg'd with two strange followers.

*Nest.* I see them not with my old eyes. What  
are they?

*Ulyss.* What glory our Achilles shares from  
Hector,

Were he not proud, we all should share with him.

But he already is too insolent;  
And we were better parch in Afric sun 370  
Than in the pride and salt scorn of his eyes,  
Should he 'scape Hector fair. If he were foil'd,  
Why then, we did our main opinion crush  
In taint of our best man. No, make a lottery;  
And, by device, let blockish Ajax draw  
The sort to fight with Hector. Among ourselves  
Give him allowance for the better man;  
For that will physic the great Myrmidon  
Who broils in loud applause, and make him fall  
His crest that prouder than blue Iris bends. 380  
If the dull brainless Ajax come safe off,  
We'll dress him up in voices. If he fail,  
Yet go we under our opinion still  
That we have better men. But, hit or miss,  
Our project's life this shape of sense assumes:  
Ajax employ'd plucks down Achilles' plumes.

Nest. Ulysses,  
Now I begin to relish thy advice;  
And I will give a taste of it forthwith  
To Agamemnon. Go we to him straight. 390  
Two curs shall tame each other; pride alone  
Must tarre the mastiffs on, as 'twere their bone.  
[Exeunt.]

## ACT II

### SCENE I. *A part of the Grecian camp*

*Enter AJAX and THERSITES.*

Ajax. Thersites!

Ther. Agamemnon, how if he had boils? full,  
all over, generally?

Ajax. Thersites!

Ther. And those boils did run? Say so: did not  
the general run then? Were not that a botchy  
core?

Ajax. Dog!

Ther. Then would come some matter from  
him; I see none now. 10

Ajax. Thou bitch-wolf's son, canst thou not  
hear? [Beating him] Feel, then.

Ther. The plague of Greece upon thee, thou  
mongrel beef-witted lord!

Ajax. Speak then, thou vinewedst leaven, speak.  
I will beat thee into handsomeness.

Ther. I shall sooner rail thee into wit and holi-  
ness; but, I think, thy horse will sooner con an  
oration than thou learn a prayer without book.  
Thou canst strike, canst thou? A red murrain o'  
thy jade's tricks! 21

Ajax. Toadstool, learn me the proclamation.

Ther. Dost thou think I have no sense, thou  
strikest me thus?

Ajax. The proclamation!

Ther. Thou art proclaimed a fool, I think.

Ajax. Do not, porpentine, do not; my fingers  
itch.

Ther. I would thou didst itch from head to foot  
and I had the scratching of thee; I would make  
thee the loathsome scab in Greece. When thou  
art forth in the incursions, thou strikest as slow  
as another.

Ajax. I say, the proclamation!

Ther. Thou grumblest and railest every hour  
on Achilles, and thou art as full of envy at his  
greatness as Cerberus is at Proserpina's beauty,  
ay, that thou barkest at him.

Ajax. Mistress Thersites!

Ther. Thou shouldst strike him. 40

Ajax. Cobloaf!

Ther. He would pun thee into shivers with his  
fist, as a sailor breaks a biscuit.

Ajax. [Beating him] You whoreson cur!

Ther. Do, do.

Ajax. Thou stool for a witch!

Ther. Ay, do, do; thou sodden-witted lord!  
Thou hast no more brain than I have in mine  
elbows; an assinego may tutor thee. Thou  
scurvy-valiant ass! thou art here but to thrash  
Trojans; and thou art bought and sold among  
those of any wit, like a barbarian slave. If thou  
use to beat me, I will begin at thy heel, and tell  
what thou art by inches, thou thing of no bowels,  
thou!

Ajax. You dog!

Ther. You scurvy lord!

Ajax. [Beating him] You cur!

Ther. Mars his idiot! do, rudeness; do, camel;  
do, do. 59

*Enter ACHILLES and PATROCLUS.*

Achil. Why, how now, Ajax! wherefore do  
you thus? How now, Thersites! what's the  
matter, man?

Ther. You see him there, do you?

Achil. Ay; what's the matter?

Ther. Nay, look upon him.

Achil. So I do. What's the matter?

Ther. Nay, but regard him well.

Achil. "Well!" why, I do so.

Ther. But yet you look not well upon him;  
for, whoseever you take him to be, he is Ajax. 70

Achil. I know that, fool.

Ther. Ay, but that fool knows not himself.

Ajax. Therefore I beat thee.

Ther. Lo, lo, lo, lo, what modicums of wit he  
utters! his evasions have ears thus long. I have  
bobb'd his brain more than he has beat my bones.  
I will buy nine sparrows for a penny, and his pia



*mater* is not worth the ninth part of a sparrow. This lord, Achilles, Ajax, who wears his wit in his belly and his guts in his head, I'll tell you what I say of him. 81

*Achil.* What?

*Ther.* I say, this Ajax—

*AJAX offers to beat him.*

*Achil.* Nay, good Ajax.

*Ther.* Has not so much wit—

*Achil.* Nay, I must hold you.

*Ther.* As will stop the eye of Helen's needle, for whom he comes to fight.

*Achil.* Peace, fool!

*Ther.* I would have peace and quietness, but the fool will not. He there, that he. Look you there.

*Ajax.* O thou damned cur! I shall—

*Achil.* Will you set your wit to a fool's?

*Ther.* No, I warrant you; for a fool's will shame it.

*Patr.* Good words, Thersites.

*Achil.* What's the quarrel?

*Ajax.* I bade the vile owl go learn me the tenour of the proclamation, and he rails upon me.

*Ther.* I serve thee not. 101

*Ajax.* Well, go to, go to.

*Ther.* I serve here voluntary.

*Achil.* Your last service was sufferance, 'twas not voluntary. No man is beaten voluntary; Ajax was here the voluntary, and you as under an impress.

*Ther.* E'en so; a great deal of your wit, too, lies in your sinews, or else there be liars. Hector shall have a great catch, if he knock out either of your brains. A' were as good crack a fusty nut with no kernel.

*Achil.* What, with me too, Thersites?

*Ther.* There's Ulysses and old Nestor, whose wit was mouldy ere your grandsires had nails on their toes, yoke you like draught-oxen and make you plough up the wars.

*Achil.* What, what?

*Ther.* Yes, good sooth. To, Achilles! to, Ajax! to! 120

*Ajax.* I shall cut out your tongue.

*Ther.* 'Tis no matter; I shall speak as much as thou afterwards.

*Patr.* No more words, Thersites; peace!

*Ther.* I will hold my peace when Achilles' brach bids me, shall I?

*Achil.* There's for you Patroclus.

*Ther.* I will see you hanged, like clotpoles, ere I come any more to your tents. I will keep where there is wit stirring and leave the faction of fools. [Exit.]

*Patr.* A good riddance.

*Achil.* Marry, this, sir, is proclaim'd through all our host:

That Hector, by the fifth hour of the sun, Will with a trumpet 'twixt our tents and Troy To-morrow morning call some knight to arms That hath a stomach; and such a one that dare Maintain—I know not what; 'tis trash. Farewell. *Ajax.* Farewell. Who shall answer him?

*Achil.* I know not. 'Tis put to lottery; otherwise 140

He knew his man.

*Ajax.* O, meaning you. I will go learn more of it. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II. *Troy: a room in Priam's palace*

*Enter PRIAM, HECTOR, TROILUS, PARIS, and HELENUS.*

*Pri.* After so many hours, lives, speeches spent, Thus once again says Nestor from the Greeks:

"Deliver Helen, and all damage else—

As honour, loss of time, travail, expense, Wounds, friends, and what else dear that is consumed

In hot digestion of this cormorant war—

Shall be struck off." Hector, what say you to't?

*Hect.* Though no man lesser fears the Greeks than I

As far as toucheth my particular,

Yet, dread Priam, 10

There is no lady of more softer bowels, More spongy to suck in the sense of fear, More ready to cry out, "Who knows what follows?"

Than Hector is. The wound of peace is surety,

Surety secure; but modest doubt is call'd

The beacon of the wise, the tent that searches

To the bottom of the worst. Let Helen go.

Since the first sword was drawn about this question,

Every tithe soul, 'mongst many thousand dismes,

Hath been as dear as Helen; I mean, of ours. 20

If we have lost so many tenths of ours,

To guard a thing not ours nor worth to us,

Had it our name, the value of one ten,

What merit's in that reason which denies

The yielding of her up?

*Tro.* Fie, fie, my brother!

Weigh you the worth and honour of a king

So great as our dread father in a scale

Of common ounces? will you with counters sum

The past proportion of his infinite?

And buckle in a waist most fathomless 30

With spans and inches so diminutive

As fears and reasons? fie, for godly shame!

*Hel.* No marvel, though you bite so sharp at reasons,

You are so empty of them. Should not our father  
Bear the great sway of his affairs with reasons,  
Because your speech hath none that tells him so?

*Tro.* You are for dreams and slumbers, brother  
priest;

You fur your gloves with reason. Here are your  
reasons:

You know an enemy intends you harm;  
You know a sword employ'd is perilous, 40  
And reason flies the object of all harm.

Who marvels then, when Helenus beholds  
A Grecian and his sword, if he do set  
The very wings of reason to his heels  
And fly like chidden Mercury from Jove,  
Or like a star disorb'd? Nay, if we talk of reason,  
Let's shut our gates and sleep. Manhood and  
honour

Should have hare-hearts, would they but fat their  
thoughts

With this cramm'd reason. Reason and respect  
Make livers pale and lustihood deject. 50

*Hect.* Brother, she is not worth what she doth  
cost

The holding.

*Tro.* What is aught, but as 'tis valued?

*Hect.* But value dwells not in particular will;  
It holds his estimate and dignity  
As well wherein 'tis precious of itself  
As in the prizer. 'Tis mad idolatry  
To make the service greater than the god;  
And the will dotes that is attributive  
To what infectiously itself affects,  
Without some image of the affected merit. 60

*Tro.* I take to-day a wife, and my election  
Is led on in the conduct of my will;  
My will enkindled by mine eyes and ears,  
Two traded pilots 'twixt the dangerous shores  
Of will and judgement: how may I avoid,  
Although my will distaste what it elected,  
The wife I chose? there can be no evasion  
To blench from this and to stand firm by honour.  
We turn not back the silks upon the merchant,  
When we have soil'd them, nor the remainder  
viands 70

We do not throw in unrespective sieve,  
Because we now are full. It was thought meet  
Paris should do some vengeance on the Greeks.  
Your breath of full consent bellied his sails;  
The seas and winds, old wranglers, took a truce  
And did him service; he touch'd the ports desired,  
And for an old aunt whom the Greeks held cap-  
tive,

He brought a Grecian queen, whose youth and  
freshness

Wrinkles Apollo's, and makes stale the morning.  
Why keep we her? the Grecians keep our aunt.

Is she worth keeping? why, she is a pearl, 81  
Whose price hath launch'd above a thousand  
ships,

And turn'd crown'd kings to merchants.  
If you'll avouch 'twas wisdom Paris went—  
As you must needs, for you all cried "Go, go"—  
If you'll confess he brought home noble prize—  
As you must needs, for you all clapp'd your  
hands,

And cried "Inestimable!"—why do you now  
The issue of your proper wisdoms rate,  
And do a deed that fortune never did, 90  
Beggard the estimation which you priz'd  
Richer than sea and land? O, theft most base,  
That we have stol'n what we do fear to keep!  
But, thieves, unworthy of a thing so stol'n,  
That in their country did them that disgrace,  
We fear to warrant in our native place!

*Cas.* [*Within*] Cry, Trojans, cry!  
*Pri.* What noise? what shriek is this?

*Tro.* 'Tis our mad sister, I do know her voice.

*Cas.* [*Within*] Cry, Trojans!  
*Hect.* It is Cassandra. 100

*Enter CASSANDRA, raving.*

*Cas.* Cry, Trojans, cry! lend me ten thousand  
eyes,

And I will fill them with prophetic tears.

*Hect.* Peace, sister, peace!

*Cas.* Virgins and boys, mid-age and wrinkled  
eld,

Soft infancy, that nothing canst but cry,  
Add to my clamours! let us pay betimes  
A moiety of that mass of moan to come.  
Cry, Trojans, cry! practise your eyes with tears!  
Troy must not be, nor goodly Ilion stand;  
Our firebrand brother, Paris, burns us all. 110

Cry, Trojans, cry! a Helen and a woe:  
Cry, cry! Troy burns, or else let Helen go. [*Exit.*

*Hect.* Now, youthful Troilus, do not these high  
strains

Of divination in our sister work

Some touches of remorse? or is your blood

So madly hot that no discourse of reason,

No fear of bad success in a bad cause,

Can qualify the same?

*Tro.* Why, brother Hector,  
We may not think the justness of each act  
Such and no other than event doth form it, 120  
Nor once deject the courage of our minds,  
Because Cassandra's mad. Her brain-sick rap-  
tures

Cannot distaste the goodness of a quarrel  
Which hath our several honours all engaged  
To make it gracious. For my private part,  
I am no more touch'd than all Priam's sons;



And Jove forbid there should be done amongst us  
Such things as might offend the weakest spleen  
To fight for and maintain!

*Par.* Else might the world convince of levity  
As well my undertakings as your counsels; 131  
But I attest the gods, your full consent  
Gave wings to my propension and cut off  
All fears attending on so dire a project.  
For what, alas, can these my single arms?  
What propugnation is in one man's valour,  
To stand the push and enmity of those  
This quarrel would excite? Yet, I protest,  
Were I alone to pass the difficulties  
And had as ample power as I have will, 140  
Paris should ne'er retract what he hath done,  
Nor faint in the pursuit.

*Pri.* Paris, you speak  
Like one besotted on your sweet delights.  
You have the honey still, but these the gall;  
So to be valiant is no praise at all.

*Par.* Sir, I propose not merely to myself  
The pleasures such a beauty brings with it;  
But I would have the soil of her fair rape  
Wiped off, in honourable keeping her.  
What treason were it to the ransack'd queen, 150  
Disgrace to your great worths and shame to me,  
Now to deliver her possession up  
On terms of base compulsion! Can it be  
That so degenerate a strain as this  
Should once set footing in your generous bosoms?  
There's not the meanest spirit on our party  
Without a heart to dare or sword to draw  
When Helen is defended, nor none so noble  
Whose life were ill bestow'd or death unfamed  
Where Helen is the subject; then, I say, 160  
Well may we fight for her whom, we know well,  
The world's large spaces cannot parallel.

*Hect.* Paris and Troilus, you have both said  
well,

And on the cause and question now in hand  
Have glozed, but superficially; not much  
Unlike young men, whom Aristotle thought  
Unfit to hear moral philosophy.  
The reasons you allege do more conduce  
To the hot passion of distemper'd blood  
Than to make up a free determination 170  
'Twixt right and wrong, for pleasure and revenge  
Have ears more deaf than adders to the voice  
Of any true decision. Nature craves  
All dues be render'd to their owners. Now,  
What nearer debt in all humanity  
Than wife is to the husband? If this law  
Of nature be corrupted through affection,  
And that great minds, of partial indulgence  
To their benumbed wills, resist the same,  
There is a law in each well-order'd nation 180

To curb those raging appetites that are  
Most disobedient and refractory.  
If Helen then be wife to Sparta's king,  
As it is known she is, these moral laws  
Of nature and of nations speak aloud  
To have her back return'd. Thus to persist  
In doing wrong extenuates not wrong,  
But makes it much more heavy. Hector's opinion  
Is this in way of truth; yet ne'ertheless,  
My spritely brethren, I propend to you 190  
In resolution to keep Helen still,  
For 'tis a cause that hath no mean dependance  
Upon our joint and several dignities.

*Tro.* Why, there you touch'd the life of our  
design.

Were it not glory that we more affected  
Than the performance of our heaving spleens,  
I would not wish a drop of Trojan blood  
Spent more in her defence. But, worthy Hector,  
She is a theme of honour and renown,  
A spur to valiant and magnanimous deeds, 200  
Whose present courage may beat down our foes,  
And fame in time to come canonize us;  
For, I presume, brave Hector would not lose  
So rich advantage of a promised glory  
As smiles upon the forehead of this action  
For the wide world's revenue.

*Hect.* I am yours,  
You valiant offspring of great Priamus.  
I have a roisting challenge sent amongst  
The dull and factious nobles of the Greeks  
Will strike amazement to their drowsy spirits. 210  
I was advertised their great general slept,  
Whilst emulation in the army crept.  
This, I presume, will wake him. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *The Grecian camp: before Achilles'  
tent*

*Enter THERSITES, solus.*

*Ther.* How now, Thersites! what, lost in the  
labyrinth of thy fury! Shall the elephant Ajax  
carry it thus? he beats me, and I rail at him.  
O, worthy satisfaction! would it were otherwise;  
that I could beat him, whilst he railed at me.  
'Sfoot, I'll learn to conjure and raise devils, but  
I'll see some issue of my spiteful execrations.  
Then there's Achilles, a rare engineer! If Troy  
be not taken till these two undermine it, the  
walls will stand till they fall of themselves. O  
thou great thunder-darter of Olympus, forget  
that thou art Jove, the king of gods, and, Mer-  
cury, lose all the serpentine craft of thy caduceus,  
if ye take not that little little less than little wit  
from them that they have! which short-armed  
ignorance itself knows is so abundant scarce, it  
will not in circumvention deliver a fly from a

spider, without drawing their massy irons and cutting the web. After this, the vengeance on the whole camp! or rather, the bone-ache! for that, methinks, is the curse dependent on those that war for a placket. I have said my prayers and devil Envy say Amen. What ho! my Lord Achilles!

*Enter PATROCLUS.*

*Patr.* Who's there? Thersites! Good Thersites, come in and rail.

*Ther.* If I could have remembered a guilt counterfeited, thou wouldst not have slipped out of my contemplation. But it is no matter; thyself upon thyself! The common curse of mankind, folly and ignorance, be thine in great revenue! Heaven bless thee from a tutor, and discipline come not near thee! Let thy blood be thy direction till thy death! then if she that lays thee out says thou art a fair corse, I'll be sworn and sworn upon't she never shrouded any but lazars. Amen. Where's Achilles?

*Patr.* What, art thou devout? wast thou in prayer?

*Ther. Ay.* The heavens hear me! 40

*Enter ACHILLES.*

*Achil.* Who's there?

*Patr.* Thersites, my lord.

*Achil.* Where, where? Art thou come? why, my cheese, my digestion, why hast thou not served thyself in to my table so many meals? Come, what's Agamemnon?

*Ther.* Thy commander, Achilles. Then tell me, Patroclus, what's Achilles?

*Patr.* Thy lord, Thersites. Then tell me, I pray thee, what's thyself? 50

*Ther.* Thy knower, Patroclus. Then tell me, Patroclus, what art thou?

*Patr.* Thou mayst tell that knowest.

*Achil.* O, tell, tell.

*Ther.* I'll decline the whole question. Agamemnon commands Achilles; Achilles is my lord; I am Patroclus' knower, and Patroclus is a fool.

*Patr.* You rascal!

*Ther.* Peace, fool! I have not done. 60

*Achil.* He is a privileged man. Proceed, Thersites.

*Ther.* Agamemnon is a fool; Achilles is a fool; Thersites is a fool, and, as aforesaid, Patroclus is a fool.

*Achil.* Derive this; come.

*Ther.* Agamemnon is a fool to offer to command Achilles; Achilles is a fool to be commanded of Agamemnon; Thersites is a fool to

serve such a fool, and Patroclus is a fool positive.

*Patr.* Why am I a fool? 71

*Ther.* Make that demand of the prover. It suffices me thou art. Look you, who comes here?

*Achil.* Patroclus, I'll speak with nobody. Come in with me, Thersites. *[Exit.]*

*Ther.* Here is such patchery, such juggling and such knavery! All the argument is a cuckold and a whore; a good quarrel to draw emulous factions and bleed to death upon. Now, the dry serpigo on the subject! and war and lechery confound all! *[Exit.]*

*Enter AGAMEMNON, ULYSSES, NESTOR, DIOMEDES, and AJAX.*

*Agam.* Where is Achilles?

*Patr.* Within his tent; but ill disposed, my lord.

*Agam.* Let it be known to him that we are here

He shent our messengers; and we lay by Our appertainments, visiting of him.

Let him be told so, lest perchance he think

We dare not move the question of our place, 89 Or know not what we are.

*Patr.* I shall say so to him. *[Exit.]*

*Ulyss.* We saw him at the opening of his tent. He is not sick.

*Ajax.* Yes, lion-sick, sick of proud heart. You may call it melancholy, if you will favour the may; but, by my head, 'tis pride. But why, why? let him show us the cause. A word, my lord.

*[Takes AGAMEMNON aside.]*

*Nest.* What moves Ajax thus to bay at him?

*Ulyss.* Achilles hath inveigled his fool from him. 100

*Nest.* Who, Thersites?

*Ulyss.* He.

*Nest.* Then will Ajax lack matter, if he have lost his argument.

*Ulyss.* No, you see, he is his argument that has his argument, Achilles.

*Nest.* All the better; their fraction is more our wish than their faction. But it was a strong composition a fool could disunite.

*Ulyss.* The amity that wisdom knits not, folly may easily untie. Here comes Patroclus. 111

*Re-enter PATROCLUS.*

*Nest.* No Achilles with him.

*Ulyss.* The elephant hath joints, but none for courtesy. His legs are legs for necessity, not for flexure.

*Patr.* Achilles bids me say, he is much sorry, If any thing more than your sport and pleasure Did move your greatness and this noble state To call upon him; he hopes it is no other



But for your health and your digestion sake, 120  
An after-dinner's breath.

*Agam.* Hear you, Patroclus.  
We are too well acquainted with these answers;  
But his evasion, wing'd thus swift with scorn,  
Cannot outfly our apprehensions.  
Much attribute he hath, and much the reason  
Why we ascribe it to him; yet all his virtues,  
Not virtuously on his own part beheld,  
Do in our eyes begin to lose their gloss,  
Yea, like fair fruit in an unwholesome dish,  
Are like to rot untasted. Go and tell him 130  
We come to speak with him; and you shall not  
sin,

If you do say we think him over-proud  
And under-honest, in self-assumption greater  
Than in the note of judgement; and worthier than  
himself

Here tend the savage strangeness he puts on,  
Disguise the holy strength of their command,  
And underwrite in an observing kind  
His humorous predominance; yea, watch  
His pettish lunes, his ebbs, his flows, as if  
The passage and whole carriage of this  
action 140

Rode on his tide. Go tell him this, and add,  
That if he overhold his price so much,  
We'll none of him; but let him, like an engine  
Not portable, lie under this report:  
"Bring action hither, this cannot go to war."  
A stirring dwarf we do allowance give  
Before a sleeping giant. Tell him so.

*Patr.* I shall; and bring his answer presently.  
[*Exit.*]

*Agam.* In second voice we'll not be satisfied;  
We come to speak with him. Ulysses, enter you.  
[*Exit* ULYSSES.]

*Ajax.* What is he more than another? 151

*Agam.* No more than what he thinks he is.

*Ajax.* Is he so much? Do you not think he  
thinks himself a better man than I am?

*Agam.* No question.

*Ajax.* Will you subscribe his thought, and say  
he is?

*Agam.* No, noble Ajax; you are as strong, as  
valiant, as wise, no less noble, much more  
gentle, and altogether more tractable. 160

*Ajax.* Why should a man be proud? How doth  
pride grow? I know not what pride is.

*Agam.* Your mind is the clearer, Ajax, and  
your virtues the fairer. He that is proud eats up  
himself; pride is his own glass, his own trumpet,  
his own chronicle; and whatever praises itself  
but in the deed, devours the deed in the praise.

*Ajax.* I do hate a proud man, as I hate the en-  
gendering of toads. 170

*Nest.* [*Aside.*] Yet he loves himself. Is't not  
strange?

*Re-enter* ULYSSES.

*Ulysses.* Achilles will not to the field tomorrow.

*Agam.* What's his excuse?

*Ulyss.* He doth rely on none,  
But carries on the stream of his dispose  
Without observance or respect of any,  
In will peculiar and in self-admission.

*Agam.* Why will he not upon our fair re-  
quest

Untent his person and share the air with us?

*Ulyss.* Things small as nothing, for request's  
sake only,

He makes important. Possess'd he is with great-  
ness, 180

And speaks not to himself but with a pride  
That quarrels at self-breath. Imagined worth  
Holds in his blood such swoln and hot discourse  
That 'twixt his mental and his active parts  
Kingdom'd Achilles in commotion rages  
And batters down himself. What should I say?  
He is so plaguy proud that the death-tokens  
of it

Cry "No recovery."

*Agam.* Let Ajax go to him.

Dear lord, go you and greet him in his tent.  
'Tis said he holds you well, and will be led 190  
At your request a little from himself.

*Ulyss.* O Agamemnon, let it not be so!  
We'll consecrate the steps that Ajax makes  
When they go from Achilles. Shall the proud  
lord

That bastes his arrogance with his own seam  
And never suffers matter of the world  
Enter his thoughts, save such as do revolve  
And ruminate himself, shall he be worshipp'd  
Of that we hold an idol more than he?  
No, this thrice worthy and right valiant lord 200  
Must not so stale his palm, nobly acquired;  
Nor, by my will, assubjugate his merit,  
As amply titled as Achilles is,  
By going to Achilles.  
That were to enlard his fat already pride  
And add more coals to Cancer when he burns  
With entertaining great Hyperion.  
This lord go to him! Jupiter forbid,  
And say in thunder "Achilles go to him."

*Nest.* [*Aside to* DIOMEDES.] O, this is well; he  
rubs the vein of him. 210

*Dio.* [*Aside to* NESTOR.] And how his silence  
drinks up this applause!

*Ajax.* If I go to him, with my armed fist  
I'll pash him o'er the face.

*Agam.* O, no, you shall not go.

*Ajax.* An a' be proud with me, I'll pheeze his pride.

Let me go to him.

*Ulyss.* Not for the worth that hangs upon our quarrel.

*Ajax.* A paltry, insolent fellow!

*Nest.* [*Aside.*] How he describes himself!

*Ajax.* Can he not be sociable? 220

*Ulyss.* [*Aside.*] The raven chides blackness.

*Ajax.* I'll let his humours blood.

*Agam.* [*Aside.*] He will be the physician that should be the patient.

*Ajax.* An all men were o' my mind—

*Ulyss.* [*Aside.*] Wit would be out of fashion.

*Ajax.* A' should not bear it so, a' should eat swords first. Shall pride carry it?

*Nest.* [*Aside.*] An 'twould, you'd carry half.

*Ulyss.* [*Aside.*] A' would have ten shares. 230

*Ajax.* I will knead him; I'll make him supple.

*Nest.* [*Aside.*] He's not yet through warm. Force him with praises. Pour in, pour in; his ambition is dry.

*Ulyss.* [*To AGAMEMNON.*] My lord, you feed too much on this dislike.

*Nest.* Our noble general, do not do so.

*Dio.* You must prepare to fight without Achilles.

*Ulyss.* Why, 'tis this naming of him does him harm.

Here is a man—but 'tis before his face; 240  
I will be silent.

*Nest.* Wherefore should you so?

He is not emulous, as Achilles is.

*Ulyss.* Know the whole world, he is as valiant.

*Ajax.* A whoreson dog, that shall palter thus with us!

Would he were a Trojan!

*Nest.* What a vice were it in Ajax now—

*Ulyss.* If he were proud—

*Dio.* Or covetous of praise—

*Ulyss.* Ay, or surly borne—

*Dio.* Or strange, or self-affected! 250

*Ulyss.* Thank the heavens, lord, thou art of sweet composure;

Praise him that got thee, she that gave thee suck.

Famed be thy tutor, and thy parts of nature

Thrice famed, beyond all erudition.

But he that disciplined thy arms to fight,

Let Mars divide eternity in twain,

And give him half; and, for thy vigour,

Bull-bearing Milo his addition yield

To sinewy Ajax. I will not praise thy wisdom,

Which, like a bourn, a pale, a shore, confines 260

Thy spacious and dilated parts. Here's Nestor;

Instructed by the antiquary times,

He must, he is, he cannot but be wise.

But pardon, father Nestor, were your days  
As green as Ajax' and your brain so temper'd,  
You should not have the eminence of him,  
But be as Ajax.

*Ajax.* Shall I call you father?

*Nest.* Ay, my good son.

*Dio.* Be ruled by him, Lord Ajax.

*Ulyss.* There is no tarrying here; the hart  
Achilles

Keeps thicket. Please it our great general 270

To call together all his state of war;

Fresh kings are come to Troy; to-morrow

We must with all our main of power stand fast;

And here's a lord—come knights from east to  
west,

And cull their flower, Ajax shall cope the best.

*Agam.* Go we to council. Let Achilles sleep:

Light boats sail swift, though greater hulks draw  
deep. *Exeunt.*

### ACT III

#### SCENE I. *Troy: Priam's palace*

*Enter a SERVANT and PANDARUS.*

*Pan.* Friend, you! pray you, a word. Do not  
you follow the young Lord Paris?

*Serv.* Ay, sir, when he goes before me.

*Pan.* You depend upon him, I mean?

*Serv.* Sir, I do depend upon the lord.

*Pan.* You depend upon a noble gentleman; I  
must needs praise him.

*Serv.* The lord be praised!

*Pan.* You know me, do you not?

*Serv.* Faith, sir, superficially. 10

*Pan.* Friend, know me better; I am the Lord  
Pandarus.

*Serv.* I hope I shall know your honour better.

*Pan.* I do desire it.

*Serv.* You are in the state of grace.

*Pan.* Grace! not so, friend; honour and lord-  
ship are my titles. [*Music within.*] What music  
is this?

*Serv.* I do but partly know, sir. It is music in  
parts. 20

*Pan.* Know you the musicians?

*Serv.* Wholly, sir.

*Pan.* Who play they to?

*Serv.* To the hearers, sir.

*Pan.* At whose pleasure, friend?

*Serv.* At mine, sir, and theirs that love music.

*Pan.* Command, I mean, friend.

*Serv.* Who shall I command, sir?

*Pan.* Friend, we understand not one another;  
I am too courtly and thou art too cunning. At  
whose request do these men play? 31

*Serv.* That's to't indeed, sir. Marry, sir, at the



request of Paris my lord, who's there in person; with him, the mortal Venus, the heart-blood of beauty, love's invisible soul—

*Pan.* Who, my cousin Cressida?

*Serv.* No, sir, Helen. Could you not find out that by her attributes?

*Pan.* It should seem, fellow, that thou hast not seen the Lady Cressida. I come to speak with Paris from the Prince Troilus. I will make a complimentary assault upon him, for my business seethes.

*Serv.* Sudden business! there's a stewed phrase indeed!

*Enter PARIS and HELEN, attended.*

*Pan.* Fair be to you, my lord, and to all this fair company! fair desires, in all fair measure fairly guide them! especially to you, fair queen fair thoughts be your fair pillow! 49

*Helen.* Dear lord, you are full of fair words.

*Pan.* You speak your fair pleasure, sweet queen. Fair prince here is good broken music.

*Par.* You have broke it, cousin, and, by my life, you shall make it whole again; you shall piece it out with a piece of your performance. Nell, he is full of harmony.

*Pan.* Truly, lady, no.

*Helen.* O, sir—

*Pan.* Rude, in sooth; in good sooth, very rude. 60

*Par.* Well said, my lord! well, you say so in fits.

*Pan.* I have business to my lord, dear queen.

My lord, will you vouchsafe me a word?

*Helen.* Nay, this shall not hedge us out. We'll hear you sing, certainly.

*Pan.* Well, sweet queen, you are pleasant with me. But, marry, thus, my lord: my dear lord and most esteemed friend, your brother Troilus— 70

*Helen.* My Lord Pandarus; honey-sweet lord—

*Pan.* Go to, sweet queen, go to!—commends himself most affectionately to you—

*Helen.* You shall not bob us out of our melody. If you do, our melancholy upon your head!

*Pan.* Sweet queen, sweet queen! that's a sweet queen, i' faith.

*Helen.* And to make a sweet lady sad is a sour offence. 80

*Pan.* Nay, that shall not serve your turn; that shall it not, in truth, la. Nay, I care not for such words; no, no. And, my lord, he desires you, that if the King call for him at supper, you will make his excuse.

*Helen.* My Lord Pandarus—

*Pan.* What says my sweet queen, my very sweet queen?

*Par.* What exploit's in hand? where sups he to-night? 90

*Helen.* Nay, but, my lord—

*Pan.* What says my sweet queen? My cousin will fall out with you. You must not know where he sups.

*Par.* I'll lay my life, with my disposer Cressida.

*Pan.* No, no, no such matter; you are wide. Come, your disposer is sick.

*Par.* Well, I'll make excuse.

*Pan.* Ay, good my lord. Why should you say Cressida? no, your poor disposer's sick. 101

*Par.* I spy.

*Pan.* You spy! what do you spy? Come, give me an instrument. Now, sweet queen.

*Helen.* Why, this is kindly done.

*Pan.* My niece is horribly in love with a thing you have, sweet queen.

*Helen.* She shall have it, my lord, if it be not my lord Paris.

*Pan.* He! no, she'll none of him; they two are twain. 111

*Helen.* Falling in, after falling out, may make them three.

*Pan.* Come, come, I'll hear no more of this; I'll sing you a song now.

*Helen.* Ay, ay, prithee now. By my troth, sweet lord, thou hast a fine forehead.

*Pan.* Ay, you may, you may.

*Helen.* Let thy song be love. This love will undo us all. O Cupid, Cupid, Cupid! 120

*Pan.* Love! ay, that it shall, i' faith.

*Par.* Ay, good now, love, love, nothing but love.

*Pan.* In good troth, it begins so.

[Sings.] "Love, love, nothing but love, still more!

For, O, love's bow

Shoots buck and doe.

The shaft confounds,

Not that it wounds,

But tickles still the sore. 130

These lovers cry Oh! oh! they die!

Yet that which seems the wound to kill,

Doth turn oh! oh! to ha! ha! he!

So dying love lives still.

Oh! oh! a while, but ha! ha! ha!

Oh! oh! groans out for ha! ha! ha!

Heigh-ho!

*Helen.* In love, i' faith, to the very tip of the nose. 139

*Par.* He eats nothing but doves, love, and that breeds hot blood, and hot blood begets hot

thoughts, and hot thoughts beget hot deeds, and hot deeds is love.

*Pan.* Is this the generation of love? hot blood, hot thoughts, and hot deeds? Why, they are vipers. Is love a generation of vipers? Sweet lord, who's a-field to-day?

*Par.* Hector, Deiphobus, Helenus, Antenor, and all the gallantry of Troy. I would fain have armed to-day, but my Nell would not have it so. How chance my brother Troilus went not? 151

*Helen.* He hangs the lip at something. You know all, Lord Pandarus.

*Pan.* Not I, honey-sweet queen. I long to hear how they sped to-day. You'll remember your brother's excuse?

*Par.* To a hair.

*Pan.* Farewell, sweet queen.

*Helen.* Commend me to your niece.

*Pan.* I will, sweet queen. [Exit. 160  
A retreat sounded.

*Par.* They're come from field. Let us to Priam's hall,

To greet the warriors. Sweet Helen, I must woo you

To help unarm our Hector. His stubborn buckles, With these your white enchanting fingers touch'd,

Shall more obey than to the edge of steel Or force of Greekish sinews; you shall do more Than all the island kings—disarm great Hector.

*Helen.* 'Twill make us proud to be his servant, Paris;

Yea, what he shall receive of us in duty Gives us more palm in beauty than we have, 170  
Yea, overshines ourself.

*Par.* Sweet, above thought I love thee. [Exeunt.

SCENE II. *The same: Pandarus' orchard*

*Enter PANDARUS and TROILUS' BOY, meeting.*

*Pan.* How now! where's thy master? at my cousin Cressida's?

*Boy.* No, sir; he stays for you to conduct him thither.

*Pan.* O, here he comes.

*Enter TROILUS.*

How now, how now!

*Tro.* Sirrah, walk off. [Exit BOY.

*Pan.* Have you seen my cousin?

*Tro.* No, Pandarus. I stalk about her door, Like a strange soul upon the Stygian banks 10  
Staying for waftage. O, be thou my Charon, And give me swift transportation to those fields Where I may wallow in the lily-beds Proposed for the deserter! O gentle Pandarus, From Cupid's shoulder pluck his painted wings,

And fly with me to Cressid!

*Pan.* Walk here i' the orchard, I'll bring her straight. [Exit.

*Tro.* I am giddy; expectation whirls me round. The imaginary relish is so sweet 20  
That it enchants my sense. What will it be, When that the watery palate tastes indeed Love's thrice repured nectar? death, I fear me, Swooning destruction, or some joy too fine, Too subtle-potent, tuned too sharp in sweetness, For the capacity of my ruder powers. I fear it much; and I do fear besides, That I shall lose distinction in my joys; As doth a battle, when they charge on heaps The enemy flying. 30

*Re-enter PANDARUS.*

*Pan.* She's making her ready, she'll come straight. You must be witty now. She does so blush, and fetches her wind so short, as if she were frayed with a sprite. I'll fetch her. It is the prettiest villain; she fetches her breath as short as a new-ta'en sparrow. [Exit.

*Tro.* Even such a passion doth embrace my bosom.

My heart beats thicker than a feverous pulse; And all my powers do their bestowing lose, Like vassalage at unawares encountering 40  
The eye of majesty.

*Re-enter PANDARUS with CRESSIDA.*

*Pan.* Come, come, what need you blush? shame's a baby. Here she is now; swear the oaths now to her that you have sworn to me. What, are you gone again? you must be watched ere you be made tame, must you? Come your ways, come your ways; an you draw backward, we'll put you i' the fills. Why do you not speak to her? Come, draw this curtain, and let's see your picture. Alas the day, how loath you are to offend daylight! an 'twere dark, you'd close sooner. So, so; rub on, and kiss the mistress. How now! a kiss in fee-farm! build there, carpenter; the air is sweet. Nay, you shall fight your hearts out ere I part you. The falcon as the tercel, for all the ducks i' the river. Go to, go to.

*Tro.* You have bereft me of all words, lady.

*Pan.* Words pay no debts, give her deeds; but she'll bereave you o' the deeds too, if she call your activity in question. What, billing again? Here's "In witness whereof the parties interchangeably"—Come in, come in. I'll go get a fire. [Exit.

*Cres.* Will you walk in, my lord?

*Tro.* O Cressida, how often have I wished me thus!



*Cres.* Wished, my lord! The gods grant—  
O my lord!

*Tro.* What should they grant? what makes this pretty abruption? What too curious dreg espies my sweet lady in the fountain of our love?

*Cres.* More dregs than water, if my fears have eyes.

*Tro.* Fears make devils of cherubins; they never see truly.

*Cres.* Blind fear, that seeing reason leads, finds safer footing than blind reason stumbling without fear. To fear the worst oft cures the worse.

*Tro.* O, let my lady apprehend no fear; in all Cupid's pageant there is presented no monster. *81*

*Cres.* Nor nothing monstrous neither?

*Tro.* Nothing, but our undertakings; when we vow to weep seas, live in fire, eat rocks, tame tigers; thinking it harder for our mistress to devise imposition enough than for us to undergo any difficulty imposed. This is the monstruosity in love, lady, that the will is infinite and the execution confined, that the desire is boundless and the act a slave to limit. *90*

*Cres.* They say all lovers swear more performance than they are able and yet reserve an ability that they never perform, vowing more than the perfection of ten and discharging less than the tenth part of one. They that have the voice of lions and the act of hares, are they not monsters?

*Tro.* Are there such? such are not we. Praise us as we are tasted, allow us as we prove; our head shall go bare till merit crown it. No perfection in reversion shall have a praise in present; we will not name desert before his birth, and, being born, his addition shall be humble. Few words to fair faith. Troilus shall be such to Cressid as what envy can say worst shall be a mock for his truth, and what truth can speak truest not truer than Troilus.

*Cres.* Will you walk in, my lord?

*Re-enter PANDARUS.*

*Pan.* What, blushing still? have you not done talking yet. *109*

*Cres.* Well, uncle, what folly I commit, I dedicate to you.

*Pan.* I thank you for that; if my lord get a boy of you, you'll give him me. Be true to my lord; if he flinch, chide me for it.

*Tro.* You know now your hostages; your uncle's word and my firm faith.

*Pan.* Nay, I'll give my word for her too. Our kindred, though they be long ere they are wooed, they are constant being won. They are burs, I can tell you; they'll stick where they are thrown.

*Cres.* Boldness comes to me now, and brings me heart. *121*

Prince Troilus, I have loved you night and day For many weary months.

*Tro.* Why was my Cressid then so hard to win?

*Cres.* Hard to seem won; but I was won, my lord,

With the first glance that ever—pardon me—  
If I confess much, you will play the tyrant.

I love you now; but not, till now, so much

But I might master it. In faith, I lie; *129*

My thoughts were like unbridled children, grown Too headstrong for their mother. See, we fools!

Why have I blabb'd? who shall be true to us,

When we are so unsecret to ourselves?

But, though I loved you well I woo'd you not;

And yet, good faith, I wish'd myself a man,

Or that we women had men's privilege

Of speaking first. Sweet, bid me hold my tongue,  
For in this rapture I shall surely speak

The thing I shall repent. See, see, your silence,

Cunning in dumbness, from my weakness draws

My very soul of counsel! stop my mouth. *141*

*Tro.* And shall, albeit sweet music issues thence.

*Pan.* Pretty, i' faith.

*Cres.* My lord, I do beseech you, pardon me;

'Twas not my purpose, thus to beg a kiss.

I am ashamed. O heavens! what have I done?

For this time will I take my leave, my lord.

*Tro.* Your leave, sweet Cressid!

*Pan.* Leave! an you take leave till to-morrow morning— *150*

*Cres.* Pray you, content you.

*Tro.* What offends you, lady?

*Cres.* Sir, mine own company.

*Tro.* You cannot shun

Yourself.

*Cres.* Let me go and try.

I have a kind of self resides with you;

But an unkind self, that itself will leave,

To be another's fool. I would be gone.

Where is my wit? I know not what I speak.

*Tro.* Well know they what they speak that speak so wisely.

*Cres.* Perchance, my lord, I show more craft than love; *160*

And fell so roundly to a large confession,

To angle for your thoughts. But you are wise,

Or else you love not, for to be wise and love

Exceeds man's might; that dwells with gods above.

*Tro.* O that I thought it could be in a woman—

As, if it can, I will presume in you—

To feed for aye her lamp and flames of love;

To keep her constancy in plight and youth,

Outliving beauty's outward, with a mind  
 That doth renew swifter then blood decays! 170  
 Or that persuasion could but thus convince me,  
 That my integrity and truth to you  
 Might be affronted with the match and weight  
 Of such a winnow'd purity in love;  
 How were I then uplifted! but, alas!  
 I am as true as truth's simplicity  
 And simpler than the infancy of truth.

*Cres.* In that I'll war with you.

*Tro.* O virtuous fight,  
 When right with right wars who shall be most  
 right! 179

True swains in love shall in the world to come  
 Approve their truths by Troilus. When their  
 rhymes,

Full of protest, of oath and big compare,  
 Want smiles, truth tired with iteration,  
 As true as steel, as plantage to the moon,  
 As sun to day, as turtle to her mate,  
 As iron to adamant, as earth to the centre,  
 Yet, after all comparisons of truth,  
 As truth's authentic author to be cited,  
 "As true as Troilus" shall crown up the verse,  
 And sanctify the numbers.

*Cres.* Prophet may you be! 190

If I be false, or swerve a hair from truth,  
 When time is old and hath forgot itself,  
 When waterdrops have worn the stones of Troy,  
 And blind oblivion swallow'd cities up,  
 And mighty states characterless are grated  
 To dusty nothing, yet let memory,  
 From false to false, among false maids in love,  
 Upbraid my falsehood! when they've said "as  
 false

As air, as water, wind, or sandy earth,  
 As fox to lamb, as wolf to heifer's calf, 200  
 Pard to the hind, or stepdame to her son,"  
 "Yea," let them say, to stick the heart of false-  
 hood,

"As false as Cressid."

*Pan.* Go to, a bargain made. Seal it, seal it; I'll  
 be the witness. Here I hold your hand, here  
 my cousin's. If ever you prove false one to an-  
 other, since I have taken such pains to bring you  
 together, let all pitiful goers-between be called to  
 the world's end after my name; call them all  
 Pandars; let all constant men be Troiluses, all  
 false women Cressids, and all brokers-between  
 Pandars! say, amen.

*Tro.* Amen.

*Cres.* Amen.

*Pan.* Amen. Whereupon I will show you a  
 chamber with a bed; which bed, because it shall  
 not speak of your pretty encounters, press it to  
 death. Away!

And Cupid grant all tongue-tied maidens here  
 Bed, chamber, Pandar to provide this gear! 220  
 [Exeunt.]

SCENE III. *The Grecian camp: before Achilles' tent*

*Enter* AGAMEMNON, ULYSSES, DIOMEDES, NESTOR,  
 AJAX, MENELAUS, and CALCHAS.

*Cal.* Now, princes, for the service I have done  
 you,

The advantage of the time prompts me aloud  
 To call for recompense. Appear it to your mind  
 That, through the sight I bear in things to love,  
 I have abandon'd Troy, left my possession,  
 Incurr'd a traitor's name; exposed myself,  
 From certain and possess'd conveniences,  
 To doubtful fortunes; sequestering from me all  
 That time, acquaintance, custom, and condition  
 Made tame and most familiar to my nature, 10  
 And here, to do you service, am become  
 As new into the world, strange, unacquainted.  
 I do beseech you, as in way of taste,  
 To give me now a little benefit,  
 Out of those many register'd in promise,  
 Which, you say, live to come in my behalf.

*Agam.* What wouldst thou of us, Trojan?  
 make demand.

*Cal.* You have a Trojan prisoner, call'd An-  
 tenor,

Yesterday took. Troy holds him very dear.  
 Oft have you—often have you thanks therefore—  
 Desired my Cressid in right great exchange, 21  
 Whom Troy hath still denied. But this Antenor,  
 I know, is such a wrest in their affairs  
 That their negotiations all must slack,  
 Wanting his manage; and they will almost  
 Give us a prince of blood, a son of Priam,  
 In change of him. Let him be sent, great princes,  
 And he shall buy my daughter; and her presence  
 Shall quite strike off all service I have done,  
 In most accepted pain.

*Agam.* Let Diomedes bear him, 30

And bring us Cressid hither. Calchas shall have  
 What he requests of us. Good Diomed,  
 Furnish you fairly for this interchange.  
 Withal bring word if Hector will to-morrow  
 Be answer'd in his challenge. Ajax is ready.

*Dio.* This shall I undertake; and 'tis a burden  
 Which I am proud to bear.

[Exeunt DIOMEDES and CALCHAS.]

*Enter* ACHILLES and PATROCLUS, before their tent.

*Ulyss.* Achilles stands i' the entrance of his  
 tent.

Please it our general to pass strangely by him,  
 As if he were forgot; and, princes all, 40  
 Lay negligent and loose regard upon him.



I will come last. 'Tis like he'll question me  
 Why such unplausive eyes are bent on him.  
 If so, I have derision medicinable,  
 To use between your strangeness and his pride,  
 Which his own will shall have desire to drink.  
 It may do good; pride hath no other glass  
 To show itself but pride, for supple knees  
 Feed arrogance and are the proud man's fees.

*Agam.* We'll execute your purpose, and put on  
 A form of strangeness as we pass along; 51  
 So do each lord, and either greet him not,  
 Or else disdainfully, which shall shake him more  
 Than if not look'd on. I will lead the way.

*Achil.* What, comes the general to speak with me?

You know my mind, I'll fight no more 'gainst Troy.

*Agam.* What says Achilles? would he aught with us?

*Nest.* Would you, my lord, aught with the general?

*Achil.* No.

*Nest.* Nothing, my lord. 60

*Agam.* The better.

[*Exeunt AGAMEMNON and NESTOR.*]

*Achil.* Good day, good day.

*Men.* How do you? how do you? [*Exit.*]

*Achil.* What, does the cuckold scorn me?

*Ajax.* How now, Patroclus!

*Achil.* Good morrow, Ajax.

*Ajax.* Ha?

*Achil.* Good morrow.

*Ajax.* Ay, and good next day too. [*Exit.*]

*Achil.* What mean these fellows? Know they not Achilles? 70

*Patr.* They pass by strangely. They were used to bend,

To send their smiles before them to Achilles;

To come as humbly as they used to creep

To holy altars.

*Achil.* What, am I poor of late?

'Tis certain, greatness, once fall'n out with fortune,

Must fall out with men too. What the declined is  
 He shall as soon read in the eyes of others

As feel in his own fall; for men, like butterflies,

Show not their mealy wings but to the summer,

And not a man, for being simply man, 80

Hath any honour, but honour for those honours

That are without him, as place, riches, favour,

Prizes of accident as oft as merit;

Which when they fall, as being slippery standers,

The love that lean'd on them as slippery too,

Do one pluck down another and together

Die in the fall. But 'tis not so with me:

Fortune and I are friends: I do enjoy

At ample point all that I did possess,  
 Save these men's looks; who do, methinks, find  
 out 90

Something not worth in me such rich beholding  
 As they have often given. Here is Ulysses;  
 I'll interrupt his reading.

How now, Ulysses!

*Ulyss.* Now, great Thetis' son!

*Achil.* What are you reading?

*Ulyss.* A strange fellow here

Writes me: "That man, how dearly ever parted,

How much in having, or without or in,

Cannot make boast to have that which he hath,

Nor feels not what he owes, but by reflection;

As when his virtues shining upon others 100

Heat them and they retort that heat again

To the first giver."

*Achil.* This is not strange, Ulysses.

The beauty that is borne here in the face

The bearer knows not, but commends itself

To other's eyes; nor doth the eye itself,

That most pure spirit of sense, behold itself,

Not going from itself; but eye to eye opposed

Salutes each other with each other's form;

For speculation turns not to itself,

Till it hath travell'd and is mirror'd there 110

Where it may see itself. This is not strange at all.

*Ulyss.* I do not strain at the position—

It is familiar—but at the author's drift;

Who, in his circumstance, expressly proves

That no man is the lord of anything,

Though in and of him there be much consisting,

Till he communicate his parts to others;

Nor doth he of himself know them for aught

Till he behold them form'd in the applause

Where they're extended; who, like an arch,

reverberates 120

The voice again, or, like a gate of steel

Fronting the sun, receives and renders back

His figure and his heat. I was much wrapt in this;

And apprehended here immediately

The unknown Ajax.

Heavens, what a man is there! a very horse,

That has he knows not what. Nature, what things

there are

Most abject in regard and dear in use!

What things again most dear in the esteem

And poor in worth! Now shall we see to-mor-

row— 130

An act that very chance doth throw upon him—

Ajax renown'd. O heavens, what some men do,

While some men leave to do!

How some men creep in skittish fortune's hall,

Whiles others play the idiots in her eyes!

How one man eats into another's pride,

While pride is fasting in his wantonness!

To see these Grecian lords!—why, even already  
They clap the lubber Ajax on the shoulder,  
As if his foot were on brave Hector's breast 140  
And great Troy shrieking.

*Achil.* I do believe it; for they pass'd by me  
As misers do by beggars, neither gave to me  
Good word nor look. What, are my deeds for-

got?  
*Ulyss.* Time hath, my lord, a wallet at his back,  
Wherein he puts alms for Oblivion,  
A great-sized monster of ingratitude:  
Those scraps are good deeds past; which are de-

vour'd  
As fast as they are made, forgot as soon  
As done. Perseverance, dear my lord, 150  
Keeps honour bright; to have done is to hang  
Quite out of fashion, like a rusty mail  
In monumental mockery. Take the instant way;  
For honour travels in a strait so narrow,  
Where one but goes abreast. Keep then the path;  
For Emulation hath a thousand sons  
That one by one pursue. If you give way,  
Or hedge aside from the direct forthright,  
Like to an enter'd tide, they all rush by  
And leave you hindmost; 160

Or, like a gallant horse fall'n in first rank,  
Lie there for pavement to the abject rear,  
O'er-run and trampled on. Then what they do in  
present,  
Though less than yours in past, must o'er-top  
yours;

For time is like a fashionable host  
That slightly shakes his parting guest by the  
hand,  
And with his arms outstretch'd, as he would fly,  
Grasps in the comer. Welcome ever smiles,  
And farewell goes out sighing. O, let not virtue  
seek

Remuneration for the thing it was; 170  
For beauty, wit,  
High birth, vigour of bone, desert in service,  
Love, friendship, charity, are subjects all  
To envious and calumniating Time.  
One touch of nature makes the whole world kin,  
That all with one consent praise new-born gawds,  
Though they are made and moulded of things  
past,

And give to dust that is a little gilt  
More laud than gilt o'er-dusted.  
The present eye praises the present object. 180  
Then marvel not, thou great and complete man,  
That all the Greeks begin to worship Ajax;  
Since things in motion sooner catch the eye  
Than what not stirs. The cry went once on thee,  
And still it might, and yet it may again,  
If thou wouldst not entomb thyself alive

And case thy reputation in thy tent;  
Whose glorious deeds, but in these fields of late,  
Made emulous missions 'mongst the gods them-  
selves  
And drave great Mars to faction.

*Achil.* Of this my privacy 190  
I have strong reasons.

*Ulyss.* But 'gainst your privacy  
The reasons are more potent and heroical.  
'Tis known, Achilles, that you are in love  
With one of Priam's daughters.

*Achil.* Ha! known!

*Ulyss.* Is that a wonder?  
The providence that's in a watchful state  
Knows almost every grain of Plutus' gold,  
Finds bottom in the uncomprehensive deeps,  
Keeps place with thought and almost, like the  
gods,

Does thoughts unveil in their dumb cradles. 200  
There is a mystery—with whom relation  
Durst never meddle—in the soul of state;  
Which hath an operation more divine  
Than breath or pen can give expressure to:  
All the commerce that you have had with Troy  
As perfectly is ours as yours, my lord;  
And better would it fit Achilles much  
To throw down Hector than Polyxena.

But it must grieve young Pyrrhus now at home,  
When fame shall in our islands sound her trump,  
And all the Greekish girls shall tripping sing, 211  
"Great Hector's sister did Achilles win,  
But our great Ajax bravely beat down him."  
Farewell, my lord. I as your lover speak;  
The fool slides o'er the ice that you should break.

[Exit.

*Patr.* To this effect, Achilles, have I moved  
you.

A woman impudent and mannish grown  
Is not more loathed than an effeminate man  
In time of action. I stand condemn'd for this;  
They think my little stomach to the war 220  
And your great love to me restrains you thus.  
Sweet, rouse yourself; and the weak wanton

Cupid  
Shall from your neck unloose his amorous fold,  
And, like a dew-drop from the lion's mane,  
Be shook to air.

*Achil.* Shall Ajax fight with Hector?

*Patr.* Ay, and perhaps receive much honour by  
him.

*Achil.* I see my reputation is at stake;  
My fame is shrewdly gored.

*Patr.* O, then, beware;  
Those wounds heal ill that men do give them-  
selves.

Omission to do what is necessary



Seals a commission to a blank of danger;  
And danger, like an ague, subtly taints  
Even then when we sit idly in the sun.

*Achil.* Go call Thersites hither, sweet Patroclus.

I'll send the fool to Ajax and desire him  
To invite the Trojan lords after the combat  
To see us here unarm'd. I have a woman's longing,  
An appetite that I am sick withal,  
To see great Hector in his weeds of peace,  
To talk with him and to behold his visage, 240  
Even to my full of view.

*Enter THERSITES.*

A labour saved!

*Ther.* A wonder!

*Achil.* What?

*Ther.* Ajax goes up and down the field, asking for himself.

*Achil.* How so?

*Ther.* He must fight singly to-morrow with Hector, and is so prophetically proud of an heroic cudgelling that he raves in saying nothing.

*Achil.* How can that be? 250

*Ther.* Why, he stalks up and down like a peacock—a stride and a stand; ruminates like an hostess that hath no arithmetic but her brain to set down her reckoning; bites his lip with a politic regard, as who should say, "There were wit in this head, an 'twould out"; and so there is, but it lies as coldly in him as fire in a flint, which will not show without knocking. The man's undone for ever; for if Hector break not his neck i' the combat, he'll break 't himself in vain-glory. He knows none. I said, "Good morrow, Ajax"; and he replies, "Thanks, Agamemnon." What think you of this man that takes me for the general? He's grown a very land-fish, languageless, a monster. A plague of opinion! a man may wear it on both sides, like a leather jerkin.

*Achil.* Thou must be my ambassador to him, Thersites.

*Ther.* Who, I? why, he'll answer nobody; he professes not answering. Speaking is for beggars; he wears his tongue in's arms. I will put on his presence; let Patroclus make demands to me, you shall see the pageant of Ajax.

*Achil.* To him, Patroclus. Tell him I humbly desire the valiant Ajax to invite the most valorous Hector to come unarmed to my tent, and to procure safe-conduct for his person of the magnanimous and most illustrious six-or-seven-times-honoured captain-general of the Grecian army, Agamemnon, et cetera. Do this. 280

*Patr.* Jove bless great Ajax!

*Ther.* Hum!

*Patr.* I come from the worthy Achilles—

*Ther.* Ha!

*Patr.* Who most humbly desires you to invite Hector to his tent—

*Ther.* Hum!

*Patr.* And to procure safe-conduct from Agamemnon.

*Ther.* Agamemnon!

290

*Patr.* Ay, my lord.

*Ther.* Ha!

*Patr.* What say you to't?

*Ther.* God b' wi' you, with all my heart.

*Patr.* Your answer, sir.

*Ther.* If to-morrow be a fair day, by eleven o'clock it will go one way or other. Howsoever, he shall pay for me ere he has me.

*Patr.* Your answer, sir.

*Ther.* Fare you well, with all my heart. 300

*Achil.* Why, but he is not in this tune, is he?

*Ther.* No, but he's out o' tune thus. What music will be in him when Hector has knocked out his brains, I know not; but, I am sure, none, unless the fiddler Apollo get his sinews to make catlings on.

*Achil.* Come, thou shalt bear a letter to him straight.

*Ther.* Let me bear another to his horse; for that's the more capable creature. 310

*Achil.* My mind is troubled, like a fountain stirr'd;

And I myself see not the bottom of it.

[*Exeunt* ACHILLES and PATROCLUS.]

*Ther.* Would the fountain of your mind were clear again, that I might water an ass at it! I had rather be a tick in a sheep than such a valiant ignorance. [*Exit.*]

## ACT IV

### SCENE I. Troy: a street

*Enter, from one side, ÆNEAS, and Servant with a torch; from the other, PARIS, DEIPHOBUS, ANTE-NOR, DIOMEDES, and others, with torches.*

*Par.* See, ho! who is that there?

*Dei.* It is the Lord Æneas.

*Æne.* Is the prince there in person?

Had I so good occasion to lie long  
As you, Prince Paris, nothing but heavenly business

Should rob my bed-mate of my company.

*Dio.* That's my mind too. Good morrow, Lord Æneas.

*Par.* A valiant Greek, Æneas—take his hand—  
Witness the process of your speech, wherein  
You told how Diomed, a whole week by days,

Did haunt you in the field.

*Æne.* Health to you, valiant sir, 10  
During all question of the gentle truce;  
But when I meet you arm'd, as black defiance  
As heart can think or courage execute.

*Dio.* The one and other Diomed embraces.  
Our bloods are now in calm; and, so long,  
health!

But when contention and occasion meet,  
By Jove, I'll play the hunter for thy life  
With all my force, pursuit and policy.

*Æne.* And thou shalt hunt a lion that will fly  
With his face backward. In humane gentleness,  
Welcome to Troy! now, by Anchises' life, 21  
Welcome, indeed! By Venus' hand I swear,  
No man alive can love in such a sort  
The thing he means to kill more excellently.

*Dio.* We sympathise. Jove, let Æneas live,  
If to my sword his fate be not the glory,  
A thousand complete courses of the sun!  
But, in mine emulous honour, let him die,  
With every joint a wound, and that to-morrow!

*Æne.* We know each other well. 30

*Dio.* We do; and long to know each other worse.

*Par.* This is the most spiteful gentle greeting,  
The noblest hateful love, that e'er I heard of.  
What business, lord, so early?

*Æne.* I was sent for to the King; but why, I  
know not.

*Par.* His purpose meets you. 'Twas to bring  
this Greek

To Calchas' house, and there to render him,  
For the unfreed Antenor, the fair Cressid.  
Let's have your company, or, if you please,  
Haste there before us. I constantly do think— 40  
Or rather, call my thought a certain knowl-  
edge—

My brother Troilus lodges there to-night.  
Rouse him and give him note of our approach,  
With the whole quality wherefore. I fear  
We shall be much unwelcome.

*Æne.* That I assure you.  
Troilus had rather Troy were borne to Greece  
Than Cressid borne from Troy.

*Par.* There is no help;  
The bitter disposition of the time

Will have it so. On, lord; we'll follow you.

*Æne.* Good morrow, all. [Exit with Servant.]

*Par.* And tell me, noble Diomed, faith, tell me  
true, 51

Even in the soul of sound good-fellowship,  
Who, in your thoughts, merits fair Helen best,  
Myself or Menelaus?

*Dio.* Both alike:  
He merits well to have her, that doth seek her,  
Not making any scruple of her soilure,

With such a hell of pain and world of charge,  
And you as well to keep her, that defend her,  
Not palating the taste of her dishonour,  
With such a costly loss of wealth and friends: 60  
He, like a puling cuckold, would drink up  
The lees and dregs of a flat tamed piece;  
You, like a lecher, out of whorish loins  
Are pleased to breed out your inheritors.  
Both merits poised, each weighs nor less nor  
more;

But he as he, the heavier for a whore.

*Par.* You are too bitter to your countrywoman.

*Dio.* She's bitter to her country. Hear me, Paris:  
For every false drop in her bawdy veins  
A Grecian's life hath sunk; for every scruple 70  
Of her contaminated carrion weight,  
A Trojan hath been slain. Since she could speak,  
She hath not given so many good words breath  
As for her Greeks and Trojans suffer'd death.

*Par.* Fair Diomed, you do as chapmen do,  
Dispraise the thing that you desire to buy.  
But we in silence hold this virtue well,  
We'll but commend what we intend to sell.

Here lies our way. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II. *The same: court of Pandarus' house*

*Enter TROILUS and CRESSIDA.*

*Tro.* Dear, trouble not yourself. The morn is  
cold.

*Cres.* Then, sweet my lord, I'll call mine uncle  
down;

He shall unbolt the gates.

*Tro.* Trouble him not;  
To bed, to bed. Sleep kill those pretty eyes,  
And give as soft attachment to thy senses  
As infants' empty of all thought!

*Cres.* Good morrow, then.

*Tro.* I prithee now, to bed.

*Cres.* Are you a-weary of me?

*Tro.* O Cressida! but that the busy day,  
Waked by the lark, hath roused the ribald crows,  
And dreaming night will hide our joys no longer,  
I would not from thee.

*Cres.* Night hath been too brief.

*Tro.* Beshrew the witch! with venomous wights  
she stays

As tediously as hell, but flies the grasps of love  
With wings more momentary-swift than thought.  
You will catch cold and curse me.

*Cres.* Prithee, tarry.

You men will never tarry.

O foolish Cressid! I might have still held off,  
And then you would have tarried. Hark! there's  
one up.

*Par.* [Within] What, 's all the doors open here?

*Tro.* It is your uncle. 20



*Cres.* A pestilence on him! now will he be  
mocking.  
*I shall have such a life!*

*Enter PANDARUS.*

*Pan.* How now, how now! how go maiden-  
heads? Here, you maid! where's my cousin Cres-  
sid?

*Cres.* Go hang yourself, you naughty mocking  
uncle!

You bring me to do, and then you flout me too.

*Pan.* To do what? to do what? let her say what.  
What have I brought you to do?

*Cres.* Come, come, beshrew your heart! you'll  
ne'er be good, 30

Nor suffer others.

*Pan.* Ha, ha! Alas, poor wretch! ah, poor *capoc-  
chia!* hast not slept to-night? would he not, a  
naughty man, let it sleep? a bugbear take him!

*Cres.* Did not I tell you? Would he were  
knock'd i' the head!

*Knocking within.*

Who's that at door? good uncle, go and see.

My lord, come you again into my chamber.

You smile and mock me, as if I meant naughtily.

*Tro.* Ha, ha! 39

*Cres.* Come, you are deceived, I think of no such  
thing.

*Knocking within.*

How earnestly they knock! Pray you, come in.

I would not for half Troy have you seen here.

*[Exeunt TROIILUS and CRESSIDA.]*

*Pan.* Who's there? what's the matter? will you  
beat down the door? How now! what's the  
matter?

*Enter ÆNEAS.*

*Æne.* Good morrow, lord, good morrow.

*Pan.* Who's there? my Lord Æneas! By my  
troth,

I knew you not. What news with you so early?

*Æne.* Is not Prince Troilus here?

*Pan.* Here! what should he do here? 50

*Æne.* Come, he is here, my lord; do not deny  
him.

It doth import him much to speak with me.

*Pan.* Is he here, say you? 'tis more than I know,  
I'll be sworn. For my own part, I came in late.  
What should he do here?

*Æne.* Who!—nay, then. Come, come, you'll do  
him wrong ere you're ware. You'll be so true to  
him, to be false to him. Do not you know of him,  
but yet go fetch him hither; go.

*Re-enter TROIILUS.*

*Tro.* How now! what's the matter? 60

*Æne.* My lord, I scarce have leisure to salute  
you,

My matter is so rash. There is at hand  
Paris your brother, and Deiphobus,  
The Grecian Diomed, and our Antenor  
Deliver'd to us; and for him forthwith,  
Ere the first sacrifice, within this hour,  
We must give up to Diomedes' hand  
The Lady Cressida.

*Tro.* Is it so concluded?

*Æne.* By Priam and the general state of Troy.  
They are at hand and ready to effect it. 70

*Tro.* How my achievements mock me!

I will go meet them. And, my Lord Æneas,  
We met by chance; you did not find me here.

*Æne.* Good, good, my lord; the secrets of na-  
ture

Have not more gift in taciturnity.

*[Exeunt TROIILUS and ÆNEAS.]*

*Pan.* Is't possible? no sooner got but lost? The  
devil take Antenor! the young prince will go  
mad. A plague upon Antenor! I would they had  
broke 's neck!

*Re-enter CRESSIDA.*

*Cres.* How now! what's the matter? who was  
here? 81

*Pan.* Ah, ah!

*Cres.* Why sigh you so profoundly? where's my  
lord? gone! Tell me, sweet uncle, what's the  
matter?

*Pan.* Would I were as deep under the earth as I  
am above!

*Cres.* O the gods! what's the matter?

*Pan.* Prithee, get thee in. Would thou hadst  
ne'er been born! I knew thou wouldst be his  
death. O, poor gentleman! A plague upon An-  
tenor!

*Cres.* Good uncle, I beseech you, on my knees I  
beseech you, what's the matter?

*Pan.* Thou must be gone, wench, thou must be  
gone; thou art changed for Antenor; thou must  
to thy father, and be gone from Troilus. 'Twill  
be his death; 'twill be his bane; he cannot bear it.

*Cres.* O you immortal gods! I will not go.

*Pan.* Thou must. 101

*Cres.* I will not, uncle. I have forgot my father;  
I know no touch of consanguinity;  
No kin, no love, no blood, no soul so near me  
As the sweet Troilus. O you gods divine!  
Make Cressid's name the very crown of false-  
hood,

If ever she leave Troilus! Time, force, and  
death,

Do to this body what extremes you can;

But the strong base and building of my love

Is as the very centre of the earth,  
Drawing all things to it. I'll go in and weep—

*Pan.* Do, do.

*Cres.* Tear my bright hair and scratch my  
praised cheeks,  
Crack my clear voice with sobs and break my  
heart

With sounding Troilus. I will not go from Troy.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *The same: street before Pandarus' house*

*Enter* PARIS, TROILUS, ÆNEAS, DEIPHOBUS,  
ANTENOR, and DIOMEDES

*Par.* It is great morning, and the hour prefix'd  
Of her delivery to this valiant Greek  
Comes fast upon. Good my brother Troilus,  
Tell you the lady what she is to do,  
And haste her to the purpose.

*Tro.* Walk into her house;  
I'll bring her to the Grecian presently;  
And to his hand when I deliver her,  
Think it an altar, and thy brother Troilus  
A priest there offering to it his own heart.

[*Exit.*]

*Par.* I know what 'tis to love;  
And would, as I shall pity, I could help!  
Please you walk in, my lords.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV. *The same: Pandarus' house*

*Enter* PANDARUS and CRESSIDA.

*Pan.* Be moderate, be moderate.

*Cres.* Why tell you me of moderation?  
The grief is fine, full, perfect, that I taste,  
And violenteth in a sense as strong  
As that which causeth it. How can I moderate it?  
If I could temporize with my affection,  
Or brew it to a weak and colder palate,  
The like allayment could I give my grief.  
My love admits no qualifying dross;  
No more my grief, in such a precious loss.

*Pan.* Here, here, here he comes.

*Enter* TROILUS.

Ah, sweet ducks!

*Cres.* O Troilus! Troilus! [*Embracing him.*]

*Pan.* What a pair of spectacles is here! Let me  
embrace too. "O heart," as the goodly saying is,

"—O heart, heavy heart,

Why sigh'st thou without breaking?"  
where he answers again,

"Because thou canst not ease thy smart 20

By friendship nor by speaking."

There was never a truer rhyme. Let us cast  
away nothing, for we may live to have need of

110 such a verse. We see it, we see it. How now,  
lamb?

*Tro.* Cressid, I love thee in so strain'd a purity,  
That the bless'd gods, as angry with my fancy,  
More bright in zeal than the devotion which  
Cold lips blow to their deities, take thee from  
me.

*Cres.* Have the gods envy?

30

*Pan.* Ay, ay, ay, ay; 'tis too plain a case.

*Cres.* And is it true that I must go from Troy?

*Tro.* A hateful truth.

*Cres.* What, and from Troilus too?

*Tro.* From Troy and Troilus.

*Cres.* Is it possible?

*Tro.* And suddenly; where injury of chance  
Puts back leave-taking, justles roughly by  
All time of pause, rudely beguiles our lips  
Of all rejoindure, forcibly prevents  
Our lock'd embrasures, strangles our dear vows  
Even in the birth of our own labouring breath. 40  
We two, that with so many thousand sighs  
Did buy each other, must poorly sell ourselves  
With the rude brevity and discharge of one.  
Injurious time now with a robber's haste  
Crams his rich thievery up, he knows not how.  
As many farewells as be stars in heaven,  
With distinct breath and consign'd kisses to  
them,

He fumbles up into a loose adieu,  
And scants us with a single famish'd kiss,  
Distasted with the salt of broken tears. 50

*Æne.* [*Within*] My lord, is the lady ready?

*Tro.* Hark! you are call'd. Some say the Genius  
so

Cries "come" to him that instantly must die.  
Bid them have patience; she shall come anon.

*Pan.* Where are my tears? rain, to lay this wind,  
or my heart will be blown up by the root.

[*Exit.*]

*Cres.* I must then to the Grecians?

*Tro.* No remedy.

*Cres.* A woful Cressid 'mongst the merry  
Greeks!

When shall we see again?

*Tro.* Hear me, my love. Be thou but true of  
heart— 60

*Cres.* I true! how now! what wicked deem is  
this?

*Tro.* Nay, we must use expostulation kindly,  
For it is parting from us.

I speak not "be thou true," as fearing thee,  
For I will throw my glove to Death himself,  
That there's no maculation in thy heart;  
But "be thou true," say I, to fashion in  
My sequent protestation; be thou true,  
And I will see thee.



*Cres.* O, you shall be exposed, my lord, to dangers  
As infinite as imminent! but I'll be true. 70

*Tro.* And I'll grow friend with danger. Wear this sleeve.

*Cres.* And you this glove. When shall I see you?

*Tro.* I will corrupt the Grecian sentinels,  
To give thee nightly visitation.

But yet be true.

*Cres.* O heavens! "be true" again!

*Tro.* Hear why I speak it, love.

The Grecian youths are full of quality;  
They're loving, well composed with gifts of nature,

Flowing and swelling o'er with arts and exercise: 80

How novelty may move, and parts with person,  
Alas, a kind of godly jealousy—

Which, I beseech you, call a virtuous sin—  
Makes me afraid.

*Cres.* O heavens! you love me not.

*Tro.* Die I a villain, then!

In this I do not call your faith in question

So mainly as my merit. I cannot sing,

Nor heel the high lavolt, nor sweeten talk,

Nor play at subtle games; fair virtues all,

To which the Grecians are most prompt and pregnant. 90

But I can tell that in each grace of these

There lurks a still and dumb-discoursive devil

That tempts most cunningly. But be not tempted.

*Cres.* Do you think I will?

*Tro.* No.

But something may be done that we will not:

And sometimes we are devils to ourselves,

When we will tempt the frailty of our powers,

Presuming on their changeful potency.

*Æne.* [Within] Nay, good my lord—

*Tro.* Come, kiss; and let us part. 100

*Par.* [Within] Brother Troilus!

*Tro.* Good brother, come you hither;

And bring *Æneas* and the Grecian with you.

*Cres.* My lord, will you be true?

*Tro.* Who, I? alas, it is my vice, my fault.

Whiles others fish with craft for great opinion,

I with great truth catch mere simplicity;

Whilst some with cunning gild their copper crowns,

With truth and plainness I do wear mine bare.

Fear not my truth; the moral of my wit

Is "plain and true"; there's all the reach of it. 110

*Enter* *ÆNEAS*, *PARIS*, *ANTENOR*, *DEIPHOBUS*,  
and *DIOMEDES*.

Welcome, Sir *Diomed*! here is the lady  
Which for *Antenor* we deliver you.

At the port, lord, I'll give her to thy hand;  
And by the way possess thee what she is.  
Entreat her fair; and, by my soul, fair Greek,  
If e'er thou stand at mercy of my sword,  
Name *Cressid*, and thy life shall be as safe  
As *Priam* is in *Ilion*.

*Di.* Fair Lady *Cressid*,  
So please you, save the thanks this prince expects.

The lustre in your eye, heaven in your cheek, 120  
Pleads your fair usage; and to *Diomed*  
You shall be mistress and command him wholly.

*Tro.* Grecian, thou dost not use me courteously,

To shame the zeal of my petition to thee  
In praising her. I tell thee, lord of Greece,  
She is as far high-soaring o'er thy praises  
As thou unworthy to be call'd her servant.  
I charge thee use her well, even for my charge;  
For, by the dreadful *Pluto*, if thou dost not,  
Though the great bulk *Achilles* be thy guard, 130  
I'll cut thy throat.

*Di.* O, be not moved, Prince *Troilus*.  
Let me be privileged by my place and message,  
To be a speaker free. When I am hence,  
I'll answer to my lust; and know you, lord,  
I'll nothing do on charge. To her own worth  
She shall be prized; but that you say "be't so,"  
I'll speak it in my spirit and honour, "no."

*Tro.* Come, to the port. I'll tell thee, *Diomed*,  
This brave shall oft make thee to hide thy head.  
Lady, give me your hand, and, as we walk, 140  
To our own selves bend we our needful talk.

[*Exeunt* *TROIILUS*, *CRESSIDA*, and *DIOMEDES*.]

*Trumpet within.*

*Par.* Hark! *Hector's* trumpet.

*Æne.* How have we spent this morning!  
The prince must think me tardy and remiss,  
That swore to ride before him to the field.

*Par.* 'Tis *Troilus's* fault. Come, come, to field  
with him.

*Dei.* Let us make ready straight.

*Æne.* Yea, with a bridegroom's fresh alacrity,  
Let us address to tend on *Hector's* heels.

The glory of our *Troy* doth this day lie 149  
On his fair worth and single chivalry. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V. *The Grecian camp: lists set out*

*Enter* *AJAX*, armed; *AGAMEMNON*, *ACHILLES*, *PATROCLUS*, *MENELAUS*, *ULYSSES*, *NESTOR*, and others.

*Agam.* Here art thou in appointment fresh and fair,

Anticipating time with starting courage.

Give with thy trumpet a loud note to *Troy*,  
Thou dreadful *Ajax*; that the appalled air

May pierce the head of the great combatant  
And hale him hither.

*Ajax.* Thou, trumpet, there's my purse.  
Now crack thy lungs, and split thy brazen pipe.  
Blow, villain, till thy spher'd bias cheek  
Outswell the colic of puff'd Aquilon.  
Come, stretch thy chest, and let thy eyes spout  
blood; 10

Thou blow'st for Hector

*Trumpet sounds.*

*Ulyss.* No trumpet answers.

*Achil.* 'Tis but early days.

*Agam.* Is not yond Diomed, with Calchas'  
daughter?

*Ulyss.* 'Tis he, I ken the manner of his gait;  
He rises on the toe. That spirit of his  
In aspiration lifts him from the earth.

*Enter DIOMEDES, with CRESSIDA.*

*Agam.* Is this the Lady Cressid?

*Dio.* Even she.

*Agam.* Most dearly welcome to the Greeks,  
sweet lady.

*Nest.* Our general doth salute you with a kiss.

*Ulyss.* Yet is the kindness but particular; 20

'Twere better she were kiss'd in general.

*Nest.* And very courtly counsel. I'll begin.

So much for Nestor.

*Achil.* I'll take that winter from your lips, fair  
lady.

Achilles bids you welcome.

*Men.* I had good argument for kissing once.

*Patr.* But that's no argument for kissing now;  
For thus popp'd Paris in his hardiment,  
And parted thus you and your argument.

*Ulyss.* O deadly gall, and theme of all our  
scorns! 30

For which we lose our heads to gild his horns.

*Patr.* The first was Menelaus' kiss; this, mine.

Patroclus kisses you.

*Men.* O, this is trim!

*Patr.* Paris and I kiss evermore for him.

*Men.* I'll have my kiss, sir. Lady, by your  
leave.

*Cres.* In kissing, do you render or receive?

*Patr.* Both take and give.

*Cres.* I'll make my match to live,

The kiss you take is better than you give;  
Therefore no kiss.

*Men.* I'll give you boot, I'll give you three for  
one. 40

*Cres.* You're an odd man; give even, or give  
none.

*Men.* An odd man, lady! every man is odd.

*Cres.* No, Paris is not; for you know 'tis true,  
That you are odd, and he is even with you.

*Men.* You fillip me o' the head.

*Cres.* No, I'll be sworn.

*Ulyss.* It were no match, your nail against his  
horn.

May I, sweet lady, beg a kiss of you?

*Cres.* You may.

*Ulyss.* I do desire it.

*Cres.* Why, beg, then.

*Ulyss.* Why then for Venus' sake, give me a  
kiss,

When Helen is a maid again, and his. 50

*Cres.* I am your debtor, claim it when 'tis due.

*Ulyss.* Never's my day, and then a kiss of you.

*Dio.* Lady, a word: I'll bring you to your  
father. [*Exit with CRESSIDA.*]

*Nest.* A woman of quick sense.

*Ulyss.* Fie, fie upon her!

There's language in her eye, her cheek, her lip,  
Nay, her foot speaks; her wanton spirits look  
out

At every joint and motive of her body.

O, these encounterers, so glib of tongue,  
That give accosting welcome ere it comes,  
And wide unclasp the tables of their thoughts 60  
To every ticklish reader! set them down  
For sluttish spoils of opportunity  
And daughters of the game.

*Trumpet within.*

*All.* The Trojans' trumpet.

*Agam.* Yonder comes the troop.

*Enter HECTOR, armed; AENEAS, TROILUS, and other  
TROJANS, with Attendants.*

*Aene.* Hail, all you state of Greece! what shall  
be done

To him that victory commands? or do you pur-  
pose

A victor shall be known? will you the knights

Shall to the edge of all extremity

Pursue each other, or shall be divided

By any voice or order of the field? 70  
Hector bade ask.

*Agam.* Which way would Hector have it?

*Aene.* He cares not; he'll obey conditions.

*Achil.* 'Tis done like Hector; but securely  
done,

A little proudly, and great deal misprizing

The knight opposed.

*Aene.* If not Achilles, sir,

What is your name?

*Achil.* If not Achilles, nothing.

*Aene.* Therefore Achilles. But, whate'er, know  
this:

In the extremity of great and little,  
Valour and pride excel themselves in Hector;  
The one almost as infinite as all, 80



The other blank as nothing. Weigh him well,  
 And that which looks like pride is courtesy.  
 This Ajax is half made of Hector's blood;  
 In love whereof, half Hector stays at home;  
 Half heart, half hand, half Hector comes to seek  
 This blended knight, half Trojan and half Greek.  
*Achil.* A maiden battle, then? O, I perceive  
 you.

*Re-enter DIOMEDES.*

*Agam.* Here is Sir Diomed. Go, gentle knight,  
 Stand by our Ajax. As you and Lord Æneas  
 Consent upon the order of their fight, 90  
 So be it; either to the uttermost,  
 Or else a breath. The combatants being kin  
 Half stints their strife before their strokes begin.

*AJAX and HECTOR enter the lists.*

*Ulyss.* They are opposed already.

*Agam.* What Trojan is that same that looks so  
 heavy?

*Ulyss.* The youngest son of Priam, a true  
 knight,

Not yet mature, yet matchless, firm of word,  
 Speaking in deeds and deedless in his tongue;  
 Not soon provoked nor being provoked soon  
 calm'd;

His heart and hand both open and both free; 100  
 For what he has he gives, what thinks he shows;  
 Yet gives he not till judgement guide his bounty,  
 Nor dignifies an impair thought with breath;  
 Manly as Hector, but more dangerous;  
 For Hector in his blaze of wrath subscribes  
 To tender objects, but he in heat of action  
 Is more vindicative than jealous love.  
 They call him Troilus, and on him erect  
 A second hope, as fairly built as Hector.  
 Thus says Æneas; one that knows the youth 110  
 Even to his inches, and with private soul  
 Did in great Ilion thus translate him to me.

*Alarum.* HECTOR and AJAX fight.

*Agam.* They are in action.

*Nest.* Now, Ajax, hold thine own!

*Tro.* Hector, thou sleep'st;

Awake thee!

*Agam.* His blows are well disposed. There,  
 Ajax!

*Dio.* You must no more.

*Trumpets cease.*

*Æne.* Princes, enough, so please you.

*Ajax.* I am not warm yet; let us fight again.

*Dio.* As Hector pleases.

*Hec.* Why, then will I no more.

Thou art, great lord, my father's sister's son, 120  
 A cousin-german to great Priam's seed;  
 The obligation of our blood forbids  
 A gory emulation 'twixt us twain.

Were thy commixtion Greek and Trojan so  
 That thou couldst say, "This hand is Grecian all,  
 And this is Trojan; the sinews of this leg  
 All Greek, and this all Troy; my mother's blood  
 Runs on the dexter cheek, and this sinister  
 Bounds in my father's"; by Jove mult. potent,  
 Thou shouldst not bear from me a Greekish  
 member 130

Wherein my sword had not impressure made  
 Of our rank feud; but the just gods gainsay  
 Thy any drop thou borrow'dst from thy mother,  
 My sacred aunt, should by my mortal sword  
 Be drain'd! Let me embrace thee, Ajax.  
 By him that thunders, thou hast lusty arms;  
 Hector would have them fall upon him thus.  
 Cousin, all honour to thee!

*Ajax.* I thank thee, Hector.

Thou art too gentle and too free a man.  
 I came to kill thee, cousin, and bear hence 140  
 A great addition earned in thy death.

*Hect.* Not Neoptolemus so mirable,  
 On whose bright crest Fame with her loud'st  
 Oyes

Cries "This is he," could promise to himself  
 A thought of added honour torn from Hector.

*Æne.* There is expectance here from both the  
 sides,

What further you will do.

*Hect.* We'll answer it;

The issue is embracement. Aja, farewell.

*Ajax.* If I might in entreaties find success—  
 As sold I have the chance—I would desire 150  
 My famous cousin to our Grecian tents.

*Dio.* 'Tis Agamemnon's wish, and great Achilles  
 Doth long to see unarm'd the valiant Hector.

*Hect.* Æneas, call my brother Troilus to me,  
 And signify this loving interview  
 To the expecters of our Trojan part;  
 Desire them home. Give me thy hand, my  
 cousin;

I will go eat with thee and see your knights.

*Ajax.* Great Agamemnon comes to meet us  
 here.

*Hect.* The worthiest of them tell me name by  
 name; 160

But for Achilles, mine own searching eyes  
 Shall find him by his large and portly size.

*Agam.* Worthy of arms! as welcome as to one  
 That would be rid of such an enemy;  
 But that's no welcome. Understand more clear,  
 What's past and what's to come is strew'd with  
 husks

And formless ruin of oblivion;  
 But in this extant moment, faith and troth,  
 Strain'd purely from all hollow bias-drawing,  
 Bids thee, with most divine integrity, 170

From heart of very heart, great Hector, welcome.

*Hect.* I thank thee, most imperious Agamemnon.

*Agam.* [*To TROILUS*] My well-famed lord of Troy, no less to you.

*Men.* Let me confirm my princely brother's greeting.

You brace of warlike brothers, welcome hither.

*Hect.* Who must we answer?

*Æne.* The noble Menelaus.

*Hect.* O, you, my lord? by Mars his gauntlet, thanks!

Mock not, that I affect the untraded oath;

Your quondam wife swears still by Venus' glove.

She's well, but bade me not commend her to you.

*Men.* Name her not now, sir; she's a deadly theme. 181

*Hect.* O, pardon; I offend.

*Nest.* I have, thou gallant Trojan, seen thee oft

Labouring for destiny make cruel way

Through ranks of Greekish youth, and I have seen thee,

As hot as Perseus, spur thy Phrygian steed,

Despising many forfeits and subduements,

When thou hast hung thy advanced sword i' the air,

Not letting it decline on the declined,

That I have said to some my standers by 190  
"Lo, Jupiter is yonder, dealing life!"

And I have seen thee pause and take thy breath,

When that a ring of Greeks have hemm'd thee in,

Like an Olympian wrestling. This have I seen;

But this thy countenance, still lock'd in steel,

I never saw till now. I knew thy grandsire,

And once fought with him. He was a soldier good;

But, by great Mars, the captain of us all,

Never like thee. Let an old man embrace thee;

And, worthy warrior, welcome to our tents. 200

*Æne.* 'Tis the old Nestor.

*Hect.* Let me embrace thee, good old chronicle,

That hast so long walk'd hand in hand with time.

Most reverend Nestor, I am glad to clasp thee.

*Nest.* I would my arms could match thee in contention,

As they contend with thee in courtesy.

*Hect.* I would they could.

*Nest.* Ha!

By this white beard, I'd fight with thee tomorrow. 209

Well, welcome, welcome!—I have seen the time.

*Ulyss.* I wonder now how yonder city stands

When we have here her base and pillar by us.

*Hect.* I know your favour, Lord Ulysses, well.

Ah, sir, there's many a Greek and Trojan dead,

Since first I saw yourself and Diomed

In Ilion, on your Greekish embassy.

*Ulyss.* Sir, I foretold you then what would ensue.

My prophecy is but half his journey yet;  
For yonder walls, that pertly front your town,  
Yond towers, whose wanton tops do buss the clouds, 220

Must kiss their own feet.

*He t.* I must not believe you.

There they stand yet, and modestly I think,  
The fall of every Phrygian stone will cost  
A drop of Grecian blood. The end crowns all,  
And that old common arbitrator, Time,  
Will one day end it.

*Ulyss.* So to him we leave it.

Most gentle and most valiant Hector, welcome.

After the general, I beseech you next

To feast with me and see me at my tent.

*Achil.* I shall forestall thee, Lord Ulysses, thou! 230

Now, Hector, I have fed mine eyes on thee;

I have with exact view perused thee, Hector,

And quoted joint by joint.

*Hect.* Is this Achilles?

*Achil.* I am Achilles.

*Hect.* Stand fair, I pray thee. Let me look on thee.

*Achil.* Behold thy fill.

*Hect.* Nay, I have done already.

*Achil.* Thou art too brief. I will the second time,

As I would buy thee, view thee limb by limb.

*Hect.* O, like a book of sport thou'lt read me o'er; 239

But there's more in me than thou understand'st.

Why dost thou so oppress me with thine eye?

*Achil.* Tell me, you heavens, in which part of his body

Shall I destroy him? whether there, or there, or there?

That I may give the local wound a name

And make distinct the very breach whereout

Hector's great spirit flew. Answer me, heavens!

*Hect.* It would discredit the blest gods, proud man,

To answer such a question. Stand again.

Think'st thou to catch my life so pleasantly

As to prenominate in nice conjecture 250

Where thou wilt hit me dead?

*Achil.* I tell thee, yea.

*Hect.* Wert thou an oracle to tell me so, I'd not believe thee. Henceforth guard thee well;

For I'll not kill thee there, nor there, nor there;

But, by the forge that stithied Mars his helm,

I'll kill thee everywhere, yea, o'er and o'er.

You wisest Grecians, pardon me this brag;

His insolence draws folly from my lips;



But I'll endeavour deeds to match these words,  
Or may I never—

*Ajax.* Do not chafe thee, cousin: 260  
And you, Achilles, let these threats alone,  
Till accident or purpose bring you to't.  
You may have every day enough of Hector,  
If you have stomach; the general state, I fear,  
Can scarce entreat you to be odd with him.

*Hect.* I pray you, let us see you in the field.  
We have had pelting wars, since you refused  
The Grecian's cause.

*Achil.* Dost thou entreat me, Hector?  
To-morrow do I meet thee, fell as death;  
To-night all friends.

*Hect.* Thy hand upon that match. 270  
*Agam.* First, all you peers of Greece, go to my  
tent;

There in the full convive we. Afterwards,  
As Hector's leisure and your bounties shall  
Concur together, severally entreat him.  
Beat loud the tabourines, let the trumpets  
blow,

That this great soldier may his welcome know.

[*Exeunt all except TROILUS and ULYSSES.*]

*Tro.* My Lord Ulysses, tell me, I beseech you,  
In what place of the field doth Calchas keep?

*Ulyss.* At Menelaus' tent, most princely  
Troilus.

There Diomed doth feast with him to-night; 280  
Who neither looks upon the heaven nor earth,  
But gives all gaze and bent of amorous view  
On the fair Cressid.

*Tro.* Shall I, sweet lord, be bound to you so  
much,

After we part from Agamemnon's tent,  
To bring me thither?

*Ulyss.* You shall command me, sir.  
As gentle tell me, of what honour was  
This Cressida in Troy? Had she no lover there  
That waits her absence?

*Tro.* O, sir, to such as boasting show their  
scars 290

A mock is due. Will you walk on, my lord?  
She was beloved, she loved; she is, and doth;  
But still sweet love is food for fortune's tooth.

[*Exeunt.*]

## ACT V

SCENE I. *The Grecian camp: before Achilles' tent*

*Enter ACHILLES and PATROCLUS.*

*Achil.* I'll heat his blood with Greekish wine  
to-night,

With my scimitar I'll cool to-morrow.

Patroclus, let us feast him to the height.

*Patr.* Here comes Thersites.

*Enter THERSITES.*

*Achil.* How now, thou core of envy!  
Thou crusty batch of nature, what's the news?

*Ther.* Why, thou picture of what thou seemest,  
and idol of idiot-worshippers, here's a letter for  
thee.

*Achil.* From whence, fragment?

*Ther.* Why, thou full dish of fool, from Troy.

*Patr.* Who keeps the tent now? 11

*Ther.* The surgeon's box, or the patient's  
wound.

*Patr.* Well said, adversity! and what need these  
tricks?

*Ther.* Prithee, be silent, boy; I profit not by  
thy talk. Thou art thought to be Achilles' male  
varlet.

*Patr.* Male varlet, you rogue! what's that?

*Ther.* Why, his masculine whore. Now, the  
rotten diseases of the south, the guts-gripping,  
ruptures, catarrhs, loads o' gravel i' the back,  
lethargies, cold palsies, raw eyes, dirt-rotten  
livers, wheezing lungs, bladders full of impost-  
hume, sciaticas, limekilns i' the palm, incurable  
bone-ache, and the rivelled fee-simple of the  
tetter, take and take again such preposterous  
discoveries!

*Patr.* Why, thou damnable box of envy, thou,  
what meanest thou to curse thus? 30

*Ther.* Do I curse thee?

*Patr.* Why, no, you ruinous butt, you whore-  
son indistinguishable cur, no.

*Ther.* No! why art thou then exasperate, thou  
idle immaterial skein of sleeve-silk, thou green  
sarcenet flap for a sore eye, thou tassel of a  
prodigal's purse, thou? Ah, how the poor world  
is pestered with such waterflies, diminutives of  
nature!

*Patr.* Out, gall! 40

*Ther.* Finch-egg!

*Achil.* My sweet Patroclus, I am thwarted  
quite

From my great purpose in to-morrow's battle.

Here is a letter from Queen Hecuba,

A token from her daughter, my fair love,

Both taxing me and gaging me to keep

An oath that I have sworn. I will not break it.

Fall Greeks; fail fame; honour or go or stay;

My major vow lies here, this I'll obey.

Come, come, Thersites, help to trim my tent. 50

This night in banquetting must all be spent.

Away, Patroclus!

[*Exeunt ACHILLES and PATROCLUS.*]

*Ther.* With too much blood and too little brain,  
these two may run mad; but, if with too much  
brain and too little blood they do, I'll be a curer

of madmen. Here's Agamemnon, an honest fellow enough, and one that loves quails; but he has not so much brain as ear-wax: and the goodly transformation of Jupiter there, his brother, the bull—the primitive statue, and oblique memorial of cuckolds; a thrifty shoeing-horn in a chain, hanging at his brother's leg—to what form but that he is, should wit larded with malice and malice forced with wit turn him to? To an ass, were nothing; he is both ass and ox; to an ox, were nothing; he is both ox and ass. To be a dog, a mule, a cat, a fitchew, a toad, a lizard, an owl, a puttock, or a herring without a roe, I would not care; but to be Menelaus! I would conspire against destiny. Ask me not what I would be, if I were not Thersites; for I care not to be the louse of a lazar, so I were not Menelaus. Hoy-day! spirits and fires!

*Enter* HECTOR, TROILUS, AJAX, AGAMEMNON, ULYSSES, NESTOR, MENELAUS, and DIOMEDES, *with lights*.

*Agam.* We go wrong, we go wrong.

*Ajax.* No, yonder 'tis;

There, where we see the lights.

*Hect.* I trouble you.

*Ajax.* No, not a whit.

*Ulyss.* Here comes himself to guide you.

*Re-enter* ACHILLES.

*Achil.* Welcome, brave Hector; welcome, princes all.

*Agam.* So now, fair Prince of Troy, I bid good night.

*Ajax* commands the guard to tend on you.

*Hect.* Thanks and good night to the Greeks' general. 80

*Men.* Good night, my lord.

*Hect.* Good night, sweet Lord Menelaus.

*Ther.* Sweet draught! "Sweet" quoth 'a! Sweet sink, sweet sewer.

*Achil.* Good night and welcome, both at once, to those

That go or tarry.

*Agam.* Good night.

[*Exeunt* AGAMEMNON and MENELAUS.]

*Achil.* Old Nestor tarries; and you too, Diomed,

Keep Hector company an hour or two.

*Dio.* I cannot, lord; I have important business,

The tide whereof is now. Good night, great Hector. 90

*Hect.* Give me your hand.

*Ulyss.* [*Aside to TROILUS*] Follow his torch; he goes to Calchas' tent.

I'll keep you company.

*Tro.* Sweet sir, you honour me.

*Hect.* And so, good night.

[*Exit* DIOMEDES; ULYSSES and TROILUS *following*.]

*Achil.* Come, come, enter my tent.

[*Exeunt* ACHILLES, HECTOR, AJAX, and NESTOR.]

*Ther.* That same Diomed's a false-hearted rogue, a most unjust knave; I will no more trust him when he leers than I will a serpent when he hisses. He will spend his mouth, and promise, like Brabblers the hound; but when he performs, astronomers foretell it; it is prodigious, there will come some change; the sun borrows of the moon, when Diomed keeps his word. I will rather leave to see Hector, than not to dog him. They say he keeps a Trojan drab, and uses the traitor Calchas' tent. I'll after. Nothing but lechery! all incontinent varlets! [*Exit*.]

SCENE II. *The same: before Calchas' tent*

*Enter* DIOMEDES.

*Dio.* What, are you up here, ho? speak.

*Cal.* [*Within*] Who calls?

*Dio.* Diomed. Calchas, I think. Where's your daughter?

*Cal.* [*Within*] She comes to you.

*Enter* TROILUS and ULYSSES, *at a distance; after them* THERSITES.

*Ulyss.* Stand where the torch may not discover us.

*Enter* CRESSIDA.

*Tro.* Cressid comes forth to him.

*Dio.* How now, my charge!

*Cres.* Now, my sweet guardian! Hark, a word with you. [*Whispers*.]

*Tro.* Yea, so familiar!

*Ulyss.* She will sing any man at first sight.

*Ther.* And any man may sing her, if he can take her cliff; she's noted. 11

*Dio.* Will you remember?

*Cres.* Remember! yes.

*Dio.* Nay, but do, then;

And let your mind be coupled with your words.

*Tro.* What should she remember?

*Ulyss.* List.

*Cres.* Sweet honey Greek, tempt me no more to folly.

*Ther.* Roguery!

*Dio.* Nay, then— 20

*Cres.* I'll tell you what—

*Dio.* Foh, foh! come, tell a pin. You are forsworn.

*Cres.* In faith, I cannot. What would you have me do?

*Ther.* A juggling trick—to be secretly open.



*Dio.* What did you swear you would bestow on me?

*Cres.* I prithee, do not hold me to mine oath;  
Bid me do anything but that, sweet Greek.

*Dio.* Good night.

*Tro.* Hold, patience!

*Ulyss.* How now, Trojan! 30

*Cres.* Diomed—

*Dio.* No, no, good night. I'll be your fool no more.

*Tro.* Thy better must.

*Cres.* Hark, one word in your ear.

*Tro.* O plague and madness!

*Ulyss.* You are moved, prince; let us depart, I pray you,

Lest your displeasure should enlarge itself  
To wrathful terms. This place is dangerous;  
The time right deadly; I beseech you, go.

*Tro.* Behold, I pray you!

*Ulyss.* Nay, good my lord, go off.

You flow to great distraction; come, my lord. 41

*Tro.* I pray thee, stay.

*Ulyss.* You have not patience; come.

*Tro.* I pray, stay; by hell and all hell's torments,

I will not speak a word!

*Dio.* And so, good night.

*Cres.* Nay, but you part in anger.

*Tro.* Doth that grieve thee?

O wither'd truth!

*Ulyss.* Why, how now, lord!

*Tro.* By Jove,

I will be patient.

*Cres.* Guardian!—why, Greek!

*Dio.* Foh, foh! adieu; you palter.

*Cres.* In faith, I do not. Come hither once again.

*Ulyss.* You shake, my lord, at something. Will you go? 50

You will break out.

*Tro.* She strokes his cheek!

*Ulyss.* Come, Come.

*Tro.* Nay, stay; by Jove, I will not speak a word.

There is between my will and all offences

A guard of patience. Stay a little while.

*Ther.* How the devil Luxury, with his fat rump  
and potato-finger, tickles these together!

Fry, lechery, fry!

*Dio.* But will you, then?

*Cres.* In faith, I will, la; never trust me else.

*Dio.* Give me some token for the surety of it. 60

*Cres.* I'll fetch you one. [Exit.]

*Ulyss.* You have sworn patience.

*Tro.* Fear me not, sweet lord;

I will not be myself, nor have cognition

Of what I feel. I am all patience.

*Re-enter CRESSIDA.*

*Ther.* Now the pledge; now, now, now!

*Cres.* Here, Diomed, keep this sleeve.

*Tro.* O beauty! where is thy faith?

*Ulyss.* My lord—

*Tro.* I will be patient; outwardly I will.

*Cres.* You look upon that sleeve; behold it well.

He loved me—O false wench!—Give't me again.

*Dio.* Whose was't? 71

*Cres.* It is no matter, now I have't again.

I will not meet with you to-morrow night.

I prithee, Diomed, visit me no more.

*Ther.* Now she sharpens. Well said, whetstone!

*Dio.* I shall have it.

*Cres.* What, this?

*Dio.* Ay, that.

*Cres.* O, all you gods! O pretty, pretty pledge!

Thy master now lies thinking in his bed

Of thee and me, and sighs, and takes my glove,

And gives memorial dainty kisses to it, 80

As I kiss thee. Nay, do not snatch it from me;

He that takes that doth take my heart withal.

*Dio.* I had your heart before, this follows it.

*Tro.* I did swear patience.

*Cres.* You shall not have it, Diomed; faith, you shall not;

I'll give you something else.

*Dio.* I will have this. Whose was it?

*Cres.* It is no matter.

*Dio.* Come, tell me whose it was.

*Cres.* 'Twas one's that loved me better than you will.

But, now you have it, take it.

*Dio.* Whose was it? 90

*Cres.* By all Diana's waiting-women yond,

And by herself, I will not tell you whose.

*Dio.* To-morrow will I wear it on my helm,

And grieve his spirit that dares not challenge it.

*Tro.* Wert thou the devil, and worst it on thy horn,

It should be challenged.

*Cres.* Well, well, 'tis done, 'tis past. And yet it is not;

I will not keep my word.

*Dio.* Why, then, farewell;

Thou never shalt mock Diomed again.

*Cres.* You shall not go. One cannot speak a word, 100

But it straight starts you.

*Dio.* I do not like this fooling.

*Ther.* Nor I, by Pluto. But that that likes not you pleases me best.

*Dio.* What, shall I come? the hour?

*Cres.* Ay, come—O Jove!—do come—I shall be plagued.

*Dio.* Farewell till then.

*Cres.* Good night. I prithee, come.

[*Exit* DIOMEDES.]

Troilus, farewell! one eye yet looks on thee;

But with my heart the other eye doth see.

Ah, poor our sex! this fault in us I find,

The error of our eye directs our mind. 110

What error leads must err; O, then conclude

Minds sway'd by eyes are full of turpitude. [*Exit.*]

*Ther.* A proof of strength she could not publish more.

Unless she said, "My mind is now turn'd whore."

*Ulyss.* All's done, my lord.

*Tro.* It is.

*Ulyss.* Why stay we, then?

*Tro.* To make a recordation to my soul

Of every syllable that here was spoke.

But if I tell how these two did co-act,

Shall I not lie in publishing a truth?

Sith yet there is a credence in my heart, 120

An esperance so obstinately strong,

That doth invert the attest of eyes and ears,

As if those organs had deceptive functions,

Created only to calumniate.

Was Cressid here?

*Ulyss.* I cannot conjure, Trojan.

*Tro.* She was not, sure.

*Ulyss.* Most sure she was.

*Tro.* Why, my negation hath no taste of madness.

*Ulyss.* Nor mine, my lord. Cressid was here but now.

*Tro.* Let it not be believed for womanhood!

Think, we had mothers; do not give advantage

To stubborn critics, apt, without a theme, 131

For depravation, to square the general sex

By Cressid's rule: rather think this not Cressid.

*Ulyss.* What hath she done, Prince, that can soil our mothers?

*Tro.* Nothing at all, unless that this were she.

*Ther.* Will he swagger himself out on's own eyes?

*Tro.* This she? no, this is Diomed's Cressida.

If beauty have a soul, this is not she;

If souls guide vows, if vows be sanctimonies,

If sanctimony be the gods' delight, 140

If there be rule in unity itself,

This is not she. O madness of discourse,

That cause sets up with and against itself!

Bi-fold authority! where reason can revolt

Without perdition, and loss assume all reason

Without revolt: this is, and is not, Cressid.

Within my soul there doth conduce a fight

Of this strange nature that a thing inseparate

Divides more wider than the sky and earth,  
And yet the spacious breadth of this division 150

Admits no orifex for a point as subtle

As Ariachne's broken woof to enter.

Instance, O instance! strong as Pluto's gates;

Cressid is mine, tied with the bonds of heaven.

Instance, O instance! strong as heaven itself;

The bonds of heaven are slipp'd, dissolved, and loosed;

And with another knot, five-finger-tied,

The fractions of her faith, orts of her love,

The fragments, scraps, the bits and greasy relics

Of her o'er-eaten faith, are bound to Diomed. 160

*Ulyss.* May worthy Troilus be half attach'd

With that which here his passion doth express?

*Tro.* Ay, Greek; and that shall be divulged well

In characters as red as Mars his heart

Inflamed with Venus. Never did young man fancy

With so eternal and so fix'd a soul.

Hark, Greek: as much as I do Cressid love,

So much by weight hate I her Diomed.

That sleeve is mine that he'll bear on his helm;

Were it a casque composed by Vulcan's skill, 170

My sword should bite it; not the dreadful spout

Which shipmen do the hurricano call,

Constringed in mass by the almighty sun,

Shall dizzy with more clamour Neptune's ear

In his descent than shall my prompted sword

Falling on Diomed.

*Ther.* He'll tickle it for his concupy.

*Tro.* O Cressid! O false Cressid! false, false, false!

Let all untruths stand by thy stained name

And they'll seem glorious.

*Ulyss.* O, contain yourself; 180

Your passion draws ears hither.

*Enter* ÆNEAS.

*Æne.* I have been seeking you this hour, my lord.

Hector, by this, is arming him in Troy;

Ajax, your guard, stays to conduct you home.

*Tro.* Have with you, Prince. My courteous lord, adieu.

Farewell, revolted fair! and, Diomed,

Stand fast, and wear a castle on thy head!

*Ulyss.* I'll bring you to the gates.

*Tro.* Accept distracted thanks.

[*Exeunt* TROILUS, ÆNEAS, and ULYSSES.]

*Ther.* Would I could meet that rogue Diomed!

I would croak like a raven; I would bode, I

would bode. Patroclus will give me anything for

the intelligence of this whore. The parrot will

not do more for an almond than he for a commo-



dious drab. Lechery, lechery; still, wars and lechery; nothing else holds fashion. A burning devil take them! *[Exit.]*

SCENE III. *Troy: before Priam's palace*

*Enter HECTOR and ANDROMACHE.*

*And.* When was my lord so much ungently temper'd,

To stop his ears against admonishment?  
Unarm, unarm, and do not fight to-day.

*Hect.* You train me to offend you; get you in.  
By all the everlasting gods, I'll go!

*And.* My dreams will, sure, prove ominous to the day.

*Hect.* No more, I say.

*Enter CASSANDRA.*

*Cas.* Where is my brother Hector?

*And.* Here, sister; arm'd, and bloody in intent.  
Consort with me in loud and dear petition,  
Pursue we him on knees; for I have dream'd 10  
Of bloody turbulence, and this whole night  
Hath nothing been but shapes and forms of slaughter.

*Cas.* O, 'tis true.

*Hect.* Ho! bid my trumpet sound.

*Cas.* No notes of sally, for the heavens, sweet brother.

*Hect.* Be gone, I say. The gods have heard me swear.

*Cas.* The gods are deaf to hot and peevish vows.  
They are polluted offerings, more abhor'd  
Than spotted livers in the sacrifice.

*And.* O, be persuaded! do not count it holy  
To hurt by being just. It is as lawful, 20  
For we would give much, to use violent thefts,  
And rob in the behalf of charity.

*Cas.* It is the purpose that makes strong the vow;

But vows to every purpose must not hold.

Unarm, sweet Hector.

*Hect.* Hold you still, I say;  
Mine honour keeps the weather of my fate.  
Life every man holds dear; but the brave man  
Holds honour far more precious-dear than life.

*Enter TROILUS.*

How now, young man! mean'st thou to fight to-day?

*And.* Cassandra, call my father to persuade. 30  
*[Exit CASSANDRA.]*

*Hect.* No, faith, young Troilus; doff thy harness, youth;

I am to-day i' the vein of chivalry.

Let grow thy sinews till their knots be strong,  
And tempt not yet the brushes of the war.

Unarm thee, go, and doubt thou not, brave boy,  
I'll stand to-day for thee and me and Troy.

*Tro.* Brother, you have a vice of mercy in you,  
Which better fits a lion than a man.

*Hect.* What vice is that, good Troilus? chide me for it.

*Tro.* When many times the captive Grecian falls, 40

Even in the fan and wind of your fair sword,  
You bid them rise, and live.

*Hect.* O, 'tis fair play.

*Tro.* Fool's play, by heaven, Hector.

*Hect.* How now! how now!

*Tro.* For the love of all the gods,  
Let's leave the hermit pity with our mothers,  
And when we have our armours buckled on,  
The venom'd vengeance ride upon our swords,  
Spur them to ruthless work, rein them from ruth.

*Hect.* Fie, savage, fie!

*Tro.* Hector, then 'tis wars.

*Hect.* Troilus, I would not have you fight to-day. 50

*Tro.* Who should withhold me?

Not fate, obedience, nor the hand of Mars  
Beckoning with fiery truncheon my retire;  
Not Priamus and Hecuba on knees,  
Their eyes o'ergalled with recourse of tears;  
Nor you, my brother, with your true sword drawn,

Opposed to hinder me, should stop my way,  
But by my ruin.

*Re-enter CASSANDRA, with PRIAM.*

*Cas.* Lay hold upon him, Priam, hold him fast.  
He is thy crutch; now if thou lose thy stay, 60  
Thou on him leaning, and all Troy on thee,  
Fall all together.

*Pri.* Come, Hector, come, go back.  
Thy wife hath dream'd; thy mother hath had visions;

Cassandra doth foresee; and I myself  
Am like a prophet suddenly enrapt  
To tell thee that this day is ominous.  
Therefore, come back.

*Hect.* Æneas is a-field;  
And I do stand engaged to many Greeks,  
Even in the faith of valour, to appear  
This morning to them.

*Pri.* Ay, but thou shalt not go.

*Hect.* I must not break my faith. 71

You know me dutiful; therefore, dear sir,  
Let me not shame respect; but give me leave  
To take that course by your consent and voice,  
Which you do here forbid me, royal Priam.

*Cas.* O Priam, yield not to him!

*And.* Do not, dear father.

*Hect.* Andromache, I am offended with you.  
Upon the love you bear me, get you in.

[*Exit ANDROMACHE.*]

*Tro.* This foolish, dreaming, superstitious girl  
Makes all these bodements.

*Cas.* O, farewell, dear Hector!  
Look, how thou diest! look, how thy eye turns  
pale! 81

Look, how thy wounds do bleed at many vents!  
Hark, how Troy roars! how Hecuba cries out!  
How poor Andromache shrills her dolours forth!  
Behold, distraction, frenzy, and amazement,  
Like witless antics, one another meet,  
And all cry, Hector! Hector's dead! O Hector!

*Tro.* Away! away!

*Cas.* Farewell; yet, soft! Hector, I take my  
leave.

Thou dost thyself and all our Troy deceive. [*Exit.*  
*Hect.* You are amazed, my liege, at her ex-  
claim. 91

Go in and cheer the town. We'll forth and fight,  
Do deeds worth praise, and tell you them at  
night.

*Pri.* Farewell! the gods with safety stand about  
thee!

[*Exeunt severally PRIAM and HECTOR. Alarums.*]

*Tro.* They are at it, hark! Proud Diomed, be-  
lieve,

I come to lose my arm, or win my sleeve.

*Enter PANDARUS.*

*Pan.* Do you hear, my lord? do you hear?

*Tro.* What now?

*Pan.* Here's a letter come from yond poor girl.

*Tro.* Let me read. 100

*Pan.* A whoreson tisick, a whoreson rascally  
tisick so troubles me, and the foolish fortune of  
this girl; and what one thing, what another, that  
I shall leave you one o' these days. And I have a  
rheum in mine eyes too, and such an ache in my  
bones that, unless a man were cursed, I cannot  
tell what to think on't. What says she there?

*Tro.* Words, words, mere words, no matter  
from the heart;

The effect doth operate another way. 109  
*Tearing the letter.*

Go, wind, to wind, there turn and change to-  
gether.

My love with words and errors still she feeds;  
But edifies another with her deeds.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE IV. *Plains between Troy and the Grecian  
camp*

*Alarums: excursions. Enter THERSITES.*

*Ther.* Now they are clapper-clawing one an-

other; I'll go look on. That dissembling abomin-  
able varlet, Diomed, has got that same scurvy  
doting foolish young knave's sleeve of Troy  
there in his helm. I would fain see them meet;  
that that same young Trojan ass, that loves the  
whore there, might send that Greekish whore-  
masterly villain, with the sleeve, back to the dis-  
sembling luxurious drab, of a sleeveless errand.  
O' the t'other side, the policy of those crafty  
swearing rascals, that stale old mouse-eaten dry  
cheese, Nestor, and that same dog-fox, Ulysses,  
is not proved worth a blackberry. They set me  
up, in policy, that mongrel cur, Ajax, against that  
dog of as bad a kind, Achilles. And now is the cur  
Ajax prouder than the cur Achilles, and will not  
arm to-day; whereupon the Grecians begin to  
proclaim barbarism, and policy grows into an ill  
opinion. Soft! here comes sleeve, and t'other.

*Enter DIOMEDES, TROILUS following.*

*Tro.* Fly not; for shouldst thou take the river  
Styx, 20

I would swim after.

*Dio.* Thou dost miscall retire.

I do not fly, but advantageous care  
Withdrew me from the odds of multitude.

Have at thee!

*Ther.* Hold thy whore, Grecian!—now for thy  
whore, Trojan!—now the sleeve, now the sleeve!

[*Exeunt TROILUS and DIOMEDES, fighting.*]

*Enter HECTOR.*

*Hect.* What art thou, Greek? art thou for  
Hector's match?

Art thou of blood and honour?

*Ther.* No, no, I am a rascal; a scurvy railing  
knave; a very filthy rogue. 31

*Hect.* I do believe thee. Live. [*Exit.*]

*Ther.* God-a-mercy, that thou wilt believe me;  
but a plague break thy neck for frightening me!  
What's become of the wenching rogues? I think  
they have swallowed one another. I would laugh  
at that miracle. Yet, in a sort, lechery eats itself.  
I'll seek them. [*Exit.*]

SCENE V. *Another part of the plains*

*Enter DIOMEDES and a Servant.*

*Dio.* Go, go, my servant, take thou Troilus'  
horse;

Present the fair steed to my lady Cressid.  
Fellow, commend my service to her beauty;  
Tell her I have chastised the amorous Trojan,  
And am her knight by proof.

*Serv.* I go, my lord. [*Exit.*]

*Enter AGAMEMNON.*



*Agam.* Renew, renew! The fierce Polydamas  
Hath beat down Menon; bastard Margarelon  
Hath Doreus prisoner,  
And stands colossus-wise, waving his beam,  
Upon the pashed corpses of the kings 10  
Epistrophus and Cediis; Polyxenes is slain,  
Amphimachus and Thoas deadly hurt,  
Patroclus ta'en or slain, and Palamedes  
Sore hurt and bruised. The dreadful Sagittary  
Appals our numbers. Haste we, Diomed,  
To reinforcement, or we perish all.

*Enter NESTOR.*

*Nest.* Go, bear Patroclus' body to Achilles;  
And bid the snail-paced Ajax arm for shame.  
There is a thousand Hectors in the field.  
Now here he fights on Galathea his horse, 20  
And there lacks work; anon he's there afoot,  
And there they fly or die, like scaled sculls  
Before the belching whale; then is he yonder,  
And there the strawy Greeks, ripe for his edge,  
Fall down before him, like the mower's swath.  
Here, there, and everywhere, he leaves and  
takes,  
Dexterity so obeying appetite  
That what he will he does, and does so much  
That proof is call'd impossibility.

*Enter ULYSSES.*

*Ulyss.* O, courage, courage, Princes! great  
Achilles 30  
Is arming, weeping, cursing, vowing vengeance.  
Patroclus' wounds have roused his drowsy blood,  
Together with his mangled Myrmidons,  
That noseless, handless, hack'd, and chipp'd,  
come to him,  
Crying on Hector. Ajax hath lost a friend  
And foams at mouth, and he is arm'd and at it,  
Roaring for Troilus, who hath done to-day  
Mad and fantastic execution,  
Engaging and reckoning of himself  
With such a careless force and forceless care 40  
As if that luck, in very spite of cunning,  
Bade him win all.

*Enter AJAX.*

*Ajax.* Troilus! thou coward Troilus! [Exit.  
*Dio.* Ay, there, there.  
*Nest.* So, so, we draw together.

*Enter ACHILLES.*

*Achil.* Where is this Hector?  
Come, come, thou boy-queller, show thy face;  
Know what it is to meet Achilles angry.  
Hector! where's Hector? I will none but Hector.  
[Exeunt.

SCENE VI. *Another part of the plains*

*Enter AJAX.*

*Ajax.* Troilus, thou coward Troilus, show thy  
head!

*Enter DIOMEDES.*

*Dio.* Troilus, I say! where's Troilus?

*Ajax.* What wouldst thou?

*Dio.* I would correct him.

*Ajax.* Were I the general, thou shouldst have  
my office

Ere that correction. Troilus, I say! what, Troilus!

*Enter TROILUS.*

*Tro.* O traitor Diomed! turn thy false face, thou  
traitor,

And pay thy life thou owest me for my horse!

*Dio.* Ha, art thou there?

*Ajax.* I'll fight with him alone. Stand, Diomed.

*Dio.* He is my prize; I will not look upon. 10

*Tro.* Come, both you cogging Greeks; have at  
you both! [Exeunt, fighting.

*Enter HECTOR.*

*Hect.* Yea, Troilus? O, well fought, my young-  
est brother!

*Enter ACHILLES.*

*Achil.* Now do I see thee, ha! have at thee,  
Hector!

*Hect.* Pause, if thou wilt.

*Achil.* I do disdain thy courtesy, proud  
Trojan.

Be happy that my arms are out of use;  
My rest and negligence befriends thee now,  
But thou anon shalt hear of me again;  
Till when, go seek thy fortune. [Exit.

*Hect.* Fare thee well.

I would have been much more a fresher man, 20  
Had I expected thee. How now, my brother!

*Re-enter TROILUS.*

*Tro.* Ajax hath ta'en Æneas. Shall it be?  
No, by the flame of yonder glorious heaven,  
He shall not carry him; I'll be ta'en too,  
Or bring him off. Fate, hear me what I say!  
I reckon not though I end my life to-day. [Exit.

*Enter one in sumptuous armour.*

*Hect.* Stand, stand, thou Greek; thou art a good-  
ly mark.

No, wilt thou not? I like thy armour well;

I'll frush it and unlock the rivets all,

But I'll be master of it. Wilt thou not, beast,  
abide?

Why, then fly on, I'll hunt thee for thy hide. 31  
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VII. *Another part of the plains*

*Enter* ACHILLES, *with* MYRMIDONS.

*Achil.* Come here about me, you my Myrmidons;

Mark what I say. Attend me where I wheel:  
Strike not a stroke, but keep yourselves in  
breath;

And when I have the bloody Hector found,  
Empale him with your weapons round about;  
In fellest manner execute your aims.

Follow me, sirs, and my proceedings eye.  
It is decreed Hector the great must die. [*Exeunt.*]

*Enter* MENELAUS and PARIS, *fighting; then*  
THERSITES.

*Ther.* The cuckold and the cuckold-maker are  
at it. Now bull! now, dog! 'Loo, Paris, 'loo! now  
my double-henned sparrow! 'loo, Paris, 'loo! The  
bull has the game; ware horns, ho!

[*Exeunt* PARIS and MENELAUS.]

*Enter* MARGARELON.

*Mar.* Turn, slave, and fight.

*Ther.* What are thou?

*Mar.* A bastard son of Priam's.

*Ther.* I am a bastard too; I love bastards. I am  
a bastard begot, bastard instructed, bastard in  
mind, bastard in valour, in everything illegiti-  
mate. One bear will not bite another, and where-  
fore should one bastard? Take heed, the quarrel's  
most ominous to us. If the son of a whore fight  
for a whore, he tempts judgement. Farewell, bas-  
tard. [*Exit.*]

*Mar.* The devil take thee, coward! [*Exit.*]

SCENE VIII. *Another part of the plains*

*Enter* HECTOR.

*Hect.* Most putrefied core, so fair without,  
Thy goodly armour thus hath cost thy life.  
Now is my day's work done; I'll take good  
breath.

Rest, sword; thou hast thy fill of blood and death.

*Puts off his helmet and hangs his shield behind*  
*him.*

*Enter* ACHILLES and MYRMIDONS.

*Achil.* Look, Hector, how the sun begins to set;  
How ugly night comes breathing at his heels.  
Even with the vail and darkening of the sun,  
To close the day up, Hector's life is done.

*Hect.* I am unarm'd; forego this vantage, Greek.

*Achil.* Strike, fellows, strike; this is the man I  
seek. [HECTOR falls. 10]

So, Ilion, fall thou next! now, Troy, sink down!  
Here lies thy heart, thy sinews, and thy bone.  
On, Myrmidons, and cry you all amain,  
"Achilles hath the mighty Hector slain."

*A retreat sounded.*

Hark! a retire upon our Grecian part.

*Myr.* The Trojan trumpets sound the like, my  
lord.

*Achil.* The dragon wing of night o'erspreads  
the earth,

And, stickler-like, the armies separates.

My half-sup'd sword, that frankly would have  
fed,

Pleased with this dainty bait, thus goes to bed. 20  
*Sheathes his sword.*

Come, tie his body to my horse's tail;

Along the field I will the Trojan trail. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IX. *Another part of the plains*

*Enter* AGAMEMNON, AJAX, MENELAUS, NESTOR,  
DIOMEDES, and others, *marching. Shouts within.*

*Agam.* Hark! hark! what shout is that?

*Nest.* Peace, drums!

[*Within*] Achilles! Achilles! Hector's slain!  
Achilles!

*Dio.* The bruit is, Hector's slain, and by Achil-  
les.

*Ajax.* If it be so, yet bragless let it be;  
Great Hector was a man as good as he.

*Agam.* March patiently along. Let one be sent  
To pray Achilles see us at our tent.

If in his death the gods have us befriended, 9  
Great Troy is ours, and our sharp wars are  
ended. [*Exeunt, marching.*]

SCENE X. *Another part of the plains*

*Enter* AENEAS and Trojans.

*Aene.* Stand, ho! yet are we masters of the field.  
Never go home; here starve we out the night.

*Enter* TROILUS.

*Tro.* Hector is slain.

*All.* Hector! the gods forbid!

*Tro.* He's dead; and at the murderer's horse's  
tail,

In basely sort, dragg'd through the shameful  
field.

Frown on, you heavens, effect your rage with  
speed!

Sit, gods, upon your thrones, and smile at Troy!  
I say, at once let your brief plagues be mercy,  
And linger not our sure destructions on! 9

*Aene.* My lord, you do discomfort all the host.

*Tro.* You understand me not that tell me so.

I do not speak of flight, of fear, of death,  
But dare all imminence that gods and men



Address their dangers in. Hector is gone.  
 Who shall tell Priam so, or Hecuba?  
 Let him that will a screech-owl aye be call'd,  
 Go in to Troy, and say there, "Hector's dead!"  
 There is a word will Priam turn to stone;  
 Make wells and Niobes of the maids and wives,  
 Cold statues of the youth, and, in a word, 20  
 Scare Troy out of itself. But, march away.  
 Hector is dead; there is no more to say.  
 Stay yet. You vile abominable tents,  
 Thus proudly pight upon our Phrygian plains,  
 Let Titan rise as early as he dare.  
 I'll through and through you! and, thou great-  
 sized coward,  
 No space of earth shall sunder our two hates.  
 I'll haunt thee like a wicked conscience still,  
 That mouldeth goblins swift as frenzy's thoughts.  
 Strike a free march to Troy! with comfort go; 30  
 Hope of revenge shall hide our inward woe.

*[Exeunt ÆNEAS and Trojans.]*

*As TROILUS is going out, enter, from the other  
 side, PANDARUS.*

*Pan.* But hear you, hear you!

*Tro.* Hence, broker-lackey! ignomy and shame  
 Pursue thy life, and live aye with thy name!

*[Exit.]*

*Pan.* A goodly medicine for my aching bones!  
 O world! world! world! thus is the poor agent  
 despised! O traitors and bawds, how earnestly  
 are you set a-work, and how ill requited! why  
 should our endeavour be so loved and the per-  
 formance so loathed? what verse for it? what  
 instance for it? Let me see: 41

"Full merrily the humble-bee doth sing,  
 Till he hath lost his honey and his sting;  
 And being once subdued in armed tail,  
 Sweet honey and sweet notes together fail."

Good traders in the flesh, set this in your painted  
 cloths.

As many as be here of Pandar's hall,  
 Your eyes, half out, weep out at Pandar's fall;  
 Or if you cannot weep, yet give some groans, 50  
 Though not for me, yet for your aching bones.  
 Brethren and sisters of the hold-door trade,  
 Some two months hence my will shall here be  
 made.

It should be now, but that my fear is this,  
 Some galled goose of Winchester would hiss.  
 Till then I'll sweat and seek about for eases,  
 And at that time bequeathe you my diseases.

*[Exit.]*

# ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

KING OF FRANCE  
DUKE OF FLORENCE  
BERTRAM, *Count of Rousillon*  
LAFEU, *an old lord*  
PAROLLES, *a follower of Bertram*  
TWO FRENCH LORDS *in the Florentine service*  
RINALDO, *steward to the Countess*  
A CLOWN, *servant to the Countess*  
THREE FRENCH LORDS, *attending on the King*  
A GENTLEMAN, *a stranger*  
TWO SOLDIERS  
A MESSENGER

COUNTRESS OF ROUSILLON, *mother to Bertram*  
HELENA, *a gentlewoman protected by the Countess*  
A WIDOW of Florence  
DIANA, *daughter to the Widow*  
MARIANA, *neighbour and friend to the Widow*

NON-SPEAKING: *Lords, Officers; Soldiers, French and Florentine; Violenta, neighbour and friend to the Widow; Attendants*

SCENE: *Rousillon, Paris, Florence, Marseilles*

## ACT I

### SCENE I. *Rousillon: the Count's palace*

*Enter BERTRAM, the COUNTESS OF ROUSILLON, HELENA, and LAFEU, all in black.*

*Count.* In delivering my son from me, I bury a second husband.

*Ber.* And I in going, madam, weep o'er my father's death anew; but I must attend his Majesty's command, to whom I am now in ward, evermore in subjection.

*Laf.* You shall find of the King a husband, madam; you, sir, a father. He that so generally is at all times good must of necessity hold his virtue to you, whose worthiness would stir it up where it wanted rather than lack it where there is such abundance.

*Count.* What hope is there of his Majesty's amendment?

*Laf.* He hath abandoned his physicians, madam; under whose practices he hath persecuted time with hope, and finds no other advantage in the process but only the losing of hope by time.

*Count.* This young gentlewoman had a father—O, that "had"! how sad a passage 'tis!—whose skill was almost as great as his honesty; had it stretched so far, would have made nature immortal, and death should have play for lack of work. Would, for the King's sake, he were living! I think it would be the death of the King's disease.

*Laf.* How called you the man you speak of, madam?

*Count.* He was famous, sir, in his profession, and it was his great right to be so: Gerard de Narbon.

*Laf.* He was excellent indeed, madam. The King very lately spoke of him admiringly and mourningly. He was skilful enough to have lived still, if knowledge could be set up against mortality.

*Ber.* What is it, my good lord, the King languishes of?

*Laf.* A fistula, my lord.

*Ber.* I heard not of it before.

*Laf.* I would it were not notorious. Was this gentlewoman the daughter of Gerard de Narbon?

*Count.* His sole child, my lord, and bequeathed to my overlooking. I have those hopes of her good that her education promises; her dispositions she inherits, which makes fair gifts fairer; for where an unclean mind carries virtuous qualities, there commendations go with pity; they are virtues and traitors too. In her they are the better for their simpleness; she derives her honesty and achieves her goodness.

*Laf.* Your commendations, madam, get from her tears.

*Count.* 'Tis the best brine a maiden can season her praise in. The remembrance of her father never approaches her heart but the tyranny of her sorrows takes all livelihood from her cheek. No more of this, Helena; go to, no more; lest it be rather thought you affect a sorrow than have it.



*Hel.* I do affect a sorrow indeed, but I have it too.

*Laf.* Moderate lamentation is the right of the dead, excessive grief the enemy to the living.

*Count.* If the living be enemy to the grief, the excess makes it soon mortal.

*Ber.* Madam, I desire your holy wishes.

*Laf.* How understand we that?

*Count.* Be thou blest, Bertram, and succeed thy father 70

In manners, as in shape! thy blood and virtue  
Contend for empire in thee, and thy goodness  
Share with thy birthright! Love all, trust a few,  
Do wrong to none. Be able for thine enemy  
Rather in power than use, and keep thy friend  
Under thy own life's key. Be check'd for silence,  
But never tax'd for speech. What heaven more  
will,

That thee may furnish and my prayers pluck  
down,

Fall on thy head! Farewell, my lord;  
'Tis an unseason'd courtier; good my lord, 80  
Advise him.

*Laf.* He cannot want the best  
That shall attend his love.

*Count* Heaven bless him! Farewell, Bertram. *[Exit.]*

*Ber.* *[To HELENA]* The best wishes that can be  
forged in your thoughts be servants to you! Be  
comfortable to my mother, your mistress, and  
make much of her.

*Laf.* Farewell, pretty lady. You must hold the  
credit of your father.

*[Exeunt BERTRAM and LAFEU.]*

*Hel.* O, were that all! I think not on my  
father; 90  
And these great tears grace his remembrance  
more

Than those I shed for him. What was he like?  
I have forgot him. My imagination  
Carries no favour in't but Bertram's.  
I am undone; there is no living, none,  
If Bertram be away. 'Twere all one  
That I should love a bright particular star  
And think to wed it, he is so above me.  
In his bright radiance and collateral light  
Must I be comforted, not in his sphere. 100  
The ambition in my love thus plagues itself.  
The hind that would be mated by the lion  
Must die for love. 'Twas pretty, though a plague,  
To see him every hour; to sit and draw  
His arched brows, his hawking eye, his curls,  
In our heart's table; heart too capable  
Of every line and trick of his sweet favour.  
But now he's gone, and my idolatrous fancy  
Must sanctify his reliques. Who comes here?

*Enter PAROLLES.*

*[Aside]* One that goes with him. I love him for  
his sake; 110

And yet I know him a notorious liar,  
Think him a great way fool, solely a coward;  
Yet these fix'd evils sit so fit in him,  
That they take place, when virtue's steely bones  
Look bleak i' the cold wind. Withal, full oft we  
see

Cold wisdom waiting on superfluous folly.

*Par.* Save you, fair queen!

*Hel.* And you, monarch!

*Par.* No.

*Hel.* And no. 120

*Par.* Are you meditating on virginity?

*Hel.* Ay. You have some stain of soldier in  
you; let me ask you a question. Man is enemy to  
virginity; how may we barricado it against  
him?

*Par.* Keep him out.

*Hel.* But he assails; and our virginity, though  
valiant, in the defence yet is weak. Unfold to us  
some warlike resistance.

*Par.* There is none. Man, sitting down before  
you, will undermine you and blow you up. 130

*Hel.* Bless our poor virginity from underminers  
and blowers up! Is there no military policy, how  
virgins might blow up men?

*Par.* Virginity being blown down, man will  
quicker be blown up. Marry, in blowing him  
down again, with the breach yourselves made,  
you lose your city. It is not politic in the com-  
monwealth of nature to preserve virginity. Loss  
of virginity is rational increase and there was  
never virgin got till virginity was first lost. That  
you were made of is metal to make virgins.  
Virginity by being once lost may be ten times  
found; by being ever kept, it is ever lost. 'Tis  
too cold a companion; away with 't!

*Hel.* I will stand for 't a little, though therefore  
I die a virgin.

*Par.* There's little can be said in 't; 'tis against  
the rule of nature. To speak on the part of vir-  
ginity, is to accuse your mothers, which is most  
infallible disobedience. He that hangs himself is  
a virgin. Virginity murders itself; and should be  
buried in highways out of all sanctified limit, as a  
desperate offensiveness against nature. Virginity  
breeds mites, much like a cheese; consumes itself  
to the very paring, and so dies with feeding his  
own stomach. Besides, virginity is peevish,  
proud, idle, made of self-love, which is the most  
inhibited sin in the canon. Keep it not; you can-  
not choose but lose by 't. Out with 't! within  
ten year it will make itself ten, which is a

goodly increase; and the principal itself not much the worse. Away with 't!

*Hel.* How might one do, sir, to lose it to her own liking?

*Par.* Let me see. Marry, ill, to like him that ne'er it likes. 'Tis a commodity will lose the gloss with lying; the longer kept, the less worth. Of with 't while 'tis vendible; answer the time of request. Virginity, like an old courtier, wears her cap out of fashion; richly suited, but unsuitable; just like the brooch and the tooth-pick, which wear not now. Your date is better in your pie and your porridge than in your cheek. And your virginity, your old virginity, is like one of our French withered pears, it looks ill, it eats drily; marry, 'tis a withered pear; it was formerly better; marry, yet 'tis a withered pear. Will you anything with it?

*Hel.* Not my virginity yet . . . . .

There shall your master have a thousand loves,  
A mother and a mistress and a friend, 187  
A phoenix, captain, and an enemy,  
A guide, a goddess, and a sovereign,  
A counsellor, a traitress, and a dear;  
His humble ambition, proud humility,  
His jarring concord, and his discord dulcet,  
His faith, his sweet disaster; with a world  
Of pretty, fond, adonious christendoms,  
That blinking Cupid gossips. Now shall he—  
I know not what he shall. God send him well!  
The court's a learning place, and he is one— 197

*Par.* What one, i' faith?

*Hel.* That I wish well. 'Tis pity—

*Par.* What's pity?

*Hel.* That wishing well had not a body in't,  
Which might be felt; that we, the poorer born,  
Whose baser stars do shut us up in wishes,  
Might with effects of them follow our friends,  
And show what we alone must think, which never  
Returns us thanks. 200

*Enter PAGE.*

*Page.* Monsieur Parolles, my lord calls for you. [Exit.]

*Par.* Little Helen, farewell. If I can remember thee, I will think of thee at court.

*Hel.* Monsieur Parolles, you were born under a charitable star.

*Par.* Under Mars, I.

*Hel.* I especially think, under Mars.

*Par.* Why under Mars?

*Hel.* The wars have so kept you under that you must needs be born under Mars. 210

*Par.* When he was predominant.

*Hel.* When he was retrograde, I think, rather.

*Par.* Why think you so?

*Hel.* You go so much backward when you fight.

*Par.* That's for advantage.

*Hel.* So is running away, when fear proposes the safety. But the composition that your valour and fear makes in you is a virtue of a good wing, and I like the wear well. 219

*Par.* I am so full of business, I cannot answer thee acutely. I will return perfect courtier; in the which, my instruction shall serve to naturalize thee, so thou wilt be capable of a courtier's counsel and understand what advice shall thrust upon thee; else thou diest in thine unthankfulness, and thine ignorance makes thee away. Farewell. When thou hast leisure, say thy prayers; when thou hast none, remember thy friends. Get thee a good husband, and use him as he uses thee. So farewell. [Exit.] 230

*Hel.* Our remedies oft in ourselves do lie,  
Which we ascribe to heaven. The fated sky  
Gives us free scope, only doth backward pull  
Our slow designs when we ourselves are dull.  
What power is it which mounts my love so high,  
That makes me see, and cannot feed mine eye?  
The mightiest space in fortune nature brings  
To join like likes and kiss like native things. 239  
Impossible be strange attempts to those  
That weigh their pains in sense and do suppose  
What hath been cannot be. Who ever strove  
To show her merit that did miss her love?  
The King's disease—my project may deceive  
me,  
But my intents are fix'd and will not leave me. [Exit.]

SCENE II. *Paris: the King's palace*

*Flourish of cornets. Enter the KING OF FRANCE, with letters, LORDS, and divers Attendants.*

*King.* The Florentines and Senoys are by the ears,

Have fought with equal fortune, and continue  
A braving war.

*1st Lord.* So 'tis reported, sir.

*King.* Nay, 'tis most credible; we here receive it  
A certainty, vouch'd from our cousin Austria,  
With caution that the Florentine will move us  
For speedy aid; wherein our dearest friend  
Prejudicates the business and would seem  
To have us make denial.

*1st Lord.* His love and wisdom,  
Approved so to your Majesty, may plead 10  
For amplest credence.

*King.* He hath arm'd our answer,  
And Florence is denied before he comes.  
Yet, for our gentlemen that mean to see  
The Tuscan service, freely have they leave  
To stand on either part.

*2nd Lord.* It well may serve  
A nursery to our gentry who are sick



For breathing and exploit.

*King.* What's he comes here?

*Enter BERTRAM, LAFEU, and PAROLLES.*

*1st Lord.* It is the Count Rousillon, my good lord,

Young Bertram.

*King.* Youth, thou bear'st thy father's face;  
Frank nature, rather curious than in haste, 20

Hath well composed thee. Thy father's moral parts

Mayst thou inherit too! Welcome to Paris.

*Ber.* My thanks and duty are your Majesty's.

*King.* I would I had that corporal soundness now,

As when thy father and myself in friendship

First tried our soldiership! He did look far

Into the service of the time and was

Disciplined of the bravest. He lasted long;

But on us both did haggish age steal on

And wore us out of act. It much repairs me 30

To talk of your good father. In his youth

He had the wit which I can well observe

To-day in our young lords; but they may jest

Till their own scorn return to them unnoted

Ere they can hide their levity in honour

So like a courtier. Contempt nor bitterness

Were in his pride or sharpness; if they were,

His equal had awaked them, and his honour,

Clock to itself, knew the true minute when

Exception bid him speak, and at this time 40

His tongue obey'd his hand. Who were below him

He used as creatures of another place

And bow'd his eminent top to their low ranks,

Making them proud of his humility,

In their poor praise he humbled. Such a man

Might be a copy to these younger times;

Which, follow'd well, would demonstrate them now

But goes backward.

*Ber.* His good remembrance, sir,

Lies richer in your thoughts than on his tomb;

So in proof lives not his epitaph 50

As in your royal speech.

*King.* Would I were with him! He would always say—

Methinks I hear him now; his plausible words

He scatter'd not in ears, but grafted them,

To grow there and to bear—"Let me not live"—

This is good melancholy oft began,

On the catastrophe and heel of pastime,

When it was out—"Let me not live," quoth he,

"After my flame lacks oil, to be the snuff

Of younger spirits, whose apprehensive senses 60

All but new things disdain; whose judgments are

Mere fathers of their garments; whose constancies

Expire before their fashions." This he wish'd.

I after him do after him wish too,

Since I nor wax nor honey can bring home,

I quickly were dissolved from my hive,

To give some labourers room.

*2nd Lord.*

You are loved, sir;

They that least lend it you shall lack you first.

*King.* I fill a place, I know't. How long is't,

Count,

Since the physician at your father's died? 70

He was much famed.

*Ber.*

Some six months since, my lord

*King.* If he were living, I would try him yet.

Lend me an arm; the rest have worn me out

With several applications. Nature and sickness

Debate it at their leisure. Welcome, Count;

My son's no dearer.

*Ber.*

Thank your Majesty.

[*Exeunt. Flourish.*]

### SCENE III. Rousillon: The Count's palace

*Enter COUNTESS, STEWARD, and CLOWN.*

*Count.* I will now hear; what say you of this gentlewoman?

*Stew.* Madam, the care I have had to even your content, I wish might be found in the calendar of my past endeavours; for then we wound our modesty and make foul the clearness of our deservings, when of ourselves we publish them.

*Count.* What does this knave here? Get you gone, sirrah. The complaints I have heard of you I do not all believe. 'Tis my slowness that I do not; for I know you lack not folly to commit them, and have ability enough to make such knaveries yours.

*Clo.* 'Tis not unknown to you, madam, I am a poor fellow.

*Count.* Well, sir.

*Clo.* No, madam, 'tis not so well that I am poor, though many of the rich are damned; but, if I may have your ladyship's good will to go to the world, Isbel the woman and I will do as we may. 21

*Count.* Wilt thou needs be a beggar?

*Clo.* I do beg your good will in this case.

*Count.* In what case?

*Clo.* In Isbel's case and mine own. Service is no heritage; and I think I shall never have the blessing of God till I have issue o' my body; for they say barnes are blessings.

*Count.* Tell me thy reason why thou wilt marry.

*Clo.* My poor body, madam, requires it. I am driven on by the flesh; and he must needs go that the devil drives.

*Count.* Is this all your worship's reason?

*Clo.* Faith, madam, I have other holy reasons, such as they are.

*Count.* May the world know them?

*Clo.* I have been, madam, a wicked creature, as you and all flesh and blood are; and, indeed, I do marry that I may repent.

*Count.* Thy marriage, sooner than thy wickedness. 41

*Clo.* I am out o' friends, madam; and I hope to have friends for my wife's sake.

*Count.* Such friends are thine enemies, knave.

*Clo.* You're shallow, madam, in great friends; for the knaves come to do that for me which I am aware of. He that ears my land spares my team and gives me leave to in the crop; if I be his cuckold, he's my drudge. He that comforts my wife is the cherisher of my flesh and blood; he that cherishes my flesh and blood loves my flesh and blood; he that loves my flesh and blood is my friend; ergo, he that kisses my wife is my friend. If men could be contented to be what they are, there were no fear in marriage; for young Charbon the puritan and old Poysam the papist, howsome'er their hearts are severed in religion, their heads are both one; they may joul horns together, like any deer i' the herd.

*Count.* Wilt thou ever be a foul-mouthed and calumnious knave? 61

*Clo.* A prophet I, madam; and I speak the truth the next way:

"For I the ballad will repeat,  
Which men full true shall find;  
Your marriage comes by destiny,  
Your cuckoo sings by kind."

*Count.* Get you gone, sir; I'll talk with you more anon.

*Stew.* May it please you, madam, that he bid Helen come to you. Of her I am to speak. 71

*Count.* Sirrah, tell my gentlewoman I would speak with her; Helen, I mean.

*Clo.* [*Sings.*]

"Was this fair face the cause, quoth she,  
Why the Grecians sacked Troy?  
Fond done, done fond,  
Was this King Priam's joy?  
With that she sighed as she stood,  
With that she sighed as she stood,  
And gave this sentence then;  
Among nine bad if one be good,  
Among nine bad if one be good,  
There's yet one good in ten."

80

*Count.* What, one good in ten? you corrupt the song, sirrah.

*Clo.* One good woman in ten, madam; which is a purifying o' the song. Would God would serve the world so all the year! we'd find no fault with the tithe-woman, if I were the parson. One in ten, quoth a'! An we might have a good

woman born but one every blazing star, or at an earthquake, 'twould mend the lottery well; a man may draw his heart out, ere a' pluck one.

*Count.* You'll be gone, sir knave, and do as I command you.

*Clo.* That man should be at woman's command, and yet no hurt done! Though honesty be no puritan, yet it will do no hurt; it will wear the surplice of humility over the black gown of a big heart. I am going, forsooth. The business is for Helen to come hither. [*Exit.* 101

*Count.* Well, now.

*Stew.* I know, madam, you love your gentlewoman entirely.

*Count.* Faith, I do. Her father bequeathed her to me; and she herself, without other advantage, may lawfully make title to as much love as she finds. There is more owing her than is paid; and more shall be paid her than she'll demand.

*Stew.* Madam, I was very late more near her than I think she wished me. Alone she was, and did communicate to herself her own words to her own ears; she thought, I dare vow for her, they touched not any stranger sense. Her matter was, she loved your son. Fortune, she said, was no goddess, that had put such difference betwixt their two estates; Love no god, that would not extend his might, only where qualities were level; Dian no queen of virgins, that would suffer her poor knight surprised, without rescue in the first assault or ransom afterward. This she delivered in the most bitter touch of sorrow that e'er I heard virgin exclaim in, which I held my duty speedily to acquaint you withal; sithence, in the loss that may happen, it concerns you something to know it.

*Count.* You have discharged this honestly; keep it to yourself. Many likelihoods informed me of this before, which hung so tottering in the balance that I could neither believe nor misdoubt. Pray you, leave me. Stall this in your bosom; and I thank you for your honest care. I will speak with you further anon.

[*Exit STEWARD.*]

*Enter HELENA.*

Even so it was with me when I was young.

If ever we are nature's, these are ours; this thorn

Doth to our rose of youth rightly belong;

Our blood to us, this to our blood is born;

It is the show and seal of nature's truth,

Where love's strong passion is impress'd in youth.

By our remembrances of days foregone,

140



Such were our faults, or then we thought them none.

Her eye is sick on't; I observe her now.

*Hel.* What is your pleasure, madam?

*Count.* You know, Helen,  
I am a mother to you.

*Hel.* Mine honourable mistress.

*Count.* Nay, a mother.

Why not a mother? When I said "a mother,"  
Methought you saw a serpent: what's in  
"mother,"

That you start at it? I say, I am your mother;  
And put you in the catalogue of those  
That were enwombed mine. 'Tis often seen 150  
Adoption strives with nature and choice breeds  
A native slip to us from foreign seeds.  
You ne'er oppress'd me with a mother's groan  
Yet I express to you a mother's care.

God's mercy, maiden! does it curd thy blood  
To say I am thy mother? What's the matter,  
That this distemper'd messenger of wet,  
The many-colour'd Iris, rounds thine eye?  
Why? that you are my daughter?

*Hel.* That I am not.

*Count.* I say, I am your mother.

*Hel.* Pardon, madam; 160  
The Count Rousillon cannot be my brother.  
I am from humble, he from honour'd name;  
No note upon my parents, his all noble.  
My master, my dear lord he is; and I  
His servant live, and will his vassal die.  
He must not be my brother.

*Count.* Nor I your mother?

*Hel.* You are my mother, madam; would you  
were—

So that my lord your son were not my brother—  
Indeed my mother! or were you both our mothers,  
I care no more for than I do for heaven, 170  
So I were not his sister. Can't no other,  
But, I your daughter, he must be my brother?

*Count.* Yes, Helen, you might be my daughter-  
in-law.

God shield you mean it not! daughter and mother  
So strive upon your pulse. What, pale again?  
My fear hath catch'd your fondness. Now I see  
The mystery of your loneliness, and find  
Your salt tears' head: Now to all sense 'tis gross  
You love my son; invention is ashamed,  
Against the proclamation of thy passion, 180  
To say thou dost not; therefore tell me true;  
But tell me then, 'tis so; for, look, thy cheeks  
Confess it, th' one to th' other; and thine eyes  
See it so grossly shown in thy behaviours  
That in their kind they speak it. Only sin  
And hellish obstinacy tie thy tongue,  
That truth should be suspected. Speak, is't so?

If it be so, you have wound a goodly clew;  
If it be not, forswear 't. Howe'er, I charge thee,  
As heaven shall work in me for thine avail, 190  
To tell me truly.

*Hel.* Good madam, pardon me!

*Count.* Do you love my son?

*Hel.* Your pardon, noble mistress!

*Count.* Love you my son?

*Hel.* Do not you love him, madam?

*Count.* Go not about; my love hath in't a bond,  
Whereof the world takes note. Come, come,  
disclose

The state of your affection; for your passions  
Have to the full appeach'd.

*Hel.* Then, I confess,  
Here on my knee, before high heaven and you,  
That before you, and next unto high heaven,  
I love your son. 200

My friends were poor, but honest; so's my love.  
Be not offended; for it hurts not him  
That he is loved of me. I follow him not  
By any token of presumptuous suit;

Nor would I have him till I do deserve him;  
Yet never know how that desert should be.

I know I love in vain, strive against hope;  
Yet in this capricious and intenable sieve  
I still pour in the waters of my love  
And lack not to lose still. Thus, Indian-like, 210  
Religious in mine error, I adore

The sun, that looks upon his worshipper,  
But knows of him no more. My dearest madam,

Let not your hate encounter with my love  
For loving where you do; but if yourself,

Whose aged honour cites a virtuous youth,  
Did ever in so true a flame of liking  
Wish chastely and love dearly, that your Dian  
Was both herself and love; O, then, give pity  
To her, whose state is such that cannot choose  
But lend and give where she is sure to lose; 221

That seeks not to find that her search implies,  
But riddle-like lives sweetly where she dies!

*Count.* Had you not lately an intent—speak  
truly—

To go to Paris?

*Hel.* Madam, I had.

*Count.* Wherefore? tell true.

*Hel.* I will tell truth; by grace itself I swear.  
You know my father left me some prescriptions  
Of rare and proved effects, such as his reading  
And manifest experience had collected  
For general sovereignty; and that he will'd me  
In heedfull'st reservation to bestow them, 231  
As notes whose faculties inclusive were  
More than they were in note. Amongst the rest  
There is a remedy, approved, set down,  
To cure the desperate languishings whereof

The King is render'd lost.

*Count.* This was your motive  
For Paris, was it? speak.

*Hel.* My lord your son made me to think of  
this;

Else Paris and the medicine and the King  
Had from the conversation of my thoughts 240  
Haply been absent then.

*Count.* But think you, Helen,  
If you should tender your supposed aid,  
He would receive it? he and his physicians  
Are of a mind; he, that they cannot help him,  
They, that they cannot help. How shall they  
credit

A poor unlearned virgin, when the schools,  
Embowell'd of their doctrine, have left off  
The danger to itself?

*Hel.* There's something in't,  
More than my father's skill, which was the  
greatest

Of his profession, that his good receipt 250  
Shall for my legacy be sanctified  
By the luckiest stars in heaven; and, would your  
honour

But give me leave to try success, I'd venture  
The well-lost life of mine on his Grace's cure  
By such a day and hour.

*Count.* Dost thou believe 't?

*Hel.* Ay, madam, knowingly.

*Count.* Why, Helen, thou shalt have my leave  
and love,

Means and attendants and my loving greetings  
To those of mine in court. I'll stay at home  
And pray God's blessing into thy attempt. 260  
Be gone to-morrow; and be sure of this,  
What I can help thee to thou shalt not miss.

[*Exeunt.*]

## ACT II

### SCENE I. *Paris: the King's palace*

*Flourish of cornets. Enter the KING, attended with  
divers young LORDS taking leave for the Floren-  
tine war, BERTRAM, and PAROLLES.*

*King.* Farewell, young lords; these warlike  
principles

Do not throw from you; and you, my lords, fare-  
well!

Share the advice betwixt you; if both gain, all  
The gift doth stretch itself as 'tis received,  
And is enough for both.

*1st Lord.* 'Tis our hope, sir,  
After well enter'd soldiers, to return  
And find your Grace in health.

*King.* No, no, it cannot be; and yet my heart  
Will not confess he owes the malady

That doth my life besiege, Farewell, young  
lords; 10

Whether I live or die, be you the sons  
Of worthy Frenchmen; let higher Italy—  
Those bated that inherit but the fall  
Of the last monarchy—see that you come  
Not to woo honour, but to wed it; when  
The bravest questant shrinks, find what you seek,  
That fame may cry you loud. I say, farewell.

*2nd Lord.* Health, at your bidding, serve your  
majesty!

*King.* Those girls of Italy, take heed of them.  
They say, our French lack language to deny, 20  
If they demand. Beware of being captives,  
Before you serve.

*Both.* Our hearts receive your warnings.

*King.* Farewell. Come hither to me.

[*Exit, attended.*]

*1st Lord.* O my sweet lord, that you will stay  
behind us!

*Par.* 'Tis not his fault, the spark.

*2nd Lord.* O, 'tis brave wars!

*Par.* Most admirable. I have seen those wars!

*Ber.* I am commanded here, and kept a coil  
with

"Too young" and "the next year" and "'tis too  
early."

*Par.* An thy mind stand to't, boy, steal away  
bravely.

*Ber.* I shall stay here the forehorse to a smock,  
Creaking my shoes on the plain masonry, 3  
Till honour be bought up and no sword worn  
But one to dance with! By heaven, I'll steal  
away.

*1st Lord.* There's honour in the theft.

*Par.* Commit it, Count.

*2nd Lord.* I am your accessory; and so, fare-  
well.

*Ber.* I grow to you, and our parting is a tor-  
tured body.

*1st Lord.* Farewell, captain.

*2nd Lord.* Sweet Monsieur Parolles!

*Par.* Noble heroes, my sword and yours are  
kin. Good sparks and lustrous, a word, good  
metals: you shall find in the regiment of the  
Spinii one Captain Spurio, with his cicatrice, an  
emblem of war, here on his sinister cheek; it  
was this very sword entrenched it. Say to him, I  
live; and observe his reports for me.

*1st Lord.* We shall, noble captain.

[*Exeunt LORDS.*]

*Par.* Mars dote on you for his novices! what  
will ye do?

*Ber.* Stay. The King!

50

*Re-enter KING, BERTRAM and PAROLLES retire.*



*Par.* [*To BERTRAM.*] Use a more spacious ceremony to the noble lords; you have restrained yourself within the list of too cold an adieu. Be more expressive to them; for they wear themselves in the cap of the time, there do muster true gait, eat, speak, and move under the influence of the most received star; and though the devil lead the measure, such are to be followed. After them, and take a more dilated farewell.

*Ber.* And I will do so. 60

*Par.* Worthy fellows; and like to prove most sinewy sword-men.

[*Exeunt BERTRAM and PAROLLES.*]

*Enter LAFEU.*

*Laf.* [*Kneeling*] Pardon, my lord, for me and for my tidings.

*King.* I'll fee thee to stand up.

*Laf.* Then here's a man stands, that has brought his pardon.

I would you had kneel'd, my lord, to ask me mercy,

And that at my bidding you could so stand up.

*King.* I would I had; so I had broke thy pate, And ask'd thee mercy for't.

*Laf.* Good faith, across. But, my good lord, tis thus; 70

Will you be cured of your infirmity?

*King.* No.

*Laf.* O, will you eat no grapes, my royal fox?

Yes, but you will my noble grapes, an if My royal fox could reach them. I have seen a medicine

That's able to breathe life into a stone, Quicken a rock, and make you dance canary With spritely fire and motion; whose simple touch

Is powerful to araise King Pepin, nay, To give great Charlemain a pen in's hand 80 And write to her a love-line.

*King.* What "her" is this?

*Laf.* Why, Doctor She. My lord, there's one arrived,

If you will see her. Now, by my faith and honour, If seriously I may convey my thoughts In this my light deliverance, I have spoke With one that, in her sex, her years, profession, Wisdom, and constancy, hath amazed me more Than I dare blame my weakness. Will you see her,

For that is her demand, and know her business? That done, laugh well at me.

*King.* Now, good Lafeu, 90 Bring in the admiration; that we with thee May spend our wonder too, or take off thine By wondering how thou took'st it.

*Laf.* Nay, I'll fit you, And not be all day neither [*Exit.*]

*King.* Thus he his special nothing ever prologues.

*Re-enter LAFEU, with HELENA.*

*Laf.* Nay, come your ways.

*King.* This haste hath wings indeed.

*Laf.* Nay, come your ways;

This is his majesty; say your mind to him.

A traitor you do look like; but such traitors His Majesty seldom fears. I am Cressid's uncle, That dare leave two together; fare you well. 101 [*Exit.*]

*King.* Now, fair one, does your business follow us?

*Hel.* Ay, my good lord.

Gerard de Narbon was my father;

In what he did profess, well found.

*King.*

I knew him.

*Hel.* The rather will I spare my praises towards him;

Knowing him is enough. On's bed of death

Many receipts he gave me; chiefly one,

Which, as the dearest issue of his practice, And of his old experience the only darling, 110

He bade me store up, as a triple eye, Safer than mine own two, more dear; I have so; And, hearing your high Majesty is touch'd With that malignant cause wherein the honour Of my dear father's gift stands chief in power, I come to tender it and my appliance With all bound humbleness.

*King.* We thank you, maiden;

But may not be so credulous of cure, When our most learned doctors leave us And The congregated college have concluded 120

That labouring art can never ransom nature

From her inaidible estate; I say we must not

So stain our judgement, or corrupt our hope,

To prostitute our past-cure malady

To empirics, or to disserve so

Our great self and our credit, to esteem

A senseless help when help past sense we deem.

*Hel.* My duty then shall pay me for my pains.

I will no more enforce mine office on you;

Humbly entreating from your royal thoughts 130

A modest one, to bear me back again.

*King.* I cannot give thee less, to be call'd grateful.

Thou thought'st to help me; and such thanks I give

As one near death to those that wish him live.

But what at full I know, thou know'st no part,

I knowing all my peril, thou no art.

*Hel.* What I can do can do no hurt to try,

Since you set up your rest 'gainst remedy  
He that of greatest works is finisher  
Oft does them by the weakest minister. 140  
So holy writ in babes hath judgement shown,  
When judges have been babes; great floods have  
    flow'n

From simple sources, and great seas have dried  
When miracles have by the greatest been denied.  
Oft expectation fails and most oft there  
Where most it promises, and oft it hits  
Where hope is coldest and despair most fits

*King.* I must not hear thee; fare thee well,  
    kind maid;

Thy pains not used must by thyself be paid.  
Proffers not took reap thanks for their reward. 150

*Hel.* Inspired merit so by breath is barr'd.  
It is not so with Him that all things knows  
As 'tis with us that square our guess by shows;  
But most it is presumption in us when  
The help of heaven we count the act of men.  
Dear sir, to my endeavours give consent;  
Of heaven, not me, make an experiment.  
I am not an impostor that proclaim  
Myself against the level of mine aim;  
But know I think and think I know most sure 160  
My art is not past power nor you past cure.

*King.* Art thou so confident? within what space  
Hapest thou my cure?

*Hel.* The great'st grace lending grace,  
Ere twice the horses of the sun shall bring  
Their fiery torcher his diurnal ring,  
Ere twice in muck and occidental damp  
Moist Hesperus hath quench'd his sleepy lamp,  
Or four and twenty times the pilot's glass  
Hath told the thievish minutes how they pass,  
What is infirm from your sound parts shall fly, 170  
Health shall live free and sickness freely die.

*King.* Upon thy certainty and confidence  
What darest thou venture?

*Hel.* Tax of impudence,  
A strumpet's boldness, a divulged shame  
Traduced by odious ballads, my maiden's name  
Sear'd otherwise; nay, worse—if worse—ex-  
    tended

With vilest torture let my life be ended.

*King.* Methinks in thee some blessed spirit doth  
    speak

His powerful sound within an organ weak;  
And what impossibility would slay 180  
In common sense, sense saves another way.  
Thy life is dear; for all that life can rate  
Worth name of life in thee hath estimate,  
Youth, beauty, wisdom, courage, all  
That happiness and prime can happy call.  
Thou this to hazard needs must intimate  
Skill infinite or monstrous desperate.

Sweet practiser, thy physic I will try,  
That ministers thine own death if I die.

*Hel.* If I break time, or flinch in property 190  
Of what I spoke, unpitied let me die,  
And well deserved. Not helping, death's my fee;  
But, if I help, what do you promise me?

*King.* Make thy demand.

*Hel.* But will you make it even?

*King.* Ay, by my sceptre and my hopes of  
    heaven.

*Hel.* Then shalt thou give me with thy kingly  
    hand

What husband in thy power I will command,  
Exempted be from me the arrogance  
To choose from forth the royal blood of France,  
My low and humble name to propagate 200  
With any branch or image of thy state;  
But such a one, thy vassal, whom I know  
Is free for me to ask, thee to bestow.

*King.* Here is my hand; the premises observed,  
Thy will by my performance shall be served.  
So make the choice of thy own time, for I,  
Thy resolved patient, on thee still rely.  
More should I question thee, and more I must,  
Though more to know could not be more to  
    trust,

From whence thou camest, how tended on; but  
    rest 210

Unquestion'd welcome and undoubted blest.  
Give me some help here, ho! If thou proceed  
As high as word, my deed shall match thy meed.  
    *[Flourish. Exeunt.]*

## SCENE II. Rousillon: the Count's palace

*Enter COUNTESS and CLOWN.*

*Count.* Come on, sir; I shall now put you to  
the height of your breeding.

*Clo.* I will show myself highly fed and lowly  
taught. I know my business is but to the court.

*Count.* To the court! why, what place make you  
special, when you put off that with such con-  
tempt? But to the court!

*Clo.* Truly, madam, if God have lent a man any  
manners, he may easily put it off at court. He  
that cannot make a leg, put off's cap, kiss his  
hand and say nothing, has neither leg, hands, lip,  
nor cap; and indeed such a fellow, to say pre-  
cisely, were not for the court; but for me, I have  
an answer will serve all men.

*Count.* Marry, that's a bountiful answer that  
fits all questions.

*Clo.* It is like a barber's chair that fits all but-  
tocks, the pin-buttock, the quatch-buttock, the  
brawn buttock, or any buttock.

*Count.* Will your answer serve fit to all ques-  
    tions? 21



*Clo.* As fit as ten groats is for the hand of an attorney, as your French crown for your taffeta punk, as Tib's rush for Tom's forefinger, as a pancake for Shrove Tuesday, a morris for May-day, as the nail to his hole, the cuckold to his horn, as a scolding quean to a wrangling knave, as the nun's lip to the friar's mouth, nay, as the pudding to his skin.

*Count.* Have you, I say, an answer of such fitness for all questions? 31

*Clo.* From below your duke to beneath your constable, it will fit any question.

*Count.* It must be an answer of most monstrous size that must fit all demands.

*Clo.* But a trifle neither, in good faith, if the learned should speak truth of it. Here it is, and all that belongs to't. Ask me if I am a courtier: it shall do you no harm to learn. 39

*Count.* To be young again, if we could, I will be a fool in question, hoping to be the wiser by your answer. I pray you, sir, are you a courtier?

*Clo.* O Lord, sir! There's a simple putting off. More, more, a hundred of them.

*Count.* Sir, I am a poor friend of yours, that loves you.

*Clo.* O Lord, sir! Thick, thick, spare not me.

*Count.* I think, sir, you can eat none of this homely meat.

*Clo.* O Lord, sir! Nay, put me to't, I warrant you. 51

*Count.* You were lately whipped, sir, as I think.

*Clo.* O Lord, sir! spare not me.

*Count.* Do you cry, "O Lord, sir!" at your whipping, and "spare not me"? Indeed your "O Lord, sir!" is very sequent to your whipping; you would answer very well to a whipping, if you were but bound to't.

*Clo.* I ne'er had worse luck in my life in my "O Lord, sir!" I see things may serve long, but not serve ever. 61

*Count.* I play the noble housewife with the time,

To entertain't so merrily with a fool.

*Clo.* O Lord, sir! why, there's serves well again.

*Count.* An end, sir; to your business. Give Helen this,

And urge her to a present answer back.

Commend me to my kinsmen and my son.

This is not much.

*Clo.* Not much commendation to them. 70

*Count.* Not much employment for you. You understand me?

*Clo.* Most fruitfully; I am there before my legs.

*Count.* Haste you again. [*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE III. *Paris: the King's palace*

*Enter BERTRAM, LAFEU, and PAROLLES.*

*Laf.* They say miracles are past; and we have our philosophical persons, to make modern and familiar, things supernatural and causeless. Hence is it that we make trifles of terrors, ensconcing ourselves into seeming knowledge, when we should submit ourselves to an unknown fear.

*Par.* Why, 'tis the rarest argument of wonder that hath shot out in our latter times.

*Ber.* And so 'tis.

*Laf.* To be relinquished of the artists— 10

*Par.* So I say.

*Laf.* Both of Galen and Paracelsus.

*Par.* So I say.

*Laf.* Of all the learned and authentic fellows—

*Par.* Right; so I say.

*Laf.* That gave him out incurable—

*Par.* Why, there 'tis; so say I too.

*Laf.* Not to be helped—

*Par.* Right; as 'twere, a man assured of a—

*Laf.* Uncertain life, and sure death. 20

*Par.* Just, you say well; so would I have said.

*Laf.* I may truly say, it is a novelty to the world.

*Par.* It is, indeed; if you will have it in showing, you shall read it in—what do ye call there?

*Laf.* A showing of a heavenly effect in an earthly actor.

*Par.* That's it; I would have said the very same.

*Laf.* Why, your dolphin is not lustier. 'Fore me, I speak in respect— 31

*Par.* Nay, 'tis strange, 'tis very strange, that is the brief and the tedious of it; and he's of a most facinorous spirit that will not acknowledge it to be the—

*Laf.* Very hand of heaven.

*Par.* Ay, so I say.

*Laf.* In a most weak—[*pausing*] and debile minister, great power, great transcendence; which should, indeed, give us a further use to be made than alone the recovery of the King, as to be—[*pausing*] generally thankful.

*Par.* I would have said it; you say well. Here comes the King.

*Enter KING, HELENA, and Attendants.*

*LAFEU and PAROLLES retire.*

*Laf.* *Lustig*, as the Dutchman says. I'll like a maid the better, whilst I have a tooth in my head. Why, he's able to lead her a coranto.

*Par.* *Mort du vinaigre!* is not this Helen? 50

*Laf.* 'Fore God, I think so.

*King.* Go, call before me all the lords in court. Sit, my preserver, by thy patient's side;

And with this healthful hand, whose banish'd  
sense

Thou hast repeal'd, a second time receive  
The confirmation of my promised gift,  
Which but attends thy naming.

*Enter three or four LORDS.*

Fair maid, send forth thine eye. This youthful  
parcel

Of noble bachelors stand at my bestowing,  
O'er whom both sovereign power and father's  
voice 60

I have to use: thy frank election make;  
Thou hast power to choose, and they none to for-  
sake.

*Hel.* To each of you one fair and virtuous mis-  
tress

Fall, when Love please! marry, to each, but one!

*Laf.* I'd give bay Curtal and his furniture,  
My mouth no more were broken than these boys',  
And writ as little beard.

*King.* Peruse them well.  
Not one of those but had a noble father.

*Hel.* Gentlemen,  
Heaven hath through me restored the King to  
health. 70

*All.* We understand it, and thank heaven for  
you.

*Hel.* I am a simple maid, and therein wealthiest,  
That I protest I simply am a maid.

Please it your Majesty, I have done already.

The blushes in my cheeks thus whisper me,  
"We blush that thou shouldst choose; but, be re-  
fused,

Let the white death sit on thy cheek for ever;  
We'll ne'er come there again."

*King.* Make choice; and see,  
Who shuns thy love shuns all his love in me.

*Hel.* Now, Dian, from thy altar do I fly, 80  
And to imperial Love, that god most high,

Do my sighs stream. Sir, will you hear my suit?

*1st Lord.* And grant it.

*Hel.* Thanks, sir; all the  
rest is mute.

*Laf.* I had rather be in this choice than throw  
ames-ace for my life.

*Hel.* The honour, sir, that flames in your fair  
eyes,

Before I speak, so threateningly replies.

Love make your fortunes twenty times above  
Her that so wishes and her humble love!

*2nd Lord.* No better, if you please.

*Hel.* My wish receive, 90  
Which great Love grant! and so, I take my leave.

*Laf.* Do all they deny her? An they were sons of  
mine, I'd have them whipped; or I would send

them to the Turk, to make eunuchs of.

*Hel.* Be not afraid that I your hand should take;  
I'll never do you wrong for your own sake.  
Blessing upon your vows! and in your bed  
Find fairer fortune, if you ever wed!

*Laf.* These boys are boys of ice, they'll none  
have her. Sure, they are bastards to the English;  
the French ne'er got 'em. 101

*Hel.* You are too young, too happy, and too  
good,

To make yourself a son out of my blood.

*4th Lord.* Fair one, I think not so.

*Laf.* There's one grape yet; I am sure thy father  
drunk wine. But if thou be'st not an ass, I am a  
youth of fourteen; I have known thee already.

*Hel.* [To BERTRAM] I dare not say I take you;  
but I give

Me and my service, ever whilst I live, 110  
Into your guiding power. This is the man.

*King.* Why, then, young Bertram, take her;  
she's thy wife.

*Ber.* My wife, my liege! I shall beseech your  
Highness,

In such a business give me leave to use  
The help of mine own eyes.

*King.* Know'st thou not, Bertram,  
What she has done for me?

*Ber.* Yes, my good lord;

But never hope to know why I should marry her.

*King.* Thou know'st she has raised me from my  
sickly bed.

*Ber.* But follows it, my lord, to bring me down  
Must answer for your raising? I know her well.  
She had her breeding at my father's charge. 121

A poor physician's daughter my wife! Disdain  
Rather corrupt me ever!

*King.* 'Tis only title thou disdain'st in her, the  
which

I can build up. Strange is it that our bloods,  
Of colour, weight, and heat, pour'd all together,  
Would quite confound distinction, yet stand off  
In differences so mighty. If she be  
All that is virtuous, save what thou dislikest,  
A poor physician's daughter, thou dislikest 130  
Of virtue for the name. But do not so.

From lowest place when virtuous things proceed,  
The place is dignified by the doer's deed.

Where great additions swell's, and virtue none,  
It is a dropp'd honour. Good alone

Is good without a name. Vileness is so;

The property by what it is should go,

Not by the title. She is young, wise, fair;

In these to nature she's immediate heir,  
And these breed honour. That is honour's scorn,

Which challenges itself as honour's born 141  
And is not like the sire. Honours thrive,



When rather from our acts we them derive  
 Than our foregoers. The mere word's a slave  
 Debosh'd on every tomb, on every grave  
 A lying trophy, and as oft is dumb  
 Where dust and damn'd oblivion is the tomb  
 Of honour'd bones indeed. What should be  
 said?

If thou canst like this creature as a maid,  
 I can create the rest. Virtue and she 150

Is her own dower; honour and wealth from me.

*Ber.* I cannot love her, nor will strive to do't.

*King.* Thou wrong'st thyself, if thou shouldst  
 strive to choose.

*Hel.* That you are well restored, my lord, I'm  
 glad.

Let the rest go.

*King.* My honour's at the stake; which to de-  
 feat,

I must produce my power. Here, take her hand,  
 Proud scornful boy, unworthy this good gift;  
 That dost in vile misprision shackle up  
 My love and her desert; that canst not dream,  
 We, poisoning us in her defective scale, 161  
 Shall weigh thee to the beam; that wilt not know,  
 It is in us to plant thine honour where  
 We please to have it grow. Check thy contempt.  
 Obey our will, which travails in thy good.  
 Believe not thy disdain, but presently  
 Do thine own fortunes that obedient right  
 Which both thy duty owes and our power claims;  
 Or I will throw thee from my care for ever  
 Into the staggers and the careless lapse 170  
 Of youth and ignorance; both my revenge and  
 hate

Loosing upon thee, in the name of justice,  
 Without all terms of pity. Speak; thine answer.

*Ber.* Pardon, my gracious lord; for I submit  
 My fancy to your eyes. When I consider  
 What great creation and what dole of honour  
 Flies where you bid it, I find that she, which late  
 Was in my nobler thoughts most base, is now  
 The praised of the King; who, so ennobled,  
 Is as 'twere born so.

*King.* Take her by the hand, 180  
 And tell her she is thine; to whom I promise  
 A counterpoise, if not to thy estate  
 A balance more replete.

*Ber.* I take her hand.

*King.* Good fortune and the favour of the King  
 Smile upon this contract; whose ceremony  
 Shall seem expedient on the now-born brief,  
 And be perform'd to-night. The solemn feast  
 Shall more attend upon the coming space,  
 Expecting absent friends. As thou lovest her,  
 Thy love's to me religious; else, does err. 190

[*Exeunt all but LAFEU and PAROLLES.*]

*Laf.* [*Advancing*] Do you hear, monsieur? a  
 word with you.

*Par.* Your pleasure, sir?

*Laf.* Your lord and master did well to make his  
 recantation.

*Par.* Recantation! My lord! my master!

*Laf.* Ay; is it not a language I speak?

*Par.* A most harsh one, and not to be understood  
 without bloody succeeding. My master!

*Laf.* Are you companion to the Count Rousil-  
 lon? 201

*Par.* To any count, to all counts, to what is man.

*Laf.* To what is count's man. Count's master is  
 of another style.

*Par.* You are too old, sir; let it satisfy you, you  
 are too old.

*Laf.* I must tell thee, sirrah, I write man; to  
 which title age cannot bring thee. 209

*Par.* What I dare too well do, I dare not do.

*Laf.* I did think thee, for two ordinaries, to be a  
 pretty wise fellow; thou didst make tolerable  
 vent of thy travel; it might pass. Yet the scarfs  
 and the bannerets about thee did manifoldly dis-  
 suade me from believing thee a vessel of too great  
 a burthen. I have now found thee; when I lose  
 thee again, I care not. Yet art thou good for noth-  
 ing but taking up; and that thou'rt scarce worth.

*Par.* Hadst thou not the privilege of antiquity  
 upon thee— 221

*Laf.* Do not plunge thyself too far in anger. Let  
 thou hasten thy trial; which if—Lord have mercy  
 on thee for a hen! So, my good window of lattice,  
 fare thee well. Thy casement I need not open,  
 for I look through thee. Give me thy hand.

*Par.* My lord, you give me most egregious in-  
 dignity.

*Laf.* Ay, with all my heart; and thou art worthy  
 of it. 231

*Par.* I have not, my lord, deserved it.

*Laf.* Yes, good faith, every dram of it; and I will  
 not bate thee a scruple.

*Par.* Well, I shall be wiser.

*Laf.* Even as soon as thou canst, for thou hast  
 to pull at a smack o' the contrary. If ever thou  
 be'st bound in thy scarf and beaten, thou shalt  
 find what it is to be proud of thy bondage. I have  
 a desire to hold my acquaintance with thee, or  
 rather my knowledge, that I may say in the de-  
 fault, "He is a man I know."

*Par.* My lord, you do me most insupportable  
 vexation.

*Laf.* I would it were hell-pains for thy sake,  
 and my poor doing eternal; for doing I am past,  
 as I will by thee, in what motion age will give  
 me leave. [*Exit.*]

*Par.* Well, thou hast a son shall take this dis-

grace off me; scurvy, old, filthy, scurvy lord! Well, I must be patient; there is no fettering of authority. I'll beat him, by my life, if I can meet him with any convenience, an he were double and double a lord. I'll have no more pity of his age than I would have of—I'll beat him, an if I could but meet him again.

*Re-enter LAFEU.*

*Laf.* Sirrah, your lord and master's married; there's news for you. You have a new mistress.

*Par.* I most unfeignedly beseech your lordship to make some reservation of your wrongs. He is my good lord. Whom I serve above is my master.

*Laf.* Who? God?

*Par.* Ay, sir.

*Laf.* The devil it is that's thy master. Why dost thou garter up thy arms o' this fashion? dost make hose of thy sleeves? do other servants so? Thou wert best set thy lower part where thy nose stands. By mine honour, if I were but two hours younger, I'd beat thee. Methinks, thou art a general offence, and every man should beat thee. I think thou wast created for men to breathe themselves upon thee.

*Par.* This is hard and undeserved measure, my lord.

*Laf.* Go to, sir; you were beaten in Italy for picking a kernel out of a pomegranate; you are a vagabond and no true traveller; you are more saucy with lords and honourable personages than the commission of your birth and virtue gives you heraldry. You are not worth another word, else I'd call you knave. I leave you. [*Exit.* 281

*Par.* Good, very good; it is so then. Good, very good; let it be concealed awhile.

*Re-enter BERTRAM.*

*Ber.* Undone, and forfeited to cares forever!

*Par.* What's the matter, sweetheart?

*Ber.* Although before the solemn priest I have sworn,  
I will not bed her.

*Par.* What, what, sweetheart?

*Ber.* O my Parolles, they have married me!  
I'll to the Tuscan wars, and never bed her. 290

*Par.* France is a dog-hole, and it no more merits  
The tread of a man's foot. To the wars!

*Ber.* There's letters from my mother. What the import is, I know not yet.

*Par.* Ay, that would be known. To the wars,  
my boy, to the wars!

He wears his honour in a box unseen,  
That hugs his kicky-wicky here at home,  
Spending his manly marrow in her arms,  
Which should sustain the bound and high curvet

Of Mars's fiery steed. To other regions 300  
France is a stable; we that dwell in't jades;  
Therefore, to the war!

*Ber.* It shall be so. I'll send her to my house,  
Acquaint my mother with my hate to her,  
And wherefore I am fled; write to the King  
That which I durst not speak: his present gift  
Shall furnish me to those Italian fields,  
Where noble fellows strike. War is no strife  
To the dark house and the detested wife.

*Par.* Will this *capriccio* hold in thee? art sure?

*Ber.* Go with me to my chamber, and advise me.  
I'll send her straight away. To-morrow 312  
I'll to the wars, she to her single sorrow.

*Par.* Why, these balls bound; there's noise in it.  
'Tis hard!

A young man married is a man that's marr'd;  
Therefore away, and leave her bravely; go.  
The King has done you wrong; but, hush, 'tis so.  
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV. *Paris: the King's palace*

*Enter HELENA and CLOWN.*

*Hel.* My mother greets me kindly. Is she well?

*Clo.* She is not well; but yet she has her health.  
She's very merry; but yet she is not well; but  
thanks be given, she's very well and wants nothing  
i' the world; but yet she is not well.

*Hel.* If she be very well, what does she ail,  
that she's not very well?

*Clo.* Truly, she's very well indeed, but for two  
things.

*Hel.* Wha two things? 10

*Clo.* One, that she's not in heaven, whither God  
send her quickly! the other, that she's in earth,  
from whence God send her quickly!

*Enter PAROLLES.*

*Par.* Bless you, my fortunate lady!

*Hel.* I hope, sir, I have your good will to have  
mine own good fortunes.

*Par.* You had my prayers to lead them on; and  
to keep them on, have them still. O, my knave,  
how does my old lady?

*Clo.* So that you had her wrinkles and I her  
money, I would she did as you say. 21

*Par.* Why, I say nothing.

*Clo.* Marry, you are the wiser man; for many a  
man's tongue shakes out his master's undoing.  
To say nothing, to do nothing, to know nothing,  
and to have nothing, is to be a great part of your  
title; which is within a very little of nothing.

*Par.* Away! thou'rt a knave.

*Clo.* You should have said, sir, before a knave  
thou'rt a knave; that's, before me thou'rt a  
knave; this had been truth, sir. 31



*Par.* Go to, thou art a witty fool; I have found thee.

*Clo.* Did you find me in yourself, sir? or were you taught to find me? The search, sir, was profitable; and much fool may you find in you, even to the world's pleasure and the increase of laughter.

*Par.* A good knave, i' faith, and well fed  
Madam, my lord will go away to-night; 40  
A very serious business calls on him.  
The great prerogative and rite of love,  
Which, as your due, time claims, he does acknowledge;

But puts it off to a compell'd restraint;  
Whose want, and whose delay, is strew'd with sweets,

Which they distil now in the curbed time,  
To make the coming hour o'erflow with joy  
And pleasure drown the brim.

*Hel.* What's his will else?

*Par.* That you take your instant leave o' the King,  
And make this haste as your own good proceeding, 50  
Strengthen'd with what apology you think  
May make it probable need.

*Hel.* What more commands he?  
*Par.* That, having this obtain'd, you presently  
Attend his further pleasure.

*Hel.* In everything I wait upon his will.  
*Par.* I shall report it so.

*Hel.* I pray you. [*Exit PAROLLES.*]  
Come, sirrah. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V. *Paris: the King's palace*

*Enter LAFEU and BERTRAM.*

*Laf.* But I hope your lordship thinks not him a soldier.

*Ber.* Yes, my lord, and of very valiant approof.

*Laf.* You have it from his own deliverance.

*Ber.* And by other warranted testimony.

*Laf.* Then my dial goes not true. I took this lark for a bunting.

*Ber.* I do assure you, my lord, he is very great in knowledge and accordingly valiant.

*Laf.* I have then sinned against his experience and transgressed against his valour; and my state that way is dangerous, since I cannot yet find in my heart to repent. Here he comes; I pray you, make us friends; I will pursue the amity.

*Enter PAROLLES.*

*Par.* [*To BERTRAM*] These things shall be done, sir.

*Laf.* Pray you, sir, who's his tailor?

*Par.* Sir?

*Laf.* O, I know him well, I, sir; he, sir, 's a good workman, a very good tailor. 21

*Ber.* [*Aside to PAROLLES*] Is she gone to the King?

*Par.* She is.

*Ber.* Will she away to-night?

*Par.* As you'll have her.

*Ber.* I have writ my letters, casketed my treasure,

Given order for our horses; and to-night,  
When I should take possession of the bride,  
End ere I do begin. 29

*Laf.* A good traveller is something at the latter end of a dinner; but one that lies three thirds and uses a known truth to pass a thousand nothings with, should be once heard and thrice beaten. God save you, captain.

*Ber.* Is there any unkindness between my lord and you, monsieur?

*Par.* I know not how I have deserved to run into my lord's displeasure.

*Laf.* You have made shift to run into 't, boots and spurs and all, like him that leaped into the custard; and out of it you'll run again, rather than suffer question for your residence.

*Ber.* It may be you have mistaken him, my lord.

*Laf.* And shall do so ever, though I took him at 's prayers. Fare you well, my lord; and believe this of me, there can be no kernel in this light nut; the soul of this man is his clothes. Trust him not in matter of heavy consequence; I have kept of them tame, and know their natures. Farewell, monsieur. I have spoken better of you than you have or will to deserve at my hand; but we must do good against evil. [*Exit.*]

*Par.* An idle lord, I swear.

*Ber.* I think so.

*Par.* Why, do you not know him?

*Ber.* Yes, I do know him well, and common speech

Gives him a worthy pass. Here comes my clog.

*Enter HELENA.*

*Hel.* I have, sir, as I was commanded from you, Spoke with the King and have procured his leave For present parting; only he desires 61  
Some private speech with you.

*Ber.* I shall obey his will.

You must not marvel, Helen, at my course,  
Which holds not colour with the time, nor does  
The ministration and required office  
On my particular. Prepared I was not  
For such a business; therefore am I found  
So much unsettled. This drives me to entreat you  
That presently you take your way for home;  
And rather muse than ask why I entreat you, 70

For my respects are better than they seem  
And my appointments have in them a need  
Greater than shows itself at the first view  
To you that know them not. This to my mother:  
*Giving a letter.*

'Twill be two days ere I shall see you, so  
I leave you to your wisdom.

*Hel.* Sir, I can nothing say,  
But that I am your most obedient servant.

*Ber.* Come, come, no more of that.

*Hel.* And ever shall  
With true observance seek to eke out that  
Wherein toward me my homely stars have fail'd  
To equal my great fortune.

*Ber.* Let that go. 81  
My ha te is very great. Farewell; hie home.

*Hel.* Pray, sir, your pardon.

*Ber.* Well, what would you say?

*Hel.* I am not worthy of the wealth I owe,  
Nor dare I say 'tis mine, and yet it is;  
But, like a timorous thief, most fain would steal  
What law does vouch mine own.

*Ber.* What would you have?  
*Hel.* Something; and scarce so much; nothing,  
indeed.

I would not tell you what I would, my lord.

Faith, yes; 90  
Strangers and foes do sunder, and not kiss.

*Ber.* I pray you, stay not, but in haste to horse.

*Hel.* I shall not break your bidding, good my  
lord.

*Ber.* Where are my other men, monsieur? Fare-  
well. [*Exit HELENA.*]

Go thou toward home; where I will never come  
Whilst I can shake my sword or hear the drum.  
Away, and for our flight.

*Par.* Bravely, *coragio!*  
[*Exeunt.*]

### ACT III

#### SCENE I. *Florence: the Duke's palace*

*Flourish.* Enter the DUKE OF FLORENCE, attended;  
the two French LORDS, with a troop of soldiers.

*Duke.* So that from point to point now have you  
heard

The fundamental reasons of this war,  
Whose great decision hath much blood let  
forth

And more thirsts after.

*1st Lord.* Holy seems the quarrel  
Upon your Grace's part; black and fearful  
On the opposer.

*Duke.* Therefore we marvel much our cousin  
France

Would in so just a business shut his bosom

Against our borrowing prayers.

*2nd Lord.* Good my lord, 10  
The reasons of our state I cannot yield,  
But like a common and an outward man,  
That the great figure of a council frames  
By self-unable motion; therefore dare not  
Say what I think of it, since I have found  
Myself in my incertain grounds to fail  
As often as I guess'd.

*Duke.* Be it his pleasure.  
*1st Lord.* But I am sure the younger of our na-  
ture,

That surfeit on their ease, will day by day  
Come here for physic.

*Duke.* Welcome shall they be; 20  
And all the honours that can fly from us  
Shall on them settle. You know your places well;  
When better fall, for your avails they fell.  
To-morrow to the field. [*Flourish. Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE II. *Roussillon: the Count's palace*

Enter COUNTESS and CLOWN.

*Count.* It hath happened all as I would have had  
it, save that he comes not along with her

*Clo.* By my troth, I take my young lord to be a  
very melancholy man.

*Count.* By what observance, I pray you?

*Clo.* Why, he will look upon his boot and sing;  
mend the ruff and sing; ask questions and sing;  
pick his teeth and sing. I know a man that had  
this trick of melancholy sold a goodly manor for  
a song. 10

*Count.* Let me see what he writes, and when he  
means to come. [*Opening a letter.*]

*Clo.* I have no mind to Isbel since I was at court.  
Our old ling and our Isbels o' the country are  
nothing like your old ling and your Isbels o' the  
court. The brains of my Cupid's knocked out,  
and I begin to love, as an old man loves money,  
with no stomach.

*Count.* What have we here?

*Clo.* E'en that you have there. [*Exit.* 20

*Count.* [*Reads*] "I have sent you a daughter-in-  
law. She hath recovered the King, and undone  
me. I have wedded her, not bedded her; and  
sworn to make the 'not' eternal. You shall hear  
I am run away. Know it before the report come.  
If there be breadth enough in the world, I will  
hold a long distance. My duty to you.

Your unfortunate son,  
Bertram"

This is not well, rash and unbridled boy, 30  
To fly the favours of so good a King;  
To pluck his indignation on thy head  
By the misprising of a maid too virtuous  
For the contempt of empire.



*Re-enter CLOWN.*

*Clo.* O madam, yonder is heavy news within  
between two soldiers and my young lady!

*Count.* What is the matter?

*Clo.* Nay, there is some comfort in the news,  
some comfort; your son will not be killed so soon  
as I thought he would. 40

*Count.* Why should he be killed?

*Clo.* So say I, madam, if he run away, as I hear  
he does. The danger is in standing to't; that's the  
loss of men, though it be the getting of children.  
Here they come will tell you more; for my part,  
I only hear your son was run away. [Exit.

*Enter HELENA and TWO FRENCH LORDS*

*1st Lord.* Save you, good madam.

*Hel.* Madam, my lord is gone, for ever gone.

*2nd Lord.* Do not say so.

*Count.* Think upon patience. Pray you, gentle-  
men, 50

I have felt so many quirks of joy and grief  
That the first face of neither, on the start,  
Can woman me unto't. Where is my son, I pray  
you?

*2nd Lord.* Madam, he's gone to serve the duke  
of Florence.

We met him thitherward; for thence we  
came,

And, after some dispatch in hand at court,  
Thither we bend again.

*Hel.* Look on his letter, madam; here's my  
passport.

[Reads] "When thou canst get the ring upon my  
finger which never shall come off, and show me  
a child begotten of thy body that I am father to,  
then call me husband; but in such a 'then' I write  
a 'never.' "

This is a dreadful sentence.

*Count.* Brought you this letter, gentlemen?

*1st Lord.* Ay, madam;

And for the contents' sake are sorry for our  
pains.

*Count.* I prithee, lady, have a better cheer;  
If thou engrosses all the griefs are thine,  
Thou rob'st me of a moiety. He was my son;  
But I do wash his name out of my blood, 70  
And thou art all my child. Towards Florence is  
he?

*2nd Lord.* Ay, madam.

*Count.* And to be a soldier?

*2nd Lord.* Such is his noble purpose; and, be-  
lieve't,

The Duke will lay upon him all the honour  
That good convenience claims.

*Count.* Return you thither?

*1st Lord.* Ay, madam, with the swiftest wing of  
speed.

*Hel.* [Reads] "Till I have no wife, I have noth-  
ing in France."

'Tis bitter.

*Count.* Find you that there?

*Hel.* Ay, madam.

*1st Lord.* 'Tis but the boldness of his hand, hap-  
ily, which his heart was not consenting to. 80

*Count.* Nothing in France, until he have no wife!  
There's nothing here that is too good for him  
But only she; and she deserves a lord  
That twenty such rude boys might tend upon  
And call her hourly mistress. Who was with  
him?

*1st Lord.* A servant only, and a gentleman  
Which I have sometime known.

*Count.* Parolles, was it not?

*1st Lord.* Ay, my good lady, he.

*Count.* A very tainted fellow, and full of wick-  
edness.

My son corrupts a well-derived nature 90  
With his inducement.

*1st Lord.* Indeed, good lady,  
The fellow has a deal of that too much,  
Which holds him much to have.

*Count.* You're welcome, gentlemen.

I will entreat you, when you see my son,  
To tell him that his sword can never win  
The honour that he loses. More I'll entreat you  
Written to bear along.

*2nd Lord.* We serve you, madam,  
In that and all your worthiest affairs.

*Count.* Not so, but as we change our cour-  
tesies. 100

Will you draw near?

[Exeunt COUNTESS and the TWO LORDS.]

*Hel.* "Till I have no wife, I have nothing in  
France."

Nothing in France, until he has no wife!  
Thou shalt have none, Rousillon, none in France;  
Then hast thou all again. Poor lord! is't I  
That chase thee from thy country and expose  
Those tender limbs of thine to the event  
Of the none-sparing war? and is it I  
That drive thee from the sportive court, where  
thou

Wast shot at with fair eyes, to be the mark 110  
Of smoky muskets? O you leaden messengers,  
That ride upon the violent speed of fire,  
Fly with false aim; move the still-peering air,  
That sings with piercing; do not touch my lord.  
Whoever shoots at him, I set him there;  
Whoever charges on his forward breast,  
I am the caittiff that do hold him to't;  
And, though I kill him not, I am the cause

His death was so effected. Better 'twere  
 I met the ravin lion when he roar'd 120  
 With sharp constraint of hunger; better 'twere  
 That all the miseries which nature owes  
 Were mine at once. No, come thou home, Rou-  
 sillon,  
 Whence honour but of danger wins a scar,  
 As oft it loses all. I will be gone;  
 My being here it is that holds thee hence.  
 Shall I stay here to do't? no, no, although  
 The air of paradise did fan the house  
 And angels officed all. I will be gone,  
 That pitiful rumour may report my flight, 130  
 To console thine ear. Come, night; end, day!  
 For with the dark, poor thief, I'll steal away.

[Exit.

SCENE III. *Florence: before the Duke's palace*

*Flourish. Enter the DUKE of FLORENCE, BERTRAM,  
 FAROLLES, Soldiers, Drum, and Trumpets.*

*Duke.* The general of our horse thou art; and  
 we,

Great in our hope, lay our best love and credence  
 Upon thy promising fortune.

*Ber.* Sir, it is  
 A charge too heavy for my strength, but yet  
 We'll strive to bear it for your worthy sake  
 To the extreme edge of hazard.

*Duke.* Then go thou forth;  
 And fortune play upon thy prosperous helm,  
 As thy auspicious mistress!

*Ber.* This very day,  
 Great Mars, I put myself into thy file;  
 Make me but like my thoughts, and I shall prove  
 A lover of thy drum, hater of love. [Exeunt. 11

SCENE IV. *Rousillon: the Count's palace*

*Enter COUNTESS and STEWARD.*

*Count.* Alas! and would you take the letter of  
 her?

Might you not know she would do as she has  
 done,

By sending me a letter? Read it again.

*Stew.* [Reads]

"I am Saint Jaques' pilgrim, thither gone.

Ambitious love hath so in me offended,

That barefoot plod I the cold ground upon,

With sainted vow my faults to have amended.

Write, write, that from the bloody course of  
 war

My dearest master, your dear son, may hie.

Bless him at home in peace, whilst I from far 10

His name with zealous fervour sanctify.

His taken labours bid him me forgive;

I, his despiteful Juno, sent him forth

From courtly friends, with camping foes to live,

Where death and danger dogs the heels of  
 worth.

He is too good and fair for Death and me,  
 Whom I myself embrace, to set him free."

*Count.* Ah, what sharp stings are in her mildest  
 words!

Rinaldo, you did never lack advice so much,  
 As letting her pass so. Had I spoke with her, 20  
 I could have well diverted her intents,  
 Which thus she hath prevented.

*Stew.* Pardon me, madam.

If I had given you this at over-night,  
 She might have been o'erta'en; and yet she  
 writes,

Pursuit would be but vain.

*Count.* What angel shall  
 Bless this unworthy husband? he cannot thrive,  
 Unless her prayers, whom heaven delights to  
 hear

And loves to grant, reprieve him from the wrath  
 Of greatest justice. Write, write, Rinaldo,  
 To this unworthy husband of his wife; 30

Let every word weigh heavy of her worth  
 That he does weigh too light. My greatest grief,  
 Though little he do feel it, set down sharply.

Dispatch the most convenient messenger.

When haply he shall hear that she is gone,

He will return; and hope I may that she,  
 Hearing so much, will speed her foot again,  
 Led hither by pure love. Which of them both

Is dearest to me, I have no skill in sense  
 To make distinction. Provide this messenger. 40  
 My heart is heavy and mine age is weak;

Grief would have tears, and sorrow bids me  
 speak. [Exeunt.

SCENE V. *Florence: without the walls. A  
 tucket afar off*

*Enter an old WIDOW of Florence, DIANA, VIOLENTA,  
 and MARIANA, with other Citizens.*

*Wid.* Nay, come; for if they do approach the  
 city, we shall lose all the sight.

*Dia.* They say the French Count has done most  
 honourable service.

*Wid.* It is reported that he has taken their great-  
 est commander; and that with his own hand he  
 slew the Duke's brother. [Tucket.] We have lost  
 our labour; they are gone a contrary way. Hark!  
 you may know by their trumpets. 9

*Mar.* Come, let's return again, and suffice our-  
 selves with the report of it. Well, Diana, take  
 heed of this French earl. The honour of a maid is  
 her name; and no legacy is so rich as honesty.

*Wid.* I have told my neighbour how you have  
 been solicited by a gentleman his companion.

*Mar.* I know that knave; hang him! one Parol-



les; a filthy officer he is in those suggestions for the young earl. Beware of them, Diana; their promises, enticements, oaths, tokens, and all these engines of lust, are not the things they go under. Many a maid hath been seduced by them; and the misery is, example, that so terrible shows in the wreck of maidenhood, cannot for all that dissuade succession, but that they are limed with the twigs that threaten them. I hope I need not to advise you further; but I hope your own grace will keep you where you are, though there were no further danger known but the modesty which is so lost.

30

*Dia.* You shall not need to fear me.

*Wid.* I hope so.

*Enter HELENA, disguised like a Pilgrim.*

Look, here comes a pilgrim. I know she will lie at my house; thither they send one another. I'll question her. God save you, pilgrim! whither are you bound?

*Hel.* To Saint Jaques le Grand.

Where do the palmers lodge, I do beseech you?

*Wid.* At the Saint Francis here beside the port.

*Hel.* Is this the way?

40

*Wid.* Ay, marry, is't.

*A march afar.*

Hark you! they come this way.

If you will tarry, holy pilgrim,

But till the troops come by,

I will conduct you where you shall be lodged;

The rather, for I think I know your hostess

As ample as myself.

*Hel.* Is it yourself?

*Wid.* If you shall please so, pilgrim.

*Hel.* I thank you, and will stay upon your leisure.

*Wid.* You came, I think, from France?

*Hel.* I did so.

*Wid.* Here you shall see a countryman of yours That has done worthy service.

51

*Hel.* His name, I pray you.

*Dia.* The Count Rousillon. Know you such a one?

*Hel.* But by the ear, that hears most nobly of him.

His face I know not.

*Dia.* Whatsome'er he is, He's bravely taken here. He stole from France, As 'tis reported, for the King had married him Against his liking. Think you it is so?

*Hel.* Ay, surely, mere the truth. I know his lady.

*Dia.* There is a gentleman that serves the Count Reports but coarsely of her.

*Hel.* What's his name? 60

*Dia.* Monsieur Parolles.

*Hel.* O, I believe with him,

In argument of praise, or to the worth Of the great Count himself, she is too mean To have her name repeated. All her deserving Is a reserved honesty, and that I have not heard examined.

*Dia.* Alas, poor lady!

'Tis a hard bondage to become the wife Of a detesting lord.

*Wid.* I warrant, good creature, wheresoe'er she is,

Her heart weighs sadly. This young maid might do her

70

A shrewd turn, if she pleased.

*Hel.* How do you mean?

May be the amorous Count solicits her In the unlawful purpose.

*Wid.* He does indeed; And brokes with all that can in such a suit Corrupt the tender honour of a maid.

But she is arm'd for him and keeps her guard In honestest defence.

*Mar.* The gods forbid else!

*Wid.* So, now they come.

*Drum and Colours.*

*Enter BERTRAM, PAROLLES, and the whole army.*

That is Antonio, the Duke's eldest son;

That, Escalus.

*Hel.* Which is the Frenchman?

*Dia.* He; 80

That with the plume. 'Tis a most gallant fellow.

I would he loved his wife. If he were honest

He were much goodlier. Is't not a handsome gentleman?

*Hel.* I like him well.

*Dia.* 'Tis pity he is not honest. Yond's that same knave

That leads him to these places. Were I his lady, I would poison that vile rascal.

*Hel.* Which is he?

*Dia.* That jack-an-apes with scarfs. Why is he melancholy?

*Hel.* Perchance he's hurt i' the battle. 90

*Par.* Lose our drum! well.

*Mar.* He's shrewdly vexed at something. Look, he has spied us.

*Wid.* Marry, hang you!

*Mar.* And your courtesy, for a ring-carrier!

[*Exeunt BERTRAM, PAROLLES, and army.*]

*Wid.* The troop is past. Come, pilgrim, I will bring you

Where you shall host. Of enjoin'd penitents

There's four or five, to great Saint Jaques bound, Already at my house.

*Hel.* I humbly thank you.  
Please it this matron and this gentle maid 100  
To eat with us to-night, the charge and thanking  
Shall be for me; and, to requite you further,  
I will bestow some precepts of this virgin  
Worthy the note.

*Both.* We'll take your offer kindly.  
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI. *Camp before Florence*

*Enter BERTRAM and the TWO FRENCH LORDS.*

*2nd Lord.* Nay, good my lord, put him to't; let him have his way.

*1st Lord.* If your lordship find him not a hilding, hold me no more in your respect.

*2nd Lord.* On my life, my lord, a bubble.

*Ber.* Do you think I am so far deceived in him?

*2nd Lord.* Believe it, my lord, in mine own direct knowledge, without any malice, but to speak of him as my kinsman, he's a most notable coward, an infinite and endless liar, an hourly promise-breaker, the owner of no one good quality worthy your lordship's entertainment.

*1st Lord.* It were fit you knew him; lest, reposing too far in his virtue, which he hath not, he might at some great and trusty business in a main danger fail you.

*Ber.* I would I knew in what particular action to try him. 19

*1st Lord.* None better than to let him fetch off his drum, which you hear him so confidently undertake to do.

*2nd Lord.* I, with a troop of Florentines, will suddenly surprise him; such I will have, whom I am sure he knows not from the enemy. We will bind and hoodwink him so that he shall suppose no other but that he is carried into the leaguer of the adversaries, when we bring him to our own tents. Be but your lordship present at his examination. If he do not, for the promise of his life and in the highest compulsion of base fear, offer to betray you and deliver all the intelligence in his power against you, and that with the divine forfeit of his soul upon oath, never trust my judgement in anything.

*1st Lord.* O, for the love of laughter, let him fetch his drum; he says he has a stratagem for't. When your lordship sees the bottom of his success in't, and to what metal this counterfeit lump of ore will be melted, if you give him not John Drum's entertainment, your inclining cannot be removed. Here he comes.

*Enter PAROLLES.*

*2nd Lord.* [*Aside to BERTRAM*] O, for the love of laughter, hinder not the honour of his design. Let

him fetch off his drum in any hand.

*Ber.* How now, monsieur! this drum stricks sorely in your disposition.

*1st Lord.* A pox on't, let it go; 'tis but a drum. 49  
*Par.* "But a drum"! is't "but a drum"? A drum so lost! There was excellent command—to charge in with our horse upon our own wings, and to rend our own soldiers!

*1st Lord.* That was not to be blamed in the command of the service. It was a disaster of war that Cæsar himself could not have prevented, if he had been there to command.

*Ber.* Well, we cannot greatly condemn our success. Some dishonour we had in the loss of that drum; but it is not to be recovered. 60

*Par.* It might have been recovered.

*Ber.* It might; but it is not now.

*Par.* It is to be recovered; but that the merit of service is seldom attributed to the true and exact performer, I would have that drum or another, or "*hic jacet*."

*Ber.* Why, if you have a stomach, to't, monsieur; if you think your mystery in stratagem can bring this instrument of honour again into his native quarter, be magnanimous in the enterprise and go on; I will grace the attempt for a worthy exploit. If you speed well in it, the Duke shall both speak of it, and extend to you what further becomes his greatness, even to the utmost syllable of your worthiness.

*Par.* By the hand of a soldier, I will undertake it.

*Ber.* But you must not now slumber in it.

*Par.* I'll about it this evening; and I will presently pen down my dilemmas, encourage myself in my certainty, put myself into my mortal preparation; and by midnight look to hear further from me.

*Ber.* May I be bold to acquaint his Grace you are gone about it?

*Par.* I know not what the success will be, my lord; but the attempt I vow.

*Ber.* I know thou'rt valiant; and, to the possibility of thy soldiership, will subscribe for thee. Farewell. 90

*Par.* I love not many words.

[*Exit.*]

*2nd Lord.* No more than a fish loves water. Is not this a strange fellow, my lord, that so confidently seems to undertake this business, which he knows is not to be done; damns himself to do and dares better be damned than to do 't?

*1st Lord.* You do not know him, my lord, as we do. Certain it is that he will steal himself into a man's favour and for a week escape a great deal of discoveries; but when you find him out, you have him ever after. 101

*Ber.* Why, do you think he will make no deed



at all of this that so seriously he does address himself unto?

*2nd Lord.* None in the world; but return with an invention and clap upon you two or three probable lies. But we have almost embossed him; you shall see his fall to-night; for indeed he is not for your lordship's respect. 109

*1st Lord.* We'll make you some sport with the fox ere we case him. He was first smoked by the old lord Lafau. When his disguise and he is parted, tell me what a sprat you shall find him; which you shall see this very night.

*2nd Lord.* I must go look my twigs. He shall be caught.

*Ber.* Your brother he shall go along with me.

*2nd Lord.* As't please your lordship. I'll leave you. [Exit.]

*Ber.* Now will I lead you to the house, and show you  
The lass I spoke of.

*1st Lord.* But you say she's honest.

*Ber.* That's all the fault. I spoke with her but once 120  
And found her wondrous cold; but I sent to her,

By this same coxcomb that we have i' the wind,  
Tokens and letters which she did re-send;  
And this is all I have done. She's a fair creature.  
Will you go see her?

*1st Lord.* With all my heart, my lord.  
[Exeunt.]

#### SCENE VII. *Florence: the Widow's house*

*Enter HELENA and WIDOW.*

*Hel.* If you misdoubt me that I am not she,  
I know not how I shall assure you further,  
But I shall lose the grounds I work upon.

*Wid.* Though my estate be fallen, I was well born,

Nothing acquainted with these businesses;  
And would not put my reputation now  
In any staining act.

*Hel.* Nor would I wish you.  
First, give me trust, the Count he is my husband,

And what to your sworn counsel I have spoken  
Is so from word to word; and then you cannot,  
By the good aid that I of you shall borrow, 11  
Err in bestowing it.

*Wid.* I should believe you;  
For you have show'd me that which well approves

You're great in fortune.

*Hel.* Take this purse of gold,  
And let me buy your friendly help thus far,  
Which I will over-pay and pay again

When I have found it. The Count he woos your daughter,

Lays down his wanton siege before her beauty,  
Resolved to carry her. Let her in fine consent,  
As we'll direct her how 'tis best to bear it. 20  
Now his important blood will nought deny  
That she'll demand. A ring the County wears,  
That downward hath succeeded in his house  
From son to son, some four or five descents  
Since the first father wore it. This ring he holds  
In most rich choice; ye in his idle fire,  
To buy his will, it would not seem too dear,  
Howe'er repented after.

*Wid.* Now I see  
The bottom of your purpose. 29

*Hel.* You see it lawful, then. It is no more,  
But that your daughter, ere she seems as won,  
Desires this ring; appoints him an encounter;  
In fine, delivers me to fill the time,  
Herself most chastely absent. After this,  
To marry her, I'll add three thousand crowns  
To what is past already.

*Wid.* I have yielded.  
Instruct my daughter how she shall persevere,  
That time and place with this deceit so lawful  
May prove coherent. Every night he comes 40  
With musics of all sorts and songs composed  
To her unworthiness. It nothing steads us  
To chide him from our eaves; for he persists  
As if his life lay on 't.

*Hel.* Why then to-night  
Let us assay our plot; which, if it speed,  
Is wicked meaning in a lawful deed  
And lawful meaning in a lawful act,  
Where both not sin, and yet a sinful fact.  
But let's about it. [Exeunt.]

## ACT IV

### SCENE I. *Without the Florentine camp*

*Enter SECOND FRENCH LORD, with five or six other  
SOLDIERS in ambush.*

*2nd Lord.* He can come no other way but by  
this hedge-corner. When you sally upon him,  
speak what terrible language you will. Though  
you understand it not yourselves, no matter; for  
we must not seem to understand him, unless some  
one among us whom we must produce for an inter-  
preter.

*1st Sold.* Good captain, let me be the inter-  
preter.

*2nd Lord.* Art not acquainted with him? knows  
he not thy voice? 11

*1st Sold.* No, sir, I warrant you.

*2nd Lord.* But what linsey-woolsey hast thou to  
speak to us again?

1st Sold. E'en such as you speak to me.

2nd Lord. He must think us some band of strangers i' the adversary's entertainment. Now he hath a smack of all neighbouring languages; therefore we must every one be a man of his own fancy, not to know what we speak one to another; so we seem to know, is to know straight our purpose: choughs' language, gabble enough, and good enough. As for you, interpreter, you must seem very politic. But couch, ho! here he comes, to beguile two hours in a sleep, and then to return and swear the lies he forges.

Enter PAROLLES.

Par. Ten o'clock; within these three hours 'twill be time enough to go home. What shall I say I have done? It must be a very plausible invention that carries it. They begin to smoke me; and disgraces have of late knocked too often at my door. I find my tongue is too foolhardy; but my heart hath the fear of Mars before it and of his creatures, not daring the reports of my tongue.

2nd Lord. [*Aside, in ambush.*] This is the first truth that e'er thine own tongue was guilty of.

Par. What the devil should move me to undertake the recovery of this drum, being not ignorant of the impossibility, and knowing I had no such purpose? I must give myself some hurts, and say I got them in exploit. Yet slight ones will not carry it; they will say, "Came you off with so little?" and great ones I dare not give. Wherefore, what's the instance? Tongue, I must put you into a butter-woman's mouth and buy myself another of Bajazet's mule, if you prattle me into these perils.

2nd Lord. Is it possible he should know what he is, and be that he is? 49

Par. I would the cutting of my garments would serve the turn, or the breaking of my Spanish sword.

2nd Lord. We cannot afford you so.

Par. Or the baring of my beard; and to say it was in stratagem.

2nd Lord. 'T would not do.

Par. Or to drown my clothes, and say I was stripped.

2nd Lord. Hardly serve.

Par. Though I swore I leaped from the window of the citadel— 61

2nd Lord. How deep?

Par. Thirty fathom.

2nd Lord. Three great oaths would scarce make that be believed.

Par. I would I had any drum of the enemy's: I would swear I recovered it.

2nd Lord. You shall hear one anon.

Par. A drum none of the enemy's—  
[*Alarum within.*]

2nd Lord. *Throca morvovus, cargo, cargo, cargo. 71*  
*All. Cargo, cargo, cargo, villianda par corbo, cargo.*

Par. O, ransom, ransom! do not hide mine eyes.

*They seize and blindfold him.*

1st Sold. *Boskos thromuldo boskos.*

Par. I know you are the Muskos' regiment, And I shall lose my life for want of language. If there be here German, or Dane, low Dutch, Italian, or French, let him speak to me; I'll Discover that which shall undo the Florentine. 80

1st Sold. *Boskos varvado:* I understand thee, and can speak thy tongue. *Kerelybonto*, sir, betake thee to thy faith, for seventeen poniards are at thy bosom.

Par. O!

1st Sold. O, pray, pray, pray! *Manka revania dulche.*

2nd Lord. *Oscorbidulchos volivorco.*

1st Sold. The general is content to spare thee yet;

And, hoodwink'd as thou art, will lead thee on 90  
To gather from thee. Haply thou mayst inform  
Something to save thy life.

Par. O, let me live!

And all the secrets of our camp I'll show,  
Their force, their purposes; nay, I'll speak that  
Which you will wonder at.

1st Sold. But wilt thou faithfully?

Par. If I do not, damn me.

1st Sold. *Acordo lima.*

Come on; thou art granted space.

[*Exit, with PAROLLES guarded. A short alarum within.*]

2nd Lord. Go, tell the Count Rousillon, and my brother,

We have caught the woodcock, and will keep him muffled 100

Till we do hear from them.

2nd Sold. Captain, I will.

2nd Lord. A' will betray us all unto ourselves; Inform on that.

2nd. Sold. So I will, sir.

2nd. Lord. Till then I'll keep him dark and safely lock'd. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *Florence: the Widow's house*

Enter BERTRAM and DIANA.

Ber. They told me that your name was Fontibell.

Dia. No, my good lord, Diana.

Ber. Titled goddess;  
And worth it, with addition! But, fair soul,



In your fine frame hath love no quality?  
 If the quick fire of youth light not your mind,  
 You are no maiden, but a monument.  
 When you are dead, you should be such a one  
 As you are now, for you are cold and stern;  
 And now you should be as your mother was  
 When your sweet self was got. 10

*Dia.* She then was honest.

*Ber.* So should you be.

*Dia.* No.

My mother did but duty; such, my lord,  
 As you owe to your wife.

*Ber.* No more o'that;  
 I prithee, do not strive against my vows.  
 I was compell'd to her; but I love thee  
 By love's own sweet constraint, and will for ever  
 Do thee all rights of service.

*Dia.* Ay, so you serve us  
 Till we serve you; but when you have our roses,  
 You barely leave our thorns to prick ourselves  
 And mock us with our bareness.

*Ber.* How have I sworn! 20

*Dia.* 'Tis not the many oaths that makes the  
 truth,

But the plain single vow that is vow'd true.  
 What is not holy, that we swear not by,  
 But take the High'st to witness. Then, pray you,  
 tell me,

If I should swear by God's great attributes,  
 I loved you dearly, would you believe my oaths,  
 When I did love you ill? This has no holding,  
 To swear by Him whom I protest to love,  
 That I will work against Him; therefore your  
 oaths

Are words and poor conditions, but unseal'd, 30  
 At least in my opinion.

*Ber.* Change it, change it;  
 Be not so holy-cruel. Love is holy;  
 And my integrity ne'er knew the crafts  
 That you do charge men with. Stand no more off,  
 But give thyself unto my sick desires,  
 Who then recover. Say thou art mine, and ever  
 My love as it begins shall so persevere.

*Dia.* I see that men make ropes in such a scarre  
 That we'll forsake ourselves. Give me that ring.

*Ber.* I'll lend it thee, my dear; but have no  
 power 40  
 To give it from me.

*Dia.* Will you not, my lord?

*Ber.* It is an honour 'longing to our house,  
 Bequeathed down from many ancestors;  
 Which were the greatest obloquy i' the world  
 In me to lose.

*Dia.* Mine honour's such a ring,  
 My chastity's the jewel of our house,  
 Bequeathed down from many ancestors;

Which were the greatest obloquy i' the world  
 In me to lose. Thus your own proper wisdom  
 Brings in the champion Honour on my part, 50  
 Against your vain assault.

*Ber.* Here, take my ring.

My house, mine honour, yea, my life, be thine,  
 And I'll be bid by thee.

*Dia.* When midnight comes, knock at my  
 chamber-window.

I'll order take my mother shall not hear.

Now will I charge you in the band of truth,  
 When you have conquer'd my yet maiden bed,  
 Remain there but an hour, nor speak to me.  
 My reasons are most strong; and you shall  
 know them

When back again this ring shall be deliver'd; 60

And on your finger in the night I'll put  
 Another ring, that what in time proceeds  
 May token to the future our past deeds.

Adieu, till then; then, fail not. You have won  
 A wife of me, though there my hope be done.

*Ber.* A heaven on earth I have won by wooing  
 thee. [Exit.

*Dia.* For which live long to thank both heaven  
 and me!

You may so in the end.

My mother told me just how he would woo,  
 As if she sat in's heart; she says all men 70  
 Have the like oaths. He had sworn to marry me  
 When his wife's dead; therefore I'll lie with him  
 When I am buried. Since Frenchmen are so braid,  
 Marry that will, I live and die a maid.  
 Only in this disguise I think't no sin  
 To cozen him that would unjustly win. [Exit.

### SCENE III. The Florentine camp.

Enter the TWO FRENCH LORDS and some two or three  
 SOLDIERS.

*1st Lord.* You have not given him his mother's  
 letter?

*2nd Lord.* I have delivered it an hour since.  
 There is something in't that stings his nature; for  
 on the reading it he changed almost into another  
 man.

*1st Lord.* He has much worthy blame laid upon  
 him for shaking off so good a wife and so sweet  
 a lady. 9

*2nd Lord.* Especially he hath incurred the ever-  
 lasting displeasure of the King, who had even  
 tuned his bounty to sing happiness to him. I will  
 tell you a thing, but you shall let it dwell darkly  
 with you.

*1st Lord.* When you have spoken, 'tis dead,  
 and I am the grave of it.

*2nd Lord.* He hath perverted a young gentle-  
 woman here in Florence, of a most chaste re-

noun, and this night he fleshes his will in the spoil of her honour. He hath given her his monumental ring, and thinks himself made in the unchaste composition.

*1st Lord.* Now, God delay our rebellion! as we are ourselves, what things are we!

*2nd Lord.* Merely our own traitors. And as in the common course of all treasons, we still see them reveal themselves, till they attain to their abhorred ends, so he that in this action contrives against his own nobility, in his proper stream overflows himself.

30

*1st Lord.* Is it not meant damnable in us to be trumpeters of our unlawful intents? We shall not then have his company to-night?

*2nd Lord.* Not till after midnight; for he is dieted to his hour.

*1st Lord.* That approaches apace; I would gladly have him see his company anatomized, that he might take a measure of his own judgements, wherein so curiously he had set this counterfeit.

40

*2nd Lord.* We will not meddle with him till he come; for his presence must be the whip of the other.

*1st Lord.* In the mean time, what hear you of these wars?

*2nd Lord.* I hear there is an overture of peace.

*1st Lord.* Nay, I assure you, a peace concluded.

*2nd Lord.* What will Count Rousillon do then? will he travel higher, or return again into France?

51

*1st Lord.* I perceive, by this demand, you are not altogether of his council.

*2nd Lord.* Let it be forbid, sir; so should I be a great deal of his act.

*1st Lord.* Sir, his wife some two months since fled from his house. Her pretence is a pilgrimage to Saint Jaques le Grand; which holy undertaking with most austere sanctimony she accomplished; and, there residing, the tenderness of her nature became as a prey to her grief; in fine, made a groan of her last breath, and now she sings in heaven.

*2nd Lord.* How is this justified?

*1st Lord.* The stronger part of it by her own letters, which makes her story true, even to the point of her death. Her death itself, which could not be her office to say is come, was faithfully confirmed by the rector of the place.

69

*2nd Lord.* Hath the Count all this intelligence?

*1st Lord.* Ay, and the particular confirmations, point from point, to the full arming of the verity.

*2nd Lord.* I am heartily sorry that he'll be glad of this.

*1st Lord.* How mightily sometimes we make

us comforts of our losses!

*2nd Lord.* And how mightily some other times we drown our gain in tears! The great dignity that his valour hath here acquired for him shall at home be encountered with a shame as ample.

*1st Lord.* The web of our life is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together. Our virtues would be proud, if our faults whipped them not; and our crimes would despair, if they were not cherished by our virtues.

*Enter a MESSENGER.*

How now! where's your master?

*Mess.* He met the Duke in the street, sir, of whom he hath taken a solemn leave. His lordship will next morning for France. The Duke hath offered him letters of commendations to the King.

*2nd Lord.* They shall be no more than needful there, if they were more than they can commend.

*1st Lord.* They cannot be too sweet for the King's tartness. Here's his lordship now.

*Enter BERTRAM.*

How now, my lord! is 't not after midnight?

*Ber.* I have to-night dispatched sixteen businesses, a month's length a-piece, by an abstract of success. I have congied with the Duke, done my adieu with his nearest; buried a wife, mourned for her; writ to my lady mother I am returning; entertained my convoy; and between these main parcels of dispatch effected many nicer needs. The last was the greatest, but that I have not ended yet.

*2nd Lord.* If the business be of any difficulty, and this morning your departure hence, it requires haste of your lordship.

109

*Ber.* I mean, the business is not ended, as fearing to hear of it hereafter. But shall we have this dialogue between the fool and the soldier? Come, bring forth this counterfeit module, has deceived me, like a double-meaning prophesier.

*2nd Lord.* Bring him forth. Has sat i' the stocks all night, poor gallant knave.

*Ber.* No matter; his heels have deserved it, in usurping his spurs so long. How does he carry himself?

120

*2nd Lord.* I have told your lordship already, the stocks carry him. But to answer you as you would be understood; he weeps like a wench that had shed her milk. He hath confessed himself to Morgan, whom he supposes to be a friar, from the time of his remembrance to this very instant disaster of his setting i' the stocks; and what think you he hath confessed?

*Ber.* Nothing of me, has a'?

129



*2nd Lord.* His confession is taken, and it shall be read to his face. If your lordship be in't, as I believe you are, you must have the patience to hear it.

*Enter PAROLLES guarded, and FIRST SOLDIER.*

*Ber.* A plague upon him! muffled! he can say nothing of me. Hush, hush!

*1st Lord.* Hoodman comes! *Portotartarosa.*

*1st Sold.* He calls for the tortures. What will you say without 'em?

*Par.* I will confess what I know without constraint. If y<sup>e</sup> pinch me like a pasty, I can say no more. 141

*1st Sold.* *Bosko chimurcho.*

*1st Lord.* *Boblibindo chicurmurcho.*

*1st Sold.* You are a merciful general. Our general bids you answer to what I shall ask you out of a note.

*Par.* And truly, as I hope to live.

*1st Sold.* [Reads] "First demand of him how many horse the Duke is strong." What say you to that? 150

*Par.* Five or six thousand; but very weak and unserviceable. The troops are all scattered, and the commanders very poor rogues, upon my reputation and credit and as I hope to live.

*1st Sold.* Shall I set down your answer so?

*Par.* Do. I'll take the sacrament on't, how and which way you will.

*Ber.* All's one to him. What a past-saving slave is this! 159

*1st Lord.* You're deceived, my lord; this is Monsieur Parolles, the gallant militarist—that was his own phrase—that had the whole theoric of war in the knot of his scarf, and the practice in the chape of his dagger.

*2nd Lord.* I will never trust a man again for keeping his sword clean, nor believe he can have everything in him by wearing his apparel neatly.

*1st Sold.* Well, that's set down. 169

*Par.* Five or six thousand horse, I said—I will say true—or thereabouts, set down, for I'll speak truth.

*1st Lord.* He's very near the truth in this.

*Ber.* But I can him no thanks for't, in the nature he delivers it.

*Par.* Poor rogues, I pray you, say.

*1st Sold.* Well, that's set down.

*Par.* I humbly thank you, sir. A truth's a truth, the rogues are marvellous poor. 179

*1st Sold.* [Reads] "Demand of him, of what strength they are a-foot." What say you to that?

*Par.* By my troth, sir, if I were to live this present hour, I will tell true. Let me see: Spurio, a hundred and fifty; Sebastian, so many; Coram-

bus, so many; Jaques, so many; Guiltian, Cosmo, Lodowick, and Gratii, two hundred and fifty each; mine own company, Chitopher, Vaumond, Bentii, two hundred and fifty each: so that the muster-file, rotten and sound, upon my life, amounts not to fifteen thousand poll; half of the which dare not shake the snow from off their cassocks, lest they shake themselves to pieces.

*Ber.* What shall be done to him?

*1st Lord.* Nothing, but let him have thanks. Demand of him my condition, and what credit I have with the Duke.

*1st Sold.* Well, that's set down. [Reads] "You shall demand of him, whether one Captain Dumain be i' the camp, a Frenchman; what his reputation is with the Duke; what his valour, honesty, and expertness in wars; or whether he thinks it were not possible, with well-weighting sums of gold, to corrupt him to a revolt." What say you to this? what do you know of it?

*Par.* I beseech you, let me answer to the particular of the inter'gatories. Demand them singly.

*1st Sold.* Do you know this Captain Dumain? 210

*Par.* I know him. A' was a botcher's 'prentice in Paris, from whence he was whipped for getting the shrieve's fool with child—a dumb innocent, that could not say him nay.

*FIRST LORD raises his hand as if to strike him.*

*Ber.* Nay, by your leave, hold your hands; though I know his brains are forfeit to the next tile that falls.

*1st Sold.* Well, is this captain in the Duke of Florence's camp? 219

*Par.* Upon my knowledge, he is, and lousy.

*1st Lord.* Nay, look not so upon me; we shall hear of your lordship anon.

*1st Sold.* What is his reputation with the Duke?

*Par.* The Duke knows him for no other but a poor officer of mine; and writ to me this other day to turn him out o' the band. I think I have his letter in my pocket.

*1st Sold.* Marry, we'll search. 229

*Par.* In good sadness, I do not know; either it is there, or it is upon a file with the Duke's other letters in my tent.

*1st Sold.* Here 'tis; here's a paper; shall I read it to you?

*Par.* I do not know if it be it or no.

*Ber.* Our interpreter does it well.

*1st Lord.* Excellently.

*1st Sold.* [Reads] "Dian, the Count's a fool, and full of gold"—

*Par.* That is not the Duke's letter, sir; that is an advertisement to a proper maid in Florence, one Diana to take heed of the allurements of one Count Rousillon, a foolish idle boy, but for all

that very ruttish. I pray you, sir, put it up again.

*1st Sold.* Nay, I'll read it first, by your favour.

*Par.* My meaning in't, I protest, was very honest in the behalf of the maid; for I knew the young Count to be a dangerous and lascivious boy, who is a whale to virginity and devours up all the fry it finds.

250

*Ber.* Damnable both-sides rogue!

*1st Sold.* [*Reads*] "When he swears oaths, bid him drop gold, and take it;

After he scores, he never pays the score.

Half won is match well made; match, and well make it;

He ne'er pays after-debts, take it before;

And say a soldier, Dian, told thee this,

Men are to mell with, boys are not to kiss.

For count of this, the Count's a fool, I know it,

Who pays before, but not when he does owe it.

Thine, as he vowed to thee in thine ear,

260

Parolles"

*Ber.* He shall be whipped through the army with this rhyme in in's forehead.

*2nd Lord.* This is your devoted friend, sir, the manifold linguist and the armpotent soldier.

*Ber.* I could endure anything before but a cat, and now he's a cat to me.

*1st Sold.* I perceive, sir, by the general's looks, we shall be fain to hang you.

269

*Par.* My life, sir, in any case. Not that I am afraid to die; but that, my offences being many, I would repent out the remainder of nature. Let me live, sir, in a dungeon, i' the stocks, or any where, so I may live.

*1st Sold.* We'll see what may be done, so you confess freely; therefore, once more to this Captain Dumain. You have answered to his reputation with the Duke and to his valour. What is his honesty?

279

*Par.* He will steal, sir, an egg out of a cloister; for rapes and ravishments he parallels Nessus; he professes not keeping of oaths; in breaking 'em he is stronger than Hercules; he will lie, sir, with such volubility, that you would think truth were a fool; drunkenness is his best virtue, for he will be swine-drunk; and in his sleep he does little harm, save to his bed-clothes about him; but they know his conditions and lay him in straw. I have but little more to say, sir, of his honesty. He has everything that an honest man should not have; what an honest man should have, he has nothing.

*1st Lord.* I begin to love him for this.

*Ber.* For this description of thine honesty?

A pox upon him for me, he's more and more a cat.

*1st Sold.* What say you to his expertness in war?

*Par.* Faith, sir, has led the drum before the English tragedians; to belie him, I will not, and more of his soldiership I know not; except, in that country he had the honour to be the officer at a place there called Mile-end, to instruct for the doubling of files. I would do the man what honour I can, but of this I am not certain.

*1st Lord.* He hath out-villained villainy so far that the rarity redeems him.

*Ber.* A pox on him, he's a cat still.

*1st Sold.* His qualities being at this poor price, I need not to ask you if gold will corrupt him to revolt.

310

*Par.* Sir, for a *quart d'écu* he will sell the fee-simple of his salvation, the inheritance of it; and cut the entail from all remainders, and a perpetual succession for it perpetually.

*1st Sold.* What's his brother, the other Captain Dumain?

*2nd Lord.* Why does he ask him of me?

*1st Sold.* What's he?

*Par.* E'en a crow o' the same nest; not altogether so great as the first in goodness, but greater a great deal in evil. He excels his brother for a coward, yet his brother is reputed one of the best that is; in a retreat he outruns any lackey; marry, in coming on he has the cramp.

*1st Sold.* If your life be saved, will you undertake to betray the Florentine?

*Par.* Ay, and the captain of his horse, Count Rousillon.

*1st Sold.* I'll whisper with the general, and know his pleasure.

330

*Par.* [*Aside*] I'll no more drumming; a plague of all drums! Only to seem to deserve well, and to beguile the supposition of that lascivious young boy the Count, have I run into this danger. Yet who would have suspected an ambush where I was taken?

*1st Sold.* There is no remedy, sir, but you must die. The general says, you that have so traitorously discovered the secrets of your army and made such pestiferous reports of men very nobly held, can serve the world for no honest use; therefore you must die. Come, headsman, off with his head.

*Par.* O Lord, sir, let me live, or let me see my death!

*1st Sold.* That shall you, and take your leave of all your friends. [*Unblinding him.*]

So, look about you. Know you any here?

*Ber.* Good morrow, noble captain.

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*2nd Lord.* God bless you, Captain Parolles.

*1st Lord.* God save you, noble captain.

*2nd Lord.* Captain, what greeting will you to my Lord Lafew? I am for France.



*1st Lord.* Good captain, will you give me a copy of the sonnet you writ to Diana in behalf of the Count Rousillon? an I were not a very coward, I'd compel it of you: but fare you well.

[*Exeunt* BERTRAM and LORDS.]

*1st Sold.* You are undone, captain, all but your scarf; that has a knot on't yet. 359

*Par.* Who cannot be crushed with a plot?

*1st Sold.* If you could find out a country where but women were that had received so much shame, you might begin an impudent nation. Fare ye well, sir; I am for France too. We shall speak of you there.

[*Exit with* SOLDIERS.]

*Par.* Yet am I thankful. If my heart were great, 'Twould burst at this. Captain I'll be no more; But I will eat and drink, and sleep as soft As captain shall. Simply the thing I am Shall make me live. Who knows himself a brag-gart, 370

Let him fear this, for it will come to pass That every braggart shall be found an ass. Rust, sword! cool, blushes! and, Parolles, live Safest in shame! being fool'd, by foolery thrive! There's place and means for every man alive. I'll after them. [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV. *Florence: the Widow's house*

*Enter* HELENA, WIDOW, and DIANA.

*Hel.* That you may well perceive I have not wrong'd you,

One of the greatest in the Christian world Shall be my surety; 'fore whose throne 'tis need-ful,

Ere I can perfect mine intents, to kneel. Time was, I did him a desired office, Dear almost as his life; which gratitude Through flinty Tartar's bosom would peep forth, And answer, thanks. I duly am inform'd His Grace is at Marseilles; to which place We have convenient convoy. You must know I am supposed dead. The army breaking, 11 My husband hies him home; where, heaven aid-ing,

And by the leave of my good lord the King, We'll be before our welcome.

*Wid.* Gentle madam, You never had a servant to whose trust Your business was more welcome.

*Hel.* Nor you, mistress, Ever a friend whose thoughts more truly labour To recompense your love. Doubt not but heaven Hath brought me up to be your daughter's dower, As it hath fated her to be my motive 20 And helper to a husband. But, O strange men!

That can such sweet use make of what they hate, When saucy trusting of the cozen'd thoughts Defiles the pitchy night. So lust doth play With what it loathes for that which is away. But more of this hereafter. You, Diana, Under my poor instructions yet must suffer Something in my behalf.

*Dia.* Let death and honesty Go with your impositions, I am yours Upon your will to suffer.

*Hel.* Yet, I pray you. 30 But with the word the time will bring on summer.

When briers shall have leaves as well as thorns, And be as sweet as sharp. We must away; Our waggon is prepared, and time revives us. All's well that ends well. Still the fine's the crown;

Whate'er the course, the end is the renown.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V. *Rousillon: the Count's palace*

*Enter* COUNTESS, LAFEU, and CLOWN

*Laf.* No, no, no, your son was misled with a snipt-taffeta fellow there, whose villainous saf-ron would have made all the unbaked and doughy youth of a nation in his colour. Your daughter-in-law had been alive at this hour, and your son here at home, more advanced by the King than by that red-tailed humble-bee I speak of.

*Count.* I would I had not known him; it was the death of the most virtuous gentlewoman that ever nature had praise for creating. If she had partaken of my flesh, and cost me the dearest groans of a mother, I could not have owed her a more rooted love.

*Laf.* 'Twas a good lady, 'twas a good lady; we may pick a thousand salads ere we light on such another herb.

*Clo.* Indeed, sir, she was the sweet-marjoram of the salad, or rather, the herb of grace.

*Laf.* They are not herbs, you knave; they are nose-herbs. 20

*Clo.* I am no great Nebuchadnezzar, sir; I have not much skill in grass.

*Laf.* Whether dost thou profess thyself, a knave or a fool?

*Clo.* A fool, sir, at a woman's service, and a knave at a man's.

*Laf.* Your distinction?

*Clo.* I would cozen the man of his wife and do his service.

*Laf.* So you were a knave at his service, in-deed. 31

*Clo.* And I would give his wife my bauble, sir, to do her service.

*Laf.* I will subscribe for thee, thou art both knave and fool.

*Clo.* At your service.

*Laf.* No, no, no.

*Clo.* Why, sir, if I cannot serve you, I can serve as great a prince as you are.

*Laf.* Who's that? a Frenchman? 40

*Clo.* Faith, sir, a' has an English name; but his fisonomy is more hotter in France than there.

*Laf.* What prince is that?

*Clo.* The Black Prince, sir; alias, the Prince of Darkness; alias, the devil,

*Laf.* Hold thee, there's my purse. I give thee not this to suggest thee from thy master thou talkest of; serve him still.

*Clo.* I am a woodland fellow, sir, that always loved a great fire; and the master I speak of ever keeps a good fire. But, sure, he is the prince of the world; let his nobility remain in's court. I am for the house with the narrow gate, which I take to be too little for pomp to enter. Some that humble themselves may; but the many will be too chill and tender, and they'll be for the flowery way that leads to the broad gate and the great fire.

*Laf.* Go thy ways, I begin to be aweary of thee; and I tell thee so before, because I would not fall out with thee. Go thy ways. Let my horses be well looked to, without any tricks.

*Clo.* If I put any tricks upon 'em, sir, they shall be jades' tricks; which are their own right by the law of nature. [Exit.]

*Laf.* A shrewd knave and an unhappy.

*Count.* So he is. My lord that's gone made himself much sport out of him. By his authority he remains here, which he thinks is a patent for his sauciness; and, indeed, he has no pace, but runs where he will. 71

*Laf.* I like him well; 'tis not amiss. And I was about to tell you, since I heard of the good lady's death and that my lord your son was upon his return home, I moved the King my master to speak in the behalf of my daughter; which, in the minority of them both, his Majesty, out of a self-gracious remembrance, did first propose. His Highness hath promised me to do it; and, to stop up the displeasure he hath conceived against your son, there is no fitter matter. How does your ladyship like it?

*Count.* With very much content, my lord; and I wish it happily effected.

*Laf.* His Highness comes post from Marseilles, of as able body as when he numbered thirty. He will be here to-morrow, or I am deceived by him that in such intelligence hath seldom failed.

*Count.* It rejoices me, that I hope I shall see

him ere I die. I have letters that my son will be here to-night. I shall beseech your lordship to remain with me till they meet together.

*Laf.* Madam, I was thinking with what manners I might safely be admitted.

*Count.* You need but plead your honourable privilege.

*Laf.* Lady, of that I have made a bold charter; but I thank my God it holds yet.

*Re-enter CLOWN.*

*Clo.* O madam, yonder's my lord your son with a patch of velvet on's face. Whether there be a scar under't or no, the velvet knows; but 'tis a goodly patch of velvet. His left cheek is a cheek of two pile and a half, but his right cheek is worn bare.

*Laf.* A scar nobly got, or a noble scar, is a good livery of honour; so belike is that.

*Clo.* But it is your carbonadoed face.

*Laf.* Let us go see your son, I pray you. I long to talk with the young noble soldier. 109

*Clo.* Faith, there's a dozen of 'em, with delicate fine hats and most courteous feathers which bow the head and nod at every man. [Exit.]

## ACT V

### SCENE I. Marseilles: a street

*Enter HELENA, WIDOW, and DIANA, with two Attendants.*

*Hel.* But this exceeding posting day and night Must wear your spirits low; we cannot help it. But since you have made the days and nights as one,

To wear your gentle limbs in my affairs, Be bold you do so grow in my requital As nothing can unroot you. In happy time;

*Enter a GENTLEMAN, A STRANGER.*

This man may help me to his Majesty's ear, If he would spend his power. God save you, sir.

*Gent.* And you.

*Hel.* Sir, I have seen you in the court of France.

*Gent.* I have been sometimes there. 11

*Hel.* I do presume, sir, that you are not fallen From the report that goes upon your goodness; And therefore, goaded with most sharp occasions, Which lay nice manners by, I put you to The use of your own virtues, for the which I shall continue thankful.

*Gent.* What's your will?

*Hel.* That it will please you To give this poor petition to the King, And aid me with that store of power you have 20 To come into his presence.

*Gent.* The King's not here.



*Hel.* Not here, sir!  
*Gent.* Not, indeed.  
 He hence removed last night and with more haste  
 Than is his use.

*Wid.* Lord, how we lose our pains!

*Hel.* All's well that ends well yet,  
 Though time seem so adverse and means unfit.  
 I do beseech you, whither is he gone?

*Gent.* Marry, as I take it, to Rousillon,  
 Whither I am going.

*Hel.* I do beseech you, sir,  
 Since you are like to see the King before me, 30  
 Commend the paper to his gracious hand,  
 Which I presume shall render you no blame  
 But rather make you thank your pains for it.  
 I will come after you with what good speed  
 Our means will make us means.

*Gent.* This I'll do for you.

*Hel.* And you shall find yourself to be well  
 thank'd,

Whate'er falls more. We must to horse again.  
 Go, go, provide. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE II. *Rousillon: before the Count's palace*

*Enter CLOWN, and PAROLLES, following.*

*Par.* Good Monsieur Lavache, give my Lord  
 Lafeu this letter. I have ere now, sir, been better  
 known to you, when I have held familiarity with  
 fresher clothes; but I am now, sir, muddled in  
 fortune's mood, and smell somewhat strong of  
 her strong displeasure.

*Clo.* Truly, fortune's displeasure is but sluttish,  
 if it smell so strongly as thou speakest of. I will  
 henceforth eat no fish of fortune's buttering.  
 Prithce, allow the wind.

*Par.* Nay, you need not to stop your nose, sir;  
 I spake but by a metapho'.

*Clo.* Indeed, sir, if your metaphor stink, I will  
 stop my nose; or against any man's metaphor.  
 Prithce, get thee further.

*Par.* Pray you, sir, deliver me this paper.

*Clo.* Foh! prithce, stand away. A paper from  
 fortune's close-stool to give to a nobleman!  
 Look, here he comes himself. 19

*Enter LAFEU.*

Here is a purr of fortune's, sir, or of fortune's cat  
 —but not a musk-cat—that has fallen into the  
 unclean fishpond of her displeasure, and, as he  
 says, is muddled withal. Pray you, sir, use the  
 carp as you may; for he looks like a poor, de-  
 cayed, ingenious, foolish, rascally knave. I do  
 pity his distress in my similes of comfort and  
 leave him to your lordship. *[Exit.]*

*Par.* My lord, I am a man whom fortune hath  
 cruelly scratched. 29

*Laf.* And what would you have me to do? 'Tis  
 too late to pare her nails now. Wherein have  
 you played the knave with fortune, that she  
 would scratch you, who of herself is a good lady  
 and would not have knaves thrive long under  
 her? There's a *quart d'écu* for you. Let the  
 justices make you and fortune friends. I am for  
 other business.

*Par.* I beseech your honour to hear me one  
 single word.

*Laf.* You beg a single penny more. Come, you  
 shall ha't; save your word. 40

*Par.* My name, my good Lord, is Parolles.

*Laf.* You beg more than "word," then. Cox  
 my passion! give me your hand. How does your  
 drum?

*Par.* O my good lord, you were the first that  
 found me!

*Laf.* Was I, in sooth? and I was the first that  
 lost thee.

*Par.* It lies in you, my lord, to bring me in  
 some grace, for you did bring me out. 50

*Laf.* Out upon thee, knave! dost thou pur upon  
 me at once both the office of God and the devil?  
 One brings thee in grace and the other brings  
 thee out. *[Trumpets sound.]* The King's coming;  
 I know by his trumpets. Sirrah, inquire further  
 after me; I had talk of you last night. Though  
 you are a fool and a knave, you shall eat; go to,  
 follow.

*Par.* I praise God for you. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE III. *Rousillon: the Count's palace*

*Flourish.* *Enter KING, COUNTESS, LAFEU, the TWO  
 FRENCH LORDS, with Attendants.*

*King.* We lost a jewel of her; and our esteem  
 Was made much poorer by it; but your son,  
 As mad in folly, lack'd the sense to know  
 Her estimation home.

*Count.* 'Tis past, my liege;  
 And I beseech your Majesty to make it  
 Natural rebellion, done i' the blaze of youth;  
 When oil and fire, too strong for reason's force,  
 O'erbears it and burns on.

*King.* My honour'd lady,  
 I have forgiven and forgotten all;  
 Though my revenges were high bent upon him,  
 And watch'd the time to shoot.

*Laf.* This I must say, 11  
 But first I beg my pardon, the young lord  
 Did to his Majesty, his mother, and his lady  
 Offence of mighty note; but to himself  
 The greatest wrong of all. He lost a wife  
 Whose beauty did astonish the survey  
 Of richest eyes, whose words all ears took cap-  
 tive,

Whose dear perfection hearts that scorn'd to  
serve

Humbly call'd mistress.

*King.* Praising what is lost  
Makes the remembrance dear. Well, call him  
hither; 20

We are reconciled, and the first view shall kill  
All repetition. Let him not ask our pardon;  
The nature of his great offence is dead,  
And deeper than oblivion we do bury  
The incensing relics of it. Let him approach,  
A stranger, no offender; and inform him  
So 'tis our will he should.

*1st Lord.* I shall, my liege. [*Exit.*  
*King.* What says he to your daughter? have  
you spoke?

*Laf.* All that he is hath reference to your high-  
ness.

*King.* Then shall we have a match. I have  
letters sent me 30  
That set him high in fame.

*Enter BERTRAM.*

*Laf.* He looks well on't.

*King.* I am not a day of season,  
For thou mayst see a sunshine and a hail  
In me at once; but to the brightest beams  
Distracted clouds give way; so stand thou forth;  
The time is fair again.

*Ber.* My high-repented blames,  
Dear sovereign, pardon to me.

*King.* All is whole;  
Not one word more of the consumed time.  
Let's take the instant by the forward top;  
For we are old, and on our quick'st decrees 40  
The inaudible and noiseless foot of Time  
Steals ere we can effect them. You remember  
The daughter of this lord?

*Ber.* Admiringly, my liege, at first  
I stuck my choice upon her, ere my heart  
Durst make too bold a herald of my tongue;  
Where the impression of mine eye infixing,  
Contempt his scornful perspective did lend me,  
Which warp'd the line of every other favour;  
Scorn'd a fair colour, or express'd it stolen; 50  
Extended or contracted all proportions  
To a most hideous object; thence it came  
That she whom all men praised and whom my-  
self,

Since I have lost, have loved, was in mine eye  
The dust that did offend it.

*King.* Well excused.  
That thou didst love her, strikes some scores  
away  
From the great compt; but love that comes too  
late,

Like a remorseful pardon slowly carried,  
To the great sender turns a sour offence,  
Crying, "That's good that's gone." Our rash  
faults 60

Make trivial price of serious things we have,  
Not knowing them until we know their grave.  
Oft our displeasures, to ourselves unjust,  
Destroy our friends and after weep their dust.  
Our own love waking cries to see what's done,  
While shame full late sleeps out the afternoon.  
Be this sweet Helen's knell, and now forget her.  
Send forth your amorous token for fair Maudlin.  
The main consents are had; and here we'll stay  
To see our widower's second marriage day. 70

*Count.* Which better than the first, O dear  
heaven, bless!

Or, ere they meet, in me, O nature, cease!

*Laf.* Come on, my son, in whom my house's  
name

Must be digested, give a favour from you  
To sparkle in the spirits of my daughter,  
That she may quickly come. [*BERTRAM gives a  
ring.*] By my old beard,

And every hair that's on't, Helen, that's dead,  
Was a sweet creature. Such a ring as this,  
The last that e'er I took her leave at court,  
I saw upon her finger.

*Ber.* Hers it was not. 80

*King.* Now, pray you, let me see it; for mine  
eye,

While I was speaking, oft was fasten'd to't.  
This ring was mine; and, when I gave it Helen,  
I bade her, if her fortunes ever stood  
Necessitated to help, that by this token  
I would relieve her. Had you that craft, to reave  
her

Of what should stead her most?

*Ber.* My gracious sovereign,  
Howe'er it pleases you to take it so,  
The ring was never hers.

*Count.* Son, on my life,  
I have seen her wear it; and she reckon'd it 90  
At her life's rate.

*Laf.* I am sure I saw her wear it.

*Ber.* You are deceived, my lord; she never saw  
it.

In Florence was it from a casement thrown me,  
Wrapp'd in a paper, which contain'd the name  
Of her that threw it. Noble she was, and thought  
I stood engaged; but when I had subscribed  
To mine own fortune and inform'd her fully  
I could not answer in that course of honour  
As she had made the overture, she ceased  
In heavy satisfaction and would never 100  
Receive the ring again.

*King.* Plutus himself,



That knows the tinct and multiplying medicine,  
Hath not in nature's mystery more science  
Than I have in this ring. 'Twas mine, 'twas

Helen's,

Whoever gave it you. Then, if you know  
That you are well acquainted with yourself,  
Confess 'twas hers, and by what rough enforce-  
ment

You got it from her. She call'd the saints to  
surety

That she would never put it from her finger,  
Unless she gave it to yourself in bed, 110  
Where you have never come, or sent it us  
Upon her great disaster.

*Ber.* She never saw it.

*King.* Thou speak'st it falsely, as I love mine  
honour;

And makest conjectural fears to come into me,  
Which I would fain shut out. If it should prove  
That thou art so inhuman—'twill not prove so—  
And yet I know not. Thou didst hate her deadly,  
And she is dead; which nothing, but to close  
Her eyes myself, could win me to believe,  
More than to see this ring. Take him away. 120

*Guards seize BERTRAM.*

My fore-past proofs, howe'er the matter fall,  
Shall tax my fears of little vanity,  
Having vainly fear'd too little. Away with him!  
We'll sift this matter further.

*Ber.* If you shall prove  
This ring was ever hers, you shall as easy  
Prove that I husbanded her bed in Florence,  
Where yet she never was. [*Exit, guarded.*]

*King.* I am wrapp'd in dismal thinkings.

*Enter a GENTLEMAN.*

*Gent.* Gracious sovereign,  
Whether I have been to blame or no, I know not.  
Here's a petition from a Florentine, 130  
Who hath for four or five removes come short  
To tender it herself. I undertook it,  
Vanquish'd thereto by the fair grace and speech  
Of the poor suppliant, who by this I know  
Is here attending. Her business looks in her  
With an importing visage; and she told me,  
In a sweet verbal brief, it did concern  
Your Highness with herself.

*King.* [*Reads*] "Upon his many protestations to  
marry me when his wife was dead, I blush to say  
it, he won me. Now is the Count Rousillon a  
widower. His vows are forfeited to me, and my  
honour's paid to him. He stole from Florence,  
taking no leave, and I follow him to his country  
for justice. Grant it me, O king! in you it best  
lies; otherwise a seducer flourishes, and a poor  
maid is undone. Diana Capilet"

*Laf.* I will buy me a son-in-law in a fair, and  
toll for this. I'll none of him.

*King.* The heavens have thought well on thee,  
Lafeu, 150

To bring forth this discovery. Seek these suitors.  
Go speedily and bring again the Count.

I am afraid the life of Helen, lady,  
Was foully snatch'd.

*Count.* Now, justice on the doers!

*Re-enter BERTRAM, guarded.*

*King.* I wonder, sir, sith wives are monsters to  
you,

And that you fly them as you swear them lord-  
ship,

Yet you desire to marry.

*Enter WIDOW and DIANA.*

What woman's that?

*Dia.* I am, my lord, a wretched Florentine,  
Derived from the ancient Capilet.

My suit, as I do understand, you know, 160  
And therefore know how far I may be pitied.

*Wid.* I am her mother, sir, whose age and  
honour

Both suffer under this complaint we bring,  
And both shall cease, without your remedy.

*King.* Come hither, Count; do you know these  
women?

*Ber.* My lord, I neither can nor will deny  
But that I know them. Do they charge me fur-  
ther?

*Dia.* Why do you look so strange upon your  
wife?

*Ber.* She's none of mine, my lord.

*Dia.* If you shall marry,  
You give away this hand, and that is mine; 170  
You give away heaven's vows, and those are  
mine;

You give away myself, which is known mine;  
For I by vow am so embodied yours,  
That she which marries you must marry me,  
Either both or none.

*Laf.* Your reputation comes too short for my  
daughter; you are no husband for her.

*Ber.* My lord, this is a fond and desperate crea-  
ture,

Whom sometime I have laugh'd with. Let your  
Highness

Lay a more noble thought upon mine honour 180  
Than for to think that I would sink it here.

*King.* Sir, for my thoughts, you have them ill to  
friend

Till your deeds gain them; fairer prove your  
honour

Than in my thought it lies.

*Dia.* Good my lord,  
Ask him upon his oath if he does think  
He had not my virginity.  
*King.* What say'st thou to her?  
*Ber.* She's impudent, my lord.

And was a common gamester to the camp.  
*Dia.* He does me wrong, my lord; if I were so,  
He might have bought me at a common price.  
Do not believe him. O, behold this ring,  
Whose high respect and rich validity  
Did lack a parallel; yet for all that  
He gave it to a commoner o' the camp,  
If I be one.

*Count.* He blushes, and 'tis it.  
Of six preceding ancestors, that gem,  
Confer'd by testament to the sequent issue,  
Hath it been owed and worn. This is his wife;  
That ring's a thousand proofs.

*King.* Methought you said  
You saw one here in court could witness it. 200

*Dia.* I did, my lord, but loath am to produce  
So bad an instrument. His name's Parolles.

*Laf.* I saw the man to-day, if man he be.

*King.* Find him, and bring him hither.

[*Exit an Attendant.*]

*Ber.* What of him?  
He's quoted for a most perfidious slave,  
With all the spots o' the world tax'd and de-  
bosh'd;

Whose nature sickens but to speak a truth.  
Am I or that or this for what he'll utter,  
That will speak anything?

*King.* She hath that ring of yours.

*Ber.* I think she has. Certain it is I liked her,  
And boarded her i' the wanton way of youth. 211  
She knew her distance and did angle for me,  
Madding my eagerness with her restraint,  
As all impediments in fancy's course  
Are motives of more fancy; and, in fine,  
Her infinite cunning, with her modern grace,  
Subdued me to her rate. She got the ring;  
And I had that which any inferior might  
At market-price have bought.

*Dia.* I must be patient.  
You, that have turn'd off a first so noble wife, 220  
May justly diet me. I pray you yet;  
Since you lack virtue, I will lose a husband;  
Send for your ring, I will return it home,  
And give me mine again.

*Ber.* I have it not.

*King.* What ring was yours, I pray you?

*Dia.* Sir, much like  
The same upon your finger.

*King.* Know you this ring? this ring was his of  
late.

*Dia.* And this was it I gave him, being abed.

*King.* The story then goes false, you threw it  
him

Out of a casement.

*Dia.* I have spoke the truth. 230

*Enter PAROLLES.*

*Ber.* My lord, I do confess the ring was hers.

*King.* You boggle shrewdly, every feather  
starts you.

Is this the man you speak of?

*Dia.* Ay, my lord.

*King.* Tell me, sirrah, but tell me true, I charge  
you,

Not fearing the displeasure of your master,  
Which on your just proceeding I'll keep off,  
By him and by this woman here what know you?

*Par.* So please your Majesty, my master hath  
been an honourable gentleman. Tricks he hath  
had in him, which gentlemen have. 240

*King.* Come, come, to the purpose. Did he love  
this woman?

*Par.* Faith, sir, he did love her; but how?

*King.* How, I pray you?

*Par.* He did love her, sir, as a gentleman loves a  
woman.

*King.* How is that?

*Par.* He loved her, sir, and loved her not.

*King.* As thou art a knave, and no knave. What  
an equivocal companion is this! 250

*Par.* I am a poor man, and at your Majesty's  
command.

*Laf.* He's a good drum, my lord, but a naughty  
orator.

*Dia.* Do you know he promised me marriage?

*Par.* Faith, I know more than I'll speak.

*King.* But wilt thou not speak all thou knowest?

*Par.* Yes, so please your Majesty. I did go be-  
tween them, as I said; but more than that, he  
loved her; for indeed he was mad for her, and  
talked of Satan and of Limbo and of Furies and I  
know not what; yet I was in that credit with  
them at that time that I knew of their going to  
bed, and of other motions, as promising her mar-  
riage, and things which would derive me ill will  
to speak of; therefore I will not speak what I  
know.

*King.* Thou hast spoken all already, unless thou  
canst say they are married; but thou art too fine  
in thy evidence; therefore stand aside. 270

This ring, you say, was yours?

*Dia.* Ay, my good lord.

*King.* Where did you buy it? or who gave it  
you?

*Dia.* It was not given me, nor I did not buy it.

*King.* Who lent it you?

*Dia.* It was not lent me neither.



*King.* Where did you find it, then?

*Dia.* I found it not.

*King.* If it were yours by none of all these ways,  
How could you give it him?

*Dia.* I never gave it him.

*Laf.* This woman's an easy glove, my lord; she  
goes off and on at pleasure.

*King.* This ring was mine; I gave it his first  
wife. 280

*Dia.* It might be yours or hers, for aught I know.

*King.* Take her away; I do not like her now;  
To prison with her; and away with him.

Unless thou tell'st me where thou hadst this ring,  
Thou diest within this hour.

*Dia.* I'll never tell you.

*King.* Take her away.

*Dia.* I'll put in bail, my liege.

*King.* I think thee now some common cus-  
tomer.

*Dia.* By Jove, if ever I knew man, 'twas you.

*King.* Wherefore hast thou accused him all this  
while? 289

*Dia.* Because he's guilty, and he is not guilty;

He knows I am no maid, and he'll swear to't:

I'll swear I am a maid, and he knows not.

Great King, I am no strumpet, by my life;

I am either maid, or else this old man's wife.

*King.* She does abuse our ears. To prison with  
her.

*Dia.* Good mother, fetch my bail. Stay, royal  
sir. [Exit widow.]

The jeweller that owes the ring is sent for,

And he shall surety me. But for this lord,

Who hath abused me, as he knows himself,

Though yet he never harm'd me, here I quit him.

He knows himself my bed he hath defiled; 301

And at that time he got his wife with child.

Dead though she be, she feels her young one kick.

So there's my riddle: one that's dead is quick:

And now behold the meaning.

*Re-enter WIDOW, with HELENA.*

*King.* Is there no exorcist

Beguiles the truer office of mine eyes?

Is't real that I see?

*Hel.* No, my good lord;

'Tis but the shadow of a wife you see,

The name and not the thing.

*Ber.* Both, both. O, pardon!

*Hel.* O my good lord, when I was like this  
maid, 310

I found you wondrous kind. There is your ring;

And, look you, here's your letter; this it says:

"When from my finger you can get this ring

And are by me with child," &c. This is done.

Will you be mine, now you are doubly won?

*Ber.* If she, my liege, can make me know this

clearly,

I'll love her dearly, ever, ever dearly.

*Hel.* If it appear not plain and prove untrue,

Deadly divorce step between me and you!

O my dear mother, do I see you living? 320

*Laf.* Mine eyes smell onions; I shall weep

anon:

[To PAROLLES] Good Tom Drum, lend me a

handkercher. So,

I thank thee; wait on me home, I'll make sport

with thee.

Let thy courtesies alone, they are scurvy ones.

*King.* Let us from point to point this story

know,

To make the even truth in pleasure flow.

[To DIANA] If thou be'st yet a fresh uncropped

flower,

Choose thou thy husband, and I'll pay thy dower;

For I can guess that by thy honest aid

Thou kept'st a wife herself, thyself a maid. 330

Of that and all the progress, more and less,

Resolvedly more leisure shall express.

All yet seems well; and if it end so meet,

The bitter past, more welcome is the sweet.

[Flourish.]

#### EPILOGUE

*King.* The king's a beggar, now the play is

done.

All is well ended, if this suit be won,

That you express content; which we will pay,

With strife to please you, day exceeding day.

Ours be your patience then, and yours our parts;

Your gentle hands lend us, and take our hearts.

[Exeunt. 340



# MEASURE FOR MEASURE

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

VINCENTIO, *the Duke*  
 ANGELO, *the Deputy*  
 ESCALUS, *an ancient Lord*  
 CLAUDIO, *a young gentleman*  
 LUCIO, *a fantastic*  
 TWO GENTLEMEN  
 PROVOST  
 THOMAS | *two friars*  
 PETER |  
 A JUSTICE  
 VARRIUS  
 ELBOW, *a simple constable*  
 FROTH, *a foolish gentleman*  
 POMPEY, *servant to Mistress Overdone*  
 ABHORSON, *an executioner*

BARNARDINE, *a dissolute prisoner*  
 A BOY  
 A MESSENGER  
 A SERVANT to Angelo

ISABELLA, *sister to Claudio*  
 MARIANA, *betrothed to Angelo*  
 JULIET, *beloved of Claudio*  
 FRANCISCA, *a nun*  
 MISTRESS OVERDONE, *a barrow*

NON-SPEAKING: *Lords, Officers, Citizens, and Attendants*

SCENE: *Vienna*



## ACT I

SCENE I. *An apartment in the Duke's palace*

Enter DUKE, ESCALUS, Lords and Attendants.

Duke. Escalus.

Escal. My lord.

Duke. Of government the properties to unfold,  
 Would seem in me to affect speech and discourse;

Since I am put to know that your own science  
 Exceeds, in that, the lists of all advice  
 My strength can give you. Then no more remains,

But that to your sufficiency . . . . .  
 . . . . . as your worth is able,  
 And let them work. The nature of our people,  
 Our city's institutions, and the terms 11  
 For common justice, you're as pregnant in  
 As art and practice hath enriched any  
 That we remember. There is our commission,  
 From which we would not have you warp. Call  
 hither,

I say, bid come before us Angelo.

[Exit an Attendant.]

What figure of us think you he will bear?  
 For you must know, we have with special soul  
 Elected him our absence to supply,  
 Lent him our terror, dress'd him with our love,  
 And given his deputation all the organs 21  
 Of our own power. What think you of it?

Escal. If any in Vienna be of worth  
 To undergo such ample grace and honour,  
 It is Lord Angelo.

Duke. Look where he comes.

Enter ANGELO.

Ang. Always obedient to your Grace's will,  
 I come to know your pleasure.

Duke. Angelo,  
 There is a kind of character in thy life  
 That to the observer doth thy history  
 Fully unfold. Thyself and thy belongings 30  
 Are not thine own so proper as to waste  
 Thyself upon thy virtues, they on thee.  
 Heaven doth with us as we with torches do,  
 Not light them for themselves; for if our virtues  
 Did not go forth of us, 'twere all alike  
 As if we had them not. Spirits are not finely  
 touch'd

But to fine issues, nor Nature never lends  
 The smallest scruple of her excellence  
 But, like a thrifty goddess, she determines 11  
 Herself the glory of a creditor,  
 Both thanks and use. But I do bend my speech 40  
 To one that can my part in him advertise;  
 Hold therefore, Angelo:  
 In our remove be thou at full yourself;  
 Mortality and mercy in Vienna  
 Live in thy tongue and heart. Old Escalus,  
 Though first in question, is thy secondary.  
 Take thy commission.

Ang. Now, good my lord,  
 Let there be some more test made of my metal,  
 Before so noble and so great a figure 50  
 Be stamp'd upon it.

Duke. No more evasion.  
 We have with a leaven'd and prepared choice  
 Proceeded to you; therefore take your honours.  
 Our haste from hence is of so quick condition



That it prefers itself and leaves unquestion'd  
Matters of needful value. We shall write to you,  
As time and our concernings shall importune,  
How it goes with us, and do look to know  
What doth befall you here. So, fare you well.  
To the hopeful execution do I leave you 60  
Of your commissions.

*Ang.* Yet give leave, my lord,  
That we may bring you something on the way.

*Duke.* My haste may not admit it;  
Nor need you, on mine honour, have to do  
With any scruple; your scope is as mine own,  
So to enforce or qualify the laws  
As to your soul seems good. Give me your hand;  
I'll privily away. I love the people,  
But do not like to stage me to their eyes.  
Though it do well, I do not relish well 70  
Their loud applause and Aves vehement;  
Nor do I think the man of safe discretion  
That does affect it. Once more, fare you well.

*Ang.* The heavens give safety to your purposes!

*Escal.* Lead forth and bring you back in happiness!

*Duke.* I thank you. Fare you well. [*Exit.*]

*Escal.* I shall desire you, sir, to give me leave  
To have free speech with you; and it concerns me

To look into the bottom of my place.  
A power I have, but of what strength and nature  
I am not yet instructed. 81

*Ang.* 'Tis so with me. Let us withdraw together,

And we may soon our satisfaction have  
Touching that point.

*Escal.* I'll wait upon your honour. [*Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE II. *A street*

*Enter LUCIO and TWO GENTLEMEN.*

*Lucio.* If the Duke with the other dukes come  
not to composition with the King of Hungary,  
why then all the dukes fall upon the King.

*1st Gent.* Heaven grant us its peace, but not the  
King of Hungary's!

*2nd Gent.* Amen.

*Lucio.* Thou concludest like the sanctimonious  
pirate, that went to sea with the Ten Command-  
ments, but scraped one out of the table.

*2nd Gent.* "Thou shalt not steal?" 10

*Lucio.* Ay, that he razed.

*1st Gent.* Why, 'twas a commandment to com-  
mand the captain and all the rest from their func-  
tions; they put forth to steal. There's not a sol-  
dier of us all, that, in the thanksgiving before  
meat, do relish the petition well that prays for  
peace.

*2nd Gent.* I never heard any soldier dislike it.

*Lucio.* I believe thee; for I think thou never  
wast where grace was said. 20

*2nd Gent.* No? a dozen times at least.

*1st Gent.* What, in metre?

*Lucio.* In any proportion or in any language.

*1st Gent.* I think, or in any religion.

*Lucio.* Ay, why not? Grace is grace, despite of  
all controversy; as, for example, thou thyself art  
a wicked villain, despite of all grace.

*1st Gent.* Well, there went but a pair of shears  
between us.

*Lucio.* I grant; as there may between the lists  
and the velvet. Thou art the list. 31

*1st Gent.* And thou the velvet. Thou art good  
velvet; thou'rt a three-piled piece, I warrant  
thee. I had as lief be a list of an English kersey  
as be piled, as thou art piled, for a French velvet.  
Do I speak feelingly now?

*Lucio.* I think thou dost; and, indeed, with most  
painful feeling of thy speech. I will, out of thine  
own confession, learn to begin thy health; but,  
whilst I live, forget to drink after thee. 40

*1st Gent.* I think I have done myself wrong, have  
I not?

*2nd Gent.* Yes, that thou hast, whether thou art  
tainted or free.

*Lucio.* Behold, behold, where Madam Mitiga-  
tion comes! I have purchased as many diseases  
under her roof as come to—

*2nd Gent.* To what, I pray?

*Lucio.* Judge.

*2nd Gent.* To three thousand dolours a year.

*1st Gent.* Ay, and more. 51

*Lucio.* A French crown more.

*1st Gent.* Thou art always figuring diseases in  
me; but thou art full of error; I am sound.

*Lucio.* Nay, not as one would say, healthy; but  
so sound as things that are hollow. Thy bones  
are hollow; impiety has made a feast of thee.

*Enter MISTRESS OVERDONE.*

*1st Gent.* How now! which of your hips has the  
most profound sciatica?

*Mrs Ov.* Well, well; there's one yonder arrest-  
ed and carried to prison was worth five thousand  
of you all.

*2nd Gent.* Who's that, I pray thee?

*Mrs Ov.* Marry, sir, that's Claudio, Signior  
Claudio.

*1st Gent.* Claudio to prison? 'tis not so.

*Mrs Ov.* Nay, but I know 'tis so. I saw him  
arrested, saw him carried away; and, which is  
more, within these three days his head to be  
chopped off. 70

*Lucio.* But, after all this fooling, I would not  
have it so. Art thou sure of this?

*Mrs Ov.* I am too sure of it; and it is for getting Madam Julietta with child.

*Lucio.* Believe me, this may be. He promised to meet me two hours since, and he was ever precise in promise-keeping.

*2nd Gent.* Besides, you know, it draws something near to the speech we had to such a purpose.

*1st Gent.* But, most of all, agreeing with the proclamation. 81

*Lucio.* Away! let's go learn the truth of it.

[*Exeunt LUCIO and GENTLEMEN.*]

*Mrs Ov.* Thus, what with the war, what with the sweat, what with the gallows, and what with poverty, I am custom-shrunk.

*Enter POMPEY.*

How now! what's the news with you?

*Pom.* Yonder man is carried to prison.

*Mrs Ov.* Well; what has he done?

*Pom.* A woman.

*Mrs Ov.* But what's his offence? 90

*Pom.* Groping for trouts in a peculiar river.

*Mrs Ov.* What, is there a maid with child by him?

*Pom.* No, but there's a woman with maid by him. You have not heard of the proclamation, have you?

*Mrs Ov.* What proclamation, man?

*Pom.* All houses in the suburbs of Vienna must be plucked down.

*Mrs Ov.* And what shall become of those in the city? 101

*Pom.* They shall stand for seed. They had gone down too, but that a wise burgher put in for them.

*Mrs Ov.* But shall all our houses of resort in the suburbs be pulled down?

*Pom.* To the ground, mistress.

*Mrs Ov.* Why, here's a change indeed in the commonwealth! What shall become of me?

*Pom.* Come; fear not you; good counsellors lack no clients. Though you change your place, you need not change your trade; I'll be your tapster still. Courage! there will be pity taken on you; you that have worn your eyes almost out in the service, you will be considered.

*Mrs Ov.* What's to do here, Thomas tapster? let's withdraw.

*Pom.* Here comes Signior Claudio, led by the provost to prison; and there's Madam Juliet.

[*Exeunt.*]

*Enter PROVOST, CLAUDIO, JULIET, and Officers.*

*Claud.* Fellow, why dost thou show me thus to the world? 120

Bear me to prison, where I am committed.

*Prov.* I do it not in evil disposition, But from Lord Angelo by special charge.

*Claud.* Thus can the demigod Authority Make us pay down for our offence by weight The words of heaven; on whom it will, it will; On whom it will not, so; yet still 'tis just.

*Re-enter LUCIO and TWO GENTLEMEN.*

*Lucio.* Why, how now, Claudio! whence comes this restraint?

*Claud.* From too much liberty, my Lucio, liberty.

As surfeit is the father of much fast, 130  
So every scope by the immoderate use  
Turns to restraint. Our natures do pursue,  
Like rats that ravin down their proper bane,  
A thirsty evil; and when we drink we die.

*Lucio.* If I could speak so wisely under an arrest, I would send for certain of my creditors. And yet, to say the truth, I had as lief have the foppery of freedom as the morality of imprisonment. What's thy offence, Claudio?

*Claud.* What but to speak of would offend again. 140

*Lucio.* What, is't murder?

*Claud.* No.

*Lucio.* Lechery?

*Claud.* Call it so.

*Prov.* Away, sir! you must go.

*Claud.* One word, good friend. Lucio, a word with you.

*Lucio.* A hundred, if they'll do you any good. Is lechery so look'd after?

*Claud.* Thus stands it with me. Upon a true contract

I got possession of Julietta's bed; 150  
You know the lady; she is fast my wife,  
Save that we do the denunciation lack  
Of outward order. This we came not to,  
Only for propagation of a dower  
Remaining in the coffer of her friends,  
From whom we thought it meet to hide our love  
Till time had made them for us. But it chanceth  
The stealth of our most mutual entertainment  
With character too gross is writ on Juliet.

*Lucio.* With child, perhaps?

*Claud.* Unhappily, even so. 160

And the new deputy now for the Duke—  
Whether it be the fault and glimpse of newness,  
Or whether that the body public be  
A horse whereon the governor doth ride,  
Who, newly in the seat, that it may know  
He can command, lets it straight feel the spur;  
Whether the tyranny be in his place,  
Or in his eminence that fills it up,



I stagger in: but this new governor  
Awakes me all the enrolled penalties 170  
Which have, like unscour'd armour, hung by the  
wall

So long that nineteen zodiacs have gone round  
And none of them been worn; and, for a name,  
Now puts the drowsy and neglected act  
Freshly on me. 'Tis surely for a name.

*Lucio.* I warrant it is; and thy head stands so  
tickle on thy shoulders that a milkmaid, if she be  
in love, may sigh it off. Send after the Duke and  
appeal to him.

*Claud.* I have done so, but he's not to be  
found. 180

I prithee, Lucio, do me this kind service.  
This day my sister should the cloister enter  
And there receive her approbation.  
Acquaint her with the danger of my state;  
Implore her, in my voice, that she make friends  
To the strict deputy; bid herself assay him;  
I have great hope in that; for in her youth  
There is a prone and speechless dialect,  
Such as move men; beside, she hath prosperous  
art

When she will play with reason and discourse,  
And well she can persuade. 191

*Lucio.* I pray she may; as well for the encour-  
agement of the like, which else would stand  
under grievous imposition, as for the enjoying of  
thy life, who I would be sorry should be thus  
foolishly lost at a game of tick-tack. I'll to her.

*Claud.* I thank you, good friend Lucio.

*Lucio.* Within two hours.

*Claud.* Come, officer, away!  
[Exeunt.]

### SCENE III. *A monastery*

*Enter DUKE and FRIAR THOMAS.*

*Duke.* No, holy father; throw away that  
thought.

Believe not that the dribbling dart of love  
Can pierce a complete bosom. Why I desire thee  
To give me secret harbour, hath a purpose  
More grave and wrinkled than the aims and ends  
Of burning youth.

*Fri. T.* May your Grace speak of it?

*Duke.* My holy sir, none better knows than you  
How I have ever loved the life removed  
And held in idle price to haunt assemblies  
Where youth, and cost, and witless bravery  
keeps.

I have deliver'd to Lord Angelo, 11  
A man of stricture and firm abstinence,  
My absoluté power and place here in Vienna,  
And he supposes me travell'd to Poland;  
For so I have strew'd it in the common ear,

And so it is received. Now, pious sir,  
You will demand of me why I do this?  
*Fri. T.* Gladly, my lord.

*Duke.* We have strict statutes and most biting  
laws,  
The needful bits and curbs to headstrong weeds,  
Which for this nineteen years we have let slip; 21  
Even like an o'ergrown lion in a cave,  
That goes not out to prey. Now, as fond fathers,  
Having bound up the threatening twigs of birch,  
Only to stick it in their children's sight  
For terror, not to use, in time the rod  
Becomes more mock'd than fear'd; so our de-  
crees,  
Dead to infliction, to themselves are dead,  
And liberty plucks justice by the nose,  
The baby beats the nurse, and quite athwart 30  
Goes all decorum.

*Fri. T.* It rested in your Grace  
To unloose this tied-up justice when you pleased;  
And it in you more dreadful would have seem'd  
Than in Lord Angelo.

*Duke.* I do fear, too dreadful.  
Sith 'twas my fault to give the people scope,  
'T would be my tyranny to strike and gall them  
For what I bid them do; for we bid this be done,  
When evil deeds have their permissive pass  
And not the punishment. Therefore indeed, my  
father,

I have on Angelo imposed the office; 40  
Who may, in the ambush of my name, strike  
home,

And yet my nature never in the fight  
To do in slander. And to behold his sway,  
I will, as 'twere a brother of your order,  
Visit both prince and people; therefore, I prithee,  
Supply me with the habit and instruct me  
How I may formally in person bear me  
Like a true friar. Moe reasons for this action  
At our more leisure shall I render you;  
Only, this one: Lord Angelo is precise; 50  
Stands at a guard with envy; scarce confesses  
That his blood flows, or that his appetite  
Is more to bread than stone; hence shall we see,  
If power change purpose, what our seemers be.  
[Exeunt.]

### SCENE IV. *A nursery*

*Enter ISABELLA and FRANCISCA.*

*Isab.* And have you nuns no farther privileges?  
*Fran.* Are not these large enough?

*Isab.* Yes, truly. I speak not as desiring more;  
But rather wishing a more strict restraint  
Upon the sisterhood, the votarists of Saint Clare.  
*Lucio.* [Within] Ho! Peace be in this place!  
*Isab.* Who's that which calls?

*Fran.* It is a man's voice. Gentle Isabella,  
Turn you the key, and know his business of him;  
You may, I may not; you are yet unsworn.  
When you have vow'd, you must not speak with  
men 10

But in the presence of the prioress;  
Then, if you speak, you must not show your face,  
Or, if you show your face, you must not speak.  
He calls again; I pray you, answer him. [*Exit.*]  
*Isab.* Peace and prosperity! Who is't that calls?

*Enter LUCIO.*

*Lucio.* Hail, virgin, if you be, as those cheek-  
roses  
Proclaim you are no less! Can you so stead me  
As bring me to the sight of Isabella,  
A novice of this place and the fair sister  
To her unhappy brother Claudio? 20

*Isab.* Why "her unhappy brother"? let me ask,  
The rather for I now must make you know  
I am that Isabella and his sister.

*Lucio.* Gentle and fair, your brother kindly  
greet's you.

Not to be weary with you, he's in prison.

*Isab.* Woe me! for what?

*Lucio.* For that which, if myself might be his  
judge,  
He should receive his punishment in thanks.  
He hath got his friend with child.

*Isab.* Sir, make me not your story.

*Lucio.* It is true. 30  
I would not—though 'tis my familiar sin  
With maids to seem the lapwing and to jest,  
Tongue far from heart—play with all virgins so.  
I hold you as a thing ensky'd and sainted,  
By your renouncement an immortal spirit,  
And to be talk'd with in sincerity,  
As with a saint.

*Isab.* You do blaspheme the good in mocking  
me.

*Lucio.* Do not believe it. Fewness and truth, 'tis  
thus:

Your brother and his lover have embraced; 40  
As those that feed grow full, as blossoming time  
That from the seedness the bare fallow brings  
To teeming foison, even so her plenteous womb  
Expresseth his full tilth and husbandry.

*Isab.* Some one with child by him? My cousin  
Juliet?

*Lucio.* Is she your cousin?

*Isab.* Adoptedly; as school-maids change their  
names

By vain though apt affection.

*Lucio.* She is it.

*Isab.* O, let him marry her.

*Lucio.* This is the point.

The Duke is very strangely gone from hence; 50  
Bore many gentlemen, myself being one,  
In hand and hope of action; but we do learn  
By those that know the very nerves of state,  
His givings-out were of an infinite distance  
From his true-meant design. Upon his place,  
And with full line of his authority,  
Governs Lord Angelo; a man whose blood  
Is very snow-broth; one who never feels  
The wanton stings and motions of the sense,  
But doth rebate and blunt his natural edge 60  
With profits of the mind, study, and fast.  
He—to give fear to use and liberty,  
Which have for long run by the hideous law,  
As mice by lions—hath pick'd out an act,  
Under whose heavy sense your brother's life  
Falls into forfeit; he arrests him on it;  
And follows close the rigour of the statute,  
To make him an example. All hope is gone,  
Unless you have the grace by your fair prayer  
To soften Angelo. And that's my pith of business  
'Twixt you and your poor brother. 71

*Isab.* Doth he so seek his life?

*Lucio.* Has censured him

Already; and, as I hear, the Provost hath  
A warrant for his execution.

*Isab.* Alas! what poor ability's in me  
To do him good?

*Lucio.* Assay the power you have.

*Isab.* My power? Alas, I doubt—

*Lucio.* Our doubts are traitors  
And make us lose the good we oft might win  
By fearing to attempt. Go to Lord Angelo,  
And let him learn to know, when maidens sue, 80  
Men give like gods; but when they weep and  
kneel,

All their petitions are as freely theirs  
As they themselves would owe them.

*Isab.* I'll see what I can do.

*Lucio.* But speedily.

*Isab.* I will about it straight;  
No longer staying but to give the Mother  
Notice of my affair. I humbly thank you.  
Commend me to my brother. Soon at night  
I'll send him certain word of my success.

*Lucio.* I take my leave of you.

*Isab.* Good sir, adieu. 90  
[*Exeunt.*]

## ACT II

### SCENE I. A hall in Angelo's house

*Enter ANGELO, ESCALUS, and a JUSTICE, PROVOST,  
Officers, and other Attendants, behind.*

*Ang.* We must not make a scarccrow of the  
law,



Setting it up to fear the birds of prey,  
And let it keep one shape, till custom make it  
Their perch and not their terror.

*Escal.* Ay, but yet  
Let us be keen, and rather cut a little,  
Than fall, and bruise to death. Alas, this gentle-  
man,  
Whom I would save, had a most noble father!  
Let but your honour know,  
Whom I believe to be most strait in virtue,  
That, in the working of your own affections, 10  
Had time cohered with place or place with wish-  
ing,  
Or that the resolute acting of your blood  
Could have attain'd the effect of your own pur-  
pose,  
Whether you had not sometime in your life  
Err'd in this point which now you censure  
him,  
And pull'd the law upon you.

*Ang.* 'Tis one thing to be tempted, Escalus,  
Another thing to fall. I not deny,  
The jury, passing on the prisoner's life,  
May in the sworn twelve have a thief or two 20  
Guiltier than him they try. What's open made to  
justice,

That justice seizes. What know the laws  
That thieves do pass on thieves? 'Tis very preg-  
nant,

The jewel that we find, we stoop and take't  
Because we see it; but what we do not see  
We tread upon, and never think of it.  
You may not so extenuate his offence  
For I have had such faults; but rather tell me,  
When I, that censure him, do so offend,  
Let mine own judgement pattern out my death,  
And nothing come in partial. Sir, he must die.

*Escal.* Be it as your wisdom will.

*Ang.* Where is the Provost?

*Prov.* Here, if it like your honour.

*Ang.* See that Claudio  
Be executed by nine to-morrow morning.  
Bring him his confessor, let him be prepared;  
For that's the utmost of his pilgrimage.

[*Exit PROVOST.*]

*Escal.* [*Aside*] Well, heaven forgive him! and  
forgive us all!

Some rise by sin, and some by virtue fall.  
Some run from brakes of vice, and answer  
none;

And some condemned for a fault alone. 40

*Enter ELBOW, and Officers with FROTH and  
POMPEY.*

*Elb.* Come, bring them away. If these be good  
people in a commonweal that do nothing but use

their abuses in common houses, I know no law.  
Bring them away.

*Ang.* How now, sir! What's your name? and  
what's the matter?

*Elb.* If it please your honour, I am the poor  
Duke's constable, and my name is Elbow. I do  
lean upon justice, sir, and do bring in here before  
your good honour two notorious benefactors. 50

*Ang.* Benefactors? Well; what benefactors  
are they? are they not malefactors?

*Elb.* If it please your honour, I know not well  
what they are; but precise villains they are, that  
I am sure of; and void of all profanation in the  
world that good Christians ought to have.

*Escal.* This comes off well; here's a wise  
officer.

*Ang.* Go to; what quality are they of? Elbow  
is your name? why dost thou not speak, Elbow?

*Pom.* He cannot, sir; he's out at elbow. 61

*Ang.* What are you, sir?

*Elb.* He, sir! a tapster, sir; parcel-bawd; one  
that serves a bad woman; whose house, sir, was,  
as they say, plucked down in the suburbs; and  
now she professes a hot-house, which, I think, is  
a very ill house too.

*Escal.* How know you that?

*Elb.* My wife, sir, whom I detest before heaven  
and your honour— 70

*Escal.* How? thy wife?

*Elb.* Ay, sir; whom, I thank heaven, is an  
honest woman—

*Escal.* Dost thou detest her therefore?

*Elb.* I say, sir, I will detest myself also, as  
well as she, that this house, if it be not a bawd's  
house, it is pity of her life, for it is a naughty  
house.

*Escal.* How dost thou know that, constable?

*Elb.* Marry, sir, by my wife; who, if she had  
been a woman cardinally given, might have been  
accused in fornication, adultery, and all unclean-  
liness there.

*Escal.* By the woman's means?

*Elb.* Ay, sir, by Mistress Overdone's means;  
but as she spit in his face, so she defied him.

*Pom.* Sir, if it please your honour, this is not so.

*Elb.* Prove it before these varlets here, thou  
honourable man; prove it.

*Escal.* Do you hear how he misplaces? 90

*Pom.* Sir, she came in great with child; and  
longing, saving your honour's reverence, for  
stewed prunes; sir, we had but two in the house,  
which at that very distant time stood, as it were,  
in a fruit-dish, a dish of some three-pence; your  
honours have seen such dishes; they are not  
China dishes, but very good dishes—

*Escal.* Go to, go to; no matter for the dish, sir.

*Pom.* No, indeed, sir, not of a pin; you are therein in the right; but to the point. As I say, this Mistress Elbow, being, as I say, with child, and being great-bellied, and longing, as I said, for prunes; and having but two in the dish, as I said, Master Froth here, this very man, having eaten the rest, as I said, and, as I say, paying for them very honestly; for, as you know, Master Froth, I could not give you three-pence again.

*Froth.* No, indeed.

*Pom.* Very well; you being then, if you be remembered, cracking the stones of the foresaid prunes—

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*Froth.* Ay, so I did indeed.

*Pom.* Why, very well; I telling you then, if you be remembered, that such a one and such a one were past cure of the thing you wot of, unless they kept very good diet, as I told you—

*Froth.* All this is true.

*Pom.* Why, very well, then—

*Escal.* Come, you are a tedious fool; to the purpose. What was done to Elbow's wife, that he hath cause to complain of? Come me to what was done to her.

*Pom.* Sir, your honour cannot come to that yet.

*Escal.* No, sir, nor I mean it not.

*Pom.* Sir, but you shall come to it, by your honour's leave. And, I beseech you, look into Master Froth here, sir; a man of fourscore pound a year; whose father died at Hallowmas. Was't not at Hallowmas, Master Froth?

*Froth.* All-hallond eve.

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*Pom.* Why, very well; I hope here be truths.

He, sir, sitting, as I say, in a lower chair, sir; 'twas in the Bunch of Grapes, where indeed you have a delight to sit, have you not?

*Froth.* I have so; because it is an open room and good for winter.

*Pom.* Why, very well, then; I hope here be truths.

*Ang.* This will last out a night in Russia, When nights are longest there. I'll take my leave,

140

And leave you to the hearing of the cause;

Hoping you'll find good cause to whip them all.

*Escal.* I think no less. Good morrow to your lordship.

[Exit ANGELO.]

Now, sir, come on. What was done to Elbow's wife, once more?

*Pom.* Once, sir? there was nothing done to her once.

*Elb.* I beseech you, sir, ask him what this man did to my wife.

*Pom.* I beseech your honour, ask me.

150

*Escal.* Well, sir; what did this gentleman do to her?

*Pom.* I beseech you, sir, look in this gentle-

man's face. Good Master Froth, look upon his honour; 'tis for a good purpose. Dost your honour mark his face?

*Escal.* Ay, sir, very well.

*Pom.* Nay, I beseech you, mark it well.

*Escal.* Well, I do so.

*Pom.* Dost your honour see any harm in his face?

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*Escal.* Why, no.

*Pom.* I'll be supposed upon a book, his face is the worst thing about him. Good, then; if his face be the worst thing about him, how could Master Froth do the constable's wife any harm? I would know that of your honour.

*Escal.* He's in the right. Constable, what say you to it?

*Elb.* First, an it like you, the house is a respected house; next, this is a respected fellow; and his mistress is a respected woman.

*Pom.* By this hand, sir, his wife is a more respected person than any of us all.

*Elb.* Varlet, thou liest; thou liest, wicked varlet! the time is yet to come that she was ever respected with man, woman, or child.

*Pom.* Sir, she was respected with him before he married with her.

*Escal.* Which is the wiser here? Justice or Iniquity? Is this true?

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*Elb.* O thou caittiff! O thou varlet! O thou wicked Hannibal! I respected with her before I was married to her! If ever I was respected with her, or she with me, let not your worship think me the poor Duke's officer. Prove this, thou wicked Hannibal, or I'll have mine action of battery on thee.

*Escal.* If he took you a box o' the ear, you might have your action of slander too.

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*Elb.* Marry, I thank your good worship for it. What is't your worship's pleasure I shall do with this wicked caittiff?

*Escal.* Truly, officer, because he hath some offences in him that thou wouldst discover if thou couldst, let him continue in his courses till thou knowest what they are.

*Elb.* Marry, I thank your worship for it.

Thou seest, thou wicked varlet, now, what's come upon thee. Thou art to continue now, thou varlet; thou art to continue.

201

*Escal.* Where were you born, friend?

*Froth.* Here in Vienna, sir.

*Escal.* Are you of fourscore pounds a year?

*Froth.* Yes, an't please you, sir.

*Escal.* So. What trade are you of, sir?

*Pom.* A tapster; a poor widow's tapster

*Escal.* Your mistress' name?

*Pom.* Mistress Overdone.



*Escal.* Hath she had any more than one husband? 211

*Pom.* Nine, sir; Overdone by the last.

*Escal.* Nine! Come hither to me, Master Froth. Master Froth, I would not have you acquainted with tapsters; they will draw you, Master Froth, and you will hang them. Get you gone, and let me hear no more of you.

*Froth.* I thank your worship. For mine own part, I never come into any room in a taphouse, but I am drawn in. 220

*Escal.* Well, no more of it, Master Froth: farewell. [*Exit FROTH.*] Come you hither to me, Master tapster. What's your name, Master tapster?

*Pom.* Pompey.

*Escal.* What else?

*Pom.* Bum, sir.

*Escal.* Troth, and your bum is the greatest thing about you; so that in the beastliest sense you are Pompey the Great. Pompey, you are partly a bawd, Pompey, howsoever you colour it in being a tapster, are you not? Come, tell me true; it shall be the better for you.

*Pom.* Truly, sir, I am a poor fellow that would live.

*Escal.* How would you live, Pompey? by being a bawd? What do you think of the trade, Pompey? is it a lawful trade?

*Pom.* If the law would allow it, sir.

*Escal.* But the law will not allow it, Pompey; nor it shall not be allowed in Vienna. 241

*Pom.* Does your worship mean to geld and splay all the youth of the city?

*Escal.* No, Pompey.

*Pom.* Truly, sir, in my poor opinion, they will to't then. If your worship will take order for the drabs and the knaves, you need not to fear the bawds.

*Escal.* There are pretty orders beginning, I can tell you. It is but heading and hanging. 250

*Pom.* If you head and hang all that offend that way but for ten year together, you'll be glad to give out a commission for more heads. If this law hold in Vienna ten year, I'll rent the fairest house in it after three-pence a bay. If you live to see this come to pass, say Pompey told you so.

*Escal.* Thank you, good Pompey; and, in requital of your prophecy, hark you, I advise you, let me not find you before me again upon any complaint whatsoever; no, not for dwelling where you do. If I do, Pompey, I shall beat you to your tent, and prove a shrewd Cæsar to you; in plain dealing, Pompey, I shall have you whipt. So, for this time, Pompey, fare you well.

*Pom.* I thank your worship for your good

counsel; [*aside*] but I shall follow it as the flesh and fortune shall better determine.

Whip me? No, no; let carman whip his jade; The valiant heart's not whipt out of his trade.

[*Exit.* 270

*Escal.* Come hither to me, Master Elbow; come hither, Master constable. How long have you been in this place of constable?

*Elb.* Seven year and a half, sir.

*Escal.* I thought, by your readiness in the office, you had continued in it some time. You say, seven years together?

*Elb.* And a half, sir.

*Escal.* Alas, it hath been great pains to you. They do you wrong to put you so oft upon't. Are there not men in your ward sufficient to serve it?

*Elb.* Faith, sir, few of any wit in such matters. As they are chosen, they are glad to choose me for them; I do it for some piece of money, and go through with all.

*Escal.* Look you bring me in the names of some six or seven, the most sufficient of your parish.

*Elb.* To your worship's house, sir?

*Escal.* To my house. Fare you well.

[*Exit ELBOW.*

What's o'clock, think you? 290

*Just.* Eleven, sir.

*Escal.* I pray you home to dinner with me.

*Just.* I humbly thank you.

*Escal.* It grieves me for the death of Claudio; But there's no remedy.

*Just.* Lord Angelo is severe.

*Escal.* It is but needful.

Mercy is not itself, that oft looks so;

Pardon is still the nurse of second woe.

But yet—poor Claudio! There is no remedy.

Come, sir. [*Exeunt.* 300

## SCENE II. Another room in the same

*Enter PROVOST and a SERVANT*

*Serv.* He's hearing of a cause; he will come straight.

I'll tell him of you.

*Prov.* Pray you, do. [*Exit SERVANT.*]

I'll know

His pleasure; may be he will relent. Alas,

He hath but as offended in a dream!

All sects, all ages smack of this vice; and he

To die for't!

*Enter ANGELO.*

*Ang.* Now, what's the matter, provost?

*Prov.* Is it your will Claudio shall die tomorrow?

*Ang.* Did not I tell thee yea? hadst thou not order?

Why dost thou ask again?

*Prov.* Lest I might be too rash.  
Under your good correction, I have seen, 10  
When, after execution, judgement hath  
Repented o'er his doom.

*Ang.* Go to; let that be mine.  
Do you your office, or give up your place,  
And you shall well be spared.

*Prov.* I crave your honour's pardon.  
What shall be done, sir, with the groaning Juliet?  
She's very near her hour.

*Ang.* Dispose of her  
To some more fitter place, and that with speed.

*Re-enter SERVANT.*

*Serv.* Here is the sister of the man condemn'd  
Desires access to you.

*Ang.* Hath he a sister?

*Prov.* Ay, my good lord; a very virtuous  
maid, 20

And to be shortly of a sisterhood,  
If not already.

*Ang.* Well, let her be admitted.  
[*Exit SERVANT.*]

See you the fornicatress be removed.

Let her have needful, but not lavish, means;  
There shall be order for't.

*Enter ISABELLA and LUCIO.*

*Prov.* God save your honour!  
*Ang.* Stay a little while. [*To ISABELLA.*] You're  
welcome; what's your will?

*Isab.* I am a woeful suitor to your honour,  
Please but your honour hear me.

*Ang.* Well; what's your suit?

*Isab.* There is a vice that most I do abhor,  
And most desire should meet the blow of jus-  
tice;

For which I would not plead, but that I must;  
For which I must not plead, but that I am  
At war 'twixt will and will not.

*Ang.* Well; the matter?

*Isab.* I have a brother is condemn'd to die.

I do beseech you, let it be his fault,  
And not my brother.

*Prov.* [*Aside*] Heaven give thee moving graces!

*Ang.* Condemn the fault, and not the actor of it?  
Why, every fault's condemn'd ere it be done.  
Mine were the very cipher of a function,  
To fine the faults whose fine stands in record, 40  
And let go by the actor.

*Isab.* O just but severe law!

I had a brother, then. Heaven keep your honour!

*Lucio.* [*Aside to ISABELLA.*] Giv't not o'er so.

To him again, entreat him;  
Kneel down before him, hang upon his gown.  
You are too cold; if you should need a pin,

You could not with more tame a tongue desire it.  
To him, I say!

*Isab.* Must he needs die?

*Ang.* Maiden, no remedy.

*Isab.* Yes; I do think that you might pardon  
him,

And neither heaven nor man grieve at the mercy.

*Ang.* I will not do't.

*Isab.* But can you, if you would? 51

*Ang.* Look, what I will not, that I cannot do.

*Isab.* But might you do't, and do the world no  
wrong,

If so your heart were touch'd with that remorse  
As mine is to him?

*Ang.* He's sentenced; 'tis too late.

*Lucio.* [*Aside to ISABELLA*] You are too cold.

*Isab.* Too late? why, no; I, that do speak a  
word,

May call it back again. Well, believe this,  
No ceremony that to great ones 'longs,  
Nor the king's crown, nor the deputed swo d, 60  
The marshal's truncheon, nor the judge's robe,  
Become them with one half so good a grace  
As mercy does.

If he had been as you and you as he,  
You would have slipt like him; but he, like you,  
Would not have been so stern.

*Ang.* Pray you, be gone.

*Isab.* I would to heaven I had your potency,  
And you were Isabel! should it then be thus?  
No; I would tell what 'twere to be a judge,  
And what a prisoner.

*Lucio.* [*Aside to ISABELLA*] Ay, touch him;  
there's the vein. 70

*Ang.* Your brother is a forfeit of the law.

And you but waste your words.

*Isab.* Alas, alas!

Why, all the souls that were were forfeit once;  
And He that might the vantage best have took  
Found out the remedy. How would you be,  
If He, which is the top of judgement, should  
But judge you as you are? O, think on that;  
And mercy then will breathe within your lips,  
Like man new made.

*Ang.* Be you content, fair maid;  
It is the law, not I, condemn your brother. 80  
Were he my kinsman, brother, or my son,  
It should be thus with him. He must die to-  
morrow.

*Isab.* To-morrow! O, that's sudden! Spare him,  
spare him!

He's not prepared for death. Even for our  
kitchens

We kill the fowl of season. Shall we serve  
Heaven

With less respect than we do minister



To our gross selves? Good, good my lord, be-  
think you;

Who is it that hath died for this offence?

There's many have committed it.

*Lucio.* [*Aside to ISABELLA*] Ay, well said.

*Ang.* The law hath not been dead, though it  
hath slept. 90

Those many had not dared to do that evil,  
If the first that did the edict infringe  
Had answer'd for his deed. Now 'tis awake,  
Takes note of what is done; and, like a prophet,  
Looks in a glass that shows what future evils,  
Either new, or by remissness new-conceived,  
And so in progress to be hatch'd and born,  
Are now to have no successive degrees,  
But, ere they live, to end.

*Isab.* Yet show some pity.

*Ang.* I show it most of all when I show justice;  
For then I pity those I do not know, 101

Which a dismiss'd offence would after gall;

And do him right that, answering one foul wrong,

Lives not to act another. Be satisfied;

Your brother dies to-morrow; be content.

*Isab.* So you must be the first that gives this  
sentence,

And he, that suffers. O, it is excellent  
To have a giant's strength; but it is tyrannous  
To use it like a giant.

*Lucio.* [*Aside to ISABELLA*] That's well said.

*Isab.* Could great men thunder 110

As Jove himself does, Jove would ne'er be quiet,

For every pelting, petty officer

Would use his heaven for thunder;

Nothing but thunder! Merciful Heaven,

Thou rather with thy sharp and sulphurous bolt

Split'st the unwedgeable and gnarled oak

Than the soft myrtle; but man, proud man,

Drest in a little brief authority,

Most ignorant of what he's most assured,

His glassy essence, like an angry ape, 120

Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven

As make the angels weep; who, with our spleens,

Would all themselves laugh mortal.

*Lucio.* [*Aside to ISABELLA*] O, to him, to him,  
wench! he will relent;

He's coming; I perceive't.

*Prov.* [*Aside*] Pray heaven she win him!

*Isab.* We cannot weigh our brother with ourself.

Great men may jest with saints; 'tis wit in them,

But in the less foul profanation.

*Lucio* [*Aside.*] Thou'rt i' the right girl; more o'  
that.

*Isab.* That in the captain's but a choleric word,  
Which in the soldier is flat blasphemy. 131

*Lucio.* [*Aside to ISABELLA.*] Art advis'd o' that?  
more on't.

*Ang.* Why do you put these sayings upon me?

*Isab.* Because authority, though it err like  
others,

Hath yet a kind of medicine in itself

That skins the vice o' the top. Go to your bosom;

Knock there, and ask your heart what it doth  
know

That's like my brother's fault. If it confess

A natural guiltiness such as is his,

Let it not sound a thought upon your tongue 140

Against my brother's life.

*Ang.* [*Aside*] She speaks, and 'tis

Such sense that my sense breeds with it. Fare  
you well.

*Isab.* Gentle my lord, turn back.

*Ang.* I will bethink me. Come again to-morrow.

*Isab.* Hark how I'll bribe you. Good my lord,  
turn back.

*Ang.* How! bribe me?

*Isab.* Ay, with such gifts that heaven shall  
share with you.

*Lucio.* [*Aside to ISABELLA*] You had marr'd all  
else.

*Isab.* Not with fond shekels of the tested gold,  
Or stones whose rates are either rich or poor 150

As fancy values them; but with true prayers

That shall be up at heaven and enter there

Ere sun-rise, prayers from preserved souls,

From fasting maids whose minds are dedicate

To nothing temporal.

*Ang.* Well; come to me to-morrow.

*Lucio.* [*Aside to ISABELLA*] Go to; 'tis well;  
away!

*Isab.* Heaven keep your honour safe!

*Ang.* [*Aside*] Amen.

For I am that way going to temptation,

Where prayers cross.

*Isab.* At what hour to-morrow

Shall I attend your lordship?

*Ang.* At any time 'fore noon. 160

*Isab.* 'Save your honour!

[*Exeunt ISABELLA, LUCIO, and PROVOST.*]

*Ang.* From thee, even from thy virtue!

What's this, what's this? Is this her fault or  
mine?

The tempter or the tempted, who sins most?

Ha!

Not she; nor doth she tempt; but it is I

That, lying by the violet in the sun,

Do as the carrion does, not as the flower,

Corrupt with virtuous season. Can it be

That modesty may more betray our sense

Than woman's lightness? Having waste ground  
enough, 170

Shall we desire to raze the sanctuary

And pitch our evils there? O, fie, fie, fie!

What dost thou, or what art thou, Angelo?  
 Dost thou desire her foully for those things  
 That make her good? O, let her brother live!  
 Thieves for their robbery have authority  
 When judges steal themselves. What, do I love  
 her,  
 That I desire to hear her speak again,  
 And feast upon her eyes? What is't I dream on?  
 O cunning enemy, that, to catch a saint, 180  
 With saints dost bait thy hook! Most dangerous  
 Is that temptation that doth goad us on  
 To sin in loving virtue. Never could the strumpet,  
 With all her double vigour, art and nature,  
 Once stir my temper; but this virtuous maid  
 Subdues me quite. Ever till now,  
 When men were fond, I smiled and wonder'd  
 how. [Exit.]

SCENE III. *A room in a prison*

Enter, severally, DUKE disguised as a friar, and  
 PROVOST.

Duke. Hail to you, Provost! so I think you are.

Prov. I am the Provost. What's your will,  
 good friar?

Duke. Bound by my charity and my blest order,  
 I come to visit the afflicted spirits  
 Here in the prison. Do me the common right  
 To let me see them and to make me know  
 The nature of their crimes, that I may minister  
 To them accordingly.

Prov. I would do more than that, If more were  
 needful.

Enter JULIET.

Look, here comes one; a gentlewoman of mine, 10  
 Who, falling in the flaws of her own youth,  
 Hath blister'd her report. She is with child;  
 And he that got it, sentenced; a young man  
 More fit to do another such offence  
 Than die for this.

Duke. When must he die?

Prov. As I do think, to-morrow.  
 I have provided for you: stay awhile, [To JULIET.  
 And you shall be conducted.

Duke. Repent you, fair one, of the sin you  
 carry?

Jul. I do; and bear the shame most patiently. 20

Duke. I'll teach you how you shall arraign your  
 conscience,

And try your penitence, if it be sound,  
 Or howlowly put on.

Jul. I'll gladly learn.

Duke. Love you the man that wrong'd you

Jul. Yes, as I love the woman that wrong'd  
 him.

Duke. So then it seems your most offenceful act

Was mutually committed?

Jul. Mutually.

Duke. Then was your sin of heavier kind than  
 his.

Jul. I do confess it, and repent it, father.

Duke. 'Tis meet so, daughter; but lest you do  
 repent, 30

As that the sin hath brought you to this shame,  
 Which sorrow is always toward ourselves, not  
 heaven,

Showing we would not spare heaven as we love it,  
 But as we stand in fear—

Jul. I do repent me, as it is an evil,  
 And take the shame with joy.

Duke. There rest.

Your partner, as I hear, must die to-morrow,  
 And I am going with instruction to him.

Grace go with you, *Benedicite!* [Exit.]

Jul. Must die to-morrow! O injurious love, 40  
 That respites me a life whose very comfort  
 Is still a dying horror!

Prov. 'Tis pity of him. [Exeunt.]

SCENE IV. *A room in Angelo's house.*

Enter ANGELO.

Ang. When I would pray and think, I think  
 and pray

To several subjects. Heaven hath my empty  
 words;

Whilst my invention, hearing not my tongue,  
 Anchors on Isabel; Heaven in my mouth,  
 As if I did but only chew his name;  
 And in my heart the strong and swelling evil  
 Of my conception. The state, whereon I studied,  
 Is like a good thing, being often read,  
 Grown fear'd and tedious; yea, my gravity, 10  
 Wherein—let no man hear me—I take pride,  
 Could I with boot change for an idle plume,  
 Which the air beats for vain. O place, O form,  
 How often dost thou with thy case, thy habit,  
 Wrench awe from fools and tie the wiser souls  
 To thy false seeming! Blood, thou art blood.  
 Let's write good angel on the devil's horn;  
 'Tis not the devil's crest.

Enter a SERVANT.

How now! who's there?

Serv. One Isabel, a sister, desires access to you.

Ang. Teach her the way. [Exit SERVANT] O  
 heavens!

Why does my blood thus muster to my heart, 20  
 Making both it unable for itself,

And dispossessing all my other parts  
 Of necessary fitness?

So play the foolish throngs with one that swoons;  
 Come all to help him, and so stop the air



By which he should revive; and even so  
The general, subject to a well-wish'd king,  
Quit their own part, and in obsequious fondness  
Crowd to his presence, where their untaught love  
Must needs appear offence.

*Enter ISABELLA.*

How now, fair maid? 30

*Isab.* I am come to know your pleasure.

*Ang.* That you might know it, would much  
better please me

Than to demand what 'tis. Your brother cannot  
live.

*Isab.* Even so. Heaven keep your honour!

*Ang.* Yet may he live awhile; and, it may be,  
As long as you or I. Yet he must die.

*Isab.* Under your sentence?

*Ang.* Yea.

*Isab.* When, I beseech you? that in his reprieve,  
Longer or shorter, he may be so fitted 40  
That his soul sicken not.

*Ang.* Ha! fie, these filthy vices! It were as good  
To pardon him that hath from nature stolen  
A man already made, as to remit  
Their saucy sweetness that do coin heaven's  
image

In stamps that are forbid. 'Tis all as easy  
Falsely to take away a life true made  
As to put metal in restrained means  
To make a false one.

*Isab.* 'Tis set down so in heaven, but not in  
earth. 50

*Ang.* Say you so? then I shall pose you quickly.  
Which had you rather, that the most just law  
Now took your brother's life; or, to redeem him,  
Give up your body to such sweet uncleanness  
As she that he hath stain'd?

*Isab.* Sir, believe this,

I had rather give my body than my soul.

*Ang.* I talk not of your soul. Our compell'd sins  
Stand more for number than for accompt.

*Isab.* How say you?

*Ang.* Nay, I'll not warrant that; for I can speak  
Against the thing I say. Answer to this: 60  
I, now the voice of the recorded law,  
Pronounce a sentence on your brother's life.  
Might there not be a charity in sin  
To save this brother's life?

*Isab.* Please you to do't,

I'll take it as a peril to my soul,

It is no sin at all, but charity.

*Ang.* Pleased you to do't at peril of your soul,  
Were equal poise of sin and charity.

*Isab.* That I do beg his life, if it be sin,  
Heaven let me bear it! you granting of my suit,  
If that be sin, I'll make it my morn prayer 71

To have it added to the faults of mine,  
And nothing of your answer.

*Ang.* Nay, but hear me.

Your sense pursues not mine. Either you are  
ignorant,

Or seem so craftily; and that's not good.

*Isab.* Let me be ignorant, and in nothing good,  
But graciously to know I am no better.

*Ang.* Thus wisdom wishes to appear most  
bright

When it doth tax itself; as these black masks  
Proclaim an enshield beauty ten times louder 80  
Than beauty could, display'd. But mark me;  
To be received plain, I'll speak more gross.  
Your brother is to die.

*Isab.* So.

*Ang.* And his offence is so, as it appears,  
Accountant to the law upon that pain.

*Isab.* True.

*Ang.* Admit no other way to save his life—  
As I subscribe not that, nor any other,  
But in the loss of question—that you, his sister,  
Finding yourself desired of such a person, 91  
Whose credit with the judge, or own great place,  
Could fetch your brother from the manacles  
Of the all-building law; and that there were  
No earthly mean to save him, but that either  
You must lay down the treasures of your body  
To this supposed, or else to let him suffer;  
What would you do?

*Isab.* As much for my poor brother as myself:  
That is, were I under the terms of death, 100  
The impression of keen whips I'd wear as rubies.  
And strip myself to death, as to a bed  
That longing have been sick for, ere I'd yield  
My body up to shame.

*Ang.* Then must your brother die.

*Isab.* And 'twere the cheaper way.

Better it were a brother died at once,  
Than that a sister, by redeeming him,  
Should die for ever.

*Ang.* Were not you then as cruel as the sentence  
That you have slander'd so? 110

*Isab.* Ignomy in ransom and free pardon  
Are of two houses. Lawful mercy  
Is nothing kin to foul redemption.

*Ang.* You seem'd of late to make the law a  
tyrant;

And rather proved the sliding of your brother  
A merriment than a vice.

*Isab.* O, pardon me, my lord; it oft falls out,  
To have what we would have, we speak not  
what we mean.

I something do excuse the thing I hate,  
For his advantage that I dearly love. 120

*Ang.* We are all frail.

*Isab.* Else let my brother die,  
If not a fedary, but only he  
Owe and succeed thy weakness.  
*Ang.* Nay, women are frail too.  
*Isab.* Ay, as the glasses where they view themselves;  
Which are as easy broke as they make forms.  
Women! Help Heaven! men their creation mar  
In profiting by them. Nay, call us ten times frail  
For we are soft as our complexions are,  
And credulous to false prints.

*Ang.* I think it well; 130  
And from this testimony of your own sex—  
Since I suppose we are made to be no stronger  
Than faults may shake our frames—let me be bold;

I do arrest your words. Be that you are,  
That is, a woman; if you be more, you're none;  
If you be one, as you are well express'd  
By all external warrants, show it now,  
By putting on the destined livery.

*Isab.* I have no tongue but one; gentle my lord,  
Let me entreat you speak the former language.

*Ang.* Plainly conceive, I love you.

*Isab.* My brother did love Juliet,  
And you tell me that he shall die for it.

*Ang.* He shall not, Isabel, if you give me love.

*Isab.* I know your virtue hath a license in't,  
Which seems a little fouler than it is,  
To pluck on others.

*Ang.* Believe me, on mine honour,  
My words express my purpose.

*Isab.* Ha! little honour to be much believed,  
And most pernicious purpose! Seeming, seeming!  
150

I will proclaim thee, Angelo; look for't.  
Sign me a present pardon for my brother,  
Or with an outstretch'd throat I'll tell the world  
aloud

What man thou art.

*Ang.* Who will believe thee, Isabel?  
My unsoil'd name, the austereness of my life,  
My vouch against you, and my place i' the state,  
Will so your accusation overweigh,  
That you shall stifle in your own report  
And smell of calumny. I have begun,  
And now I give my sensual race the rein. 160  
Fit thy consent to my sharp appetite;  
Lay by all nicety and prolixious blushes,  
That banish what they sue for; redeem thy  
brother

By yielding up thy body to my will;  
Or else he must not only die the death,  
But thy unkindness shall his death draw out  
To lingering sufferance. Answer me to-morrow,  
Or, by the affection that now guides me most,

I'll prove a tyrant to him. As for you,  
Say what you can, my false o'erweighs your  
true. [Exit. 170

*Isab.* To whom should I complain? Did I tell  
this,  
Who would believe me? O perilous mouths,  
That bear in them one and the self-same tongue,  
Either of condemnation or approval;  
Bidding the law make court'sy to their will;  
Hooking both right and wrong to the appetite,  
To follow as it draws! I'll to my brother:  
Though he hath fall'n by prompture of the  
blood,

Yet hath he in him such a mind of honour  
That, had he twenty heads to tender down 180  
On twenty bloody blocks, he'd yield them up,  
Before his sister should her body stoop  
To such abhorr'd pollution.  
Then, Isabel, live chaste, and, brother, die;  
More than our brother is our chastity.  
I'll tell him yet of Angelo's request,  
And fit his mind to death, for his soul's rest.

[Exit.

## ACT III

### SCENE I. A room in the prison

Enter DUKE disguised as before, CLAUDIO, and  
PROVOST.

*Duke.* So then you hope of pardon from Lord  
Angelo?

*Claud.* The miserable have no other medicine  
But only hope.

I've hope to live, and am prepared to die.

*Duke.* Be absolute for death; either death or  
life

Shall thereby be the sweeter. Reason thus with  
life:

If I do lose thee, I do lose a thing  
That none but fools would keep. A breath thou  
art,

Servile to all the skyey influences,  
That dost this habitation, where thou keep'st, 10  
Hourly afflict. Merely, thou art Death's fool;  
For him thou labour'st by thy flight to shun  
And yet runn'st toward him still. Thou art not  
noble;

For all the accommodations that thou bear'st  
Are nursed by baseness. Thou'rt by no means  
valiant;

For thou dost fear the soft and tender fork  
Of a poor worm. Thy best of rest is sleep,  
And that thou oft provokest; yet grossly fear'st  
Thy death, which is no more. Thou art not thy-  
self;

For thou exist'st on many a thousand grains 20



That issue out of dust. Happy thou art not;  
For what thou hast not, still thou strivest to get,  
And what thou hast, forget'st. Thou art not  
certain;

For thy complexion shifts to strange effects,  
After the moon. If thou art rich, thou'rt poor;  
For, like an ass whose back with ingots bows,  
Thou bear'st thy heavy riches but a journey,  
And death unloads thee. Friend hast thou none;  
For thine own bowels, which do call thee sire,  
The mere effusion of thy proper loins, 30  
Do curse the gout, serpigo, and the rheum,  
For ending thee no sooner. Thou hast nor youth  
nor age,

But, as it were, an after-dinner's sleep,  
Dreaming on both; for all thy blessed youth  
Becomes as aged, and doth beg the alms  
Of palsied eld; and when thou art old and rich,  
Thou hast neither heat, affection, limb, nor  
beauty,

To make thy riches pleasant. What's yet in this  
That bears the name of life? Yet in this life  
Lie hid moe thousand deaths; yet death we fear,  
That makes these odds all even. 41

*Claud.* I humbly thank you.

To sue to live, I find I seek to die;  
And, seeking death, find life. Let it come on.

*Isab.* [*Within*] What, ho! Peace here, grace and  
good company!

*Prov.* Who's there? come in. The wish de-  
serves a welcome.

*Duke.* Dear sir, ere long I'll visit you again.

*Claud.* Most holy sir, I thank you.

*Enter ISABELLA.*

*Isab.* My business is a word or two with Claud-  
io.

*Prov.* And very welcome. Look, signior, here's  
your sister.

*Duke.* Provost, a word with you. 50

*Prov.* As many as you please.

*Duke.* Bring me to hear them speak, where I  
may be concealed. [*Exeunt DUKE and PROVOST.*]

*Claud.* Now, sister, what's the comfort?

*Isab.* Why,  
As all comforts are; most good, most good  
indeed.

Lord Angelo, having affairs to heaven,  
Intends you for his swift ambassador,  
Where you shall be an everlasting leiger;  
Therefore your best appointment make with  
speed; 60

To-morrow you set on.

*Claud.* Is there no remedy?

*Isab.* None, but such remedy as, to save a  
head,

To cleave a heart in twain.

*Claud.* But is there any?

*Isab.* Yes, brother, you may live.

There is a devilish mercy in the judge,  
If you'll implore it, that will free your life,  
But fetter you till death.

*Claud.* Perpetual durance?

*Isab.* Ay, just; perpetual durance, a restraint,  
Though all the world's vastidity you had,  
To a determined scope.

*Claud.* But in what nature? 70

*Isab.* In such a one as, you consenting to't,  
Would bark your honour from that trunk you  
bear,

And leave you naked.

*Claud.* Let me know the point.

*Isab.* O, I do fear thee, Claudio; and I quake,  
Lest thou a feverous life shouldst entertain,  
And six or seven winters more respect  
Than a perpetual honour. Darest thou die?  
The sense of death is most in apprehension;  
And the poor beetle that we tread upon,  
In corporal sufferance finds a pang as great 80  
As when a giant dies

*Claud.* Why give you me this shame?

Think you I can a resolution fetch  
From flowery tenderness? If I must die,  
I will encounter darkness as a bride,  
And hug it in mine arms.

*Isab.* There spake my brother; there my father's  
grave

Did utter forth a voice. Yes, thou must die.

Thou art too noble to conserve a life  
In base appliances. This outward-sainted deputy,  
Whose settled visage and deliberate word 90  
Nips youth i' the head and follies doth emmew  
As falcon doth the fowl, is yet a devil;  
His filth within being cast, he would appear  
A pond as deep as hell.

*Claud.* The prenzie Angelo!

*Isab.* O, 'tis the cunning livery of hell,  
The damned'st body to invest and cover  
In prenzie guards! Dost thou think, Claudio?  
If I would yield him my virginity,  
Thou mightst be freed.

*Claud.* O heavens! it cannot be.

*Isab.* Yes, he would give't thee, from this rank  
offence, 100

So to offend him still. This night's the time  
That I should do what I abhor to name,  
Or else thou diest to-morrow.

*Claud.* Thou shalt not do't.

*Isab.* O, were it but my life,  
I'll throw it down for your deliverance  
As frankly as a pin.

*Claud.* Thanks, dear Isabel.

*Isab.* Be ready, Claudio, for your death to-morrow.

*Claud.* Yes. Has he affections in him,  
That thus can make him bite the law by the  
nose,

When he would force it? Sure, it is no sin; 110  
Or of the deadly seven it is the least.

*Isab.* Which is the least?

*Claud.* If it were damnable, he being so wise,  
Why would he for the momentary trick  
Be perdurably fined? O Isabel!

*Isab.* What says my brother?

*Claud.* Death is a fearful thing.

*Isab.* And shamed life a hateful.

*Claud.* Ay, but to die, and go we know not  
where;

To lie in cold obstruction and to rot;  
This sensible warm motion to become 120  
A kneaded clod; and the delighted spirit

To bathe in fiery floods, or to reside  
In thrilling region of thick-ribbed ice;  
To be imprison'd in the viewless winds,

And blown with restless violence round about  
The pendent world; or to be worse than worst  
Of those that lawless and uncertain thought  
Imagine howling; 'tis too horrible!

The weariest and most loathed worldly life  
That age, ache, penury, and imprisonment 130  
Can lay on nature is a paradise  
To what we fear of death.

*Isab.* Alas, alas!

*Claud.* Sweet sister, let me live.  
What sin you do to save a brother's life,  
Nature dispenses with the deed so far  
That it becomes a virtue.

*Isab.* O you beast!  
O faithless coward! O dishonest wretch!  
Wilt thou be made a man out of my vice?  
Is't not a kind of incest, to take life  
From thine own sister's shame? What should I  
think? 140

Heaven shield my mother play'd my father fair!  
For such a warped slip of wilderness  
Ne'er issued from his blood. Take my defiance!  
Die, perish! Might but my bending down  
Relieve thee from thy fate, it should proceed.  
I'll pray a thousand prayers for thy death,  
No word to save thee.

*Claud.* Nay, hear me, Isabel.

*Isab.* O, fie, fie, fie!  
Thy sin's not accidental, but a trade. 150  
Mercy to thee would prove itself a bawd.  
'Tis best that thou diest quickly.

*Claud.* O hear me, Isabella!

*Re-enter DUKE.*

*Duke.* Vouchsafe a word, young sister, but one  
word.

*Isab.* What is your will?

*Duke.* Might you dispense with your leisure,  
I would by and by have some speech with you.  
The satisfaction I would require is likewise your  
own benefit.

*Isab.* I have no superfluous leisure; my stay  
must be stolen out of other affairs; but I will  
attend you awhile. [*Walks apart.*]

*Duke.* Son, I have overheard what hath passed  
between you and your sister. Angelo had never  
the purpose to corrupt her; only he hath made  
an assay of her virtue to practise his judgement  
with the disposition of natures. She, having the  
truth of honour in her, hath made him that gra-  
cious denial which he is most glad to receive. I  
am confessor to Angelo, and I know this to be  
true; therefore prepare yourself to death. Do not  
satisfy your resolution with hopes that are fal-  
lible; to-morrow you must die; go to your knees  
and make ready.

*Claud.* Let me ask my sister pardon. I am so  
out of love with life that I will sue to be rid of it.

*Duke.* Hold you there! Farewell. [*Exit Claud-  
io.*] Provost, a word with you!

*Re-enter PROVOST.*

*Prov.* What's your will, father?

*Duke.* That now you are come, you will be  
gone. Leave me awhile with the maid. My  
mind promises with my habit no loss shall touch  
her by my company.

*Prov.* In good time.

[*Exit PROVOST. ISABELLA comes forward.*]

*Duke.* The hand that hath made you fair hath  
made you good; the goodness that is cheap in  
beauty makes beauty brief in goodness; but  
grace, being the soul of your complexion, shall  
keep the body of it ever fair. The assault that  
Angelo hath made to you, fortune hath conveyed  
to my understanding; and, but that frailty hath  
examples for his falling, I should wonder at  
Angelo. How will you do to content this sub-  
stitute, and to save your brother?

*Isab.* I am now going to resolve him. I had  
rather my brother die by the law than my son  
should be unlawfully born. But, O, how much  
is the good Duke deceived in Angelo! If ever  
he return and I can speak to him, I will open my  
lips in vain, or discover his government.

*Duke.* That shall not be much amiss; yet, as  
the matter now stands, he will avoid your accu-  
sation; he made trial of you only. Therefore  
fasten your ear on my advisings. To the love I  
have in doing good a remedy presents itself. I



do make myself believe that you may most uprightly do a poor wronged lady a merited benefit; redeem your brother from the angry law; do no stain to your own gracious person; and much please the absent Duke, if peradventure he shall ever return to have hearing of this business. 211

*Isab.* Let me hear you speak farther. I have spirit to do anything that appears not foul in the truth of my spirit.

*Duke.* Virtue is bold, and goodness never fearful. Have you not heard speak of Mariana, the sister of Frederick the great soldier who miscarried at sea?

*Isab.* I have heard of the lady, and good words went with her name. 220

*Duke.* She should this Angelo have married; was affianced to her by oath, and the nuptial appointed; between which time of the contract and limit of the solemnity, her brother Frederick was wrecked at sea, having in that perished vessel the dowry of his sister. But mark how heavily this befell to the poor gentlewoman. There she lost a noble and renowned brother, in his love toward her ever most kind and natural; with him, the portion and sinew of her fortune, her marriage dowry; with both, her combinate husband, this well-seeming Angelo.

*Isab.* Can this be so? did Angelo so leave her?

*Duke.* Left her in her tears, and dried not one of them with his comfort; swallowed his vows whole, pretending in her discoveries of dishonour; in few, bestowed her on her own lamentation, which she yet wears for his sake; and he, a marble to her tears, is washed with them, but relents not.

*Isab.* What a merit were it in death to take this poor maid from the world! What corruption in this life, that it will let this man live! But how out of this can she avail?

*Duke.* It is a rupture that you may easily heal; and the cure of it not only saves your brother, but keeps you from dishonour in doing it.

*Isab.* Show me how, good father.

*Duke.* This forenamed maid hath yet in her the countenance of her first affection; his unjust unkindness, that in all reason should have quenched her love, hath, like an impediment in the current, made it more violent and unruly. Go you to Angelo; answer his requiring with a plausible obedience; agree with his demands to the point; only refer yourself to this advantage, first, that your stay with him may not be long; that the time may have all shadow and silence in it; and the place answer to convenience. This being granted in course—and now follows all—

we shall advise this wronged maid to stand up your appointment, go in your place; if the encounter acknowledge itself hereafter, it may compel him to her recompense: and here, by this, is your brother saved, your honour untainted, the poor Mariana advantaged, and the corrupt deputy scaled. The maid will I frame and make fit for his attempt. If you think well to carry this as you may, the doubleness of the benefit defends the deceit from reproof. What think you of it?

*Isab.* The image of it gives me content already; and I trust it will grow to a most prosperous perfection.

*Duke.* It lies much in your holding up. Haste you speedily to Angelo. If for this night he entreat you to his bed, give him promise of satisfaction. I will presently to Saint Luke's; there, at the moated grange, resides this dejected Mariana. At that place call upon me; and dispatch with Angelo, that it may be quickly.

*Isab.* I thank you for this comfort. Fare you well, good father. [*Exeunt severally.* 231

#### SCENE II. *The street before the prison.*

*Enter, on one side, DUKE disguised as before; on the other, ELBOW, and Officers with POMPEY.*

*Elb.* Nay, if there be no remedy for it, but that you will needs buy and sell men and women like beasts, we shall have all the world drink brown and white bastard.

*Duke.* O heavens! what stuff is here?

*Pom.* 'Twas never merry world since, of two usuries, the merriest was put down, and the worsor allowed by order of law a furred gown to keep him warm; and furred with fox and lamb-skins too, to signify, that craft, being richer than innocence, stands for the facing. 11

*Elb.* Come your way, sir. 'Bless you, good father friar.

*Duke.* And you, good brother father. What offence hath this man made you, sir?

*Elb.* Marry, sir, he hath offended the law; and, sir, we take him to be a thief too, sir; for we have found upon him, sir, a strange picklock, which we have sent to the deputy.

*Duke.* Fie, sirrah! a bawd, a wicked bawd!

The evil that thou causest to be done, That is thy means to live. Do thou but think What 'tis to cram a maw or clothe a back From such a filthy vice; say to thyself, From their abominable and beastly touches I drink, I eat, array myself, and live. Canst thou believe thy living is a life, So stinkingly depending? Go mend, go mend. 21

*Pom.* Indeed, it does stink in some sort, sir; but yet, sir, I would prove— 30

*Duke.* Nay, if the devil have given thee proofs for sin,  
Thou wilt prove his. Take him to prison, officer.  
Correction and instruction must both work  
Ere this rude beast will profit.

*Elb.* He must before the deputy, sir; he has given him warning. The deputy cannot abide a whoremaster. If he be a whoremonger, and comes before him, he were as good go a mile on his errand.

*Duke.* That we were all, as some would seem to be,  
From our faults, as faults from seeming, free!

*Elb.* His neck will come to your waist—a cord, sir.

*Pom.* I spy comfort; I cry bail. Here's a gentleman and a friend of mine.

*Enter LUCIO.*

*Lucio.* How now, noble Pompey! What, at the wheels of Cæsar? art thou led in triumph? What, is there none of Pygmalion's images, newly made woman, to be had now, for putting the hand in the pocket and extracting it clutched? What reply, ha? What sayest thou to this tune, matter and method? Is't not drowned i' the last rain, ha? What sayest thou, Trot? Is the world as it was, man? Which is the way? Is it sad, and few words? or how? The trick of it?

*Duke.* Still thus, and thus; still worse!

*Lucio.* How doth my dear morsel, thy mistress? Procures she still, ha?

*Pom.* Troth, sir, she hath eaten up all her beef, and she is herself in the tub.

*Lucio.* Why, 'tis good; it is the right of it; it must be so. Ever your fresh whore and your powdered bawd; an unshunned consequence; it must be so. Art going to prison, Pompey?

*Pom.* Yes, faith, sir.

*Lucio.* Why, 'tis not amiss, Pompey. Farewell. Go say I sent thee thither. For debt, Pompey? or how?

*Elb.* For being a bawd, for being a bawd.

*Lucio.* Well, then, imprison him. If imprison-ment be the due of a bawd, why, 'tis his right. Bawd is he doubtless, and of antiquity too: bawd-born. Farewell, good Pompey. Commend me to the prison, Pompey. You will turn good husband now, Pompey; you will keep the house.

*Pom.* I hope, sir, your good worship will be my bail.

*Lucio.* No, indeed, will I not, Pompey; it is not the wear. I will pray, Pompey, to increase your bondage. If you take it not patiently, why, your mettle is the more. Adieu, trusty Pompey. Bless you, friar.

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*Duke.* And you.

*Lucio.* Does Bridget paint still, Pompey, ha?

*Elb.* Come your ways, sir; come.

*Pom.* You will not bail me, then, sir?

*Lucio.* Then, Pompey, nor now. What news abroad, friar? what news?

*Elb.* Come your ways, sir; come.

*Lucio.* Go to kennel, Pompey; go. [*Exeunt ELBOW, POMPEY and Officers.*] What news, friar, of the Duke?

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*Duke.* I know none. Can you tell me of any?

*Lucio.* Some say he is with the Emperor of Russia; other some, he is in Rome: but where is he, think you?

*Duke.* I know not where; but wheresoever, I wish him well.

*Lucio.* It was a mad fantastical trick of him to steal from the state, and usurp the beggary he was never born to. Lord Angelo dukes it well in his absence; he puts transgression to't.

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*Duke.* He does well in't.

*Lucio.* A little more lenity to lechery would do no harm in him; something too crabbed that way, friar.

*Duke.* It is too general a vice, and severity must cure it.

*Lucio.* Yes, in good sooth, the vice is of a great kindred; it is well allied; but it is impossible to extirp it quite, friar, till eating and drinking be put down. They say this Angelo was not made by man and woman after this downright way of creation. Is it true, think you?

*Duke.* How should he be made, then?

*Lucio.* Some report a sea-maid spawned him; some, that he was begot between two stock-fishes. But it is certain that when he makes water his urine is congealed ice; that I know to be true: and he is a motion generative; that's infallible.

*Duke.* You are pleasant, sir, and speak apace.

*Lucio.* Why, what a ruthless thing is this in him, for the rebellion of a codpiece to take away the life of a man! Would the Duke that is absent have done this? Ere he would have hanged a man for the getting a hundred bastards, he would have paid for the nursing a thousand. He had some feeling of the sport; he knew the service, and that instructed him to mercy.

*Duke.* I never heard the absent Duke much detected for women; he was not inclined that way.

*Lucio.* O, sir, you are deceived.

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*Duke.* 'Tis not possible.

*Lucio.* Who, not the Duke? yes, your beggar of fifty; and his use was to put a ducat in her clack-dish. The Duke had crotchets in him. He would be drunk too; that let me inform you.

*Duke.* You do him wrong, surely.



*Lucio.* Sir, I was an inward of his. A shy fellow was the Duke; and I believe I know the cause of his withdrawing. 140

*Duke.* What, I prithee, might be the cause?

*Lucio.* No, pardon; 'tis a secret must be locked within the teeth and the lips. But this I can let you understand, the greater file of the subject held the Duke to be wise.

*Duke.* Wise! why, no question but he was.

*Lucio.* A very superficial, ignorant, unweighing fellow.

*Duke.* Either this is envy in you, folly, or mistaking. The very stream of his life and the business he hath helmed must upon a warranted need give him a better proclamation. Let him be but testified in his own bringings-forth, and he shall appear to the envious a scholar, a statesman, and a soldier. Therefore you speak unskilfully; or if your knowledge be more it is much darkened in your malice.

*Lucio.* Sir, I know him, and I love him.

*Duke.* Love talks with better knowledge, and knowledge with dearer love. 160

*Lucio.* Come, sir, I know what I know.

*Duke.* I can hardly believe that, since you know not what you speak. But, if ever the Duke return, as our prayers are he may, let me desire you to make your answer before him. If it be honest you have spoke, you have courage to maintain it. I am bound to call upon you; and, I pray you, your name?

*Lucio.* Sir, my name is Lucio; well known to the Duke. 170

*Duke.* He shall know you better, sir, if I may live to report you.

*Lucio.* I fear you not.

*Duke.* O, you hope the Duke will return no more; or you imagine me too unhurtful an opposite. But indeed I can do you little harm; you'll forswear this again.

*Lucio.* I'll be hanged first. Thou art deceived in me, friar. But no more of this. Canst thou tell if Claudio die to-morrow or no? 180

*Duke.* Why should he die, sir?

*Lucio.* Why? For filling a bottle with a tundish. I would the Duke we talk of were returned again. This ungenitured agent will unpeople the province with contumency; sparrows must not build in his house-eaves, because they are lecherous. The Duke yet would have dark deeds darkly answered; he would never bring them to light. Would he were returned! Marry, this Claudio is condemned for untrussing. Farewell, good friar; I prithee, pray for me. The Duke, I say to thee again, would eat mutton on Fridays. He's not past it yet, and I say to thee, he would mouth

with a beggar, though she smelt brown bread and garlic. Say that I said so. Farewell. [Exit.

*Duke.* No might nor greatness in mortality Can censure 'scape; back-wounding calumny The whitest virtue strikes. What king so strong

Can tie the gall up in the slanderous tongue? But who comes here? 200

*Enter ESCALUS, PROVOST, and Officers with MISTRESS OVERDONE.*

*Escal.* Go; away with her to prison!

*Mrs Ov.* Good my lord, be good to me; your honour is accounted a merciful man; good my lord.

*Escal.* Double and treble admonition, and still forfeit in the same kind! This would make mercy swear and play the tyrant.

*Prov.* A bawd of eleven years' continuance, may it please your honour.

*Mrs Ov.* My lord, this is one Lucio's information against me. Mistress Kate Keepdown was with child by him in the Duke's time; he promised her marriage. His child is a year and a quarter old, come Philip and Jacob. I have kept it myself; and see how he goes about to abuse me!

*Escal.* That fellow is a fellow of much license. Let him be called before us. Away with her to prison! Go to; no more words. [Exit Officers with MISTRESS OVERDONE] Provost, my brother Angelo will not be altered; Claudio must die to-morrow. Let him be furnished with divines, and have all charitable preparation. If my brother wrought by my pity, it should not be so with him.

*Prov.* So please you, this friar hath been with him, and advised him for the entertainment of death.

*Escal.* Good even, good father.

*Duke.* Bliss and goodness on you!

*Escal.* Of whence are you?

*Duke.* Not of this country, though my chance is now 230

To use it for my time. I am a brother Of gracious order, late come from the See In special business from his Holiness.

*Escal.* What news abroad i' the world?

*Duke.* None, but that there is so great a fever on goodness that the dissolution of it must cure it. Novelty is only in request; and it is as dangerous to be aged in any kind of course, as it is virtuous to be constant in any undertaking. There is scarce truth enough alive to make societies secure; but security enough to make fellowships accurst. Much upon this riddle runs the wisdom

of the world. This news is old enough, yet it is every day's news. I pray you, sir, of what disposition was the Duke?

*Escal.* One that, above all other strifes, contented especially to know himself.

*Duke.* What pleasure was he given to?

*Escal.* Rather rejoicing to see another merry, than merry at anything which professed to make him rejoice; a gentleman of all temperance. But leave we him to his events, with a prayer they may prove prosperous; and let me desire to know how you find Claudio prepared. I am made to understand that you have lent him visitation.

*Duke.* He professes to have received no sinister measure from his judge, but most willingly humbles himself to the determination of justice; yet had he framed to himself, by the instruction of his frailty, many deceiving promises of life; which I by my good leisure have discredited to him, and now is he resolved to die.

*Escal.* You have paid the heavens your function, and the prisoner the very debt of your calling. I have laboured for the poor gentleman to the extremest shore of my modesty; but my brother justice have I found so severe that he hath forced me to tell him he is indeed Justice.

*Duke.* If his own life answer the straitness of his proceeding, it shall become him well; wherein if he chance to fail, he hath sentenced himself.

*Escal.* I am going to visit the prisoner. Fare you well.

*Duke.* Peace be with you!

[*Exeunt ESCALUS and PROVOST.*]

He who the sword of heaven will bear  
Should be as holy as severe;  
Pattern in himself to know,  
Grace to stand, and virtue go;  
More nor less to others paying  
Than by self-offences weighing. 280  
Shame to him whose cruel striking  
Kills for faults of his own liking!  
Twice treble shame on Angelo,  
To weed my vice and let his grow!  
O, what may man within him hide,  
Though angel on the outward side!  
How may likeness made in crimes,  
Making practice on the times,  
To draw with idle spiders' strings  
Most ponderous and substantial things! 290  
Craft against vice I must apply.  
With Angelo to-night shall lie  
His old betrothed but despised;  
So disguise shall, by the disguised,  
Pay with falsehood false exacting,  
And perform an old contracting. [Exit.]

## ACT IV

SCENE I. *The moated grange at St. Luke's*

*Enter MARIANA and a BOY.*

Boy [*sings*].

"Take, O, take those lips away,  
That so sweetly were forsworn;  
And those eyes, the break of day,  
Lights that do mislead the morn;  
But my kisses bring again, bring again;  
Seals of love, but seal'd in vain, seal'd in vain."

*Mari.* Break off thy song, and haste thee quick away:

Here comes a man of comfort, whose advice  
Hath often still'd my brawling discontent.

[*Exit BOY.*]

*Enter DUKE disguised as before.*

I cry you mercy, sir; and well could wish 10  
You had not found me here so musical.

Let me excuse me, and believe me so,  
My mirth it much displeased, but pleased my woe.

*Duke.* 'Tis good; though music oft hath such a  
charm

To make bad good, and good provoke to harm.  
I pray you, tell me, hath anybody inquired for  
me here to-day? much upon this time have I  
promised here to meet.

*Mari.* You have not been inquired after. I have  
sat here all day. 20

*Enter ISABELLA.*

*Duke.* I do constantly believe you. The time  
is come even now. I shall crave your forbear-  
ance a little. May be I will call upon you anon,  
for some advantage to yourself.

*Mari.* I am always bound to you. [*Exit.*]

*Duke.* Very well met, and well come.  
What is the news from this good deputy?

*Isab.* He hath a garden circummured with brick,  
Whose western side is with a vineyard back'd;  
And to that vineyard is a planched gate, 30  
That makes his opening with this bigger key.  
This other doth command a little door  
Which from the vineyard to the garden leads;  
There have I made my promise  
Upon the heavy middle of the night  
To call upon him.

*Duke.* But shall you on your knowledge find this  
way?

*Isab.* I have ta'en a due and wary note upon't.  
With whispering and most guilty diligence,  
In action all of precept, he did show me 40  
The way twice o'er.

*Duke.* Are there no other tokens



Between you 'greed concerning her observance?

*Isab.* No, none, but only a repair i' the dark;  
And that I have possess'd him my most stay  
Can be but brief; for I have made him know  
I have a servant comes with me along,  
That stays upon me, whose persuasion is  
I come about my brother.

*Duke.* 'Tis well borne up.  
I have not yet made known to Mariana  
A word of this. What, ho! within! come forth!

*Re-enter MARIANA.*

I pray you, be acquainted with this maid; 51  
She comes to do you good.

*Isab.* I do desire the like.

*Duke.* Do you persuade yourself that I respect  
you?

*Mari.* Good friar, I know you do, and have  
found it.

*Duke.* Take, then, this your companion by the  
hand,

Who hath a story ready for your ear.  
I shall attend your leisure; but make haste;  
The vaporous night approaches.

*Mari.* Will't please you walk aside?

[*Exeunt MARIANA and ISABELLA.*]

*Duke.* O place and greatness! millions of false  
eyes 60

Are stuck upon thee. Volumes of report  
Run with these false and most contrarious quests  
Upon thy doings; thousand escapes of wit  
Make thee the father of their idle dreams  
And rack thee in their fancies.

*Re-enter MARIANA and ISABELLA.*

Welcome, how agreed?

*Isab.* She'll take the enterprise upon her, father,  
If you advise it.

*Duke.* It is not my consent,  
But my entreaty too.

*Isab.* Little have you to say  
When you depart from him, but, soft and low,  
"Remember now my brother."

*Mari.* Fear me not. 70

*Duke.* Nor, gentle daughter, fear you not at all.  
He is your husband on a pre-contract.

To bring you thus together, 'tis no sin,  
Sith that the justice of your title to him  
Doth flourish the deceit. Come, let us go.  
Our corn's to reap, for yet our tithe's to sow.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *A room in the prison*

*Enter PROVOST and POMPEY.*

*Prov.* Come hither, sirrah. Can you cut off a  
man's head?

*Pom.* If the man be a bachelor, sir, I can; but  
if he be a married man, he's his wife's head, and  
I can never cut off a woman's head.

*Prov.* Come, sir, leave me your snatches, and  
yield me a direct answer. To-morrow morn-  
ing are to die Claudio and Barnardine. Here is  
in our prison a common executioner, who in  
his office lacks a helper. If you will take it on  
you to assist him, it shall redeem you from your  
gyves; if not, you shall have your full time of  
imprisonment and your deliverance with an un-  
pitied whipping, for you have been a notorious  
bawd.

*Pom.* Sir, I have been an unlawful bawd time  
out of mind; but yet I will be content to be a  
lawful hangman. I would be glad to receive some  
instruction from my fellow partner.

*Prov.* What, ho! Abhorson! Where's Abhorson,  
there? 21

*Enter ABHORSON.*

*Abhor.* Do you call, sir?

*Prov.* Sirrah, here's a fellow will help you to-  
morrow in your execution. If you think it meet,  
compound with him by the year, and let him  
abide here with you; if not, use him for the  
present and dismiss him. He cannot plead his  
estimation with you; he hath been a bawd.

*Abhor.* A bawd, sir? fie upon him! he will dis-  
credit our mystery. 30

*Prov.* Go to, sir; you weigh equally; a feather  
will turn the scale. [*Exit.*]

*Pom.* Pray, sir, by your good favour—for sure-  
ly, sir, a good favour you have, but that you have  
a hanging look—do you call, sir, your occupa-  
tion a mystery?

*Abhor.* Ay, sir; a mystery.

*Pom.* Painting, sir, I have heard say, is a mys-  
tery; and your whores, sir, being members of  
my occupation, using painting, do prove my oc-  
cupation a mystery; but what mystery there  
should be in hanging, if I should be hanged, I  
cannot imagine.

*Abhor.* Sir, it is a mystery.

*Pom.* Proof?

*Abhor.* Every true man's apparel fits your thief.  
If it be too little for your thief, your true man  
thinks it big enough; if it be too big for your  
thief, your thief thinks it little enough; so every  
true man's apparel fits your thief. 50

*Re-enter PROVOST.*

*Prov.* Are you agreed?

*Pom.* Sir, I will serve him; for I do find your  
hangman is a more penitent trade than your  
bawd; he doth oftener ask forgiveness.

*Prov.* You, sirrah, provide your block and your axe to-morrow four o'clock.

*Abhor.* Come on, bawd; I will instruct thee in my trade; follow.

*Pom.* I do desire to learn, sir; and I hope, if you have occasion to use me for your own turn, you shall find me yare; for truly, sir, for your kindness I owe you a good turn.

*Prov.* Call hither Barnardine and Claudio:

[*Exeunt POMPEY and ABHORSON.*]

The one has my pity; not a jot the other,  
Being a murderer, though he were my brother.

*Enter CLAUDIO.*

Look, here's the warrant, Claudio, for thy death.  
'Tis now dead midnight, and by eight to-morrow  
Thou must be made immortal. Where's Barnardine?

*Claud.* As fast lock'd up in sleep as guiltless labour

When it lies starkly in the traveller's bones. 70  
He will not wake.

*Prov.* Who can do good on him?

Well, go, prepare yourself. [*Knocking within.*]

But, hark, what noise?

Heaven give your spirits comfort!

[*Exit CLAUDIO.*]

By and by.

I hope it is some pardon or reprieve  
For the most gentle Claudio.

*Enter DUKE disguised as before.*

Welcome, father.

*Duke.* The best and wholesomest spirits of the night  
Envelope you, good Provost! Who call'd here of late?

*Prov.* None, since the curfew rung.

*Duke.* Not Isabel?

*Prov.* No.

*Duke.* They will, then, ere't be long.

*Prov.* What comfort is for Claudio? 80

*Duke.* There's some in hope.

*Prov.* It is a bitter deputy.

*Duke.* Not so, not so; his life is parallel'd

Even with the stroke and line of his great justice.  
He doth with holy abstinence subdue  
That in himself which he spurs on his power  
To qualify in others. Were he meal'd with that  
Which he corrects, then were he tyrannous;  
But this being so, he's just.

*Knocking within.*

Now are they come.

[*Exit PROVOST.*]

This is a gentle Provost: seldom when  
The steeld gaoler is the friend of men.

*Knocking within.*

How now! what noise? That spirit's possess'd 90  
with haste  
That wounds the insisting postern with these strokes.

*Re-enter PROVOST.*

*Prov.* There he must stay until the officer  
Arise to let him in. He is call'd up.

*Duke.* Have you no countermand for Claudio yet,

But he must die to-morrow?

*Prov.* None, sir, none.

*Duke.* As near the dawning, Provost, as it is,  
You shall hear more ere morning.

*Prov.* Happily

You something know; yet I believe there comes  
No countermand; no such example have we. 100  
Besides, upon the very siege of justice  
Lord Angelo hath to the public ear  
Profess'd the contrary

*Enter a MESSENGER.*

This is his lordship's man.

*Duke.* And here comes Claudio's pardon.

*Mes.* [*Giving a paper.*] My lord hath sent you this note; and by me this further charge, that you swerve not from the smallest article of it, neither in time, matter, or other circumstance. Good morrow; for, as I take it, it is almost day.

*Prov.* I shall obey him. [*Exit MESSENGER.*]

*Duke.* [*Aside*] This is his pardon, purchased by such sin

For which the pardoner himself is in.  
Hence hath offence his quick celerity,  
When it is borne in high authority.  
When vice makes mercy, mercy's so extended,  
That for the fault's love is the offender friended.  
Now, sir, what news?

*Prov.* I told you. Lord Angelo, belike thinking me remiss in mine office, awakens me with this unwonted putting-on; methinks strangely, for he hath not used it before. 121

*Duke.* Pray you, let's hear.

*Prov.* [*Reads*]

"Whatsoever you may hear to the contrary, let Claudio be executed by four of the clock; and in the afternoon Barnardine. For my better satisfaction, let me have Claudio's head sent me by five. Let this be duly performed; with a thought that more depends on it than we must yet deliver. Thus fail not to do your office, as you will answer it at your peril." 130

What say you to this, sir?

*Duke.* What is that Barnardine who is to be executed in the afternoon?



*Prov.* A Bohemian born, but here nursed up and bred; one that is a prisoner nine years old.

*Duke.* How came it that the absent Duke had not either delivered him to his liberty or executed him? I have heard it was ever his manner to do so.

*Prov.* His friends still wrought reprieves for him; and, indeed, his fact, till now in the government of Lord Angelo, came not to an undoubtful proof.

*Duke.* It is now apparent?

*Prov.* Most manifest, and not denied by himself.

*Duke.* Hath he borne himself penitently in prison? how seems he to be touched?

*Prov.* A man that apprehends death no more dreadfully but as a drunken sleep; careless, reckless, and fearless of what's past, present, or to come; insensible of mortality, and desperately mortal.

*Duke.* He wants advice.

*Prov.* He will hear none. He hath evermore had the liberty of the prison; give him leave to escape hence, he would not; drunk many times a day, if not many days entirely drunk. We have very oft awaked him, as if to carry him to execution, and showed him a seeming warrant for it; it hath not moved him at all. 161

*Duke.* More of him anon. There is written in your brow, Provost, honesty and constancy. If I read it not truly, my ancient skill beguiles me; but, in the boldness of my cunning, I will lay my self in hazard. Claudio, whom here you have warrant to execute, is no greater forfeit to the law than Angelo who hath sentenced him. To make you understand this in a manifested effect, I crave but four days' respite; for the which you are to do me both a present and a dangerous courtesy.

*Prov.* Pray, sir, in what?

*Duke.* In the delaying death.

*Prov.* Alack, how may I do it, having the hour limited, and an express command, under penalty, to deliver his head in the view of Angelo? I may make my case as Claudio's, to cross this in the smallest.

*Duke.* By the vow of mine order I warrant you, if my instructions may be your guide. Let this Barnardine be this morning executed, and his head borne to Angelo.

*Prov.* Angelo hath seen them both, and will discover the favour.

*Duke.* O, death's a great disguiser; and you may add to it. Shave the head, and tie the beard; and say it was the desire of the penitent to be so bared before his death: you know the course is common. If anything fall to you upon this, more

than thanks and good fortune, by the saint whom I profess, I will plead against it with my life.

*Prov.* Pardon me, good father; it is against my oath.

*Duke.* Were you sworn to the Duke, or to the deputy?

*Prov.* To him, and to his substitutes.

*Duke.* You will think you have made no offence, if the Duke avouch the justice of your dealing?

*Prov.* But what likelihood is in that? 202

*Duke.* Not a resemblance, but a certainty. Yet since I see you fearful, that neither my coat, integrity, nor persuasion can with ease attempt you, I will go further than I meant, to pluck all fears out of you. Look you, sir, here is the hand and seal of the Duke. You know the character, I doubt not; and the signet is not strange to you.

*Prov.* I know them both. 210

*Duke.* The contents of this is the return of the Duke. You shall anon over-read it at your pleasure; where you shall find, within these two days he will be here. This is a thing that Angelo knows not; for he this very day receives letters of strange tenour; perchance of the Duke's death; perchance entering into some monastery; but, by chance, nothing of what is writ. Look, the unfolding star calls up the shepherd. Put not yourself into amazement how these things should be. All difficulties are but easy when they are known. Call your executioner, and off with Barnardine's head. I will give him a present shrift and advise him for a better place. Yet you are amazed; but this shall absolutely resolve you. Come away; it is almost clear dawn. [*Exeunt.*]

### SCENE III. *Another room in the same*

*Enter POMPEY.*

*Pom.* I am as well acquainted here as I was in our house of profession. One would think it were Mistress Overdone's own house, for here be many of her old customers. First, here's young Master Rash; he's in for a commodity of brown paper and old ginger, nine-score and seventeen pounds; of which he made five marks, ready money. Marry, then ginger was not much in request, for the old women were all dead. Then is there here one Master Caper, at the suit of Master Three-pile the mercer, for some four suits of peach-coloured satin, which now peaches him a beggar. Then have we here young Dizy, and young Master Deep-vow, and Master Copper-spur, and Master Starve-lackey the rapier and dagger man, and young Drop-heir that killed lusty Pudding, and Master Forthlight the tilter, and brave Master Shooty the great traveller, and wild Half-can that stabbed Pots, and, I think,

forty more; all great doers in our trade, and are now "for the Lord's sake." 21

*Enter ABHORSON.*

*Abhor.* Sirrah, bring Barnardine hither.

*Pom.* Master Barnardine! you must rise and be hanged, Master Barnardine!

*Abhor.* What, ho, Barnardine!

*Bar.* [*Within*] A pox o' your throats! Who makes that noise there? What are you?

*Pom.* Your friends, sir; the hangman. You must be so good, sir, to rise and be put to death.

*Bar.* [*Within*] Away, you rogue, away! I am sleepy. 31

*Abhor.* Tell him he must awake, and that quickly too.

*Pom.* Pray, Master Barnardine, awake till you are executed, and sleep afterwards.

*Abhor.* Go in to him, and fetch him out.

*Pom.* He is coming, sir, he is coming; I hear his straw rustle.

*Abhor.* Is the axe upon the block, sirrah?

*Pom.* Very ready, sir. 40

*Enter BARNARDINE.*

*Bar.* How now, Abhorson? what's the news with you?

*Abhor.* Truly, sir, I would desire you to clap into your prayers; for, look you, the warrant's come.

*Bar.* You rogue, I have been drinking all night; I am not fitted for 't.

*Pom.* O, the better, sir; for he that drinks all night, and is hanged betimes in the morning, may sleep the sounder all the next day. 50

*Enter DUKE disguised as before.*

*Abhor.* Look you, sir; here comes your ghostly father. Do we jest now, think you?

*Duke.* Sir, induced by my charity, and hearing how hastily you are to depart, I am come to advise you, comfort you, and pray with you.

*Bar.* Friar, not I. I have been drinking hard all night, and I will have more time to prepare me, or they shall beat out my brains with billets. I will not consent to die this day, that's certain.

*Duke.* O, sir, you must; and therefore I beseech you 60

Look forward on the journey you shall go.

*Bar.* I swear I will not die to-day for any man's persuasion.

*Duke.* But hear you.

*Bar.* Not a word. If you have anything to say to me, come to my ward; for thence will not I to-day. [*Exit.*]

*Duke.* Unfit to live or die, O gravel heart!

After him, fellows; bring him to the block.

[*Exeunt ABHORSON and POMPEY.*]

*Enter PROVOST.*

*Prov.* Now, sir, how do you find the prisoner? 70

*Duke.* A creature unprepared, unmeet for death; And to transport him in the mind he is Were damnable.

*Prov.* Here in the prison, father, There died this morning of a cruel fever One Ragozine, a most notorious pirate, A man of Claudio's years; his beard and head Just of his colour. What if we do omit This reprobate till he were well inclined; And satisfy the deputy with the visage Of Ragozine, more like to Claudio? 80

*Duke.* O, 'tis an accident that heaven provides! Dispatch it presently; the hour draws on Prefix'd by Angelo. See this be done, And satisfy the deputy to command; whiles I Persuade this rude wretch willingly to die.

*Prov.* This shall be done, good father, presently. But Barnardine must die this afternoon; And how shall we continue Claudio, To save me from the danger that might come If he were known alive?

*Duke.* Let this be done. 90 Put them in secret holds, both Barnardine and Claudio.

Ere twice the sun hath made his journal greeting To the under generation, you shall find Your safety manifested.

*Prov.* I am your free dependant.

*Duke.* Quick, dispatch, and send the head to Angelo. [*Exit PROVOST.*]

Now will I write letters to Angelo— The Provost, he shall bear them—whose contents Shall witness to him I am near at home, And that, by great injunctions, I am bound 100 To enter publicly. Him I'll desire To meet me at the consecrated fount A league below the city; and from thence, By cold gradation and well-balanced form, We shall proceed with Angelo.

*Re-enter PROVOST.*

*Prov.* Here is the head; I'll carry it myself.

*Duke.* Convenient is it. Make a swift return; For I would commune with you of such things That want no ear but yours.

*Prov.* I'll make all speed. [*Exit.*]

*Isab.* [*Within*] Peace, ho, be here! 110

*Duke.* The tongue of Isabel. She's come to know If yet her brother's pardon be come hither.



But I will keep her ignorant of her good,  
To make her heavenly comforts of despair,  
When it is least expected.

*Enter ISABELLA.*

*Isab.* Ho, by your leave!

*Duke.* Good morning to you, fair and gracious daughter.

*Isab.* The better, given me by so holy a man.  
Hath yet the deputy sent my brother's pardon?

*Duke.* He hath released him, Isabel, from the world.

His head is off and sent to Angelo. 120

*Isab.* Nay, but it is not so.

*Duke.* It is no other. Show your wisdom, daughter,

In your patience.

*Isab.* O, I will to him and pluck out his eyes!

*Duke.* You shall not be admitted to his sight.

*Isab.* Unhappy Claudio! wretched Isabel!

Injurious world! most damned Angelo!

*Duke.* This nor hurts him nor profits you a jot;  
Forbear it therefore; give your cause to heaven.

Mark what I say, which you shall find 130  
By every syllable a faithful verity.

The Duke comes home to-morrow; nay, dry  
your eyes;

One of our convent, and his confessor,  
Gives me this instance. Already he hath carried

Notice to Escalus and Angelo,

Who do prepare to meet him at the gates,

There to give up their power. If you can, pace  
your wisdom

In that good path that I would wish it go,  
And you shall have your bosom on this wretch,  
Grace of the Duke, revenges to your heart, 140  
And general honour.

*Isab.* I am directed by you.

*Duke.* This letter, then, to Friar Peter give;  
'Tis that he sent me of the Duke's return.

Say, by this token, I desire his company

At Mariana's house to-night. Her cause and  
yours

I'll perfect him withal, and he shall bring you  
Before the Duke, and to the head of Angelo

Accuse him home and home. For my poor self,  
I am combined by a sacred vow

And shall be absent. Wend you with this letter.

Command these fretting waters from your eyes  
With a light heart; trust not my holy order,

If I pervert your course. Who's here?

*Enter LUCIO.*

*Lucio.* Good even. Friar, where's the Provost?

*Duke.* Not within, sir.

*Lucio.* O pretty Isabella, I am pale at mine

heart to see thine eyes so red. Thou must be patient. I am fain to dine and sup with water and bran; I dare not for my head fill my belly; one fruitful meal would set me to't. But they say the Duke will be here to-morrow. By my troth, Isabel, I loved thy brother. If the old fantastical Duke of dark corners had been at home, he had lived. *[Exit ISABELLA.]*

*Duke.* Sir, the Duke is marvellous little beholding to your reports; but the best is, he lives not in them.

*Lucio.* Friar, thou knowest not the Duke so well as I do. He's a better woodman than thou takest him for. 171

*Duke.* Well, you'll answer this one day. Fare ye well.

*Lucio.* Nay, tarry; I'll go along with thee. I can tell thee pretty tales of the Duke.

*Duke.* You have told me too many of him already, sir, if they be true; if not true, none were enough.

*Lucio.* I was once before him for getting a wench with child. 180

*Duke.* Did you such a thing?

*Lucio.* Yes, marry, did I; but I was fain to forswear it. They would else have married me to the rotten medlar.

*Duke.* Sir, your company is fairer than honest. Rest you well.

*Lucio.* By my troth, I'll go with thee to the lane's end. If bawdy talk offend you, we'll have very little of it. Nay, friar, I am a kind of burr; I shall stick. *[Exeunt. 190]*

SCENE IV. *A room in Angelo's house*

*Enter ANGELO and ESCALUS.*

*Escal.* Every letter he hath writ hath disvouched other.

*Ang.* In most uneven and distracted manner. His actions show much like to madness; pray Heaven his wisdom be not tainted! And why meet him at the gates, and redeliver our authorities there?

*Escal.* I guess not.

*Ang.* And why should we proclaim it in an hour before his entering, that if any crave redress of injustice, they should exhibit their petitions in the street?

*Escal.* He shows his reason for that: to have a dispatch of complaints, and to deliver us from devices hereafter, which shall then have no power to stand against us.

*Ang.* Well, I beseech you, let it be proclaimed betimes i' the morn; I'll call you at your house. Give notice to such men of sort and suit as are to meet him. 20

*Escal.* I shall, sir. Fare you well.

*Ang.* Good night. [Exit ESCALUS.  
This deed unshapes me quite, makes me un-  
pregnant

And dull to all proceedings. A deflower'd maid!  
And by an eminent body that enforced  
The law against it! But that her tender shame  
Will not proclaim against her maiden loss,  
How might she tongue me! Yet reason dares  
her no;

For my authority bears of a credent bulk,  
That no particular scandal once can touch 30  
But it confounds the breather. He should have  
lived,

Save that his riotous youth, with dangerous sense,  
Might in the times to come have ta'en revenge,  
By so receiving a dishonour'd life  
With ransom of such shame. Would yet he had  
lived!

Alack, when once our grace we have forgot,  
Nothing goes right; we would, and we would not,  
[Exit.

#### SCENE V. *Fields without the town*

*Enter DUKE in his own habit, and FRIAR PETER.*

*Duke.* These letters at fit time deliver me.  
*Giving letters.*

The Provost knows our purpose and our plot.  
The matter being afoot, keep your instruction,  
And hold you ever to our special drift;  
Though sometimes you do blench from this to  
that,

As cause doth minister. Go call at Flavius' house,  
And tell him where I stay. Give the like notice  
To Valentinus, Rowland, and to Crassus,  
And bid them bring the trumpets to the gate;  
But send me Flavius first.

*Fri. P.* It shall be speeded well. [Exit. 10

*Enter VARRIUS.*

*Duke.* I thank thee, Varrius; thou hast made  
good haste.

Come, we will walk. There's other of our friends  
Will greet us here anon, my gentle Varrius.

[Exeunt.

#### SCENE VI. *Street near the city gate*

*Enter ISABELLA and MARIANA.*

*Isab.* To speak so indirectly I am loath.  
I would say the truth; but to accuse him so,  
That is your part. Yet I am advised to do it;  
He says, to veil full purpose.

*Mari.* Be ruled by him.

*Isab.* Besides, he tells me that, if peradventure  
He speak against me on the adverse side,  
I should not think it strange; for 'tis a physics

That's bitter to sweet end.

*Mari.* I would Friar Peter—

*Isab.* O, peace! the friar is come.

*Enter FRIAR PETER.*

*Fri. P.* Come, I have found you out a stand  
most fit, 10

Where you may have such vantage on the Duke,  
He shall not pass you. Twice have the trumpets  
sounded,

The generous and gravest citizens  
Have hent the gates, and very near upon  
The Duke is entering; therefore, hence, away!  
[Exeunt.

### ACT V

#### SCENE I. *The city gate*

MARIANA veiled, ISABELLA, and FRIAR PETER, at  
their stand. *Enter DUKE, VARRIUS, Lords, AN-  
GELO, ESCALUS, LUCIO, PROVOST, Officers, and  
Citizens, at several doors.*

*Duke.* My very worthy cousin, fairly met!  
Our old and faithful friend, we are glad to see  
you.

*Ang.* } Happy return be to your royal Grace!  
*Escal.* }

*Duke.* Many and hearty thankings to you both.  
We have made inquiry of you; and we hear  
Such goodness of your justice, that our soul  
Cannot but yield you forth to public thanks,  
Forerunning more requital.

*Ang.* You make my bonds still greater.

*Duke.* O, your desert speaks loud; and I should  
wrong it

To lock it in the wards of covert bosom, 10  
When it deserves, with characters of brass,  
A fortified residence 'gainst the tooth of time  
And rature of oblivion. Give me your hand,  
And let the subject see, to make them know  
That outward courtesies would fain proclaim  
Favours that keep within. Come, Escalus,  
You must walk by us on our other hand;  
And good supporters are you.

FRIAR PETER and ISABELLA come forward.

*Fri. P.* Now is your time. Speak loud and kneel  
before him.

*Isab.* Justice, O royal Duke! Vail your re-  
gard 20

Upon a wrong'd, I would fain have said, a maid!  
O worthy Prince, dishonour not your eye  
By throwing it on any other object

Till you have heard me in my true complaint  
And given me justice, justice, justice, justice!

*Duke.* Relate your wrongs; in what? by  
whom? be brief.



Here is Lord Angelo shall give you justice:  
Reveal yourself to him.

*Isab.* O worthy Duke,  
You bid me seek redemption of the devil.  
Hear me yourself; for that which I must speak  
Must either punish me, not being believed, 31  
Or wring redress from you. Hear me, O hear  
me, here!

*Ang.* My lord, her wits, I fear me, are not  
firm.

She hath been a suitor to me for her brother  
Cut off by course of justice—

*Isab.* By course of justice!  
*Ang.* And she will speak most bitterly and  
strange.

*Isab.* Most strange, but yet most truly, will I  
speak:

That Angelo's forsworn; is it not strange?  
That Angelo's a murderer; is't not strange?  
That Angelo is an adulterous thief, 40  
An hypocrite, a virgin-violator;  
Is it not strange and strange?

*Duke.* Nay, it is ten times strange.

*Isab.* It is not truer he is Angelo  
Than this is all as true as it is strange.  
Nay, it is ten times true; for truth is truth  
To the end of reckoning.

*Duke.* Away with her! Poor soul,  
She speaks this in the infirmity of sense.

*Isab.* O Prince, I conjure thee, as thou be-  
lievest

There is another comfort than this world,  
That thou neglect me not, with that opinion 50  
That I am touch'd with madness! Make not im-  
possible

That which but seems unlike. 'Tis not impossible  
But one, the wicked'st caitiff on the ground,  
May seem as shy, as grave, as just, as absolute  
As Angelo; even so may Angelo,  
In all his dressings, characts, titles, forms,  
Be an arch-villain; believe it, royal prince.  
If he be less, he's nothing; but he's more,  
Had I more name for badness.

*Duke.* By mine honesty,  
If she be mad—as I believe no other— 60  
Her madness hath the oddest frame of sense,  
Such a dependency of thing on thing,  
As e'er I heard in madness.

*Isab.* O gracious Duke,  
Harp not on that, nor do not banish reason  
For inequality; but let your reason serve  
To make the truth appear where it seems hid,  
And hide the false seems true.

*Duke.* Many that are not mad  
Have, sure, more lack of reason. What would  
you say?

*Isab.* I am the sister of one Claudio,  
Condemn'd upon the act of fornication 70  
To lose his head; condemn'd by Angelo.  
I, in probation of a sisterhood,  
Was sent to by my brother; one Lucio  
As then the messenger—

*Lucio.* That's I, an't like your Grace.  
I came to her from Claudio, and desired her  
To try her gracious fortune with Lord Angelo  
For her poor brother's pardon.

*Isab.* That's he indeed.

*Duke.* You were not bid to speak.

*Lucio.* No, my good lord;  
Nor wish'd to hold my place.

*Duke.* I wish you now, then;  
Pray you, take note of it; and when you have 80  
A business for yourself, pray Heaven you then  
Be perfect.

*Lucio.* I warrant your honour.

*Duke.* The warrant's for yourself; take heed to't.

*Isab.* This gentleman told somewhat of my  
tale—

*Lucio.* Right.

*Duke.* It may be right; but you are i' the wrong  
To speak before your time. Proceed.

*Isab.* I went

To this pernicious caitiff deputy—

*Duke.* That's somewhat madly spoken.

*Isab.* Pardon it;

The phrase is to the matter. 90

*Duke.* Mended again. The matter; proceed.

*Isab.* In brief, to set the needless process by,  
How I persuaded, how I pray'd, and kneel'd,  
How he refus'd me, and how I replied—  
For this was of much length—the vile conclusion  
I now begin with grief and shame to utter.

He would not, but by gift of my chaste body  
To his concupiscible intemperate lust,  
Release my brother; and, after much debate-  
ment,

My sisterly remorse confutes mine honour, 100  
And I did yield to him; but the next morn be-  
times,

His purpose surfeiting, he sends a warrant  
For my poor brother's head.

*Duke.* This is most likely!

*Isab.* O, that it were as like as it is true!

*Duke.* By heaven, fond wretch, thou know'st  
not what thou speak'st,  
Or else thou art suborn'd against his honour  
In hateful practice. First, his integrity  
Stands without blemish. Next, it imports no  
reason

That with such vehemency he should pursue  
Faults proper to himself. If he had so offended,  
He would have weigh'd thy brother by himself

And not have cut him off. Some one hath set you on.

Confess the truth, and say by whose advice Thou camest here to complain.

*Isab.* And is this all?  
Then, O you blessed ministers above,  
Keep me in patience, and with ripen'd time  
Unfold the evil which is here wrapt up  
In countenance! Heaven shield your Grace from woe,

As I, thus wrong'd, hence unbeliev'd go!

*Duke.* I know you'd fain be gone. An officer! 120  
To prison with her! Shall we thus permit  
A blasting and a scandalous breath to fall  
On him so near us? This needs must be a practice.  
Who knew of your intent and coming hither?

*Isab.* One that I would were here, Friar Lodowick.

*Duke.* A ghostly father, belike. Who knows that Lodowick?

*Lucio.* My lord, I know him; 'tis a meddling friar;

I do not like the man. Had he been lay, my lord,  
For certain words he spake against your Grace  
In your retirement, I had swung him soundly.

*Duke.* Words against me! this is a good friar, belike! 131

And to set on this wretched woman here  
Against our substitute! Let this friar be found.

*Lucio.* But yesternight, my lord, she and that friar,

I saw them at the prison. A saucy friar,  
A very scurvy fellow.

*Fri. P.* Blessed be your royal Grace!  
I have stood by, my lord, and I have heard  
Your royal ear abused. First, hath this woman  
Most wrongfully accused your substitute, 140  
Who is as free from touch or soil with her  
As she from one ungot.

*Duke.* We did believe no less.  
Know you that Friar Lodowick that she speaks of?

*Fri. P.* I know him for a man divine and holy;  
Not scurvy, nor a temporary meddler,  
As he's reported by this gentleman;  
And, on my trust, a man that never yet  
Did, as he vouches, misreport your Grace.

*Lucio.* My lord, most villainously; believe it.

*Fri. P.* Well, he in time may come to clear himself; 150

But at this instant he is sick, my lord,  
Of a strange fever. Upon his mere request,  
Being come to knowledge that there was complaint

Intended 'gainst Lord Angelo, came I hither,  
To speak, as from his mouth, what he doth know  
Is true and false; and what he with his oath

And all probation will make up full clear,  
Whensoever he's convented. First, for this woman,

To justify this worthy nobleman,  
So vulgarly and personally accused, 160  
Her shall you hear disproved to her eyes,  
Till she herself confess it.

*Duke.* Good friar, let's hear it.

[ISABELLA is carried off guarded; and  
MARIANA comes forward.]

Do you not smile at this, Lord Angelo?  
O heaven, the vanity of wretched fools!  
Give us some seats. Come, cousin Angelo;  
In this I'll be impartial; be you judge  
Of your own cause. Is this the witness, friar?  
First, let her show her face, and after speak.

*Mari.* Pardon, my lord; I will not show my face

Until my husband bid me. 170

*Duke.* What, are you married?

*Mari.* No, my lord.

*Duke.* Are you a maid?

*Mari.* No, my lord.

*Duke.* A widow, then?

*Mari.* Neither, my lord.

*Duke.* Why, you are nothing then: neither  
maid, widow, nor wife?

*Lucio.* My lord, she may be a punk; for many  
of them are neither maid, widow, nor wife.

*Duke.* Silence that fellow. I would he had some  
cause 181

To prattle for himself.

*Lucio.* Well, my lord.

*Mari.* My lord, I do confess I ne'er was married;

And I confess besides I am no maid;  
I have known my husband; yet my husband  
Knows not that ever he knew me.

*Lucio.* He was drunk then my lord. It can be  
no better.

*Duke.* For the benefit of silence, would thou  
wert so too! 191

*Lucio.* Well, my lord.

*Duke.* This is no witness for Lord Angelo.

*Mari.* Now I come to't, my lord.

She that accuses him of fornication,  
In self-same manner doth accuse my husband,  
And charges him, my lord, with such a time  
When I'll depose I had him in mine arms  
With all the effect of love.

*Ang.* Charges she more than me?

*Mari.* Not that I know. 200

*Duke.* No? you say your husband.

*Mari.* Why, just, my lord, and that is Angelo,  
Who thinks he knows that he ne'er knew my  
body,



But knows he thinks that he knows Isabel's.

*Ang.* This is a strange abuse. Let's see thy face.

*Mari.* My husband bids me; now I will unmask. [*Unveiling.*]

This is that face, thou cruel Angelo,  
Which once thou sworest was worth the looking on;

This is the hand which, with a vow'd contract,  
Was fast belock'd in thine; this is the body 210  
That took away the match from Isabel,  
And did supply thee at thy garden-house  
In her imagined person.

*Duke.* Know you this woman?

*Lucio.* Carnally, she says.

*Duke.* Sirrah, no more!

*Lucio.* Enough, my lord.

*Ang.* My lord, I must confess I know this woman;

And five years since there was some speech of marriage

Betwixt myself and her; which was broke off,  
Partly for that her promised proportions  
Came short of composition, but in chief 220  
For that her reputation was disvalued  
In levity; since which time of five years  
I never spake with her, saw her, nor heard from her,

Upon my faith and honour.

*Mari.* Noble Prince,

As there comes light from heaven and words from breath,

As there is sense in truth and truth in virtue,  
I am affianced this man's wife as strongly  
As words could make up vows; and, my good lord,

But Tuesday night last gone in's garden-house  
He knew me as a wife. As this is true, 230  
Let me in safety raise me from my knees;  
Or else for ever be confixed here,  
A marble monument!

*Ang.* I did but smile till now.

Now, good my lord, give me the scope of justice;  
My patience here is touch'd. I do perceive  
These poor informal women are no more  
But instruments of some more mightier member  
That sets them on. Let me have way, my lord,  
To find this practice out.

*Duke.* Ay, with my heart;

And punish them to your height of pleasure 240  
Thou foolish friar, and thou pernicious woman,  
Compact with her that's gone, think'st thou thy oaths,

Though they would swear down each particular saint,

Were testimonies against his worth and credit

That's seal'd in approbation? You, Lord Escalus,  
Sit with my cousin; lend him your kind pains  
To find out this abuse, whence 'tis derived.  
There is another friar that set them on;  
Let him be sent for.

*Fri. P.* Would he were here, my lord! for he indeed 250

Hath set the women on to this complaint.  
Your Provost knows the place where he abides  
And he may fetch him.

*Duke.* Go do it instantly. [*Exit PROVOST.*]  
And you, my noble and well-warranted cousin,  
Whom it concerns to hear this matter forth,  
Do with your injuries as seems you best,  
In any chastisement. I for a while will leave you;

But stir not you till you have well determined  
Upon these slanderers.

*Escal.* My lord, we'll do it thoroughly. 260  
[*Exit DUKE.*]

Signior Lucio, did not you say you knew that  
Friar Lodowick to be a dishonest person?

*Lucio.* *Cucullus non facit monachum*: honest in  
nothing but in his clothes; and one that hath  
spoke most villainous speeches of the Duke.

*Escal.* We shall entreat you to abide here till  
he come and enforce them against him. We shall  
find this friar a notable fellow.

*Lucio.* As any in Vienna, on my word.

*Escal.* Call that same Isabel here once again;  
I would speak with her. [*Exit an Attendant.*]  
Pray you, my lord, give me leave to question;  
you shall see how I'll handle her.

*Lucio.* Not better than he, by her own report.

*Escal.* Say you?

*Lucio.* Marry, sir, I think, if you handled her  
privately, she would sooner confess; perchance,  
publicly, she'll be ashamed.

*Escal.* I will go darkly to work with her.

*Lucio.* That's the way; for women are light at  
midnight. 281

*Re-enter Officers with ISABELLA; and PROVOST  
with the DUKE in his friar's habit.*

*Escal.* Come on, mistress. Here's a gentle-  
woman denies all that you have said.

*Lucio.* My lord, here comes the rascal I spoke  
of; here with the Provost.

*Escal.* In very good time. Speak not you to  
him till we call upon you.

*Lucio.* Mum.

*Escal.* Come, sir; did you set these women  
on to slander Lord Angelo? they have confessed  
you did. 291

*Duke.* 'Tis false.

*Escal.* How! know you where you are?

*Duke.* Respect to your great place! and let the devil

Be sometime honour'd for his burning throne!  
Where is the Duke? 'tis he should hear me speak.

*Escal.* The Duke's in us; and we will hear you speak.

Look you speak justly.

*Duke.* Boldly, at least. But, O, poor souls,  
Come you to seek the lamb here of the fox? 300  
Good night to your redress! Is the Duke gone?  
Then is your cause gone too. The Duke's unjust,  
Thus to retort your manifest appeal,  
And put your trial in the villain's mouth  
Which here you come to accuse.

*Lucio.* This is the rascal; this is he I spoke of.

*Escal.* Why, thou unreverend and unhallow'd friar,

Is't not enough thou hast suborn'd these women  
To accuse this worthy man, but, in foul mouth  
And in the witness of his proper ear, 310  
To call him villain? and then to glance from him  
To the Duke himself, to tax him with injustice?  
Take him hence; to the rack with him! We'll  
touse you

Joint by joint, but we will know his purpose.  
What, "unjust"!

*Duke.* Be not so hot; the Duke  
Dare no more stretch this finger of mine than he  
Dare rack his own. His subject am I not,  
Nor here provincial. My business in this state  
Made me a looker on here in Vienna,  
Where I have seen corruption boil and bubble  
Till it o'er-run the stew; laws for all faults, 321  
But faults so countenanced, that the strong statutes

Stand like the forfeits in a barber's shop,  
As much in mock as mark.

*Escal.* Slander to the state! Away with him to prison!

*Ang.* What can you vouch against him, Signior Lucio?

Is this the man that you did tell us of?

*Lucio.* 'Tis he, my lord. Come hither, goodman baldpate. Do you know me?

*Duke.* I remember you, sir, by the sound of your voice. I met you at the prison, in the absence of the Duke.

*Lucio.* O, did you so? And do you remember what you said of the Duke?

*Duke.* Most notably, sir.

*Lucio.* Do you so, sir? And was the Duke a fleshmonger, a fool, and a coward, as you then reported him to be?

*Duke.* You must, sir, change persons with me, ere you make that my report. You, indeed, spoke

so of him; and much more, much worse. 341

*Lucio.* O thou damnable fellow! Did not I pluck thee by the nose for thy speeches?

*Duke.* I protest I love the Duke as I love myself.

*Ang.* Hark, how the villain would close now, after his treasonable abuses!

*Escal.* Such a fellow is not to be talked withal. Away with him to prison. Where is the Provost? Away with him to prison! lay bolts enough upon him. Let him speak no more. Away with those giglots too, and with the other confederate companion!

*Duke.* [To PROVOST] Stay, sir; stay awhile.

*Ang.* What, resists he? Help him, Lucio.

*Lucio.* Come, sir; come, sir; come, sir; foh, sir! Why, you bald-pated, lying rascal, you must be hooded, must you? Show your knave's visage, with a pox to you! show your sheep-biting face, and be hanged an hour! Will't not off? 360

*Pulls off the friar's hood, and discovers the Duke.*

*Duke.* Thou art the first knave that e'er madest a Duke.

First, Provost, let me bail these gentle three.

[To LUCIO] Sneak not away, sir; for the friar and you

Must have a word anon. Lay hold on him.

*Lucio.* This may prove worse than hanging.

*Duke.* [To ESCALUS] What you have spoke I pardon. Sit you down.

We'll borrow place of him. [To ANGELO] Sir, by your leave.

Hast thou or word, or wit, or impudence,  
That yet can do thee office? If thou hast,  
Rely upon it till my tale be heard, 370  
And hold no longer out.

*Ang.* O my dread lord,

I should be guiltier than my guiltiness,

To think I can be undiscernible,

When I perceive your Grace, like power divine,  
Hath look'd upon my passes. Then, good Prince,  
No longer session hold upon my shame,  
But let my trial be mine own confession.

Immediate sentence then and sequent death  
Is all the grace I beg.

*Duke.* Come hither, Mariana.

Say, wast thou e'er contracted to this woman? 381

*Ang.* I was, my lord.

*Duke.* Go take her hence, and marry her instantly.

Do you the office, friar; which consummate,  
Return him here again. Go with him, Provost.

[*Exeunt* ANGELO, MARIANA, FRIAR PETER  
and PROVOST.]

*Escal.* My lord, I am more amazed at his dishonour



Than at the strangeness of it.

*Duke.* Come hither, Isabel.  
Your friar is now your Prince. As I was then  
Advertising and holy to your business,  
Not changing heart with habit, I am still  
Attorney'd at your service.

*Isab.* O, give me pardon, 390  
That I, your vassal, have employ'd and pain'd  
Your unknown sovereignty!

*Duke.* You are pardon'd, Isabel.  
And now, dear maid, be you as free to us.  
Your brother's death, I know, sits at your heart;  
And you may marvel why I obscured myself,  
Labouring to save his life, and would not rather  
Make rash remonstrance of my hidden power  
Than let him so be lost. O most kind maid,  
It was the swift celerity of his death,  
Which I did think with slower foot came on, 400  
That brain'd my purpose. But, peace be with  
him!

That life is better life, past fearing death,  
Than that which lives to fear. Make it your  
comfort,

So happy is your brother.

*Isab.* I do, my lord.

*Re-enter* ANGELO, MARIANA, FRIAR PETER,  
and PROVOST.

*Duke.* For this new-married man approaching  
here,

Whose salt imagination yet hath wrong'd  
Your well defended honour, you must pardon  
For Mariana's sake. But as he adjudged your  
brother—

Being criminal, in double violation  
Of sacred chastity and of promise-breach 410  
Thereon dependent, for your brother's life—  
The very mercy of the law cries out  
Most audible, even from his proper tongue,  
"An Angelo for Claudio, death for death!"  
Haste still pays haste, and leisure answers lei-  
sure;

Like doth quit like, and MEASURE still FOR  
MEASURE.

Then, Angelo, thy fault's thus manifested;  
Which, though thou wouldst deny, denies thee  
vantage.

We do condemn thee to the very block  
Where Claudio stoop'd to death, and with like  
haste. 420

Away with him!

*Mari.* O my most gracious lord,  
I hope you will not mock me with a husband.

*Duke.* It is your husband mock'd you with a  
husband.

Consenting to the safeguard of your honour,

I thought your marriage fit; else imputation,  
For that he knew you, might reproach your life  
And choke your good to come. For his posses-  
sions,

Although by confiscation they are ours,  
We do instate and widow you withal,  
To buy you a better husband.

*Mari.* O my dear lord, 430  
I crave no other, nor no better man.

*Duke.* Never crave him; we are definitive.

*Mari.* Gentle my liege— [*Kneeling.*]

*Duke.* You do but lose your labour.  
Away with him to death! [*To LUCIO*] Now, sir,  
to you.

*Mari.* O my good lord! Sweet Isabel, take my  
part;

Lend me your knees, and all my life to come  
I'll lend you all my life to do you service.

*Duke.* Against all sense you do importune her.  
Should she kneel down in mercy of this fact,  
Her brother's ghost his paved bed would break,  
And take her hence in horror.

*Mari.* Isabel, 441

Sweet Isabel, do yet but kneel by me;  
Hold up your hands, say nothing; I'll speak all.  
They say, best men are moulded out of faults;  
And, for the most, become much more the better  
For being a little bad; so may my husband.  
O Isabel, will you not lend a knee?

*Duke.* He dies for Claudio's death.

*Isab.* Most bounteous sir, [*Kneeling.*]  
Look, if it please you, on this man condemn'd,  
As if my brother lived. I partly think 450  
A due sincerity govern'd his deeds,  
Till he did look on me. Since it is so,  
Let him not die. My brother had but justice,  
In that he did the thing for which he died.

For Angelo,  
His act did not o'ertake his bad intent,  
And must be buried but as an intent  
That perish'd by the way. Thoughts are no  
subjects;

Intent's but merely thoughts.

*Mari.* Merely, my lord.

*Duke.* Your suit's unprofitable; stand up, I say.  
I have bethought me of another fault. 461  
Provost, how came it Claudio was beheaded  
At an unusual hour?

*Prov.* It was commanded so.

*Duke.* Had you a special warrant for the deed?  
*Prov.* No, my good lord; it was by private mes-  
sage.

*Duke.* For which I do discharge you of your  
office.

Give up your keys.

*Prov.* Pardon me, noble lord.

I thought it was a fault, but knew it not;  
 Yet did repent me, after more advice;  
 For testimony whereof, one in the prison, 470  
 That should by private order else have died,  
 I have reserved alive.

*Duke.* What's he?

*Prov.* His name is Barnardine.

*Duke.* I would thou hadst done so by Claudio.  
 Go fetch him hither; let me look upon him.

[*Exit PROVOST.*]

*Escal.* I am sorry, one so learned and so wise  
 As you, Lord Angelo, have still appear'd,  
 Should slip so grossly, both in the heat of blood,  
 And lack of temper'd judgement afterward.

*Ang.* I am sorry that such sorrow I procure;  
 And so deep sticks it in my penitent heart 480  
 That I crave death more willingly than mercy;  
 'Tis my deserving, and I do entreat it.

*Re-enter PROVOST, with BARNARDINE, CLAUDIO  
 muffled, and JULIET.*

*Duke.* Which is that Barnardine?

*Prov.* This, my lord.

*Duke.* There was a friar told me of this man.  
 Sirrah, thou art said to have a stubborn soul,  
 That apprehends no further than this world,  
 And squares thy life according. Thou'rt condemn'd;

But, for those earthly faults, I quit them all;  
 And pray thee take this mercy to provide  
 For better times to come. Friar, advise him; 490  
 I leave him to your hand. What muffled fellow's  
 that?

*Prov.* This is another prisoner that I saved,  
 Who should have died when Claudio lost his  
 head;

As like almost to Claudio as himself.

*Unmuffles CLAUDIO.*

*Duke.* [*To ISABELLA*] If he be like your brother,  
 for his sake

Is he pardon'd; and, for your lovely sake,  
 Give me your hand and say you will be mine,  
 He is my brother too; but fitter time for that.  
 By this Lord Angelo perceives he's safe;  
 Methinks I see a quickening in his eye. 500  
 Well, Angelo, your evil quits you well.  
 Look that you love your wife; her worth worth  
 yours.

I find an apt remission in myself;  
 And yet here's one in place I cannot pardon.

[*To LUCIO*] You, sirrah, that knew me for a fool,  
 a coward,

One all of luxury, an ass, a madman;  
 Wherein have I so deserved of you,  
 That you extol me thus?

*Lucio.* 'Faith, my lord, I spoke it but according  
 to the trick. If you will hang me for it, you may;  
 but I had rather it would please you I might be  
 whipt.

*Duke.* Whipt first, sir, and hanged after.  
 Proclaim it, Provost, round about the city,  
 Is any woman wrong'd by this lewd fellow,  
 As I have heard him swear himself there's one  
 Whom he begot with child, let her appear,  
 And he shall marry her; the nuptial finish'd,  
 Let him be whipt and hang'd.

*Lucio.* I beseech your Highness, do not marry  
 me to a whore. Your Highness said even now, I  
 made you a Duke. Good my lord, do not recom-  
 pense me in making me a cuckold.

*Duke.* Upon mine honour, thou shalt marry  
 her.

Thy slanders I forgive; and therewithal  
 Remit thy other forfeits. Take him to prison;  
 And see our pleasure herein executed.

*Lucio.* Marrying a punk, my lord, is pressing to  
 death, whipping, and hanging.

*Duke.* Slandering a prince deserves it. 530

[*Exeunt Officers with LUCIO.*]

She, Claudio, that you wrong'd, look you restore.  
 Joy to you, Mariana! Love her, Angelo;  
 I have confess'd her and I know her virtue.  
 Thanks, good friend Escalus, for thy much good-  
 ness;

There's more behind that is more gratefully.

Thanks, Provost, for thy care and secrecy;

We shall employ thee in a worthier place.

Forgive him, Angelo, that brought you home

The head of Ragozine for Claudio's;

The offence pardons itself. Dear Isabel, 540

I have a motion much imports your good;

Whereto if you'll a willing ear incline,

What's mine is yours and what is yours is mine.

So, bring us to our palace, where we'll show

What's yet behind, that's meet you all should

know.

[*Exeunt.*]



# OTHELLO, the Moor of Venice

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

DUKE OF VENICE  
BRABANTIO, *a Senator*  
TWO SENATORS  
GRATIANO, *brother to Brabantio*  
LODOVICO, *kinsman to Brabantio*  
OTHELLO, *a noble Moor in the service of the Venetian state*  
CASSIO, *his lieutenant*  
IAGO, *his ancient*  
RODERIGO, *a Venetian gentleman*  
MONTANO, *Othello's predecessor in the government of Cyprus*  
CLOWN, *servant to Othello*  
TWO GENTLEMEN, *of Venice*  
FOUR GENTLEMEN, *of Cyprus*

AN OFFICER  
A HERALD  
A MESSENGER  
A SAILOR  
A MUSICIAN

DESDEMONA, *daughter to Brabantio and wife to Othello*

EMILIA, *wife to Iago*  
BIANCA, *mistress to Cassio*

NON-SPEAKING: *Officers, Gentlemen, Musicians, and Attendants*

SCENE: *Venice, and a Sea-port in Cyprus*

## ACT I

SCENE I. *Venice: a street*

*Enter RODERIGO and IAGO.*

*Rod.* Tush! never tell me; I take it much unkindly

That thou, Iago, who hast had my purse  
As if the strings were thine, shouldst know of this.

*Iago.* 'Sblood, but you will not hear me.  
If ever I did dream of such a matter,  
Abhor me.

*Rod.* Thou told'st me thou didst hold him in thy hate.

*Iago.* Despise me, if I do not. Three great ones of the city,

In personal suit to make me his lieutenant,  
Off-capp'd to him; and, by the faith of man, 10  
I know my price, I am worth no worse a place.  
But he, as loving his own pride and purposes,  
Evades them, with a bombast circumstance  
Horribly stuff'd with epithets of war,  
And, in conclusion,  
Nonsuits my mediators; for, "Certes," says he,  
"I have already chose my officer."

And what was he?  
Forsooth, a great arithmetician,  
One Michael Cassio, a Florentine, 20  
A fellow almost damn'd in a fair wife;  
That never set a squadron in the field,  
Nor the division of a battle knows  
More than a spinster; unless the bookish theoretic,  
Wherein the toged consuls can propose  
As masterly as he. Mere prattle, without practice,

Is all his soldiership. But he, sir, had the election;  
And I, of whom his eyes had seen the proof  
At Rhodes, at Cyprus and on other grounds  
Christian and heathen, must be be-lee'd and calm'd 30

By debtor and creditor; this counter-caster,  
He, in good time, must his lieutenant be,  
And I—God bless the mark!—his Moorship's ancient.

*Rod.* By heaven, I rather would have been his hangman.

*Iago.* Why, there's no remedy; 'tis the curse of service,

Preferment goes by letter and affection,  
And not by old gradation, where each second  
Stood heir to the first. Now, sir, be judge your-  
self

Whether I in any just term am affined  
To love the Moor.

*Rod.* I would not follow him then. 40

*Iago.* O, sir, content you;

I follow him to serve my turn upon him.  
We cannot all be masters, nor all masters  
Cannot be truly follow'd. You shall mark  
Many a duteous and knee-crooking knave  
That, doting on his own obsequious bondage,  
Wears out his time, much like his master's ass,  
For nought but provender, and when he's old,  
cashier'd.

Whip me such honest knaves. Others there  
are

Who, trimm'd in forms and visages of duty, 50  
Keep yet their hearts attending on themselves,  
And, throwing but shows of service on their  
lords,

Do well thrive by them and when they have lined  
their coats  
Do themselves homage. These fellows have some  
soul;

And such a one do I profess myself. For, sir,  
It is as sure as you are Roderigo,  
Were I the Moor, I would not be Iago.  
In following him, I follow but myself;  
Heaven is my judge, not I for love and duty,  
But seeming so, for my peculiar end; 60  
For when my outward action doth demonstrate  
The native act and figure of my heart  
In compliment extern, 'tis not long after  
But I will wear my heart upon my sleeve  
For daws to peck at. I am not what I am.

*Rod.* What a full fortune does the thick-lips  
owe,

If he can carry't thus!

*Iago.* Call up her father,  
Rouse him. Make after him, poison his delight,  
Proclaim him in the streets. Incense her kins-  
men,

And, though he in a fertile climate dwell, 70  
Plague him with flies. Though that his joy be  
joy,

Yet throw such changes of vexation on't,  
As it may lose some colour.

*Rod.* Here is her father's house; I'll call aloud.

*Iago.* Do, with like timorous accent and dire  
yell

As when, by night and negligence, the fire  
Is spied in populous cities.

*Rod.* What, ho, Brabantio! Signior Brabantio,  
ho!

*Iago.* Awake! what, ho, Brabantio! thieves!  
thieves! thieves!

Look to your house, your daughter, and your  
bags!

Thieves! thieves! 81

*BRABANTIO appears above, at a window.*

*Bra.* What is the reason of this terrible sum-  
mons?

What is the matter there?

*Rod.* Signior, is all your family within?

*Iago.* Are your doors lock'd?

*Bra.* Why, wherefore ask you this?

*Iago.* 'Zounds, sir, you're robb'd; for shame, put  
on your gown;

Your heart is burst, you have lost half your soul;

Even now, now, very now, an old black ram

Is tupping your white ewe. Arise, arise;

Awake the snorting citizens with the bell, 90

Or else the devil will make a grandsire of you.

Arise, I say.

*Bra.* What, have you lost your wits?

*Rod.* Most reverend signior, do you know my  
voice?

*Bra.* Not I. What are you?

*Rod.* My name is Roderigo.

*Bra.* The worse welcome.

I have charged thee not to haunt about my  
doors.

In honest plainness thou hast heard me say  
My daughter is not for thee; and now, in mad-  
ness,

Being full of supper and distempering draughts,  
Upon malicious bravery, dost thou come 100  
To start my quiet.

*Rod.* Sir, sir, sir—

*Bra.* But thou must needs be sure  
My spirit and my place have in them power  
To make this bitter to thee.

*Rod.* Patience, good sir.

*Bra.* What tell'st thou me of robbing? this is  
Venice;

My house is not a grange.

*Rod.* Most grave Brabantio,

In simple and pure soul I come to you.

*Iago.* 'Zounds, sir, you are one of those that will  
not serve God, if the devil bid you. Because we  
come to do you service and you think we are  
ruffians, you'll have your daughter covered with  
a Barbary horse; you'll have your nephews neigh  
to you; you'll have coursers for cousins and gen-  
nets for germans.

*Bra.* What profane wretch art thou?

*Iago.* I am one, sir, that comes to tell you your  
daughter and the Moor are now making the beast  
with two backs.

*Bra.* Thou art a villain.

*Iago.* You are—a senator.

*Bra.* This thou shalt answer; I know thee,

Roderigo. 120

*Rod.* Sir, I will answer anything. But, I beseech  
you,

If 't be your pleasure and most wise consent,  
As partly I find it is, that your fair daughter,  
At this odd-even and dull watch o' the night,  
Transported, with no worse nor better guard  
But with a knave of common hire, a gondolier,  
To the gross clasps of a lascivious Moor—  
If this be known to you and your allowance,  
We then have done you bold and saucy wrongs;  
But if you know not this, my manners tell me 130  
We have your wrong rebuke. Do not believe  
That, from the sense of all civility,  
I thus would play and trifle with your reverence.  
Your daughter, if you have not given her leave,  
I say again, hath made a gross revolt;  
Tying her duty, beauty, wit, and fortunes  
In an extravagant and wheeling stranger



Of here and everywhere. Straight satisfy yourself.

If she be in her chamber or your house,  
Let loose on me the justice of the state 140  
For thus deluding you.

*Bra.* Strike on the tinder, ho!  
Give me a taper! call up all my people!  
This accident is not unlike my dream;  
Belief of it oppresses me already.

Light, I say! light! [Exit above.  
*Iago.* Farewell; for I must leave you.

It seems not meet, nor wholesome to my place,  
To be produced—as, if I stay, I shall—  
Against the Moor; for, I do know, the state,  
However this may gall him with some check,  
Cannot with safety cast him, for he's embark'd  
With such loud reason to the Cyprus wars, 151  
Which even now stand in act, that, for their  
souls,

Another of his fathom they have none  
To lead their business; in which regard,  
Though I do hate him as I do hell-pains,  
Yet, for necessity of present life,  
I must show out a flag and sign of love,  
Which is indeed but sign. That you shall surely  
find him,

Lead to the Sagittary the raised search;  
And there will I be with him. So, farewell. 160  
[Exit.

*Enter, below, BRABANTIO, and Servants with  
torches.*

*Bra.* It is too true an evil; gone she is;  
And what's to come of my despised time  
Is nought but bitterness. Now, Roderigo,  
Where didst thou see her? O unhappy girl!  
With the Moor, say'st thou? Who would be a  
father!

How didst thou know 'twas she? O, she deceives  
me

Past thought! What said she to you? Get more  
tapers.

Raise all my kindred. Are they married, think  
you?

*Rod.* Truly, I think they are.

*Bra.* O heaven! How got she out? O treason of  
the blood! 170

Fathers, from hence trust not your daughters'  
minds

By what you see them act. Is there not charms  
By which the property of youth and maidhood  
May be abused? Have you not read, Roderigo,  
Of some such thing?

*Rod.* Yes, sir, I have indeed.

*Bra.* Call up my brother. O, would you had had  
her!

Some one way, some another. Do you know  
Where we may apprehend her and the Moor?

*Rod.* I think I can discover him, if you please  
To get good guard and go along with me. 180

*Bra.* Pray you, lead on. At every house I'll call;  
I may command at most. Get weapons, ho!  
And raise some special officers of night.  
On, good Roderigo; I'll deserve your pains.

[Exeunt.

# SCENE II. Another street

*Enter OTHELLO, IAGO, and Attendants with  
torches.*

*Iago.* Though in the trade of war I have slain  
men,

Yet do I hold it very stuff o' the conscience  
To do no contrived murder. I lack iniquity  
Sometimes to do me service. Nine or ten times  
I had thought to have yerk'd him here under the  
ribs.

*Oth.* 'Tis better as it is.

*Iago.* Nay, but he prated,  
And spoke such scurvy and provoking terms  
Against your honour  
That, with the little godliness I have,  
I did full hard forbear him. But, I pray you, sir,  
Are you fast married? Be assured of this, 11  
That the magnifico is much beloved,  
And hath in his effect a voice potential  
As double as the Duke's. He will divorce  
you;

Or put upon you what restraint and grievance  
The law, with all his might to enforce it on,  
Will give him cable.

*Oth.* Let him do his spite;  
My services which I have done the signiory  
Shall out-tongue his complaints. 'Tis yet to  
know—

Which, when I know that boasting is an  
honour,

I shall promulgate—I fetch my life and being 21  
From men of royal siege, and my demerits  
May speak unbonneted to as proud a fortune  
As this that I have reach'd; for know, Iago,  
But that I love the gentle Desdemona,  
I would not my unhoused free condition  
Put into circumscription and confine  
For the sea's worth. But, look! what lights come  
yond?

*Iago.* Those are the raised father and his friends.  
You were best go in.

*Oth.* Not I; I must be found. 30  
My parts, my title, and my perfect soul  
Shall manifest me rightly. Is it they?

*Iago.* By Janus, I think no.

*Enter CASSIO, and certain OFFICERS with torches.*

*Oth.* The servants of the Duke, and my lieutenant.

The goodness of the night upon you, friends!  
What is the news?

*Cas.* The Duke does greet you, general,  
And he requires your haste-post-haste appearance,

Even on the instant.

*Oth.* What is the matter, think you?

*Cas.* Something from Cyprus, as I may divine;

It is a business of some heat. The galleys 40

Have sent a dozen sequent messengers

This very night at one another's heels,

And many of the consuls, raised and met,

Are at the Duke's already. You have been hotly  
call'd for;

When, being not at your lodging to be found,  
The senate hath sent about three several quests  
To search you out.

*Oth.* 'Tis well I am found by you.

I will but spend a word here in the house,  
And go with you. [Exit.

*Cas.* Ancient, what makes he here?

*Iago.* 'Faith, he to-night hath boarded a land  
carack. 50

If it prove lawful prize, he's made for ever.

*Cas.* I do not understand.

*Iago.* He's married.

*Cas.* To who?

*Re-enter OTHELLO.*

*Iago.* Marry, to—Come, captain, will you go?

*Oth.* Have with you.

*Cas.* Here comes another troop to seek for you.

*Iago.* It is Brabantio. General, be advised;

He comes to bad intent.

*Enter BRABANTIO, RODERIGO, and Officers with  
torches and weapons.*

*Oth.* Holla! stand there!

*Rod.* Signior, it is the Moor.

*Bra.* Down with him, thief!

*They draw on both sides.*

*Iago.* You, Roderigo! come, sir, I am for you.

*Oth.* Keep up your bright swords, for the dew  
will rust them.

Good signior, you shall more command with  
years

Than with your weapons. 61

*Bra.* O thou foul thief, where hast thou stow'd  
my daughter?

Damn'd as thou art, thou hast enchanted her;

For I'll refer me to all things of sense,

If she in chains of magic were not bound,

Whether a maid so tender, fair, and happy,

So opposite to marriage that she shunn'd

The wealthy curled darlings of our nation,  
Would ever have, to incur a general mock,  
Run from her guardage to the sooty bosom 70  
Of such a thing as thou—to fear, not to delight.

Judge me the world, if 'tis not gross in sense  
That thou hast practised on her with foul charms,  
Abused her delicate youth with drugs or minerals  
That weaken motion. I'll have't disputed on;

'Tis probable and palpable to thinking.  
I therefore apprehend and do attach thee

For an abuser of the world, a practiser

Of arts inhibited and out of warrant.

Lay hold upon him. If he do resist, 80  
Subdue him at his peril.

*Oth.* Hold your hands,  
Both you of my inclining, and the rest.

Were it my cue to fight, I should have known it  
Without a prompter. Where will you that I go  
To answer this your charge?

*Bra.* To prison, till fit time  
Of law and course of direct session

Call thee to answer.

*Oth.* What if I do obey?

How may the Duke be therewith satisfied,  
Whose messengers are here about my side,  
Upon some present business of the state 90  
To bring me to him?

*1st Off.* 'Tis true, most worthy signior;  
The Duke's in council, and your noble self,  
I am sure, is sent for.

*Bra.* How! the Duke in council!

In this time of the night! Bring him away.

Mine's not an idle cause. The Duke himself,

Or any of my brothers of the state,

Cannot but feel this wrong as 'twere their own;

For if such actions may have passage free,

Bond-slaves and pagans shall our statesmen be.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE III. A council-chamber

*The DUKE and SENATORS sitting at a table;  
OFFICERS attending.*

*Duke.* There is no composition in these news  
That gives them credit.

*1st Sen.* Indeed, they are disproportion'd;  
My letters say a hundred and seven galleys.

*Duke.* And mine, a hundred and forty.

*2nd Sen.* And mine, two hundred.

But though they jump not on a just account—

As in these cases, where the aim reports,

'Tis oft with difference—yet do they all confirm  
A Turkish fleet, and bearing up to Cyprus.

*Duke.* Nay, it is possible enough to judgement.

I do not so secure me in the error, 10

But the main article I do approve

In fearful sense.



*Sailor.* [*Within*] What, ho! what, ho! what, ho!  
*1st Off.* A messenger from the galleys.

*Enter a SAILOR.*

*Duke.* Now, what's the business?

*Sail.* The Turkish preparation makes for Rhodes;

So was I bid report here to the state

By Signior Angelo.

*Duke.* How say you by this change?

*1st Sen.* This cannot be,

By no assay of reason; 'tis a pageant,

To keep us in false gaze. When we consider

The importancy of Cyprus to the Turk, 20

And let ourselves again but understand,

That as it more concerns the Turk than Rhodes,

So may he with more facile question bear it,

For that it stands not in such warlike brace,

But altogether lacks the abilities

That Rhodes is dress'd in. If we make thought of this,

We must not think the Turk is so unskilful

To leave that latest which concerns him first,

Neglecting an attempt of ease and gain

To wake and wage a danger profitless. 30

*Duke.* Nay, in all confidence, he's not for

Rhodes.

*1st Off.* Here is more news.

*Enter a MESSENGER.*

*Mess.* The Ottomites, reverend and gracious,  
 Steering with due course towards the isle of

Rhodes,

Have there injointed them with an after fleet.

*1st Sen.* Ay, so I thought. How many, as you guess?

*Mess.* Of thirty sail; and now they do re-stem  
 Their backward course, bearing with frank appearance

Their purposes toward Cyprus. Signior Montano,

Your trusty and most valiant servitor, 40

With his free duty recommends you thus,

And prays you to believe him.

*Duke.* 'Tis certain, then, for Cyprus.

Marcus Luccicos, is not he in town?

*1st Sen.* He's now in Florence.

*Duke.* Write from us to him; post-post-haste  
 dispatch.

*1st Sen.* Here comes Brabantio and the valiant  
 Moor.

*Enter BRABANTIO, OTHELLO, IAGO,  
 RODERIGO, and Officers.*

*Duke.* Valiant Othello, we must straight employ you

Against the general enemy Ottoman.

[*To BRABANTIO*] I did not see you; welcome,  
 gentle signior; 50

We lack'd your counsel and your help to-night.

*Bra.* So did I yours. Good your Grace, pardon  
 me;

Neither my place nor aught I heard of business

Hath raised me from my bed, nor doth the general care

Take hold on me, for my particular grief

Is of so flood-gate and o'erbearing nature

That it engulfs and swallows other sorrows

And it is still itself.

*Duke.* Why, what's the matter?

*Bra.* My daughter! O, my daughter!

*All.* Dead?

*Bra.* Ay, to me;

She is abused, stol'n from me, and corrupted 60

By spells and medicines bought of mountebanks;

For nature so preposterously to err,

Being not deficient, blind, or lame of sense,

Sans witchcraft could not.

*Duke.* Whoe'er he be that in this foul proceeding

Hath thus beguiled your daughter of herself

And you of her, the bloody book of law

You shall yourself read in the bitter letter

After your own sense, yea, though our proper son

Stood in your action.

*Bra.* Humbly I thank your Grace. 70

Here is the man, this Moor, whom now, it seems,

Your special mandate for the state affairs

Hath hither brought.

*All.* We are very sorry for't.

*Duke.* [*To OTHELLO*] What, in your own part,  
 can you say to this?

*Bra.* Nothing, but this is so.

*Oth.* Most potent, grave, and reverend signiors,

My very noble and approved good masters,

That I have ta'en away this old man's daughter,

It is most true; true, I have married her:

The very head and front of my offending 80

Hath this extent, no more. Rude am I in my

speech,

And little bless'd with the soft phrase of peace.

For since these arms of mine had seven years'

pith,

Till now some nine moons wasted, they have  
 used

Their dearest action in the tented field,

And little of this great world can I speak

More than pertains to feats of broil and battle,

And therefore little shall I grace my cause

In speaking for myself. Yet, by your gracious  
 patience,

I will a round unvarnish'd tale deliver 90

Of my whole course of love; what drugs, what charms,

What conjuration, and what mighty magic,  
For such proceeding I am charged withal,  
I won his daughter.

*Bra.* A maiden never bold;  
Of spirit so still and quiet that her motion  
Blush'd at herself; and she, in spite of nature,  
Of years, of country, credit, everything,  
To fall in love with what she fear'd to look on!  
It is a judgement main'd and most imperfect  
That will confess perfection so could err 100  
Against all rules of nature, and must be driven  
To find out practices of cunning hell,  
Why this should be. I therefore vouch again  
That with some mixtures powerful o'er the  
blood,  
Or with some dram conjured to this effect,  
He wrought upon her.

*Duke.* To vouch this is no proof,  
Without more wider and more overt test  
Than these thin habits and poor likelihoods  
Of modern seeming do prefer against him.

*1st Sen.* But, Othello, speak. 110  
Did you by indirect and forced courses  
Subdue and poison this young maid's affections?  
Or came it by request and such fair question  
As follow'd to soul affordeth?

*Oth.* I do beseech you,  
Send for the lady to the Sagittary,  
And let her speak of me before her father.  
If you do find me foul in her report,  
The trust, the office I do hold of you,  
Not only take away, but let your sentence  
Even fall upon my life.

*Duke.* Fetch Desdemona hither. 120

*Oth.* Ancient, conduct them; you best know the  
place. [*Exeunt IAGO and Attendants.*]

And, till she come, as truly as to heaven  
I do confess the vices of my blood,  
So justly to your grave ears I'll present  
How I did thrive in this fair lady's love,  
And she in mine.

*Duke.* Say it, Othello.

*Oth.* Her father loved me; oft invited me;  
Still question'd me the story of my life, 129  
From year to year, the battles, sieges, fortunes,  
That I have pass'd.

I ran it through, even from my boyish days,  
To the very moment that he bade me tell it;  
Wherein I spake of most disastrous chances,  
Of moving accidents by flood and field,  
Of hair-breadth scapes i' the imminent deadly  
breach,

Of being taken by the insolent foe  
And sold to slavery, of my redemption thence

And portance in my travels' history;  
Wherein of antres vast and deserts idle, 140  
Rough quarries, rocks, and hills whose heads  
touch heaven,

It was my hint to speak—such was the process—  
And of the Cannibals that each other eat,  
The Anthropophagi and men whose heads  
Do grow beneath their shoulders. This to hear  
Would Desdemona seriously incline;  
But still the house-affairs would draw her  
thence,

Which ever as she could with haste dispatch,  
She'd come again, and with a greedy ear  
Devour up my discourse; which I observing, 150  
Took once a pliant hour, and found good means  
To draw from her a prayer of earnest heart  
That I would all my pilgrimage dilate,  
Whereof by parcels she had something heard,  
But not intently. I did consent,  
And often did beguile her of her tears  
When I did speak of some distressful stroke  
That my youth suffer'd. My story being done,  
She gave me for my pains a world of sighs.  
She swore, in faith, 'twas strange, 'twas passing  
strange, 160

'Twas pitiful, 'twas wondrous pitiful.  
She wish'd she had not heard it, yet she wish'd  
That heaven had made her such a man. She  
thank'd me,

And bade me, if I had a friend that loved her,  
I should but teach him how to tell my story,  
And that would woo her. Upon this hint I  
spake:

She loved me for the dangers I had pass'd,  
And I loved her that she did pity them.  
This only is the witchcraft I have used.  
Here comes the lady; let her witness it. 170

*Enter DESDEMONA, IAGO, and Attendants.*

*Duke.* I think this tale would win my daughter  
too.

Good Brabantio,  
Take up this mangled matter at the best;  
Men do their broken weapons rather use  
Than their bare hands.

*Bra.* I pray you, hear her speak.  
If she confess that she was half the wooer,  
Destruction on my head, if my bad blame  
Light on the man! Come hither, gentle mistress.  
Do you perceive in all this noble company  
Where most you owe obedience?

*Des.* My noble father, 180  
I do perceive here a divided duty:  
To you I am bound for life and education;  
My life and education both do learn me  
How to respect you; you are the lord of duty;



I am hitherto your daughter. But here's my husband,

And so much duty as my mother show'd  
To you, preferring you before her father,  
So much I challenge that I may profess  
Due to the Moor my lord.

*Bra.* God be wi' you! I have done.

Please it your Grace, on to the state-affairs. 190

I had rather to adopt a child than get it.

Come hither, Moor.

I here do give thee that with all my heart  
Which, but thou hast already, with all my heart

I would keep from thee. For your sake, jewel,  
I am glad at soul I have no other child;

For thy escape would teach me tyranny,

To hang clogs on them. I have done, my lord.

*Duke.* Let me speak like yourself, and lay a sentence, 199

Which, as a grise or step, may help these lovers  
Into your favour.

When remedies are past, the griefs are ended

By seeing the worst, which late on hopes depended.

To mourn a mischief that is past and gone

Is the next way to draw new mischief on.

What cannot be preserved when fortune takes,

Patience her injury a mockery makes.

The robb'd that smiles steals something from the thief;

He robs himself that spends a bootless grief. 209

*Bra.* So let the Turk of Cyprus us beguile;

We lose it not, so long as we can smile.

He bears the sentence well that nothing bears

But the free comfort which from thence he hears,

But he bears both the sentence and the sorrow

That, to pay grief, must of poor patience borrow.

These sentences, to sugar, or to gall,

Being strong on both sides, are equivocal.

But words are words; I never yet did hear

That the bruised heart was pierced through the ear.

I humbly beseech you, proceed to the affair of state. 220

*Duke.* The Turk with a most mighty preparation makes for Cyprus. Othello, the fortitude of the place is best known to you; and though we have there a substitute of most allowed sufficiency, yet opinion, a sovereign mistress of effects, throws a more safer voice on you. You must therefore be content to slubber the gloss of your new fortunes with this more stubborn and boisterous expedition. 229

*Oth.* The tyrant custom, most grave senators,

Hath made the flinty and steel couch of war

My thrice-driven bed of down. I do agnize

A natural and prompt alacrity

I find in hardness, and do undertake

These present wars against the Ottomites.

Most humbly therefore bending to your state,

I crave fit disposition for my wife,

Due reference of place and exhibition,

With such accommodation and besort

As levels with her breeding.

*Duke.* If you please, 240

Be 't at her father's.

*Bra.* I'll not have it so.

*Oth.* Nor I.

*Des.* Nor I; I would not there reside,

To put my father in impatient thoughts

By being in his eye. Most gracious Duke,

To my unfolding lend your prosperous ear;

And let me find a charter in your voice,

To assist my simpleness.

*Duke.* What would you, Desdemona?

*Des.* That I did love the Moor to live with him, 249

My downright violence and storm of fortunes

May trumpet to the world. My heart's subdued

Even to the very quality of my lord.

I saw Othello's visage in his mind,

And to his honours and his valiant parts

Did I my soul and fortunes consecrate.

So that, dear lords, if I be left behind,

A moth of peace, and he go to the war,

The rites for which I love him are bereft me,

And I a heavy interim shall support

By his dear absence. Let me go with him. 260

*Oth.* Let her have your voices.

Vouch with me, Heaven, I therefore beg it not,

To please the palate of my appetite,

Nor to comply with heat—the young affects

In me defunct—and proper satisfaction,

But to be free and bounteous to her mind;

And Heaven defend your good souls, that you think

I will your serious and great business scant

For she is with me. No, when light-wing'd toys

Of feather'd Cupid seel with wanton dullness 270

My speculative and officed instruments,

That my disports corrupt and taint my business,

Let housewives make a skillet of my helm,

And all indign and base adversities

Make head against my estimation!

*Duke.* Be it as you shall privately determine,

Either for her stay or going. The affair cries haste,

And speed must answer it.

*1st Sen.* You must away to-night

*Oth.* With all my heart.

*Duke.* At nine i' the morning here we'll meet again. 280

Othello, leave some officer behind,  
And he shall our commission bring to you,  
With such things else of quality and respect  
As doth import you.

*Oth.* So please your Grace, my ancient;  
A man he is of honesty and trust.  
To his conveyance I assign my wife,  
With what else needful your good Grace shall  
think

To be sent after me.

*Duke.* Let it be so.  
Good night to every one. [*To BRABANTIO*] And,  
noble signior,

If virtue no delighted beauty lack, 290  
Your son-in-law is far more fair than black.

*1st Sen.* Adieu, brave Moor; use Desdemona  
well.

*Bra.* Look to her, Moor, if thou hast eyes to  
see;

She has deceived her father, and may thee.

[*Exeunt DUKE, SENATORS, Officers, &c.*]

*Oth.* My life upon her faith! Honest Iago,  
My Desdemona must I leave to thee.  
I prithee, let thy wife attend on her;  
And bring them after in the best advantage.  
Come, Desdemona; I have but an hour  
Of love, of worldly matters and direction, 300  
To spend with thee. We must obey the time.

[*Exeunt OTHELLO and DESDEMONA.*]

*Rod.* Iago—

*Iago.* What say'st thou, noble heart?

*Rod.* What will I do, thinkest thou?

*Iago.* Why, go to bed and sleep.

*Rod.* I will incontinently drown myself.

*Iago.* If thou dost, I shall never love thee after.  
Why, thou silly gentleman!

*Rod.* It is silliness to live when to live is torment;  
and then have we a prescription to die  
when Death is our physician. 311

*Iago.* O villainous! I have looked upon the  
world for four times seven years; and since I  
could distinguish betwixt a benefit and an injury,  
I never found a man that knew how to love himself.  
Ere I would say I would drown myself for the  
love of a guinea-hen, I would change my humanity  
with a baboon.

*Rod.* What should I do? I confess it is my  
shame to be so fond; but it is not in my virtue  
to amend it. 321

*Iago.* Virtue! a fig! 'tis in ourselves that we  
are thus or thus. Our bodies are our gardens,  
to the which our wills are gardeners; so that if we  
will plant nettles, or sow lettuce, set hyssop and  
weed up thyme, supply it with one gender of  
herbs, or distract it with many, either to have it  
sterile with idleness or manured with industry,

why, the power and corrigible authority of this  
lies in our wills. If the balance of our lives had  
not one scale of reason to poise another of sensuality,  
the blood and baseness of our natures  
would conduct us to most preposterous conclusions;  
but we have reason to cool our raging  
motions, our carnal stings, our unbitted lusts,  
whereof I take this that you call love to be a sect  
or scion.

*Rod.* It cannot be.

*Iago.* It is merely a lust of the blood and a  
permission of the will. Come, be a man. Drown  
thyself! drown cats and blind puppies. I have  
professed me thy friend and I confess me knit to  
thy deserving with cables of perdurable toughness;  
I could never better stead thee than now.  
Put money in thy purse; follow thou the wars;  
defeat thy favour with an usurped beard; I say,  
put money in thy purse. It cannot be that Desdemona  
should long continue her love to the Moor—put money  
in thy purse—nor he his to her. It was a violent commencement,  
and thou shalt see an answerable sequestration—put  
money in thy purse. These Moors are changeable  
in their wills—fill thy purse with money—the  
food that to him now is as luscious as locusts,  
shall be to him shortly as bitter as coloquintida.  
She must change for youth; when she is sated  
with his body, she will find the error of her  
choice; she must have change, she must; therefore  
put money in thy purse. If thou wilt needs  
damn thyself, do it a more delicate way than  
drowning. Make all the money thou canst. If  
sanctimony and a frail vow betwixt an erring  
barbarian and a supersubtle Venetian be not  
too hard for my wits and all the tribe of hell,  
thou shalt enjoy her; therefore make money. A  
pox of drowning thyself! it is clean out of the  
way. Seek thou rather to be hanged in compassing  
thy joy than to be drowned and go without her.

*Rod.* Wilt thou be fast to my hopes, if I depend  
on the issue?

*Iago.* Thou art sure of me. Go, make money.  
I have told thee often, and I re-tell thee again  
and again, I hate the Moor; my cause is hearted;  
thine hath no less reason. Let us be conjunctive  
in our revenge against him. If thou canst cuckold  
him, thou dost thyself a pleasure, me a sport.  
There are many events in the womb of time which  
will be delivered. Traverse! go, provide thy  
money. We will have more of this to-morrow.  
Adieu.

*Rod.* Where shall we meet i' the morning?

*Iago.* At my lodging.

*Rod.* I'll be with thee betimes.



*Iago.* Go to, farewell. Do you hear, Roderigo?

*Rod.* What say you?

*Iago.* No more of drowning, do you hear?

*Rod.* I am changed. I'll go sell all my land.

[*Exit.*]

*Iago.* Thus do I ever make my fool my purse;  
For I mine own gain'd knowledge should profane,

If I would time expend with such a snipe,  
But for my sport and profit. I hate the Moor;  
And it is thought abroad that 'twixt my sheets  
He has done my office. I know not if 't be true;  
But I, for mere suspicion in that kind,  
Will do as if for surety. He holds me well;  
The better shall my purpose work on him.  
Cassio's a proper man; let me see now;  
To get his place and to plume up my will 399  
In double knavery—How, how?—Let's see—  
After some time, to abuse Othello's ear  
That he is too familiar with his wife.  
He hath a person and a smooth dispose  
To be suspected, framed to make women false.  
The Moor is of a free and open nature  
That thinks men honest that but seem to be so,  
And will as tenderly be led by the nose  
As asses are.  
I have't. It is engender'd. Hell and night  
Must bring this monstrous birth to the world's  
light. [Exit. 410]

## ACT II

SCENE I. *A Sea-port in Cyprus: an open  
place near the quay*

*Enter MONTANO and TWO GENTLEMEN.*

*Mon.* What from the cape can you discern at sea?

*1st Gent.* Nothing at all; it is a high-wrought flood.

I cannot, 'twixt the heaven and the main,  
Descry a sail.

*Mon.* Methinks the wind hath spoke aloud at land;

A fuller blast ne'er shook our battlements.

If it hath ruffian'd so upon the sea,

What ribs of oak, when mountains melt on them,  
Can hold the mortise? What shall we hear of this?

*2nd Gent.* A segregation of the Turkish fleet.

For do but stand upon the foaming shore, 11  
The chidden billow seems to pelt the clouds;  
The wind-shaked surge, with high and monstrous  
mane,

Seems to cast water on the burning bear,

And quench the guards of the ever-fixed pole.

I never did like molestation view  
On the enchafed flood.

*Mon.* If that the Turkish fleet  
Be not enshelter'd and embay'd, they are drown'd;  
It is impossible they bear it out. 19

*Enter a THIRD GENTLEMAN.*

*3rd Gent.* News, lads! our wars are done.  
The desperate tempest hath so bang'd the Turks  
That their designment halts. A noble ship of  
Venice

Hath seen a grievous wreck and sufferance  
On most part of their fleet.

*Mon.* How! is this true?

*3rd Gent.* The ship is here put in.

A Veronese, Michael Cassio,  
Lieutenant to the warlike Moor Othello,  
Is come on shore; the Moor himself at sea,  
And is in full commission here for Cyprus. 29

*Mon.* I am glad on't; 'tis a worthy governor.

*3rd Gent.* But this same Cassio, though he  
speak of comfort  
Touching the Turkish loss, yet he looks sadly,  
And prays the Moor be safe, for they were parted  
With foul and violent tempest.

*Mon.* Pray heavens he be;  
For I have served him, and the man commands  
Like a full soldier. Let's to the seaside, ho!  
As well to see the vessel that's come in  
As to throw out our eyes for brave Othello,  
Even till we make the main and the aerial blue  
An indistinct regard.

*3rd Gent.* Come, let's do so; 40  
For every minute is expectancy  
Of more arrivance.

*Enter CASSIO.*

*Cas.* Thanks, you the valiant of this warlike  
isle,

That so approve the Moor! O, let the heavens  
Give him defence against the elements,  
For I have lost him on a dangerous sea.

*Mon.* Is he well shipp'd?

*Cas.* His bark is stoutly timber'd, and his pilot  
Of very expert and approved allowance;  
Therefore my hopes, not surfeited to death, 50  
Stand in bold cure.

*A cry within, "A sail, a sail, a sail!"*

*Enter a FOURTH GENTLEMAN.*

*Cas.* What noise?

*4th Gent.* The town is empty; on the brow o'  
the sea

Stand ranks of people, and they cry, "A sail!"

*Cas.* My hopes do shape him for the governor.

*Guns heard.*

2nd Gent. They do discharge their shot of courtesy.

Our friends at least.

Cas. I pray you, sir, go forth,

And give us truth who 'tis that is arrived.

2nd Gent. I shall.

[Exit.

Mon. But, good lieutenant, is your general wived?

60

Cas. Most fortunately. He hath achieved a maid

That paragon's description and wild fame;

One that excels the quirks of blazoning pens,

And in the essential vesture of creation

Does tire the ingener.

Re-enter SECOND GENTLEMAN.

How now! who has put in?

2nd Gent. 'Tis one Iago, ancient to the general.

Cas. He has had most favourable and happy speed.

Tempests themselves, high seas and howling winds,

The gutter'd rocks and congregated sands—

Traitors ensteep'd to clog the guiltless keel—

As having sense of beauty, do omit

71

Their mortal natures, letting go safely by

The divine Desdemona.

Mon. What is she?

Cas. She that I spake of, our great captain's captain,

Left in the conduct of the bold Iago,

Whose footing here anticipates our thoughts

A se'nnight's speed. Great Jove, Othello guard,

And swell his sail with thine own powerful breath,

That he may bless this bay with his tall ship,

79

Make love's quick pants in Desdemona's arms,

Give renew'd fire to our extincted spirits,

And bring all Cyprus comfort!

Enter DESDEMONA, EMILIA, IAGO, RODERIGO, and Attendants.

O, behold,

The riches of the ship is come on shore!

Ye men of Cyprus, let her have your knees.

Hail to thee, lady! and the grace of heaven,

Before, behind thee, and on every hand,

Enwheel thee round!

Des. I thank you, valiant Cassio.

What tidings can you tell me of my lord?

Cas. He is not yet arrived; nor know I aught But that he's well and will be shortly here.

90

Des. O, but I fear—how lost you company?

Cas. The great contention of the sea and skies

Parted our fellowship—But, hark! a sail.

Within, "A sail, a sail!" Guns heard.

2nd Gent. They give their greeting to the citadel.

This likewise is a friend.

Cas. See for the news. [Exit GENTLEMAN.

Good ancient, you are welcome. [To EMILIA]

Welcome, mistress.

Let it not gall your patience, good Iago,

That I extend my manners; 'tis my breeding

That gives me this bold show of courtesy.

100

Kissing her.

Iago. Sir, would she give you so much of her lips

As of her tongue she oft bestows on me,

You'd have enough.

Des. Alas, she has no speech.

Iago. In faith, too much;

I find it still, when I have list to sleep.

Marry, before your ladyship, I grant,

She puts her tongue a little in her heart,

And chides with thinking.

Emil. You have little cause to say so.

Iago. Come on, come on; you are pictures out of doors,

110

Bells in your parlours, wild-cats in your kitchens,

Saints in your injuries, devils being offended,

Players in your housewifery, and housewives in your beds.

Des. O, fie upon thee, slanderer!

Iago. Nay, it is true, or else I am a Turk;

You rise to play and go to bed to work.

Emil. You shall not write my praise.

Iago. No, let me not.

Des. What wouldst thou write of me, if thou shouldst praise me?

Iago. O gentle lady, do not put me to't;

For I am nothing, if not critical.

120

Des. Come on, assay. There's one gone to the harbour?

Iago. Ay, madam.

Des. I am not merry; but I do beguile

The thing I am by seeming otherwise.

Come, how wouldst thou praise me?

Iago. I am about it; but indeed my invention

Comes from my pate as birdlime does from frize;

It plucks out brains and all. But my Muse labours,

And thus she is deliver'd.

If she be fair and wise, fairness and wit,

130

The one's for use, the other useth it.

Des. Well praised! How if she be black and witty?

Iago. If she be black, and thereto have a wit, She'll find a white that shall her blackness fit.

Des. Worse and worse.

Emil. How if fair and foolish?

Iago. She never yet was foolish that was fair;

For even her folly help'd her to an heir.



*Des.* These are old fond paradoxes to make fools laugh i' the alehouse. What miserable praise hast thou for her that's foul and foolish? 141

*Iago.* There's none so foul and foolish thereunto, But does foul pranks which fair and wise ones do.

*Des.* O heavy ignorance! thou praisest the worst best. But what praise couldst thou bestow on a deserving woman indeed, one that, in the authority of her merit, did justly put on the vouch of very malice itself?

*Iago.* She that was ever fair and never proud, Had tongue at will and yet was never loud, 150 Never lack'd gold and yet went never gay, Fled from her wish and yet said, "Now I may"; She that being anger'd, her revenge being nigh, Bade her wrong stay and her displeasure fly, She that in wisdom never was so frail To change the cod's head for the salmon's tail, She that could think and ne'er disclose her mind, See suitors following and not look behind, She was a wight, if ever such wight were—

*Des.* To do what? 160

*Iago.* To suckle fools and chronicle small beer.

*Des.* O most lame and impotent conclusion!

Do not learn of him, Emilia, though he be thy husband. How say you, Cassio? is he not a most profane and liberal counsellor?

*Cas.* He speaks home, madam. You may relish him more in the soldier than in the scholar.

*Iago.* [*Aside*] He takes her by the palm; ay, well said, whisper. With as little a web as this will I ensnare as great a fly as Cassio. Ay, smile upon her, do; I will gyve thee in thine own courtship. You say true; 'tis so, indeed. If such tricks as these strip you out of your lieutenantry, it had been better you had not kissed your three fingers so oft, which now again you are most apt to play the sir in. Very good; well kissed! an excellent courtesy! 'tis so, indeed. Yet again your fingers to your lips? would they were clyster-pipes for your sake! [*Trumpet within.*] The Moor! I know his trumpet. 180

*Cas.* 'Tis truly so.

*Des.* Let's meet him and receive him.

*Cas.* Lo, where he comes!

*Enter OTHELLO and Attendants.*

*Oth.* O my fair warrior!

*Des.* My dear Othello!

*Oth.* It gives me wonder great as my content To see you here before me. O my soul's joy! If after every tempest come such calms, May the winds blow till they have waken'd death!

And let the labouring bark climb hills of seas Olympus-high and duck again as low 190

As hell's from heaven! If it were now to die, 'Twere now to be most happy; for, I fear, My soul hath her content so absolute That not another comfort like to this Succeeds in unknown fate.

*Des.* The heavens forbid But that our loves and comforts should increase, Even as our days do grow!

*Oth.* Amen to that, sweet powers! I cannot speak enough of this content; It stops me here; it is too much of joy.

And this, and this, the greatest discords be 200  
*Kissing her.*

That e'er our hearts shall make!

*Iago.* [*Aside*] O, you are well tuned now! But I'll set down the pegs that make this music, As honest as I am.

*Oth.* Come, let us to the castle. News, friends; our wars are done, the Turks are drown'd.

How does my old acquaintance of this isle? Honey, you shall be well desired in Cyprus; I have found great love amongst them. O my sweet,

I prattle out of fashion, and I dote In mine own comforts. I prithee, good Iago, Go to the bay and disembark my coffers. 210 Bring thou the master to the citadel; He is a good one, and his worthiness Does challenge much respect. Come, Desdemona,

Once more, well met at Cyprus.

[*Exeunt OTHELLO, DESDEMONA, and Attendants.*]

*Iago.* Do thou meet me presently at the harbour. Come hither. If thou be'st valiant—as, they say, base men being in love have then a nobility in their natures more than is native to them—list me. The lieutenant to-night watches on the court of guard. First, I must tell thee this—Desdemona is directly in love with him. 221

*Rod.* With him! why, 'tis not possible.

*Iago.* Lay thy finger thus, and let thy soul be instructed. Mark me with what violence she first loved the Moor, but for bragging and telling her fantastical lies; and will she love him still for prating? let not thy discreet heart think it. Her eye must be fed; and what delight shall she have to look on the devil? When the blood is made dull with the act of sport, there should be, again to inflame it and to give satiety a fresh appetite, loveliness in favour, sympathy in years, manners, and beauties; all which the Moor is defective in. Now, for want of these required conveniences, her delicate tenderness will find itself abused, begin to heave the gorge, disrelish and abhor the Moor; very nature will instruct her in it and

compel her to some second choice. Now, sir, this granted—as it is a most pregnant and unforced position—who stands so eminent in the degree of this fortune as Cassio does? a knave very voluble; no further conscionable than in putting on the mere form of civil and humane seeming, for the better compassing of his salt and most hidden loose affection? Why, none; why, none; a slipper and subtle knave, a finder of occasions, that has an eye can stamp and counterfeited advantages, though true advantage never present itself; a devilish knave. Besides, the knave is handsome, young, and hath all those requisites in him that folly and green minds look after; a pestilent complete knave; and the woman hath found him already.

*Rod.* I cannot believe that in her; she's full of most blessed condition.

*Iago.* Blessed fig's-end! the wine she drinks is made of grapes. If she had been blessed, she would never have loved the Moor. Blessed pudding! Didst thou not see her paddle with the palm of his hand? didst not mark that? 260

*Rod.* Yes, that I did; but that was but courtesy.

*Iago.* Lechery, by this hand; an index and obscure prologue to the history of lust and foul thoughts. They met so near with their lips that their breaths embraced together. Villainous thoughts, Roderigo! when these mutualities so marshal the way, hard at hand comes the master and main exercise, the incorporate conclusion. Pish! But, sir, be you ruled by me; I have brought you from Venice. Watch you to-night; for the command, I'll lay't upon you. Cassio knows you not. I'll not be far from you. Do you find some occasion to anger Cassio, either by speaking too loud, or tainting his discipline; or from what other course you please, which the time shall more favourably minister.

*Rod.* Well. 278

*Iago.* Sir, he is rash and very sudden in choler, and haply may strike at you. Provoke him, that he may; for even out of that will I cause these of Cyprus to mutiny; whose qualification shall come into no true taste again but by the displanting of Cassio. So shall you have a shorter journey to your desires by the means I shall then have to prefer them; and the impediment most profitably removed, without the which there were no expectation of our prosperity.

*Rod.* I will do this, if I can bring it to any opportunity. 290

*Iago.* I warrant thee. Meet me by and by at the citadel. I must fetch his necessities ashore. Farewell.

*Rod.* Adieu.

*Iago.* That Cassio loves her, I do well believe it; That she loves him, 'tis apt and of great credit. The Moor, howbeit that I endure him not, Is of a constant, loving, noble nature, And I dare think he'll prove to Desdemona 299 A most dear husband. Now, I do love her too; Not out of absolute lust, though peradventure I stand accountant for as great a sin, But partly led to diet my revenge, For that I do suspect the lusty Moor Hath leap'd into my seat; the thought whereof Doth, like a poisonous mineral, gnaw my inwards;

And nothing can or shall content my soul Till I am even'd with him, wife for wife, Or failing so, yet that I put the Moor At least into a jealousy so strong 310 That judgement cannot cure. Which thing to do, If this poor trash of Venice, whom I trash For his quick hunting, stand the putting on, I'll have our Michael Cassio on the hip, Abuse him to the Moor in the rank garb— For I fear Cassio with my night-cap too— Make the Moor thank me, love me, and reward me,

For making him egregiously an ass And practising upon his peace and quiet 319 Even to madness. 'Tis here, but yet confused; Knavery's plain face is never seen till used. *[Exit.]*

#### SCENE II. *A street*

*Enter a HERALD with a proclamation; People following.*

*Her.* It is Othello's pleasure, our noble and valiant general, that, upon certain tidings now arrived, importing the mere perdition of the Turkish fleet, every man put himself into triumph; some to dance, some to make bonfires, each man to what sport and revels his addiction leads him; for, besides these beneficial news, it is the celebration of his nuptial. So much was his pleasure should be proclaimed. All offices are open, and there is full liberty of feasting from this present hour of five till the bell have told eleven. Heaven bless the isle of Cyprus and our noble general Othello! *[Exeunt.]*

#### SCENE III. *A hall in the castle*

*Enter OTHELLO, DESDEMONA, CASSIO, and Attendants.*

*Oth.* Good Michael, look you to the guard to-night.

Let's teach ourselves that honourable stop, Not to outsport discretion.

*Cas.* Iago hath direction what to do;



But, notwithstanding, with my personal eye  
Will I look to't.

*Oth.* Iago is most honest.  
Michael, good night. To-morrow with your ear-  
liest

Let me have speech with you. [*To Desdemona*]

Come, my dear love,  
The purchase made, the fruits are to ensue;  
That profit's yet to come 'tween me and you. 10  
Good night.

[*Exeunt OTHELLO, DESDEMONA, and Attendants.*]

*Enter IAGO.*

*Cas.* Welcome, Iago; we must to the watch.  
*Iago.* Not this hour, lieutenant; 'tis not yet  
ten o'clock. Our general cast us thus early for  
the love of his Desdemona; who let us not there-  
fore blame. He hath not yet made wanton the  
night with her; and she is sport for Jove.

*Cas.* She's a most exquisite lady.  
*Iago.* And, I'll warrant her, full of game.  
*Cas.* Indeed, she's a most fresh and delicate  
creature. 21

*Iago.* What an eye she has! methinks it sounds  
a parley of provocation.

*Cas.* An inviting eye; and yet methinks right  
modest.

*Iago.* And when she speaks, is it not an alarum  
to love?

*Cas.* She is indeed perfection.

*Iago.* Well, happiness to their sheets! Come,  
lieutenant, I have a stoup of wine; and here  
without are a brace of Cyprus gallants that  
would fain have a measure to the health of black  
Othello.

*Cas.* Not to-night, good Iago. I have very  
poor and unhappy brains for drinking. I could  
well wish courtesy would invent some other cus-  
tom of entertainment.

*Iago.* O, they are our friends; but one cup;  
I'll drink for you.

*Cas.* I have drunk but one cup to-night, and that  
was craftily qualified too, and, behold, what in-  
novation it makes here. I am unfortunate in the  
infirmity, and dare not task my weakness with  
any more.

*Iago.* What, man! 'tis a night of revels. The gal-  
lants desire it.

*Cas.* Where are they?

*Iago.* Here at the door; I pray you, call them in.

*Cas.* I'll do't; but it dislikes me. [*Exit.*]

*Iago.* If I can fasten but one cup upon him, 50  
With that which he hath drunk to-night already,  
He'll be as full of quarrel and offence

As my young mistress' dog. Now, my sick fool  
Roderigo,

Whom love hath turn'd almost the wrong side  
out,

To Desdemona hath to-night caroused  
Potations pottle-deep; and he's to watch.  
Three lads of Cyprus, noble swelling spirits,  
That hold their honours in a wary distance,  
The very elements of this warlike isle,  
Have I to-night fluster'd with flowing cups, 60  
And they watch too. Now, 'mongst this flock of  
drunkards,

Am I to put our Cassio in some action  
That may offend the isle. But here they come.  
If consequence do but approve my dream,  
My boat sails freely, both with wind and stream.

*Re-enter CASSIO; with him MONTANO and  
GENTLEMEN; Servants following with wine.*

*Cas.* 'Fore God, they have given me a rouse  
already.

*Mon.* Good faith, a little one; not past a pint, as  
I am a soldier.

*Iago.* Some wine, ho! 70  
[*Sings*] "And let me the canakin clink, clink;

And let me the canakin clink.

A soldier's a man;

A life's but a span;

Why, then, let a soldier drink."

Some wine, boys!

*Cas.* 'Fore God, an excellent song.

*Iago.* I learned it in England, where, indeed,  
they are most potent in potting; your Dane, your  
German, and your swag-bellied Hollander—  
Drink, ho!—are nothing to your English. 81

*Cas.* Is your Englishman so expert in his drink-  
ing?

*Iago.* Why, he drinks you, with facility, your  
Dane dead drunk; he sweats not to overthrow  
your Almain; he gives your Hollander a vomit,  
ere the next pottle can be filled.

*Cas.* To the health of our general!

*Mon.* I am for it, lieutenant; and I'll do you jus-  
tice. 90

*Iago.* O sweet England!

"King Stephen was a worthy peer,

His breeches cost him but a crown;

He held them sixpence all too dear,

With that he call'd the tailor lown.

"He was a wight of high renown,

And thou art but of low degree.

'Tis pride that pulls the country down;

Then take thine auld cloak about thee."

Some wine, ho! 100

*Cas.* Why, this is a more exquisite song than the  
other.

*Iago.* Will you hear 't again?

*Cas.* No; for I hold him to be unworthy of his place that does those things. Well, God's above all; and there be souls must be saved, and there be souls must not be saved.

*Iago.* It's true, good lieutenant.

*Cas.* For mine own part—no offence to the general, nor any man of quality—I hope to be saved. 111

*Iago.* And so do I too, lieutenant.

*Cas.* Ay, but, by your leave, not before me; the lieutenant is to be saved before the ancient. Let's have no more of this; let's to our affairs.—Forgive us our sins!—Gentlemen, let's look to our business. Do not think, gentlemen, I am drunk. This is my ancient; this is my right hand, and this is my left. I am not drunk now; I can stand well enough, and speak well enough. 120

*All.* Excellent well.

*Cas.* Why, very well then; you must not think then that I am drunk. [Exit.]

*Mon.* To the platform, masters; come, let's set the watch.

*Iago.* You see this fellow that is gone before; He is a soldier fit to stand by Cæsar And give direction; and do but see his vice. 'Tis to his virtue a just equinox, The one as long as the other; 'tis pity of him. 130 I fear the trust Othello puts him in, On some odd time of his infirmity, Will shake this island.

*Mon.* But is he often thus?

*Iago.* 'Tis evermore the prologue to his sleep. He'll watch the horologe a double set, If drink rock not his cradle.

*Mon.* It were well

The general were put in mind of it. Perhaps he sees it not; or his good nature Prizes the virtue that appears in Cassio, And looks not on his evils. Is not this true? 140

*Enter RODERIGO.*

*Iago.* [Aside to him] How now, Roderigo! I pray you, after the lieutenant; go.

[Exit RODERIGO.]

*Mon.* And 'tis great pity that the noble Moor Should hazard such a place as his own second With one of an ingraft infirmity. It were an honest action to say So to the Moor.

*Iago.* Not I, for this fair island. I do love Cassio well; and would do much To cure him of this evil—But, hark! what noise? Cry within: "Help! help!"

*Re-enter CASSIO, driving in RODERIGO.*

*Cas.* You rogue! you rascal!

*Mon.* What's the matter, lieutenant?

*Cas.* A knave teach me my duty! 151 I'll beat the knave into a twiggen bottle.

*Rod.* Beat me!

*Cas.* Dost thou prate, rogue?

*Striking RODERIGO.*

*Mon.* Nay, good lieutenant;

*Saying him.*

I pray you, sir, hold your hand.

*Cas.* Let me go, sir,

Or I'll knock you o'er the mazzard.

*Mon.* Come, come, you're drunk.

*Cas.* Drunk! [They fight.]

*Iago.* [Aside to RODERIGO] Away, I say; go out, and cry a mutiny. [Exit RODERIGO.]

Nay, good lieutenant—alas, gentlemen—

Help, ho!—Lieutenant—sir—Montano—sir—

Help, masters!—Here's a goodly watch indeed!

*Bell rings.*

Who's that which rings the bell?—Diablo, ho!

The town will rise. God's will, lieutenant, hold!

You will be shamed for ever.

*Re-enter OTHELLO and Attendants.*

*Oth.* What is the matter here?

*Mon.* 'Zounds, I bleed still; I am hurt to the death. [Faints.]

*Oth.* Hold, for your lives!

*Iago.* Hold, ho! Lieutenant—sir—Montano—gentlemen—

Have you forgot all sense of place and duty?

Hold! the general speaks to you; hold, hold, for shame!

*Oth.* Why, how now, ho! from whence ariseth this?

Are we turn'd Turks, and to ourselves do that Which Heaven hath forbid the Ottomites? 171 For Christian shame, put by this barbarous brawl.

He that stirs next to carve for his own rage Holds his soul light; he dies upon his motion. Silence that dreadful bell; it frights the isle From her propriety. What is the matter, masters?

Honest Iago, that look'st dead with grieving, Speak, who began this? on thy love, I charge thee.

*Iago.* I do not know. Friends all but now, even now,

In quarter, and in terms like bride and groom Devesting them for bed; and then, but now— 181 As if some planet had unwitting men— Swords out, and tilting one at other's breast, In opposition bloody. I cannot speak Any beginning to this peevish odds; And would in action glorious I had lost



Those legs that brought me to a part of it!

*Oth.* How comes it, Michael, you are thus forget?

*Cas.* I pray you, pardon me; I cannot speak.

*Oth.* Worthy Montano, you were wont be civil; 190

The gravity and stillness of your youth  
The world hath noted, and your name is great  
In mouths of wisest censure. What's the matter,  
That you unlace your reputation thus  
And spend your rich opinion for the name  
Of a night-brawler? give me answer to it.

*Mon.* Worthy Othello, I am hurt to danger.

Your officer, Iago, can inform you—  
While I spare speech, which something now  
offends me—

Of all that I do know; nor know I aught 200  
By me that's said or done amiss this night;  
Unless self-charity be sometimes a vice,  
And to defend ourselves it be a sin  
When violence assails us.

*Oth.* Now, by heaven,  
My blood begins my safer guides to rule;  
And passion, having my best judgement collied,  
Assays to lead the way. If I once stir,  
Or do but lift this arm, the best of you  
Shall sink in my rebuke. Give me to know  
How this foul rout began, who set it on; 210  
And he that is approved in this offence,  
Though he had twinn'd with me, both at a birth,  
Shall lose me. What! in a town of war,  
Yet wild, the people's hearts brimful of fear,  
To manage private and domestic quarrel,  
In night, and on the court and guard of safety!  
'Tis monstrous. Iago, who began 't?

*Mon.* If partially affined, or leagued in office,  
Thou dost deliver more or less than truth,  
Thou art no soldier.

*Iago.* Touch me not so near. 220  
I had rather have this tongue cut from my mouth  
Than it should do offence to Michael Cassio;  
Yet, I persuade myself, to speak the truth  
Shall nothing wrong him. Thus it is, general.  
Montano and myself being in speech,  
There comes a fellow crying out for help;  
And Cassio following him with determined  
sword,

To execute upon him. Sir, this gentleman  
Steps in to Cassio, and entreats his pause.  
Myself the crying fellow did pursue, 230  
Lest by his clamour—as it so fell out—  
The town might fall in fright. He, swift of foot,  
Outran my purpose; and I return'd the rather  
For that I heard the clink and fall of swords,  
And Cassio high in oath; which till to-night  
I ne'er might say before. When I came back—

For this was brief—I found them close together,  
At blow and thrust; even as again they were  
When you yourself did part them.

More of this matter cannot I report. 240  
But men are men; the best sometimes forget.  
Though Cassio did some little wrong to him,  
As men in rage strike those that wish them  
best,

Yet surely Cassio, I believe, received  
From him that fled some strange indignity  
Which patience could not pass.

*Oth.* I know, Iago,  
Thy honesty and love doth mince this matter,  
Making it light to Cassio. Cassio, I love thee;  
But never more be officer of mine.

*Re-enter DESDEMONA, attended.*

Look, if my gentle love be not raised up! 250  
I'll make thee an example.

*Des.* What's the matter?

*Oth.* All's well now, sweeting; come away to bed.

Sir, for your hurts, myself will be your surgeon.  
Lead him off. [*To MONTANO, who is led off.*]

Iago, look with care about the town,  
And silence those whom this vile brawl dis-  
tracted.

Come, Desdemona; 'tis the soldiers' life  
To have their balmy slumbers waked with strife.

[*Exeunt all but IAGO and CASSIO.*]

*Iago.* What, are you hurt, lieutenant?

*Cas.* Ay, past all surgery. 260

*Iago.* Marry, heaven forbid!

*Cas.* Reputation, reputation, reputation! O, I  
have lost my reputation! I have lost the immortal  
part of myself, and what remains is bestial. My  
reputation, Iago, my reputation!

*Iago.* As I am an honest man, I thought you had  
received some bodily wound; there is more sense  
in that than in reputation. Reputation is an idle  
and most false imposition; oft got without merit,  
and lost without deserving. You have lost no  
reputation at all, unless you repute yourself such  
a loser. What, man! there are ways to recover  
the general again. You are but now cast in his  
mood, a punishment more in policy than in mal-  
ice; even so as one would beat his offenceless  
dog to affright an imperious lion. Sue to him  
again, and he's yours.

*Cas.* I will rather sue to be despised than to de-  
ceive so good a commander with so slight, so  
drunken, and so indiscreet an officer. Drunk?  
and speak parrot? and squabble? swagger? swear?  
and discourse fustian with one's own shadow?  
O thou invisible spirit of wine, if thou hast no  
name to be known by, let us call thee devil!

*Iago.* What was he that you followed with your sword? What had he done to you?

*Cas.* I know not.

*Iago.* Is't possible?

*Cas.* I remember a mass of things, but nothing distinctly; a quarrel, but nothing wherefore. O God, that men should put an enemy in their mouths to steal away their brains! that we should, with joy, pleasance, revel, and applause, transform ourselves into beasts!

*Iago.* Why, but you are now well enough. How came you thus recovered?

*Cas.* It hath pleased the devil drunkenness to give place to the devil wrath. One unperfectness shows me another, to make me frankly despise myself. 300

*Iago.* Come, you are too severe a moraler. As the time, the place, and the condition of this country stands, I could heartily wish this had not befallen; but, since it is as it is, mend it for your own good.

*Cas.* I will ask him for my place again; he shall tell me I am a drunkard! Had I as many mouths as Hydra, such an answer would stop them all. To be now a sensible man, by and by a fool, and presently a beast! O strange! Every inordinate cup is unblessed and the ingredient is a devil.

*Iago.* Come, come, good wine is a good familiar creature, if it be well used; exclaim no more against it. And, good lieutenant, I think you think I love you.

*Cas.* I have well approved it, sir. I drunk!

*Iago.* You or any man living may be drunk at a time, man. I'll tell you what you shall do. Our general's wife is now the general. I may say so in this respect, for that he hath devoted and given up himself to the contemplation, mark, and denotement of her parts and graces. Confess yourself freely to her; importune her help to put you in your place again. She is of so free, so kind, so apt, so blessed a disposition, she holds it a vice in her goodness not to do more than she is requested. This broken joint between you and her husband entreat her to splinter; and, my fortunes against any lay worth naming, this crack of your love shall grow stronger than it was before. 331

*Cas.* You advise me well.

*Iago.* I protest, in the sincerity of love and honest kindness.

*Cas.* I think it freely; and betimes in the morning I will beseech the virtuous Desdemona to undertake for me. I am desperate of my fortunes if they check me here.

*Iago.* You are in the right. Good night, lieutenant; I must to the watch. 340

*Cas.* Good night, honest Iago. [Exit.]

*Iago.* And what's he then that says I play the villain?

When this advice is free I give and honest,  
Probal to thinking and indeed the course  
To win the Moor again? For 'tis most easy  
The inclining Desdemona to subdue  
In any honest suit; she's framed as fruitful  
As the free elements. And then for her  
To win the Moor—were't to renounce his baptism,

All seals and symbols of redeemed sin, 350  
His soul is so enfetted to her love,  
That she may make, unmake, do what she list,  
Even as her appetite shall play the god  
With his weak function. How am I then a villain

To counsel Cassio to this parallel course,  
Directly to his good? Divinity of hell!  
When devils will the blackest sins put on,  
They do suggest at first with heavenly shows,  
As I do now; for whiles this honest fool  
Plies Desdemona to repair his fortunes 360  
And she for him pleads strongly to the Moor,  
I'll pour this pestilence into his ear,  
That she repeals him for her body's lust;  
And by how much she strives to do him good,  
She shall undo her credit with the Moor.  
So will I turn her virtue into pitch,  
And out of her own goodness make the net  
That shall enmesh them all.

*Re-enter RODERIGO.*

How now, Roderigo!

*Rod.* I do follow here in the chase, not like a hound that hunts, but one that fills up the cry. My money is almost spent; I have been to-night exceedingly well cudgelled; and I think the issue will be, I shall have so much experience for my pains, and so, with no money at all and a little more wit, return again to Venice.

*Iago.* How poor are they that have not patience! What wound did ever heal but by degrees?

Thou know'st we work by wit, and not by witchcraft;  
And wit depends on dilatory time.

Does't not go well? Cassio hath beaten thee, And thou, by that small hurt, hast cashier'd 381

Cassio.  
Though other things grow fair against the sun,  
Yet fruits that blossom first will first be ripe.  
Content thyself awhile. By the mass, 'tis morning;

Pleasure and action make the hours seem short.

Retire thee; go where thou art billeted.  
Away, I say; thou shalt know more hereafter.



Nay, get thee gone. [*Exit* RODERIGO.] Two things are to be done:

My wife must move for Cassio to her mistress;  
I'll set her on; 390

Myself the while to draw the Moor apart,  
And bring him jump when he may Cassio find  
Soliciting his wife. Ay, that's the way;  
Dull not device by coldness and delay. [*Exit*]

## ACT III

SCENE I. *Before the castle*

*Enter* CASSIO and some MUSICIANS.

Cas. Masters, play here; I will content your pains;  
Something that's brief; and bid "Good morrow, general."  
*Music.*

*Enter* CLOWN.

Clo. Why, masters, have your instruments been in Naples, that they speak i' the nose thus?

1st Mus. How, sir, how!

Clo. Are these, I pray you, wind-instruments?

1st Mus. Ay, marry, are they, sir.

Clo. O, thereby hangs a tail.

1st Mus. Whereby hangs a tale, sir? 9

Clo. Marry, sir, by many a wind-instrument that I know. But, masters, here's money for you; and the general so likes your music, that he desires you, for love's sake, to make no more noise with it.

1st Mus. Well, sir, we will not.

Clo. If you have any music that may not be heard, to't again; but, as they say, to hear music the general does not greatly care.

1st Mus. We have none such, sir.

Clo. Then put up your pipes in your bag, for I'll away. Go; vanish into air; away! 21

[*Exeunt* MUSICIANS.]

Cas. Dost thou hear, my honest friend?

Clo. No, I hear not your honest friend; I hear you.

Cas. Prithee, keep up thy quilllets. There's a poor piece of gold for thee. If the gentlewoman that attends the general's wife be stirring, tell her there's one Cassio entreats her a little favour of speech. Will thou do this?

Clo. She is stirring, sir. If she will stir hither, I shall seem to notify unto her. 31

Cas. Do, good my friend. [*Exit* CLOWN.]

*Enter* IAGO.

In happy time, Iago.

Iago. You have not been a-bed, then?

Cas. Why, no; the day had broke

Before we parted. I have made bold, Iago, To send in to your wife. My suit to her Is that she will to virtuous Desdemona Procure me some access.

Iago. I'll send her to you presently; And I'll devise a mean to draw the Moor Out of the way, that your converse and business May be more free. 41

Cas. I humbly thank you for't. [*Exit* IAGO.]  
I never knew

A Florentine more kind and honest.

*Enter* EMILIA.

Emil. Good morrow, good lieutenant. I am sorry

For your displeasure; but all will sure be well. The general and his wife are talking of it; And she speaks for you stoutly. The Moor replies

That he you hurt is of great fame in Cyprus And great affinity and that in wholesome wisdom He might not but refuse you, but he protests he loves you 50

And needs no other suitor but his likings To take the safest occasion by the front To bring you in again.

Cas. Yet, I beseech you, If you think fit, or that it may be done, Give me advantage of some brief discourse With Desdemona alone.

Emil. Pray you, come in. I will bestow you where you shall have time To speak your bosom freely.

Cas. I am much bound to you. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE II. *A room in the castle*

*Enter* OTHELLO, IAGO, and GENTLEMEN.

Oth. These letters give, Iago, to the pilot; And by him do my duties to the Senate. That done, I will be walking on the works; Repair there to me.

Iago. Well, my good lord, I'll do 't.

Oth. This fortification, gentlemen, shall we see 't?

Gent. We'll wait upon your lordship. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE III. *The garden of the castle*

*Enter* DESDEMONA, CASSIO, and EMILIA.

Des. Be thou assured, good Cassio, I will do All my abilities in thy behalf.

Emil. Good madam, do. I warrant it grieves my husband,

As if the case were his.

Des. O, that's an honest fellow. Do not doubt, Cassio,

But I will have my lord and you again

As friendly as you were.

*Cas.* Bounteous madam,  
Whatever shall become of Michael Cassio,  
He's never anything but your true servant.

*Des.* I know't; I thank you. You do love my lord;

You have known him long; and be you well assured

He shall in strangeness stand no further off  
Than in a politic distance.

*Cas.* Ay, but, lady,  
That policy may either last so long,  
Or feed upon such nice and waterish diet,  
Or breed itself so out of circumstance,  
That, I being absent and my place supplied,  
My general will forget my love and service.

*Des.* Do not doubt that; before Emilia here  
I give thee warrant of thy place. Assure thee, 20  
If I do vow a friendship, I'll perform it

To the last article. My lord shall never rest;  
I'll watch him tame and talk him out of patience;

His bed shall seem a school, his board a shrift;  
I'll intermingle everything he does

With Cassio's suit. Therefore be merry,

*Cassio;*

For thy solicitor shall rather die  
Than give thy cause away.

*Enter OTHELLO and IAGO.*

*Emil.* Madam, here comes my lord.

*Cas.* Madam, I'll take my leave. 30

*Des.* Why, stay, and hear me speak.

*Cas.* Madam, not now; I am very ill at ease,  
Unfit for mine own purposes.

*Des.* Well, do your discretion. [*Exit CASSIO.*]

*Iago.* Ha! I like not that.

*Oth.* What dost thou say?

*Iago.* Nothing, my lord; or if—I know not what.

*Oth.* Was not that Cassio parted from my wife?

*Iago.* Cassio, my lord! No, sure, I cannot think it,

That he would steal away so guilty-like,  
Seeing you coming.

*Oth.* I do believe 'twas he. 40

*Des.* How now, my lord!

I have been talking with a suitor here,  
A man that languishes in your displeasure.

*Oth.* Who is't you mean?

*Des.* Why, your lieutenant, Cassio. Good my lord,

If I have any grace or power to move you,  
His present reconciliation take;  
For if he be not one that truly loves you,  
That errs in ignorance and not in cunning,

I have no judgement in an honest face.

50

I prithee, call him back.

*Oth.* Went he hence now?

*Des.* Ay, sooth; so humbled

That he hath left part of his grief with me,  
To suffer with him. Good love, call him back.

*Oth.* Not now, sweet Desdemona; some other time.

*Des.* But shall't be shortly?

*Oth.* The sooner, sweet, for you.

*Des.* Shall't be to-night at supper?

*Oth.* No, not to-night.

*Des.* To-morrow dinner, then?

*Oth.* I shall not dine at home;

I meet the captains at the citadel.

*Des.* Why, then, to-morrow night; or Tuesday morn; 60

On Tuesday noon, or night; on Wednesday morn.

I prithee, name the time, but let it not

Exceed three days. In faith, he's penitent;

And yet his trespass, in our common reason—

Save that, they say, the wars must make examples

Out of their best—is not almost a fault

To incur a private check. When shall he come?

Tell me. Othello. I wonder in my soul

What you would ask me that I should deny,

Or stand soammering on. What! Michael Cassio, 70

That came a-wooing with you, and so many a time,

When I have spoke of you dispraisingly,

Hath ta'en your part; to have so much to do

To bring him in! Trust me, I could do much—

*Oth.* Prithee, no more. Let him come when he will;

I will deny thee nothing.

*Des.*

Why, this is not a boon;

'Tis as I should entreat you wear your gloves,

Or feed on nourishing dishes, or keep you warm,

Or sue to you to do a peculiar profit

To your own person. Nay, when I have a suit 80

Wherein I mean to touch your love indeed,

It shall be full of poise and difficult weight

And fearful to be granted.

*Oth.*

I will deny thee nothing;

Whereon, I do beseech thee, grant me this,

To leave me but a little to myself.

*Des.* Shall I deny you? no. Farewell, my lord.

*Oth.* Farewell, my Desdemona. I'll come to thee straight.

*Des.* Emilia, come. Be as your fancies teach you;

Whate'er you be, I am obedient.

[*Exeunt DESDEMONA and EMILIA.*]



*Oth.* Excellent wretch! Perdition catch my soul,  
90

But I do love thee! and when I love thee not,  
Chaos is come again.

*Iago.* My noble lord—

*Oth.* What dost thou say, Iago?

*Iago.* Did Michael Cassio, when you woo'd my lady,

Know of your love?

*Oth.* He did, from first to last. Why dost thou ask?

*Iago.* But for a satisfaction of my thought;  
No further harm.

*Oth.* Why of thy thought, Iago?

*Iago.* I did not think he had been acquainted with her.

*Oth.* O, yes; and went between us very oft.

*Iago.* Indeed! 101

*Oth.* Indeed! ay, indeed. Discern'st thou aught in that?

Is he not honest?

*Iago.* Honest, my lord!

*Oth.* Honest! ay, honest.

*Iago.* My lord, for aught I know.

*Oth.* What dost thou think?

*Iago.* Think, my lord!

*Oth.* Think, my lord!

By heaven, he echoes me,

As if there were some monster in his thought

Too hideous to be shown. Thou dost mean something.

I heard thee say even now, thou likedst not that,

When Cassio left my wife. What didst not like?

And when I told thee he was of my counsel 111

In my whole course of wooing, thou criedst "Indeed!"

And didst contract and purse thy brow together,

As if thou then hadst shut up in thy brain

Some horrible conceit. If thou dost love me,

Show me thy thought.

*Iago.* My lord, you know I love you.

*Oth.* I think thou dost;

And, for I know thou'rt full of love and honesty,

And weigh'st thy words before thou givest them breath,

Therefore these stops of thine fright me the more;

For such things in a false disloyal knave 121

Are tricks of custom, but in a man that's just

They are close delations, working from the heart

That passion cannot rule.

*Iago.* For Michael Cassio,

I dare be sworn I think that he is honest.

*Oth.* I think so too.

*Iago.* Men should be what they seem;

Or those that be not, would they might seem none!

*Oth.* Certain, men should be what they seem.

*Iago.* Why, then, I think Cassio's an honest man.

*Oth.* Nay, yet there's more in this. 130

I prithee, speak to me as to thy thinkings,  
As thou dost ruminate, and give thy worst of thoughts

The worst of words.

*Iago.* Good my lord, pardon me.

Though I am bound to every act of duty,

I am not bound to that all slaves are free to.

Utter my thoughts? Why, say they are vile and false;

As where's that palace whereinto foul things

Sometimes intrude not? who has a breast so pure,

But some uncleanly apprehensions

Keep leets and law-days and in session sit 140

With meditations lawful?

*Oth.* Thou dost conspire against thy friend,

Iago,

If thou but think'st him wrong'd and makest his ear

A stranger to thy thoughts.

*Iago.* I do beseech you—

Though I perchance am vicious in my guess,

As, I confess, it is my nature's plague

To spy into abuses, and oft my jealousy

Shapes faults that are not—that your wisdom yet,

From one that so imperfectly conceits,

Would take no notice, nor build yourself a trouble

Out of his scattering and unsure observance. 151

It were not for your quiet nor your good,

Nor for my manhood, honesty, or wisdom,

To let you know my thoughts.

*Oth.* What dost thou mean?

*Iago.* Good name in man and woman, dear my lord,

Is the immediate jewel of their souls.

Who steals my purse steals trash; 'tis something, nothing;

'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands.

But he that filches from me my good name

Robs me of that which not enriches him 160  
And makes me poor indeed.

*Oth.* By heaven, I'll know thy thoughts.

*Iago.* You cannot, if my heart were in your hand;

Nor shall not, whilst 'tis in my custody.

*Oth.* Ha!

*Iago.* O, beware, my lord, of jealousy;

It is the green-eyed monster which doth mock

The meat it feeds on. That cuckold lives in bliss

Who, certain of his fate, loves not his wronger;

But, O, what damned minutes tells he o'er  
Who dotes, yet doubts, suspects, yet strongly  
loves! 170

*Oth.* O misery!

*Iago.* Poor and content is rich and rich enough,  
But riches fineless is as poor as winter  
To him that ever fears he shall be poor.  
Good heaven, the souls of all my tribe defend  
From jealousy!

*Oth.* Why, why is this?  
Think'st thou I'd make a life of jealousy,  
To follow still the changes of the moon  
With fresh suspicions? No; to be once in doubt  
Is once to be resolved. Exchange me for a goat,  
When I shall turn the business of my soul 181  
To such exsufficate and blown surmises,  
Matching thy inference. 'Tis not to make me  
jealous

To say my wife is fair, feeds well, loves com-  
pany,

Is free of speech, sings, plays, and dances well;  
Where virtue is, these are more virtuous.

Nor from mine own weak merits will I draw  
The smallest fear or doubt of her revolt;  
For she had eyes, and chose me. No, *Iago*;  
I'll see before I doubt; when I doubt, prove; 190  
And on the proof, there is no more but this—  
Away at once with love or jealousy!

*Iago.* I am glad of it; for now I shall have  
reason

To show the love and duty that I bear you  
With franker spirit; therefore, as I am bound,  
Receive it from me. I speak not yet of proof.  
Look to your wife; observe her well with *Cassio*;  
Wear your eye thus, not jealous nor secure.  
I would not have your free and noble nature,  
Out of self-bounty, be abused; look to't. 200

I know our country disposition well;  
In Venice they do let heaven see the pranks  
They dare not show their husbands; their best  
conscience

Is not to leave't undone, but keep't unknown.

*Oth.* Dost thou say so?

*Iago.* She did deceive her father, marrying you;  
And when she seem'd to shake and fear your  
looks,

She loved them most.

*Oth.* And so she did.

*Iago.* Why, go to then;  
She that, so young, could give out such a seem-  
ing,

To see her father's eyes up close as oak— 210  
He thought 'twas witchcraft—but I am much to  
blame;

I humbly do beseech you of your pardon  
For too much loving you.

*Oth.* I am bound to thee for ever.

*Iago.* I see this hath a little dash'd your spirits.

*Oth.* Not a jot, not a jot.

*Iago.* I' faith, I fear it has.

I hope you will consider what is spoke  
Comes from my love. But I do see you're moved.  
I am to pray you not to strain my speech  
To grosser issues nor to larger reach  
Than to suspicion. 220

*Oth.* I will not.

*Iago.* Should you do so, my lord,  
My speech should fall into such vile success  
As my thoughts aim not at. *Cassio's* my worthy  
friend—

My lord, I see you're moved.

*Oth.* No, not much moved.

I do not think but *Desdemona's* honest.

*Iago.* Long live she so! and long live you to  
think so!

*Oth.* And yet, how nature erring from itself—

*Iago.* Ay, there's the point; as—to be bold with  
you—

Not to affect many proposed matches  
Of her own clime, complexion, and degree, 230

Whereto we see in all things nature tends—

*Foh!* one may smell in such a will most rank,

Foul disproportion, thoughts unnatural.

But pardon me; I do not in position

Distinctly speak of her; though I may fear

Her will, recoiling to her better judgement,

May fall to match you with her country forms

And happily repent.

*Oth.* Farewell, farewell.

If more thou dost perceive, let me know more;

Set on thy wife to observe. Leave me, *Iago.* 240

*Iago.* [Going] My lord, I take my leave.

*Oth.* Why did I marry? This honest creature  
doubtless

Sees and knows more, much more, than he un-  
folds.

*Iago.* [Returning] My lord, I would I might  
entreat your honour

To scan this thing no further; leave it to time.

Though it be fit that *Cassio* have his place,

For, sure, he fills it up with great ability,

Yet, if you please to hold him off awhile,

You shall by that perceive him and his means.

Note, if your lady strain his entertainment 250

With any strong or vehement importunity;

Much will be seen in that. In the mean time,

Let me be thought too busy in my fears—

As worthy cause I have to fear I am—

And hold her free, I do beseech your honour.

*Oth.* Fear not my government.

*Iago.* I once more take my leave. [Exit.]

*Oth.* This fellow's of exceeding honesty,



And knows all qualities, with a learned spirit, 259  
 Of human dealings. If I do prove her haggard,  
 Though that her jesses were my dear heart-strings,  
 I'd whistle her off and let her down the wind,  
 To prey at fortune. Haply, for I am black  
 And have not those soft parts of conversation  
 That chamberers have, or for I am declined  
 Into the vale of years—yet that's not much—  
 She's gone. I am abused; and my relief  
 Must be to loathe her. O curse of marriage,  
 That we can call these delicate creatures ours,  
 And not their appetites! I had rather be a toad,  
 And live upon the vapour of a dungeon, 271  
 Than keep a corner in the thing I love  
 For others' uses. Yet, 'tis the plague of great  
 ones;  
 Prerogativ'd are they less than the base;  
 'Tis destiny unshunnable, like death.  
 Even then this forked plague is fated to us  
 When we do quicken. Desdemona comes;

*Re-enter DESDEMONA and EMILIA.*

If she be false, O, then heaven mocks itself!  
 I'll not believe 't.

*Des.* How now, my dear Othello!  
 Your dinner, and the generous islanders 280  
 By you invited, do attend your presence.

*Oth.* I am to blame.

*Des.* Why do you speak so faintly?  
 Are you not well?

*Oth.* I have a pain upon my forehead here.

*Des.* 'Faith, that's with watching; 'twill away  
 again.

Let me but bind it hard, within this hour  
 It will be well.

*Oth.* Your napkin is too little.  
*He puts the handkerchief from him; and it drops.*  
 Let it alone. Come, I'll go in with you.

*Des.* I am very sorry that you are not well.

*[Exeunt OTHELLO and DESDEMONA.]*

*Emil.* I am glad I have found this napkin; 290  
 This was her first remembrance from the Moor.  
 My wayward husband hath a hundred times  
 Woo'd me to steal it; but she so loves the token,  
 For he conjured her she should ever keep it,  
 That she reserves it evermore about her  
 To kiss and talk to. I'll have the work ta'en out,  
 And give't Iago. What he will do with it  
 Heaven knows, not I;  
 I nothing but to please his fantasy.

*Re-enter IAGO.*

*Iago.* How now! what do you here alone? 300

*Emil.* Do not you chide; I have a thing for you.

*Iago.* A thing for me? it is a common thing—

*Emil.* Ha!

*Iago.* To have a foolish wife.

*Emil.* O, is that all? What will you give me now  
 For that same handkerchief?

*Iago.* What handkerchief?

*Emil.* What handkerchief!

Why, that the Moor first gave to Desdemona;  
 That which so often you did bid me steal.

*Iago.* Hast stol'n it from her? 310

*Emil.* No, 'faith; she let it drop by negligence,  
 And, to the advantage, I, being here, took 't up.  
 Look, here it is.

*Iago.* A good wench; give it me.

*Emil.* What will you do with't, that you have  
 been so earnest  
 To have me filch it?

*Iago.* *[Snatching it]* Why, what's that to you?

*Emil.* If it be not for some purpose of import,  
 Give 't me again. Poor lady, she'll run mad  
 When she shall lack it.

*Iago.* Be not acknown on't; I have use for it.

Go, leave me. *[Exit EMILIA.]* 320

I will in Cassio's lodging lose this napkin,  
 And let him find it. Trifles light as air  
 Are to the jealous confirmations strong  
 As proofs of holy writ; this may do something.  
 The Moor already changes with my poison.  
 Dangerous conceits are, in their natures, poisons,  
 Which at the first are scarce found to distaste,  
 But with a little act upon the blood,  
 Burn like the mines of sulphur. I did say so.  
 Look, where he comes!

*Re-enter OTHELLO.*

Nor poppy, nor mandragora, 330  
 Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world,  
 Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep  
 Which thou owedst yesterday.

*Oth.* Ha! ha! false to me?

*Iago.* Why, how now, general! no more of that.

*Oth.* Avaunt! be gone! thou hast set me on the  
 rack.

I swear 'tis better to be much abused  
 Than but to know 't a little.

*Iago.* How now, my lord!

*Oth.* What sense had I of her stol'n hours of  
 lust?

I saw 't not, thought it not, it harm'd not me.

I slept the next night well, was free and merry;  
 I found not Cassio's kisses on her lips. 341

He that is robb'd, not wanting what is stol'n,  
 Let him not know 't, and he's not robb'd at all.

*Iago.* I am sorry to hear this.

*Oth.* I had been happy, if the general camp,  
 Pioners and all, had tasted her sweet body,  
 So I had nothing known. O, now, for ever  
 Farewell the tranquil mind! farewell content!

Farewell the plumed troop, and the big wars,  
That make ambition virtue! O, farewell! 350  
Farewell the neighing steed, and the shrill trump,  
The spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing fife,  
The royal banner, and all quality,  
Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war!  
And, O you mortal engines, whose rude throats  
The immortal Jove's dread clamours counterfeit,  
Farewell! Othello's occupation's gone!

*Iago.* Is't possible, my lord?

*Oth.* Villain, be sure thou prove my love a  
where,

Be sure of it; give me the ocular proof; 360  
Or, by the worth of man's eternal soul,  
Thou hadst been better have been born a dog  
Than answer my waked wrath!

*Iago.* Is't come to this?

*Oth.* Make me to see't; or, at the least, so  
prove it

That the probation bear no hinge nor loop  
To hang a doubt on; or woe upon thy life!

*Iago.* My noble lord—

*Oth.* If thou dost slander her and torture me,  
Never pray more; abandon all remorse;  
On horror's head horrors accumulate; 370  
Do deeds to make heaven weep, all earth amazed;  
For nothing canst thou to damnation add  
Greater than that.

*Iago.* O grace! O heaven forgive me!  
Are you a man? have you a soul or sense?  
God be wi' you; take mine office. O wretched  
fool,

That livest to make thine honesty a vice!  
O monstrous world! Take note, take note, O  
world,

To be direct and honest is not safe.

I thank you for this profit; and from hence  
I'll love no friend, sith love breeds such offence.

*Oth.* Nay, stay. Thou shouldst be honest. 381

*Iago.* I should be wise, for honesty's a fool  
And loses that it works for.

*Oth.* By the world,  
I think my wife be honest and think she is not;  
I think that thou art just and think thou art not.  
I'll have some proof. Her name, that was as fresh  
As Dian's visage, is now begrimed and black  
As mine own face. If there be cords, or knives,  
Poison, or fire, or suffocating streams,  
I'll not endure it. Would I were satisfied! 390

*Iago.* I see, sir, you are eaten up with passion.  
I do repent me that I put it to you.

You would be satisfied?

*Oth.* Would! nay, I will.

*Iago.* And may; but, how? how satisfied, my  
lord?

Would you, the supervisor, grossly gape on—

Behold her topp'd?

*Oth.* Death and damnation! O!

*Iago.* It were a tedious difficulty, I think,  
To bring them to that prospect. Damn them  
then,

If ever mortal eyes do see them bolster  
More than their own! What then? how then?  
What shall I say? Where's satisfaction? 401

It is impossible you should see this,  
Were they as prime as goats, as hot as monkeys,  
As salt as wolves in pride, and fools as gross  
As ignorance made drunk. But yet, I say,  
If imputation and strong circumstances,  
Which lead directly to the door of truth,  
Will give you satisfaction, you may have 't.

*Oth.* Give me a living reason she's disloyal.

*Iago.* I do not like the office; 410

But, sith I am enter'd in this cause so far,  
Prick'd to 't by foolish honesty and love,  
I will go on. I lay with Cassio lately;  
And, being troubled with a raging tooth,  
I could not sleep.

There are a kind of men so loose of soul,  
That in their sleeps will mutter their affairs;  
One of this kind is Cassio.

In sleep I heard him say, "Sweet Desdemona,  
Let us be wary, let us hide our loves"; 420  
And then, sir, would he gripe and wring my  
hand,

Cry, "O sweet creature!" and then kiss me hard,  
As if he pluck'd up kisses by the roots  
That grew upon my lips; then laid his leg  
Over my thigh, and sigh'd, and kiss'd; and then  
Cried, "Cursed fate that gave thee to the Moor!"

*Oth.* O monstrous! monstrous!

*Iago.* Nay, this was but his dream.

*Oth.* But this denoted a foregone conclusion.  
'Tis a shrewd doubt, though it be but a dream.

*Iago.* And this may help to thicken other  
proofs 430

That do demonstrate thinly.

*Oth.* I'll tear her all to pieces.

*Iago.* Nay, but be wise; yet we see nothing  
done;

She may be honest yet. Tell me but this,  
Have you not sometimes seen a handkerchief  
Spotted with strawberries in your wife's hand?

*Oth.* I gave her such a one; 'twas my first gift

*Iago.* I know not that; but such a handkerchief—  
I am sure it was your wife's—did I to-day  
See Cassio wipe his beard with.

*Oth.* If it be that—

*Iago.* If it be that, or any that was hers, 440  
It speaks against her with the other proofs.

*Oth.* O, that the slave had forty thousand lives!  
One is too poor, too weak for my revenge.



Now do I see 'tis true. Look here, Iago;  
All my fond love thus do I blow to heaven.  
'Tis gone.

Arise, black vengeance, from thy hollow cell!  
Yield up, O love, thy crown and hearted throne  
To tyrannous hate! Swell, bosom, with thy  
fraught,

For 'tis of aspics' tongues!

*Iago.* Yet be content. 450

*Oth.* O, blood, blood, blood!

*Iago.* Patience, I say; your mind perhaps may  
change.

*Oth.* Never, Iago. Like to the Pontic sea,  
Whose icy current and compulsive course  
Ne'er feels retiring ebb, but keeps due on  
To the Propontic and the Hellespont,  
Even so my bloody thoughts, with violent pace,  
Shall ne'er look back, ne'er ebb to humble love,  
Till that a capable and wide revenge  
Swallow them up. Now, by yond marble  
heaven, 460

[*Kneels*] In the due reverence of a sacred vow  
I here engage my words.

*Iago.* Do not rise yet.

[*Kneels*] Witness, you ever-burning lights above,  
You elements that clip us round about,  
Witness that here Iago doth give up  
The execution of his wit, hands, heart,  
To wrong'd Othello's service! Let him com-  
mand,

And to obey shall be in me remorse,  
What bloody business ever. [*They rise.*]

*Oth.* I greet thy love,  
Not with vain thanks, but with acceptance  
bounteous, 470

And will upon the instant put thee to 't.  
Within these three days let me hear thee say  
That Cassio's not alive.

*Iago.* My friend is dead; 'tis done at your re-  
quest.

But let her live.

*Oth.* Damn her, lewd minx! O, damn her!  
Come, go with me apart; I will withdraw,  
To furnish me with some swift means of death  
For the fair devil. Now art thou my lieutenant.

*Iago.* I am your own for ever. [*Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE IV. Before the castle

*Enter* DESDEMONA, EMILIA, and CLOWN.

*Des.* Do you know, sirrah, where Lieutenant  
Cassio lies?

*Clo.* I dare not say he lies anywhere.

*Des.* Why, man?

*Clo.* He's a soldier, and for one to say a soldier  
lies, is stabbing.

*Des.* Go to. Where lodges he?

*Clo.* To tell you where he lodges, is to tell you  
where I lie.

*Des.* Can anything be made of this? 10

*Clo.* I know not where he lodges, and for me  
to devise a lodging and say he lies here or he lies  
there, were to lie in mine own throat.

*Des.* Can you inquire him out, and be edified by  
report?

*Clo.* I will catechize the world for him; that  
is, make questions, and by them answer.

*Des.* Seek him, bid him come hither. Tell him I  
have moved my lord on his behalf, and hope all  
will be well. 20

*Clo.* To do this is within the compass of man's  
wit; and therefore I will attempt the doing it.

[*Exit.*]

*Des.* Where should I lose that handkerchief,  
Emilia?

*Emil.* I know not, madam.

*Des.* Believe me, I had rather have lost my purse  
Full of crusadoes; and, but my noble Moor  
Is true of mind and made of no such baseness  
As jealous creatures are, it were enough  
To put him to ill thinking.

*Emil.* Is he not jealous?

*Des.* Who, he? I think the sun where he was  
born 30  
Drew all such humours from him.

*Emil.* Look, where he comes.

*Des.* I will not leave him now till Cassio  
Be call'd to him.

*Enter* OTHELLO.

How is't with you, my lord?

*Oth.* Well, my good lady. [*Aside*] O, hardness  
to dissemble!—

How do you, Desdemona?

*Des.* Well, my good lord.

*Oth.* Give me your hand. This hand is moist, my  
lady.

*Des.* It yet hath felt no age nor known no sor-  
row.

*Oth.* This argues fruitfulness and liberal heart;  
Hot, hot, and moist. This hand of yours requires  
A sequester from liberty, fasting, and prayer, 40  
Much castigation, exercise devout;  
For here's a young and sweating devil here,  
That commonly rebels. 'Tis a good hand,  
A frank one.

*Des.* You may, indeed, say so;

For 'twas that hand that gave away my heart.

*Oth.* A liberal hand. The hearts of old gave  
hands;

But our new heraldry is hands, not hearts.

*Des.* I cannot speak of this. Come now, your  
promise.

*Oth.* What promise, chuck?

*Des.* I have sent to bid Cassio come speak with you. 50

*Oth.* I have a salt and sorry rheum offends me; Lend my thy handkerchief.

*Des.* Here, my lord.

*Oth.* That which I gave you.

*Des.* I have it not about me.

*Oth.* Not?

*Des.* No, indeed, my lord.

*Oth.* That is a fault.

That handkerchief

Did an Egyptian to my mother give;

She was a charmer, and could almost read

The thoughts of people. She told her, while she kept it,

'T would make her amiable and subdue my father Entirely to her love, but if she lost it 60

Or made a gift of it, my father's eye

Should hold her loathed and his spirits should hunt

After new fancies. She, dying, gave it me;

And bid me, when my fate would have me wive,

To give it her. I did so; and take heed on 't;

Make it a darling like your precious eye;

To lose 't or give 't away were such perdition

As nothing else could match.

*Des.* Is't possible?

*Oth.* 'Tis true; there's magic in the web of it.

A sibyl, that had number'd in the world 70

The sun to course two hundred compasses,

In her prophetic fury sew'd the work;

The worms were hallow'd that did breed the silk;

And it was dyed in mummy which the skilful

Conserved of maidens' hearts.

*Des.* Indeed! is't true?

*Oth.* Most veritable; therefore look to 't well.

*Des.* Then would to God that I had never seen 't!

*Oth.* Ha! wherefore?

*Des.* Why do you speak so startingly and rash?

*Oth.* Is't lost? is't gone? speak, is it out o' the way? 80

*Des.* Heaven bless us!

*Oth.* Say you?

*Des.* It is not lost; but what an if it were?

*Oth.* How!

*Des.* I say, it is not lost.

*Oth.* Fetch't, let me see't.

*Des.* Why, so I can, sir, but I will not now.

This is a trick to put me from my suit.

Pray you, let Cassio be received again.

*Oth.* Fetch me the handkerchief. My mind mis-gives.

*Des.* Come, come; 90

You'll never meet a more sufficient man.

*Oth.* The handkerchief!

*Des.* I pray, talk me of Cassio.

*Oth.* The handkerchief!

*Des.* A man that all his time

Hath founded his good fortunes on your love,

Shared dangers with you—

*Oth.* The handkerchief!

*Des.* In sooth, you are to blame.

*Oth.* Away!

[Exit.

*Emil.* Is not this man jealous?

*Des.* I ne'er saw this before. 100

Sure, there's some wonder in this handkerchief.

I am most unhappy in the loss of it.

*Emil.* 'Tis not a year or two shows us a man.

They are all but stomachs, and we all but food;

They eat us hungerly, and when they are full,

They belch us. Look you, Cassio and my husband!

*Enter CASSIO and IAGO.*

*Iago.* There is no other way; 'tis she must do 't.

And, lo, the happiness! go, and importune her.

*Des.* How now, good Cassio! what's the news with you?

*Cas.* Madam, my former suit. I do beseech you

That by your virtuous means I may again 111

Exist, and be a member of his love

Whom I with all the office of my heart

Entirely honour. I would not be delay'd.

If my offence be of such mortal kind

That nor my service past, nor present sorrows,

Nor purposed merit in futurity,

Can ransom me into his love again,

But to know so must be my benefit;

So shall I clothe me in a forced content, 120

And shut myself up in some other course,

To fortune's alms.

*Des.* Alas, thrice-gentle Cassio!

My advocacy is not now in tune;

My lord is not my lord; nor should I know him,

Were he in favour as in humour alter'd.

So help me every spirit sanctified,

As I have spoken for you all my best

And stood within the blank of his displeasure

For my free speech! you must awhile be patient.

What I can do I will; and more I will 130

Than for myself I dare. Let that suffice you.

*Iago.* Is my lord angry?

*Emil.* He went hence but now,

And certainly in strange unquietness.

*Iago.* Can he be angry? I have seen the cannon,

When it hath blown his ranks into the air,

And, like the devil, from his very arm

Puff'd his own brother—and can he be angry?

Something of moment then. I will go meet him.

There's matter in 't indeed, if he be angry.



*Des.* I prithee, do so.

[*Exit* IAGO.]

Something, sure, of state, 140

Either from Venice, or some unhatch'd practice  
Made demonstrable here in Cyprus to him,  
Hath puddled his clear spirit; and in such cases  
Men's natures wrangle with inferior things,  
Though great ones are their object. 'Tis even so;  
For let our finger ache, and it indues  
Our other healthful members even to that sense  
Of pain. Nay, we must think men are not gods,  
Nor of them look for such observances  
As fit the bridal. Beshrew me much, Emilia, 150  
I was, unhandsome warrior as I am,  
Arraigning his unkindness with my soul;  
But now I find I had suborn'd the witness,  
And he's indicted falsely.

*Emil.* Pray heaven it be state-matters, as you  
think,  
And no conception nor no jealous toy  
Concerning you.

*Des.* Alas the day! I never gave him cause.

*Emil.* But jealous souls will not be answer'd so;  
They are not ever jealous for the cause, 160  
But jealous for they are jealous. 'Tis a monster  
Begot upon itself, born on itself.

*Des.* Heaven keep that monster from Othello's  
mind!

*Emil.* Lady, amen.

*Des.* I will go seek him. Cassio, walk here  
about.

If I do find him fit, I'll move your suit  
And seek to effect it to my uttermost.

*Cas.* I humbly thank your ladyship.

[*Exeunt* DESDEMONA and EMILIA.]

*Enter* BIANCA.

*Bian.* Save you, friend Cassio!

*Cas.* What make you from home?

How is it with you, my most fair Bianca? 170  
I' faith, sweet love, I was coming to your house.

*Bian.* And I was going to your lodging, Cassio.  
What, keep a week away? seven days and nights?  
Eight score eight hours? and lovers' absent hours,  
More tedious than the dial eight score times?  
O weary reckoning!

*Cas.* Pardon me, Bianca.

I have this while with leaden thoughts been  
press'd;

But I shall, in a more continue time,  
Strike off this score of absence. Sweet Bianca,

*Giving her Desdemona's handkerchief.*

Take me this work out.

*Bian.* O Cassio, whence came this? 180  
This is some token from a newer friend.  
To the felt absence now I feel a cause;  
Is't come to this? Well, well.

*Cas.*

Go to, woman!

Throw your vile guesses in the devil's teeth,  
From whence you have them. You are jealous  
now

That this is from some mistress, some remem-  
brance.

No, in good troth, Bianca.

*Bian.*

Why, whose is it?

*Cas.* I know not, sweet. I found it in my cham-  
ber.

I like the work well. Ere it be demanded—

As like enough it will—I'd have it copied. 190

Take it, and do't; and leave me for this time.

*Bian.* Leave you! wherefore?

*Cas.* I do attend here on the general;  
And think it no addition, nor my wish,  
To have him see me woman'd.

*Bian.*

Why, I pray you?

*Cas.* Not that I love you not.

*Bian.* But that you do not love me.

I pray you, bring me on the way a little,  
And say if I shall see you soon at night.

*Cas.* 'Tis but a little way that I can bring you;  
For I attend here; but I'll see you soon. 200

*Bian.* 'Tis very good; I must be circumstanced.

[*Exeunt.*]

## ACT IV

### SCENE I. Cyprus: before the castle

*Enter* OTHELLO and IAGO.

*Iago.* Will you think so?

*Oth.*

Think so, Iago!

*Iago.*

What,

To kiss in private?

*Oth.*

An unauthorized kiss.

*Iago.* Or to be naked with her friend in bed  
An hour or more, not meaning any harm?

*Oth.* Naked in bed, Iago, not mean harm!  
It is hypocrisy against the devil.

They that mean virtuously, and yet do so,  
The devil their virtue tempts, and they tempt  
heaven.

*Iago.* So they do nothing, 'tis a venial slip.

But if I give my wife a handkerchief— 10

*Oth.* What then?

*Iago.* Why, then, 'tis hers, my lord; and, being  
hers,

She may, I think, bestow't on any man.

*Oth.* She is protectress of her honour too.

May she give that?

*Iago.* Her honour is an essence that's not seen;  
They have it very oft that have it not.

But, for the handkerchief—

*Oth.* By heaven, I would most gladly have for-  
got it.

Thou said'st—O, it comes o'er my memory, 20  
As doth the raven o'er the infected house,  
Boding to all—he had my handkerchief.

*Iago.* Ay, what of that?

*Oth.* That's not so good now.

*Iago.*

What,

If I had said I had seen him do you wrong?  
Or heard him say—as knaves be such abroad,  
Who having, by their own importunate suit,  
Or voluntary dotation of some mistress,  
Convinced or supplied them, cannot choose  
But they must blab—

*Oth.* Hath he said anything?

*Iago.* He hath, my lord; but be you well  
assured,

30

No more than he'll unswear.

*Oth.* What hath he said?

*Iago.* 'Faith, that he did—I know not what he  
did.

*Oth.* What? what?

*Iago.* Lie—

*Oth.* With her?

*Iago.* With her, on her; what you will.

*Oth.* Lie with her! lie on her! We say lie on her,  
when they belie her. Lie with her! that's fulsome.  
—Handkerchief—confessions—handkerchief!—  
To confess, and be hanged for his labour—first,  
to be hanged, and then to confess.—I tremble at  
it. Nature would not invest herself in such  
shadowing passion without some instruction.  
It is not words that shake me thus. Pish! Noses,  
ears, and lips.—Is't possible?—Confess—hand-  
kerchief!—O devil! [*Falls in a trance.*]

*Iago.* Work on,

My medicine, work! Thus credulous fools are  
caught;

And many worthy and chaste dames even thus,  
All guiltless, meet reproach. What, ho! my lord!  
My lord, I say! Othello!

*Enter* CASSIO.

How now, Cassio!

*Cas.* What's the matter? 50

*Iago.* My lord is fall'n into an epilepsy.

This is his second fit; he had one yesterday.

*Cas.* Rub him about the temples.

*Iago.*

No, forbear;

The lethargy must have his quiet course;  
If not, he foams at mouth and by and by  
Breaks out to savage madness. Look, he stirs.  
Do you withdraw yourself a little while,  
He will recover straight. When he is gone,  
I would on great occasion speak with you. 59

[*Exit* CASSIO.]

How is it, general? have you not hurt your head?

*Oth.* Dost thou mock me?

*Iago.* I mock you! no, by heaven.

Would you would bear your fortune like a man!

*Oth.* A horned man's a monster and a beast.

*Iago.* There's many a beast then in a populous  
city,

And many a civil monster.

*Oth.* Did he confess it?

*Iago.* Good sir, be a man;

Think every bearded fellow that's but yoked  
May draw with you. There's millions now alive  
That nightly lie in those unproper beds

Which they dare swear peculiar; your case is  
better. 70

O, 'tis the spite of hell, the fiend's arch-mock,

To lip a wanton in a secure couch,

And to suppose her chaste! No, let me know;

And knowing what I am, I know what she shall  
be.

*Oth.* O, thou art wise; 'tis certain.

*Iago.* Stand you awhile apart;

Confine yourself but in a patient list.

Whilst you were here o'erwhelmed with your  
grief—

A passion most unsuited such a man—

Cassio came hither. I shifted him away,

And laid good 'scuse upon your ecstasy, 80

Bade him anon return and here speak with me;

The which he promised. Do but encave your-  
self,

And mark the fleers, the gibes, and notable  
scorns,

That dwell in every region of his face;

For I will make him tell the tale anew,

Where, how, how oft, how long ago, and when

He hath, and is again to cope your wife.

I say, but mark his gesture. Marry, patience;

Or I shall say you are all in all in spleen,

And nothing of a man.

*Oth.* Dost thou hear, Iago? 90

I will be found most cunning in my patience;

But—dost thou hear?—most bloody.

*Iago.*

That's not amiss;

But yet keep time in all. Will you withdraw?

[*OTHELLO retires.*]

Now will I question Cassio of Bianca,

A housewife that by selling her desires

Buys herself bread and clothes; it is a creature

That dotes on Cassio; as 'tis the strumpet's  
plague

To beguile many and be beguiled by one.

He, when he hears of her, cannot refrain 99

From the excess of laughter. Here he comes.

*Re-enter* CASSIO.

As he shall smile, Othello shall go mad;

And his unbookish jealousy must construe



Poor Cassio's smiles, gestures, and light behaviour,

Quite in the wrong. How do you now, lieutenant?

*Cas.* The worse that you give me the addition

Whose weight even kills me.

*Iago.* Ply Desdemona well, and you are sure on't.

[*Speaking lower*] Now, if this suit lay in Bianca's power,

How quickly should you speed!

*Cas.* Alas, poor caitiff!

*Oth.* Look, how he laughs already! 110

*Iago.* I never knew woman love man so.

*Cas.* Alas, poor rogue! I think, i' faith, she loves me.

*Oth.* Now he denies it faintly, and laughs it out.

*Iago.* Do you hear, Cassio?

*Oth.* Now he importunes him

To tell it o'er. Go to; well said, well said.

*Iago.* She gives it out that you shall marry her.

Do you intend it?

*Cas.* Ha, ha, ha! 120

*Oth.* Do you triumph, Roman? do you triumph?

*Cas.* I marry her! what? a customer! Prithee, bear some charity to my wit; do not think it so unwholesome. Ha, ha, ha!

*Oth.* So, so, so, so; they laugh that win.

*Iago.* 'Faith, the cry goes that you shall marry her.

*Cas.* Prithee, say true.

*Iago.* I am a very villain else.

*Oth.* Have you scored me? Well. 130

*Cas.* This is the monkey's own giving out: she is persuaded I will marry her, out of her own love and flattery, not out of my promise.

*Oth.* Iago beckons me; now he begins the story.

*Cas.* She was here even now; she haunts me in every place. I was the other day talking on the sea-bank with certain Venetians; and thither comes the bauble, and, by this hand, she falls me thus about my neck— 140

*Oth.* Crying, "O dear Cassio!" as it were; his gesture imports it.

*Cas.* So hangs, and lolls, and weeps upon me; so hailes, and pulls me. Ha, ha, ha!

*Oth.* Now he tells how she plucked him to my chamber. O, I see that nose of yours, but not that dog I shall throw it to.

*Cas.* Well, I must leave her company.

*Iago.* Before me! look, where she comes.

*Cas.* 'Tis such another fitchew! marry, a perfumed one. 151

*Enter BIANCA.*

What do you mean by this haunting of me?

*Bian.* Let the devil and his dam haunt you!

What did you mean by that same handkerchief you gave me even now? I was a fine fool to take it. I must take out the work?—A likely piece of work, that you should find it in your chamber, and not know who left it there! This is some minx's token, and I must take out the work? There; give it your hobby-horse. Wheresoever you had it, I'll take out no work on't. 161

*Cas.* How now, my sweet Bianca! how now! how now!

*Oth.* By heaven, that should be my handkerchief!

*Bian.* An you'll come to supper to-night, you may; an you will not, come when you are next prepared for. [*Exit.*]

*Iago.* After her, after her.

*Cas.* 'Faith, I must; she'll rail in the street else.

*Iago.* Will you sup there? 172

*Cas.* 'Faith, I intend so.

*Iago.* Well, I may chance to see you; for I would very fain speak with you.

*Cas.* Prithee, come; will you?

*Iago.* Go to; say no more. [*Exit Cassio.*]

*Oth.* [*Advancing*] How shall I murder him, Iago?

*Iago.* Did you perceive how he laughed at his vice? 181

*Oth.* O Iago!

*Iago.* And did you see the handkerchief?

*Oth.* Was that mine?

*Iago.* Yours, by this hand; and to see how he prizes the foolish woman your wife! she gave it him, and he hath given it his whore.

*Oth.* I would have him nine years a-killing. A fine woman! a fair woman! a sweet woman!

*Iago.* Nay, you must forget that. 190

*Oth.* Ay, let her rot, and perish, and be damned to-night; for she shall not live. No, my heart is turned to stone; I strike it, and it hurts my hand. O, the world hath not a sweeter creature! She might lie by an emperor's side and command him tasks.

*Iago.* Nay, that's not your way.

*Oth.* Hang her! I do but say what she is: so delicate with her needle; an admirable musician: O! she will sing the savageness out of a bear. Of so high and plenteous wit and invention— 201

*Iago.* She's the worse for all this.

*Oth.* O, a thousand thousand times. And then,

of so gentle a condition!

*Iago.* Ay, too gentle.

*Oth.* Nay, that's certain; but yet the pity of it, Iago! O Iago, the pity of it, Iago!

*Iago.* If you are so fond over her iniquity, give her patent to offend; for, if it touch not you, it comes near nobody. 210

*Oth.* I will chop her into messes. Cuckold me!

*Iago.* O, 'tis foul in her.

*Oth.* With mine officer!

*Iago.* That's fouler.

*Oth.* Get me some poison, Iago; this night. I'll not expostulate with her, lest her body and beauty unprovide my mind again. This night, Iago. 219

*Iago.* Do it not with poison; strangle her in her bed, even the bed she hath contaminated.

*Oth.* Good, good; the justice of it pleases; very good.

*Iago.* And for Cassio, let me be his undertaker. You shall hear more by midnight.

*Oth.* Excellent good.

*A trumpet within.*

What trumpet is that same?

*Iago.* Something from Venice, sure. 'Tis Lodovico

Come from the Duke. And, see, your wife is with him.

*Enter* LODOVICO, DESDEMONA, and Attendants.

*Lod.* Save you, worthy general!

*Oth.* With all my heart, sir.

*Lod.* The Duke and Senators of Venice greet you. [*Gives him a letter.*]

*Oth.* I kiss the instrument of their pleasures.

*Opens the letter, and reads.*

*Des.* And what's the news, good cousin Lodovico?

*Iago.* I am very glad to see you, signior; Welcome to Cyprus.

*Lod.* I thank you. How does Lieutenant Cassio?

*Iago.* Lives, sir.

*Des.* Cousin, there's fall'n between him and my lord

An unkind breach; but you shall make all well.

*Oth.* Are you sure of that?

*Des.* My lord?

*Oth.* [*Reads*] "This fail you not to do, as you will"— 240

*Lod.* He did not call; he's busy in the paper. Is there division 'twixt my lord and Cassio?

*Des.* A most unhappy one. I would do much To atone them, for the love I bear to Cassio.

*Oth.* Fire and brimstone!

*Des.* My lord?

*Oth.* Are you wise?

*Des.* What, is he angry?

*Lod.* May be the letter moved him;

For, as I think, they do command him home, Deputing Cassio in his government.

*Des.* Trust me, I am glad on't.

*Oth.* Indeed!

*Des.* My lord?

*Oth.* I am glad to see you mad.

*Des.*

Why, sweet Othello— 250

*Oth.* [*Striking her*] Devil!

*Des.* I have not deserved this.

*Lod.* My lord, this would not be believed in Venice,

Though I should swear I saw't. 'Tis very much. Make her amends; she weeps.

*Oth.* O devil, devil!

If that the earth could teem with woman's tears, Each drop she falls would prove a crocodile.

Out of my sight!

*Des.* I will not stay to offend you. [*Going.*]

*Lod.* Truly, an obedient lady.

I do beseech your lordship, call her back. 260

*Oth.* Mistress!

*Des.* My lord?

*Oth.* What would you with her, sir?

*Lod.* Who, I, my lord?

*Oth.* Ay; you did wish that I would make her turn.

Sir, she can turn, and turn, and yet go on, And turn again; and she can weep, sir, weep; And she's obedient, as you say, obedient, Very obedient. Proceed you in your tears. Concerning this, sir—O well-painted passion!— I am commanded home. Get you away; 269 I'll send for you anon. Sir, I obey the mandate, And will return to Venice. Hence, avaunt!

[*Exit* DESDEMONA.]

Cassio shall have my place. And, sir, to-night, I do entreat that we may sup together.

You are welcome, sir, to Cyprus.—Goats and monkeys! [*Exit.*]

*Lod.* Is this the noble Moor whom our full Senate

Call all in all sufficient? Is this the nature Whom passion could not shake? whose solid virtue

The shot of accident, nor dart of chance, Could neither graze nor pierce?

*Iago.* He is much changed.

*Lod.* Are his wits safe? Is he not light of brain? 280

*Iago.* He's that he is; I may not breathe my curse

What he might be. If what he might he is not, I would to heaven he were!

*Lod.* What, strike his wife!

*Iago.* 'Faith, that was not so well; yet would I knew

That stroke would prove the worst!

*Lod.* Is it his use?

Or did the letters work upon his blood And new-create this fault?

*Iago.* Alas, alas!

It is not honesty in me to speak



What I have seen and known. You shall observe  
him,  
And his own courses will denote him so 290  
That I may save my speech. Do but go after,  
And mark how he continues.  
*Lod.* I am sorry that I am deceived in him.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *A room in the castle*

*Enter OTHELLO and EMILIA.*

*Oth.* You have seen nothing then?  
*Emil.* Nor ever heard, nor ever did suspect.  
*Oth.* Yes, you have seen Cassio and she together.  
*Emil.* But then I saw no harm, and then I heard  
Each syllable that breath made up between them.  
*Oth.* What, did they never whisper?  
*Emil.* Never, my lord.  
*Oth.* Nor send you out o' the way?  
*Emil.* Never.  
*Oth.* To fetch her fan, her gloves, her mask, nor  
nothing?  
*Emil.* Never, my lord. 10  
*Oth.* That's strange.  
*Emil.* I durst, my lord, to wager she is honest,  
Lay down my soul at stake. If you think other,  
Remove your thought; it doth abuse your bosom.  
If any wretch have put this in your head,  
Let heaven requite it with the serpent's curse!  
For, if she be not honest, chaste, and true,  
There's no man happy; the purest of their  
wives  
Is foul as slander.  
*Oth.* Bid her come hither; go.

[*Exit EMILIA.*]

She says enough; yet she's a simple bawd 20  
That cannot say as much. This is a subtle whore,  
A closet lock and key of villainous secrets;  
And yet she'll kneel and pray; I have seen her  
do't.

*Enter DESDEMONA with EMILIA.*

*Des.* My lord, what is your will?  
*Oth.* Pray, chuck, come hither.  
*Des.* What is your pleasure?  
*Oth.* Let me see your eyes;  
Look in my face.  
*Des.* What horrible fancy's this?  
*Oth.* [To EMILIA] Some of your function, mis-  
tress;  
Leave procreants alone and shut the door;  
Cough, or cry "hem," if anybody come.  
Your mystery, your mystery; nay, dispatch. 30  
[*Exit EMILIA.*]  
*Des.* Upon my knees, what doth your speech  
import?

I understand a fury in your words,  
But not the words.  
*Oth.* Why, what art thou?  
*Des.* Your wife, my lord; your true  
And loyal wife.  
*Oth.* Come, swear it, damn thyself;  
Lest, being like one of heaven, the devils them-  
selves  
Should fear to seize thee; therefore be double  
damn'd.  
Swear thou art honest.  
*Des.* Heaven doth truly know it.  
*Oth.* Heaven truly knows that thou art false as  
hell.  
*Des.* To whom, my lord? with whom? how am  
I false? 40  
*Oth.* O Desdemona! away! away! away!  
*Des.* Alas the heavy day! Why do you weep?  
Am I the motive of these tears, my lord?  
If haply you my father do suspect  
An instrument of this your calling back,  
Lay not your blame on me. If you have lost him,  
Why, I have lost him too.  
*Oth.* Had it pleased heaven  
To try me with affliction; had they rain'd  
All kinds of sores and shames on my bare head,  
Steep'd me in poverty to the very lips, 50  
Given to captivity me and my utmost hopes,  
I should have found in some place of my soul  
A drop of patience; but, alas, to make me  
A fixed figure for the time of scorn  
To point his slow unmoving finger at!  
Yet could I bear that too; well, very well;  
But there, where I have garner'd up my heart,  
Where either I must live, or bear no life;  
The fountain from the which my current runs,  
Or else dries up; to be discarded thence! 60  
Or keep it as a cistern for foul toads  
To knot and gender in! Turn thy complexion  
there,  
Patience, thou young and rose-lipp'd cherubin—  
Ay, there, look grim as hell!  
*Des.* I hope my noble lord esteems me honest.  
*Oth.* O, ay; as summer flies are in the shambles,  
That quicken even with blowing. O thou weed,  
Who art so lovely fair and smell'st so sweet  
That the sense aches at thee, would thou hadst  
ne'er been born!  
*Des.* Alas, what ignorant sin have I committed? 70  
*Oth.* Was this fair paper, this most goodly book,  
Made to write "whore" upon? What committed!  
Committed! O thou public commoner!  
I should make very forges of my cheeks,  
That would to cinders burn up modesty,  
Did I but speak thy deeds. What committed!  
Heaven stops the nose at it and the moon winks,

The bawdy wind that kisses all it meets  
Is hush'd within the hollow mine of earth,  
And will not hear it. What committed! 80  
Impudent strumpet!

*Des.* By heaven, you do me wrong.

*Oth.* Are not you a strumpet?

*Des.* No, as I am a Christian.

If to preserve this vessel for my lord  
From any other foul unlawful touch

Be not to be a strumpet, I am none.

*Oth.* What, not a whore?

*Des.* No, as I shall be saved.

*Oth.* Is't possible?

*Des.* O, heaven forgive us!

*Oth.* I cry you mercy, then.

I took you for that cunning whore of Venice  
That married with Othello. [*Raising his voice*]

You, mistress, 90

That have the office opposite to Saint Peter,  
And keep the gate of hell!

*Re-enter EMILIA.*

You, you, ay, you!

We have done our course; there's money for  
your pains.

I pray you, turn the key and keep our counsel.

[*Exit.*]

*Emil.* Alas, what does this gentleman conceive?  
How do you, madam? how do you, my good  
lady?

*Des.* 'Faith, half asleep.

*Emil.* Good madam, what's the matter with my  
lord?

*Des.* With who?

*Emil.* Why, with my lord, madam. 100

*Des.* Who is thy lord?

*Emil.* He that is yours, sweet lady.

*Des.* I have none. Do not talk to me, Emilia;

I cannot weep; nor answer have I none,  
But what should go by water. Prithee, to-night  
Lay on my bed my wedding sheets, remember;  
And call thy husband hither.

*Emil.* Here's a change indeed! [*Exit.*]

*Des.* 'Tis meet I should be used so, very meet.

How have I been behaved, that he might stick  
The small'st opinion on my least misuse?

*Re-enter EMILIA with IAGO.*

*Iago.* What is your pleasure, madam? How is't  
with you? 110

*Des.* I cannot tell. Those that do teach young  
babes

Do it with gentle means and easy tasks.  
He might have chid me so; for, in good faith,  
I am a child to chiding.

*Iago.* What's the matter, lady?

*Emil.* Alas, Iago, my lord hath so bewhored  
her,

Thrown such despite and heavy terms upon her,  
As true hearts cannot bear.

*Des.* Am I that name, Iago?

*Iago.* What name, fair lady?

*Des.* Such as she says my lord did say I was.

*Emil.* He call'd her whore. A beggar in his  
drink 120

Could not have laid such terms upon his caller.

*Iago.* Why did he so?

*Des.* I do not know; I am sure I am none such.

*Iago.* Do not weep, do not weep. Alas the day!

*Emil.* Hath she forsook so many noble matches,  
Her father and her country and her friends,

To be call'd whore? would it not make one weep?

*Des.* It is my wretched fortune.

*Iago.* Beshrew him for't!

How comes this trick upon him?

*Des.* Nay, Heaven doth know.

*Emil.* I will be hang'd, if some eternal villain,  
Some busy and insinuating rogue, 131

Some cogging, cozening slave, to get some office,  
Have not devised this slander; I'll be hang'd else.

*Iago.* Fie, there is no such man; it is impossible.

*Des.* If any such there be, Heaven pardon him!

*Emil.* A halter pardon him! and hell gnaw his  
bones!

Why should he call her whore? who keeps her  
company?

What place? what time? what form? what likeli-  
hood?

The Moor's abused by some most villainous  
knave,

Some base notorious knave, some scurvy fellow.

O heaven, that such companions thou'dst unfold,

And put in every honest hand a whip

To lash the rascals naked through the world  
Even from the east to the west!

*Iago.* Speak within door.

*Emil.* O, fie upon them! Some such squire he  
was

That turn'd your wit the seamy side without,  
And made you to suspect me with the Moor.

*Iago.* You are a fool; go to.

*Des.* O good Iago,

What shall I do to win my lord again?  
Good friend, go to him; for, by this light of  
heaven, 150

I know not how I lost him. Here I kneel.

If e'er my will did trespass 'gainst his love,  
Either in discourse of thought or actual deed,

Or that mine eyes, mine ears, or any sense,

Delighted them in any other form;

Or that I do not yet, and ever did,

And ever will—though he do shake me off



To beggarly divorcement—love him dearly,  
Comfort forswear me! Unkindness may do  
much;

And his unkindness may defeat my life, 160  
But never taint my love. I cannot say "whore."  
It doth abhor me now I speak the word;  
To do the act that might the addition earn  
Not the world's mass of vanity could make  
me.

*Iago.* I pray you, be content; 'tis but his humour.

The business of the state does him offence,  
And he does chide with you.

*Des.* If 'twere no other—

*Iago.* 'Tis but so, I warrant.

*Trumpets within.*

Hark, how these instruments summon to  
supper!

The messengers of Venice stay the meat. 170  
Go in, and weep not; all things shall be well.

[*Exeunt* DESDEMONA and EMILIA.]

*Enter* RODERIGO.

How now, Roderigo!

*Rod.* I do not find that thou dealest justly with me.

*Iago.* What in the contrary?

*Rod.* Every day thou daffest me with some device, Iago; and rather, as it seems to me now, keepest from me all conveniency than suppliest me with the least advantage of hope. I will indeed no longer endure it, nor am I yet persuaded to put up in peace what already I have foolishly suffered.

*Iago.* Will you hear me, Roderigo?

*Rod.* 'Faith, I have heard too much, for your words and performances are no kin together.

*Iago.* You charge me most unjustly.

*Rod.* With nought but truth. I have wasted myself out of my means. The jewels you have had from me to deliver to Desdemona would half have corrupted a votarist. You have told me she hath received them and returned me expectations and comforts of sudden respect and acquaintance, but I find none.

*Iago.* Well; go to; very well.

*Rod.* Very well! go to! I cannot go to, man; nor 'tis not very well. Nay, I think it is scurvy, and begin to find myself fopped in it.

*Iago.* Very well.

*Rod.* I tell you 'tis not very well. I will make myself known to Desdemona. If she will return me my jewels, I will give over my suit and repent my unlawful solicitation; if not, assure yourself I will seek satisfaction of you.

*Iago.* You have said now.

*Rod.* Ay, and said nothing but what I protest intendment of doing.

*Iago.* Why, now I see there's mettle in thee, and even from this instant do build on thee a better opinion than ever before. Give me thy hand, Roderigo. Thou hast taken against me a most just exception; but yet, I protest, I have dealt most directly in thy affair.

*Rod.* It hath not appeared.

*Iago.* I grant indeed it hath not appeared, and your suspicion is not without wit and judgement. But, Roderigo, if thou hast that in thee indeed, which I have greater reason to believe now than ever, I mean purpose, courage, and valour, this night show it. If thou the next night following enjoy not Desdemona, take me from this world with treachery and devise engines for my life.

*Rod.* Well, what is it? is it within reason and compass?

*Iago.* Sir, there is especial commission come from Venice to depute Cassio in Othello's place.

*Rod.* Is that true? why, then Othello and Desdemona return again to Venice.

*Iago.* O, no; he goes into Mauritania and takes away with him the fair Desdemona, unless his abode be lingered here by some accident; wherein none can be so determinate as the removing of Cassio.

*Rod.* How do you mean, removing of him?

*Iago.* Why, by making him incapable of Othello's place; knocking out his brains.

*Rod.* And that you would have me to do?

*Iago.* Ay, if you dare do yourself a profit and a right. He sups to-night with a harlotry, and thither will I go to him; he knows not yet of his honourable fortune. If you will watch his going thence, which I will fashion to fall out between twelve and one, you may take him at your pleasure. I will be near to second your attempt, and he shall fall between us. Come, stand not amazed at it, but go along with me; I will show you such a necessity in his death that you shall think yourself bound to put it on him. It is now high suppertime, and the night grows to waste. About it. 250

*Rod.* I will hear further reason for this.

*Iago.* And you shall be satisfied. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *Another room in the castle*

*Enter* OTHELLO, LODOVICO, DESDEMONA,  
EMILIA, and Attendants.

*Lod.* I do beseech you, sir, trouble yourself no further.

*Oth.* O, pardon me; 'twill do me good to walk.

*Lod.* Madam, good night; I humbly thank your ladyship.

*Des.* Your honour is most welcome.

*Oth.* Will you walk, sir?  
*O—Desdemona—*  
*Des.* My lord?  
*Oth.* Get you to bed on the instant; I will be returned forthwith. Dismiss your attendant there. Look it be done.

*Des.* I will, my lord. 10

[*Exeunt OTHELLO, LODOVICO, and Attendants.*]

*Emil.* How goes it now? he looks gentler than he did.

*Des.* He says he will return incontinent.

He hath commanded me to go to bed,  
 And bade me to dismiss you.

*Emil.* Dismiss me!

*Des.* It was his bidding; therefore, good Emilia,  
 Give me my nightly wearing, and adieu.  
 We must not now displease him.

*Emil.* I would you had never seen him!

*Des.* So would not I. My love doth so approve him,

That even his stubbornness, his checks, his frowns— 20

Prithee, unpin me—have grace and favour in them.

*Emil.* I have laid those sheets you bade me on the bed.

*Des.* All's one. Good faith, how foolish are our minds!

If I do die before thee, prithee, shroud me  
 In one of those same sheets.

*Emil.* Come, come, you talk.

*Des.* My mother had a maid call'd Barbara;  
 She was in love, and he she loved proved mad  
 And did forsake her. She had a song of "Willow";

An old thing 'twas, but it express'd her fortune,  
 And she died singing it. That song to-night 30

Will not go from my mind; I have much to do,  
 But to go hang my head all at one side,  
 And sing it like poor Barbara. Prithee, dispatch.

*Emil.* Shall I go fetch your night-gown?

*Des.* No, unpin me here.  
 This Lodovico is a proper man.

*Emil.* A very handsome man.

*Des.* He speaks well.

*Emil.* I know a lady in Venice would have  
 walked barefoot to Palestine for a touch of his  
 nether lip. 40

*Des.* [*Singing*] "The poor soul sat sighing by a  
 sycamore tree,

Sing all a green willow;

Her hand on her bosom, her head on her knee,

Sing willow, willow, willow.

The fresh streams ran by her, and murmur'd  
 her moans;

Sing willow, willow, willow;

Her salt tears fell from her, and soften'd the  
 stones"—

Lay by these:—

[*Singing*] "Sing willow, willow, willow";  
 Prithee, hie thee; he'll come anon— 50

[*Singing*] "Sing all a green willow must be my  
 garland.

Let nobody blame him; his scorn I ap-  
 prove"—

Nay, that's not next.—Hark! who is't that  
 knocks?

*Emil.* It's the wind.

*Des.* [*Singing*] "I call'd my love false love; but  
 what said he then?

Sing willow, willow, willow.

If I court moe women, you'll couch with moe  
 men."

So, get thee gone; good night. Mine eyes do itch;  
 Doth that bode weeping?

*Emil.* 'Tis neither here nor there.

*Des.* I have heard it said so. O, these men, these  
 men! 60

Dost thou in conscience think—tell me, Emilia—  
 That there be women do abuse their husbands  
 In such gross kind?

*Emil.* There be some such, no question.

*Des.* Wouldst thou do such a deed for all the  
 world?

*Emil.* Why, would not you?

*Des.* No, by this heavenly light!

*Emil.* Nor I neither by this heavenly light;  
 I might do't as well i' the dark.

*Des.* Wouldst thou do such a deed for all the  
 world?

*Emil.* The world's a huge thing; it is a great  
 price.

For a small vice.

*Des.* In troth, I think thou wouldst not. 70

*Emil.* In troth, I think I should; and undo't  
 when I had done. Marry, I would not do such a  
 thing for a joint-ring, nor for measures of lawn,  
 nor for gowns, petticoats, nor caps, nor any  
 petty exhibition; but, for the whole world—  
 why, who would not make her husband a cuck-  
 old to make him a monarch? I should venture  
 purgatory for't.

*Des.* Beshrew me, if I would do such a wrong  
 For the whole world. 79

*Emil.* Why, the wrong is but a wrong i' the  
 world; and having the world for your labour, 'tis  
 a wrong in your own world, and you might  
 quickly make it right.

*Des.* I do not think there is any such woman.

*Emil.* Yes, a dozen; and as many to the vantage  
 as would store the world they played for.  
 But I do think it is their husbands' faults



If wives do fall. Say that they slack their duties,  
 And pour our treasures into foreign laps,  
 Or else break out in peevish jealousies, 90  
 Throwing restraint upon us; or say they strike  
 us,  
 Or scant our former having in despite;  
 Why, we have galls, and though we have some  
 grace,  
 Yet have we some revenge. Let husbands know  
 Their wives have sense like them; they see and  
 smell  
 And have their palates both for sweet and sour,  
 As husbands have. What is it that they do  
 When they change us for others? Is it sport?  
 I think it is. And doth affection breed it?  
 I think it doth. Is't frailty that thus errs? 100  
 It is so too. And have not we affections,  
 Desires for sport, and frailty, as men have?  
 Then let them use us well; else let them know,  
 The ills we do, their ills instruct us so.  
*Des.* Good night, good night. Heaven me such  
 uses send,  
 Not to pick bad from bad, but by bad mend!  
 [Exeunt.]

## ACT V

SCENE I. *Cyprus: a street*

*Enter IAGO and RODERIGO.*

*Iago.* Here, stand behind this bulk; straight will  
 he come.  
 Wear thy good rapier bare, and put it home.  
 Quick, quick; fear nothing; I'll be at thy elbow.  
 It makes us, or it mars us; think on that,  
 And fix most firm thy resolution.  
*Rod.* Be near at hand; I may miscarry in't.  
*Iago.* Here, at thy hand; be bold, and take thy  
 stand. [Retires.]  
*Rod.* I have no great devotion to the deed;  
 And yet he hath given me satisfying reasons. 9  
 'Tis but a man gone. Forth, my sword; he dies.  
*Iago.* I have rubb'd this young quat almost to the  
 sense,  
 And he grows angry. Now, whether he kill Cas-  
 sio,  
 Or Cassio him, or each do kill the other,  
 Every way makes my gain. Live Roderigo,  
 He calls me to a restitution large  
 Of gold and jewels that I bobb'd from him,  
 As gifts to Desdemona;  
 It must not be. If Cassio do remain,  
 He hath a daily beauty in his life 20  
 That makes me ugly; and, besides, the Moor  
 May unfold me to him; there stand I in much  
 peril.  
 No, he must die. But so; I hear him coming.

*Enter CASSIO.*

*Rod.* I know his gait, 'tis he.—Villain, thou  
 diest! [Makes a pass at CASSIO.]  
*Cas.* That thrust had been mine enemy indeed,  
 But that my coat is better than thou know'st.  
 I will make proof of thine.  
*Draws, and wounds* RODERIGO.  
*Rod.* O, I am slain!  
*IAGO from behind wounds CASSIO in the leg, and*  
*exit.*  
*Cas.* I am maim'd for ever. Help, ho! murder!  
 murder! [Falls.]

*Enter OTHELLO.*

*Oth.* The voice of Cassio. Iago keeps his word.  
*Rod.* O, villain that I am!  
*Oth.* It is even so.  
*Cas.* O, help, ho! light! a surgeon! 30  
*Oth.* 'Tis he. O brave Iago, honest and just,  
 That hast such noble sense of thy friend's wrong!  
 Thou teachest me. Minion, your dear lies dead,  
 And your unblest fate hies; strumpet, I come.  
 Forth of my heart those charms, thine eyes, are  
 blotted;  
 Thy bed, lust-stain'd, shall with lust's blood be  
 spotted. [Exit.]

*Enter LODOVICO and GRATIANO.*

*Cas.* What, ho! no watch? no passage? murder!  
 murder!  
*Gra.* 'Tis some mischance; the cry is very dire-  
 ful.  
*Cas.* O, help!  
*Lod.* Hark! 40  
*Rod.* O wretched villain!  
*Lod.* Two or three groan. It is a heavy night,  
 These may be counterfeits; let's think't unsafe  
 To come in to the cry without more help.  
*Rod.* Nobody come? then shall I bleed to death.  
*Lod.* Hark!

*Re-enter IAGO, with a light.*

*Gra.* Here's one comes in his shirt, with light  
 and weapons.  
*Iago.* Who's there? whose noise is this that  
 cries on murder?  
*Lod.* We do not know.  
*Iago.* Did not you hear a cry?  
*Cas.* Here, here! for heaven's sake, help me!  
*Iago.* What's the matter? 50  
*Gra.* This is Othello's ancient, as I take it.  
*Lod.* The same indeed; a very valiant fellow.  
*Iago.* What are you here that cry so grievously?  
*Cas.* Iago? O, I am spoil'd, undone by villains!  
 Give me some help.

*Iago.* O me, lieutenant! what villains have done this?

*Cas.* I think that one of them is hereabout, And cannot make away.

*Iago.* O treacherous villains! What are you there? come in, and give some help. [*To LODOVICO and GRATIANO.*]

*Rod.* O, help me here! 60

*Cas.* That's one of them.

*Iago.* O murderous slave! O villain!

*Stabs RODERIGO.*

*Rod.* O damn'd Iago! O inhuman dog!

*Iago.* Kill men i' the dark! Where be these bloody thieves?

How silent is this town! Ho! murder! murder!

What may you be? are you of good or evil?

*Lod.* As you shall prove us, praise us.

*Iago.* Signior Lodovico?

*Lod.* He, sir.

*Iago.* I cry you mercy. Here's Cassio hurt by villains.

*Gra.* Cassio! 70

*Iago.* How is't, brother!

*Cas.* My leg is cut in two.

*Iago.* Marry, heaven forbid!

Light, gentlemen. I'll bind it with my shirt.

*Enter BIANCA.*

*Bian.* What is the matter, ho? who is't that cried?

*Iago.* Who is't that cried!

*Bian.* O my dear Cassio! my sweet Cassio!

O Cassio, Cassio, Cassio!

*Iago.* O notable strumpet! Cassio, may you suspect

Who they should be that have thus mangled you?

*Cas.* No. 80

*Gra.* I am sorry to find you thus. I have been to seek you.

*Iago.* Lend me a garter. So. O, for a chair, To bear him easily hence!

*Bian.* Alas, he faints! O Cassio, Cassio, Cassio!

*Iago.* Gentlemen all, I do suspect this trash To be a party in this injury.

Patience awhile, good Cassio. Come, come;

Lend me a light. Know we this face or no?

Alas, my friend and my dear countryman Roderigo! no. Yes, sure. O heaven! Roderigo.

*Gra.* What, of Venice? 91

*Iago.* Even he, sir. Did you know him?

*Gra.* Know him! ay.

*Iago.* Signior Gratiano? I cry you gentle pardon;

These bloody accidents must excuse my manners,

That so neglected you.

*Gra.* I am glad to see you.

*Iago.* How do you, Cassio? O, a chair, a chair!

*Gra.* Roderigo!

*Iago.* He, he, 'tis he. [*A chair brought in.*]

O, that's well said; the chair.

Some good man bear him carefully from hence; I'll fetch the general's surgeon. [*To BIANCA*]

For you, mistress, 100

Save you your labour. He that lies slain here,

Cassio,

Was my dear friend. What malice was between you?

*Cas.* None in the world; nor do I know the man.

*Iago.* [*To BIANCA*] What, look you pale? O, bear him out o' the air.

[*CASSIO and RODERIGO are borne off.*]

Stay you, good gentlemen. Look you pale, mistress?

Do you perceive the gastness of her eye?

Nay, if you stare, we shall hear more anon.

Behold her well; I pray you, look upon her;

Do you see, gentlemen? nay, guiltiness will speak,

Though tongues were out of use. 110

*Enter EMILIA.*

*Emil.* 'Las, what's the matter? what's the matter, husband?

*Iago.* Cassio hath here been set on in the dark

By Roderigo and fellows that are scaped.

He's almost slain, and Roderigo dead.

*Emil.* Alas, good gentleman! alas, good Cassio!

*Iago.* This is the fruit of whoring. Prithee,

Emilia,

Go know of Cassio where he supp'd to-night.

[*To BIANCA*] What, do you shake at that?

*Bian.* He supp'd at my house; but I therefore shake not.

*Iago.* O, did he so? I charge you, go with me.

*Emil.* Fie, fie upon thee, strumpet! 121

*Bian.* I am no strumpet; but of life as honest As you that thus abuse me.

*Emil.* As I! foh! fie upon thee!

*Iago.* Kind gentlemen, let's go see poor Cassio dress'd.

Come, mistress, you must tell's another tale.

Emilia, run you to the citadel,

And tell my lord and lady what hath happ'd.

Will you go on? I pray. [*Aside*] This is the night

That either makes me or fordoes me quite.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *A bedchamber in the castle; DESDEMONA in bed asleep; a light burning*

*Enter OTHELLO.*

*Oth.* It is the cause, it is the cause, my soul—



Let me not name it to you, you chaste stars!—  
 It is the cause. Yet I'll not shed her blood;  
 Nor scar that whiter skin of hers than snow,  
 And smooth as monumental alabaster.  
 Yet she must die, else she'll betray more men.  
 Put out the light, and then put out the light.  
 If I quench thee, thou flaming minister,  
 I can again thy former light restore,  
 Should I repent me; but once put out thy light,  
 Thou cunning'st pattern of excelling nature, 11  
 I know not where is that Promethean heat  
 That can thy light relume. When I have pluck'd  
 the rose,

I cannot give it vital growth again,  
 It must needs wither. I'll smell it on the tree.

*Kissing her.*

Ah, balmy breath, that dost almost persuade  
 Justice to break her sword! One more, one more.  
 Be thus when thou art dead, and I will kill thee,  
 And love thee after. One more, and this the last;  
 So sweet was ne'er so fatal. I must weep, 20  
 But they are cruel tears. This sorrow's heavenly;  
 It strikes where it doth love. She wakes.

*Des.* Who's there? Othello?

*Oth.* Ay, Desdemona.

*Des.* Will you come to bed, my lord?

*Oth.* Have you pray'd to-night, Desdemona?

*Des.* Ay, my lord.

*Oth.* If you bethink yourself of any crime  
 Unreconciled as yet to Heaven and grace,  
 Solicit for it straight.

*Des.* Alas, my lord, what do you mean by that?

*Oth.* Well, do it, and be brief; I will walk by.

I would not kill thy unprepared spirit; 31

No; heaven forbid! I would not kill thy soul.

*Des.* Talk you of killing?

*Oth.* Ay, I do.

*Des.* Then Heaven

Have mercy on me!

*Oth.* Amen, with all my heart!

*Des.* If you say so, I hope you will not kill me.

*Oth.* Hum!

*Des.* And yet I fear you; for you are fatal then  
 When your eyes roll so. Why I should fear I  
 know not,

Since guiltiness I know not; but yet I feel I fear.

*Oth.* Think on thy sins.

*Des.* They are loves I bear to you. 40

*Oth.* Ay, and for that thou diest.

*Des.* That death's unnatural that kills for loving.

Alas, why gnaw you so your nether lip?  
 Some bloody passion shakes your very frame.

These are portents; but yet I hope, I hope,  
 They do not point on me.

*Oth.* Peace, and be still!

*Des.* I will so. What's the matter?

*Oth.* That handkerchief which I so loved and  
 gave thee

Thou gavest to Cassio.

*Des.* No, by my life and soul!

Send for the man, and ask him.

*Oth.* Sweet soul, take heed, 50

Take heed of perjury; thou art on thy death-bed.

*Des.* Ay, but not yet to die.

*Oth.* Yes, presently;

Therefore confess thee freely of thy sin;

For to deny each article with oath

Cannot remove nor choke the strong conception

That I do groan withal. Thou art to die.

*Des.* Then Lord have mercy on me!

*Oth.* I say, amen.

*Des.* And have you mercy too! I never did

Offend you in my life; never loved Cassio

But with such general warranty of heaven 60

As I might love; I never gave him token.

*Oth.* By heaven, I saw my handkerchief in's  
 hand.

O perjured woman! thou dost stone my heart,

And makest me call what I intend to do

A murder, which I thought a sacrifice.

I saw the handkerchief.

*Des.* He found it then;

I never gave it him. Send for him hither;

Let him confess a truth.

*Oth.* He hath confess'd.

*Des.* What, my lord?

*Oth.* That he hath used thee.

*Des.* How? unlawfully?

*Oth.* Ay. 70

*Des.* He will not say so.

*Oth.* No, his mouth is stopp'd;

Honest Iago hath ta'en order for't.

*Des.* O! my fear interprets. What, is he dead?

*Oth.* Had all his hairs been lives, my great re-  
 venge

Had stomach for them all.

*Des.* Alas! he is betray'd and I undone.

*Oth.* Out, strumpet! weep'st thou for him to my  
 face?

*Des.* O, banish me, my lord, but kill me not!

*Oth.* Down, strumpet!

*Des.* Kill me to-morrow; let me live to-night!

*Oth.* Nay, if you strive— 81

*Des.* But half an hour!

*Oth.* Being done, there is no pause.

*Des.* But while I say one prayer!

*Oth.* It is too late

*He stifles her.*

*Emil.* [Within] My lord, my lord! what, ho!  
 my lord, my lord!

*Oth.* What noise is this? Not dead? not yet quite  
 dead?

I that am cruel am yet merciful;  
I would not have thee linger in thy pain.

So, so.

*Emil.* [*Within*] What, ho! my lord, my lord!

*Oth.* Who's there?

*Emil.* [*Within*] O, good my lord, I would speak  
a word with you! 90

*Oth.* Yes, 'tis Emilia.—By and by.—She's  
dead.—

'Tis like she comes to speak of Cassio's death.

The noise was here. Ha! no more moving?

Still as the grave.—Shall she come in? were't  
good?—

I think she stirs again. No.—What's best to do?

If she come in, she'll sure speak to my wife.

My wife! my wife! what wife? I have no wife.

O, insupportable! O heavy hour!

Methinks it should be now a huge eclipse

Of sun and moon, and that the affrighted globe

Should yawn at alteration.

*Emil.* [*Within*] I do beseech you 101

That I may speak with you, O, good my lord!

*Oth.* I had forgot thee. O, come in, Emilia.

Soft; by and by. Let me the curtains draw.

Where art thou? [*Unlocks the door.*]

*Enter EMILIA.*

What's the matter with thee now?

*Emil.* O, my good lord, yonder's foul murders  
done!

*Oth.* What, now?

*Emil.* But now, my lord.

*Oth.* It is the very error of the moon;

She comes more nearer earth than she was wont,  
And makes men mad. 111

*Emil.* Cassio, my lord, hath kill'd a young

Venetian

Call'd Roderigo.

*Oth.* Roderigo kill'd!

And Cassio kill'd!

*Emil.* No, Cassio is not kill'd.

*Oth.* Not Cassio kill'd! then murder's out of  
tune,

And sweet revenge grows harsh.

*Des.* O, falsely, falsely murder'd!

*Emil.* Alas, what cry is that?

*Oth.* That! what?

*Emil.* Out, and alas! that was my lady's voice.

Help! help, ho! help! O lady, speak again! 120

Sweet Desdemona! O sweet mistress, speak!

*Des.* A guiltless death I die.

*Emil.* O, who hath done this deed?

*Des.* Nobody; I myself. Farewell.

Commend me to my kind lord. O, farewell!

[*Dies.*]

*Oth.* Why, how should she be murder'd?

*Emil.*

Alas, who knows?

*Oth.* You heard her say herself, it was not I.

*Emil.* She said so. I must needs report the truth.

*Oth.* She's, like a liar, gone to burning hell.

'Twas I that kill'd her.

*Emil.* O, the more angel she, 130

And you the blacker devil!

*Oth.* She turn'd to folly, and she was a whore.

*Emil.* Thou dost belie her, and thou art a devil.

*Oth.* She was false as water.

*Emil.* Thou art rash as fire to say

That she was false. O, she was heavenly true!

*Oth.* Cassio did top her; ask thy husband else.

O, I were damn'd beneath all depth in hell,

But that I did proceed upon just grounds

To this extremity. Thy husband knew it all.

*Emil.* My husband! 140

*Oth.* Thy husband.

*Emil.* That she was false to wedlock?

*Oth.* Ay, with Cassio. Nay, had she been true,

If Heaven would make me such another world

Of one entire and perfect chrysolite,

I'd not have sold her for it.

*Emil.* My husband!

*Oth.* Ay, 'twas he that told me first.

An honest man he is, and hates the slime

That sticks on filthy deeds.

*Emil.*

My husband!

*Oth.* What needs this iteration, woman? I say  
thy husband. 150

*Emil.* O mistress, villainy hath made mocks

with love!

My husband say that she was false!

*Oth.*

He, woman;

I say thy husband. Dost understand the word?

My friend, thy husband, honest, honest Iago.

*Emil.* If he say so, may his pernicious soul

Rot half a grain a day! he lies to the heart.

She was too fond of her most filthy bargain.

*Oth.* Ha!

*Emil.* Do thy worst.

This deed of thine is no more worthy heaven 160

Than thou wast worthy her.

*Oth.*

Peace, you were best.

*Emil.* Thou hast not half that power to do me  
harm

As I have to be hurt. O gull! O dolt!

As ignorant as dirt! thou hast done a deed—

I care not for thy sword; I'll make thee known,

Though I lost twenty lives.—Help! help, ho!

help!

The Moor hath kill'd my mistress! Murder!

murder!

*Enter MONTANO, GRATIANO, IAGO, and others.*

*Mom.* What is the matter? How now, general!



*Emil.* O, are you come, Iago? you have done well,  
 That men must lay their murders on your neck.  
*Gra.* What is the matter? 171  
*Emil.* Disprove this villain, if thou be'st a man.  
 He says thou told'st him that his wife was false.  
 I know thou didst not, thou'rt not such a villain.  
 Speak, for my heart is full.  
*Iago.* I told him what I thought, and told no more  
 Than what he found himself was apt and true.  
*Emil.* But did you ever tell him she was false?  
*Iago.* I did.  
*Emil.* You told a lie; an odious, damned lie;  
 Upon my soul, a lie, a wicked lie. 181  
 She false with Cassio!—did you say with Cassio?  
*Iago.* With Cassio, mistress. Go to, charm your tongue.  
*Emil.* I will not charm my tongue; I am bound to speak.  
 My mistress here lies murder'd in her bed—  
*All.* O heavens forfend!  
*Emil.* And your reports have set the murder on.  
*Oth.* Nay, stare not, masters. It is true, indeed.  
*Gra.* 'Tis a strange truth.  
*Mon.* O monstrous act!  
*Emil.* Villainy, villainy, villainy! 190  
 I think upon 't, I think, I smell 't. O villainy!  
 I thought so then. I'll kill myself for grief.  
 O villainy, villainy!  
*Iago.* What, are you mad? I charge you, get you home.  
*Emil.* Good gentlemen, let me have leave to speak;  
 'Tis proper I obey him, but not now.  
 Perchance, Iago, I will ne'er go home.  
*Oth.* O! O! O! [*He falls on the bed.*]  
*Emil.* Nay, lay thee down and roar;  
 For thou hast kill'd the sweetest innocent  
 That e'er did lift up eye.  
*Oth.* [*Rising*] O, she was foul! 200  
 I scarce did know you, uncle. There lies your niece,  
 Whose breath, indeed, these hands have newly stopp'd.  
 I know this act shows horrible and grim.  
*Gra.* Poor Desdemona! I am glad thy father's dead.  
 Thy match was mortal to him, and pure grief  
 Shore his old thread in twain. Did he live now,  
 This sight would make him do a desperate turn,  
 Yea, curse his better angel from his side,  
 And fall to reprobation.  
*Oth.* 'Tis pitiful; but yet Iago knows 210  
 That she with Cassio hath the act of shame  
 A thousand times committed; Cassio confess'd it.

And she did gratify his amorous works  
 With that recognizance and pledge of love  
 Which I first gave her; I saw it in his hand;  
 It was a handkerchief, an antique token  
 My father gave my mother.  
*Emil.* O heaven! O heavenly powers!  
*Iago.* Come, hold your peace.  
*Emil.* 'Twill out, 'twill out! I peace!  
 No, I will speak as liberal as the north. 220  
 Let heaven and men and devils, let them all,  
 All, all, cry shame against me, yet I'll speak.  
*Iago.* Be wise, and get you home.  
*Emil.* I will not.  
*IAGO offers to stab EMILIA.*  
*Gra.* Fie!  
 Your sword upon a woman?  
*Emil.* O thou dull Moor! that handkerchief thou  
 speak'st of  
 I found by fortune and did give my husband;  
 For often, with a solemn earnestness,  
 More than indeed belong'd to such a trifle,  
 He begg'd of me to steal it.  
*Iago.* Villainous whore! 229  
*Emil.* She give it Cassio! No, alas! I found it,  
 And I did give't my husband.  
*Iago.* Filth, thou liest!  
*Emil.* By heaven, I do not, I do not, gentlemen.  
 O murderous coxcomb! what should such a fool  
 Do with so good a woman?  
*Oth.* Are there no stones in heaven  
 But what serve for the thunder?—Precious villain!  
*He runs at IAGO. IAGO, from behind, stabs Emilia, and exit.*  
*Gra.* The woman falls; sure, he hath kill'd his wife.  
*Emil.* Ay, ay. O, lay me by my mistress' side.  
*Gra.* He's gone, but his wife's kill'd.  
*Mon.* 'Tis a notorious villain. Take you this  
 weapon,  
 Which I have here recover'd from the Moor. 240  
 Come, guard the door without; let him not pass,  
 But kill him rather. I'll after that same villain,  
 For 'tis a damned slave.  
*[Exeunt MONTANO and GRATIANO.]*  
*Oth.* I am not valiant neither,  
 But every puny whipster gets my sword.  
 But why should honour outlive honesty?  
 Let it go all.  
*Emil.* What did thy song bode, lady?  
 Hark, canst thou hear me? I will play the swan,  
 And die in music. [*Singing*] 'Willow, willow,  
 willow.'—  
 Moor, she was chaste; she loved thee, cruel  
 Moor;  
 So come my soul to bliss, as I speak true; 250

So speaking as I think, I die, I die. *[Dies.]*

*Oth.* I have another weapon in this chamber;

It is a sword of Spain, the ice-brook's temper.

O, here it is. Uncle, I must come forth.

*Gra.* *[Within]* If thou attempt it, it will cost thee dear.

Thou hast no weapon, and perforce must suffer.

*Oth.* Look in upon me then and speak with me,

Or, naked as I am, I will assault thee.

*Re-enter GRATIANO.*

*Gra.* What is the matter?

*Oth.* Behold, I have a weapon;

A better never did itself sustain 260

Upon a soldier's thigh. I have seen the day

That, with this little arm and this good sword,

I have made my way through more impediments

Than twenty times your stop. But, O vain boast!

Who can control his fate? 'tis not so now.

Be not afraid, though you do see me weapon'd;

Here is my journey's end, here is my butt,

And very sea-mark of my utmost sail.

Do you go back dismay'd? 'tis a lost fear;

Man but a rush against Othello's breast, 270

And he retires. Where should Othello go?

Now, how dost thou look now? O ill-starr'd

wench!

Pale as thy smock! when we shall meet at compt,

This look of thine will hurl my soul from heaven,

And fiends will snatch at it. Cold, cold, my girl!

Even like thy chastity. O cursed slave!

Whip me, ye devils,

From the possession of this heavenly sight!

Blow me about in winds! roast me in sulphur!

Wash me in steep-down gulfs of liquid fire! 280

O Desdemona! Desdemona! dead!

Oh! Oh! Oh!

*Enter LODOVICO, MONTANO, CASSIO carried in a chair, and Officers with IAGO, prisoner.*

*Lod.* Where is this rash and most unfortunate man?

*Oth.* That's he that was Othello. Here I am.

*Lod.* Where is that viper? bring the villain forth.

*Oth.* I look down towards his feet; but that's a fable.

If that thou be'st a devil, I cannot kill thee.

*Wounds IAGO.*

*Lod.* Wrench his sword from him.

*Iago.* I bleed, sir; but not kill'd.

*Oth.* I am not sorry neither. I'd have thee live;

For, in my sense, 'tis happiness to die. 290

*Lod.* O thou Othello, that wert once so good,

Fall'n in the practice of a damned slave,

What shall be said to thee?

*Oth.*

Why, anything;

An honourable murderer, if you will;

For nought I did in hate, but all in honour.

*Lod.* This wretch hath part confess'd his villainy.

Did you and he consent in Cassio's death?

*Oth.* Ay.

*Cas.* Dear general, I never gave you cause.

*Oth.* I do believe it, and I ask you pardon.

Will you, I pray, demand that demi-devil 301

Why he hath thus ensnared my soul and body?

*Iago.* Demand me nothing. What you know, you know.

From this time forth I never will speak word.

*Lod.* What, not to pray?

*Gra.* Torments will ope your lips.

*Oth.* Well, thou dost best.

*Lod.* Sir, you shall understand what hath befall'n,

Which, as I think, you know not. Here is a letter

Found in the pocket of the slain Roderigo;

And here another. The one of them imports 310

The death of Cassio to be undertook

By Roderigo.

*Oth.* O villain!

*Cas.* Most heathenish and most gross!

*Lod.* Now here's another discontented paper,

Found in his pocket too; and this, it seems,

Roderigo meant to have sent this damned villain;

And that belike Iago in the interim

Came in and satisfied him.

*Oth.* O the pernicious caitiff!

How came you, Cassio, by that handkerchief

That was my wife's?

*Cas.* I found it in my chamber; 320

And he himself confess'd but even now

That there he dropp'd it for a special purpose

Which wrought to his desire.

*Oth.* O fool! fool! fool!

*Cas.* There is besides in Roderigo's letter,

How he upbraids Iago, that he made him

Brave me upon the watch; whereon it came

That I was cast. And even but now he spake,

After long seeming dead, Iago hurt him,

Iago set him on.

*Lod.* You must forsake this room, and go with us; 330

Your power and your command is taken off,

And Cassio rules in Cyprus. For this slave,

If there be any cunning cruelty

That can torment him much and hold him long,

It shall be his. You shall close prisoner rest,

Till that the nature of your fault be known

To the Venetian state. Come, bring him away.

*Oth.* Soft you; a word or two before you go.

I have done the state some service, and they

know't.



No more of that. I pray you, in your letters,  
When you shall these unlucky deeds relate,  
Speak of me as I am; nothing extenuate,  
Nor set down aught in malice. Then must you  
speak

Of one that loved not wisely but too well;  
Of one not easily jealous, but being wrought  
Perplex'd in the extreme; of one whose hand,  
Like the base Indian, threw a pearl away  
Richer than all his tribe; of one whose subdued  
eyes,

Albeit unused to the melting mood,  
Drop tears as fast as the Arabian trees  
Their medicinal gum. Set you down this; 350  
And say besides, that in Aleppo once,  
Where a malignant and a turban'd Turk  
Beat a Venetian and traduced the state,  
I took by the throat the circumcised dog,  
And smote him, thus. [*Stabs himself.*]

*Lod.* O bloody period!

*Gra.*

All that's spoke is marr'd.

*Oth.* I kiss'd thee ere I kill'd thee. No way but  
this,

Killing myself, to die upon a kiss.

[*Falls on the bed and dies.*]

*Cas.* This did I fear, but thought he had no  
weapon; 360

For he was great of heart.

*Lod.*

[*To IAGO*] O Spartan dog,

More fell than anguish, hunger, or the sea!

Look on the tragic loading of this bed;

This is thy work. The object poisons sight;

Let it be hid. Gratiano, keep the house,

And seize upon the fortunes of the Moor,

For they succeed on you. To you, lord gover-  
nor,

Remains the censure of this hellish villain;

The time, the place, the torture. O, enforce it!

Myself will straight aboard; and to the state 370

This heavy act with heavy heart relate. [*Exeunt.*]

# 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 GLOUCESTER  
 EDGAR, *son to Gloucester*  
 EDMUND, *bastard son to Gloucester*  
 CURAN, *a courtier*  
 OLD MAN, *tenant to Gloucester*  
 A DOCTOR  
 FOOL  
 OSWALD, *steward to Goneril*  
 TWO CAPTAINS

A GENTLEMAN, *attendant on Cordelia*  
 A GENTLEMAN, *attendant on Lear*  
 A KNIGHT, *attendant on Lear*  
 A HERALD  
 THREE SERVANTS *to Cornwall*  
 TWO MESSENGERS  
 GONERIL  
 REGAN  
 CORDELIA

| *daughters to Lear*

NON-SPEAKING: *Knights of Lear's train, Captains, Soldiers, and Attendants*

SCENE: *Britain*

## ACT I

### SCENE I. *King Lear's palace*

*Enter KENT, GLOUCESTER, and EDMUND.*

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

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

*Kent.* Is not this your son, my lord?

*Glou.* His breeding, sir, hath been at my charge. I have so often blushed to acknowledge him, that now I am brazed to it.

*Kent.* I cannot conceive you.

*Glou.* Sir, this young fellow's mother could; whereupon she grew round-wombed, and had, indeed, sir, a son for her cradle ere she had a husband for her bed. Do you smell a fault?

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

*Glou.* But I have, sir, a son 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; there was good sport at his making, and the whoreson must be acknowledged. Do you know this noble gentleman, Edmund?

*Edm.* No, my lord.

*Glou.* My lord of Kent. Remember him hereafter as my honourable friend.

*Edm.* My services to your lordship.

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

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*Edm.* Sir, I shall study deserving.

*Glou.* He hath been out nine years, and away he shall again. The King is coming.

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

*Lear.* Attend the lords of France and Burgundy, Gloucester.

*Glou.* I shall, my liege.

*[Exeunt GLOUCESTER and EDMUND.]*

*Lear.* Meantime we shall express our darker purpose.

Give me the map there. Know that we have divided

In three our kingdom; and 'tis our fast intent  
 To shake all cares and business from our age; 40  
 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 Burgundy,

Great rivals in our youngest daughter's love,  
 Long in our court have made their amorous so-  
 journ,

And here are to be answer'd. Tell me, my  
 daughters—

Since now we will divest us, both of rule, 50  
 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.

*Gon.* Sir, I love you more than words can wield  
the matter;

Dearer than eye-sight, space, and liberty;

Beyond what can be valued, rich or rare;

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

As much as child e'er loved, or father found; 60

A love that makes breath poor, and speech unable;

Beyond all manner of so much I love you.

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

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

With shadowy forests and with champains rich'd,

With plenteous rivers and wide-skirted meads,

We make thee lady; to thine and Albany's issue

Be this perpetual. What says our second daughter,

Our dearest Regan, wife to Cornwall? Speak.

*Reg.* Sir, I am made 70

Of the self-same metal that my sister is,

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 pos-  
sesses;

And find I am alone felicitate

In your dear Highness' love.

*Cor.* [*Aside*] Then poor Cordelia!

And yet not so; since, I am sure, my love's

More richer than my tongue. 80

*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 the last, not least; to whose young love

The vines of France and milk of Burgundy

Strive to be interest'd; what can you say to draw

A third more opulent than your sisters? Speak.

*Cor.* Nothing, my lord.

*Lear.* Nothing! 90

*Cor.* Nothing.

*Lear.* Nothing will come of nothing. Speak  
again.

*Cor.* Unhappy that I am, I cannot heave

My heart into my mouth. I love your Majesty

According to my bond; nor more nor less.

*Lear.* How, how, Cordelia! mend your speech a  
little,

Lest it may mar your fortunes.

*Cor.* Good my lord,

You have begot me, bred me, loved me. I

Return those duties back as are right fit,

Obey you, love you, and most honour you. 100

Why have my sisters husbands, if they say  
They love you all? Haply, when I shall wed,  
That lord whose hand must take my plight shall  
carry

Half my love with him, half my care and duty.

Sure, I shall never marry like my sisters,

To love my father all.

*Lear.* But goes thy heart with this?

*Cor.* Ay, good my lord.

*Lear.* So young, and so untender?

*Cor.* So young, my lord, and true.

*Lear.* Let it be so; thy truth, then, be thy  
dower; 110

For, by the sacred radiance of the sun,

The mysteries of Hecate, and the night;

By all the operation of the orbs

From whom we do exist, and cease to be;

Here I disclaim all my paternal 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 120

Be as well neighbour'd, pitied, and relieved,

As thou my sometime daughter.

*Kent.* Good my liege—

*Lear.* Peace, Kent!

Come not between the dragon and his wrath.

I loved 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, 129

With my two daughters' dowers digest this third.

Let pride, which she calls plainness, marry her.

I do invest you jointly with my power,

Pre-eminence, and all the large effects

That troop with majesty. Ourself, by monthly  
course,

With reservation of an hundred knights,

By you to be sustain'd, shall our abode

Make with you by due turns. Only we still retain

The name, and all the additions to a king;

The sway, revenue, execution of the rest,

Beloved sons, be yours; which to confirm, 140

This coronet part betwixt you. [*Giving the crown.*]

*Kent.* Royal Lear,

Whom I have ever honour'd as my king,

Loved as my father, as my master follow'd,

As my great patron thought on in my prayers—

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

*Kent.* Let it fall rather, though the fork invade

The region of my heart: be Kent unmannerly,

When Lear is mad. What wilt 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 stoops to folly. Reverse thy doom;  
And, in thy best consideration, check  
This hideous rashness. Answer my life my judge-  
ment,

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.

*Lear.* Out of my sight!

*Kent.* See better, Lear; and let me still remain  
The true blank of thine eye. 161

*Lear.* Now, by Apollo—

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

*Lear.* O, vassal! miscreant!

*Laying his hand on his sword.*

*Alb.* } Dear sir, forbear.  
*Corn.* }

*Kent.* Do;

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

*Lear.* Hear me, recreant!

On thine allegiance, hear me!  
Since thou hast sought to make us break our vow,  
Which we durst never yet, and with strain'd  
pride

To come between our sentence and our power,  
Which nor our nature nor our place can bear,  
Our potency 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  
Upon our kingdom. If, on the tenth day follow-  
ing,

Thy banish'd trunk be found in our dominions,  
The moment is thy death. Away! by Jupiter,  
This shall not be revoked.

*Kent.* Fare thee well, king! Sith thus thou wilt  
appear,

Freedom lives hence, and banishment is here.

[*To CORDELIA*] The gods to their dear shelter  
take thee, maid,

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

[*To REGAN and GONERIL*] 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 GLOUCESTER, with FRANCE,  
BURGUNDY, and Attendants.*

*Glou.* Here's France and Burgundy, my noble  
lord. 191

*Lear.* My Lord of Burgundy,

We first address towards you, who with this  
king

Hath rivall'd for our daughter: what, in the least,  
Will you require in present dower with her,  
Or cease your quest of love?

*Bur.* Most royal Majesty,  
I carve no more than what your Highness offer'd,  
Nor will you tender less.

*Lear.* Right noble Burgundy,

When she was dear to us, we did hold her so;  
But now her price is fall'n. Sir, there she stands:  
If aught within that little seeming substance, 201  
Or all of it, with our displeasure pieced,  
And nothing more, may fitly like your Grace,  
She's there, and she is yours.

*Bur.* 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?

*Bur.* Pardon me, royal sir;

Election makes up not on such conditions.

*Lear.* Then leave her, sir; for, by the power that  
made me, 210

I tell you all her wealth. [*To FRANCE*] For you,  
great king,

I would not from your love make such a stray,  
To match you where I hate; therefore beseech  
you

To avert your liking a more worthier way  
Than on a wretch whom nature is ashamed  
Almost to acknowledge hers.

*France.*

This is most strange,  
That she, that even but now was your best ob-  
ject,

The argument of your praise, balm of your age,  
Most best, most dearest, should in this trice of  
time

Commit a thing so monstrous, to dismantle 220  
So many folds of favour. Sure, her offence  
Must be of such unnatural degree,  
That monsters it, or your fore-vouch'd affection  
Fall'n into taint; which to believe of her,  
Must be a faith that reason without miracle  
Could never plant in me.

*Cor.*

I yet beseech your Majesty—

If for 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  
It is no vicious blot, murder, or foulness, 230  
No unchaste action, or dishonour'd step,  
That hath deprived 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  
As 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 pleased me  
better.

*France.* Is it but this—a tardiness in nature  
Which often leaves the history unspoke  
That it intends to do? My Lord of Burgundy,  
What say you to the lady? Love's not love 241  
When it is mingled with regards that stand  
Aloof from the entire point. Will you have her?  
She is herself a dowry.

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

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

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

*Cor.* Peace be with Burgundy! 250  
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 loved, despised!  
Thee and thy virtues here I seize upon,  
Be it lawful I take up what's cast away.

Gods, gods! 'tis strange that from their cold'st  
neglect

My love should kindle to inflamed respect.

Thy dowerless daughter, king, thrown to my  
chance,

Is queen of us, of ours, and our fair France. 260  
Not all the dukes of waterish Burgundy  
Can buy this unprized precious maid of me.  
Bid them farewell, Cordelia, though unkind;  
Thou lovest here, a better where to find.

*Lear.* Thou hast her, France. Let her be thine;  
for we

Have no such daughter, nor shall ever see  
That face of 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. 270

*Cor.* The jewels of our father, with wash'd eyes  
Cordelia leaves you. I know you what you are;

And like a sister am most loath to call  
Your faults as they are named. Use well our  
father;

To your professed bosoms I commit him.

But yet, alas, stood I within his grace,

I would prefer him to a better place.

So, farewell to you both.

*Reg.* Prescribe not us our duties.

*Gon.*

Let your study 279

Be to content your lord, who hath received  
you

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

*Cor.* Time shall unfold what plaited cunning  
hides;

Who cover faults, at last shame them derides.

Well may you prosper!

*France.*

Come, my fair Cordelia.

[*Exeunt FRANCE and CORDELIA.*

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

*Reg.* That's most certain, and with you; next  
month with us. 290

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

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

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

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

*Gon.* There is further compliment of leave-  
taking between France and him. Pray you, let's  
hit together. If our father carry authority with  
such dispositions as he bears, this last surrender  
of his will but offend us. 310

*Reg.* We shall further think on't.

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

[*Exeunt.*

## SCENE II. *The Earl of Gloucester's castle*

*Enter EDMUND, with a letter.*

*Edm.* Thou, nature, art my goddess; to thy  
law

My services are bound. Wherefore should I  
Stand in the plague of custom, and permit  
The curiosity of nations to deprive me,

For that I am some twelve or fourteen moon-shines

Lag of a brother? Why bastard? wherefore base?

When my dimensions are as well compact,

My mind as generous, and my shape as true,

As honest madam's issue? Why brand they us

With base? with baseness? bastardy? base, base?

Who, in the lusty stealth of nature, take 11

More composition and fierce quality

Than doth, within a dull, stale, tired bed,

Go to the creating a whole tribe of fops,

Got 'tween asleep and wake? Well, then,

Legitimate Edgar, I must have your land.

Our father's love is to the bastard Edmund

As to the legitimate. Fine word, "legitimate!"

Well, my legitimate, if this letter speed,

And my invention thrive, Edmund the base 20

Shall top the legitimate. I grow; I prosper.

Now, gods, stand up for bastards!

*Enter GLOUCESTER.*

*Glou.* Kent banish'd thus! and France in choler parted!

And the King gone to-night! subscribed his power!

Confined to exhibition! All this done

Upon the gad! Edmund, how now! what news?

*Edm.* So please your lordship, none.

*Putting up the letter.*

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

*Edm.* I know no news, my lord.

*Glou.* What paper were you reading? 30

*Edm.* Nothing, my lord.

*Glou.* 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.

*Edm.* 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'er-looking. 40

*Glou.* Give me the letter, sir.

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

*Glou.* Let's see, let's see.

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

*Glou.* [*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 waked him, you should enjoy half his revenue for ever, and live the beloved of your brother, *Edgar*" Hum, conspiracy! "Sleep till I waked him, you should enjoy half his revenue." My son *Edgar*! Had he a hand to write this? a heart and brain to breed it in? When came this to you? who brought it?

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

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

*Edm.* If the matter were good, my lord, I durst swear it were his; but, in respect of that, I would fain think it were not. 70

*Glou.* It is his.

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

*Glou.* Hath he never heretofore sounded you in this business?

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

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

*Edm.* I do not well know, my lord. If it shall please you to suspend your indignation against my brother till you can derive from him better testimony of his intent, you shall run a certain course; 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.

*Glou.* Think you so?

*Edm.* If your honour judge it meet, I will place you where you shall hear us confer of this, and by an auricular assurance have your satisfaction; and that without any further delay than this very evening. 101

*Glou.* He cannot be such a monster—

*Edm.* Nor is not, sure.

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

*Edm.* I will seek him, sir, presently; convey



the business as I shall find means, and acquaint you withal. *III*

*Glou.* 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, hollow-ness, 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! 'Tis strange.

[*Exit.*]

*Edm.* This is the excellent foppery of the world, that, when we are sick in fortune—often the surfeit of our own behaviour—we make guilty of our disasters the sun, the moon, and the stars, as if we were villains by necessity, fools by heavenly compulsion, knaves, thieves, and treachers, 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. An admirable evasion of whore-master man, to lay his goatish disposition to the charge of a star! My father compounded with my mother under the dragon's tail; and my nativity was under *Ursa major*; so that it follows, I am rough and lecherous. Tut, I should have been that I am, had the maidenliest star in the firmament twinkled on my bastardizing. Edgar—

*Enter* EDGAR.

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

*Edg.* How now, brother Edmund! what serious contemplation are you in? *151*

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

*Edg.* Do you busy yourself about that?

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

*Edg.* How long have you been a sectary astronomical?

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

*Edg.* Why, the night gone by.

*Edm.* Spake you with him?

*Edg.* Ay, two hours together. *170*

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

*Edg.* None at all.

*Edm.* Bethink yourself wherein you may have offended him; and at my entreaty forbear his 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.

*Edg.* Some villain hath done me wrong. *180*

*Edm.* 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.

*Edg.* Armed, brother!

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

*Edg.* Shall I hear from you anon?

*Edm.* I do serve you in this business.

[*Exit* EDGAR.]

A credulous father! and a brother noble,  
Whose nature is so far from doing harms  
That he suspects none; on whose foolish honesty  
My practices ride easy! I see the business.

Let me, if not by birth, have lands by wit; *199*  
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.

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

*Osw.* Yes, madam.

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

He flashes into one gross crime or other,  
That sets us all at odds. I'll not endure it.

His knights grow riotous, and himself upbraids us  
On every trifle. When he returns from hunting,  
I will not speak with him; say I am sick.

If you come slack of former services,  
You shall do well; the fault of it I'll answer. *10*

*Osw.* He's coming, madam; I hear him.

*Horns within.*

*Gon.* Put on what weary negligence you please,

You and your fellows; I'd have it come to question.

If he dislike it, let him to our sister,  
Whose mind and mine, I know, in that are one,  
Not to be over-ruled. 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 used  
With checks as flatteries—when they are seen  
abused.

Remember what I tell you.

*Osw.* Well, madam.

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

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

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

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV. *A hall in the same*

*Enter KENT, disguised.*

*Kent.* If but as well I other accents borrow,  
That can my speech defuse, my good intent  
May carry through itself to that full issue  
For which I razed my likeness. Now, banish'd

*Kent,*

If thou canst serve where thou dost stand condemn'd,

So may it come, thy master, whom thou lovest,  
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.

*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 judgement;  
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. 21

*Lear.* If thou be 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. 30

*Lear.* What's that?

*Kent.* Authority.

*Lear.* What services canst thou do?

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

*Lear.* How old art thou? 39

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

*Lear.* Follow me; thou shalt serve me. If I  
like thee no worse after dinner, I will not part  
from thee yet. Dinner, ho, dinner! Where's my  
knave? my Fool? Go you, and call my Fool  
hither. [*Exit an Attendant.*]

*Enter OSWALD.*

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

*Osw.* 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.

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

*Lear.* He would not! 60

*Knight.* My lord, I know not what the matter  
is; but, to my judgement, 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 depend-  
ants as in the Duke himself also and your  
daughter.

*Lear.* Ha! sayest thou so?

*Knight.* I beseech you, pardon me, my lord, If I  
be mistaken; for my duty cannot be silent when  
I think your Highness wronged. 71

*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 pur-  
pose of unkindness. I will look further into't.  
But where's my Fool? I have not seen him this  
two days.

*Knight.* Since my young lady's going into  
France, sir, the Fool hath much pined away. 80



*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?

*Osw.* My lady's father.

*Lear.* "My lady's father"! my lord's knave!  
You whoreson dog! you slave! you cur!

*Osw.* I am none of these, my lord; I beseech  
your pardon. 91

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

*Osw.* I'll not be struck, 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.

*Giving KENT money.*

*Enter FOOL.*

*Fool.* Let me hire him too. Here's my cox-  
comb. [*Offering KENT his cap.*]

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

*Fool.* Sirrah, you were best take my coxcomb.

*Kent.* Why, Fool? 110

*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!

*Lear.* Why, my boy? 119

*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.

*Lear.* Do.

*Fool.* Mark it, nuncle: 130  
"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,  
Leave thy drink and thy whore,  
And keep in-a-door,  
And thou shalt have more  
Than two tens to a score."

140

*Kent.* This is nothing, fool.

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

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

*Fool.* [*To KENT*] Prithee, tell him, so much the  
rent of his land comes to. He will not believe a  
Fool.

*Lear.* A bitter fool! 150

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

*Lear.* No, lad; teach me.

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

To give away thy land,

Come place him here by me,

Do thou for him stand.

The sweet and bitter fool

Will presently appear;

The one in motley here, 160  
The other found out there."

*Lear.* Dost thou call me fool, boy?

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

*Kent.* This is not altogether fool, my lord.

*Fool.* No, faith, lords and great men will not  
let me; if I had a monopoly out, they would have  
part on't. And ladies too, they will not let me  
have all fool to myself; they'll be snatching.  
Give me an egg, nuncle, and I'll give thee two  
crowns. 171

*Lear.* What two crowns shall they be?

*Fool.* Why, after I have cut the egg i' the  
middle, and eat up the meat, the two crowns of  
the egg. When thou clovest thy crown i' the  
middle, and gavest away both parts, thou borest  
thy ass on thy back o'er the dirt. Thou hadst little  
wit in thy bald crown when thou gavest thy  
golden one away. If I speak like myself in this,  
let him be whipped that first finds it so. 180

[*Singing*] "Fools had ne'er less wit in a year;

For wise men are grown foppish,

They know not how their wits to wear,

Their manners are so apish."

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

*Fool.* I have used it, nuncle, ever since thou

madest thy daughters thy mother; for when thou gavest them the rod, and put'st down thine own breeches, 190  
[Singing] "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.

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. 209

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."

[Pointing to LEAR] That's a shealed peacock.

Gon. Not only, sir, this your all-licensed Fool, But other of your insolent retinue 221  
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,

Which, in the tender of a wholesome weal, 230  
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 had it head bit off by it young."

So, out went the candle, and we were left dark-  
ling.

Lear. Are you our daughter?

Gon. Come, sir. 239

I would you would make use of that good wis-  
dom,

Whereof I know you are fraught; and put away  
These dispositions, that of late transform you  
From what you rightly are.

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

Lear. Doth any here know me? This is not

Lear.

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

Either his notion weakens, his discernings  
Are lethargied—Ha! waking? 'tis not so.

Who is it that can tell me who I am? 250

Fool. Lear's shadow.

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

Fool. Which they will make an obedient father.

Lear. Your name, fair gentlewoman?

Gon. This admiration, sir, is much o' the savour  
Of other your new pranks. I do beseech you  
To understand my purposes aright. 260

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  
Make it more like a tavern or a brothel  
Than a graced palace. The shame itself doth  
speak

For instant remedy. Be then desired  
By her, that else will take the thing she begs,  
A little to disquantity your train; 270  
And the remainder, that shall still depend  
To be such men as may besort your age,  
And know themselves and you.

Lear. Darkness and devils!

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

Gon. You strike my people; and your disorder'd  
rabble

Make servants of their betters.

Enter ALBANY.

Lear. Woe, that too late repents—[To ALBANY]  
O, sir, are you come?

Is it your will? Speak, sir. Prepare my horses.  
Ingratitude, thou marble-hearted fiend, 281  
More hideous when thou show'st thee in a child  
Than the sea-monster!

Alb. Pray, sir, be patient.

Lear. [To GONERIL] 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! 289  
That, like an engine, wrench'd my frame of na-  
ture

From the fix'd place; drew from my heart all  
love,

And added to the gall. O Lear, Lear, Lear!  
Beat at this gate, that let thy folly in,

*Striking his head.*

And thy dear judgement out! Go, go, my people.

*Alb.* My lord, I am guiltless, as I am ignorant  
Of what hath moved you.

*Lear.* It may be so, my lord.

Hear, Nature, hear; dear goddess, hear!

Suspend thy purpose, if thou didst intend

To make this creature fruitful!

Into her womb convey sterility! 300

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 disnatured 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

To laughter and contempt; that she may feel

How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is 310

To have a thankless child! Away, away! *[Exit.]*

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

*Gon.* Never afflict yourself to know the cause;

But let his disposition have that scope

That dotage gives it.

*Re-enter LEAR.*

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

Within a fortnight!

*Alb.* What's the matter, sir?

*Lear.* I'll tell thee. *[To GONERIL]* Life and death!

I am ashamed

That thou hast power to shake my manhood  
thus;

That these hot tears, which break from me per-  
force, 320

Should make thee worth them. Blasts and fogs  
upon thee!

The untended 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. Yea, is it come to this?

Let it be so: yet have I left a daughter,

Who, I am sure, is kind and comfortable.

When she shall hear this of thee, with her nails  
She'll flay thy wolvisish visage. Thou shalt find  
That I'll resume the shape which thou dost  
think

I have cast off for ever. Thou shalt, I warrant  
thee.

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

*Gon.* Do you mark that, my lord?

*Alb.* I cannot be so partial, Goneril,

To the great love I bear you—

*Gon.* Pray you, content. What, Oswald, ho!

*[To the fool.]* You, sir, more knave than fool,  
after your master.

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

"A fox, when one has caught her, 340

And such a daughter,

Should sure to the slaughter,

If my cap would buy a halter.

So the Fool follows after." *[Exit.]*

*Gon.* This man hath had good counsel; a hun-  
dred knights!

'Tis 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!

*Alb.* Well, you may fear too far.

*Gon.* Safer than trust too far. 351

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—

*Re-enter OSWALD.*

How now, Oswald!

What, have you writ that letter to my sister?

*Osw.* Yes, madam.

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

Inform her full of my particular fear; 360

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 attack'd for want of wisdom

Than praised for harmful mildness.

*Alb.* How far your eyes may pierce I cannot  
tell.

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

*Gon.* Nay, then— 370

*Alb.* Well, well; the event.

*[Exeunt.]*

SCENE V. *Court before the same**Enter LEAR, KENT, and FOOL.*

*Lear.* Go you before to Gloucester with these letters. Acquaint my daughter no further with anything 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. 10

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

*Lear.* Ha, ha, ha!

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

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

*Fool.* She will taste as like this as a crab does to a crab. Thou canst tell why one's nose stands i' the middle on's face? 20

*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.

*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. 30

*Lear.* Why?

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

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

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

*Lear.* Because they are not eight? 40

*Fool.* Yes, indeed. Thou wouldst make a good fool.

*Lear.* To take 't again perforce! Monster ingratitute!

*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.

*Lear.* O, let me not be mad, not mad, sweet heaven! 50

Keep me in temper. I would not be mad!

*Enter GENTLEMAN.*

How now! are the horses ready?

*Gent.* Ready, my lord.

*Lear.* Come, boy.

*Fool.* She that's a maid now, and laughs at my departure,

Shall not be a maid long, unless things be cut shorter. *[Exeunt.]*

## ACT II

SCENE I. *The Earl of Gloucester's castle*

*Enter EDMUND, and CURAN meets him.*

*Edm.* Save thee, Curan.

*Cur.* 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.

*Edm.* How comes that?

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

*Edm.* Not I. Pray you, what are they? 10

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

*Edm.* Not a word.

*Cur.* You may do, then, in time. Fare you well, sir. *[Exit.]*

*Edm.* The Duke be here to-night? The better! best!

This weaves itself perforce into my business.

My father hath set guard to take my brother;

And I have one thing, of a queasy question, Which I must act. Briefness and fortune, work!

Brother, a word; descend, Brother, I say! 21

*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.

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

*Edm.* I hear my father coming. Pardon me; In cunning I must draw my sword upon you: 31 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 Wounds his arm.



Of my more fierce endeavour. I have seen drunkards

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

*Enter GLOUCESTER, and Servants with torches.*

*Glou.* Now, Edmund, where's the villain?

*Edm.* Here stood he in the dark, his sharp sword  
out, 40

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

*Glou.* But where is he?

*Edm.* Look, sir, I bleed.

*Glou.* Where is the villain, Edmund?

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

*Glou.* Pursue him, ho! Go after. [*Exeunt some  
Servants.*] By no means what?

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

But that I told him, the revenging gods  
'Gainst parricides did all their thunders bend;  
Spoke, with how manifold and strong a bond

The child was bound to the father; sir, in fine, 50  
Seeing how loathly opposite I stood

To his unnatural purpose, in fell motion,  
With his prepared sword, he charges home

My unprovided body, lanced mine arm.

But when he saw my best alarum'd spirits,

Bold in the quarrel's right, roused to the encoun-  
ter,

Or whether gasted by the noise I made,  
Full suddenly he fled.

*Glou.* Let him fly far.

Not in this land shall he remain uncaught;

And found—dispatch. The noble Duke my mas-  
ter,

My worthy arch and patron, comes to-night. 61  
By his authority I will proclaim it,

That he which finds him shall deserve our  
thanks,

Bringing the murderous coward to the stake;  
He that conceals him, death.

*Edm.* 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 71

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."

*Glou.* Strong and fasten'd villain!

Would he deny his letter? I never got him. 80

*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 pic-  
ture

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.*

*Corn.* How now, my noble friend! since I came  
hither,

Which I can call but now, I have heard strange  
news.

*Reg.* If it be true, all vengeance comes too short  
Which can pursue the offender. How dost, my  
lord? 91

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

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

He whom my father named? your Edgar?

*Glou.* O, lady, lady, shame would have it hid!

*Reg.* Was he not companion with the riotous  
knights

That tend upon my father?

*Glou.* I know not, madam. 'Tis too bad, too bad.

*Edm.* Yes, madam, he was of that consort.

*Reg.* No marvel, then, though he were ill af-  
fected. 100

'Tis they have put him on the old man's death,

To have the expense and waste of his revenues.

I have this present evening from my sister

Been well inform'd of them; and with such cau-  
tions,

That if they come to sojourn at my house,  
I'll not be there.

*Corn.* Nor I, assure thee, Regan.

Edmund, I hear that you have shown your father  
A child-like office.

*Edm.* 'Twas my duty, sir.

*Glou.* He did bewray his practice; and received  
This hurt you see, striving to apprehend him. 110

*Corn.* Is he pursued?

*Glou.* Ay, my good lord.

*Corn.* If he be taken, he shall never more

Be fear'd of doing harm. Make your own pur-  
pose,

How in my strength you please. For you, Ed-  
mund,

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

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

*Glou.* For him I thank your Grace.

*Corn.* You know not why we came to visit  
you— 120

*Reg.* Thus out of season, threading dark-eyed  
night.

Occasions, noble Gloucester, of some poise,  
Wherein we must have use of your advice.  
Our father he hath writ, so hath our sister,  
Of differences, which I least thought it fit  
To answer from our home; the several messen-  
gers

From hence attend dispatch. Our good old  
friend,

Lay comforts to your bosom; and bestow  
Your needful counsel to our business,  
Which craves the instant use.

*Glou.* I serve you, madam. 130  
Your Graces are right welcome. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *Before Gloucester's castle*

*Enter KENT and OSWALD, severally.*

*Osw.* Good dawning to thee, friend. Art of this  
house?

*Kent.* Ay.

*Osw.* Where may we set our horses?

*Kent.* I' the mire.

*Osw.* Prithee, if thou lovest me, tell me.

*Kent.* I love thee not.

*Osw.* Why, then, I care not for thee.

*Kent.* If I had thee in Lipsbury pinfold, I would  
make thee care for me. 10

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

*Kent.* Fellow, I know thee.

*Osw.* 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 knave, a  
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, beg-  
gar, coward, pandar, and the son and heir of a  
mongrel bitch; one whom I will beat into clam-  
orous whining, if thou deniest the least syllable  
of thy addition.

*Osw.* Why, what a monstrous fellow art thou,  
thus to rail on one that is neither known of thee  
nor knows thee! 29

*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 moon-  
shine of you. Draw, you whoreson cullionly  
barber-monger, draw.

*Drawing his sword.*

*Osw.* Away! I have nothing to do with thee.

*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.

*Osw.* Help, ho! murder! help!

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

*Osw.* Help, ho! murder! murder!

*Enter EDMUND, with his rapier drawn, CORNWALL,  
REGAN, GLOUCESTER, and Servants.*

*Edm.* How now! What's the matter?

*Kent.* With you, Goodman boy, an you please.  
Come, I'll flesh ye; come on, young master.

*Glou.* Weapons! arms! What's the matter here?

*Corn.* Keep peace, upon your lives; 52

He dies that strikes again. What is the matter?

*Reg.* The messengers from our sister and the  
King.

*Corn.* What is your difference? speak.

*Osw.* 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. 60

*Corn.* Thou art a strange fellow. A tailor make  
a man?

*Kent.* Ay, a tailor, sir. A stone-cutter or a paint-  
er could not have made him so ill, though he had  
been but two hours at the trade.

*Corn.* Speak yet, how grew your quarrel?

*Osw.* This ancient ruffian, sir, whose life I have  
spared at suit of his gray beard—

*Kent.* Thou whoreson zed! thou unnecessary  
letter! My lord, if you will give me leave, I will  
tread this unbolted villain into mortar, and daub  
the walls of a jakes with him. Spare my gray  
beard, you wagtail?

*Corn.* Peace, sirrah!

You beastly knave, know you no reverence?

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

*Corn.* Why art thou angry?

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

Who wears no honesty. Such smiling rogues as  
these,

Like rats, oft bite the holy cords a-twain 80



Which are too intrinse t' unloose; smoothe every passion

That in the natures of their lords rebel;  
Bring oil to fire, snow to their 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. 90

*Corn.* What, art thou mad, old fellow?

*Glou.* How fell you out? say that.

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

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

*Kent.* His countenance likes me not.

*Corn.* No more, perchance, does mine, nor his,  
nor hers.

*Kent.* Sir, 'tis my occupation to be plain.

I have seen better faces in my time  
Than stands on any shoulder that I see 100  
Before me at this instant.

*Corn.* This is some fellow,  
Who, having been praised 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 plain-  
ness

Harbour more craft and more corrupter ends  
Than twenty silly ducking observants  
That stretch their duties nicely. 110

*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—

*Corn.* What mean'st by this?

*Kent.* To go out of my dialect, which you dis-  
commend 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.

*Corn.* What was the offence you gave him? 121

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

And, in the fleshment of this dread exploit, 130  
Drew on me here again.

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

*Corn.* Fetch forth the stocks!  
You stubborn ancient knave, you reverend brag-  
gart,

We'll teach you—

*Kent.* Sir, I am too old to learn.  
Call not your stocks for me. I serve the King;

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.

*Corn.* Fetch forth the stocks! As I have life and  
honour, 140

There shall he sit till noon.

*Reg.* 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.

*Reg.* Sir, being his knave, I will.

*Corn.* This is a fellow of the self-same colour  
Our sister speaks of. Come, bring away the  
stocks!

*Stocks brought out.*

*Glou.* 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 purposed low correc-  
tion

Is such as basest and contemned'st wretches 150  
For pilferings and most common trespasses  
Are punish'd with. The King must take it ill  
That he's so slightly valued in his messenger,  
Should have him thus restrain'd.

*Corn.* I'll answer that.

*Reg.* My sister may receive it much more  
worse,

To have her gentleman abused, assaulted,  
For following her affairs. Put in his legs.

*KENT is put in the stocks.*

Come, my good lord, away.

[*Exeunt all but GLOUCESTER and KENT.*]

*Glou.* I am sorry for thee, friend; 'tis the Duke's  
pleasure,

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

*Kent.* Pray, do not, sir. I have watched and  
travell'd hard;

Some time I shall sleep out, the rest I'll whistle.

A good man's fortune may grow out at heels.

Give you good morrow!

*Glou.* The Duke's to blame in this; 'twill 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 'tis from Cordelia,  
 Who hath most fortunately been inform'd  
 Of my obscured course; and [*reads*] "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.* 180

SCENE III. *A wood**Enter EDGAR.*

*Edg.* I heard myself proclaim'd;  
 And by the happy hollow of a tree  
 Escaped 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; 10  
 And with presented nakedness out-face  
 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 Gloucester's castle.* KENT  
*in the stocks**Enter LEAR, FOOL, and GENTLEMAN.*

*Lear.* 'Tis strange that they should so depart  
 from home,  
 And not send back my messenger.  
*Gent.* As I learn'd,  
 The night before there was no purpose in them  
 Of this remove.

*Kent.* Hail to thee, noble master!  
*Lear.* Ha!  
 Makest 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. 11  
*Lear.* What's he that hath so much thy place  
 mistook  
 To set thee here?  
*Kent.* It is both he and she;  
 Your son and daughter.  
*Lear.* No.  
*Kent.* Yes.  
*Lear.* No, I say.  
*Kent.* I say, yea.  
*Lear.* No, no, they would not.  
*Kent.* Yes, they have. 20  
*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; 'tis 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,  
 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, 30  
 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;  
 Commanded me to follow and attend  
 The leisure of their answer; gave me cold looks;  
 And meeting here the other messenger,  
 Whose welcome, I perceived, had poison'd  
 mine—  
 Being the very fellow that of late 40  
 Display'd so saucily against your Highness—  
 Having more man than wit about me, drew.  
 He raised the house with loud and coward cries.  
 Your son and daughter found this trespass worth  
 The shame which here it suffers.

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

"Fathers that wear rags  
 Do make their children blind;  
 But fathers that bear bags



Shall see their children kind.

Fortune, that arrant whore,

Ne'er turns the key to the poor."

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?

*Kent.* With the Earl, sir, here within.

*Lear.* Follow me not;  
Stay here. [Exit. 60

*Gent.* Made you no more offence but what you  
speak of?

*Kent.* None.

How chance the King comes with so small a  
train?

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

*Kent.* Why, fool?

*Fool.* We'll set thee to school to an ant, to teach  
thee there's no labouring 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 up the hill, let him draw thee after. When a  
wise man gives thee better counsel, give me mine  
again. I would have none but knaves follow it,  
since a fool gives it.

"That sir which serves and seeks for gain,  
And follows but for form, 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 GLOUCESTER.*

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

They have travell'd all the night? Mere  
fetches;

The images of revolt and flying off. 91  
Fetch me a better answer.

*Glou.* 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, Gloucester, Glou-  
cester,

I'd speak with the Duke of Cornwall and his  
wife.

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

*Lear.* Inform'd them! Dost thou understand me,  
man? 100

*Glou.* Ay, my good lord.

*Lear.* The King would speak with Cornwall;  
the dear father

Would with his daughter speak, commands her  
service.

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

"Fiery"? the fiery Duke? Tell the hot Duke  
that—

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

Infirmity doth still neglect all office

Whereto our health is bound; we are not our-  
selves

When nature, being oppress'd, commands the  
mind

To suffer with the body. I'll forbear; 110

And am fall'n out with my more headier will,

To take the indisposed and sickly fit

For the sound man. Death on my state! where-  
fore [Looking on KENT]

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,

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. 120

*Glou.* 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!" 'Twas her  
brother that, in pure kindness to his horse, but-  
tered his hay.

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

*Lear.* Good morrow to you both.

*Corn.* Hail to your Grace!

KENT is set at liberty.

*Reg.* I am glad to see your Highness. 130

*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.

*Points to his heart.*

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

Reg. I pray you, sir, take patience. I have hope  
You less know how to value her desert 141  
Than she to scant her duty.

Lear. Say, how is that?

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

Lear. My curses on her!

Reg. O, sir, you are old;  
Nature in you stands on the very verge  
Of her confine. You should be ruled and led 150  
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 he: forgiveness?  
Do you but mark how this becomes the house:  
"Dear daughter, I confess that I am old;

*Kneeling.*

Age is unnecessary. On my knees I beg  
That you'll vouchsafe me raiment, bed, and  
food."

Reg. Good sir, no more; these are unsightly  
tricks.

Return you to my sister.

Lear. [*Rising*] Never, Regan. 160  
She hath abated me of half my train;  
Look'd black upon me; struck me with her  
tongue,

Most serpent-like, upon the very heart.  
All the stored vengeance of heaven fall  
On her ingrateful top! Strike her young bones,  
You taking airs, with lameness!

Corn. 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! 170

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

Lear. No, Regan, thou shalt never have my  
course.

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

Do comfort and not burn. 'Tis not in thee  
To grudge my pleasures, to cut off my train,

To bandy hasty words, to scant my sizes,  
And in conclusion to oppose the bolt  
Against my coming in. Thou better know'st 180  
The offices of nature, bond of childhood,  
Effects of courtesy, dues of gratitude;  
Thy half o' the kingdom hast thou not forgot,  
Wherein I thee endow'd.

Reg. Good sir, to the purpose.

Lear. Who put my man i' the stocks?

*Tucket within.*

Corn.

What trumpet's that?

Reg. 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.  
Out, varlet, from my sight!

Corn. What means your Grace? 190

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

*Enter GONERIL.*

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!

[*To GONERIL*] Art not ashamed to look upon this  
beard?

O Regan, wilt thou take her by the hand?

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

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

Lear. O sides, you are too tough; 200  
Will you yet hold? How came my man i' the  
stocks?

Corn. I set him there, sir; but his own disorders  
Deserved much less advancement.

Lear. You! did you?

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

Lear. Return to her, and fifty men dismiss'd?  
No, rather I abjure all roofs, and choose 211  
To wage against the enmity o' the air;  
To be a comrade with the wolf and owl—  
Necessity's sharp pinch! Return with her?



Why, the hot-blooded France, that dowerless  
took

Our youngest born, I could as well be brought  
To knee his throne, and, squire-like, pension beg  
To keep base life afoot. Return with her?  
Persuade me rather to be slave and sumpter  
To this detested groom. [*Pointing at OSWALD.*]

*Gon.* At your choice, sir. 220

*Lear.* I prithee, daughter, do not make me mad.  
I will not trouble thee, my child; farewell.  
We'll no more meet, no more see one another.  
But yet thou art my flesh, my blood, my daugh-  
ter;

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, 230

Nor tell tales of thee to high-judging Jove.  
Mend when thou canst; be better at thy leisure.  
I can be patient; I can stay with Regan,  
I and my hundred knights.

*Reg.* Not altogether so.  
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?

*Reg.* I dare avouch it, sir. What, fifty follow-  
ers? 240

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? 'Tis hard; almost impossible.

*Gon.* Why might not you, my lord, receive  
attendance

From those that she calls servants or from mine?

*Reg.* Why not, my lord? If then they chanced  
to slack you,

We could control them. If you will come to  
me—

For now I spy a danger—I entreat you 250  
To bring but five and twenty. To no more  
Will I give place or notice.

*Lear.* I gave you all—

*Reg.* And in good time you gave it.

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

*Reg.* And speak'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 260

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.

*Gon.*

Hear me, my lord.

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

*Reg.*

What need one?

*Lear.* O, reason not the need. Our basest beg-  
gars

Are in the poorest thing superfluous.

Allow not nature more than nature needs,

Man's life's as cheap as beast's. Thou art a  
lady;

If only to go warm were gorgeous, 271

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

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

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

You see me here, you gods, a poor old man,  
As full of grief as age; wretched in both!

If it be you that 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, 280

Stain my man's cheeks! No, you unnatural hags,

I will have such revenges on you both,

That all the world shall—I will do such things—  
What they are, yet I know not; but they shall be

The terrors of the earth. You think I'll weep;

No, I'll not weep.

I have full cause of weeping; but this heart

Shall break into a hundred thousand flaws,

Or ere I'll weep. O Fool, I shall go mad!

[*Exeunt LEAR, GLOUCESTER, KENT, and FOOL.*]

*Storm and tempest.*

*Corn.* Let us withdraw; 'twill be a storm. 290

*Reg.* This house is little. The old man and his  
people

Cannot be well bestow'd.

*Gon.* 'Tis his own blame; hath put himself from  
rest,

And must needs taste his folly.

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

*Gon.*

So am I purposed.

Where is my lord of Gloucester?

*Corn.* Follow'd the old man forth. He is re-  
turn'd.

*Re-enter GLOUCESTER.*

*Glou.* The King is in high rage.

*Corn.* Whither is he going?

*Glou.* He calls to horse; but will I know not  
whither. 300

*Corn.* 'Tis best to give him way; he leads himself.

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

*Glou.* Alack, the night comes on, and the bleak  
winds

Do sorely ruffle; for many miles about

There's scarce a bush.

*Reg.* O, sir, to wilful men,  
The injuries that they themselves procure  
Must be their schoolmasters. Shut up your doors.  
He is attended with a desperate train;

And what they may incense him to, being apt  
To have his ear abused, wisdom bids fear. 310

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

My Regan counsels well. Come out o' the storm.  
[*Exeunt.*]

### ACT III

#### SCENE I. *A heath*

*Storm still. Enter KENT and a GENTLEMAN,  
meeting.*

*Kent.* Who's there, besides foul weather?

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

*Kent.* I know you. Where's the King?

*Gent.* Contending with the fretful element;

Bids the wind blow the earth into the sea,  
Or swell the curled waters 'bove the main,  
That things might change or cease; tears his  
white hair,

Which the impetuous blasts, with eyeless  
rage,

Catch in their fury, and make nothing of;  
Strives in his little world of man to out-scorn 10

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?

*Gent.* None but the Fool; who labours to out-  
jest

His heart-struck injuries.

*Kent.* Sir, I do know you;  
And dare, upon the warrant of my note,  
Commend a dear thing to you. There is division,  
Although as yet the face of it be cover'd 20

With mutual cunning, 'twixt Albany and Corn-  
wall;

Who have—as who have not, that their great  
stars

Throned 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, 31  
Wise in our negligence, have secret feet  
In some of our best ports, and are at point  
To show their open banner. Now to you.

If on my credit you dare build so far  
To make your speed to Dover, you shall find  
Some that will thank you, making just report  
Of how unnatural and bemadding sorrow  
The King hath cause to plain.

I am a gentleman of blood and breeding; 40  
And, from some knowledge and assurance, offer  
This office to you.

*Gent.* I will talk further with you.

*Kent.* No, do not.

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

I will go seek the King. 50

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

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

That, when we have found the King—in which  
your pain

That way, I'll this—he that first lights on him  
Holla the other. [*Exeunt severally.*]

#### SCENE II. *Another part of the heath. Storm still*

*Enter LEAR and FOOL.*

*Lear.* Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks! rage!  
blow!

You cataracts and hurricanes, spout  
Till you have drench'd our steeples, drown'd the  
cocks!

You sulphurous and thought-executing fires,  
Vaunt-couriers to oak-cleaving thunderbolts,  
Singe my white head! And thou, all-shaking  
thunder,

Smite 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, and ask thy daughters' blessing. Here's a night pities neither wise man nor fool.

*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 despised old man: 20

But yet I call you servile ministers,

That have with two pernicious daughters join'd

Your high engender'd battles 'gainst a head

So old and white as this. O! O! 'tis foul!

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

"The cod-piece that will house

Before the head has any,

The he d and he shall louse;

So beggars marry many. 30

The man that makes his toe

What he his heart should make

Shall of a corn cry woe,

And turn his sleep to wake."

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

*Lear.* No, I will be the pattern of all patience;

I will say nothing.

*Enter KENT.*

*Kent.* Who's there?

*Fool.* Marry, here's grace and a cod-piece; that's a wise man and a fool. 41

*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.

*Lear.* Let the great gods,

That keep this dreadful pother o'er our heads, 50

Find out their enemies now. Tremble, thou

wretch,

That hast within thee undivulged crimes,

Unwhipp'd of justice. Hide thee, thou bloody

hand;

Thou perjured, and thou simular man of virtue

That art incestuous. Caitiff, to pieces shake,

That under covert and convenient seeming  
Hast practised 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.

*Kent.* Alack, bare-headed! 60

Gracious my lord, hard by here is a hovel;

Some friendship will it lend you 'gainst the temp-  
est.

Repose you there; while I to this hard house—

More harder than the stones whereof 'tis raised;

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 fel-  
low?

The art of our necessities is strange, 70

That can make vile things precious. Come, your  
hovel.

Poor fool and knave, I have one part in my heart

That's sorry yet for thee.

*Fool.* [*Singing*] "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, my good boy. Come, bring us to

this hovel. [*Exeunt LEAR and KENT.*]

*Fool.* This is a brave night to cool a courtesan.

I'll speak a prophecy ere I go: 80

When priests are more in word than matter;

When brewers mar their malt with water;

When nobles are their tailors' tutors;

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;

When usurers tell their gold i' the field;

And bawds and whores do churches build; 90

Then shall the realm of Albion

Come to great confusion.

Then comes the time, who lives to see't,

That going shall be used with feet.

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

SCENE III. Gloucester's castle

*Enter GLOUCESTER and EDMUND.*

*Glou.* Alack, alack, Edmund, I like not this un-  
natural dealing. When I desired their leave that I  
might pity him, they took from me the use of

mine own house; charged me, on pain of their perpetual displeasure, neither to speak of him, entreat for him, nor any way sustain him.

*Edm.* Most savage and unnatural!

*Glou.* Go to; say you nothing. There's a division betwixt the Dukes; and a worse matter than that. I have received a letter this night; 'tis dangerous to be spoken; I have locked the letter in my closet. These injuries the King now bears will be revenged home; there's part of a power already footed. We must incline to the King. I will seek him, and privily relieve him. Go you and maintain talk with the Duke, that my charity be not of him perceived. If he ask for me, I am ill and gone to bed. Though I die for it, as no less is threatened me, the King my old master must be relieved. There is some strange thing toward, Edmund; pray you, be careful. [*Exit.* 21

*Edm.* This courtesy, forbid thee, shall the Duke instantly know; and of that letter too.

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

SCENE IV. *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 'tis much that this contentious storm

Invades us to the skin. So 'tis to thee;  
But where the greater malady is fix'd,  
The lesser is scarce felt. Thou'dst shun a bear;  
But if thy flight lay toward the raging sea, 10  
Thou'dst meet the bear i' the mouth. When the mind's free,

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

O, that way madness lies; let me shun that; 21  
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.  
[*To the FOOL.*] 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, 29  
How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides,

Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you

From reasons 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.

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

*The FOOL runs out from the hovel.*

*Fool.* Come not in here, nuncle, here's a spirit.  
Help me, help me! 40

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

*Fool.* A spirit, a spirit. He says his name's poor Tom.

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

*Enter EDGAR disguised as a madman.*

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

Hum! go to thy cold bed and warm thee.

*Lear.* Hast thou given all to thy two daughters?  
And art thou come to this? 50

*Edg.* Who gives anything 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? Didst thou give them all?



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

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

Hang fated o'er men's faults light on thy daughters! 70

*Kent.* He hath no daughters, sir.

*Lear.* Death, traitor! nothing could have subdued nature

To such a lowness but his unkind daughters.

Is it the fashion, that discarded fathers

Should have thus little mercy on their flesh?

Judicious punishment! 'twas this flesh begot

Those pelican daughters.

*Edg.* "Pillcock sat on Pillcock-hill."

Halloo, halloo, loo, loo!

*Fool.* This cold night will turn us all to fools and madmen. 81

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

*Lear.* What hast thou been?

*Edg.* A serving-man, proud in heart and mind; that curled my hair; wore gloves in my cap; served the lust of my mistress' heart, and did the act of darkness with her; 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 the creaking of shoes nor the rustling of silks betray thy poor heart to woman. Keep thy foot out of brothels, thy hand out of plackets, thy pen from lenders' books, and defy the foul fiend. 101

Still through the hawthorn blows the cold wind:

Says sum, mun, ha, no, nonny.

Dolphin my boy, my boy, sessa! let him trot by.

*Storm still.*

*Lear.* Why, thou wert better in thy grave than to answer with thy uncovered body this extremity of the skies. Is man no more than this? Consider him well. Thou owest the worm no silk, the beast no hide, the sheep no wool, the cat no perfume. Ha! here's three 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. [*Tearing off his clothes.*]

*Fool.* Prithee, nuncle, be contented; 'tis a naughty night to swim in. Now a little fire in a wild field were like an old lecher's heart; a small

spark, all the rest on 's body cold. Look, here comes a walking fire. 119

*Enter GLOUCESTER, with a torch.*

*Edg.* This is the foul fiend Flibbertigibbet. He begins at curfew, and walks till the 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.

"St. Withold footed thrice the old;

He met the night-mare, and her nine-fold;

Bid her alight,

And her troth plight,

And, aroint thee, witch, aroint thee!"

*Kent.* How fares your Grace? 130

*Lear.* What's he?

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

*Glou.* What are you there? Your names?

*Edg.* 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 stock-punished, and imprisoned; who hath had three suits to his back, six shirts to his body, horse to ride, and weapon to wear;

But mice and rats, and such small deer,

Have been Tom's food for seven long year.

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

*Glou.* What, hath your Grace no better company?

*Edg.* The prince of darkness is a gentleman.

Modo he's call'd, and Mahu.

*Glou.* Our flesh and blood is grown so vile, my lord, 150

That it doth hate what gets it.

*Edg.* Poor Tom 's a-cold.

*Glou.* 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 fire and food is ready.

*Lear.* First let me talk with this philosopher.

What is the cause of thunder? 160

*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?

*Edg.* 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.

*Glou.* Canst thou blame him?

*Storm still.*

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

He said it would be thus, poor banish'd man!  
Thou say'st the King grows mad; I'll tell thee,  
friend, 170

I am almost mad myself. I had a son,  
Now outlaw'd from my blood; he sought my life,  
But lately, very late. I loved him, friend;  
No father his son dearer. Truth to tell thee,  
The grief hath crazed my wits. What a night's  
this!

I do beseech your Grace—

*Lear.* O, cry you mercy, sir.

Noble philosopher, your company.

*Edg.* Tom's a-cold.

*Glou.* In, fellow, there, into the hovel. Keep  
there warm.

*Lear.* Come, let's in all.

*Kent.* This way, my lord.

*Lear.* With him; 180

I will keep still with my philosopher.

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

*Glou.* Take him you on.

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

*Lear.* Come, good Athenian.

*Glou.* No words, no words; hush.

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

[*Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE V. Gloucester's castle

*Enter CORNWALL and EDMUND.*

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

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

*Corn.* I now perceive, it was not altogether  
your brother's evil disposition made him seek his  
death; but a provoking merit, set a-work by a  
reprovable badness in himself. 9

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

*Corn.* Go with me to the Duchess.

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

*Corn.* True or false, it hath made thee Earl of

Gloucester. Seek out where thy father is, that  
he may be ready for our apprehension. 20

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

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

#### SCENE VI. A chamber in a farmhouse adjoining the castle

*Enter GLOUCESTER, LEAR, KENT, FOOL, and EDGAR.*

*Glou.* 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 kind-  
ness! [*Exit GLOUCESTER.*]

*Edg.* 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 mad-  
man be a gentleman or a yeoman? 11

*Lear.* A king, a king!

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

*Lear.* To have a thousand with red burning  
spits

Come hissing in upon 'em—

*Edg.* 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. 21

*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!

*Edg.* 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." 30

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

*Kent.* How do you, sir? Stand you not so  
amazed.

Will you lie down and rest upon the cushions?

*Lear.* I'll see their trial first. Bring in the evi-  
dence.



[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

Edg. Let us deal justly.

"Sleepest or wakest thou, jolly shepherd?

Thy sheep be in the corn;

And for one blast of thy minikin mouth,

Thy sheep shall take no harm."

Pur! the cat is gray.

Lear. Arraign her first; 'tis Goneril. I here take my oath before this honourable assembly, she kicked the poor King her father. 50

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

Lear. She cannot deny it.

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

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

What store her heart is made on. Stop her there! Arms, arms, sword, fire! Corruption in the place!

False justicer, why hast thou let her 'scape?

Edg. Bless thy five wits! 60

Kent. O pity! Sir, where is the patience now

That you so oft have boasted to retain?

Edg. [Aside] My tears begin to take his part so much,

They'll mar my counterfeiting.

Lear. The little dogs and all,

Tray, Blanch, and Sweetheart, see, they bark at me.

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

Be thy mouth or black or white,  
Tooth that poisons if it bite; 70

Mastiff, greyhound, mongrel grim,

Hound or spaniel, brach or lym,

Or bobtail tike or trundle-tail,

Tom will make them weep and wail;

For, with throwing thus my head,

Dogs leap the hatch, and all are fled.

Do de, de, de. Sessa! come, march to wakes and fairs and market-towns. Poor Tom, thy horn is dry. 79

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 garments. you will say they are Persian attire; but let them be changed.

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

Lear. Make no noise, make no noise; draw the curtains; so, so, so. We'll go to supper i' the morning. So, so, so. 91

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

Re-enter GLOUCESTER.

Glou. Come hither, friend; where is the King my master?

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

Glou. Good friend, I prithee, take him in thy arms;

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

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

And drive towards Dover, friend, where thou shalt meet

Both welcome and protection. Take up thy master.

If thou shouldst dally half an hour, his life, 100

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. Oppressed nature sleeps.

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

Which, if convenience will not allow,

Stand in hard cure. [To the FOOL] Come, help to bear thy master:

Thou must not stay behind.

Glou. Come, come, away.

[Exeunt all but EDGAR.]

Edg. When we our betters see bearing our woes,

We scarcely think our miseries our foes. 110

Who alone suffers, suffers most i' the mind.

Leaving free things and happy shows behind;

But then the mind much sufferance doth o'erskip,

When grief hath mates, and bearing fellowship.

How light and portable my pain seems now,

When that which makes me bend makes the

King bow,

He childed as I father'd! Tom, away!

Mark the high noises; and thyself bewray,

When false opinion, whose wrong thought defiles thee,

In thy just proof, repeals and reconciles thee. 120

What will hap more to-night, safe 'scape the

King!

Lurk, lurk.

[Exit.]

SCENE VII. Gloucester's castle

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

*Corn.* Post speedily to my lord your husband; show him this letter. The army of France is landed. Seek out the villain Gloucester.

*[Exeunt some of the Servants.]*

*Reg.* Hang him instantly.

*Gon.* Pluck out his eyes.

*Corn.* 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 Gloucester.

*Enter OSWALD.*

How now! where's the King?

*Osw.* My lord of Gloucester 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 towards Dover; where they  
boast

To have well-armed friends.

*Corn.* Get horses for your mistress. 20

*Gon.* Farewell, sweet lord, and sister.

*Corn.* Edmund, farewell.

*[Exeunt GONERIL, EDMUND, and OSWALD.]*

Go seek the traitor Gloucester,  
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 GLOUCESTER, brought in by two or three  
SERVANTS.*

*Reg.* Ingrateful fox! 'tis he.

*Corn.* Bind fast his corky arms.

*Glou.* What mean your Graces? Good my  
friends, consider 30

You are my guests. Do me no foul play, friends.

*Corn.* Bind him, I say.

*SERVANTS bind him.*

*Reg.* Hard, hard. O filthy traitor!

*Glou.* Unmerciful lady as you are, I'm none.

*Corn.* To this chair bind him. Villain, thou  
shalt find—

*REGAN plucks his beard.*

*Glou.* By the kind gods, 'tis most ignobly done  
To pluck me by the beard.

*Reg.* So white, and such a traitor!

*Glou.* 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 40  
You should not ruffle thus. What will you do?

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

*Reg.* Be simple answerer, for we know the  
truth.

*Corn.* And what confederacy have you with the  
traitors

Late footed in the kingdom?

*Reg.* To whose hands have you sent the lunatic  
King?

Speak.

*Glou.* I have a letter guessingly set down,  
Which came from one that's of a neutral heart,  
And not from one opposed.

*Corn.* Cunning.

*Reg.* And false.

*Corn.* Where hast thou sent the King? 50

*Glou.* To Dover.

*Reg.* Wherefore to Dover? Wast thou not  
charged at peril—

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

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

*Reg.* Wherefore to Dover, sir?

*Glou.* Because I would not see thy cruel nails  
Pluck out his poor old eyes; nor thy fierce sister  
In his anointed flesh stick boarish fangs.  
The sea, with such a storm as his bare head  
In hell-black night endured, would have bouy'd  
up,

And quench'd the stelled fires; 61  
Yet, poor old heart, he help 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 subscribed; but I shall see  
The winged vengeance overtake such children.

*Corn.* See't shalt thou never. Fellows, hold the  
chair.

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

*Glou.* He that will think to live till he be old,  
Give me some help! O cruel! O you gods! 70

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

*Corn.* If you see vengeance—

*1st Serv.* Hold your hand, my lord.

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

*Reg.* How now, you dog!

*1st Serv.* If you did wear a beard upon your chin,



I'd shake it on this quarrel. What do you mean?

*Corn.* My villain!

*They draw and fight.*

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

*Reg.* Give me thy sword. A peasant stand up thus! 80

*Takes a sword, and runs at him behind.*

*1st Serv.* O, I am slain! My lord, you have one eye left

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

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

Where is thy lustre now?

*Glou.* All dark and comfortless. Where's my son Edmund?

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

*Reg.* 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. 90

*Glou.* O my follies! then Edgar was abused.  
Kind gods, forgive me that, and prosper him!

*Reg.* Go thrust him out at gates, and let him smell

His way to Dover. [*Exit one with GLOUCESTER.*]

How is't, my lord? how look you?

*Corn.* I have received 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.*]

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

*3rd Serv.* If she live long, 100

And in the end meet the old course of death,

Women will all turn monsters.

*2nd. Serv.* Let's follow the old Earl, and get the  
Bedlam

To lead him where he would. His roguish mad-  
ness

Allows itself to anything.

*3rd 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.*

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

Than still contemn'd and flatter'd. To be worst,  
The lowest and most dejected thing of fortune,

Stands still in 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 GLOUCESTER, led by an OLD MAN.*

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

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

*Glou.* Away, get thee away; good friend, be  
gone.

Thy comforts can do me no good at all;

Thee they may hurt.

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

*Glou.* I have no way, and therefore want no  
eyes; 20

I stumbled when I saw. Full oft 'tis seen,  
Our means secure us, and our mere defects

Prove our commodities. O dear son Edgar,

The food of thy abused father's wrath!

Might I but live to see thee in my touch,

I'd say I had eyes again!

*Old Man.* How now! Who's there?

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

I am worse than e'er I was.

*Old Man.* 'Tis poor mad Tom.

*Edg.* [*Aside*] And worse I may be yet; the  
worst is not

So long as we can say, "This is the worst." 30

*Old Man.* Fellow, where goest?

*Glou.* Is it a beggar-man?

*Old Man.* Madman and beggar too.

*Glou.* He has some reason, else he could not beg.

I' the last night's storm I such a fellow saw;

Which made me think a man a worm. My son

Came then into my mind; and yet my mind

Was then scarce friends with him. I have heard  
more since.

As flies to wanton boys, are we to the gods,

They kill us for their sport.

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

Bad is the trade that must play fool to sorrow, 40  
Angering itself and others.—Bless thee, master!

*Glou.* Is that the naked fellow?

*Old Man.*

Ay, my lord.

*Glou.* Then, prithee, get thee gone. If, for my  
sake,

Thou wilt o'ertake us, hence a mile or twain,

I' the way toward Dover, do it for ancient love;

And bring some covering for this naked soul,

Who I'll entreat to lead me.

*Old Man.* Alack, sir, he is mad.

*Glou.* 'Tis the times' plague, when madmen lead the blind.

Do as I bid thee, or rather do thy pleasure;

Above the rest, be gone. 50

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

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

*Glou.* Sirrah, naked fellow—

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

*Glou.* Come hither, fellow.

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

*Glou.* Know'st thou the way to Dover?

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

*Glou.* Here, take this purse, thou whom the heavens' 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, 70

That slaves your ordinance, that will not see Because he doth not feel, feel your power quickly;

So distribution should undo excess, And each man have enough. Dost thou know

Dover?

*Edg.* Ay, master.

*Glou.* There is a cliff, whose high and bending head

Looks fearfully in the confined deep.

Bring me but to the very brim of it,

And I'll repair the misery thou dost bear

With something rich about me. From that place I shall no leading need.

*Edg.* Give me thy arm: 81

Poor Tom shall lead thee. *[Exeunt.]*

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

*Enter GONERIL and EDMUND.*

*Gon.* Welcome, my lord. I marvel our mild husband

Not met us on the way.

*Enter OSWALD.*

Now, where's your master?

*Osw.* Madam, within; but never man so changed.

I told him of the army that was landed;

He smiled at it. I told him you were coming;

His answer was, "The worse"; of Gloucester'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; 10

What like, offensive.

*Gon. [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

Shall pass between us. Ere long you are like to hear,

If you dare venture in your own behalf, 20

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.

*Edm.* Yours in the ranks of death.

*Gon.* My most dear Gloucester!

*[Exit EDMUND.]*

O, the difference of man and man!

To thee a woman's services are due;

My fool usurps my body.

*Osw.* Madam, here comes my lord. *[Exit.]*

*Enter ALBANY.*

*Gon.* I have been worth the whistle.

*Alb.* O Goneril!

You are not worth the dust which the rude wind 30

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.

*Gon.* No more; the text is foolish.

*Alb.* Wisdom and goodness to the vile seem vile;

Filths savour but themselves. What have you done?

Tigers, not daughters, what have you perform'd?

A father, and a gracious aged man, 41



Whose reverence even the head-lugg'd bear  
would lick,

Most barbarous, most degenerate! have you  
madded.

Could my good brother suffer you to do it?

A man, a prince, by him so benefited!

If that the heavens do not their visible spirits

Send quickly down to tame these vile offences,

It will come,

Humanity must perforce prey on itself,

Like monsters of the deep.

*Gon.* Milk-liver'd man! 50

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 plumed helm thy state begins to threaten;

Whiles thou, a moral fool, sit'st still, and criest,

"Alack, why does he so?"

*Alb.* See thyself, devil!

Proper deformity seems not in the fiend! 60

So horrid as in woman.

*Gon.* O vain fool!

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

Be-monster not thy feature. Were'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.

*Gon.* Marry, your manhood now—

*Enter a MESSENGER.*

*Alb.* What news?

*Mess.* O, my good lord, the Duke of Cornwall's  
dead; 70

Slain by his servant, going to put out

The other eye of Gloucester.

*Alb.* Gloucester's eyes!

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

Opposed against the act, bending his sword

To his great master; who, thereat enraged,

Flew on him, and amongst them fell'd him dead;

But not without that harmful stroke, which since  
Hath pluck'd him after.

*Alb.* This shows you are above,

You justicers, that these our nether crimes

So speedily can venge! But, O poor Gloucester!

Lost he his other eye?

*Mess.* Both, both, my lord. 81

This letter, madam, craves a speedy answer;

'Tis from your sister.

*Gon.* [*Aside*] One way I like this well;

But being widow, and my Gloucester with her,

May all the building in my fancy pluck

Upon my hateful life; another way,

The news is not so tart.—I'll read, and answer.

[*Exit.*]

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

*Mess.* Come with my lady hither.

*Alb.* He is not here. 90

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

*Alb.* Knows he the wickedness?

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

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

Might have the freer course.

*Alb.* Gloucester, I live

To thank thee for the love thou show'st the

King,

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?

*Gent.* Something he left imperfect in the state,  
which since his coming forth is thought of;  
which imports to the kingdom so much fear and  
danger, that his personal return was most re-  
quired and necessary.

*Kent.* Who hath he left behind him general?

*Gent.* The Marshal of France, Monsieur La  
Far. 10

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

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

And now and then an ample tear trill'd down  
Her delicate cheek. It seem'd she was a queen  
Over her passion; who, most rebel-like,

Sought to be king o'er her.

*Kent.* O, then it moved her.

*Gent.* Not to a rage: patience and sorrow strove  
Who should express her goodliest. You have  
seen

Sunshine and rain at once: her smiles and tears  
Were like a better way; those happy smiles, 21

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 beloved,

If all could so become it.

*Kent.* Made she no verbal question?

*Gent.* 'Faith, once or twice she heaved the name of "father"

Pantingly forth, as if it press'd her heart;

Cried "Sisters! sisters! Shame of ladies! sisters!

*Kent!* father! sisters! What, i' the storm? i' the night? 30

Let pity not be believed!" 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?

*Gent.* No.

*Kent.* Was this before the King returned?

*Gent.* 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.

*Gent.* Why, good sir?

*Kent.* A sovereign shame so elbows him. His own unkindness,

That stripp'd her from his benediction, turn'd her

To foreign casualties, gave her dear rights

To his dog-hearted daughters, these things sting

His mind so venomously, that burning shame

Detains him from Cordelia.

*Gent.* Alack, poor gentleman!

*Kent.* Of Albany's and Cornwall's powers you heard not? 50

*Gent.* 'Tis 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.*

*Cor.* Alack, 'tis 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 bur-docks, 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?

He that helps him take all my outward worth. 10

*Doct.* There is means, madam.

Our foster-nurse of nature is repose,

The which he lacks; that to provoke in him,

Are many simples operative, whose power

Will close the eye of anguish.

*Cor.*

All 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;

Lest his ungovern'd rage dissolve the life

That wants the means to lead it.

#### *Enter a MESSENGER.*

*Mess.*

News, madam; 20

The British powers are marching hitherward.

*Cor.* 'Tis known before; our preparation stands

In expectation of them. O dear father,

It is thy business that I go about;

Therefore great France

My mourning and important tears hath pitied.

No blown ambition doth our arms incite,

But love, dear love, and our aged father's right.

Soon may I hear and see him! [*Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE V. *Gloucester's castle*

*Enter REGAN and OSWALD.*

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

*Osw.* Ay, madam.

*Reg.* Himself in person there?

*Osw.* Madam, with much ado.

Your sister is the better soldier.

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

*Osw.* No, madam.

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

*Osw.* I know not, lady.

*Reg.* 'Faith, he is posted hence on serious matter.

It was great ignorance, Gloucester's eyes being out,

To let him live; where he arrives he moves 10

All hearts against us. Edmund, I think, is gone,

In pity of his misery, to dispatch

His nighted life, moreover, to descry

The strength o' the enemy.

*Osw.* I must needs after him, madam, with my letter.

*Reg.* Our troops set forth to-morrow. Stay with us;

The ways are dangerous.



*Osw.* I may not, madam.  
 My lady charged my duty in this business.  
*Reg.* Why should she write to Edmund?  
 Might not you  
 Transport her purposes by word? Belike, 20  
 Something—I know not what. I'll love thee  
 much,  
 Let me unseal the letter.

*Osw.* Madam, I had rather—  
*Reg.* I know your lady does not love her husband;  
 I am sure of that. And at her late being here  
 She gave strange ocellades and most speaking  
 looks  
 To noble Edmund. I know you are of her bosom.  
*Osw.* I, madam?  
*Reg.* 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; 30  
 And more convenient is he for my hand  
 Than for your lady's. You may gather more.  
 If you do find him, pray you, give him this;  
 And when your mistress hears thus much from  
 you,  
 I pray, desire her call her wisdom to her.  
 So, fare you well.  
 If you do chance to hear of that blind traitor,  
 Preferment falls on him that cuts him off.  
*Osw.* Would I could meet him, madam! I should  
 show  
 What party I do follow.  
*Reg.* Fare thee well. [*Exeunt.* 40

SCENE VI. *Fields near Dover*

*Enter GLOUCESTER, and EDGAR dressed like a peasant.*

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

*Edg.* You do climb up it now. Look, how we  
 labour.

*Glou.* Methinks the ground is even.

*Edg.* Horrible steep.

Hark, do you hear the sea?

*Glou.* No, truly.

*Edg.* Why, then, your other senses grow im-  
 perfect

By your eyes' anguish.

*Glou.* So may it be, indeed.

Methinks thy voice is alter'd; and thou speak'st  
 In better phrase and matter than thou didst.

*Edg.* You're much deceived. In nothing am I  
 changed

But in my garments.

*Glou.* Methinks you're better spoken. 10

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

And dizzy 'tis, to cast one's eyes so low!  
 The crows and choughs that wing the midway air  
 Show scarce so gross as beetles. Half way down  
 Hangs one that gathers samphire, dreadful trade!  
 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 pebbles chafes, 21  
 Cannot be heard so high. I'll look no more;  
 Lest my brain turn, and the deficient sight  
 Topple down headlong.

*Glou.* Set me where you stand.

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

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

*Glou.* 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 farther off; 30  
 Bid me farewell, and let me hear thee going.

*Edg.* Now fare you well, good sir.

*Glou.* With all my heart.

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

*Glou.* [*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 loathed part of nature should

Burn itself out. If Edgar live, O, bless him! 40  
 Now, fellow, fare thee well. [*He falls forward.*

*Edg.* Gone, sir; farewell.

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!

This might he pass indeed. Yet he revives.

What are you, sir?

*Glou.* Away, and let me die.

*Edg.* Hadst thou been aught but gossamer,  
 feathers, air,

So many fathom down precipitating, 50  
 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 miracle. Speak yet again.

*Glou.* But have I fall'n, or no?

*Edg.* From the dread summit of this chalky bourn.

Look up a-height; the shrill-gorged lark so far  
Cannot be seen or heard. Do but look up.

*Glou.* Alack, I have no eyes. 60

Is wretchedness deprived that benefit,  
To end itself by death? 'Twas yet some comfort,  
When misery could beguile the tyrant's rage,  
And frustrate his proud will.

*Edg.* Give me your arm.  
Up: so. How is't? Feel you your legs? You stand.

*Glou.* Too well, too well.

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

*Glou.* A poor unfortunate beggar.

*Edg.* As I stood here below, methought his eyes  
Were two full moons; he had a thousand noses, 70  
Horns whelk'd and waved 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 preserved thee.

*Glou.* I do remember now. Henceforth I'll bear  
Affliction till it do cry out itself

"Enough, enough," and die. That thing you  
speak of,

I took it for a man; often 'twould say  
"The fiend, the fiend." He led me to that place.

*Edg.* Bear free and patient thoughts. But who  
comes here? 80

*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.

*Edg.* O thou side-piercing sight!

*Lear.* Nature's above art in that respect. There's  
your press-money. That fellow handles his bow  
like a crow-keeper. Draw me a clothier's yard.  
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.

*Edg.* Sweet marjoram.

*Lear.* Pass.

*Glou.* I know that voice.

*Lear.* Ha! Goneril, with a white beard! They  
flattered 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 everything that I said!  
—"Ay" and "no" too was no good divinity.

When the rain came to wet me once, and the  
wind to make me chatter; when the thunder  
would not peace at my bidding; there I found  
'em, there I smelt 'em out. Go to, they are not  
men o' their words. They told me I was every  
thing; 'tis a lie, I am not ague-proof.

*Glou.* The trick of that voice I do well remem-  
ber.

Is't not the King?

*Lear.* Ay, every inch a king!  
When I do stare, see how the subject quakes. 110  
I pardon that man's life. What was thy cause?  
Adultery?

Thou shalt not die. Die for adultery! No:  
The wren goes to't, and the small gilded fly  
Does lecher in my sight.  
Let copulation thrive; for Gloucester's bastard  
son

Was kinder to his father than my daughters  
Got 'tween the lawful sheets.

To't, luxury, pell-mell; for I lack soldiers.

Behold yond simpering dame, 120

Whose face between her forks presages snow;  
That minces virtue, and does shake the head

To hear of pleasure's name;

The fitchew, nor the soiled horse, goes to't

With a more riotous appetite.

Down from the waist they are Centaurs,  
Though women all above;

But to the girdle do the gods inherit,

Beneath is all the fiends';

There's hell, there's darkness, there's the sul-  
phurous pit, 130

Burning, scalding, stench, consumption; fie, fie,  
fie! pah, pah! Give me an ounce of civet, good  
apothecary, to sweeten my imagination. There's  
money for thee.

*Glou.* O, let me kiss that hand!

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

*Glou.* 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.

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

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

*Lear.* Read.

*Glou.* 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. 151

*Glou.* I see it feelingly.



*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?

*Glou.* Ay, sir. 160

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

Thou rascal beadle, hold thy bloody hand!

Why dost thou lash that whore? Strip thine own back;

Thou hotly lust'st to use her in that kind  
For which thou whipp'st her. The usurer hangs  
the cozeners.

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

And the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks;  
Arm it in rags, a pigmy's straw does pierce it. 171  
None does offend, none, I say, none; I'll able  
'em.

Take that of me, my friend, who have the power  
To seal the accuser's lips. Get thee glass eyes;  
And, like a scurvy politician, seem  
To see the things thou dost not. Now, now, now,  
now.

Pull off my boots: harder, harder; so.

*Edg.* O, matter and impertinency mix'd!

Reason in madness!

*Lear.* If thou wilt weep my fortunes, take my  
eyes. 180

I know thee well enough; thy name is Gloucester.  
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.

*Glou.* 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;  
It were a delicate stratagem, to shoe  
A troop of horse with felt. I'll put't in proof;  
And when I have stol'n upon these sons-in-law,  
Then, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill! 191

*Enter a GENTLEMAN, with Attendants.*

*Gent.* O, here he is. Lay hand upon him. Sir,  
Your most dear daughter—

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

*Gent.* 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, 200  
Ay, and laying autumn's dust.

*Gent.* Good sir—

*Lear.* I will die bravely, like a bridegroom.  
What!

I will be jovial. Come, come; I am a king,  
My masters, know you that.

*Gent.* You are a royal one, and we obey you.

*Lear.* Then there's life in't. Nay, if you get it,  
you shall get it with running. Sa, sa, sa, sa.

[*Exit running; Attendants follow.*]

*Gent.* A sight most pitiful in the meanest  
wretch,

Past speaking of in a king! Thou hast one daugh-  
ter,

Who redeems nature from the general curse 210  
Which twain have brought her to.

*Edg.* Hail, gentle sir.

*Gent.* Sir, speed you. What's your will?

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

*Gent.* Most sure and vulgar. Every one hears  
that,

Which can distinguish sound.

*Edg.* But, by your favour,

How near's the other army?

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

*Edg.* I thank you, sir. That's all.

*Gent.* Though that the Queen on special cause  
is here,

Her army is moved on.

*Edg.* I thank you, sir. 220

[*Exit GENTLEMAN.*]

*Glou.* You ever-gentle gods, take my breath  
from me;

Let not my worser spirit tempt me again  
To die before you please!

*Edg.* Well pray you, father.

*Glou.* Now, good sir, what are you?

*Edg.* 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 biding.

*Glou.* Hearty thanks.

The bounty and the benison of Heaven  
To boot, and boot!

*Enter OSWALD.*

*Osw.* A proclaim'd prize! Most happy! 230  
That eyeless head of thine was first framed flesh  
To raise my fortunes. Thou old unhappy traitor,  
Briefly thyself remember; the sword is out  
That must destroy thee.

*Glou.* Now let thy friendly hand

Put strength enough to't.

EDGAR *interposes*.

Osw. Wherefore, bold peasant,  
Darest thou support a publish'd traitor? Hence;  
Lest that the infection of his fortune take  
Like hold on thee. Let go his arm.

Edg. Chill not let go, zir, without vurther  
'casion. 240

Osw. Let go, slave, or thou diest!

Edg. Good gentleman, go your gait, and let  
poor volk pass. An chud ha' bin zwaggered out  
of my life, 'twould not ha' bin zo long as 'tis by a  
vornight. 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.

Osw. Out, dunghill!

Edg. Chill pick your teeth, zir. Come; no mat-  
ter vor your foins. 251

*They fight, and EDGAR knocks him down.*

Osw. 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 Gloucester; seek him out  
Upon the British party. O, untimely death!

[Dies.]

Edg. I know thee well. A serviceable villain;  
As duteous to the vices of thy mistress  
As badness would desire.

Glou. What, is he dead?

Edg. Sit you down, father; rest you. 260  
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 death's-man. Let us see;  
Leave, gentle wax; and, manners, blame us not.  
To know our enemies' minds, we'd rip their  
hearts;

Their papers, is more lawful.

[Reads] "Let our reciprocal vows be remem-  
bered. You have many opportunities to cut him  
off. If your will want not, time and place will be  
fruitfully offered. There is nothing done, if he  
return the conqueror. Then am I the prisoner,  
and his bed my gaol; from the loathed warmth  
whereof deliver me, and supply the place for  
your labour."

"Your—wife, so I would say—

"Affectionate servant,

"Goneril"

O undistinguish'd space of woman's will!

A plot upon her virtuous husband's life;  
And the exchange my brother! Here, in the  
sands,

Thee I'll rake up, the post unsanctified

281

Of murderous lechers. And in the mature time  
With this ungracious paper strike the sight  
Of the death-practised Duke; for him 'tis well  
That of thy death and business I can tell.

Glou. The King is mad. How stiff is my vile  
sense,

That I stand up, and have ingenious feeling  
Of my huge sorrows! Better I were distract.  
So should my thoughts be sever'd from my  
griefs,

And woes by wrong imaginations lose 290  
The knowledge of themselves.

Edg. Give me your hand:

*Drum afar off.*

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.*

Cor. O thou good Kent, how shall I live and  
work,

To match thy goodness? My life will be too  
short,

And every measure fail me.

Kent. To be acknowledged, madam, is o'erpaid.  
All my reports go with the modest truth;  
Nor more nor clipp'd, but so.

Cor. Be better suited;

These weeds are memories of those worsor  
hours.

I prithee, put them off.

Kent. Pardon me, dear madam;

Yet to be known shortens my made intent.

My boon I make it, that you know me not 10  
Till time and I think meet.

Cor. Then be't so, my good lord. [To the doc-  
tor] How does the King?

Doct. Madam, sleeps still.

Cor. O you kind gods,

Cure this great breach in his abused nature!

The untuned and jarring senses, O, wind up  
Of this child-changed father!

Doct. So please your Majesty

That we may wake the King? He hath slept long.

Cor. Be govern'd by your knowledge, and pro-  
ceed

I' the sway of your own will. Is he array'd? 20

Gent. Ay, madam; in the heaviness of his sleep  
We put fresh garments on him.

Doct. Be by, good madam, when we do awake  
him;

I doubt not of his temperance.

Cor. Very well.



*Doct.* Please you, draw near. Louder the music there!

*Cor.* O my dear father! Restoration hang Thy medicine on my lips; and let this kiss Repair those violent harms that my two sisters Have in thy reverence made!

*Kent.* Kind and dear Princess!

*Cor.* Had you not been their father, these white flakes 30

Had challenged pity of them. Was this a face To be opposed against the warring winds? To stand against the deep dread-bolted thunder? In the most terrible and nimble stroke Of quick, cross lightning? to watch—poor per-  
du!—

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! 40

'Tis wonder that thy life and wits at once  
Had not concluded all. He wakes; speak to him.

*Doct.* Madam, do you; 'tis fittest.

*Cor.* How does my royal lord? How fares your Majesty?

*Lear.* You do me wrong to take me out o' the grave.

Thou art a soul in bliss; but I am bound  
Upon a wheel of fire, that mine own tears  
Do scald like molten lead.

*Cor.* Sir, do you know me?

*Lear.* You are a spirit, I know. When did you die?

*Cor.* Still, still, far wide! 50

*Doct.* He's scarce awake. Let him alone awhile.

*Lear.* Where have I been? Where am I? Fair daylight?

I am mightily abused. 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 assured  
Of my condition!

*Cor.* O, look upon me, sir,  
And hold your hands in benediction o'er me.  
No, sir, you must not kneel.

*Lear.* Pray, do not mock me.  
I am a very foolish fond old man, 60

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;  
For, as I am a man, I think this lady  
To be my child Cordelia.

*Cor.* And so I am, I am. 70

*Lear.* Be your tears wet? yes, 'faith. I pray,  
weep not.

If you have poison for me, I will drink it.  
I know you do not love me; for your sisters  
Have, as I do remember, done me wrong.  
You have some cause, they have not.

*Cor.* No cause, no cause.

*Lear.* Am I in France?

*Kent.* In your own kingdom, sir.

*Lear.* Do not abuse me.

*Doct.* Be comforted, good madam. The great  
rage,

You see, is kill'd in him; and yet it is danger  
To make him even o'er the time he has lost. 80  
Desire him to go in; trouble him no more  
Till further settling.

*Cor.* Will't please your Highness walk?

*Lear.* You must bear with me.  
Pray you now, forget and forgive. I am old and  
foolish.

[*Exeunt all but KENT and GENTLEMAN.*]

*Gent.* Holds it true, sir, that the Duke of Corn-  
wall was so slain?

*Kent.* Most certain, sir.

*Gent.* Who is conductor of his people?

*Kent.* As 'tis said, the bastard son of Gloucester.

*Gent.* They say Edgar, his banished son, is with  
the Earl of Kent in Germany. 91

*Kent.* Report is changeable. 'Tis time to look  
about; the powers of the kingdom approach  
apace.

*Gent.* 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.*

*Edm.* Know of the Duke if his last purpose  
hold,

Or whether since he is advised by aught  
To change the course. He's full of alteration  
And self-reproving; bring his constant pleasure.

[*To a Gentleman, who goes out.*]

*Reg.* Our sister's man is certainly miscarried.

*Edm.* 'Tis to be doubted, madam.

*Reg.* Now, sweet lord,  
You know the goodness I intend upon you.  
Tell me—but truly—but then speak the truth,  
Do you not love my sister?

*Edm.* In honour'd love.

*Reg.* But have you never found my brother's  
way 10  
To the forfended place?

*Edm.* That thought abuses you.

*Reg.* I am doubtful that you have been conjunct  
And bosom'd with her, as far as we call hers.

*Edm.* No, by mine honour, madam.

*Reg.* I never shall endure her. Dear my lord,  
Be not familiar with her.

*Edm.* Fear me not.  
She and the Duke her husband!

*Enter, with drum and colours, ALBANY,  
GONERIL, and Soldiers.*

*Gon.* [*Aside*] I had rather lose the battle than  
that sister  
Should loosen him and me.

*Alb.* Our very loving sister, well be-met. 20  
Sir, this I hear; the King is come to his daughter,  
With others whom the rigour of our state  
Forced 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.

*Edm.* Sir, you speak nobly.

*Reg.* Why is this reason'd?  
*Gon.* Combine together 'gainst the enemy;  
For these domestic and particular broils 30  
Are not the question here.

*Alb.* Let's then determine  
With the ancient of war on our proceedings.

*Edm.* I shall attend you presently at your tent.

*Reg.* Sister, you'll go with us?

*Gon.* No.

*Reg.* 'Tis most convenient; pray you, go with  
us.

*Gon.* [*Aside*] O, ho, I know the riddle.—I will  
go.

*As they are going out, enter EDGAR disguised.*

*Edg.* If e'er your Grace had speech with man  
so poor,

Hear me one word.

*Alb.* I'll overtake you. Speak.

[*Exeunt all but ALBANY and EDGAR.*]

*Edg.* Before you fight the battle, ope this letter.  
If you have victory, let the trumpet sound 41  
For him that brought it. Wretched though I  
seem,

I can produce a champion that will prove

What is avouched there. If you miscarry,  
Your business of the world hath so an end,  
And machination ceases. Fortune love you!

*Alb.* Stay till I have read the letter.

*Edg.*

I was forbid it.

When time shall serve, let but the herald cry,  
And I'll appear again.

*Alb.* Why, fare thee well. I will o'erlook thy  
paper. [*Exit EDGAR.* 50

*Re-enter EDMUND.*

*Edm.* The enemy's in view; draw up your  
powers.

Here is the guess of their true strength and forces  
By diligent discovery; but your haste  
Is now urged on you.

*Alb.* We will greet the time. [*Exit.*

*Edm.* To both these sisters have I sworn my  
love;

Each jealous of the other, as the stung  
Are of the adder. Which of them shall I take?  
Both? one? or neither? Neither can be enjoy'd,  
If both remain alive. To take the widow  
Exasperates, makes mad her sister Goneril; 60  
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.* 69

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 GLOUCESTER.*

*Edg.* 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.

*Glou.* Grace go with you, sir!  
[*Exit EDGAR.*]

*Alarum and retreat within. Re-enter EDGAR.*

*Edg.* Away, old man; give me thy hand; away!  
King Lear hath lost, he and his daughter ta'en.  
Give me thy hand; come on.

*Glou.* No farther, sir; a man may rot even here.

*Edg.* What, in ill thoughts again? Men must  
endure



Their going hence, even as their coming hither;  
Ripeness is all. Come on.

*Glou.* 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, &c.*

*Edm.* Some officers take them away. Good guard,

Until their greater pleasures first be known  
That are to censure them.

*Cor.* We are not the first

Who, with best meaning, have incurr'd the  
worst.

For thee, oppressed King, am I cast down;  
Myself could else out-frown false Fortune's  
frown.

Shall we not see these daughters and these sis-  
ters?

*Lear.* No, no, no, no! Come, let's away to  
prison.

We two alone will sing like birds i' the cage;  
When thou dost ask me blessing, I'll kneel down,  
And ask of thee forgiveness; so we'll live, 11

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.

*Edm.* Take them away. 20

*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  
starve first.

*Come.* [*Exeunt LEAR and CORDELIA, guarded.*]

*Edm.* Come hither, captain; hark.

Take thou this note [*giving a paper*]; go follow  
them to prison.

One step I have advanced thee; if thou dost  
As this instructs thee, thou dost make thy way  
To noble fortunes. Know thou this, that men 30  
Are as the time is; to be tender-minded  
Does not become a sword. Thy great employ-  
ment

Will not bear question; either say thou'lt do 't,  
Or thrive by other means.

*Capt.* I'll do 't, my lord.

*Edm.* About it; and write happy when thou hast  
done.

Mark, I say, instantly; and carry it so  
As I have set it down.

*Capt.* I cannot draw a cart, nor eat dried oats;  
If it be man's work, I'll do 't. [*Exit.*]

*Flourish.* *Enter ALBANY, GONERIL, REGAN,  
another CAPTAIN, and Soldiers.*

*Alb.* Sir, you have shown to-day your valiant  
strain, 40

And fortune led you well. You have the captives  
That were the opposites of this day's strife;  
We do require them of you, so to use them  
As we shall find their merits and our safety  
May equally determine.

*Edm.* Sir, I thought it fit

To send the old and miserable King  
To some retention and appointed guard;  
Whose age has charms in it, whose title more,  
To pluck the common bosom on his side,  
And turn our impress'd lances in our eyes 50  
Which do command them. With him I sent the  
Queen;

My reason all the same; and they are ready  
To-morrow, or at further space, to appear  
Where you shall hold your session. At this time  
We sweat and bleed; the friend hath lost his  
friend;

And the best quarrels, in the heat, are cursed  
By those that feel their sharpness.  
The question of Cordelia and her father  
Requires a fitter place.

*Alb.* Sir, by your patience,  
I hold you but a subject of this war, 60  
Not as a brother.

*Reg.* That's as we list to grace him.  
Methinks our pleasure might have been demand-  
ed,

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.

*Gon.* Not so hot:

In his own grace he doth exalt himself,  
More than in your addition.

*Reg.* In my rights,  
By me invested, he compeers the best.

*Gon.* That were the most, if he should husband  
you. 70

*Reg.* Jesters do oft prove prophets.

*Gon.* Holla, holla!

That eye that told you so look'd but a-squint.

*Reg.* Lady, I am not well; else I should answer  
From a full-flowing stomach. General,  
Take thou my soldiers, prisoners, patrimony;

Dispose of them, of me; the walls are thine.  
Witness the world, that I create thee here  
My lord and master.

*Gon.* Mean you to enjoy him?

*Alb.* The let-alone lies not in your good will.

*Edm.* Nor in thine, lord.

*Alb.* Half-blooded fellow, yes. 80

*Reg.* [To EDMUND] Let the drum strike, and  
prove my title thine.

*Alb.* Stay yet; hear reason. Edmund, I arrest  
thee

On capital treason; and, in thine attain,   
This gilded serpent [pointing to GONERIL]. For  
your claim, fair sister,

I bar it in the interest of my wife;

'Tis she is sub-contracted to this lord,

And I, her husband, contradict your bans.

If you will marry, make your loves to me,

My lady is bespoken.

*Gon.* An interlude!

*Alb.* Thou art arm'd, Gloucester. Let the trum-  
pet sound. 90

If none appear to prove upon thy head

Thy heinous, manifest, and many treasons,

There is my pledge [throwing down a glove];

I'll prove it on thy heart,

Ere I taste bread, thou art in nothing less

Than I have here proclaim'd thee.

*Reg.* Sick, O, sick!

*Gon.* [Aside] If not, I'll ne'er trust medicine.

*Edm.* There's my exchange [throwing down a  
glove]. What in the world he is

That names me traitor, villain-like he lies.

Call by thy trumpet; he that dares approach,

On him, on you, who not? I will maintain 100

My truth and honour firmly.

*Alb.* A herald, ho!

*Edm.* A herald, ho, a herald!

*Alb.* Trust to thy single virtue; for thy soldiers,

All levied in my name, have in my name

Took their discharge.

*Reg.* My sickness grows upon me.

*Alb.* She is not well; convey her to my tent.

[Exit REGAN, led.]

*Enter a HERALD.*

Come hither, herald. Let the trumpet sound,  
And read out this.

*Cap.* Sound, trumpet! [A trumpet sounds.]

*Her.* [Reads] "If any man of quality or degree  
within the lists of the army will maintain upon  
Edmund, supposed Earl of Gloucester, that he is  
a manifold traitor, let him appear by the third  
sound of the trumpet. He is bold in his defence."

*Edm.* Sound! [First trumpet.]

*Her.* Again! [Second trumpet.]

*Her.* Again! [Third trumpet.]

*Trumpet answers within.*

*Enter EDGAR, at the third sound, armed, with  
a trumpet before him.*

*Alb.* Ask him his purposes, why he appears  
Upon this call o' the trumpet.

*Her.* What are you? 119

Your name, your quality? and why you answer  
This present summons?

*Edg.* Know, my name is lost;  
By treason's tooth bare-gnawn and canker-bit.  
Yet am I noble as the adversary

I come to cope.

*Alb.* Which is that adversary?

*Edg.* What's he that speaks for Edmund Earl of  
Gloucester?

*Edm.* Himself. What say'st thou to him?

*Edg.* Draw thy sword,

That, if my speech offend a noble heart,

Thy arm may do thee justice; here is mine.

Behold, it is the privilege of mine honours,

My oath, and my profession. I protest, 130

Maugre thy strength, youth, place, and emi-  
nence,

Despise 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, 140  
Thou liest.

*Edm.* 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!

*Alarums. They fight. EDMUND falls.*

*Alb.* Save him, save him!

*Gon.* This is practice, Gloucester. 151

By the law of arms thou wast not bound to an-  
swer

An unknown opposite; thou art not vanquish'd,  
But cozen'd and beguiled.

*Alb.* Shut your mouth, dame,



Or with this paper shall I stop it. Hold, sir.  
Thou worse than any name, read thine own evil.  
No tearing, lady; I perceive you know it.

*Gives the letter to EDMUND.*

*Gon.* Say, if I do, the laws are mine, not thine.  
Who can arraign me for't?

*Alb.* Most monstrous! oh! 159  
Know'st thou this paper?

*Gon.* Ask me not what I know. [*Exit.*]

*Alb.* Go after her. She's desperate; govern her.

*Edm.* What you have charged me with, that  
have I done;

And more, much more; the time will bring it  
out.

'Tis past, and so am I. But what art thou  
That hast this fortune on me? If thou'rt noble,  
I do forgive thee.

*Edg.* Let's exchange charity.  
I am no less in blood than thou art, Edmund;  
If more, the more thou hast wrong'd me.  
My name is Edgar, and thy father's son.  
The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices 170  
Make instruments to plague us.

The dark and vicious place where thee he got  
Cost him his eyes.

*Edm.* Thou hast spoken right, 'tis true;  
The wheel is come full circle; I am here.

*Alb.* Methought thy very gait did prophesy  
A royal nobleness. I must embrace thee.

Let sorrow split my heart, if ever I  
Did hate thee or thy father!

*Edg.* Worthy Prince, I know't.

*Alb.* Where have you hid yourself? 179

How have you known the miseries of your fa-  
ther?

*Edg.* By nursing them, my lord. List a brief  
tale;

And when 'tis told, O, that my heart would  
burst!

The bloody proclamation to escape,  
That follow'd me so near,—O, our lives' sweet-  
ness!

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, 189  
Their precious stones new lost; became his  
guide,

Led him, begg'd for him, saved him from despair;  
Never—O fault!—reveal'd myself unto him,  
Until some half-hour past, when I was arm'd.  
Not sure, though hoping, of this good success,  
I ask'd his blessing, and from first to last  
Told him my pilgrimage. But his flaw'd heart,  
Alack, too weak the conflict to support!

'Twixt two extremes of passion, joy and grief,  
Burst smilingly.

*Edm.* This speech of yours hath moved me,  
And shall perchance do good. But speak you on;  
You look as you had something more to say. 201

*Alb.* If there be more, more woeful, hold it in;  
For I am almost ready to dissolve,  
Hearing of this.

*Edg.* This would have seem'd a period  
To such as love not sorrow; but another,  
To amplify too much, would make much more,  
And top extremity.

Whilst I was big in clamour came there in a man,  
Who, having seen me in my worst estate, 209  
Shunn'd my abhorr'd society; but then, finding  
Who 'twas that so endured, with his strong arms  
He fasten'd on my neck, and bellow'd out  
As he'd burst heaven; threw him on my father;  
Told the most piteous tale of Lear and him  
That ever ear received; which in recounting  
His grief grew puissant, and the strings of life  
Began to crack. Twice then the trumpets sound-  
ed,

And there I left him tranced.

*Alb.* But who was this?

*Edg.* Kent, sir, the banish'd Kent; who in dis-  
guise

Follow'd his enemy King, and did him serv-  
ice 220

Improper for a slave.

*Enter a GENTLEMAN, with a bloody knife.*

*Gent.* Help, help, O, help!

*Edg.* What kind of help?

*Alb.* Speak, man.

*Edg.* What means that bloody knife?

*Gent.* 'Tis hot, it smokes;

It came even from the heart of—O, she's dead!

*Alb.* Who dead? speak, man.

*Gent.* Your lady, sir, your lady. And her sister  
By her is poisoned; she hath confess'd it.

*Edm.* I was contracted to them both. All three  
Now marry in an instant.

*Edg.* Here comes Kent. 229

*Alb.* Produce their bodies, be they alive or dead.  
This judgment of the heavens, that makes us  
tremble,

Touches us not with pity. [*Exit GENTLEMAN.*]

*Enter KENT.*

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.  
Is he not here?

*Alb.* Great thing of us forgot!  
Speak, Edmund, where's the King? and where's  
Cordelia?

See'st thou this object, Kent?

*The bodies of GONERIL and REGAN are brought in.*

*Kent.* Alack, why thus?

*Edm.* Yet Edmund was beloved.

The one the other poison'd for my sake, 240  
And after slew herself.

*Alb.* Even so. Cover their faces.

*Edm.* I pant for life. Some good I mean to do,  
Despite of mine own nature. Quickly send,  
Be brief in it, to the castle; for my writ  
Is on the life of Lear and on Cordelia.

Nay, send in time.

*Alb.* Run, run, O, run!

*Edg.* To who, my lord? Who hath the office?  
send

Thy token of reprieve.

*Edm.* Well thought on. Take my sword, 250  
Give it the captain.

*Alb.* Haste thee, for thy life. [*Exit EDGAR.*]

*Edm.* He hath commission from thy wife and  
me

To hang Cordelia in the prison, and  
To lay the blame upon her own despair,  
That she fordid herself.

*Alb.* 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! 259

I know when one is dead, and when one lives;  
She's dead as earth. Lend me a looking-glass;  
If that her breath will mist or stain the stone,  
Why, then she lives.

*Kent.* Is this the promised end?

*Edg.* Or image of that horror?

*Alb.* Fall, and cease!

*Lear.* This feather stirs; she lives! if it be so,  
It is a chance which does redeem all sorrows  
That ever I have felt.

*Kent.* [*Kneeling*] O my good master!

*Lear.* Prithee, away.

*Edg.* 'Tis noble Kent, your friend.

*Lear.* A plague upon you, murderers, traitors  
all!

I might have saved her; now she's gone for ever!  
Cordelia, Cordelia! stay a little. Ha! 271  
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.

*Capt.* 'Tis true, my lords, he did.

*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 loved and  
hated, 280

One of them we behold.

*Lear.* This is a dull sight. Are you not Kent?

*Kent.* The same.

Your servant Kent. Where is your servant  
Caius?

*Lear.* He's a good fellow, I can tell you that;  
He'll strike, and quickly too. He's dead and  
rotten.

*Kent.* No, my good lord; I am the very man—

*Lear.* I'll see that straight.

*Kent.* That, from your first of difference and  
decay,

Have follow'd your sad steps.

*Lear.* You are welcome hither.

*Kent.* Nor no man else. All's cheerless, dark,  
and deadly. 290

Your eldest daughters have fordone themselves,  
And desperately are dead.

*Lear.* Ay, so I think.

*Alb.* He knows not what he says; and vain it is  
That we present us to him.

*Edg.* Very bootless.

*Enter a CAPTAIN.*

*Capt.* Edmund is dead, my lord.

*Alb.* That's but a trifle here.

You lords and noble friends, know our intent.

What comfort to this great decay may come

Shall be applied. For us, we will resign,

During the life of this old majesty,

To him our absolute power; [*To EDGAR and  
KENT*] you, to your rights; 300

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!

Pray you, undo this button. Thank you, sir.

Do you see this? Look on her, look, her lips, 310  
Look there, look there! [*Dies.*]

*Edg.* He faints! My lord, my lord!

*Kent.* Break, heart; I prithee, break!



*Edg.* Look up, my lord.

*Kent.* Vex not his ghost. O, let him pass! he  
hates him much

That would upon the rack of this tough world  
Stretch him out longer.

*Edg.* He is gone, indeed.

*Kent.* The wonder is he hath endured so long.  
He but usurp'd his life.

*Alb.* Bear them from hence. Our present busi-  
ness

Is general woe. [*To KENT and EDGAR*] Friends of  
my soul, you twain

Rule in this realm, and the gored state sustain.

*Kent.* I have a journey, sir, shortly to go; 321  
My master calls me, I must not say no.

*Alb.* The weight of this sad time we must obey;  
Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say.

The oldest hath borne most; we that are young  
Shall never see so much, nor live so long.

[*Exeunt, with a dead march.*]



# MACBETH

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

DUNCAN, *King of Scotland*  
MALCOLM  
DONALBAIN *his sons*  
MACBETH *generals of the King's army*  
BANQUO  
MACDUFF  
LENNOX  
ROSS  
MENTEITH *noblemen of Scotland*  
ANGUS  
CAITHNESS  
FLEANCE, *son to Banquo*  
SIWARD, *Earl of Northumberland, general of the English forces*  
YOUNG SIWARD, *his son*  
SEYTON, *an officer attending on Macbeth*  
BOY, *son to Macduff*  
AN ENGLISH DOCTOR  
A SCOTCH DOCTOR  
A LORD

A PORTER  
AN OLD MAN  
A SERGEANT  
TWO MESSENGERS  
AN ATTENDANT *on Macbeth*  
A SERVANT *to Lady Macbeth*  
THREE MURDERERS

LADY MACBETH  
LADY MACDUFF  
A GENTLEWOMAN, *attending on Lady Macbeth*

HECATE  
THREE WITCHES  
THREE APPARITIONS

NON-SPEAKING: *Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers, Ghosts, and Attendants*

SCENE: *Scotland; England*



## ACT I

### SCENE I. *A desert place*

*Thunder and lightning. Enter THREE WITCHES.*

*1st Witch.* When shall we three meet again

In thunder, lightning, or in rain?

*2nd Witch.* When the hurlyburly's done,

When the battle's lost and won.

*3rd Witch.* That will be ere the set of sun.

*1st Witch.* Where the place?

*2nd Witch.* Upon the heath.

*3rd Witch.* There to meet with Macbeth.

*1st Witch.* I come, Graymalkin!

*2nd Witch.* Paddock calls.

*3rd Witch.* Anon.

*All.* Fair is foul, and foul is fair;

Hover through the fog and filthy air. [*Exeunt.*]

### SCENE II. *A camp near Forres*

*Alarm within. Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, LENNOX, with Attendants, meeting a bleeding SERGEANT.*

*Dun.* What bloody man is that? He can report,  
As seemeth by his plight, of the revolt  
The newest state.

*Mal.* This is the sergeant  
Who like a good and hardy soldier fought  
'Gainst my captivity. Hail, brave friend!  
Say to the King the knowledge of the broil  
As thou didst leave it.

*Ser.* Doubtful it stood;

As two spent swimmers that do cling together  
And choke their art. The merciless Macdon-  
wald—

Worthy to be a rebel, for to that 10

The multiplying villainies of nature

Do swarm upon him—from the western isles

Of kerns and gallowglasses is supplied;

And Fortune, on his damned quarrel smiling,

Show'd like a rebel's whore. But all's too weak;

For brave Macbeth—well he deserves that name—

Disdaining Fortune, with his brandish'd steel,

Which smok'd with bloody execution,

Like valour's minion carved out his passage

Till he faced the slave; 20

Which ne'er shook hands, nor bade farewell to  
him,

Till he unseam'd him from the nave to the chaps,  
And fix'd his head upon our battlements.

*Dun.* O valiant cousin! worthy gentleman!

*Ser.* As whence the sun 'gins his reflection  
Shipwrecking storms and direful thunders break,  
So from that spring whence comfort seem'd to  
come

Discomfort swells. Mark, King of Scotland,  
mark!

No sooner justice had, with valour arm'd,  
Compell'd these skipping kerns to trust their  
heels.

But the Norway lord surveying vantage, 30

With furbish'd arms and new supplies of men  
Began a fresh assault.



*Dun.* Dismay'd not this  
Our captains, Macbeth and Banquo?  
*Ser.* Yes;  
As sparrows eagles, or the hare the lion.  
If I say sooth, I must report they were  
As cannons overcharged with double cracks, so  
they  
Doubly redoubled strokes upon the foe.  
Except they meant to bathe in reeking wounds,  
Or memorize another Golgotha, 40  
I cannot tell.  
But I am faint, my gashes cry for help.  
*Dun.* So well thy words become thee as thy  
wounds;  
They smack of honour both. Go get him sur-  
geons. [*Exit SERGEANT attended.*]  
Who comes here?

*Enter ROSS.*

*Mal.* The worthythane of Ross.  
*Len.* What a haste looks through his eyes!  
So should he look  
That seems to speak things strange.  
*Ross.* God save the King!  
*Dun.* Whence camest thou, worthythane?  
*Ross.* From Fife, great King;  
Where the Norweyan banners flout the sky  
And fan our people cold. Norway himself, 50  
With terrible numbers,  
Assisted by that most disloyal traitor  
Thethane of Cawdor, began a dismal conflict;  
Till that Bellona's bridegroom, lapp'd in proof,  
Confronted him with self-comparisons,  
Point against point rebellious, arm 'gainst arm,  
Curbing his lavish spirit; and, to conclude,  
The victory fell on us.  
*Dun.* Great happiness!  
*Ross.* That now  
Sweno, the Norways' king, craves composition;  
Nor would we deign him burial of his men 60  
Till he disbursed at Saint Colme's inch  
Ten thousand dollars to our general use.  
*Dun.* No more thatthane of Cawdor shall de-  
ceive  
Our bosom interest. Go pronounce his present  
death,  
And with his former title greet Macbeth.  
*Ross.* I'll see it done.  
*Dun.* What he hath lost, noble Macbeth hath  
won. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *A heath near Forres*

*Thunder. Enter the THREE WITCHES.*

*1st Witch.* Where hast thou been, sister?  
*2nd Witch.* Killing swine.  
*3rd Witch.* Sister, where thou?

*1st Witch.* A sailor's wife had chestnuts in her  
lap,  
And munch'd, and munch'd, and munch'd.  
"Give me," quoth I.  
"Aroint thee, witch!" the rump-fed ronyon  
cries.  
Her husband's to Aleppo gone, master o' the  
Tiger;  
But in a sieve I'll thither sail,  
And, like a rat without a tail,  
I'll do, I'll do, and I'll do. 10  
*2nd Witch.* I'll give thee a wind.  
*1st Witch.* Thou 'rt kind.  
*3rd Witch.* And I another.  
*1st Witch.* I myself have all the other,  
And the very ports they blow,  
All the quarters that they know  
I' the shipman's card.  
I will drain him dry as hay.  
Sleep shall neither night nor day  
Hang upon his pent-house lid; 20  
He shall live a man forbid.  
Weary se'nights nine times nine  
Shall he dwindle, peak and pine.  
Though his bark cannot be lost,  
Yet it shall be tempest-tost.  
Look what I have.  
*2nd Witch.* Show me, show me.  
*1st Witch.* Here I have a pilot's thumb,  
Wreck'd as homeward he did come.  
*Drum within.*  
*3rd Witch.* A drum, a drum! 30  
Macbeth doth come.  
*All.* The weird sisters, hand in hand,  
Posters of the sea and land,  
Thus do go about, about;  
Thrice to thine and thrice to mine  
And thrice again, to make up nine.  
Peace! the charm's wound up.

*Enter MACBETH and BANQUO.*

*Macb.* So foul and fair a day I have not seen.  
*Ban.* How far is't call'd to Forres? What are  
these  
So wither'd and so wild in their attire, 40  
That look not like the inhabitants o' the earth,  
And yet are on't? Live you? or are you aught  
That man may question? You seem to under-  
stand me,  
By each at once her choppy finger laying  
Upon her skinny lips. You should be women,  
And yet your beards forbid me to interpret  
That you are so.  
*Macb.* Speak, if you can. What are you?  
*1st Witch.* All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, thane  
of Glamis!

*2nd Witch.* All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee,  
thane of Cawdor!

*3rd Witch.* All hail, Macbeth, that shalt be  
King hereafter! 50

*Ban.* Good sir, why do you start, and seem to  
fear

Things that do sound so fair? I' the name of  
truth,

Are ye fantastical, or that indeed  
Which outwardly ye show? My noble partner  
You greet with present grace and great prediction  
Of noble having and of royal hope,  
That he seems rapt withal. To me you speak not.

If you can look into the seeds of time,  
And say which grain will grow and which will  
not,

Speak then to me, who neither beg nor fear 60  
Your favours nor your hate.

*1st Witch.* Hail!

*2nd Witch.* Hail!

*3rd Witch.* Hail!

*1st Witch.* Lesser than Macbeth, and greater.

*2nd Witch.* Not so happy, yet much happier.

*3rd Witch.* Thou shalt get kings, though thou be  
none.

So all hail, Macbeth and Banquo!

*1st Witch.* Banquo and Macbeth, all hail!

*Macb.* Stay, you imperfect speakers, tell me  
more. 70

By Sinel's death I know I am thane of Glamis;  
But how of Cawdor? the thane of Cawdor  
lives,

A prosperous gentleman; and to be king  
Stands not within the prospect of belief,  
No more than to be Cawdor. Say from whence  
You owe this strange intelligence? or why  
Upon this blasted heath you stop our way  
With such prophetic greeting? Speak, I charge  
you. [WITCHES *vanish*.]

*Ban.* The earth hath bubbles, as the water has,  
And these are of them. Whither are they van-  
ish'd? 80

*Macb.* Into the air; and what seem'd corporal  
melted

As breath into the wind. Would they had stay'd!

*Ban.* Were such things here as we do speak  
about?

Or have we eaten on the insane root  
That takes the reason prisoner?

*Macb.* Your children shall be kings.

*Ban.* You shall be King.

*Macb.* And thane of Cawdor too; went it not so?

*Ban.* To the selfsame tune and words. Who's  
here?

*Ross.* The King hath happily received, Mac-  
beth,

The news of thy success; and when he reads 90  
Thy personal venture in the rebels' fight,  
His wonders and his praises do contend  
Which should be thine or his. Silenced with that,  
In viewing o'er the rest o' the selfsame day,  
He finds thee in the stout Norweyan ranks,  
Nothing afeard of what thyself didst make,  
Strange images of death. As thick as hail  
Came post with post; and every one did bear  
Thy praises in his kingdom's great defence,  
And pour'd them down before him.

*Ang.* We are sent 100

To give thee from our royal master thanks;  
Only to herald thee into his sight,  
Not pay thee.

*Ross.* And, for an earnest of a greater honour,  
He bade me, from him, call thee thane of Caw-  
dor;

In which addition, hail, most worthy thane!  
For it is thine.

*Ban.* What, can the devil speak true?

*Macb.* The thane of Cawdor lives. Why do you  
dress me

In borrow'd robes?

*Ang.* Who was the thane lives yet;  
But under heavy judgement bears that life 110  
Which he deserves to lose. Whether he was  
combined

With those of Norway, or did line the rebel  
With hidden help and vantage, or that with both  
He labour'd in his country's wreck, I know not;  
But treasons capital, confess'd, and proved,  
Have overthrown him.

*Macb.* [*Aside*] Glamis, and thane of Cawdor!  
The greatest is behind. [*To ROSS and ANGUS*]

Thanks for your pains.

[*To BANQUO*] Do you not hope your children  
shall be kings,

When those that gave the thane of Cawdor to  
me

Promised no less to them?

*Ban.* That trusted home 120

Might yet enkindle you unto the crown,  
Besides the thane of Cawdor. But 'tis strange;  
And oftentimes, to win us to our harm,  
The instruments of darkness tell us truths,  
Win us with honest trifles, to betray's  
In deepest consequence.

Cousins, a word, I pray you.

*Macb.* [*Aside*] Two truths are told,  
As happy prologues to the swelling act  
Of the imperial theme.—I thank you, gentlemen.  
[*Aside*] This supernatural soliciting 130  
Cannot be ill, cannot be good. If ill,

*Enter ROSS and ANGUS.*



Why hath it given me earnest of success,  
Commencing in a truth? I am thane of Cawdor.  
If good, why do I yield to that suggestion  
Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair  
And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,  
Against the use of nature? Present fears  
Are less than horrible imaginings.  
My thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical,  
Shakes so my single state of man that function  
Is smother'd in surmise, and nothing is 141  
But what is not.

*Ban.* Look, how our partner's rapt.

*Macb.* [*Aside*] If chance will have me King,  
why, chance may crown me  
Without my stir.

*Ban.* New honours come upon him,  
Like our strange garments, cleave not to their  
mould  
But with the aid of use.

*Macb.* [*Aside*] Come what come may,  
Time and the hour runs through the roughest day.

*Ban.* Worthy Macbeth, we stay upon your  
leisure.

*Macb.* Give me your favour. My dull brain was  
wrought  
With things forgotten. Kind gentlemen, your  
pains 150  
Are register'd where every day I turn  
The leaf to read them. Let us toward the King.  
[*To BANQUO*] Think upon what hath chanced,  
and, at more time,  
The interim having weigh'd it, let us speak  
Our free hearts each to other.

*Ban.* Very gladly.  
*Macb.* Till then, enough. Come, friends.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV. *Forres: the palace*

*Flourish.* Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN,  
LENNOX, and Attendants.

*Dun.* Is execution done on Cawdor? Are not  
Those in commission yet return'd?

*Mal.* My liege,  
They are not yet come back. But I have spoke  
With one that saw him die; who did report  
That very frankly he confess'd his treasons,  
Implor'd your Highness' pardon, and set forth  
A deep repentance. Nothing in his life  
Became him like the leaving it; he died  
As one that had been studied in his death  
To throw away the dearest thing he owed, 10  
As 'twere a careless trifle.

*Dun.* There's no art  
To find the mind's construction in the face.  
He was a gentleman on whom I built  
An absolute trust.

Enter MACBETH, BANQUO, ROSS, and ANGUS.

O worthiest cousin!

The sin of my ingratitude even now  
Was heavy on me. Thou art so far before  
That swiftest wing of recompense is slow  
To overtake thee. Would thou hadst less de-  
served,  
That the proportion both of thanks and payment  
Might have been mine! only I have left to say, 20  
More is thy due than more than all can pay.

*Macb.* The service and the loyalty I owe,  
In doing it, pays itself. Your Highness' part  
Is to receive our duties; and our duties  
Are to your throne and state children and serv-  
ants,  
Which do but what they should, by doing every-  
thing

Safe toward your love and honour.

*Dun.* Welcome hither.

I have begun to plant thee, and will labour  
To make thee full of growing. Noble Banquo,  
That hast no less deserved, nor must be known 30  
No less to have done so, let me unfold thee  
And hold thee to my heart.

*Ban.* There if I grow,  
The harvest is your own.

*Dun.* My plenteous joys,  
Wanton in fulness, seek to hide themselves  
In drops of sorrow. Sons, kinsmen, thanes,  
And you whose places are the nearest, know  
We will establish our estate upon  
Our eldest, Malcolm, whom we name hereafter  
The Prince of Cumberland; which honour must  
Not unaccompanied invest him only, 40  
But signs of nobleness, like stars, shall shine  
On all deservers. From hence to Inverness,  
And bind us further to you.

*Macb.* The rest is labour, which is not used for  
you.

I'll be myself the harbinger and make joyful  
The hearing of my wife with your approach;  
So humbly take my leave.

*Dun.* My worthy Cawdor!

*Macb.* [*Aside*] The Prince of Cumberland!  
that is a step  
On which I must fall down, or else o'erleap,  
For in my way it lies. Stars, hide your fires; 50  
Let not light see my black and deep desires;  
The eye wink at the hand; yet let that be  
Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see.

[*Exit.*]

*Dun.* True, worthy Banquo; he is full so valiant,  
And in his commendations I am fed;  
It is a banquet to me. Let's after him,  
Whose care is gone before to bid us welcome.

It is a peerless kinsman.

[*Flourish. Exeunt.*]

SCENE V. *Inverness: Macbeth's castle*

*Enter* LADY MACBETH, *reading a letter.*

*Lady M.* "They met me in the day of success; and I have learned by the perfectest report, they have more in them than mortal knowledge. When I burned in desire to question them further, they made themselves air, into which they vanished. Whiles I stood rapt in the wonder of it, came missives from the King, who all-hailed me 'Thane of Cawdor'; by which title, before, these weird sisters saluted me, and referred me to the coming on of time with 'Hail, King that shalt be!' This have I thought good to deliver thee, my dearest partner of greatness, that thou mightst not lose the dues of rejoicing by being ignorant of what greatness is promised thee. Lay it to thy heart, and farewell."

Glamis thou art, and Cawdor; and shalt be  
What thou art promised. Yet do I fear thy nature;

It is too full o' the milk of human kindness  
To catch the nearest way. Thou wouldst be great;

Art not without ambition, but without 20  
The illness should attend it. What thou wouldst highly,

That wouldst thou holily; wouldst not play false,  
And yet wouldst wrongly win. Thou'dst have, great Glamis,

That which cries "Thus thou must do, if thou have it;

And that which rather thou dost fear to do  
Than wishest should be undone." Hie thee hither,

That I may pour my spirits in thine ear;  
And chastise with the valour of my tongue  
All that impedes thee from the golden round,  
Which fate and metaphysical aid doth seem 30  
To have thee crown'd withal.

*Enter a MESSENGER.*

What is your tidings?

*Mess.* The King comes here to-night.

*Lady M.* Thou'rt mad to say it!  
Is not thy master with him? who, were't so,  
Would have inform'd for preparation.

*Mess.* So please you, it is true; our thane is coming.

One of my fellows had the speed of him,  
Who, almost dead for breath, had scarcely more  
Than would make up his message.

*Lady M.* Give him tending;  
He brings great news. [Exit MESSENGER.]

The raven himself is hoarse

That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan  
Under my battlements. Come, you spirits  
That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,  
And fill me from the crown to the toe top-full  
Of direst cruelty! make thick my blood;  
Stop up the access and passage to remorse.  
That no compunctious visitings of nature  
Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between  
The effect and it! Come to my woman's breasts,  
And take my milk for gall, you murdering  
ministers,

Wherever in your sightless substances 50  
You wait on nature's mischief! Come, thick night,  
And pall thee in the dunest smoke of hell,  
That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,  
Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,  
To cry, "Hold, hold!"

*Enter* MACBETH.

Great Glamis! worthy Cawdor!  
Greater than both, by the all-hail hereafter!  
Thy letters have transported me beyond  
This ignorant present, and I feel now  
The future in the instant.

*Macb.* My dearest love,  
Duncan comes here to-night.

*Lady M.* And when goes hence? 60

*Macb.* To-morrow, as he purposes.

*Lady M.* O, never  
Shall sun that morrow see!

Your face, my thane, is as a book where men  
May read strange matters. To beguile the time,  
Look like the time; bear welcome in your eye,  
Your hand, your tongue; look like the innocent  
flower,

But be the serpent under't. He that's coming  
Must be provided for; and you shall put  
This night's great business into my dispatch;  
Which shall to all our nights and days to come 70  
Give solely sovereign sway and masterdom.

*Macb.* We will speak further.

*Lady M.* Only look up clear;  
To alter favour ever is to fear.  
Leave all the rest to me. [Exit.]

SCENE VI. *Before Macbeth's castle*

*Hautboys and torches. Enter* DUNCAN, MALCOLM,  
DONALBAIN, BANQUO, LENNOX, MACDUFF, ROSS,  
ANGUS, and Attendants.

*Dun.* This castle hath a pleasant seat; the air  
Nimble and sweetly recommends itself  
Unto our gentle senses.

*Ban.* This guest of summer,  
The temple-haunting martlet, does approve,  
By his loved mansionry, that the heaven's breath  
Smells wooingly here; no jutty, frieze,



Buttress, nor coign of vantage, but this bird  
 Hath made his pendent bed and procreant cradle.  
 Where they most breed and haunt, I have observed,  
 The air is delicate.

*Enter LADY MACBETH.*

*Dun.* See, see, our honour'd hostess! 10  
 The love that follows us sometime is our trouble,  
 Which still we thank as love. Herein I teach you  
 How you shall bid God 'ild us for your pains,  
 And thank us for your trouble.

*Lady M.* All our service  
 In every point twice done and then done double  
 Were poor and single business to contend  
 Against those honours deep and broad where-  
 with

Your Majesty loads our house. For those of old,  
 And the late dignities heap'd up to them,  
 We rest your hermits.

*Dun.* Where's the thane of Cawdor? 20  
 We coursed him at the heels, and had a purpose  
 To be his purveyor; but he rides well  
 And his great love, sharp as his spur, hath holp  
 him

To his home before us. Fair and noble hostess,  
 We are your guest to-night.

*Lady M.* Your servants ever  
 Have theirs, themselves, and what is theirs, in  
 compt,

To make their audit at your Highness' pleasure,  
 Still to return your own.

*Dun.* Give me your hand;  
 Conduct me to mine host. We love him highly,  
 And shall continue our graces towards him. 30  
 By your leave, hostess. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VII. *Macbeth's castle*

*Hautboys and torches. Enter a SEWER, and divers  
 Servants with dishes and service, and pass over the  
 stage. Then enter MACBETH.*

*Macb.* If it were done when 'tis done, then  
 'twere well

It were done quickly. If the assassination  
 Could trammel up the consequence, and catch  
 With his surcease success; that but this blow  
 Might be the be-all and the end-all here,  
 But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,  
 We'd jump the life to come. But in these cases  
 We still have judgement here; that we but teach  
 Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return  
 To plague the inventor. This even-handed justice  
 Commends the ingredients of our poison'd chalice  
 To our own lips. He's here in double trust;  
 First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,  
 Strong both against the deed; then, as his host,

Who should against his murderer shut the door,  
 Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan  
 Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been  
 So clear in his great office, that his virtues  
 Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against  
 The deep damnation of his taking-off; 20  
 And pity, like a naked new-born babe,  
 Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubim, horsed  
 Upon the sightless couriers of the air,  
 Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,  
 That tears shall drown the wind. I have no spur  
 To prick the sides of my intent, but only  
 Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself  
 And falls on the other.

*Enter LADY MACBETH.*

How now! what news?

*Lady M.* He has almost supp'd. Why have  
 you left the chamber?

*Macb.* Hath he ask'd for me?

*Lady M.* Know you not he has? 30

*Macb.* We will proceed no further in this busi-  
 ness.

He hath honour'd me of late; and I have bought  
 Golden opinions from all sorts of people,  
 Which would be worn now in their newest  
 gloss,

Not cast aside so soon.

*Lady M.* Was the hope drunk  
 Wherein you dress'd yourself? Hath it slept  
 since?

And wakes it now, to look so green and pale  
 At what it did so freely? From this time  
 Such I account thy love. Art thou afraid 40  
 To be the same in thine own act and valour  
 As thou art in desire? Wouldst thou have that  
 Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,  
 And live a coward in thine own esteem,  
 Letting "I dare not" wait upon "I would,"  
 Like the poor cat i' the adage?

*Macb.* Prithee, peace.

I dare do all that may become a man;  
 Who dares do more is none.

*Lady M.* What beast was't, then,  
 That made you break this enterprise to me?  
 When you durst do it, then you were a man;  
 And, to be more than what you were, you  
 would 50

Be so much more the man. Nor time nor place  
 Did then adhere, and yet you would make both.  
 They have made themselves, and that their fit-  
 ness now

Does unmake you. I have given suck, and know  
 How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me;  
 I would, while it was smiling in my face,  
 Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums

And dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn as you  
Have done to this.

*Macb.* If we should fail?

*Lady M.* We fail!

But screw your courage to the sticking-place, 60  
And we'll not fail. When Duncan is asleep—  
Whereto the rather shall his day's hard journey  
Soundly invite him—his two chamberlains  
Will I with wine and wassail so convince  
That memory, the warder of the brain,  
Shall be a fume, and the receipt of reason  
A limbeck only. When in swinish sleep  
Their drenched natures lie as in a death,  
What cannot you and I perform upon 70  
The unguarded Duncan? what not put upon  
His spongy officers, who shall bear the guilt  
Of our great quell?

*Macb.* Bring forth men-children only;  
For thy undaunted mettle should compose  
Nothing but males. Will it not be received,  
When we have mark'd with blood those sleepy 70  
two

Of his own chamber and used their very  
daggers,

That they have done 't?

*Lady M.* Who dares receive it other,  
As we shall make our griefs and clamour roar  
Upon his death?

*Macb.* I am settled, and bend up  
Each corporal agent to this terrible feat. 80  
Away, and mock the time with fairest show;  
False face must hide what the false heart doth  
know [Exeunt.]

## ACT II

### SCENE I. Court of Macbeth's castle

*Enter BANQUO, and FLEANCE bearing a torch before him.*

*Ban.* How goes the night, boy?

*Fle.* The moon is down; I have not heard the  
clock.

*Ban.* And she goes down at twelve.

*Fle.* I take't, 'tis later, sir.

*Ban.* Hold, take my sword. There's husbandry  
in heaven;

Their candles are all out. Take thee that too.  
A heavy summons lies like lead upon me,  
And yet I would not sleep. Merciful powers,  
Restrain in me the cursed thoughts that nature  
Gives way to in repose!

*Enter MACBETH, and a Servant with a torch.*

Give me my sword.

Who's there?

*Macb.* A friend.

*Ban.* What, sir, not yet at rest? The King's  
a-bed.

He hath been in unusual pleasure, and  
Sent forth great largess to your offices.  
This diamond he greets your wife withal,  
By the name of most kind hostess; and shut up  
In measureless content.

*Macb.* Being unprepared,  
Our will became the servant to defect;  
Which else should free have wrought.

*Ban.* All's well.  
I dreamt last night of the three weird sisters. 20  
To you they have show'd some truth.

*Macb.* I think not of them:  
Yet, when we can entreat an hour to serve,  
We would spend it in some words upon that  
business,

If you would grant the time.

*Ban.* At your kind'st leisure.

*Macb.* If you shall cleave to my consent, when  
'tis,

It shall make honour for you.

*Ban.* So I lose none  
In seeking to augment it, but still keep  
My bosom franchised and allegiance clear,  
I shall be counsell'd.

*Macb.* Good repose the while!

*Ban.* Thanks, sir; the like to you! 30  
[Exeunt BANQUO and FLEANCE.]

*Macb.* Go bid thy mistress, when my drink is  
ready,  
She strike upon the bell. Get thee to bed.

[Exit Servant.]

Is this a dagger which I see before me,  
The handle toward my hand? Come, let me  
clutch thee.

I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.

Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible

To feeling as to sight? or art thou but

A dagger of the mind, a false creation,  
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain?

I see thee yet, in form as palpable 40  
As this which now I draw.

Thou marshall'st me the way that I was going;

And such an instrument I was to use.

Mine eyes are made the fools o' the other senses,

Or else worth all the rest; I see thee still,

And on thy blade and dudgeon gouts of blood,  
Which was not so before. There's no such  
thing.

It is the bloody business which informs  
Thus to mine eyes. Now o'er the one half-world  
Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse 50  
The curtain'd sleep; witchcraft celebrates  
Pale Hecate's offerings, and wither'd murder,  
Alarum'd by his sentinel, the wolf,



Whose howl's his watch, thus with his stealthy  
pace,  
With Tarquin's ravishing strides, towards his  
design  
Moves like a ghost. Thou sure and firm-set  
earth,  
Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for  
fear  
Thy very stones prate of my whereabouts,  
And take the present horror from the time,  
Which now suits with it. Whiles I threat, he  
lives: 60  
Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives.  
*A bell rings.*  
I go, and it is done; the bell invites me.  
Hear it not, Duncan; for it is a knell  
That summons thee to heaven or to hell. [Exit.]

SCENE II. *The same**Enter LADY MACBETH.*

*Lady M.* That which hath made them drunk  
hath made me bold;  
What hath quench'd them hath given me fire.  
Hark! Peace!  
It was the owl that shriek'd, the fatal bellman,  
Which gives the stern'st good-night. He is about  
it.  
The doors are open, and the surfeited grooms  
Do mock their charge with snores. I have drugg'd  
their possets,  
That death and nature do contend about them,  
Whether they live or die.  
*Macb.* [Within] Who's there? what, ho! 9  
*Lady M.* Alack, I am afraid they have awaked,  
And 'tis not done. The attempt and not the deed  
Confounds us. Hark! I laid their daggers ready;  
He could not miss 'em. Had he not resembled  
My father as he slept, I had done 't.

*Enter MACBETH.*

My husband!  
*Macb.* I have done the deed. Didst thou not hear  
a noise?  
*Lady M.* I heard the owl scream and the crickets  
cry.  
Did not you speak?  
*Macb.* When?  
*Lady M.* Now.  
*Macb.* As I descended?  
*Lady M.* Ay.  
*Macb.* Hark!  
Who lies i' the second chamber?  
*Lady M.* Donalbain. 20  
*Macb.* This is a sorry sight.  
*Looking on his hands.*  
*Lady M.* A foolish thought, to say a sorry sight.

*Macb.* There's one did laugh in's sleep, and one  
cried "Murder!"  
That they did wake each other. I stood and heard  
them;  
But they did say their prayers, and address'd  
them  
Again to sleep.  
*Lady M.* There are two lodged together.  
*Macb.* One cried "God bless us!" and "Amen"  
the other;  
As they had seen me with these hangman's hands.  
Listening their fear, I could not say "Amen,"  
When they did say "God bless us!"  
*Lady M.* Consider it not so deeply. 30  
*Macb.* But wherefore could not I pronounce  
"Amen"?  
I had most need of blessing, and "Amen"  
Stuck in my throat  
*Lady M.* These deeds must not be thought  
After these ways; so, it will make us mad.  
*Macb.* Methought I heard a voice cry, "Sleep no  
more!"  
Macbeth does murder sleep," the innocent sleep,  
Sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care,  
The death of each day's life, sore labour's bath,  
Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,  
Chief nourisher in life's feast—  
*Lady M.* What do you mean?  
*Macb.* Still it cried, "Sleep no more!" to all the  
house; 41  
"Glamis hath murder'd sleep, and therefore  
Cawdor  
Shall sleep no more; Macbeth shall sleep no  
more."  
*Lady M.* Who was it that thus cried? Why,  
worthythane,  
You do unbend your noble strength, to think  
So brainsickly of things. Go get some water,  
And wash this filthy witness from your hand.  
Why did you bring these daggers from the place?  
They must lie there. Go carry them; and smear  
The sleepy grooms with blood.  
*Macb.* I'll go no more. 50  
I am afraid to think what I have done;  
Look on't again I dare not.  
*Lady M.* Infirm of purpose!  
Give me the daggers. The sleeping and the dead  
Are but as pictures; 'tis the eye of childhood  
That fears a painted devil. If he do bleed,  
I'll gild the faces of the grooms withal;  
For it must seem their guilt.  
[Exit. Knocking within.]  
*Macb.* Whence is that knocking?  
How is't with me, when every noise appals me?  
What hands are here? ha! they pluck out mine  
eyes. 59

Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood  
Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will  
rather  
The multitudinous seas incarnadine,  
Making the green one red.

*Re-enter LADY MACBETH.*

Lady M. My hands are of your colour; but I  
shame  
To wear a heart so white. [*Knocking within.*] I  
hear a knocking  
At the south entry. Retire we to our chamber.  
A little water clears us of this deed;  
How easy is it, then! Your constancy  
Hath left you unattended. [*Knocking within.*]  
Hark! more knocking.  
Get on your nightgown, lest occasion call us, 70  
And show us to be watchers. Be not lost  
So poorly in your thoughts.  
Macb. To know my deed, 'twere best not know  
myself. [*Knocking within.*]  
Wake Duncan with thy knocking! I would thou  
couldst! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *The same*

*Knocking within. Enter a PORTER.*

Porter. Here's a knocking indeed! If a man were  
porter of hell-gate, he should have old turning  
the key. [*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock,  
knock! Who's there, i' the name of Beelzebub?  
Here's a farmer, that hanged himself on the ex-  
pectation of plenty. Come in time; have napkins  
enow about you; here you'll sweat for't, [*Knock-  
ing within.*] Knock, knock! Who's there, in  
the other devil's name? Faith, here's an equivoca-  
tor, that could swear in both the scales against  
either scale; who committed treason enough for  
God's sake, yet could not equivocate to heaven.  
O, come in, equivocator. [*Knocking within.*]  
Knock, knock, knock! Who's there? Faith,  
here's an English tailor come hither for stealing  
out of a French hose. Come in, tailor; here you  
may roast your goose. [*Knocking within.*] Knock,  
knock; never at quiet! What are you? But this  
place is too cold for hell. I'll devil-porter it no  
further. I had thought to have let in some of all  
professions that go the primrose way to the ever-  
lasting bonfire. [*Knocking within.*] Anon, anon! I  
pray you, remember the porter.

*Opens the gate.*

*Enter MACDUFF and LENNOX.*

Macd. Was it so late, friend, ere you went to  
bed,  
That you do lie so late?  
Port. 'Faith, sir, we were carousing till the

second cock. And drink, sir, is a great provoker  
of three things.

Macd. What three things does drink especially  
provoke? 30

Port. Marry, sir, nose-painting, sleep, and  
urine. Lechery, sir, it provokes, and unprovokes;  
it provokes the desire but it takes away the per-  
formance; therefore, much drink may be said to  
be an equivocator with lechery: it makes him,  
and it mars him; it sets him on, and it takes him  
off; it persuades him, and disheartens him; makes  
him stand to, and not stand to; in conclusion,  
equivocates him in a sleep, and, giving him the  
lie, leaves him. 40

Macd. I believe drink gave thee the lie last  
night.

Port. That it did, sir, i' the very throat on me.  
But I requited him for his lie; and, I think, being  
too strong for him, though he took up my legs  
sometime, yet I made a shift to cast him.

Macd. Is thy master stirring?

*Enter MACBETH.*

Our knocking has awakened him; here he comes.

Len. Good morrow, noble sir.

Macb. Good morrow, both.

Macd. Is the King stirring, worthythane?

Macb. Not yet. 50

Macd. He did command me to call timely on  
him.

I have almost slipp'd the hour.

Macb. I'll bring you to him.

Macd. I know this is a joyful trouble to you;  
But yet 'tis one.

Macb. The labour we delight in physics pain.  
This is the door.

Macd. I'll make so bold to call,  
For 'tis my limited service. [*Exit.*]

Len. Goes the King hence to-day?

Macb. He does; he did appoint so.

Len. The night has been unruly. Where we lay,  
Our chimneys were blown down; and, as they  
say,

Lamentings heard i' the air; strange screams of  
death, 61

And prophesying with accents terrible  
Of dire combustion and confused events  
New hatch'd to the woeful time. The obscure  
bird

Clamour'd the livelong night; some say, the earth  
Was feverous and did shake,

Macb. 'Twas a rough night.

Len. My young remembrance cannot parallel  
A fellow to it.

*Re-enter MACDUFF.*



*Macd.* O horror, horror, horror! Tongue nor heart

Can never conceive nor name thee.

*Macb.* {

*Len.* }

What's the matter? 70

*Macd.* Confusion now hath made his masterpiece!

Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope  
The Lord's anointed temple, and stole thence  
The life o' the building!

*Macb.* What is't you say? the life?

*Lan.* Mean you his Majesty?

*Macd.* Approach the chamber, and destroy your sight

With a new Gorgon. Do not bid me speak;

See, and then speak yourselves.

[*Exeunt MACBETH and LENNOX.*]

Awake, awake!

Ring the alarum-bell. Murder and treason!

Banquo and Donalbain! Malcolm! awake! 80

Shake off this downy sleep, death's counterfeit,

And look on death itself! Up, up, and see

The great doom's image! Malcolm! Banquo!

As from your graves rise up, and walk like  
sprites,

To countenance this horror! Ring the bell.

*Bell rings.*

*Enter LADY MACBETH.*

*Lady M.* What's the business,  
That such a hideous trumpet calls to parley

The sleepers of the house? Speak, speak!

*Macd.* O gentle lady,

'Tis not for you to hear what I can speak.

The repetition, in a woman's ear, 90

Would murder as it fell.

*Enter BANQUO.*

O Banquo, Banquo,

Our royal master's murder'd!

*Lady M.* Woe, alas!

What, in our house?

*Ban.* Too cruel anywhere.

Dear Duff, I prithee, contradict thyself,

And say it is not so.

*Re-enter MACBETH and LENNOX, with ROSS.*

*Macb.* Had I but died an hour before this chance,  
I had lived a blessed time; for, from this instant,

There's nothing serious in mortality;

All is but toys. Renown and grace is dead;

The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees 100

Is left this vault to brag of.

*Enter MALCOLM and DONALBAIN.*

*Don.* What is amiss?

*Macb.* You are, and do not know't.

The spring, the head, the fountain of your blood  
Is stopp'd; the very source of it is stopp'd.

*Macd.* Your royal father's murder'd.

*Mal.* O, by whom?

*Len.* Those of his chamber, as it seem'd, had  
done't.

Their hands and faces were all badged with blood;  
So were their daggers, which unwiped we found  
Upon their pillows.

They stared, and were distracted; no man's life  
Was to be trusted with them. 111

*Macb.* O, yet I do repent me of my fury,  
That I did kill them.

*Macd.* Wherefore did you so?

*Macb.* Who can be wise, amazed, temperate and  
furious,

Loyal and neutral, in a moment? No man.

The expedition of my violent love

Outrun the pauser, reason. Here lay Duncan,

His silver skin laced with his golden blood;

And his gash'd stabs look'd like a breach in nature  
For ruin's wasteful entrance; there, the murder-

ers,

Steep'd in the colours of their trade, their daggers  
Unmannerly breech'd with gore. Who could re-  
frain,

That had a heart to love, and in that heart  
Courage to make 's love known?

*Lady M.* Help me hence, ho!

*Macd.* Look to the lady.

*Mal.* [*Aside to DONALBAIN*] Why do we hold  
our tongues,

That most may claim this argument for ours?

*Don.* [*Aside to MALCOLM*] What should be  
spoken here, where our fate,

Hid in an auger-hole, may rush, and seize us?

Let's away; 129

Our tears are not yet brew'd.

*Mal.* [*Aside to DONALBAIN*] Nor our strong sor-  
row

Upon the foot of motion.

*Ban.*

Look to the lady;

[*Lady MACBETH is carried out.*]

And when we have our naked frailties hid,

That suffer in exposure, let us meet

And question this most bloody piece of work,

To know it further. Fears and scruples shake us.

In the great hand of God I stand; and thence

Against the undivulged pretence I fight

Of treasonous malice.

*Macd.* And so do I.

*All.* So all.

*Macb.* Let's briefly put on manly readiness,  
And meet it the hall together.

*All.* Well contented. 140

[*Exeunt all but MALCOLM and DONALBAIN.*]

*Mal.* What will you do? Let's not consort with them;

To show an unfelt sorrow is an office  
Which the false man does easy. I'll to England.

*Don.* To Ireland, I; our separated fortune  
Shall keep us both the safer. Where we are,  
There's daggers in men's smiles; the near in  
blood,

The nearer bloody.

*Mal.* This murderous shaft that's shot  
Hath not yet lighted, and our safest way  
Is to avoid the aim. Therefore, to horse;  
And let us not be dainty of leave-taking, 150  
But shift away. There's warrant in that theft  
Which steals itself, when there's no mercy left.

[*Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE IV. *Outside Macbeth's castle*

*Enter ROSS and an OLD MAN.*

*Old M.* Threescore and ten I can remember  
well;

Within the volume of which time I have seen  
Hours dreadful and things strange; but this sore  
night

Hath trifled former knowings.

*Ross.* Ah, good father,  
Thou seest, the heavens, as troubled with man's  
act,

Threaten his bloody stage. By the clock, 'tis day,  
And yet dark night strangles the travelling lamp.  
Is't night's predominance, or the day's shame,  
That darkness does the face of earth entomb,  
When living light should kiss it?

*Old M.* 'Tis unnatural, 10  
Even like the deed that's done. On Tuesday  
last,

A falcon, towering in her pride of place,  
Was by a mousing owl hawk'd at and kill'd.

*Ross.* And Duncan's horses—a thing most  
strange and certain—  
Beauteous and swift, the minions of their race,  
Turn'd wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung  
out,  
Contending 'gainst obedience, as they would  
make  
War with mankind.

*Old M.* 'Tis said they eat each other.  
*Ross.* They did so, to the amazement of mine  
eyes

That look'd upon't. Here comes the good Mac-  
duff. 20

*Enter MACDUFF.*

How goes the world, sir, now?

*Macd.* Why, see you not?

*Ross.* Is't known who did this more than bloody  
deed?

*Macd.* Those that Macbeth hath slain.

*Ross.* Alas, the day!

What good could they pretend?

*Macd.* They were suborn'd.

Malcolm and Donalbain, the King's two sons,  
Are stol'n away and fled; which puts upon them  
Suspicion of the deed.

*Ross.* 'Gainst nature still!

Thriftless ambition, that wilt ravine up  
Thine own life's means! Then 'tis most like  
The sovereignty will fall upon Macbeth. 30

*Macd.* He is already named, and gone to Scone  
To be invested.

*Ross.* Where is Duncan's body?

*Macd.* Carried to Colmekill,  
The sacred storehouse of his predecessors,  
And guardian of their bones.

*Ross.* Will you to Scone?

*Macd.* No, cousin, I'll to Fife.

*Ross.* Well, I will thither.

*Macd.* Well, may you see things well done  
there, adieu!

Lest our old robes sit easier than our new!

*Ross.* Farewell, father.

*Old M.* God's benison go with you; and with  
those 40

That would make good of bad, and friends of  
foes! [*Exeunt.*]

### ACT III

#### SCENE I. *Forres: the palace*

*Enter BANQUO.*

*Ban.* Thou hast it now: King, Cawdor, Glamis,  
all,

As the weird women promised, and, I fear,  
Thou play'dst most foully for't; yet it was said  
It should not stand in thy posterity,  
But that myself should be the root and father  
Of many kings. If there come truth from them—  
As upon thee, Macbeth, their speeches shine—  
Why, by the verities on thee made good,  
May they not be my oracles as well,  
And set me up in hope? But hush! no more. 10

*Sennet sounded. Enter MACBETH, as King, LADY  
MACBETH, as Queen, LENNOX, ROSS, Lords,  
Ladies, and Attendants.*

*Macb.* Here's our chief guest.

*Lady M.* If he had been forgotten,  
It had been as a gap in our great feast,  
And all-things unbecoming.

*Macb.* To-night we hold a solemn supper, sir,  
And I'll request your presence.



*Ban.* Let your Highness  
Command upon me; to the which my duties  
Are with a most indissoluble tie  
For ever knit.

*Macb.* Ride you this afternoon?

*Ban.* Ay, my good lord. 20

*Macb.* We should have else desired your good  
advice,

Which still hath been both grave and prosperous,  
In this day's council; but we'll take to-morrow.  
Is't far you ride?

*Ban.* As far, my lord, as will fill up the time  
'Twixt this and supper. Go not my horse the  
better,

I must become a borrower of the night  
For a dark hour or twain.

*Macb.* Fail not our feast.

*Ban.* My lord, I will not.

*Macb.* We hear, our bloody cousins are be-  
stow'd 30

In England and in Ireland, not confessing  
Their cruel parricide, filling their hearers  
With strange invention. But of that to-morrow,  
When therewithal we shall have cause of state  
Craving us jointly. Hie you to horse; adieu.  
Till you return at night. Goes Fleance with you?

*Ban.* Ay, my good lord. Our time does call  
upon's.

*Macb.* I wish your horses swift and sure of foot;  
And so I do commend you to their backs.  
Farewell. [Exit BANQUO. 40

Let every man be master of his time  
Till seven at night. To make society  
The sweeter welcome, we will keep ourself  
Till supper-time alone; while then, God be with  
you!

[*Exeunt all but MACBETH, and an ATTENDANT.*  
Sirrah, a word with you. Attend those men  
Our pleasure?

*Atten.* They are, my lord, without the palace  
gate.

*Macb.* Bring them before us.

[*Exit ATTENDANT.*

To be thus is nothing;

But to be safely thus. Our fears in Banquo  
Stick deep; and in his royalty of nature 50  
Reigns that which would be fear'd. 'Tis much he  
dares;

And, to that dauntless temper of his mind,  
He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valour  
To act in safety. There is none but he  
Whose being I do fear; and, under him,  
My Genius is rebuked, as, it is said,

Mark Antony's was by Cæsar. He chid the  
sisters

When first they put the name of king upon me,

And bade them speak to him; then prophet-like  
They hail'd him father to a line of kings; 60  
Upon my head they placed a fruitless crown,  
And put a barren sceptre in my gripe,  
Thence to be wrench'd with an unlineal hand,  
No son of mine succeeding. If't be so,  
For Banquo's issue have I filed my mind;  
For them the gracious Duncan have I murder'd;  
Put rancours in the vessel of my peace  
Only for them; and mine eternal jewel  
Given to the common enemy of man,  
To make them kings, the seed of Banquo  
Kings! 70

Rather than so, come fate into the list,  
And champion me to the utterance! Who's there?

*Re-enter Attendant, with TWO MURDERERS.*

Now go to the door, and stay there till we call.

[*Exit Attendant.*

Was it not yesterday we spoke together?

*1st Mur.* It was, so please your Highness.

*Macb.* Well then, now  
Have you consider'd of my speeches? Know  
That it was he in the times past which held you  
So under fortune, which you thought had been  
Our innocent self. This I made good to you  
In our last conference, pass'd in probation with  
you, 80

How you were borne in hand, how cross'd, the  
instruments,

Who wrought with them, and all things else that  
might

To half a soul and to a notion crazed

Say "Thus did Banquo."

*1st Mur.* You made it known to us.

*Macb.* I did so, and went further, which is now  
Our point of second meeting. Do you find  
Your patience so predominant in your nature  
That you can let this go? Are you so gospell'd  
To pray for this good man and for his issue,  
Whose heavy hand hath bow'd you to the grave  
And beggar'd yours for ever?

*1st Mur.* We are men, my liege. 91

*Macb.* Ay, in the catalogue ye go for men;  
As hounds and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels,  
curs,

Shoughs, water-rugs and demi-wolves are clept  
All by the name of dogs; the valued file  
Distinguishes the swift, the slow, the subtle,  
The housekeeper, the hunter, every one  
According to the gift which bounteous nature  
Hath in him closed, whereby he does receive  
Particular addition, from the bill 100

That writes them all alike; and so of men.

Now, if you have a station in the file,  
Not i' the worst rank of manhood, say't;

And I will put that business in your bosoms,  
Whose execution takes your enemy off,  
Grapples you to the heart and love of us,  
Who wear our health but sickly in his life,  
Which in his death were perfect.

*2nd Mur.* I am one, my liege,  
Whom the vile blows and buffets of the world  
Have so incensed that I am reckless what  
I do to spite the world. 110

*1st Mur.* And I another  
So weary with disasters, tugg'd with fortune,  
That I would set my life on any chance,  
To mend it, or be rid on't.

*Macb.* Both of you  
Know Banquo was your enemy.

*Both Mur.* True, my lord.

*Macb.* So is he mine; and in such bloody distance,

That every minute of his being thrusts  
Against my near'st of life; and though I could  
With barefaced power sweep him from my sight  
And bid my will avouch it, yet I must not, 120  
For certain friends that are both his and mine,  
Whose loves I may not drop, but wail his fall  
Who I myself struck down; and thence it is,  
That I to your assistance do make love,  
Masking the business from the common eye  
For sundry weighty reasons.

*2nd Mur.* We shall, my lord,  
Perform what you command us.

*1st Mur.* Though our lives—  
*Macb.* Your spirits shine through you. Within  
this hour at most

I will advise you where to plant yourselves;  
Acquaint you with the perfect spy o' the time, 130  
The moment on't; for't must be done to-night,  
And something from the palace; always thought  
That I require a clearness: and with him—  
To leave no rubs nor botches in the work—  
Fleance his son, that keeps him company,  
Whose absence is no less material to me  
Than is his father's, must embrace the fate  
Of that dark hour. Resolve yourselves apart;  
I'll come to you anon.

*Both Mur.* We are resolved, my lord.

*Macb.* I'll call upon you straight; abide  
within. [Exeunt MURDERERS. 140]  
It is concluded. Banquo, thy soul's flight,  
If it find heaven, must find it out to-night. [Exit.]

#### SCENE II. The palace

*Enter LADY MACBETH and a SERVANT.*

*Lady M.* Is Banquo gone from court?

*Serv.* Ay, madam, but returns again to-night.

*Lady M.* Say to the King, I would attend his  
leisure

For a few words.

*Serv.* Madam, I will. [Exit.]

*Lady M.* Nought's had, all's spent,  
Where our desire is got without content.  
'Tis safer to be that which we destroy  
Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy.

*Enter MACBETH.*

How now, my lord! why do you keep alone,  
Of sorriest fancies your companions making,  
Using those thoughts which should indeed have  
died 10

With them they think on? Things without all  
remedy

Should be without regard; what's done is done.

*Macb.* We have scotch'd the snake, nor kill'd it;  
She'll close and be herself, whilst our poor malice  
Remains in danger of her former tooth,  
But let the frame of things disjoint, both the  
worlds suffer,

Ere we will eat our meal in fear and sleep  
In the affliction of these terrible dreams  
That shake us nightly. Better be with the dead,  
Whom we, to gain our peace, have sent to  
peace,

Than on the torture of the mind to lie 21  
In restless ecstasy. Duncan is in his grave;  
After life's fitful fever he sleeps well;  
Treason has done his worst; nor steel, nor poison,  
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing,  
Can touch him further.

*Lady M.* Come on;  
Gentle my lord, sleek o'er your rugged looks;  
Be bright and jovial among your guests to-  
night.

*Macb.* So shall I, love; and so, I pray, be you.  
Let your remembrance apply to Banquo; 30  
Present him eminence, both with eye and tongue.  
Unsafe the while, that we  
Must lave our honours in these flattering streams,  
And make our faces vizards to our hearts,  
Disguising what they are.

*Lady M.* You must leave this.

*Macb.* O, full of scorpions is my mind, dear  
wife!

Thou know'st that Banquo, and his Fleance, lives.

*Lady M.* But in them nature's copy's not eterne.

*Macb.* There's comfort yet; they are assailable;  
Then be thou jocund; ere the bat hath flown 40  
His cloister'd flight, ere to black Hecate's sum-  
mons

The shard-borne beetle with his drowsy hums  
Hath rung night's yawning peal, there shall be  
done

A deed of dreadful note.

*Lady M.* What's to be done?



*Macb.* Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest  
 chuck,  
 Till thou applaud the deed. Come, seeling night,  
 Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day;  
 And with thy bloody and invisible hand  
 Cancel and tear to pieces that great bond  
 Which keeps me pale! Light thickens; and the  
 crow 50  
 Makes wing to the rooky wood;  
 Good things of day begin to droop and drowse;  
 Whiles night's black agents to their preys do  
 rouse.  
 Thou marvell'st at my words, but hold thee still;  
 Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill.  
 So, prithee, go with me. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *A park near the palace**Enter THREE MURDERERS.*

*1st Mur.* But who did bid thee join with us?  
*3rd Mur.* Macbeth.  
*2nd Mur.* He needs not our mistrust, since he  
 delivers  
 Our offices and what we have to do  
 To the direction just.  
*1st Mur.* Then stand with us.  
 The west yet glimmers with some streaks of  
 day;  
 Now spurs the lated traveller apace  
 To gain the timely inn; and near approaches  
 The subject of our watch.  
*3rd Mur.* Hark! I hear horses.  
*Ban.* [*Within*] Give us a light there, ho!  
*2nd Mur.* Then 'tis he; the rest  
 That are within the note of expectation 10  
 Already are i' the court.  
*1st Mur.* His horses go about.  
*3rd Mur.* Almost a mile; but he does usually,  
 So all men do, from hence to the palace gate  
 Make it their walk.  
*2nd Mur.* A light, a light!  
*Enter BANQUO, and FLEANCE with a torch.*  
*3rd Mur.* 'Tis he.  
*1st Mur.* Stand to't.  
*Ban.* It will be rain to-night.  
*1st Mur.* Let it come down.  
*They set upon BANQUO.*  
*Ban.* O, treachery! Fly, good Fleance, fly, fly,  
 fly!  
 Thou mayst revenge. O slave!  
 [*Dies. FLEANCE escapes.*]  
*3rd Mur.* Who did strike out the light?  
*1st Mur.* Was't not the way?  
*3rd Mur.* There's but one down; the son is fled.  
*2nd Mur.* We have lost 20  
 Best half of our affair.

*1st Mur.* Well, let's away, and say how much is  
 done. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV. *The same: hall in the palace*

*A banquet prepared. Enter MACBETH, LADY MACBETH, ROSS, LENNOX, Lords, and Attendants.*

*Macb.* You know your own degrees; sit down.  
 At first  
 And last the hearty welcome.  
*Lords.* Thanks to your Majesty.  
*Macb.* Ourself will mingle with society,  
 And play the humble host.  
 Our hostess keeps her state, but in best time  
 We will require her welcome.  
*Lady M.* Pronounce it for me, sir, to all our  
 friends;  
 For my heart speaks they are welcome.

FIRST MURDERER *appears at the door.*

*Macb.* See, they encounter thee with their  
 hearts' thanks.  
 Both sides are even; here I'll sit i' the midst. 10  
 Be large in mirth; anon we'll drink a measure  
 The table round. [*Approaching the door.*] There's  
 blood upon thy face.  
*1st Mur.* 'Tis Banquo's then.  
*Macb.* 'Tis better thee without than he within.  
 Is he dispatch'd?  
*1st Mur.* My lord, his throat is cut; that I did  
 for him.  
*Macb.* Thou art the best o' the cut-throats; yet  
 he's good  
 That did the like for Fleance. If thou didst it,  
 Thou art the nonpareil.  
*1st Mur.* Most royal sir,  
 Fleance is 'scaped. 20  
*Macb.* Then comes my fit again. I had else been  
 perfect,  
 Whole as the marble, founded as the rock,  
 As broad and general as the casing air;  
 But now I am cabin'd, cribb'd, confined, bound in  
 To saucy doubts and fears. But Banquo's safe?  
*1st Mur.* Ay, my good lord; safe in a ditch he  
 bides,  
 With twenty trenched gashes on his head;  
 The least a death to nature.  
*Macb.* Thanks for that.  
 There the grown serpent lies; the worm that's  
 fled  
 Hath nature that in time will venom breed, 30  
 No teeth for the present. Get thee gone; to-  
 morrow  
 We'll hear, ourselves, again. [*Exit MURDERER.*]  
*Lady M.* My royal lord,  
 You do not give the cheer. The feast is sold  
 That is not often vouch'd, while 'tis a-making,

'Tis given with welcome. To feed were best at home;

From thence the sauce to meat is ceremony;  
Meeting were bare without it.

*Macb.* Sweet remembrancer!  
Now, good digestion wait on appetite,  
And health on both!

*Len.* May't please your Highness sit.

*The Ghost of Banquo enters, and sits in Macbeth's place.*

*Macb.* Here had we now our country's honour roof'd, 40

Were the graced person of our Banquo present;  
Who may I rather challenge for unkindness  
Than pity for mischance!

*Ross.* His absence, sir,  
Lays blame upon his promise. Please't your Highness

To grace us with your royal company.

*Macb.* The table's full.

*Len.* Here is a place reserved, sir.

*Macb.* Where?

*Len.* Here, my good lord. What is't that moves  
your Highness?

*Macb.* Which of you have done this?

*Lords.* What, my good lord?

*Macb.* Thou canst not say I did it. Never shake 50

Thy gory locks at me.

*Ross.* Gentlemen, rise: his Highness is not well.

*Lady M.* Sit, worthy friends; my lord is often thus,

And hath been from his youth. Pray you, keep seat;

The fit is momentary; upon a thought  
He will again be well. If much you note him,  
You shall offend him and extend his passion.  
Feed, and regard him not. Are you a man?

*Macb.* Ay, and a bold one, that dare look on that  
Which might appal the devil.

*Lady M.* O proper stuff! 60

This is the very painting of your fear;  
This is the air-drawn dagger which, you said,  
Led you to Duncan. O, these flaws and starts,  
Impostors to true fear, would well become  
A woman's story at a winter's fire,  
Authorized by her grandam. Shame itself!  
Why do you make such faces? When all's done,  
You look but on a stool.

*Macb.* Prithee, see there! behold! look! lo! how  
say you?

Why, what care I? If thou canst nod, speak too.  
If charnel-houses and our graves must send 71  
Those that we bury back, our monuments  
Shall be the maws of kites. [*Ghost vanishes.*

*Lady M.* What, quite unmann'd in folly?  
*Macb.* If I stand here, I saw him.

*Lady M.* Fie, for shame!

*Macb.* Blood hath been shed ere now, i' the  
olden time,

Ere humane statute purged the gentle weal;  
Ay, and since too, murders have been perform'd  
Too terrible for the ear. The time has been  
That, when the brains were out, the man would  
die,

And there an end; but now they rise again, 80  
With twenty mortal murders on their crowns,  
And push us from our stools. This is more strange  
Than such a murder is.

*Lady M.* My worthy lord,

Your noble friends do lack you.

*Macb.* I do forget.

Do not muse at me, my most worthy friends;  
I have a strange infirmity, which is nothing  
To those that know me. Come, love and health  
to all;

Then I'll sit down. Give me some wine; fill full.  
I drink to the general joy o' the whole table, 89  
And to our dear friend Banquo, whom we miss;  
Would he were here! to all, and him, we thirst,  
And all to all.

*Lords.* Our duties, and the pledge.

*Re-enter Ghost.*

*Macb.* Avaunt! and quit my sight! let the earth  
hide thee!

Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold;  
Thou hast no speculation in those eyes  
Which thou dost glare with!

*Lady M.* Think of this, good peers,  
But as a thing of custom; 'tis no other.  
Only it spoils the pleasure of the time.

*Macb.* What man dare, I dare.  
Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear, 100  
The arm'd rhinoceros, or the Hyrcan tiger;  
Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves  
Shall never tremble. Or be alive again,  
And dare me to the desert with thy sword;  
If trembling I inhabit then, protest me  
The baby of a girl. Hence, horrible shadow!  
Unreal mockery, hence! [*Ghost vanishes.*

Why, so; being gone,  
I am a man again. Pray you, sit still.

*Lady M.* You have displaced the mirth, broke  
the good meeting,

With most admired disorder.

*Macb.* Can such things be, 110  
And overcome us like a summer's cloud,  
Without our special wonder? You make me  
strange  
Even to the disposition that I owe,



When now I think you can behold such sights,  
And keep the natural ruby of your cheeks,  
When mine is blanch'd with fear.

*Ross.* What sights, my lord?

*Lady M.* I pray you, speak not; he grows worse  
and worse;

Question enrages him. At once, good night.  
Stand not upon the order of your going,  
But go at once.

*Len.* Good night; and better health 120

Attend his Majesty!

*Lady M.* A kind good night to all!

[*Exeunt all but MACBETH and LADY MACBETH.*]

*Macb.* It will have blood; they say, blood will  
have blood.

Stones have been known to move and trees to  
speak;

Augurs and understood relations have

By magot-pies and choughs and rooks brought  
forth

The secret'st man of blood. What is the night?

*Lady M.* Almost at odds with morning, which  
is which.

*Macb.* How say'st thou, that Macduff denies his  
person

At our great bidding?

*Lady M.* Did you send to him, sir?

*Macb.* I hear it by the way; but I will send.

There's not a one of them but in his house 131

I keep a servant fee'd. I will to-morrow,

And betimes I will, to the weird sisters.

More shall they speak; for now I am bent to  
know,

By the worst means, the worst. For mine own  
good,

All causes shall give way. I am in blood

Stepp'd in so far that, should I wade no more,

Returning were as tedious as go o'er.

Strange things I have in head, that will to hand;

Which must be acted ere they may be scann'd.

*Lady M.* You lack the season of all natures,  
sleep. 141

*Macb.* Come, we'll to sleep. My strange and  
self-abuse

Is the initiate fear that wants hard use.

We are yet but young in deed.

[*Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE V. *A Heath*

*Thunder.* Enter the THREE WITCHES,  
meeting HECATE.

*1st Witch.* Why, how now, Hecate! you look  
angrily.

*Hec.* Have I not reason, beldams as you are,

Saucy and overbold? How did you dare

To trade and traffic with Macbeth

In riddles and affairs of death;

And I, the mistress of your charms,

The close contriver of all harms,

Was never call'd to bear my part,

Or show the glory of our art?

And, which is worse, all you have done 10

Hath been but for a wayward son,

Spiteful and wrathful, who, as others do,

Loves for his own ends, not for you.

But make amends now; get you gone,

And at the pit of Acheron

Meet me i' the morning; thither he

Will come to know his destiny.

Your vessels and your spells provide,

Your charms and everything beside.

I am for the air; this night I'll spend 20

Unto a dismal and a fatal end;

Great business must be wrought ere noon.

Upon the corner of the moon

There hangs a vaporous drop profound;

I'll catch it ere it come to ground;

And that distill'd by magic sleights

Shall raise such artificial sprites

As by the strength of their illusion

Shall draw him on to his confusion.

He shall spurn fate, scorn death, and bear 30

His hopes 'bove wisdom, grace and fear;

And you all know, security

Is mortals' chiefest enemy.

*Music and a song within:* "Come away, come  
away," &c.

Hark! I am call'd; my little spirit, see,

Sits in a foggy cloud, and stays for me. [*Exit.*]

*1st Witch.* Come, let's make haste; she'll soon  
be back again. [*Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE VI. *Forres: the palace*

Enter LENNOX and another LORD.

*Len.* My former speeches have but hit your  
thoughts,

Which can interpret further; only, I say,

Things have been strangely borne. The gracious

Duncan

Was pitied of Macbeth; marry, he was dead.

And the right-valiant Banquo walk'd too late;

Whom, you may say, if't please you, Fleance

kill'd,

For Fleance fled. Men must not walk too late.

Who cannot want the thought how monstrous

It was for Malcolm and for Donalbain

To kill their gracious father? damned fact! 10

How it did grieve Macbeth! did he not straight

In pious rage the two delinquents tear,

That were the slaves of drink and thralls of sleep?

Was not that nobly done? Ay, and wisely too;

For 'twould have anger'd any heart alive

To hear the men deny't. So that, I say,

He has borne all things well; and I do think  
That had he Duncan's sons under his key—  
As, an't please heaven, he shall not—they should  
find

What 'twere to kill a father; so should Fleance. 20  
But, peace! for from broad words and 'cause he  
fail'd

His presence at the tyrant's feast, I hear  
Macduff lives in disgrace. Sir, can you tell  
Where he bestows himself?

Lord. The son of Duncan,  
From whom this tyrant holds the due of birth,  
Lives in the English court, and is received  
Of the most pious Edward with such grace  
That the malevolence of Fortune nothing  
Takes from his high respect. Thither Macduff  
Is gone to pray the holy King, upon his aid 30  
To wake Northumberland and warlike Siward;  
That, by the help of these—with Him above  
To ratify the work—we may again  
Give to our tables meat, sleep to our nights,  
Free from our feasts and banquets bloody knives,  
Do faithful homage, and receive free honours;  
All which we pine for now. And this report  
Hath so exasperate the King that he  
Prepares for some attempt of war.

Len. Sent he to Macduff?  
Lord. He did; and with an absolute "Sir,  
not I," 40

The cloudy messenger turns me his back,  
And hums, as who should say, "You'll rue the  
time

That clogs me with this answer."

Len. And that well might  
Advise him to a caution, to hold what distance  
His wisdom can provide. Some holy angel  
Fly to the court of England and unfold  
His message ere he come, that a swift blessing  
May soon return to this our suffering country  
Under a hand accurs'd!

Lord. I'll send my prayers with him.  
[Exeunt.]

## ACT IV

SCENE I. *A cavern: in the middle, a boiling  
cauldron*

*Thunder. Enter the THREE WITCHES.*

1st Witch. Thrice the brinded cat hath mew'd.

2nd Witch. Thrice and once the hedge-pig  
whined.

3rd Witch. Harpier cries; 'tis time, 'tis time.

1st Witch. Round about the cauldron go;

In the poison'd entrails throw.

Toad, that under cold stone

Days and nights has thirty-one

Swelter'd venom sleeping got,

Boil thou first i' the charmed pot.

All. Double, double, toil and trouble;  
Fire burn and cauldron bubble. 10

2nd Witch. Fillet of a fenny snake,  
In the cauldron boil and bake;  
Eye of newt and toe of frog,  
Wool of bat and tongue of dog,  
Adder's fork and blind-worm's sting,  
Lizard's leg and howlet's wing,  
For a charm of powerful trouble,  
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

All. Double, double, toil and trouble;  
Fire burn and cauldron bubble. 20

3rd Witch. Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf,  
Witches' mummy, maw and gulf  
Of the ravin'd salt-sea shark,  
Root of hemlock digg'd i' the dark,  
Liver of blaspheming Jew,  
Gall of goat, and slips of yew  
Sliver'd in the moon's eclipse,  
Nose of Turk and Tartar's lips,  
Finger of birth-strangled babe 30  
Ditch-deliver'd by a drab,  
Make the gruel thick and slab.  
Add thereto a tiger's chaudron,  
For the ingredients of our cauldron.

All. Double, double, toil and trouble;  
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

2nd Witch. Cool it with a baboon's blood,  
Then the charm is firm and good.

*Enter HECATE to the other THREE WITCHES.*

Hec. O, well done! I commend your pains;  
And every one shall share i' the gains. 40  
And now about the cauldron sing,  
Like elves and fairies in a ring,  
Enchanting all that you put in.

*Music and a song: "Black spirits," &c.*

[HECATE retires.]

2nd Witch. By the pricking of my thumbs,  
Something wicked this way comes.

Open, locks,  
Whoever knocks!

*Enter MACBETH.*

Macb. How now, you secret, black, and mid-  
night hags!

What is't you do?

All. A deed without a name. 49

Macb. I conjure you by that which you profess,  
Howe'er you come to know it, answer me:  
Though you untie the winds and let them fight  
Against the churches; though the yesty waves  
Confound and swallow navigation up;  
Though bladed corn be lodged and trees blown  
down;



Though castles topple on their warders' heads;  
 Though palaces and pyramids do slope  
 Their heads to their foundations; though the  
 treasure

Of nature's germens tumble all together,  
 Even till destruction sicken; answer me 60  
 To what I ask you.

*1st Witch.* Speak.

*2nd Witch.* Demand.

*3rd Witch.* We'll answer.

*1st Witch.* Say, if thou'dst rather hear it from  
 our mouths,

Or from our masters?

*Macb.* Call 'em; let me see 'em.

*1st Witch.* Pour in sow's blood, that hath eaten  
 Her nine farrow; grease that's sweaten  
 From the murderer's gibbet throw  
 Into the flame.

*All.* Come, high or low;  
 Thyself and office deftly show!

*Thunder.* FIRST APPARITION: *an armed Head.*

*Macb.* Tell me, thou unknown power—

*1st Witch.* He knows thy thought.

Hear his speech, but say thou nought. 70

*1st App.* Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth! beware  
 Macduff;

Beware the thane of Fife. Dismiss me. Enough.  
 [*Descends.*]

*Macb.* Whate'er thou art, for thy good caution,  
 thanks;

Thou hast harp'd my fear aright. But one word  
 more—

*1st Witch.* He will not be commanded. Here's  
 another,

More potent than the first.

*Thunder.* SECOND APPARITION: *a bloody Child.*

*2nd App.* Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth!

*Macb.* Had I three ears, I'd hear thee.

*2nd App.* Be bloody, bold, and resolute; laugh  
 to scorn

The power of man, for none of woman born 80  
 Shall harm Macbeth. [*Descends.*]

*Macb.* Then live, Macduff; what need I fear of  
 thee?

But yet I'll make assurance double sure,  
 And take a bond of fate. Thou shalt not live;  
 That I may tell pale-hearted fear it lies,  
 And sleep in spite of thunder.

*Thunder.* THIRD APPARITION: *a Child crowned,  
 with a tree in his hand.*

What is this

That rises like the issue of a king,  
 And wears upon his baby-brow the round

And top of sovereignty?

*All.* Listen, but speak not to 't.

*3rd App.* Be lion-mettled, proud; and take no  
 care 90

Who chafes, who frets, or where conspirers are.

Macbeth shall never vanquish'd be until  
 Great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill  
 Shall come against him. [*Descends.*]

*Macb.* That will never be.

Who can impress the forest, bid the tree  
 Unfix his earth-bound root? Sweet bodements!  
 good!

Rebellion's head, rise never till the wood  
 Of Birnam rise, and our high-placed Macbeth  
 Shall live the lease of nature, pay his breath  
 To time and mortal custom. Yet my heart 100  
 Throbs to know one thing. Tell me, if your art  
 Can tell so much: shall Banquo's issue ever  
 Reign in this kingdom?

*All.* Seek to know no more.

*Macb.* I will be satisfied; deny me this,  
 And an eternal curse fall on you! Let me know.  
 Why sinks that cauldron? and what noise is this?

*Hautboys.*

*1st Witch.* Show!

*2nd Witch.* Show!

*3rd Witch.* Show!

*All.* Show his eyes, and grieve his heart; 110  
 Come like shadows, so depart!

*A show of EIGHT KINGS, the last with a glass in  
 his hand; Banquo's Ghost following.*

*Macb.* Thou art too like the spirit of Banquo;  
 down!

Thy crown does sear mine eye-balls. And thy  
 hair,

Thou other gold-bound brow, is like the first.

A third is like the former. Filthy hags!

Why do you show me this? A fourth! Start, eyes!

What, will the line stretch out to the crack of  
 doom?

Another yet! A seventh! I'll see no more.

And yet the eighth appears, who bears a glass  
 Which shows me many more; and some I see 120  
 That two-fold balls and treble sceptres carry.

Horrible sight! Now, I see, 'tis true;

For the blood-bolter'd Banquo smiles upon me,  
 And points at them for his. [*Apparitions vanish.*]

What, is this so?

*1st Witch.* Ay, sir, all this is so. But why  
 Stands Macbeth thus amazedly?

Come, sisters, cheer we up his sprites,  
 And show the best of our delights.

I'll charm the air to give a sound,

While you perform your antic round; 130

That this great king may kindly say,

Our duties did his welcome pay.

[*Music. The WITCHES dance, and then vanish, with HECATE.*]

*Macb.* Where are they? Gone? Let this pernicious hour

Stand aye accursed in the calendar!  
Come in, without there!

*Enter LENNOX.*

*Len.* What's your Grace's will?

*Macb.* Saw you the weird sisters?

*Len.* No, my lord.

*Macb.* Came they not by you?

*Len.* No, indeed, my lord.

*Macb.* Infected be the air whereon they ride;  
And damn'd all those that trust them! I did hear  
The galloping of horse; who was't came by? 140

*Len.* 'Tis two or three, my lord, that bring you word

Macduff is fled to England.

*Macb.* Fled to England!

*Len.* Ay, my good lord.

*Macb.* Time, thou anticipatest my dread exploits;

The flighty purpose never is o'ertook  
Unless the deed go with it. From this moment  
The very firstlings of my heart shall be  
The firstlings of my hand. And even now,  
To crown my thoughts with acts, be it thought  
and done.

The castle of Macduff I will surprise; 150

Seize upon Fife; give to the edge o' the sword  
His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls  
That trace him in his line. No boasting like a  
fool;

This deed I'll do before this purpose cool.

But no more sights! Where are these gentlemen?  
Come, bring me where they are. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *Fife: Macduff's castle*

*Enter LADY MACDUFF, her SON, and ROSS.*

*L. Macd.* What had he done, to make him fly  
the land?

*Ross.* You must have patience, madam.

*L. Macd.* He had none;  
His flight was madness. When our actions do  
not,

Our fears do make us traitors.

*Ross.* You know not  
Whether it was his wisdom or his fear.

*L. Macd.* Wisdom! to leave his wife, to leave  
his babes,

His mansion, and his titles in a place  
From whence himself does fly? He loves us not;  
He wants the natural touch; for the poor wren,  
The most diminutive of birds, will fight, 10

Her young ones in her nest, against the owl.

All is the fear and nothing is the love;  
As little is the wisdom, where the flight  
So runs against all reason.

*Ross.* My dearest coz,  
I pray you, school yourself; but for your husband,

He is noble, wise, judicious, and best knows  
The fits o' the season. I dare not speak much  
further;

But cruel are the times, when we are traitors  
And do not know ourselves, when we hold rumour

From what we fear, yet know not what we fear,  
But float upon a wild and violent sea 21  
Each way and move. I take my leave of you;  
Shall not be long but I'll be here again.

Things at the worst will cease, or else climb upward

To what they were before. My pretty cousin,  
Blessing upon you!

*L. Macd.* Father'd he is, and yet he's fatherless.

*Ross.* I am so much a fool, should I stay longer,  
It would be my disgrace and your discomfort.  
I take my leave at once. [*Exit.*]

*L. Macd.* Sirrah, your father's dead; 30  
And what will you do now? How will you live?

*Son.* As birds do, mother.

*L. Macd.* What, with worms and flies?

*Son.* With what I get, I mean; and so do they.

*L. Macd.* Poor bird! thou'dst never fear the net  
nor lime,

The pitfall nor the gin.

*Son.* Why should I, mother? Poor birds they  
are not set for.

My father is not dead, for all your saying.

*L. Macd.* Yes, he is dead. How wilt thou do for  
a father?

*Son.* Nay, how will you do for a husband?

*L. Macd.* Why, I can buy me twenty at any  
market. 40

*Son.* Then you'll buy 'em to sell again.

*L. Macd.* Thou speak'st with all thy wit; and  
yet, i' faith,

With wit enough for thee.

*Son.* Was my father a traitor, mother?

*L. Macd.* Ay, that he was.

*Son.* What is a traitor?

*L. Macd.* Why, one that swears and lies.

*Son.* And be all traitors that do so?

*L. Macd.* Every one that does so is a traitor, and  
must be hanged. 50

*Son.* And must they all be hanged that swear  
and lie?

*L. Macd.* Every one.

*Son.* Who must hang them?



*L. Macd.* Why, the honest men.

*Son.* Then the liars and swearers are fools, for there are liars and swearers enow to beat the honest men and hang up them.

*L. Macd.* Now, God help thee, poor monkey! But how wilt thou do for a father? 60

*Son.* If he were dead, you'd weep for him; if you would not, it were a good sign that I should quickly have a new father.

*L. Macd.* Poor prattler, how thou talk'st!

*Enter a MESSENGER.*

*Mess.* Bless you, fair dame! I am not to you known,

Though in your state of honour I am perfect. I doubt some danger does approach you nearly. If you will take a homely man's advice, Be not found here; hence, with your little ones. To fright you thus, methinks, I am too savage; 70 To do worse to you were fell cruelty, Which is too nigh your person. Heaven preserve you!

I dare abide no longer. *[Exit.*

*L. Macd.* Whither should I fly?

I have done no harm. But I remember now I am in this earthly world; where to do harm Is often laudable, to do good sometime Accounted dangerous folly. Why then, alas, Do I put up that womanly defence, To say I have done no harm?

*Enter MURDERERS.*

What are these faces?

*1st Mur.* Where is your husband? 80

*L. Macd.* I hope, in no place so unsanctified Where such as thou mayst find him.

*1st Mur.* He's a traitor.

*Son.* Thou liest, thou shag-hair'd villain!

*1st Mur.* What, you egg!

*Stabbing him.*

Young fry of treachery!

*Son.* He has kill'd me, mother.

Run away, I pray you! *[Dies.*

*[Exit LADY MACDUFF, crying "Murder!"*

*Exeunt MURDERERS, following her.*

SCENE III. *England: before the King's palace*

*Enter MALCOLM and MACDUFF.*

*Mal.* Let us seek out some desolate shade, and there

Weep our sad bosoms empty.

*Macd.* Let us rather

Hold fast the mortal sword, and like good men Bestride our down-fall'n birthdom. Each new morn New widows howl, new orphans cry, new sorrows

Strike heaven on the face, that it resounds As if it felt with Scotland and yell'd out Like syllable of dolour.

*Mal.* What I believe I'll wail, What know believe, and what I can redress, As I shall find the time to friend, I will. 10 What you have spoke, it may be so perchance. This tyrant, whose sole name blisters our tongues, Was once thought honest; you have loved him well.

He hath not touch'd you yet. I am young; but something

You may deserve of him through me, and wisdom To offer up a weak poor innocent lamb To appease an angry god.

*Macd.* I am not treacherous.

*Mal.* But Macbeth is.

A good and virtuous nature may recoil In an imperial charge. But I shall crave your pardon; 20

That which you are my thoughts cannot transpose.

Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell. Though all things foul would wear the brows of grace,

Yet grace must still look so.

*Macd.* I have lost my hopes.

*Mal.* Perchance even there where I did find my doubts.

Why in that rawness left you wife and child, Those precious motives, those strong knots of love,

Without leave-taking? I pray you, Let not my jealousies be your dishonours, 29 But mine own safeties. You may be rightly just, Whatever I shall think.

*Macd.* Bleed, bleed, poor country!

Great tyranny! lay thou thy basis sure, For goodness dare not check thee. Wear thou thy wrongs;

The title is affeer'd! Fare thee well, lord.

I would not be the villain that thou think'st For the whole space that's in the tyrant's grasp, And the rich East to boot.

*Mal.* Be not offended.

I speak not as in absolute fear of you.

I think our country sinks beneath the yoke; It weeps, it bleeds; and each new day a gash 40 Is added to her wounds. I think withal

There would be hands uplifted in my right;

And here from gracious England have I offer

Of goodly thousands. But, for all this,

When I shall tread upon the tyrant's head,

Or wear it on my sword, yet my poor country

Shall have more vices than it had before,

More suffer and more sundry ways than ever,

By him that shall succeed.

*Macd.* What should he be?

*Mal.* It is myself I mean; in whom I know 50  
All the particulars of vice so grafted  
That, when they shall be open'd, black Macbeth  
Will seem as pure as snow, and the poor state  
Esteem him as a lamb, being compared  
With my confineless harms.

*Macd.* Not in the legions  
Of horrid hell can come a devil more damn'd  
In evils to top Macbeth.

*Mal.* I grant him bloody,  
Luxurious, avaricious, false, deceitful,  
Sudden, malicious, smacking of every sin  
That has a name; but there's no bottom, none, 60  
In my voluptuousness. Your wives, your daughters,  
Your matrons, and your maids, could not fill up

The cistern of my lust, and my desire  
All continent impediments would o'erbear  
That did oppose my will. Better Macbeth  
Than such an one to reign.

*Macd.* Boundless intemperance  
In nature is a tyranny; it hath been  
The untimely emptying of the happy throne  
And fall of many kings. But fear not yet  
To take upon you what is yours; you may 70  
Convey your pleasures in a spacious plenty,  
And yet seem cold, the time you may so hood-  
wink.

We have willing dames enough; there cannot be  
That vulture in you, to devour so many  
As will to greatness dedicate themselves,  
Finding it so inclined.

*Mal.* With this there grows  
In my most ill-composed affection such  
A stanchless avarice that, were I king,  
I should cut off the nobles for their lands,  
Desire his jewels and this other's house; 80  
And my more-having would be as a sauce  
To make me hunger more; that I should forge  
Quarrels unjust against the good and loyal,  
Destroying them for wealth.

*Macd.* This avarice  
Sticks deeper, grows with more pernicious root  
Than summer-seeming lust, and it hath been  
The sword of our slain kings. Yet do not fear;  
Scotland hath foisons to fill up your will,  
Of your mere own. All these are portable,  
With other graces weigh'd. 90

*Mal.* But I have none. The king-becoming  
graces,

As justice, verity, temperance, stableness,  
Bounty, perseverance, mercy, lowliness,  
Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude,  
I have no relish of them, but abound

In the division of each several crime,  
Acting it many ways. Nay, had I power, I should  
Pour the sweet milk of concord into hell,  
Uproar the universal peace, confound  
All unity on earth.

*Macd.* O Scotland, Scotland! 100

*Mal.* If such a one be fit to govern, speak.  
I am as I have spoken.

*Macd.* Fit to govern!  
No, not to live. O nation miserable,  
With an untitled tyrant bloody-scepter'd,  
When shalt thou see thy wholesome days again,  
Since that the truest issue of thy throne  
By his own interdiction stands accursed,  
And does blaspheme his breed? Thy royal father  
Was a most sainted king; the queen that bore  
thee,

Oftener upon her knees than on her feet, 110  
Died every day she lived. Fare thee well!  
These evils thou repeat'st upon thyself  
Have banish'd me from Scotland. O my breast,  
Thy hope ends here!

*Mal.* Macduff, this noble passion,  
Child of integrity, hath from my soul  
Wiped the black scruples, reconciled my thoughts  
To thy good truth and honour. Devilish Macbeth  
By many of these trains hath sought to win me  
Into his power, and modest wisdom plucks me  
From over-credulous haste. But God above 120  
Deal between thee and me! for even now

I put myself to thy direction, and  
Unspeak mine own detraction, here abjure  
The taints and blames I laid upon myself,  
For strangers to my nature. I am yet  
Unknown to woman, never was forsworn,  
Scarcely have coveted what was mine own,  
At no time broke my faith, would not betray  
The devil to his fellow, and delight  
No less in truth than life. My first false speaking  
Was this upon myself; what I am truly, 131

Is thine and my poor country's to command.  
Whither indeed, before thy here-approach,  
Old Siward, with ten thousand warlike men,  
Already at a point, was setting forth.  
Now we'll together; and the chance of goodness  
Be like our warranted quarrel! Why are you  
silent?

*Macd.* Such welcome and unwelcome things at  
once

'Tis hard to reconcile.

*Enter a DOCTOR.*

*Mal.* Well; more anon.—Comes the King forth,  
I pray you? 140

*Doct.* Ay, sir; there are a crew of wretched souls  
That stay his cure. Their malady convinces



The great assay of art; but at his touch—  
Such sanctity hath heaven given his hand—  
They presently amend.

*Mal.* I thank you, doctor. [*Exit DOCTOR.*]

*Macd.* What's the disease he means?

*Mal.* 'Tis call'd the evil:

A most miraculous work in this good king;  
Which often, since my here-remain in England,  
I have seen him do. How he solicits Heaven,  
Himself best knows; but strangely-visited  
people,

All swoln and ulcerous, pitiful to the eye, 151  
The mere despair of surgery, he cures,  
Hanging a golden stamp about their necks,  
Put on with holy prayers. And 'tis spoken,  
To the succeeding royalty he leaves  
The healing benediction. With this strange vir-  
tue,

He hath a heavenly gift of prophecy,  
And sundry blessings hang about his throne  
That speak him full of grace.

*Enter ROSS.*

*Macd.* See, who comes here?

*Mal.* My countryman; but yet I know him 160  
not.

*Macd.* My ever-gentle cousin, welcome hither.

*Mal.* I know him now. Good God, betimes re-  
move

The means that makes us strangers!

*Ross.* Sir, amen.

*Macd.* Stands Scotland where it did?

*Ross.* Alas, poor country!

Almost afraid to know itself. It cannot  
Be call'd our mother, but our grave; where noth-  
ing,

But who knows nothing, is once seen to smile;  
Where sighs and groans and shrieks that rend the  
air

Are made, not mark'd; where violent sorrow  
seems

A modern ecstasy. The dead man's knell 170  
Is there scarce ask'd for who; and good men's  
lives

Expire before the flowers in their caps,  
Dying or ere they sicken.

*Macd.* O, relation  
Too nice, and yet too true!

*Mal.* What's the newest grief?

*Ross.* That of an hour's age doth hiss the speak-  
er;

Each minute teems a new one.

*Macd.* How does my wife?

*Ross.* Why, well.

*Macd.* And all my children?

*Ross.* Well too.

*Macd.* The tyrant has not batter'd at their  
peace?

*Ross.* No; they were well at peace when I did  
leave 'em.

*Macd.* Be not a niggard of your speech; how  
goes't? 180

*Ross.* When I came hither to transport the tid-  
ings,  
Which I have heavily borne, there ran a rumour  
Of many worthy fellows that were out;  
Which was to my belief witness'd the rather,  
For that I saw the tyrant's power a-foot.  
Now is the time of help; your eye in Scotland  
Would create soldiers, make our women fight,  
To doff their dire distresses.

*Mal.* Be't their comfort  
We are coming thither. Gracious England hath  
Lent us good Siward and ten thousand men; 190  
An older and a better soldier none  
That Christendom gives out.

*Ross.* Would I could answer  
This comfort with the like! But I have words  
That would be howl'd out in the desert air,  
Where hearing should not latch them.

*Macd.* What concern they?  
The general cause? or is it a fee-grief  
Due to some single breast?

*Ross.* No mind that's honest  
But in it shares some woe; though the main part  
Pertains to you alone.

*Macd.* If it be mine,  
Keep it not from me, quickly let me have it. 200

*Ross.* Let not your ears despise my tongue for  
ever,  
Which shall possess them with the heaviest  
sound

That ever yet they heard.

*Macd.* Hum! I guess at it.

*Ross.* Your castle is surprised; your wife and  
babes

Savagely slaughter'd. To relate the manner  
Were, on the quarry of these murder'd deer,  
To add the death of you.

*Mal.* Merciful heaven!  
What, man! ne'er pull your hat upon your brows;  
Give sorrow words. The grief that does not  
speak

Whispers the o'er-fraught heart and bids it break.

*Macd.* My children too?

*Ross.* Wife, children, servants, all 211  
That could be found.

*Macd.* And I must be from thence!  
My wife kill'd too?

*Ross.* I have said.

*Mal.* Be comforted.  
Let's make us medicines of our great revenge

To cure this deadly grief.

*Macd.* He has no children. All my pretty ones?

Did you say all? O hell-kite! All?

What, all my pretty chickens and their dam

At one fell swoop?

*Mal.* Dispute it like a man.

*Macd.* I shall do so; 220

But I must also feel it as a man.

I cannot but remember such things were,

That were most precious to me. Did heaven look  
on,

And would not take their part? Sinful Macduff,  
They were all struck for thee! naught that I am,  
Not for their own demerits, but for mine,  
Fell slaughter on their souls. Heaven rest them  
now!

*Mal.* Be this the whetstone of your sword; let  
grief

Convert to anger; blunt not the heart, enrage it.

*Macd.* O, I could play the woman with mine  
eyes 230

And braggart with my tongue! But, gentle  
heavens,

Cut short all intermission; front to front  
Bring thou this fiend of Scotland and myself;  
Within my sword's length set him; if he 'scape,  
Heaven forgive him too!

*Mal.* This tune goes manly.

Come, go we to the King; our power is ready;

Our lack is nothing but our leave. Macbeth

Is ripe for shaking, and the powers above

Put on their instruments. Receive what cheer you  
may;

The night is long that never finds the day. 240

[*Exeunt.*]

## ACT V

SCENE 1. *Dunsinane: ante-room in the castle*

*Enter a DOCTOR OF PHYSIC and a WAITING-GENTLE-  
WOMAN.*

*Doct.* I have two nights watched with you, but  
can perceive no truth in your report. When was  
it she last walked?

*Gent.* Since his Majesty went into the field, I  
have seen her rise from her bed, throw her night-  
gown upon her, unlock her closet, take forth  
paper, fold it, write upon't, read it, afterwards  
seal it, and again return to bed; yet all this while  
in a most fast sleep. 9

*Doct.* A great perturbation in nature, to receive  
at once the benefit of sleep, and do the effects of  
watching! In this slumbry agitation, besides her  
walking and other actual performances, what, at  
any time, have you heard her say?

*Gent.* That, sir, which I will not report after her.

*Doct.* You may to me; and 'tis most meet you  
should.

*Gent.* Neither to you nor any one; having no  
witness to confirm my speech. 21

*Enter LADY MACBETH, with a taper.*

Lo you, here she comes! This is her very guise;  
and, upon my life, fast asleep. Observe her;  
stand close.

*Doct.* How came she by that light?

*Gent.* Why, it stood by her. She has light by her  
continually; 'tis her command.

*Doct.* You see, her eyes are open.

*Gent.* Ay, but their sense is shut.

*Doct.* What is it she does now? Look, how she  
rubs her hands. 31

*Gent.* It is an accustomed action with her, to  
seem thus washing her hands. I have known her  
continue in this a quarter of an hour.

*Lady M.* Yet here's a spot.

*Doct.* Hark! she speaks. I will set down what  
comes from her, to satisfy my remembrance the  
more strongly.

*Lady M.* Out, damned spot! out, I say! One;  
two. Why, then 'tis time to do't. Hell is murky!  
Fie, my lord, fie! a soldier, and afeard? What  
need we fear who knows it, when none can call  
our power to account? Yet who would have  
thought the old man to have had so much blood  
in him.

*Doct.* Do you mark that?

*Lady M.* The thane of Fife had a wife. Where  
is she now? What, will these hands ne'er be  
clean? No more o' that, my lord, no more o' that!  
You mar all with this starting. 50

*Doct.* Go to, go to; you have known what you  
should not.

*Gent.* She has spoke what she should not, I am  
sure of that. Heaven knows what she has known.

*Lady M.* Here's the smell of the blood still. All  
the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this  
little hand. Oh, oh, oh!

*Doct.* What a sigh is there! The heart is sorely  
charged. 60

*Gent.* I would not have such a heart in my bosom  
for the dignity of the whole body.

*Doct.* Well, well, well—

*Gent.* Pray God it be, sir.

*Doct.* This disease is beyond my practice. Yet I  
have known those which have walked in their  
sleep who have died holily in their beds.

*Lady M.* Wash your hands, put on your night-  
gown; look not so pale. I tell you yet again,  
Banquo's buried; he cannot come out on's grave.

*Doct.* Even so? 72

*Lady M.* To bed, to bed! there's knocking at



the gate. Come, come, come, come, give me your hand. What's done cannot be undone. To bed, to bed, to bed!

[Exit.

*Doct.* Will she go now to bed?

*Gent.* Directly.

*Doct.* Foul whisperings are abroad. Unnatural deeds

Do breed unnatural troubles. Infected minds 80  
To their deaf pillows will discharge their secrets.  
More needs she the divine than the physician.  
God, God forgive us all! Look after her;  
Remove from her the means of all annoyance,  
And still keep eyes upon her. So, good night.  
My mind she has mated, and amazed my sight.  
I think, but dare not speak.

*Gent.* Good night, good doctor.

[Exit.

SCENE II. *The country near Dunsinane*

*Drum and colours. Enter MENTEITH, CAITHNESS,  
ANGUS, LENNOX, and Soldiers.*

*Ment.* The English power is near, led on by  
Malcolm,

His uncle Siward, and the good Macduff.  
Revenge burn in them; for their dear causes  
Would to the bleeding and the grim alarm  
Excite the mortified man.

*Ang.* Near Birnam wood  
Shall we well meet them; that way are they  
coming.

*Caith.* Who knows if Donalbain be with his  
brother?

*Len.* For certain, sir, he is not; I have a file  
Of all the gentry. There is Siward's son,  
And many unrough youths that even now 10  
Protest their first of manhood.

*Ment.* What does the tyrant?

*Caith.* Great Dunsinane he strongly fortifies.  
Some say he's mad; others that lesser hate him  
Do call it valiant fury; but, for certain,  
He cannot buckle his distemper'd cause  
Within the belt of rule.

*Ang.* Now does he feel  
His secret murders sticking on his hands;  
Now minutely revolts upbraid his faith-breach;  
Those he commands move only in command,  
Nothing in love; now does he feel his title 20  
Hang loose about him, like a giant's robe  
Upon a dwarfish thief.

*Ment.* Who then shall blame  
His pester'd senses to recoil and start,  
When all that is within him does condemn  
Itself for being there?

*Caith.* Well, march we on,  
To give obedience where 'tis truly owed.  
Meet we the medicine of the sickly weal,

And with him pour we in our country's purge  
Each drop of us.

*Len.* Or so much as it needs,  
To dew the sovereign flower and drown the  
weeds.

30

Make we our march towards Birnam.

[Exit, marching.

SCENE III. *Dunsinane: a room in the castle*

*Enter MACBETH, DOCTOR, and Attendants.*

*Macb.* Bring me no more reports; let them fly  
all.

Till Birnam wood remove to Dunsinane,  
I cannot taint with fear. What's the boy Mal-  
colm?

Was he not born of woman? The spirits that  
know

All mortal consequences have pronounced me  
thus:

"Fear not, Macbeth; no man that's born of  
woman

Shall e'er have power upon thee." Then fly, false  
thanes,

And mingle with the English epicures.

The mind I sway by and the heart I bear

Shall never sag with doubt nor shake with fear. 10

*Enter a SERVANT.*

The devil damn thee black, thou cream-faced  
loon!

Where got'st thou that goose look?

*Serv.* There is ten thousand—

*Macb.* Geese, villain?

*Serv.* Soldiers, sir.

*Macb.* Go prick thy face, and over-red thy fear,  
Thou lily-liver'd boy. What soldiers, patch?

Death of thy soul! those linen cheeks of thine  
Are counsellors to fear. What soldiers, whey-  
face?

*Serv.* The English force, so please you.

*Macb.* Take thy face hence. [Exit SERVANT.

Seyton!—I am sick at heart,  
When I behold—Seyton, I say!—This push 20  
Will cheer me ever, or disseat me now.

I have lived long enough; my way of life

Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf;

And that which should accompany old age,

As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,

I must not look to have; but, in their stead,

Curses, not loud but deep, mouth-honour, breath,  
Which the poor heart would fain deny, and dare  
not.

Seyton!

*Enter SEYTON.*

*Sey.* What is your gracious pleasure?

*Macb.* What news more? 30  
*Sey.* All is confirm'd, my lord, which was reported.  
*Macb.* I'll fight till from my bones my flesh be hack'd.

Give me my armour.

*Sey.* 'Tis not needed yet.

*Macb.* I'll put it on.  
 Send out more horses; skirr the country round;  
 Hang those that talk of fear. Give me mine armour.

How does your patient, doctor?

*Doct.* Not so sick, my lord.  
 As she is troubled with thick-coming fancies,  
 That keep her from her rest.

*Macb.* Cure her of that.  
 Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased, 40  
 Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,  
 Raze out the written troubles of the brain,  
 And with some sweet oblivious antidote  
 Cleanse the stuff'd bosom of that perilous stuff  
 Which weighs upon the heart?

*Doct.* Therein the patient  
 Must minister to himself.

*Macb.* Throw physic to the dogs; I'll none of it.

Come, put mine armour on; give me my staff.  
 Seyton, send out. Doctor, the thanes fly from me. 49

Come, sir, dispatch. If thou couldst, doctor, cast  
 The water of my land, find her disease,  
 And purge it to a sound and pristine health,  
 I would applaud thee to the very echo,  
 That should applaud again.—Pull't off, I say.—  
 What rhubarb, senna, or what purgative drug,  
 Would scour these English hence? Hear'st thou of them?

*Doct.* Ay, my good lord; your royal preparation  
 Makes us hear something.

*Macb.* Bring it after me.  
 I will not be afraid of death and bane,  
 Till Birnam forest come to Dunsinane. 60

*Doct.* [*Aside*] Were I from Dunsinane away and clear,  
 Profit again should hardly draw me here.

[*Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE IV. Country near Birnam wood

*Drum and colours. Enter MALCOLM, OLD SIWARD and his son, MACDUFF, MENTEITH, CAITHNESS, ANGUS, LENNOX, ROSS, and Soldiers, marching.*

*Mal.* Cousins, I hope the days are near at hand  
 That chambers will be safe.

*Ment.* We doubt it nothing.

*Sirw.* What wood is this before us?

*Ment.* The wood of Birnam.  
*Mal.* Let every soldier hew him down a bough  
 And bear't before him; thereby shall we shadow  
 The numbers of our host and make discovery  
 Err in report of us.

*Soldiers.* It shall be done.

*Sirw.* We learn no other but the confident tyrant  
 Keeps still in Dunsinane, and will endure  
 Our setting down before 't.

*Mal.* 'Tis his main hope; 70  
 For where there is advantage to be given,  
 Both more and less have given him the revolt,  
 And none serve with him but constrained things  
 Whose hearts are absent too.

*Macd.* Let our just censures  
 Attend the true event, and put we on  
 Industrious soldiership.

*Sirw.* The time approaches  
 That will with due decision make us know  
 What we shall say we have and what we owe.  
 Thoughts speculative their unsure hopes relate,  
 But certain issue strokes must arbitrate; 20  
 Towards which advance the war.

[*Exeunt, marching.*]

#### SCENE V. Dunsinane: within the castle

*Enter MACBETH, SEYTON, and Soldiers, with drum and colours.*

*Macb.* Hang out our banners on the outward walls;  
 The cry is still "They come." Our castle's strength  
 Will laugh a siege to scorn; here let them lie  
 Till famine and the ague eat them up.  
 Were they not forced with those that should be ours,  
 We might have met them dareful, beard to beard,  
 And beat them backward home.

*A cry of women within.*

What is that noise?  
*Sey.* It is the cry of women, my good lord. 80

[*Exit.*]

*Macb.* I have almost forgot the taste of fears.  
 The time has been, my senses would have cool'd  
 To hear a night-shriek; and my fell of hair 11  
 Would at a dismal treatise rouse and stir  
 As life were in 't. I have supp'd full with horrors;  
 Direness, familiar to my slaughterous thoughts,  
 Cannot once start me.

*Re-enter SEYTON.*

Wherefore was that cry?

*Sey.* The Queen, my lord, is dead.

*Macb.* She should have died hereafter;  
 There would have been a time for such a word.  
 To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,



Creeps in this petty pace from day to day 20  
 To the last syllable of recorded time,  
 And all our yesterdays have lighted fools  
 The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!  
 Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player  
 That struts and frets his hour upon the stage  
 And then is heard no more. It is a tale  
 Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,  
 Signifying nothing.

*Enter a MESSENGER.*

Thou comest to use thy tongue; thy story  
 quickly.

*Mess.* Gracious my lord, 30  
 I should report that which I say I saw,  
 But know not how to do it.

*Macb.* Well, say, sir.

*Mess.* As I did stand my watch upon the hill,  
 I look'd toward Birnam, and anon, methought,  
 The wood began to move.

*Macb.* Liar and slave!

*Mess.* Let me endure your wrath, if't be not so.  
 Within this three mile may you see it coming;  
 I say, a moving grove.

*Macb.* If thou speak'st false,  
 Upon the next tree shalt thou hang alive,  
 Till famine cling thee. If thy speech be sooth, 40  
 I care not if thou dost for me as much.

I pull in resolution, and begin  
 To doubt the equivocation of the fiend  
 That lies like truth: "Fear not, till Birnam wood  
 Do come to Dunsinane"; and now a wood  
 Comes toward Dunsinane. Arm, arm, and out!

If this which he avouches does appear,  
 There is nor flying hence nor tarrying here.  
 I gin to be aweary of the sun,

And wish the estate o' the world were now un-  
 done. 50  
 Ring the alarum-bell! Blow, wind! come, wrack!  
 At least we'll die with harness on our back.

*[Exeunt.]*

SCENE VI. *Dunsinane: before the castle*

*Drum and colours. Enter MALCOLM, OLD SIWARD,  
 MACDUFF, and their Army, with boughs.*

*Mal.* Now near enough. Your leavy screens  
 throw down,  
 And show like those you are. You, worthy  
 uncle,

Shall, with my cousin, your right-noble son,  
 Lead our first battle. Worthy Macduff and we  
 Shall take upon 's what else remains to do,  
 According to our order.

*Siw.* Fare you well.

Do we but find the tyrant's power to-night,  
 Let us be beaten, if we cannot fight.

*Macd.* Make all our trumpets speak; give them  
 all breath 9  
 Those clamorous harbingers of blood and death.  
*[Exeunt.]*

SCENE VII. *Another part of the field*

*Alarums. Enter MACBETH.*

*Macb.* They have tied me to a stake; I cannot  
 fly,  
 But, bear-like, I must fight the course. What's he  
 That was not born of woman? Such a one  
 Am I to fear, or none.

*Enter YOUNG SIWARD.*

*Yo. Siw.* What is thy name?  
*Macb.* Thou'lt be afraid to hear it.  
*Yo. Siw.* No; though thou call'st thyself a hotter  
 name  
 Than any is in hell.

*Macb.* My name's Macbeth.  
*Yo. Siw.* The devil himself could not pronounce  
 a title

More hateful to mine ear.

*Macb.* No, nor more fearful.

*Yo. Siw.* Thou liest, abhorred tyrant; with my  
 sword 10  
 I'll prove the lie thou speak'st.

*They fight and YOUNG SIWARD is slain.*

*Macb.* Thou wast born of woman.  
 But swords I smile at, weapons laugh to scorn,  
 Brandish'd by man that's of a woman born.

*[Exit.]*

*Alarums. Enter MACDUFF.*

*Macd.* That way the noise is. Tyrant, show thy  
 face!

If thou be'st slain and with no stroke of mine,  
 My wife and children's ghosts will haunt me  
 still.

I cannot strike at wretched kerns, whose arms  
 Are hired to bear their staves. Either thou, Mac-  
 beth,

Or else my sword with an unbatter'd edge  
 I sheathe again undeeded. There thou shouldst  
 be; 20

By this great clatter, one of greatest note  
 Seems bruited. Let me find him, fortune!  
 And more I beg not. *[Exit. Alarums.]*

*Enter MALCOLM and OLD SIWARD.*

*Siw.* This way, my lord; the castle's gently  
 render'd.

The tyrant's people on both sides do fight;  
 The noble thanes do bravely in the war;  
 The day almost itself professes yours,  
 And little is to do.

*Mal.* We have met with foes  
That strike beside us.

*Sirw.* Enter, sir, the castle.  
[*Exeunt. Alarums.*]

SCENE VIII. *Another part of the field*

*Enter MACBETH.*

*Macb.* Why should I play the Roman fool, and die

On mine own sword? whiles I see lives, the  
gashes  
Do better upon them.

*Enter MACDUFF.*

*Macd.* Turn, hell-hound, turn!

*Macb.* Of all men else I have avoided thee.  
But get thee back; my soul is too much charged  
With blood of thine already.

*Macd.* I have no words;  
My voice is in my sword. Thou bloodier villain  
Than terms can give thee out!

*They fight.*

*Macb.* Thou lovest labour.  
As every mayst thou the intrenchant air  
With thy keen sword impress as make me bleed.  
Let fall thy blade on vulnerable crests;  
I bear a charmed life, which must not yield  
To one of woman born.

*Macd.* Despair thy charm;  
And let the angel whom thou still hast served  
Tell thee, Macduff was from his mother's womb  
Untimely ripp'd.

*Macb.* Accursed be that tongue that tells me so,  
For it hath cow'd my better part of man!  
And be these juggling fiends no more believed  
That palter with us in a double sense;  
That keep the word of promise to our ear,  
And break it to our hope. I'll not fight with thee.

*Macd.* Then yield thee, coward,  
And live to be the show and gaze o' the time!  
We'll have thee, as our rarer monsters are,  
Painted upon a pole, and underwrit,  
"Here may you see the tyrant."

*Macb.* I will not yield,  
To kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet  
And to be baited with the rabble's curse.  
Though Birnam wood be come to Dunsinane,  
And thou opposed, being of no woman born,  
Yet I will try the last. Before my body  
I throw my warlike shield. Lay on, Macduff,  
And damn'd be him that first cries, "Hold,  
enough!"

[*Exeunt, fighting. Alarums.*]

*Retreat. Flourish. Enter, with drum and colours,  
MALCOLM, OLD SIWARD, ROSS, the other Thanes,  
and Soldiers.*

*Mal.* I would the friends we miss were safe  
arrived.

*Sirw.* Some must go off; and yet, by these I see,  
So great a day as this is cheaply bought.

*Mal.* Macduff is missing, and your noble son.

*Ross.* Your son, my lord, has paid a soldier's debt.  
He only lived but till he was a man;  
The which no sooner had his prowess confirm'd  
In the unshrinking station where he fought,  
But like a man he died.

*Sirw.* Then he is dead?

*Ross.* Ay, and brought off the field. Your cause  
of sorrow

Must not be measured by his worth, for then  
It hath no end.

*Sirw.* Had he his hurts before?

*Ross.* Ay, on the front.

*Sirw.* Why then, God's soldier be he!  
Had I as many sons as I have hairs,  
I would not wish them to a fairer death.  
And so, his knell is knoll'd.

*Mal.* He's worth more sorrow, 50  
And that I'll spend for him.

*Sirw.* He's worth no more.  
They say he parted well, and paid his score;  
And so, God be with him! Here comes newer  
comfort.

*Re-enter MACDUFF, with MACBETH's head.*

*Macd.* Hail, King! for so thou art. Behold,  
where stands

The usurper's cursed head. The time is free.  
I see thee compass'd with thy kingdom's pearl,  
That speak my salutation in their minds;  
Whose voices I desire aloud with mine:  
Hail, King of Scotland!

*All.* Hail, King of Scotland! [*Flourish.*]

*Mal.* We shall not spend a large expense of  
time 60

Before we reckon with your several loves,  
And make us even with you. My thanes and  
kinsmen,

Henceforth be earls, the first that ever Scotland  
In such an honour named. What's more to do,  
Which would be planted newly with the time,  
As calling home our exiled friends abroad  
That fled the snares of watchful tyranny;  
Producing forth the cruel ministers  
Of this dead butcher and his fiend-like queen,  
Who, as 'tis thought, by self and violent hands 70  
Took off her life; this, and what needful else  
That calls upon us, by the grace of Grace,  
We will perform in measure, time and place.  
So, thanks to all at once and to each one,  
Whom we invite to see us crown'd at Scone.

[*Flourish. Exeunt.*]



# ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MARK ANTONY		ALEXAS	
OCTAVIUS CÆSAR	triumvirs	MARDIAN, a eunuch	attendants on Cleopatra
M. ÆMILIUS LEPIDUS		SELEUCUS	
SEXTUS POMPEIUS		DIOMEDES	
DOMITIUS ENOBARBUS		A SOOTHSAYER	
VENTIDIUS		A CLOWN	
EROS	friends to Antony	FIVE MESSENGERS	
SCARUS		AN EGYPTIAN	
DERCETAS		TWO SERVANTS to Pompey	
DEMETRIUS		A CAPTAIN of Antony's army	
PHILO		FOUR SOLDIERS of Antony's army	
MECÆNAS	friends to Cæsar	FOUR SOLDIERS of Cæsar's army	
AGRIPPA		TWO GUARDS to Cleopatra	
DOLABELLA		THREE GUARDS of Antony's army	
PROCULEIUS		TWO ATTENDANTS on Antony	
THYREUS		ONE ATTENDANT on Cleopatra	
GALLUS	friends to Pompey	CLEOPATRA, Queen of Egypt	
MENAS		OCTAVIA, sister to Cæsar and wife to Antony	
MENECRATES		CHARMIAN	attendants on Cleopatra
VARRIUS		IRAS	
TAURUS, lieutenant-general to Cæsar		NON-SPEAKING: Officers, Soldiers, Guards, Servitors, and Attendants	
CANIDIUS, lieutenant-general to Antony			
SILIUS, an officer in Ventidius' army			
EUPHRONIUS, an ambassador from Antony to Cæsar			

SCENE: In several parts of the Roman Empire

## ACT I

### SCENE I. Alexandria: a room in Cleopatra's palace

Enter DEMETRIUS and PHILO.

*Phi.* Nay, but this dotage of our general's  
O'erflows the measure. Those his goodly eyes,  
That o'er the files and musters of the war  
Have glow'd like plated Mars, now bend, now

turn,  
The office and devotion of their view  
Upon a tawny front; his captain's heart,  
Which in the scuffles of great fights hath burst  
The buckles on his breast, reneges all temper,  
And is become the bellows and the fan  
To cool a gipsy's lust.

*Flourish.* Enter ANTONY, CLEOPATRA, her Ladies,  
the Train, with Eumuchs fanning her.

Look, where they come! 10  
Take but good note, and you shall see in him  
The triple pillar of the world transform'd  
Into a strumpet's fool. Behold and see.

*Cleo.* If it be love indeed, tell me how much.

*Ant.* There's beggary in the love that can be  
reckon'd.

*Cleo.* I'll set a bourn how far to be beloved.

*Ant.* Then must thou needs find out new heaven,  
new earth.

Enter an ATTENDANT.

*Att.* News, my good lord, from Rome.

*Ant.* Grates me: the sum.

*Cleo.* Nay, hear them, Antony.

Fulvia perchance is angry; or, who knows 20  
If the scarce-bearded Cæsar have not sent  
His powerful mandate to you, "Do this, or this;  
Take in that kingdom, and enfranchise that;  
Perform't, or else we damn thee."

*Ant.* How, my love!

*Cleo.* Perchance! nay, and most like.  
You must not stay here longer, your dismission  
Is come from Cæsar; therefore hear it, Antony.  
Where's Fulvia's process? Cæsar's I would say?  
Both?

Call in the messengers. As I am Egypt's queen,  
Thou blushest, Antony; and that blood of thine  
Is Cæsar's homager; else so thy cheek pays  
shame 31  
When shrill-tongued Fulvia scolds. The messen-  
gers!

*Ant.* Let Rome in Tiber melt, and the wide arch  
Of the ranged empire fall! Here is my space.  
Kingdoms are clay; our dungy earth alike

Feeds beast as man; the nobleness of life  
Is to do thus; when such a mutual pair

*Embracing.*

And such a twain can do't, in which I bind,  
On pain of punishment, the world to weet  
We stand up peerless.

*Cleo.* Excellent falsehood! 40  
Why did he marry Fulvia, and not love her?  
I'll seem the fool I am not. Antony  
Will be himself.

*Ant.* But stirr'd by Cleopatra.  
Now, for the love of Love and her soft hours,  
Let's not confound the time with conference  
harsh.

There's not a minute of our lives should stretch  
Without some pleasure now. What sport to-  
night?

*Cleo.* Hear the ambassadors.

*Ant.* Fie, wrangling queen!  
Whom everything becomes, to chide, to laugh,  
To weep; whose every passion fully strives 50  
To make itself, in thee, fair and admired!  
No messenger, but thine; and all alone  
To-night we'll wander through the streets and  
note

The qualities of people. Come, my queen;  
Last night you did desire it. Speak not to us.

[*Exeunt ANTONY and CLEOPATRA with their train.*]

*Dem.* Is Cæsar with Antonius prized so slight?

*Phi.* Sir, sometimes, when he is not Antony,  
He comes too short of that great property  
Which still should go with Antony.

*Dem.* I am full sorry  
That he approves the common liar, who 60  
Thus speaks of him at Rome; but I will hope  
Of better deeds to-morrow. Rest you happy!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *The same: another room*

*Enter CHARMIAN, IRAS, ALEXAS, and a SOOTHSAYER.*

*Char.* Lord Alexas, sweet Alexas, most any-  
thing Alexas, almost most absolute Alexas,  
where's the soothsayer that you praised so to the  
Queen? O, that I knew this husband, which, you  
say, must charge his horns with garlands!

*Alex.* Soothsayer!

*Sooth.* Your will?

*Char.* Is this the man? Is't you, sir, that know  
things?

*Sooth.* In nature's infinite book of secrecy  
A little I can read.

*Alex.* Show him your hand. 10

*Enter ENOBARBUS.*

*Eno.* Bring in the banquet quickly; wine enough  
Cleopatra's health to drink.

*Char.* Good sir, give me good fortune.

*Sooth.* I make not, but foresee.

*Char.* Pray, then, foresee me one.

*Sooth.* You shall be yet far fairer than you are.

*Char.* He means in flesh.

*Iras.* No, you shall paint when you are old.

*Char.* Wrinkles forbid!

*Alex.* Vex not his prescience; be attentive.

*Char.* Hush! 21

*Sooth.* You shall be more beloved than beloved.

*Char.* I had rather heat my liver with drinking.

*Alex.* Nay, hear him.

*Char.* Good now, some excellent fortune! Let  
me be married to three kings in a forenoon, and  
widow them all. Let me have a child at fifty, to  
whom Herod of Jewry may do homage. Find me  
to marry me with Octavius Cæsar, and compan-  
ion me with my mistress. 30

*Sooth.* You shall outlive the lady whom you  
serve.

*Char.* O excellent! I love long life better than  
figs.

*Sooth.* You have seen and proved a fairer former  
fortune

Than that which is to approach.

*Char.* Then unlike my children shall have no  
names. Prithee, how many boys and wenches  
must I have?

*Sooth.* If every of your wishes had a womb,  
And fertile every wish, a million.

*Char.* Out, fool! I forgive thee for a witch. 40  
*Alex.* You think none but your sheets are privy  
to your wishes.

*Char.* Nay, come, tell Iras hers.

*Alex.* We'll know all our fortunes.

*Eno.* Mine, and most of our fortunes, to-night,  
shall be—drunk to bed.

*Iras.* There's a palm presages chastity, if nothing  
else.

*Char.* E'en as the o'erflowing Nilus presageth  
famine. 50

*Iras.* Go, you wild bedfellow, you cannot sooth-  
say.

*Char.* Nay, if an oily palm be not a fruitful prog-  
nostication, I cannot scratch mine ear. Prithee,  
tell her but a worky-day fortune.

*Sooth.* Your fortunes are alike.

*Iras.* But how, but how? give me particulars.

*Sooth.* I have said.

*Iras.* Am I not an inch of fortune better than  
she? 60

*Char.* Well, if you were but an inch of fortune  
better than I, where would you choose it?

*Iras.* Not in my husband's nose.

*Char.* Our worse thoughts heavens mend!  
Alexas—come, his fortune, his fortune! O, let



him marry a woman that cannot go, sweet Isis, I beseech thee! and let her die too, and give him a worse! and let worse follow worse, till the worst of all follow him laughing to his grave, fifty-fold a cuckold! Good Isis, hear me this prayer, though thou deny me a matter of more weight; good Isis, I beseech thee!

*Iras.* Amen. Dear goddess, hear that prayer of the people! for, as it is a heart-breaking to see a handsome man loose-wived, so it is a deadly sorrow to behold a foul knave uncuckolded; therefore, dear Isis, keep decorum, and fortune him accordingly!

*Char.* Amen. 79

*Alex.* Lo, now, if it lay in their hands to make me a cuckold, they would make themselves whores, but they'd do 't!

*Eno.* Hush! here comes Antony.

*Char.* Not he; the Queen.

*Enter CLEOPATRA.*

*Cleo.* Saw you my lord?

*Eno.* No, lady.

*Cleo.* Was he not here?

*Char.* No, madam.

*Cleo.* He was disposed to mirth; but on the sudden

A Roman thought hath struck him. Enobarbus!

*Eno.* Madam?

*Cleo.* Seek him, and bring him hither. Where's Alexas?

*Alex.* Here, at your service. My lord approaches. 90

*Cleo.* We will not look upon him. Go with us. *[Exeunt.]*

*Enter ANTONY with a MESSENGER and ATTENDANTS.*

*Mess.* Fulvia thy wife first came into the field.

*Ant.* Against my brother Lucius?

*Mess.* Ay.

But soon that war had end, and the time's state Made friends of them, jointing their force 'gainst Cæsar;

Whose better issue in the war, from Italy, Upon the first encounter, drave them.

*Ant.* Well, what worst?

*Mess.* The nature of bad news infects the teller. 99

*Ant.* When it concerns the fool or coward. On: Things that are past are done with me. 'Tis thus;

Who tells me true, though in his tale lie death, I hear him as he flatter'd.

*Mess.* Labienus—

This is stiff news—hath with his Parthian force Extended Asia from Euphrates;

His conquering banner shook from Syria To Lydia and to Ionia;

Whilst—

*Ant.* Antony, thou wouldst say—

*Mess.* O, my lord!

*Ant.* Speak to me home, mince not the general tongue.

Name Cleopatra as she is call'd in Rome; 110

Rail thou in Fulvia's phrase; and taunt my faults

With such full license as both truth and malice

Have power to utter. O, then we bring forth weeds,

When our quick minds lie still; and our ills told us

Is as our earing. Fare thee well awhile.

*Mess.* At your noble pleasure. *[Exit.]*

*Ant.* From Sicyon, ho, the news! Speak there!

*1st Att.* The man from Sicyon—is there such an one?

*2nd Att.* He stays upon your will.

*Ant.* Let him appear.

These strong Egyptian fetters I must break, 120 Or lose myself in dotage.

*Enter another MESSENGER.*

What are you?

*2nd Mess.* Fulvia thy wife is dead.

*Ant.* Where died she?

*2nd Mess.* In Sicyon.

Her length of sickness, with what else more serious

Importeth thee to know, this bears.

*Gives a letter.*

*Ant.* Forbear me.

*[Exit SECOND MESSENGER.]*

There's a great spirit gone! Thus did I desire it.

What our contempt doth often hurl from us,

We wish it ours again; the present pleasure,

By revolution lowering, does become 129

The opposite of itself. She's good, being gone;

The hand could pluck her back that shoved her on.

I must from this enchanting queen break off;

Ten thousand harms, more than the ills I know,

My idleness doth hatch. How now! Enobarbus!

*Re-enter ENOBARBUS.*

*Eno.* What's your pleasure, sir?

*Ant.* I must with haste from hence.

*Eno.* Why, then, we kill all our women. We see how mortal an unkindness is to them; if they suffer our departure, death's the word.

*Ant.* I must be gone. 140

*Eno.* Under a compelling occasion, let women die. It were pity to cast them away for nothing; though, between them and a great cause, they

should be esteemed nothing. Cleopatra, catching but the least noise of this, dies instantly; I have seen her die twenty times upon far poorer moment. I do think there is mettle in death, which commits some loving act upon her, she hath such a celerity in dying.

*Ant.* She is cunning past man's thought. 150

*Eno.* Alack, sir, no; her passions are made of nothing but the finest part of pure love. We cannot call her winds and waters sighs and tears; they are greater storms and tempests than almanacs can report. This cannot be cunning in her; if it be, she makes a shower of rain as well as Jove.

*Ant.* Would I had never seen her!

*Eno.* O, sir, you had then left unseen a wonderful piece of work; which not to have been blest withal would have discredited your travel.

*Ant.* Fulvia is dead.

*Eno.* Sir?

*Ant.* Fulvia is dead.

*Eno.* Fulvia!

*Ant.* Dead.

*Eno.* Why, sir, give the gods a thankful sacrifice. When it pleaseth their deities to take the wife of a man from him, it shows to man the tailors of the earth; comforting therein, that when old robes are worn out, there are members to make new. If there were no more women but Fulvia, then had you indeed a cut, and the case to be lamented. This grief is crowned with consolation; your old smock brings forth a new petticoat; and indeed the tears live in an onion that should water this sorrow.

*Ant.* The business she hath broached in the state

Cannot endure my absence. 179

*Eno.* And the business you have broached here cannot be without you; especially that of Cleopatra's, which wholly depends on your abode.

*Ant.* No more light answers. Let our officers Have notice what we purpose. I shall break The cause of our expedience to the Queen, And get her leave to part. For not alone The death of Fulvia, with more urgent touches, Do strongly speak to us; but the letters too Of many our contriving friends in Rome Petition us at home. Sextus Pompeius 190 Hath given the dare to Cæsar, and commands The empire of the sea. Our slippery people, Whose love is never link'd to the deservert Till his deserts are past, begin to throw Pompey the Great and all his dignities Upon his son; who, high in name and power, Higher than both in blood and life, stands up For the main soldier; whose quality, going on,

The sides o' the world may danger. Much is breeding, 199 Which, like the courser's hair, hath yet but life, And not a serpent's poison. Say, our pleasure, To such whose place is under us, requires Our quick remove from hence. *Eno.* I shall do 't. [Exeunt.]

SCENE III. *The same: another room*

*Enter* CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, IRAS, and ALEXAS.

*Cleo.* Where is he?

*Char.*

I did not see him since.

*Cleo.* See where he is, who's with him, what he does.

I did not send you. If you find him sad, Say I am dancing; if in mirth, report That I am sudden sick. Quick, and return.

[Exit ALEXAS.]

*Char.* Madam, methinks, if you did love him dearly,

You do not hold the method to enforce The like from him.

*Cleo.* What should I do, I do not?

*Char.* In each thing give him way, cross him in nothing.

*Cleo.* Thou teachest like a fool; the way to lose him. 10

*Char.* Tempt him not so too far; I wish, forbear. In time we hate that which we often fear. But here comes Antony.

*Enter* ANTONY.

*Cleo.* I am sick and sullen.

*Ant.* I am sorry to give breathing to my purpose—

*Cleo.* Help me away, dear Charmian; I shall fall.

It cannot be thus long, the sides of nature Will not sustain it.

*Ant.* Now, my dearest queen—

*Cleo.* Pray you, stand farther from me.

*Ant.*

What's the matter?

*Cleo.* I know, by that same eye, there's some good news.

What says the married woman? You may go. 20 Would she had never given you leave to come!

Let her not say 'tis I that keep you here;

I have no power upon you; hers you are.

*Ant.* The gods best know—

*Cleo.* O, never was there queen So mightily betray'd! yet at the first I saw the treasons planted.

*Ant.*

Cleopatra—

*Cleo.* Why should I think you can be mine and true,

Though you in swearing shake the throned gods,



Who have been false to Fulvia? Riotous madness,

To be entangled with those mouth-made vows,<sup>30</sup>  
Which break themselves in swearing!

*Ant.* Most sweet queen—

*Cleo.* Nay, pray you, seek no colour for your going,  
But bid farewell, and go. When you sued staying,

Then was the time for words; no going then;  
Eternity was in our lips and eyes,  
Bliss in our brows' bent; none our parts so poor,  
But was a race of heaven. They are so still,  
Or thou, the greatest soldier of the world,  
Art turn'd the greatest liar.

*Ant.* How now, lady!

*Cleo.* I would I had thy inches; thou shouldst know 40

There were a heart in Egypt.

*Ant.* Hear me, Queen.

The strong necessity of time commands  
Our services awhile; but my full heart  
Remains in use with you. Our Italy  
Shines o'er with civil swords; Sextus Pompeius  
Makes his approaches to the port of Rome;  
Equality of two domestic powers  
Breed scrupulous faction; the hated, grown to strength,

Are newly grown to love; the condemn'd Pompey,

Rich in his father's honour, creeps apace 50  
Into the hearts of such as have not thrived

Upon the present state, whose numbers threaten;  
And quietness, grown sick of rest, would purge  
By any desperate change. My more particular,  
And that which most with you should safe my going,

Is Fulvia's death.

*Cleo.* Though age from folly could not give me freedom,

It does from childishness. Can Fulvia die?

*Ant.* She's dead, my queen.

Look here, and at thy sovereign leisure read 60  
The garboils she awaked; at the last, best;  
See when and where she died.

*Cleo.* O most false love!

Where be the sacred vials thou shouldst fill  
With sorrowful water? Now I see, I see,  
In Fulvia's death, how mine received shall be.

*Ant.* Quarrel no more, but be prepared to know

The purposes I bear; which are, or cease,  
As you shall give the advice. By the fire  
That quickens Nilus' slime, I go from hence  
Thy soldier, servant; making peace or war 70  
As thou affect'st.

*Cleo.* Cut my lace, Charmian, come!

But let it be; I am quickly ill, and well,  
So Antony loves.

*Ant.* My precious queen, forbear;  
And give true evidence to his love, which stands  
An honourable trial.

*Cleo.* So Fulvia told me.

I prithee, turn aside and weep for her;  
Then bid adieu to me, and say the tears  
Belong to Egypt. Good now, play one scene  
Of excellent dissembling; and let it look  
Like perfect honour.

*Ant.* You'll heat my blood. No more. 80

*Cleo.* You can do better yet; but this is meetly.

*Ant.* Now, by my sword—

*Cleo.* And target. Still he mends;  
But this is not the best. Look, prithee, Charmian,  
How this Herculean Roman does become  
The carriage of his chafe.

*Ant.* I'll leave you, lady.

*Cleo.* Courteous lord, one word.

Sir, you and I must part, but that's not it;  
Sir, you and I have loved, but there's not it;  
That you know well. Something it is I would—  
O, my oblivion is a very Antony, 90  
And I am all forgotten.

*Ant.* But that your royalty  
Holds idleness your subject, I should take you  
For idleness itself.

*Cleo.* 'Tis sweating labour  
To bear such idleness so near the heart  
As Cleopatra this. But, sir, forgive me;  
Since my becoming kill me, when they do not  
Eye well to you. Your honour calls you hence;  
Therefore be deaf to my unpitied folly,  
And all the gods go with you! Upon your sword  
Sit laurel victory! and smooth success 100  
Be strew'd before your feet!

*Ant.* Let us go. Come;  
Our separation so abides, and flies,  
That thou, residing here, go'st yet with me,  
And I, hence fleeting, here remain with thee.  
Away! [Exeunt.]

#### SCENE IV. Rome: Cæsar's house

*Enter OCTAVIUS CÆSAR, reading a letter,  
LEPIDUS, and their Train.*

*Cæs.* You may see, Lepidus, and henceforth know,

It is not Cæsar's natural vice to hate  
Our great competitor. From Alexandria  
This is the news: he fishes, drinks, and wastes  
The lamps of night in revel; is not more manlike  
Than Cleopatra; nor the queen of Ptolemy  
More womanly than he; hardly gave audience, or  
Vouchsafed to think he had partners. You shall find there

A man who is the abstract of all faults

That all men follow.

*Lep.* I must not think there are 10

Evils enow to darken all his goodness.

His faults in him seem as the spots of heaven,

More fiery by night's blackness; hereditary,

Rather than purchased; what he cannot change,

Than what he chooses.

*Cæs.* You are too indulgent. Let us grant, it is not

Amiss to tumble on the bed of Ptolemy;

To give a kingdom for a mirth; to sit

And keep the turn of tippling with a slave; 19

To reel the streets at noon, and stand the buffet

With knaves that smell of sweat: say this be-  
comes him—

As his composure must be rare indeed

Whom these things cannot blemish—yet must

*Antony*

No way excuse his soils, when we do bear

So great weight in his lightness. If he fill'd

His vacancy with his voluptuousness,

Full surfeits and the dryness of his bones,

Call on him for't; but to confound such time,

That drums him from his sport and speaks as  
loud

As his own state and ours—'tis to be chid 30

As we rate boys, who, being mature in knowl-  
edge,

Pawn their experience to their present pleasure,

And so rebel to judgement.

*Enter a MESSENGER.*

*Lep.* Here's more news.

*Mess.* Thy biddings have been done; and every  
hour,

Most noble Cæsar, shalt thou have report

How 'tis abroad. Pompey is strong at sea;

And it appears he is beloved of those

That only have fear'd Cæsar. To the ports

The discontents repair, and men's reports

Give him much wrong'd.

*Cæs.* I should have known no less.

It hath been taught us from the primal state; 41

That he which is was wish'd until he were;

And the ebb'd man, ne'er loved till ne'er worth  
love,

Comes dear'd by being lack'd. This common  
body,

Like to a vagabond flag upon the stream,

Goes to and back, lackeying the varying tide,

To rot itself with motion.

*Mess.* Cæsar, I bring thee word,

Menecrates and Menas, famous pirates,

Make the sea serve them, which they ear and  
wound

With keels of every kind. Many hot inroads 50

They make in Italy; the borders maritime

Lack blood to think on't, and flush youth revolt;

No vessel can peep forth, but 'tis as soon

Taken as seen; for Pompey's name strikes more

Than could his war resisted.

*Cæs.* Antony,

Leave thy lascivious wassails. When thou once

Wast beaten from Modena, where thou slew'st

Hirtius and Pansa, consuls, at thy heel

Did famine follow; whom thou fought'st against,

Though daintily brought up, with patience more

Than savages could suffer. Thou didst drink 61

The stale of horses, and the gilded puddle

Which beasts would cough at; thy palate then

did deign

The roughest berry on the rudest hedge;

Yea, like the stag, when snow the pasture sheets,

The barks of trees thou browsed'st; on the Alps

It is reported thou didst eat strange flesh,

Which some did die to look on; and all this—

It wounds thine honour that I speak it now—

Was borne so like a soldier, that thy cheek 70

So much as lank'd not.

*Lep.* 'Tis pity of him.

*Cæs.* Let his shames quickly

Drive him to Rome. 'Tis time we twain

Did show ourselves i' the field; and to that end

Assemble we immediate council. Pompey

Thrives in our idleness.

*Lep.* To-morrow, Cæsar,

I shall be furnish'd to inform you rightly

Both what by sea and land I can be able

To front this present time.

*Cæs.* Till which encounter,  
It is my business too. Farewell. 80

*Lep.* Farewell, my lord. What you shall know  
meantime

Of stirs abroad, I shall beseech you, sir,

To let me be partaker.

*Cæs.* Doubt not, sir;

I knew it for my bond. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V. *Alexandria: Cleopatra's palace*

*Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, IRAS, and MARDIAN.*

*Cleo.* Charmian!

*Char.* Madam?

*Cleo.* Ha, ha!

Give me to drink mandragora.

*Char.* Why, madam?

*Cleo.* That I might sleep out this great gap of  
time

My Antony is away.

*Char.* You think of him too much.

*Cleo.* O, 'tis treason!

*Char.* Madam, I trust, not so.



*Cleo.* Thou, eunuch Mardian!

*Mar.* What's your Highness' pleasure?

*Cleo.* Not now to hear thee sing; I take no pleasure

In aught an eunuch has. 'Tis well for thee, 10

That, being unseminar'd, thy freer thoughts

May not fly forth of Egypt. Hast thou affections?

*Mar.* Yes, gracious madam.

*Cleo.* Indeed!

*Mar.* Not in deed, madam; for I can do nothing

But what indeed is honest to be done;

Yet have I fierce affections, and think

What Venus did with Mars.

*Cleo.* O Charmian,

Where, think'st thou he is now? Stands he, or sits he?

Or does he walk? or is he on his horse? 20

O happy horse, to bear the weight of Antony!

Do bravely, horse! for wot'st thou whom thou movest?

The demi-Atlas of this earth, the arm

And burgoner of men. He's speaking now,

Or murmuring, "Where's my serpent of old Nile?"

For so he calls me. Now I feed myself

With most delicious poison. Think on me,

That am with Phoebus' amorous pinches black,

And wrinkled deep in time? Broad-fronted

Cæsar,

When thou wast here above the ground, I was 30

A morsel for a monarch; and great Pompey

Would stand and make his eyes grow in my brow;

There would he anchor his aspect and die

With looking on his life.

*Enter ALEXAS.*

*Alex.* Sovereign of Egypt, hail!

*Cleo.* How much unlike art thou Mark Antony!

Yet, coming from him, that great medicine hath With his tinct gilded thee.

How goes it with my brave Mark Antony?

*Alex.* Last thing he did, dear queen, 39

He kiss'd—the last of many doubled kisses—

This orient pearl. His speech sticks in my heart.

*Cleo.* Mine ear must pluck it thence.

*Alex.* "Good friend," quoth he,

"Say, the firm Roman to great Egypt sends

This treasure of an oyster; at whose foot,

To mend the petty present, I will piece

Her opulent throne with kingdoms; all the East,

Say thou, shall call her mistress." So he nodded,

And soberly did mount an arm-gaunt steed,

Who neigh'd so high that what I would have spoke

Was beastly dumb'd by him.

*Cleo.* What, was he sad or merry? 50

*Alex.* Like to the time o' the year between the extremes

Of hot and cold, he was nor sad nor merry.

*Cleo.* O well-divided disposition! Note him,

Note him, good Charmian, 'tis the man; but note him:

He was not sad, for he would shine on those

That make their looks by his; he was not merry,

Which seem'd to tell them his remembrance lay

In Egypt with his joy; but between both.

O heavenly mingle! Be'st thou sad or merry,

The violence of either thee becomes, 60

So does it no man else. Met'st thou my posts?

*Alex.* Ay, madam, twenty several messengers.

Why do you send so thick?

*Cleo.* Who's born that day

When I forget to send to Antony,

Shall die a beggar. Ink and paper, Charmian.

Welcome, my good Alexas. Did I, Charmian,

Ever love Cæsar so?

*Char.* O that brave Cæsar!

*Cleo.* Be choked with such another emphasis!

Say, the brave Antony.

*Char.* The valiant Cæsar!

*Cleo.* By Isis, I will give thee bloody teeth,

If thou with Cæsar paragon again 71

My man of men.

*Char.* By your most gracious pardon, I sing but after you.

*Cleo.* My salad days,

When I was green in judgement, cold in blood,

To say as I said then! But, come, away;

Get me ink and paper.

He shall have every day a several greeting,

Or I'll unpeople Egypt. [Exeunt.]

## ACT II

### SCENE I. Messina: Pompey's house

*Enter POMPEY, MENECRATES, and MENAS, in war-like manner.*

*Pom.* If the great gods be just, they shall assist The deeds of justest men.

*Mene.* Know, worthy Pompey, That what they do delay, they not deny.

*Pom.* Whiles we are suitors to their throne, decays

The thing we sue for.

*Mene.* We, ignorant of ourselves, Beg often our own harms, which the wise powers Deny us for our good; so find we profit By losing of our prayers.

*Pom.* I shall do well.

The people love me, and the sea is mine; My powers are crescent, and my auguring hope

Says it will come to the full. Mark Antony  
In Egypt sits at dinner, and will make  
No wars without doors. Cæsar gets money  
where

He loses hearts. Lepidus flatters both,  
Of both is flatter'd; but he neither loves,  
Nor either cares for him.

*Men.* Cæsar and Lepidus  
Are in the field; a mighty strength they carry.

*Pom.* Where have you this? 'tis false.

*Men.* From Silvius, sir.

*Pom.* He dreams. I know they are in Rome  
together,

Looking for Antony. But all the charms of  
love,

Salt Cleopatra, soften thy waned lip!  
Let witchcraft join with beauty, lust with  
both!

Tie up the libertine in a field of feasts,  
Keep his brain fuming; Epicurean cooks  
Sharpen with cloyless sauce his appetite;  
That sleep and feeding may prorogue his honour  
Even till a Lethe'd dulness!

*Enter VARRIUS.*

How now, Varrius!

*Var.* This is most certain that I shall deliver:  
Mark Antony is every hour in Rome  
Expected; since he went from Egypt 'tis  
A space for further travel.

*Pom.* I could have given less matter  
A better ear. Menas, I did not think  
This amorous surfeiter would have donn'd his  
helmet

For such a petty war. His soldiership  
Is twice the other twain; but let us rear  
The higher our opinion, that our stirring  
Can from the lap of Egypt's widow pluck  
The ne'er-lust-weari'd Antony.

*Men.* I cannot hope  
Cæsar and Antony shall well greet together.  
His wife that's dead did trespasses to Cæsar;  
His brother warr'd upon him; although, I think,  
Not moved by Antony.

*Pom.* I know not, Menas,  
How lesser enmities may give way to greater.  
Were't not that we stand up against them all,  
'Twere pregnant they should square between  
themselves;

For they have entertained cause enough  
To draw their swords; but how the fear of us  
May cement their divisions and bind up  
The petty difference, we yet not know.  
Be't as our gods will have't! It only stands  
Our lives upon to use our strongest hands.  
Come, Menas.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *Rome: the house of Lepidus*

*Enter ENOBARBUS and LEPIDUS.*

*Lep.* Good Enobarbus, 'tis a worthy deed,  
And shall become you well, to entreat your cap-  
tain

To soft and gentle speech.

*Eno.* I shall entreat him  
To answer like himself. If Cæsar move him,  
Let Antony look over Cæsar's head  
And speak as loud as Mars. By Jupiter,  
Were I the wearer of Antonius' beard,  
I would not shave't to-day.

*Lep.* 'Tis not a time  
For private stomaching.

*Eno.* Every time  
Serves for the matter that is then born in 't.

*Lep.* But small to greater matters must give  
way.

*Eno.* Not if the small come first.

*Lep.* Your speech is passion;  
But, pray you, stir no embers up. Here comes  
The noble Antony.

*Enter ANTONY and VENTIDIUS.*

*Eno.* And yonder, Cæsar.

*Enter CÆSAR, MECÆNAS, and AGRIPPA.*

*Ant.* If we compose well here, to Parthia!  
Hark, Ventidius.

*Cæs.* I do not know,  
Mecænas; ask Agrippa.

*Lep.* Noble friends,  
That which combined us was most great, and let  
not

A leaner action rend us. What's amiss,  
May it be gently heard; when we debate  
Out trivial difference loud, we do commit

Murder in healing wounds; then, noble partners,  
The rather, for I earnestly beseech,

Touch you the sourest points with sweetest  
terms,

Nor curstness grow to the matter.

*Ant.* 'Tis spoken well.  
Were we before our armies, and to fight,  
I should do thus.

*Flourish.*

*Cæs.* Welcome to Rome.

*Ant.* Thank you.

*Cæs.* Sit.

*Ant.* Sit, sir.

*Cæs.* Nay, then.

*Ant.* I learn, you take things ill which are not so,  
Or being, concern you not.

*Cæs.* I must be laugh'd at  
If, or for nothing or a little, I



Should say myself offended, and with you  
Chiefly i' the world; more laugh'd at that I  
should

Once name you derogately, when to sound your  
name

It not concern'd me.

*Ant.* My being in Egypt, Cæsar,  
What was't to you?

*Cæs.* No more than my residing here at Rome  
Might be to you in Egypt; yet, if you there  
Did practise on my state, your being in Egypt  
Might be my question.

*Ant.* How intend you, practised? 40

*Cæs.* You may be pleased to catch at mine  
intent.

By what did here befall me. Your wife and brother

Made wars upon me; and their contestation  
Was theme for you, you were the word of war.

*Ant.* You do mistake your business; my brother never

Did urge me in his act. I did inquire it;  
And have my learning from some true reports,  
That drew their swords with you. Did he not  
rather

Discredit my authority with yours;  
And make the wars alike against my stomach, 50  
Having alike your cause? Of this my letters  
Before did satisfy you. If you'll patch a quarrel,  
As matter whole you have not to make it with,  
It must not be with this.

*Cæs.* You praise yourself  
By laying defects of judgement to me; but  
You patch'd up your excuses.

*Ant.* Not so, not so;  
I know you could not lack, I am certain on't,  
Very necessity of this thought, that I,  
Your partner in the cause 'gainst which he fought,  
Could not with graceful eyes attend those wars 60  
Which fronted mine own peace. As for my wife,  
I would you had her spirit in such another.  
The third o' the world is yours; which with a  
snaffle

You may pace easy, but not such a wife.

*Eno.* Would we had all such wives, that the  
men might go to wars with the women!

*Ant.* So much ungraceful, her garboils, Cæsar,  
Made out of her impatience, which not wanted  
Shrewdness of policy too, I grieving grant  
Did you too much disquiet. For that you must 70  
But say, I could not help it.

*Cæs.* I wrote to you  
When rioting in Alexandria; you  
Did pocket up my letters, and with taunts  
Did gibe my missive out of audience.

*Ant.* Sir,

He fell upon me ere admitted. Then  
Three kings I had newly feasted, and did want  
Of what I was i' the morning; but next day  
I told him of myself; which was as much  
As to have ask'd him pardon. Let this fellow  
Be nothing of our strife; if we contend, 80  
Out of our question wipe him.

*Cæs.* You have broken  
The article of your oath; which you shall never  
Have tongue to charge me with.

*Lep.* Soft, Cæsar!  
*Ant.* No,

Lepidus, let him speak.

The honour is sacred which he talks on now,  
Supposing that I lack'd it. But, on, Cæsar;  
The article of my oath.

*Cæs.* To lend me arms and aid when I required  
them;

The which you both denied.

*Ant.* Neglected, rather;  
And then when poison'd hours had bound me  
up 90

From mine own knowledge. As nearly as I may,  
I'll play the penitent to you; but mine honesty  
Shall not make poor my greatness, nor my  
power

Work without it. Truth is that Fulvia,  
To have me out of Egypt, made wars here;  
For which myself, the ignorant motive, do  
So far ask pardon as befits mine honour  
To stoop in such a case.

*Lep.* 'Tis noble spoken.

*Mec.* If it might please you, to enforce no  
further

The griefs between ye: to forget them quite 100  
Were to remember that the present need  
Speaks to atone you.

*Lep.* Worthily spoken, Mecænas.

*Eno.* Or, if you borrow one another's love for  
the instant, you may, when you hear no more  
words of Pompey, return it again. You shall  
have time to wrangle in when you have nothing  
else to do.

*Ant.* Thou art a soldier only; speak no more.

*Eno.* That truth should be silent I had almost  
forgot. 110

*Ant.* You wrong this presence; therefore speak  
no more.

*Eno.* Go to, then; your considerate stone.

*Cæs.* I do not much dislike the matter, but  
The manner of his speech; for't cannot be  
We shall remain in friendship, our conditions  
So differing in their acts. Yet, if I knew  
What hoop should hold us stanch, from edge to  
edge  
O' the world I would pursue it.

*Ag.* Give me leave, Cæsar—

*Cæs.* Speak, Agrippa.

*Ag.* Thou hast a sister by the mother's side,  
Admired Octavia. Great Mark Antony 121  
Is now a widower.

*Cæs.* Say not so, Agrippa.

If Cleopatra heard you, your reproof  
Were well deserved of rashness.

*Ant.* I am not married, Cæsar. Let me hear  
Agrippa further speak.

*Ag.* To hold you in perpetual amity,  
To make you brothers, and to knit your hearts  
With an unslipping knot, take Antony 130  
Octavia to his wife; whose beauty claims  
No worse a husband than the best of men;  
Whose virtue and whose general graces speak  
That which none else can utter. By this marriage,  
All little jealousies, which now seem great,  
And all great fears, which now import their  
dangers,

Would then be nothing. Truths would be tales,  
Where now half tales be truths. Her love to both  
Would, each to other and all loves to both,  
Draw after her. Pardon what I have spoke;  
For 'tis a studied, not a present thought, 140  
By duty ruminated.

*Ant.* Will Cæsar speak?

*Cæs.* Not till he hears how Antony is touch'd  
With what is spoke already.

*Ant.* What power is in Agrippa,  
If I would say, "Agrippa, be it so,"  
To make this good?

*Cæs.* The power of Cæsar, and  
His power unto Octavia.

*Ant.* May I never  
To this good purpose, that so fairly shows,  
Dream of impediment! Let me have thy hand.  
Further this act of grace; and from this hour  
The heart of brothers govern in our loves 150  
And sway our great designs!

*Cæs.* There is my hand.  
A sister I bequeath you, whom no brother  
Did ever love so dearly. Let her live  
To join our kingdoms and our hearts; and never  
Fly off our loves again!

*Lep.* Happily, amen!

*Ant.* I did not think to draw my sword 'gainst  
Pompey;  
For he hath laid strange courtesies and great  
Of late upon me. I must thank him only,  
Lest my remembrance suffer ill report;  
At heel of that, defy him.

*Lep.* Time calls upon's. 160  
Of us must Pompey presently be sought,  
Or else he seeks out us.

*Ant.* Where lies he?

*Cæs.* About the mount Misenum.

*Ant.* What is his strength by land?

*Cæs.* Great and increasing; but by sea  
He is an absolute master.

*Ant.* So is the fame.

Would we had spoke together! Haste we for it;  
Yet, ere we put ourselves in arms, dispatch we  
The business we have talk'd of.

*Cæs.* With most gladness;  
And do invite you to my sister's view, 170  
Whither straight I'll lead you.

*Ant.* Let us, Lepidus,  
Not lack your company.

*Lep.* Noble Antony,  
Not sickness should detain me.

[*Flourish. Exeunt CÆSAR, ANTONY, and LEPIDUS.*]

*Mec.* Welcome from Egypt, sir.

*Eno.* Half the heart of Cæsar, worthy Mecæ-  
nas! My honourable friend, Agrippa!

*Ag.* Good Enobarbus!

*Mec.* We have cause to be glad that matters are  
so well digested. You stayed well by't in  
Egypt. 180

*Eno.* Ay, sir; we did sleep day out of counte-  
nance, and made the night light with drinking.

*Mec.* Eight wild-boars roasted whole at a break-  
fast, and but twelve persons there; is this true?

*Eno.* This was but as a fly by an eagle. We had  
much more monstrous matter of feast, which  
worthily deserved noting.

*Mec.* She's a most triumphant lady, if report be  
square to her. 190

*Eno.* When she first met Mark Antony, she  
purs'd up his heart, upon the river of Cydnus.

*Ag.* There she appeared indeed; or my re-  
porter devised well for her.

*Eno.* I will tell you.

The barge she sat in, like a burnish'd throne,  
Burn'd on the water. The poop was beaten gold;  
Purple the sails, and so perfumed that  
The winds were love-sick with them; the oars  
were silver,

Which to the tune of flutes kept stroke, and made  
The water which they beat to follow faster, 201  
As amorous of their strokes. For her own person,  
It beggar'd all description: she did lie  
In her pavilion—cloth-of-gold of tissue—  
O'er-picturing that Venus where we see  
The fancy outwork nature. On each side her  
Stood pretty dimpled boys, like smiling Cupids,  
With divers-colour'd fans, whose wind did seem  
To glow the delicate cheeks which they did cool,  
And what they undid did.

*Ag.* O, rare for Antony! 210

*Eno.* Her gentlewomen, like the Nereides,  
So many mermaids, tended her i' the eyes,



And made their bends adornings. At the helm  
 A seeming mermaid steers; the silken tackle  
 Swell with the touches of those flower-soft hands,  
 That yarely frame the office. From the barge  
 A strange invisible perfume hits the sense  
 Of the adjacent wharfs. The city cast  
 Her people out upon her; and Antony,  
 Enthroned i' the market-place, did sit alone, 220  
 Whistling to the air; which, but for vacancy,  
 Had gone to gaze on Cleopatra too  
 And made a gap in nature.

*Agr.* Rare Egyptian!

*Eno.* Upon her landing, Antony sent to her,  
 Invited her to supper. She replied,  
 It should be better he became her guest;  
 Which she entreated. Our courteous Antony,  
 Whom ne'er the word of "No" woman heard  
 speak,  
 Being barber'd ten times o'er, goes to the feast,  
 And for his ordinary pays his heart 230  
 For what his eyes eat only.

*Agr.* Royal wench!  
 She made great Cæsar lay his sword to bed.  
 He plough'd her and she cropp'd.

*Eno.* I saw her once  
 Hop forty paces through the public street;  
 And having lost her breath, she spoke, and panted,  
 That she did make defect perfection,  
 And, breathless, power breathe forth.

*Mec.* Now Antony must leave her utterly.

*Eno.* Never; he will not.  
 Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale 240  
 Her infinite variety. Other women cloy  
 The appetites they feed, but she makes hungry  
 Where most she satisfies; for vilest things  
 Become themselves in her, that the holy priests  
 Bless her when she is riggish.

*Mec.* If beauty, wisdom, modesty, can settle  
 The heart of Antony, Octavia is  
 A blessed lottery to him.

*Agr.* Let us go.  
 Good Enobarbus, make yourself my guest 249  
 Whilst you abide here.

*Eno.* Humbly, sir, I thank you. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *The same: Cæsar's house*

*Enter* ANTONY, CÆSAR, OCTAVIA *between them, and*  
*Attendants.*

*Ant.* The world and my great office will some-  
 times

Divide me from your bosom.

*Octa.* All which time  
 Before the gods my knee shall bow my prayers  
 To them for you.

*Ant.* Good night, sir. My Octavia,  
 Read not my blemishes in the world's report.

I have not kept my square; but that to come  
 Shall all be done by the rule. Good night, dear  
 lady.

Good night, sir.

*Cæs.* Good night.

[*Exeunt* CÆSAR and OCTAVIA.]

*Enter* SOOTHSAYER.

*Ant.* Now, sirrah; you do wish yourself in  
 Egypt? 10

*Sooth.* Would I had never come from thence,  
 nor you  
 Thither!

*Ant.* If you can, your reason?

*Sooth.* I see it in  
 My motion, have it not in my tongue; but yet  
 Hie you to Egypt again.

*Ant.* Say to me,  
 Whose fortunes shall rise higher, Cæsar's or  
 mine?

*Sooth.* Cæsar's.  
 Therefore, O Antony, stay not by his side.  
 Thy demon, that's thy spirit which keeps  
 thee, is

Noble, courageous, high, unmatchable, 20  
 Where Cæsar's is not; but, near him, thy angel  
 Becomes a fear, as being o'erpower'd: there-  
 fore

Make space enough between you.

*Ant.* Speak this no more.

*Sooth.* To none but thee; no more, but when to  
 thee.

If thou dost play with him at any game,  
 Thou art sure to lose; and, of that natural luck,  
 He beats thee 'gainst the odds. Thy lustre  
 thickens,

When he shines by. I say again, thy spirit  
 Is all afraid to govern thee near him;  
 But, he away, 'tis noble.

*Ant.* Get thee gone. 30  
 Say to Ventidius I would speak with him.

[*Exit* SOOTHSAYER.]

He shall to Parthia. Be it art or hap,  
 He hath spoken true. The very dice obey him;  
 And in our sports my better cunning faints  
 Under his chance. If we draw lots, he speeds;  
 His cocks do win the battle still of mine,  
 When it is all to nought; and his quails ever  
 Beat mine, inhoop'd, at odds. I will to Egypt;  
 And though I make this marriage for my peace,  
 I' the East my pleasure lies.

*Enter* VENTIDIUS.

O, come, Ventidius, 40  
 You must to Parthia. Your commission's ready;  
 Follow me, and receive't. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV. *The same: a street**Enter* LEPIDUS, MECÆNAS, and AGRIPPA.

*Lep.* Trouble yourselves no further; pray you, hasten

Your generals after.

*Agr.* Sir, Mark Antony Will e'en but kiss Octavia, and we'll follow.

*Lep.* Till I shall see you in your soldier's dress,

Which will become you both, farewell.

*Mec.* We shall, As I conceive the journey, be at the Mount Before you, Lepidus.

*Lep.* Your way is shorter; My purposes do draw me much about. You'll win two days upon me.

*Mec.* } Sir, good success!  
*Agr.* }

*Lep.* Farewell. [Exeunt. 10

SCENE V. *Alexandria: Cleopatra's palace**Enter* CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, IRAS, and ALEXAS.

*Cleo.* Give me some music; music, moody food Of us that trade in love.

*Attend.* The music, ho!

*Enter* MARDIAN the eunuch.

*Cleo.* Let it alone; let's to billiards. Come, Charmian.

*Char.* My arm is sore; best play with Mardian.

*Cleo.* As well a woman with an eunuch play'd As with a woman. Come, you'll play with me, sir?

*Mar.* As well as I can, madam.

*Cleo.* And when good will is show'd, though't come too short,

The actor may plead pardon. I'll none now. Give me mine angle; we'll to the river; there, My music playing far off, I will betray Tawny-finn'd fishes; my bended hook shall pierce 11

Their slimy jaws; and, as I draw them up, I'll think them every one an Antony, And say, "Ah, ha! you're caught."

*Char.* 'Twas merry when You wager'd on your angling; when your diver Did hang a salt-fish on his hook, which he With fervency drew up.

*Cleo.* That time—O times!— I laugh'd him out of patience; and that night I laugh'd him into patience; and next morn, Ere the ninth hour, I drunk him to his bed; Then put my tires and mantles on him, whilst I wore his sword Philippan. 20

*Enter* a MESSENGER.

O, from Italy!

Ram thou thy fruitful tidings in mine ears, That long time have been barren.

*Mess.* Madam, madam—

*Cleo.* Antonius dead!—If thou say so, villain, Thou kill'st thy mistress; but well and free, If thou so yield him, there is gold, and here My bluest veins to kiss; a hand that kings Have lipp'd, and trembled kissing. 30

*Mess.* First, madam, he is well.

*Cleo.* Why, there's more gold. But, sirrah, mark, we use

To say the dead are well. Bring it to that, The gold I give thee will I melt and pour Down thy ill-uttering throat.

*Mess.* Good madam, hear me.

*Cleo.* Well, go to, I will; But there's no goodness in thy face. If Antony Be free and healthful—so tart a favour To trumpet such good tidings! If not well, Thou shouldst come like a Fury crown'd with snakes, 40 Not like a formal man.

*Mess.* Will't please you hear me?

*Cleo.* I have a mind to strike thee ere thou speak'st.

Yet, if thou say Antony lives, is well, Or friends with Cæsar, or not captive to him, I'll set thee in a shower of gold, and hail Rich pearls upon thee.

*Mess.* Madam, he's well.

*Cleo.* Well said.

*Mess.* And friends with Cæsar.

*Cleo.* Thou'rt an honest man.

*Mess.* Cæsar and he are greater friends than ever.

*Cleo.* Make thee a fortune from me.

*Mess.* But yet, madam—

*Cleo.* I do not like "But yet," it does allay 50 The good precedence; fie upon "But yet"! "But yet" is as a gaoler to bring forth Some monstrous malefactor. Prithce, friend, Pour out the pack of matter to mine ear, The good and bad together. He's friends with Cæsar;

In state of health thou say'st; and thou say'st free.

*Mess.* Free, madam! no; I made no such report.

He's bound unto Octavia.

*Cleo.* For what good turn?

*Mess.* For the best turn i' the bed.

*Cleo.* I am pale, Charmian.

*Mess.* Madam, he's married to Octavia. 60



*Cleo.* The most infectious pestilence upon thee!

*Strikes him down.*

*Mess.* Good madam, patience.

*Cleo.* What say you? Hence,

*Strikes him again.*

Horrible villain! or I'll spurn thine eyes

Like balls before me; I'll unhair thy head.

*She hales him up and down.*

Thou shalt be whipp'd with wire, and stew'd in  
brine,

Smarting in lingering pickle.

*Mess.* Gracious madam,

I that do bring the news made not the match.

*Cleo.* Say 'tis not so, a province I will give thee,

And make thy fortunes proud; the blow thou  
hadst

Shall make thy peace for moving me to rage; 70

And I will boot thee with what gift beside

Thy modesty can beg.

*Mess.* He's married, madam.

*Cleo.* Rogue, thou hast lived too long.

*Draws a knife.*

*Mess.*

Nay, then I'll run.

What mean you, madam? I have made no fault.

*[Exit.*

*Char.* Good madam, keep yourself within your-  
self.

The man is innocent.

*Cleo.* Some innocents 'scape not the thunderbolt.

Melt Egypt into Nile! and kindly creatures

Turn all to serpents! Call the slave again.

Though I am mad, I will not bite him. Call. 80

*Char.* He is afraid to come.

*Cleo.* I will not hurt him.

*[Exit CHARMIAN.*

These hands do lack nobility that they strike

A meaner than myself; since I myself

Have given myself the cause.

*Re-enter CHARMIAN and MESSENGER.*

Come hither, sir.

Though it be honest, it is never good

To bring bad news. Give to a gracious message

An host of tongues; but let ill tidings tell

Themselves when they be felt.

*Mess.*

I have done my duty.

*Cleo.* Is he married?

I cannot hate thee worser than I do, 90

If thou again say "Yes."

*Mess.*

He's married, madam.

*Cleo.* The gods confound thee! dost thou hold  
there still?

*Mess.* Should I lie, madam?

*Cleo.*

O, I would thou didst,

So half my Egypt were submerged and made

A cistern for scaled snakes! Go, get thee hence.

Hadst thou Narcissus in thy face, to me

Thou wouldst appear most ugly. He is married?

*Mess.* I crave your Highness' pardon.

*Cleo.*

He is married?

*Mess.* Take no offence that I would not offend  
you.

To punish me for what you make me do 100

Seems much unequal. He's married to Octavia.

*Cleo.* O, that his fault should make a knave of  
thee,

That art not what thou'rt sure of! Get thee hence.

The merchandise which thou hast brought from  
Rome

Are all too dear for me; lie they upon thy hand,

And be undone by 'em! *[Exit MESSENGER.*

*Char.*

Good your Highness, patience.

*Cleo.* In praising Antony, I have dispraised

Cæsar.

*Char.* Many times, madam.

*Cleo.*

I am paid for't now.

Lead me from hence;

I faint. O Iras, Charmian! 'tis no matter. 110

Go to the fellow, good Alexas; bid him

Report the feature of Octavia, her years,

Her inclination, let him not leave out

The colour of her hair. Bring me word quickly.

*[Exit ALEXAS.*

Let him for ever go; let him not—Charmian,

Though he be painted one way like a Gorgon,

The other way's a Mars. Bid you Alexas

*[To MARDIAN.*

Bring me word how tall she is. Pity me, Char-  
mian,

But do not speak to me. Lead me to my chamber.

*[Exeunt.*

#### SCENE VI. Near Misenum

*Flourish.* Enter POMPEY and MENAS at one side,  
with drum and trumpet; at another, CÆSAR, AN-  
TONY, LEPIDUS, ENOBARBUS, MECÆNAS with  
*Soldiers marching.*

*Pom.* Your hostages I have, so have you mine;

And we shall talk before we fight.

*Cæs.*

Most meet

That first we come to words; and therefore have  
we

Our written purposes before us sent;

Which, if thou hast consider'd, let us know

If 'twill tie up thy discontented sword,

And carry back to Sicily much tall youth

That else must perish here.

*Pom.*

To you all three,

The senators alone of this great world,

Chief factors for the gods, I do not know 10

Wherefore my father should revengers want,

Having a son and friends; since Julius Cæsar,

Who at Philippi the good Brutus ghosted,  
There saw you labouring for him. What was't  
That moved pale Cassius to conspire; and what  
Made the all-honour'd, honest Roman, Brutus,  
With the arm'd rest, courtiers of beauteous freedom,

To drench the Capitol; but that they would  
Have one man but a man? And that is it 19  
Hath made me rig my navy; at whose burthen  
The anger'd ocean foams; with which I meant  
To scourge the ingratitude that spiteful Rome  
Cast on my noble father.

*Cæs.* Take your time.

*Ant.* Thou canst not fear us, Pompey, with thy sails;

We'll speak with thee at sea. At land, thou know'st

How much we do o'er-count thee.

*Pom.* At land, indeed,  
Thou dost o'er-count me of my father's house;  
But, since the cuckoo builds not for himself,  
Remain in't as thou mayst.

*Lep.* Be pleased to tell us—  
For this is from the present—how you take 30  
The offers we have sent you.

*Cæs.* There's the point.

*Ant.* Which do not be entreated to, but weigh  
What it is worth embraced.

*Cæs.* And what may follow,  
To try a larger fortune.

*Pom.* You have made me offer  
Of Sicily, Sardinia; and I must  
Rid all the sea of pirates; then, to send  
Measures of wheat to Rome; this'greed upon,  
To part with unhack'd edges, and bear back  
Your targes undinted.

*Cæs. Ant. Lep.* That's our offer.

*Pom.* Know, then, 40  
I came before you here a man prepared  
To take this offer; but Mark Antony  
Put me to some impatience. Though I lose  
The praise of it by telling, you must know,  
When Cæsar and your brother were at blows,  
Your mother came to Sicily and did find  
Her welcome friendly.

*Ant.* I have heard it, Pompey;  
And am well studied for a liberal thanks  
Which I do owe you.

*Pom.* Let me have your hand.  
I did not think, sir, to have met you here. 50

*Ant.* The beds i' the East are soft; and thanks  
to you,

That call'd me timelier than my purpose hither;  
For I have gain'd by't.

*Cæs.* Since I saw you last,  
There is a change upon you.

*Pom.* Well, I know not  
What counts harsh Fortune casts upon my face;  
But in my bosom shall she never come,  
To make my heart her vassal.

*Lep.* Well met here.  
*Pom.* I hope so, Lepidus. Thus we are agreed.  
I crave our composition may be written,  
And seal'd between us.

*Cæs.* That's the next to do. 60  
*Pom.* We'll feast each other ere we part; and  
let's

Draw lots who shall begin.

*Ant.* That will I, Pompey.

*Pom.* No, Antony, take the lot; but, first  
Or last, your fine Egyptian cookery  
Shall have the fame. I have heard that Julius  
Cæsar

Grew fat with feasting there.

*Ant.* You have heard much.

*Pom.* I have fair meanings, sir.

*Ant.* And fair words to them.

*Pom.* Then so much have I heard;  
And I have heard, Apollodorus carried—

*Eno.* No more of that; he did so.

*Pom.* What, I pray you? 70

*Eno.* A certain queen to Cæsar in a mattress.

*Pom.* I know thee now. How far'st thou,  
soldier?

*Eno.* Well;

And well am like to do; for, I perceive,  
Four feasts are toward.

*Pom.* Let me shake thy hand;  
I never hated thee. I have seen thee fight,  
When I have envied thy behaviour.

*Eno.* Sir,  
I never loved you much; but I ha' praised ye,  
When you have well deserved ten times as much  
As I have said you did.

*Pom.* Enjoy thy plainness, 80  
It nothing ill becomes thee.

Aboard my galley I invite you all.  
Will you lead, lords?

*Cæs. Ant. Lep.* Show us the way, sir.

*Pom.* Come.

[*Exeunt all but MENAS and ENOBARBUS.*]

*Men.* [*Aside*] Thy father, Pompey, would ne'er  
have made this treaty. You and I have known,  
sir.

*Eno.* At sea, I think.

*Men.* We have, sir.

*Eno.* You have done well by water.

*Men.* And you by land. 90

*Eno.* I will praise any man that will praise me;  
though it cannot be denied what I have done by  
land.

*Men.* Nor what I have done by water.



*Eno.* Yes, something you can deny for your own safety. You have been a great thief by sea.

*Men.* And you by land.

*Eno.* There I deny my land service. But give me your hand, Menas. If our eyes had authority, here they might take two thieves kissing. 101

*Men.* All men's faces are true, whatsome'er their hands are.

*Eno.* But there is never a fair woman has a true face.

*Men.* No slander; they steal hearts.

*Eno.* We came hither to fight with you.

*Men.* For my part, I am sorry it is turned to a drinking. Pompey doth this day laugh away his fortune. 110

*Eno.* If he do, sure, he cannot weep't back again.

*Men.* You've said, sir. We looked not for Mark Antony here. Pray you, is he married to Cleopatra?

*Eno.* Cæsar's sister is called Octavia.

*Men.* True, sir; she was the wife of Caius Marcellus.

*Eno.* But she is now the wife of Marcus Antonius.

*Men.* Pray ye, sir? 120

*Eno.* 'Tis true.

*Men.* Then is Cæsar and he for ever knit together.

*Eno.* If I were bound to divine of this unity, I would not prophesy so.

*Men.* I think the policy of that purpose made more in the marriage than the love of the parties.

*Eno.* I think so too. But you shall find the band that seems to tie their friendship together will be the very strangler of their amity. Octavia is of a holy, cold, and still conversation. 131

*Men.* Who would not have his wife so?

*Eno.* Not he that himself is not so; which is Mark Antony. He will to his Egyptian dish again. Then shall the sighs of Octavia blow the fire up in Cæsar; and, as I said before, that which is the strength of their amity shall prove the immediate author of their variance. Antony will use his affection where it is; he married but his occasion here. 140

*Men.* And thus it may be. Come, sir, will you aboard? I have a health for you.

*Eno.* I shall take it, sir. We have used our throats in Egypt.

*Men.* Come, let's away. [Exeunt.]

SCENE VII. On board Pompey's galley, off Misenum

Music plays. Enter two or three SERVANTS with a banquet.

*1st Serv.* Here they'll be, man. Some o' their plants are ill-rooted already; the least wind i' the world will blow them down.

*2nd Serv.* Lepidus is high-coloured.

*1st Serv.* They have made him drink alms-drink.

*2nd Serv.* As they pinch one another by the disposition, he cries out "No more"; reconciles them to his entreaty, and himself to the drink.

*1st Serv.* But it raises the greater war between him and his discretion. 11

*2nd Serv.* Why, this it is to have a name in great men's fellowship. I had as lief have a reed that will do me no service as a partisan I could not heave.

*1st Serv.* To be called into a huge sphere, and not to be seen to move in't, are the holes where eyes should be, which pitifully disaster the cheeks.

*A semnet sounded. Enter CÆSAR, ANTONY, LEPIDUS POMPEY, AGRIPPA, MECÆNAS, ENO BARBUS, MENAS, with other captains.*

*Ant.* [To CÆSAR] Thus do they, sir: they take the flow o' the Nile 20

By certain scales i' the pyramid; they know, By the height, the lowness, or the mean, if dearth Or foison follow. The higher Nilus swells, The more it promises; as it ebbs, the seedman Upon the slime and ooze scatters his grain, And shortly comes to harvest.

*Lep.* You've strange serpents there.

*Ant.* Ay, Lepidus.

*Lep.* Your serpent of Egypt is bred now of your mud by the operation of your sun. So is your crocodile. 31

*Ant.* They are so.

*Pom.* Sit—and some wine! A health to Lepidus!

*Lep.* I am not so well as I should be, but I'll ne'er out.

*Eno.* Not till you have slept; I fear me you'll be in till then.

*Lep.* Nay, certainly, I have heard the Ptolemies' pyramids are very goodly things; without contradiction, I have heard that. 41

*Men.* [Aside to POMPEY] Pompey, a word.

*Pom.* [Aside to MENAS] Say in mine ear: what is't?

*Men.* [Aside to POMPEY] Forsake thy seat, I do beseech thee, captain, And hear me speak a word.

*Pom.* [Aside to MENAS] Forbear me till anon. This wine for Lepidus!

*Lep.* What manner o' thing is your crocodile?

*Ant.* It is shaped, sir, like itself; and it is as broad as it hath breadth; it is just so high as it is, and moves with it own organs; it lives by that

which nourisheth it; and the elements once out of it, it transmigrates. 51

*Lep.* What colour is it of?

*Ant.* Of it own colour too.

*Lep.* 'Tis a strange serpent.

*Ant.* 'Tis so. And the tears of it are wet.

*Cæs.* Will this description satisfy him?

*Ant.* With the health that Pompey gives him, else he is a very epicure.

*Pom.* [*Aside to MENAS*] Go hang, sir, hang!

Tell me of that? away!

Do as I bid you. Where's this cup I call'd for?

*Men.* [*Aside to POMPEY*] If for the sake of merit thou wilt hear me, 61

Rise from thy stool.

*Pom.* [*Aside to MENAS*] I think thou'rt mad.

The matter? [*Rises, and walks aside.*]

*Men.* I have ever held my cap off to thy fortunes.

*Pom.* Thou hast served me with much faith.

What's else to say?

Be jolly, lords.

*Ant.* These quick-sands, Lepidus,

Keep off them, for you sink.

*Men.* Wilt thou be lord of all the world?

*Pom.* What say'st thou?

*Men.* Wilt thou be lord of the whole world?

That's twice.

*Pom.* How should that be?

*Men.* But entertain it, 69

And, though thou think me poor, I am the man Will give thee all the world.

*Pom.* Hast thou drunk well?

*Men.* No, Pompey, I have kept me from the cup.

Thou art, if thou darest be, the earthly Jove.

Whate'er the ocean pales, or sky inclips,

Is thine, if thou wilt ha't.

*Pom.* Show me which way.

*Men.* These three world-sharers, these competitors,

Are in thy vessel. Let me cut the cable;

And, when we are put off, fall to their throats.

All there is thine.

*Pom.* Ah, this thou shouldst have done, And not have spoke on 't! In me 'tis villainy; 80

In thee 't had been good service. Thou must know,

'Tis not my profit that does lead mine honour;

Mine honour, it. Repent that e'er thy tongue

Hath so betray'd thine act; being done un-

known,

I should have found it afterwards well done;

But must condemn it now. Desist, and drink.

*Men.* [*Aside*] For this, I'll never follow thy pall'd fortunes more.

Who seeks, and will not take when once 'tis offer'd,

Shall never find it more.

*Pom.* This health to Lepidus! 90

*Ant.* Bear him ashore. I'll pledge it for him,

Pompey.

*Eno.* Here's to thee, Menas!

*Men.* Enobarbus, welcome!

*Pom.* Fill till the cup be hid.

*Eno.* There's a strong fellow, Menas.

[*Pointing to the Attendant who carries off* LEPIDUS.

*Men.* Why?

*Eno.* A' bears the third part of the world, man; see'st not?

*Men.* The third part, then, is drunk. Would it were all,

That it might go on wheels!

*Eno.* Drink thou; increase the reels. 100

*Men.* Come.

*Pom.* This is not yet an Alexandrian feast.

*Ant.* It ripens towards it. Strike the vessels, ho! Here is to Cæsar!

*Cæs.* I could well forbear 't.

It's monstrous labour, when I wash my brain, And it grows fouler.

*Ant.* Be a child o' the time.

*Cæs.* Possess it, I'll make answer.

But I had rather fast from all four days

Than drink so much in one.

*Eno.* Ha, my brave emperor! [*To ANTONY.*

Shall we dance now the Egyptian Bacchanals, And celebrate our drink?

*Pom.* Let's ha't, good soldier. 111

*Ant.* Come, let's all take hands,

Till that the conquering wine hath steep'd our sense

In soft and delicate Lethe.

*Eno.* All take hands.

Make battery to our ears with the loud music;

The while I'll place you; then the boy shall sing;

The holding every man shall bear as loud

As his strong sides can volley.

*Music plays.* ENOBARBUS places them hand in hand.

#### THE SONG

Come, thou monarch of the vine, 120

Plumpy Bacchus with pink eyne!

In thy fats our cares be drown'd,

With thy grapes our hairs be crown'd.

Cup us, till the world go round,

Cup us, till the world go round!

*Cæs.* What would you more? Pompey, good night. Good brother,



Let me request you off; our graver business  
Frowns at this levity. Gentle lords, let's part;  
You see we have burnt our cheeks. Strong Enobarb

Is weaker than the wine; and mine own tongue  
Splits what it speaks; the wild disguise hath  
almost

Antick'd us all. What needs more words? Good  
night.

Good Antony, your hand.

*Pom.* I'll try you on the shore.

*Ant.* And shall, sir; give's your hand.

*Pom.* O Antony,  
You have my father's house—But, what? we are  
friends.

Come, down into the boat.

*Eno.* Take heed you fall not.

[*Exeunt all but ENOBARBUS and MENAS.*]

Menas, I'll not on shore.

*Men.* No, to my cabin.

These drums! these trumpets, flutes! what!

Let Neptune hear we bid a loud farewell

To these great fellows. Sound and be hang'd,  
sound out!

*Sound a flourish, with drums.*

*Eno.* Ho! says a'. There's my cap. 141

*Men.* Ho! Noble captain, come. [*Exeunt.*]

### ACT III

#### SCENE I. A plain in Syria

*Enter VENTIDIUS as it were in triumph, with SILIUS, and other Romans, Officers, and Soldiers; the dead body of PACORUS borne before him.*

*Ven.* Now, darting Parthia, art thou struck; and  
now

Pleased fortune does of Marcus Crassus' death  
Make me revenger. Bear the King's son's body  
Before our army. Thy Pacorus, Orodes,  
Pays this for Marcus Crassus.

*Sil.* Noble Ventidius,  
Whilst yet with Parthian blood thy sword is  
warm,

The fugitive Parthians follow; spur through  
Media,

Mesopotamia, and the shelters whither  
The routed fly; so thy grand captain Antony  
Shall set thee on triumphant chariots and 10  
Put garlands on thy head.

*Ven.* O Silius, Silius,  
I have done enough; a lower place, note well,  
May make too great an act; for learn this, Silius;  
Better to leave undone, than by our deed  
Acquire too high a fame when him we serve's  
away.

Cæsar and Antony have ever won

More in their officer than person. Sossius,  
One of my place in Syria, his lieutenant,  
For quick accumulation of renown, 19  
Which he achieved by the minute, lost his favour.  
Who does i' the wars more than his captain can  
Becomes his captain's captain; and ambition,  
The soldier's virtue, rather makes choice of loss,  
Than gain which darkens him.

I could do more to do Antonius good,  
But 'twould offend him; and in his offence  
Should my performance perish.

*Sil.* Thou hast, Ventidius, that  
Without the which a soldier, and his sword,  
Grants scarce distinction. Thou wilt write to  
Antony?

*Ven.* I'll humbly signify what in his name, 30  
That magical word of war, we have effected;  
How, with his banners and his well-paid ranks,  
The ne'er-yet-beaten horse of Parthia  
We have jaded out o' the field.

*Sil.* Where is he now?

*Ven.* He purposeth to Athens; whither, with  
what haste  
The weight we must convey with 's will permit,  
We shall appear before him. On, there; pass  
along! [*Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE II. Rome: an ante-chamber in Cæsar's house

*Enter AGRIPPA at one door, ENOBARBUS  
at another.*

*Agr.* What, are the brothers parted?

*Eno.* They have dispatch'd with Pompey, he is  
gone;

The other three are sealing. Octavia weeps  
To part from Rome; Cæsar is sad; and Lepidus,  
Since Pompey's feast, as Menas says, is troubled  
With the green sickness.

*Agr.* 'Tis a noble Lepidus.

*Eno.* A very fine one. O, how he loves Cæsar!

*Agr.* Nay, but how dearly he adores Mark An-  
tony!

*Eno.* Cæsar? Why, he's the Jupiter of men.

*Agr.* What's Antony? The god of Jupiter. 10

*Eno.* Spake you of Cæsar? How! the nonpareil!

*Agr.* O Antony! O thou Arabian bird!

*Eno.* Would you praise Cæsar, say "Cæsar";  
go no further.

*Agr.* Indeed, he plied them both with excellent  
praises.

*Eno.* But he loves Cæsar best; yet he loves An-  
tony.

Ho! hearts, tongues, figures, scribes, bards,  
poets, cannot

Think, speak, cast, write, sing, number, ho!  
His love to Antony. But as for Cæsar,

Kneel down, kneel down, and wonder.

*Agr.* Both he loves.

*Eno.* They are his shards, and he their beetle.

[*Trumpets within.*] So; 20

This is to horse. Adieu, noble Agrippa.

*Agr.* Good fortune, worthy soldier; and farewell.

*Enter CÆSAR, ANTONY, LEPIDUS, and OCTAVIA.*

*Ant.* No further, sir.

*Cæs.* You take from me a great part of myself;  
Use me well in 't. Sister, prove such a wife  
As my thoughts make thee, and as my farthest  
band

Shall pass on thy approof. Most noble Antony,  
Let not the piece of virtue, which is set  
Betwixt us as the cement of our love,  
To keep it builded, be the ram to batter 30  
The fortress of it; for better might we  
Have loved without this mean, if on both parts  
This be not cherish'd.

*Ant.* Make me not offended.  
In your distrust.

*Cæs.* I have said.

*Ant.* You shall not find,  
Though you be therein curious, the least cause  
For what you seem to fear. So, the gods keep you,  
And make the hearts of Romans serve your ends!  
We will here part.

*Cæs.* Farewell, my dearest sister, fare thee well.  
The elements be kind to thee, and make 40  
Thy spirits all of comfort! fare thee well.

*Oct.* My noble brother!

*Ant.* The April's in her eyes; it is love's spring,  
And these the showers to bring it on. Be cheerful.

*Oct.* Sir, look well to my husband's house; and—

*Cæs.* What,

Octavia?

*Oct.* I'll tell you in your ear.

*Ant.* Her tongue will not obey her heart, nor  
can

Her heart inform her tongue—the swan's down-  
feather,

That stands upon the swell at full of tide,  
And neither way inclines. 50

*Eno.* [*Aside to AGRIPPA*] Will Cæsar weep?

*Agr.* [*Aside to ENOBARBUS*] He has a cloud in's  
face.

*Eno.* [*Aside to AGRIPPA*] He were the worse for  
that, were he a horse;

So is he, being a man.

*Agr.* [*Aside to ENOBARBUS*] Why, Enobarbus,  
When Antony found Julius Cæsar dead  
He cried almost to roaring; and he wept  
When at Philippi he found Brutus slain.

*Eno.* [*Aside to AGRIPPA*] That year, indeed, he  
was troubled with a rheum;  
What willingly he did confound he wail'd,  
Believe 't, till I wept too.

*Cæs.* No, sweet Octavia,  
You shall hear from me still; the time shall not  
Out-go my thinking on you.

*Ant.* Come, sir, come; 61  
I'll wrestle with you in my strength of love.  
Look, here I have you; thus I let you go,  
And give you to the gods.

*Cæs.* Adieu; be happy!

*Lep.* Let all the number of the stars give light  
To thy fair way!

*Cæs.* Farewell, farewell! [*Kisses OCTAVIA.*]

*Ant.* Farewell!  
[*Trumpets sound. Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *Alexandria: Cleopatra's palace*

*Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, IRAS, and  
ALEXAS.*

*Cleo.* Where is the fellow?

*Alex.* Half afeard to come.

*Cleo.* Go to, go to.

*Enter the MESSENGER as before.*

Come hither, sir.

*Alex.* Good Majesty,  
Herod of Jewry dare not look upon you  
But when you are well pleased.

*Cleo.* That Herod's head  
I'll have; but how, when Antony is gone  
Through whom I might command it? Come thou  
near.

*Mess.* Most gracious Majesty—

*Cleo.* Didst thou behold Octavia?

*Mess.* Ay, dread queen.

*Cleo.* Where? 10

*Mess.* Madam, in Rome;

I look'd her in the face, and saw her led  
Between her brother and Mark Antony.

*Cleo.* Is she as tall as me?

*Mess.* She is not, madam.  
*Cleo.* Didst hear her speak? is she shrill-tongued  
or low?

*Mess.* Madam, I heard her speak; she is low-  
voiced.

*Cleo.* That's not so good. He cannot like her  
long?

*Char.* Like her! O Isis! 'tis impossible.

*Cleo.* I think so, Charmian. Dull of tongue, and  
dwarfish!

What majesty is in her gait? Remember, 20  
If e'er thou look'dst on majesty.

*Mess.* She creeps;  
Her motion and her station are as one;



She shows a body rather than a life,  
A statue than a breather.

*Cleo.* Is this certain?

*Mess.* Or I have no observance.

*Char.* Three in Egypt  
Cannot make better note.

*Cleo.* He's very knowing;  
I do perceive 't. There's nothing in her yet.

The fellow has good judgement.

*Char.* Excellent.

*Cleo.* Guess at her years, I prithee.

*Mess.* Madam,

She was a widow—

*Cleo.* Widow! Charmian, hark. 30

*Mess.* And I do think she's thirty.

*Cleo.* Bear'st thou her face in mind? is't long or round?

*Mess.* Round even to faultiness.

*Cleo.* For the most part, too, they are foolish  
that are so.

Her hair, what colour?

*Mess.* Brown, madam; and her forehead

As low as she would wish it.

*Cleo.* There's gold for thee.  
Thou must not take my former sharpness ill.

I will employ thee back again; I find thee

Most fit for business. Go make thee ready; 40

Our letters are prepared. [*Exit MESSENGER.*]

*Char.* A proper man.

*Cleo.* Indeed, he is so. I repent me much

That so I harried him. Why, methinks, by him,  
This creature's no such thing.

*Char.* Nothing, madam.

*Cleo.* The man hath seen some majesty, and  
should know.

*Char.* Hath he seen majesty? Isis else defend,  
And serving you so long!

*Cleo.* I have one thing more to ask him yet,  
good Charmian;

But 'tis no matter; thou shalt bring him to me  
Where I will write. All may be well enough. 50

*Char.* I warrant you, madam. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV. *Athens: A room in Antony's house*

*Enter ANTONY and OCTAVIA.*

*Ant.* Nay, nay, Octavia, not only that—  
That were excusable, that, and thousands more  
Of semblable import—but he hath waged  
New wars 'gainst Pompey; made his will, and  
read it  
To public ear;  
Spoke scantily of me; when perforce he could not  
But pay me terms of honour, cold and sickly  
He vented them; most narrow measure lent me;  
When the best hint was given him, he not took 't,  
Or did it from his teeth.

*Oct.* O my good lord, 10

Believe not all; or, if you must believe,  
Stomach not all. A more unhappy lady,  
If this division chance, ne'er stood between,  
Praying for both parts.

The good gods will mock me presently,  
When I shall pray, "O, bless my lord and hus-  
band!"

Undo that prayer, by crying out as loud,  
"O, bless my brother!" Husband win, win  
brother,

Prays, and destroys the prayer; no midway  
'Twixt these extremes at all.

*Ant.* Gentle Octavia, 20  
Let your best love draw to that point which  
seeks

Best to preserve it. If I lose mine honour,  
I lose myself; better I were not yours  
Than yours so branchless. But, as you requested,  
Yourself shall go between's. The mean time, lady,  
I'll raise the preparation of a war

Shall stain your brother. Make your soonest  
haste;

So your desires are yours.

*Oct.* Thanks to my lord.

The Jove of power make me most weak, most  
weak,

Your reconciler! Wars 'twixt you twain would  
be

As if the world should cleave, and that slain  
men 31

Should solder up the rift.

*Ant.* When it appears to you where this begins,  
Turn your displeasure that way; for our faults  
Can never be so equal that your love  
Can equally move with them. Provide your  
going;

Choose your own company, and command what  
cost

Your heart has mind to. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V. *The same: another room*

*Enter ENOBARBUS and EROS, meeting.*

*Eno.* How now, friend Eros!

*Eros.* There's strange news come, sir.

*Eno.* What, man?

*Eros.* Cæsar and Lepidus have made wars upon  
Pompey.

*Eno.* This is old. What is the success?

*Eros.* Cæsar, having made use of him in the wars  
'gainst Pompey, presently denied him rivalry;  
would not let him partake in the glory of the  
action; and not resting here, accuses him of let-  
ters he had formerly wrote to Pompey; upon his  
own appeal, seizes him. So the poor third is up,  
till death enlarge his confine.

*Eno.* Then, world, thou hast a pair of chaps, no more;

And throw between them all the food thou hast,  
They'll grind the one the other. Where's Antony?

*Eros.* He's walking in the garden—thus; and spurns

The rush that lies before him; cries, "Fool Lepidus!"

And threatens the throat of that his officer  
That murder'd Pompey.

*Eno.* Our great navy's rigg'd. 20

*Eros.* For Italy and Cæsar. More, Domitius;  
My lord desires you presently; my news  
I might have told hereafter.

*Eno.* 'Twill be naught;  
But let it be. Bring me to Antony.

*Eros.* Come, sir. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI. *Rome: Cæsar's house*

*Enter CÆSAR, AGRIPPA, and MÆCÆNAS.*

*Cæs.* Contemning Rome, he has done all this  
and more

In Alexandria. Here's the manner of't:  
I' the market-place, on a tribunal silver'd,  
Cleopatra and himself in chairs of gold  
Were publicly enthroned. At the feet sat  
Cæsarion, whom they call my father's son,  
And all the unlawful issue that their lust  
Since then hath made between them. Unto her  
He gave the establishment of Egypt; made her  
Of lower Syria, Cyprus, Lydia, 10  
Absolute queen.

*Mec.* This in the public eye?

*Cæs.* I' the common show-place, where they  
exercise.

His sons he there proclaim'd the kings of kings:  
Great Media, Parthia, and Armenia,  
He gave to Alexander; to Ptolemy he assign'd  
Syria, Cilicia, and Phœnicia. She  
In the habiliments of the goddess Isis  
That day appear'd; and oft before gave audience,  
As 'tis reported, so.

*Mec.* Let Rome be thus  
Inform'd.

*Agr.* Who, queasy with his insolence 20  
Already, will their good thoughts call from him.

*Cæs.* The people know it; and have now re-  
ceived

His accusations.

*Agr.* Who does he accuse?

*Cæs.* Cæsar; and that, having in Sicily  
Sextus Pompeius spoil'd, we had not rated him  
His part o' the isle. Then does he say he lent me  
Some shipping unrestored. Lastly, he frets  
That Lepidus of the triumvirate

Should be deposed; and, being, that we detain  
All his revenue.

*Agr.* Sir, this should be answer'd. 30

*Cæs.* 'Tis done already, and the messenger gone.  
I have told him Lepidus was grown too cruel;  
That he his high authority abused,  
And did deserve his change. For what I have con-  
quer'd,

I grant him part; but then, in his Armenia,  
And other of his conquer'd kingdoms, I  
Demand the like.

*Mec.* He'll never yield to that.

*Cæs.* Nor must not then be yielded to in this.

*Enter OCTAVIA with her train.*

*Oct.* Hail, Cæsar, and my lord! hail, most dear  
Cæsar! 39

*Cæs.* That ever I should call thee castaway!

*Oct.* You have not call'd me so, nor have you  
cause.

*Cæs.* Why have you stol'n upon us thus? You  
come not

Like Cæsar's sister. The wife of Antony  
Should have an army for an usher, and  
The neighs of horse to tell of her approach  
Long ere she did appear; the trees by the way  
Should have borne men; and expectation fainted,  
Longing for what it had not; nay, the dust  
Should have ascended to the roof of heaven, 49  
Raised by your populous troops. But you are  
come

A market-maid to Rome; and have prevented  
The ostentation of our love, which, left unshown,  
Is often left unloved. We should have met you  
By sea and land; supplying every stage  
With an augmented greeting.

*Oct.* Good my lord,  
To come thus was I not constrain'd, but did it  
On my free will. My lord, Mark Antony,  
Hearing that you prepared for war, acquainted  
My grieved ear withal; whereon, I begg'd  
His pardon for return.

*Cæs.* Which soon he granted, 60  
Being an obstruct 'tween his lust and him.

*Oct.* Do not say so, my lord.

*Cæs.* I have eyes upon him,  
And his affairs come to me on the wind.  
Where is he now?

*Oct.* My lord, in Athens.

*Cæs.* No, my most wronged sister; Cleopatra  
Hath nodded him to her. He hath given his em-  
pire

Up to a whore; who now are levying  
The kings o' the earth for war. He hath assem-  
bled  
Bocchus, the King of Libya; Archelaus,



Of Cappadocia; Philadelphos, King 70  
Of Paphlagonia; the Thracian king, Adallas;  
King Malchus of Arabia; King of Pont;  
Herod of Jewry; Mithridates, King  
Of Comagene; Polemon and Amyntas,  
The Kings of Mede and Lycaonia,  
With a more larger list of sceptres.

*Oct.* Ay me, most wretched,  
That have my heart parted betwixt two friends  
That do afflict each other!

*Cæs.* Welcome hither.  
Your letters did withhold our breaking forth; 79  
Till we perceived, both how you were wrong led,  
And we in negligent danger. Cheer your heart;  
Be you not troubled with the time, which drives  
O'er your content these strong necessities;  
But let determined things to destiny  
Hold unbewail'd their way. Welcome to Rome;  
Nothing more dear to me. You are abused  
Beyond the mark of thought: and the high gods,  
To do you justice, make them ministers  
Of us and those that love you. Best of comfort;  
And ever welcome to us. 90

*Agr.* Welcome, lady.  
*Mec.* Welcome, dear madam.  
Each heart in Rome does love and pity you.  
Only the adulterous Antony, most large  
In his abominations, turns you off,  
And gives his potent regiment to a trull,  
That noises it against us.

*Oct.* Is it so, sir?  
*Cæs.* Most certain. Sister, welcome. Pray you,  
Be ever known to patience. My dear'st sister!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VII. *Near Actium: Antony's camp*

*Enter CLEOPATRA and ENOBARBUS.*

*Cleo.* I will be even with thee, doubt it not.

*Eno.* But why, why, why?

*Cleo.* Thou hast forspoke my being in these wars,

And say'st it is not fit.

*Eno.* Well, is it, is it?

*Cleo.* If not denounced against us, why should not we

Be there in person?

*Eno.* [*Aside*] Well, I could reply:

If we should serve with horse and mares together,

The horse were merely lost; the mares would bear

A soldier and his horse.

*Cleo.* What is't you say? 10

*Eno.* Your presence needs must puzzle Antony;  
Take from his heart, take from his brain, from's  
time,

What should not then be spared. He is already  
Traduced for levity; and 'tis said in Rome  
That Photinus an eunuch and your maids  
Manage this war.

*Cleo.* Sink Rome, and their tongues rot  
That speak against us! A charge we bear i' the  
war,

And, as the president of my kingdom, will  
Appear there for a man. Speak not against it;  
I will not stay behind.

*Eno.* Nay, I have done. 20  
Here comes the Emperor.

*Enter ANTONY and CANIDIUS.*

*Ant.* Is it not strange, Canidius,  
That from Tarentum and Brundisium  
He could so quickly cut the Ionian sea,  
And take in Toryne? You have heard on 't,  
sweet?

*Cleo.* Celerity is never more admired  
Than by the negligent.

*Ant.* A good rebuke,  
Which might have well become the best of  
men,

To taunt at slackness. Canidius, we  
Will fight with him by sea.

*Cleo.* By sea! what else?

*Can.* Why will my lord do so?

*Ant.* For that he dares us to 't. 30

*Eno.* So hath my lord dared him to single fight.

*Can.* Ay, and to wage this battle at Pharsalia,  
Where Cæsar fought with Pompey; but these  
offers,

Which serve not for his vantage, he shakes off;  
And so should you.

*Eno.* Your ships are not well mann'd;

Your mariners are muleters, reapers, people  
Ingross'd by swift impress; in Cæsar's fleet  
Are those that often have 'gainst Pompey fought.

Their ships are yare; yours, heavy. No disgrace  
Shall fall you for refusing him at sea, 40  
Being prepared for land.

*Ant.* By sea, by sea.

*Eno.* Most worthy sir, you therein throw away  
The absolute soldiership you have by land;  
Distract your army, which doth most consist  
Of war-mark'd footmen; leave unexecuted  
Your own renowned knowledge; quite forego  
The way which promises assurance; and  
Give up yourself merely to chance and hazard,  
From firm security.

*Ant.* I'll fight at sea.

*Cleo.* I have sixty sails, Cæsar none better. 50

*Ant.* Our overplus of shipping will we burn;  
And, with the rest full-mann'd, from the head of  
Actium

Beat the approaching Cæsar. But if we fail,  
We then can do't at land.

*Enter a MESSENGER.*

Thy business?

*Mess.* The news is true, my lord; he is descried;  
Cæsar has taken Toryne.

*Ant.* Can he be there in person? 'tis impossible;

Strange that his power should be. Canidius,  
Our nineteen legions thou shalt hold by land,  
And our twelve thousand horse. We'll to our  
ship.

Away, my Thetis!

*Enter a SOLDIER.*

How now, worthy soldier! 61

*Sold.* O noble emperor, do not fight by sea;  
Trust not to rotten planks. Do you misdoubt  
This sword and these my wounds? Let the Egyptian  
swords

And the Phœnicians go a-ducking; we  
Have used to conquer, standing on the earth,  
And fighting foot to foot.

*Ant.* Well, well; away!

[*Exeunt* ANTONY, CLEOPATRA, and ENOBARBUS.

*Sold.* By Hercules, I think I am i' the right.

*Can.* Soldier, thou art; but his whole action  
grows

Not in the power on't. So our leader's led, 70  
And we are women's men.

*Sold.* You keep by land

The legions and the horse whole, do you not?

*Can.* Marcus Octavius, Marcus Justeius,  
Publicola, and Cælius, are for sea;

But we keep whole by land. This speed of

Cæsar's

Carries beyond belief.

*Sold.* While he was yet in Rome,

His power went out in such distractions as  
Beguiled all spies.

*Can.* Who's his lieutenant, hear you?

*Sold.* They say, one Taurus.

*Can.* Well I know the man.

*Enter a MESSENGER.*

*Mess.* The Emperor calls Canidius. 80

*Can.* With news the time's with labour, and  
throes forth,

Each minute, some. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VIII. *A plain near Actium*

*Enter CÆSAR, and TAURUS, with his army,  
marching.*

*Cæs.* Taurus!

*Taur.* My Lord?

*Cæs.* Strike not by land; keep whole; provoke  
not battle,

Till we have done at sea. Do not exceed  
The prescript of this scroll; our fortune lies  
Upon this jump.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IX. *Another part of the plain*

*Enter* ANTONY *and* ENOBARBUS.

*Ant.* Set we our squadrons on yond side o' the  
hill,

In eye of Cæsar's battle; from which place

We may the number of the ships behold,

And so proceed accordingly. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE X. *Another part of the plain*

CANIDIUS *marsheth with his land army one way  
over the stage; and* TAURUS, *the lieutenant of*  
CÆSAR, *the other way. After their going in, is*  
*heard the noise of a sea-fight.*

*Alarum.* *Enter* ENOBARBUS.

*Eno.* Naught, naught, all naught! I can behold  
no longer.

The Antoniad, the Egyptian admiral,

With all their sixty, fly and turn the rudder.

To see't mine eyes are blasted.

*Enter* SCARUS.

*Scar.* Gods and goddesses,

All the whole synod of them!

*Eno.* What's thy passion?

*Scar.* The greater cantle of the world is lost  
With very ignorance; we have kiss'd away  
Kingdoms and provinces.

*Eno.* How appears the fight?

*Scar.* On our side like the token'd pestilence,  
Where death is sure. Yon ribaudred nag of

Egypt—

Whom leprosy o'ertake!—i' the midst o' the  
fight,

When vantage like a pair of twins appear'd,

Both as the same, or rather ours the elder,

The breeze upon her, like a cow in June,  
Hoists sails and flies.

*Eno.* That I beheld.

Mine eyes did sicken at the sight, and could not  
Endure a further view.

*Scar.* She once being loof'd,

The noble ruin of her magic, Antony,  
Claps on his sea-wing, and, like a doting mallard,  
Leaving the fight in height, flies after her. 21

I never saw an action of such shame;

Experience, manhood, honour, ne'er before  
Did violate so itself.

*Eno.*

Alack, alack!

*Enter* CANIDIUS.



*Can.* Our fortune on the sea is out of breath  
And sinks most lamentably. Had our general  
Been what he knew himself, it had gone well.  
O, he has given example for our flight,  
Most grossly, by his own!

*Eno.* Ay, are you thereabouts?  
Why, then, good night indeed. 30

*Can.* Toward Peloponnesus are they fled.

*Scar.* 'Tis easy to't; and there I will attend  
What further comes.

*Can.* To Cæsar will I render  
My legions and my horse. Six kings already  
Show me the way of yielding.

*Eno.* I'll yet follow  
The wounded chance of Antony, though my  
reason

Sits in the wind against me. [Exeunt.]

SCENE XI. *Alexandria: Cleopatra's  
palace*

Enter ANTONY with ATTENDANTS.

*Ant.* Hark! the land bids me tread no more  
upon't;

It is ashamed to bear me! Friends, come hither.  
I am so lated in the world, that I  
Have lost my way for ever. I have a ship  
Laden with gold; take that, divide it; fly,  
And make your peace with Cæsar.

*All.* Fly! not we  
*Ant.* I have fled myself; and have instructed  
cowards

To run and show their shoulders. Friends, be  
gone;

I have myself resolved upon a course  
Which has no need of you; be gone. 10  
My treasure's in the harbour, take it. O,  
I follow'd that I blush to look upon.  
My very hairs do mutiny; for the white  
Reprove the brown for rashness, and they them  
For fear and doting. Friends, be gone; you shall  
Have letters from me to some friends that will  
Sweep your way for you. Pray you, look not sad,  
Nor make replies of loathness. Take the hint  
Which my despair proclaims; let that be left  
Which leaves itself. To the sea-side straightway;  
I will possess you of that ship and treasure. 21  
Leave me, I pray, a little; pray you now.

Nay, do so; for, indeed, I have lost command,  
Therefore I pray you. I'll see you by and by.

*Sits down.*

Enter CLEOPATRA led by CHARMIAN and IRAS;  
EROS following.

*Eros.* Nay, gentle madam, to him, comfort him.

*Iras.* Do, most dear queen.

*Char.* Do! why, what else?

*Cleo.* Let me sit down. O Juno!

*Ant.* No, no, no, no, no. 30

*Eros.* See you here, sir?

*Ant.* O fie, fie, fie!

*Char.* Madam!

*Iras.* Madam, O good empress!

*Eros.* Sir, sir—

*Ant.* Yes, my lord, yes; he at Philippi kept  
His sword e'en like a dancer; while I struck  
The lean and wrinkled Cassius; and 'twas I  
That the mad Brutus ended. He alone  
Dealt on lieutenantry, and no practice had  
In the brave squares of war; yet now—No  
matter.

*Cleo.* Ah, stand by. 41

*Eros.* The Queen, my lord, the Queen.

*Iras.* Go to him, madam, speak to him;  
He is unqualitied with very shame.

*Cleo.* Well then, sustain me. O!

*Eros.* Most noble sir, arise; the Queen ap-  
proaches.

Her head's declined, and death will seize her,  
but

Your comfort makes the rescue.

*Ant.* I have offended reputation,  
A most un noble swerving.

*Eros.* Sir, the Queen. 50

*Ant.* O, whither hast thou led me, Egypt?

See,

How I convey my shame out of thine eyes  
By looking back what I have left behind  
'Stroy'd in dishonour.

*Cleo.* O my lord, my lord,  
Forgive my fearful sails! I little thought  
You would have follow'd.

*Ant.* Egypt, thou knew'st too well  
My heart was to thy rudder tied by the strings,  
And thou shouldst tow me after. O'er my spirit  
Thy full supremacy thou knew'st, and that  
Thy beck might from the bidding of the gods 60  
Command me.

*Cleo.* O, my pardon!

*Ant.* Now I must  
To the young man send humble treaties, dodge  
And palter in the shifts of lowness; who  
With half the bulk o' the world play'd as I  
pleased,

Making and marring fortunes. You did know  
How much you were my conqueror; and that  
My sword, made weak by my affection, would  
Obey it on all cause.

*Cleo.* Pardon, pardon!

*Ant.* Fall not a tear, I say; one of them rates  
All that is won and lost. Give me a kiss; 70  
Even this repays me. We sent our schoolmaster;  
Is he come back? Love, I am full of lead.

Some wine, within there, and our viands! For-  
tune knows  
We scorn her most when most she offers blows.  
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE XII. *Egypt. Cæsar's camp*

*Enter CÆSAR, DOLABELLA, THYREUS, with others.*

*Cæs.* Let him appear that's come from Antony.  
Know you him?

*Dol.* Cæsar, 'tis his schoolmaster;  
An argument that he is pluck'd, when hither  
He sends so poor a pinion of his wing,  
Which had superfluous kings for messengers  
Not many moons gone by.

*Enter EUPHRONIUS, ambassador from Antony.*

*Cæs.* Approach, and speak.

*Euph.* Such as I am, I come from Antony.

I was of late as petty to his ends  
As is the morn-dew on the myrtle-leaf  
To his grand sea.

*Cæs.* Be't so; declare thine office. 10

*Euph.* Lord of his fortunes he salutes thee, and  
Requires to live in Egypt; which not granted,  
He lessens his requests; and to thee sues  
To let him breathe between the heavens and  
earth,

A private man in Athens. This for him.  
Next, Cleopatra does confess thy greatness;  
Submits her to thy might; and of thee craves  
The circle of the Ptolemies for her heirs,  
Now hazarded to thy grace.

*Cæs.* For Antony,  
I have no ears to his request. The Queen 20  
Of audience nor desire shall fail, so she  
From Egypt drive her all-disgraced friend,  
Or take his life there. This if she perform,  
She shall not sue unheard. So to them both.

*Euph.* Fortune pursue thee!

*Cæs.* Bring him through the bands.  
[*Exit EUPHRONIUS.*]

[*To THYREUS*] To try thy eloquence, now 'tis  
time; dispatch.

From Antony win Cleopatra; promise,  
And in our name, what she requires; add more,  
From thine invention, offers. Women are not  
In their best fortunes strong; but want will  
perjure 30

The ne'er-touch'd vestal. Try thy cunning, Thy-  
reus;

Make thine own edict for thy pains, which we  
Will answer as a law.

*Thyr.* Cæsar, I go.

*Cæs.* Observe how Antony becomes his flaw,  
And what thou think'st his very action speaks  
In every power that moves.

*Thyr.*

Cæsar, I shall. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE XIII. *Alexandria: Cleopatra's palace*

*Enter CLEOPATRA, ENOBARBUS, CHARMIAN, and IRAS.*

*Cleo.* What shall we do, Enobarbus?

*Eno.* Think, and die.

*Cleo.* Is Antony or we in fault for this?

*Eno.* Antony only, that would make his will  
Lord of his reason. What though you fled  
From that great face of war, whose several  
ranges

Frighted each other? why should he follow?  
The itch of his affection should not then  
Have nick'd his captainship; at such a point,  
When half to half the world opposed, he being  
The meered question. 'Twas a shame no less 10  
Than was his loss, to course your flying flags,  
And leave his navy gazing.

*Cleo.* Prithee, peace.

*Enter ANTONY with EUPHRONIUS, the Ambassador.*

*Ant.* Is that his answer?

*Euph.* Ay, my lord.

*Ant.* The Queen shall then have courtesy, so  
she  
Will yield us up.

*Euph.* He says so.

*Ant.* Let her know't.

To the boy Cæsar send this grizzled head,  
And he will fill thy wishes to the brim  
With principalities.

*Cleo.* That head, my lord? 19

*Ant.* To him again. Tell him he wears the rose  
Of youth upon him; from which the world should  
note

Something particular. His coin, ships, legions,  
May be a coward's; whose ministers would  
prevail

Under the service of a child as soon  
As i' the command of Cæsar. I dare him therefore  
To lay his gay comparisons apart,  
And answer me declined, sword against sword,  
Ourselves alone. I'll write it. Follow me.

[*Exeunt ANTONY and EUPHRONIUS.*]

*Eno.* [*Aside*] Yes, like enough, high-battled

Cæsar will 29  
Unstate his happiness, and be staged to the show,  
Against a sworder! I see men's judgements are  
A parcel of their fortunes; and things outward  
Do draw the inward quality after them,  
To suffer all alike. That he should dream,  
Knowing all measures, the full Cæsar will  
Answer his emptiness! Cæsar, thou hast sub-  
dued  
His judgement too.



*Enter an ATTENDANT.*

*Att.* A messenger from Cæsar.

*Cleo.* What, no more ceremony? See, my women!

Against the blown rose may they stop their nose  
That kneel'd unto the buds. Admit him, sir. 40

*[Exit ATTENDANT.]*

*Eno. [Aside]* Mine honesty and I begin to square.

The loyalty well held to fools does make  
Our faith mere folly; yet he that can endure  
To follow with allegiance a fall'n lord  
Does conquer him that did his master conquer,  
And earns a place i' the story.

*Enter THYREUS.*

*Cleo.* Cæsar's will?

*Thyr.* Hear it apart.

*Cleo.* None but friends; say boldly.

*Thyr.* So, haply, are they friends to Antony.

*Eno.* He needs as many, sir, as Cæsar has;  
Or needs not us. If Cæsar please, our master 50  
Will leap to be his friend. For us, you know  
Whose he is we are, and that is, Cæsar's.

*Thyr.* So.

Thus then, thou most renown'd: Cæsar entreats,  
Not to consider in what case thou stand'st,  
Further than he is Cæsar.

*Cleo.* Go on: right royal.

*Thyr.* He knows that you embrace not Antony  
As you did love, but as you fear'd him.

*Cleo.* O!

*Thyr.* The scars upon your honour, therefore, he  
Does pity, as constrained blemishes,  
Not as deserved.

*Cleo.* He is a god and knows 60  
What is most right. Mine honour was not  
yielded,

But conquer'd merely.

*Eno. [Aside]* To be sure of that,  
I will ask Antony. Sir, sir, thou art so leaky,  
That we must leave thee to thy sinking, for  
Thy dearest quit thee. *[Exit.]*

*Thyr.* Shall I say to Cæsar  
What you require of him? for he partly begs  
To be desired to give. It much would please him  
That of his fortunes you should make a staff  
To lean upon; but it would warm his spirits 70  
To hear from me you had left Antony,  
And put yourself under his shroud,  
The universal landlord.

*Cleo.* What's your name?

*Thyr.* My name is Thyreus.

*Cleo.* Most kind messenger,  
Say to great Cæsar this: in deputation

I kiss his conquering hand. Tell him, I am prompt  
To lay my crown at's feet, and there to kneel.  
Tell him, from his all-obeying breath I hear  
The doom of Egypt.

*Thyr.* 'Tis your noblest course.

Wisdom and fortune combating together,  
If that the former dare but what it can, 80  
No chance may shake it. Give me grace to lay  
My duty on your hand.

*Cleo.* Your Cæsar's father oft,  
When he hath mused of taking kingdoms in,  
Bestow'd his lips on that unworthy place,  
As it rain'd kisses.

*Re-enter ANTONY and ENOBARBUS.*

*Ant.* Favours, by Jove that thunders!  
What art thou, fellow?

*Thyr.* One that but performs  
The bidding of the fullest man, and worthiest  
To have command obey'd.

*Eno. [Aside]* You will be whipp'd.

*Ant.* Approach, there! Ah, you kite! Now,  
gods and devils!  
Authority melts from me. Of late, when I cried  
"Ho!" 90

Like boys unto a muss, kings would start forth,  
And cry "Your will?" Have you no ears? I am  
Antony yet.

*Enter Attendants.*

Take hence this Jack, and whip him.

*Eno. [Aside]* 'Tis better playing with a lion's  
whelp

Than with an old one dying.

*Ant.* Moon and stars!  
Whip him. Were't twenty of the greatest tribu-  
taries

That do acknowledge Cæsar, should I find them  
So saucy with the hand of she here—what's her  
name,

Since she was Cleopatra? Whip him, fellows,  
Till, like a boy, you see him cringe his face. 100  
And whine aloud for mercy. Take him hence.

*Thyr.* Mark Antony!

*Ant.* Tug him away. Being whipp'd,  
Bring him again; this Jack of Cæsar's shall  
Bear us an errand to him.

*[Exeunt Attendants with THYREUS.]*

You were half blasted ere I knew you; ha!  
Have I my pillow left unpress'd in Rome,  
Forborne the getting of a lawful race,  
And by a gem of women, to be abused  
By one that looks on feeders?

*Cleo.* Good my lord—

*Ant.* You have been a boggler ever; 110  
But when we in our viciousness grow hard—

O misery on't!—the wise gods seal our eyes;  
In our own filth drop our clear judgements;  
make us

Adore our errors; laugh at's, while we strut  
To our confusion.

*Cleo.* O, is't come to this?

*Ant.* I found you as a morsel cold upon  
Dead Cæsar's trencher; nay, you were a frag-  
ment

Of Cneius Pompey's; besides what hotter hours,  
Unregister'd in vulgar fame, you have  
Luxuriously pick'd out; for, I am sure, 120  
Though you can guess what temperance should  
be,

You know not what it is.

*Cleo.* Wherefore is this?

*Ant.* To let a fellow that will take rewards  
And say "God quit you!" be familiar with  
My playfellow, your hand, this kingly seal  
And plighter of high hearts! O, that I were  
Upon the hill of Basan, to outroar  
The horned herd! for I have savage cause;  
And to proclaim it civilly were like  
A halter'd neck which does the hangman thank  
For being yare about him.

*Re-enter ATTENDANTS with THYREUS.*

Is he whipp'd? 131

*1st Att.* Soundly, my lord.

*Ant.* Cried he? and begg'd a' pardon?

*1st Att.* He did ask favour.

*Ant.* If that thy father live, let him repent  
Thou wast not made his daughter; and be thou  
sorry

To follow Cæsar in his triumph, since  
Thou hast been whipp'd for following him;  
henceforth

The white hand of a lady fever thee,  
Shake thou to look on't. Get thee back to  
Cæsar,

Tell him thy entertainment. Look, thou say 140  
He makes me angry with him; for he seems  
Proud and disdainful, harping on what I am,  
Not what he knew I was. He makes me angry;  
And at this time most easy 'tis to do't,  
When my good stars, that were my former  
guides,

Have empty left their orbs, and shot their fires  
Into the abysm of hell. If he mislike  
My speech and what is done, tell him he has  
Hipparchus, my enfranchised bondman, whom  
He may at pleasure whip, or hang, or torture,  
As he shall like, to quit me. Urge it thou. 151  
Hence with thy stripes, begone! [*Exit THYREUS.*

*Cleo.* Have you done yet?

*Ant.* Alack, our terrene moon

Is now eclipsed; and it portends alone  
The fall of Antony!

*Cleo.* I must stay his time.

*Ant.* To flatter Cæsar, would you mingle eyes  
With one that ties his points?

*Cleo.* Not know me yet?

*Ant.* Cold-hearted toward me?

*Cleo.* Ah, dear, if I be so,

From my cold heart let heaven engender hail,  
And poison it in the source; and the first stone  
Drop in my neck; as it determines, so 161

Dissolve my life! The next Cæsarion smite!

Till by degrees the memory of my death,  
Together with my brave Egyptians all,  
By the discandying of this pelleted storm,  
Lie graveless, till the flies and gnats of Nile  
Have buried them for prey!

*Ant.* I am satisfied.

Cæsar sits down in Alexandria, where  
I will oppose his fate. Our force by land  
Hath nobly held; our sever'd navy too 170  
Have knit again, and fleet, threatening most sea-  
like.

Where hast thou been, my heart? Dost thou  
hear, lady?

If from the field I shall return once more  
To kiss these lips, I will appear in blood;  
I and my sword will earn our chronicle.  
There's hope in't yet.

*Cleo.* That's my brave lord!

*Ant.* I will be treble-sinew'd, hearted, breathed,  
And fight maliciously; for when mine hours  
Were nice and lucky, men did ransom lives 180  
Of me for jests; but now I'll set my teeth,  
And send to darkness all that stop me. Come,  
Let's have one other gaudy night. Call to me  
All my sad captains; fill our bowls once more;  
Let's mock the midnight bell.

*Cleo.* It is my birth-day.

I had thought to have held it poor; but, since my  
lord

Is Antony again, I will be Cleopatra.

*Ant.* We will yet do well.

*Cleo.* Call all his noble captains to my lord.

*Ant.* Do so, we'll speak to them; and to-night  
I'll force 190

The wine peep through their scars. Come on,  
my queen;

There's sap in't yet. The next time I do fight,  
I'll make death love me; for I will contend  
Even with his pestilent scythe.

[*Exeunt all but ENOBARBUS.*

*Eno.* Now he'll outstare the lightning. To be  
furious,

Is to be frighted out of fear; and in that mood  
The dove will peck the estridge; and I see still,



A diminution in our captain's brain  
Restores his heart. When valour preys on reason,  
It eats the sword it fights with. I will seek 200  
Some way to leave him. [Exit.]

## ACT IV

SCENE I. *Before Alexandria: Cæsar's camp*

Enter CÆSAR, AGRIPPA, and MECÆNAS, with his  
Army; CÆSAR reading a letter.

Cæs. He calls me boy; and chides, as he had  
power

To beat me out of Egypt; my messenger  
He hath whipp'd with rods; dares me to personal  
combat,

Cæsar to Antony. Let the old ruffian know  
I have many other ways to die; meantime  
Laugh at his challenge.

Mec. Cæsar must think,  
When one so great begins to rage, he's hunted  
Even to falling. Give him no breath, but now  
Make boot of his distraction. Never anger  
Made good guard for itself.

Cæs. Let our best heads 10  
Know that to-morrow the last of many battles  
We mean to fight. Within our files there are,  
Of those that served Mark Antony but late,  
Enough to fetch him in. See it done,  
And feast the army; we have store to do't,  
And they have earn'd the waste. Poor Antony!

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II. *Alexandria: Cleopatra's palace*

Enter ANTONY, CLEOPATRA, ENOBARBUS, CHAR-  
MIAN, IRAS, ALEXAS, with others.

Ant. He will not fight with me, Domitius.

Eno. No.

Ant. Why should he not?

Eno. He thinks, being twenty times of better  
fortune,

He is twenty men to one.

Ant. To-morrow, soldier,  
By sea and land I'll fight; or I will live,  
Or bathe my dying honour in the blood  
Shall make it live again. Woo't thou fight well?

Eno. I'll strike, and cry, "Take all."

Ant. Well said; come on.  
Call forth my household servants; let's to-night  
Be bounteous at our meal.

Enter three or four Servitors.

Give me thy hand, 10

Thou hast been rightly honest; so hast thou,  
Thou, and thou, and thou; you have served me  
well,

And kings have been your fellows.

Cleo. [Aside to ENOBARBUS] What means this?

Eno. [Aside to CLEOPATRA] 'Tis one of those odd  
tricks which sorrow shoots

Out of the mind.

Ant. And thou art honest too.

I wish I could be made so many men,  
And all of you clapp'd up together in  
An Antony, that I might do you service  
So good as you have done.

All. The gods forbid!

Ant. Well, my good fellows, wait on me to-  
night; 20

Scant not my cups; and make as much of me  
As when mine empire was your fellow too,  
And suffer'd my command.

Cleo. [Aside to ENOBARBUS] What does he  
mean?

Eno. [Aside to CLEOPATRA] To make his fol-  
lowers weep.

Ant. Tend me to-night;

May be it is the period of your duty;  
Haply you shall not see me more; or if,  
A mangled shadow; perchance to-morrow  
You'll serve another master. I look on you  
As one that takes his leave. Mine honest friends,  
I turn you not away; but, like a master 30  
Married to your good service, stay till death.  
Tend me to-night two hours, I ask no more,  
And the gods yield you for't!

Eno. What mean you, sir,

To give them this discomfort? Look, they  
weep,

And I, an ass, am onion-eyed. For shame,  
Transform us not to women.

Ant. Ho, ho, ho!

Now the witch take me, if I meant it thus!

Grace grow where those drops fall! My hearty  
friends,

You take me in too dolorous a sense;

For I spake to you for your comfort; did desire  
you

To burn this night with torches. Know, my  
hearts,

I hope well of to-morrow, and will lead you

Where rather I'll expect victorious life

Than death and honour. Let's to supper, come,

And drown consideration.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE III. *The same: before the palace.*

Enter TWO SOLDIERS to their guard.

1st Sold. Brother, good night; to-morrow is the  
day.

2nd Sold. It will determine one way; fare you  
well.

Heard you of nothing strange about the streets?

1st Sold. Nothing. What news?

2nd Sold. Belike 'tis but a rumour. Good night to you.

1st Sold. Well, sir, good night.

*Enter TWO other SOLDIERS.*

2nd. Sold. Soldiers, have careful watch.

3rd Sold. And you. Good night, good night.

*They place themselves in every corner of the stage.*

4th Sold. Here we. And if to-morrow  
Our navy thrive, I have an absolute hope 10  
Our landmen will stand up.

3rd Sold. 'Tis a brave army,  
And full of purpose.

*Music of the hautboys as under the stage.*

4th Sold. Peace! what noise?

1st Sold. List, List!

2nd Sold. Hark!

1st Sold. Music i' the air.

3rd Sold. Under the earth.

4th Sold. It signs well, does it not?

3rd Sold. No.

1st Sold. Peace, I say!

What should this mean?

2nd Sold. 'Tis the god Hercules, whom Antony  
loved,

Now leaves him.

1st Sold. Walk; let's see if other watchmen  
Do hear what we do.

*They advance to another post.*

2nd Sold. How now, masters!

All. [Speaking together] How now!  
How now! do you hear this?

1st Sold. Ay; is't not strange? 20

3rd Sold. Do you hear, masters? do you hear?

1st Sold. Follow the noise so far as we have  
quarter;

Let's see how it will give off.

All. Content. 'Tis strange. [Exeunt.]

SCENE IV. *The same: a room in the palace*

*Enter ANTONY and CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, and  
others attending.*

Ant. Eros! mine armour, Eros!

Cleo. Sleep a little.

Ant. No, my chuck. Eros, come; mine armour,  
Eros!

*Enter EROS with armour.*

Come, good fellow, put mine iron on.

If fortune be not ours to-day, it is

Because we brave her. Come.

Cleo. Nay, I'll help too  
What's this for?

Ant. Ah, let be, let be! thou art  
The armourer of my heart. False, false; this, this.

Cleo. Sooth, la, I'll help. Thus it must be.

Ant.

Well, well;  
We shall thrive now. Seest thou, my good fellow?  
Go put on thy defences.

Eros.

Briefly, sir.

10

Cleo. Is not this buckled well?

Ant.

Rarely, rarely.

He that unbuckles this, till we do please

To daff't for our repose, shall hear a storm.

Thou fumblest, Eros; and my queen's a squire

More tight at this than thou. Dispatch. O love,

That thou couldst see my wars to-day, and  
knew'st

The royal occupation! thou shouldst see  
A workman in't.

*Enter an armed SOLDIER.*

Good morrow to thee; welcome.

Thou look'st like him that knows a warlike  
charge.

To business that we love we rise betime, 20  
And go to't with delight.

Sold. A thousand, sir,

Early though't be, have on their riveted trim,  
And at the port expect you.

*Shout. Trumpets flourish.*

*Enter CAPTAINS and SOLDIERS.*

Capt. The morn is fair. Good morrow, general.

All. Good morrow, general.

Ant.

'Tis well blown, lads.

This morning, like the spirit of a youth

That means to be of note, begins betimes.

So, so; come, give me that. This way; well said.

Fare thee well, dame, whate'er becomes of me.

This is a soldier's kiss; rebukeable [Kisses her.]

And worthy shameful check it were, to stand 31

On more mechanic compliment; I'll leave thee

Now, like a man of steel. You that will fight,

Follow me close; I'll bring you to 't. Adieu.

[Exeunt ANTONY, EROS, CAPTAINS, and  
SOLDIERS.]

Char. Please you, retire to your chamber.

Cleo.

Lead me.

He goes forth gallantly. That he and Cæsar  
might

Determine this great war in single fight!

Then, Antony—but now—Well, on. [Exeunt.]

SCENE V. *Alexandria: Antony's camp*

*Trumpets sound. Enter ANTONY and EROS; a  
SOLDIER meeting them.*

Sold. The gods make this a happy day to An-  
tony!

Ant. Would thou and those thy scars had once  
prevail'd  
To make me fight at land!



*Sold.* Hadst thou done so,  
The kings that have revolted, and the soldier  
That has this morning left thee, would have still  
Follow'd thy heels.

*Ant.* Who's gone this morning?  
*Sold.* Who!

One ever near thee. Call for Enobarbus,  
He shall not hear thee; or from Cæsar's camp  
Say, "I am none of thine."

*Ant.* What say'st thou?  
*Sold.* Sir,

He is with Cæsar.

*Eros.* Sir, his chests and treasure 10  
He has not with him.

*Ant.* Is he gone?

*Sold.* Most certain.

*Ant.* Go, Eros, send his treasure after; do it;  
Detain no jot, I charge thee. Write to him—  
I will subscribe—gentle adieus and greetings;  
Say that I wish he never find more cause  
To change a master. O, my fortunes have  
Corrupted honest men! Dispatch. Enobarbus!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI. *Alexandria: Cæsar's camp*

*Flourish.* Enter CÆSAR, AGRIPPA, with ENO-  
BARBUS, and others.

*Cæs.* Go forth, Agrippa, and begin the fight.  
Our will is Antony be took alive;  
Make it so known.

*Agr.* Cæsar, I shall. [*Exit.*]

*Cæs.* The time of universal peace is near.  
Prove this a prosperous day, the three-nook'd  
world

Shall bear the olive freely.

Enter a MESSENGER.

*Mess.* Antony  
Is come into the field.

*Cæs.* Go charge Agrippa  
Plant those that have revolted in the van,  
That Antony may seem to spend his fury 10  
Upon himself. [*Exeunt all but ENOBARBUS.*]

*Eno.* Alexas did revolt; and went to Jewry on  
Affairs of Antony; there did persuade  
Great Herod to incline himself to Cæsar,  
And leave his master Antony; for this pains  
Cæsar hath hang'd him. Canidius and the rest  
That fell away have entertainment, but  
No honourable trust. I have done ill;  
Of which I do accuse myself so sorely,  
That I will joy no more.

Enter a SOLDIER of CÆSAR'S.

*Sold.* Enobarbus, Antony 20  
Hath after thee sent all thy treasure, with

His bounty overplus. The messenger  
Came on my guard, and at thy tent is now  
Unloading of his mules.

*Eno.* I give it you.

*Sold.* Mock not, Enobarbus.

I tell you true. Best you safed the bringer  
Out of the host; I must attend mine office,  
Or would have done 't myself. Your emperor  
Continues still a Jove. [*Exit.*]

*Eno.* I am alone the villain of the earth, 30  
And feel I am so most. O Antony,  
Thou mine of bounty, how wouldst thou have  
paid

My better service, when my turpitude  
Thou dost so crown with gold! This blows my  
heart.

If swift thought break it not, a swifter mean  
Shall outstrike thought; but thought will do 't, I  
feel

I fight against thee! No! I will go seek  
Some ditch wherein to die; the foul'st best fits  
My latter part of life. [*Exit.*]

SCENE VII. *Field of battle between the camps*

*Alarum.* Drums and trumpets. Enter AGRIPPA  
and others.

*Agr.* Retire, we have engaged ourselves too  
far.

Cæsar himself has work, and our oppression  
Exceeds what we expected. [*Exeunt.*]

*Alarums.* Enter ANTONY, and SCARUS wounded.

*Scar.* O my brave emperor, this is fought in-  
deed!

Had we done so at first, we had droven them  
home

With clouts about their heads.

*Ant.* Thou bleed'st apace.

*Scar.* I had a wound here that was like a T,  
But now 'tis made an H.

*Ant.* They do retire.

*Scar.* We'll beat 'em into bench-holes. I have  
yet  
Room for six scotches more. 10

Enter EROS.

*Eros.* They are beaten, sir; and our advantage  
serves

For a fair victory.

*Scar.* Let us score their backs,  
And snatch 'em up, as we take hares, behind.  
'Tis sport to maul a runner.

*Ant.* I will reward thee  
Once for thy spritely comfort, and ten-fold  
For thy good valour. Come thee on.

*Scar.* I'll halt after. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VIII. *Under the walls of Alexandria*  
*Alarum. Enter ANTONY, in a march; SCARUS,*  
*with others.*

*Ant.* We have beat him to his camp. Run one before,  
 And let the Queen know of our gests. To-morrow,  
 Before the sun shall see 's, we'll spill the blood  
 That has to-day escaped. I thank you all;  
 For doughty-handed are you, and have fought  
 Not as you served the cause, but as 't had been  
 Each man's like mine; you have shown all Hec-  
 tors.

Enter the city, clip your wives, your friends,  
 Tell them your feats; whilst they with joyful  
 tears  
 Wash the congealment from your wounds, and  
 kiss  
 The honour'd gashes whole. [*To SCARUS*] Give  
 me thy hand;

*Enter CLEOPATRA, attended.*

To this great fairy I'll commend thy acts,  
 Make her thanks bless thee. [*To CLEOPATRA*] O  
 thou day o' the world,  
 Chain mine arm'd neck; leap thou, attire and all,  
 Through proof of harness to my heart, and there  
 Ride on the pants triumphing!

*Cleo.* Lord of lords!  
 O infinite virtue, comest thou smiling from  
 The world's great snare uncaught?

*Ant.* My nightingale,  
 We have beat them to their beds. What, girl!  
 though grey  
 Do something mingle with our younger brown,  
 yet ha' we

A brain that nourishes our nerves, and can  
 Get goal for goal of youth. Behold this man;  
 Commend unto his lips thy favouring hand.  
 Kiss it, my warrior. He hath fought to-day  
 As if a god, in hate of mankind, had  
 Destroy'd in such a shape.

*Cleo.* I'll give thee, friend,  
 An armour all of gold; it was a king's.

*Ant.* He has deserved it, were it carbuncled  
 Like holy Phœbus' car. Give me thy hand.  
 Through Alexandria make a jolly march;  
 Bear our hack'd targets like the men that owe  
 them.

Had our great palace the capacity  
 To camp this host, we all would sup together,  
 And drink carouses to the next day's fate,  
 Which promises royal peril. Trumpeters,  
 With brazen din blast you the city's ear;  
 Make mingle with our rattling tabourines,

That heaven and earth may strike their sounds  
 together,  
 Applauding our approach. [*Exeunt.* 39]

SCENE IX. *Cæsar's camp*  
*Sentinels at their post.*

*1st Sold.* If we be not relieved within this hour,  
 We must return to the court of guard. The night  
 Is shiny, and they say we shall embattle  
 By the second hour i' the morn.

*2nd Sold.* This last day was  
 A shrewd one to 's.

*Enter ENOBARBUS.*

*Eno.* O, bear me witness, night—

*3rd Sold.* What man is this?

*2nd Sold.* Stand close, and list him.

*Eno.* Be witness to me, O thou blessed moon,  
 When men revolted shall upon record  
 Bear hateful memory, poor Enobarbus did  
 Before thy face repent!

*1st Sold.* Enobarbus!

*3rd Sold.* Peace! 10  
 Hark further.

*Eno.* O sovereign mistress of true melancholy,  
 The poisonous damp of night disponge upon  
 me,

That life, a very rebel to my will,  
 May hang no longer on me. Throw my heart  
 Against the flint and hardness of my fault;  
 Which, being dried with grief, will break to  
 powder,

And finish all foul thoughts. O Antony,  
 Nobler than my revolt is infamous,  
 Forgive me in thine own particular;  
 But let the world rank me in register  
 A master-leaver and a fugitive.

O Antony! O Antony! [*Dies.* 20]

*2nd Sold.* Let's speak  
 To him.

*1st Sold.* Let's hear him, for the things he speaks  
 May concern Cæsar.

*3rd Sold.* Let's do so. But he sleeps.

*1st Sold.* Swoons rather; for so bad a prayer as  
 his

Was never yet for sleep.

*2nd Sold.* Go we to him.

*3rd Sold.* Awake, sir, awake; speak to us.

*2nd Sold.* Hear you, sir?

*1st Sold.* The hand of death hath raught him.

[*Drums afar off.*] Hark! the drums  
 Demurely wake the sleepers. Let us bear him 31  
 To the court of guard; he is of note. Our hour  
 Is fully out.

*3rd Sold.* Come on, then;

He may recover yet. [*Exeunt with the body.*]



SCENE X. *Between the two camps**Enter* ANTONY *and* SCARUS, *with their Army.*

*Ant.* Their preparation is to-day by sea;  
We please them not by land.

*Scar.* For both, my lord.

*Ant.* I would they'd fight i' the fire or i' the air;  
We'd fight there too. But this it is; our foot  
Upon the hills adjoining to the city  
Shall stay with us; order for sea is given;  
They have put forth the haven. [Go we up.]  
Where their appointment we may best discover,  
And look on their endeavour. [Exeunt. 9]

SCENE XI. *Another part of the same**Enter* CÆSAR, *and his Army.*

*Cæs.* But being charged, we will be still by land,  
Which, as I take 't, we shall; for his best force  
Is forth to man his galleys. To the vales,  
And hold our best advantage. [Exeunt.]

SCENE XII. *Another part of the same**Enter* ANTONY *and* SCARUS.

*Ant.* Yet they are not join'd. Where yond pine  
does stand,  
I shall discover all. I'll bring thee word  
Straight, how 'tis like to go. [Exit.]

*Scar.* Swallows have built  
In Cleopatra's sails their nests. The augurers  
Say they know not, they cannot tell; look grimly,  
And dare not speak their knowledge. Antony  
Is valiant, and dejected; and, by starts,  
His fretted fortunes give him hope, and fear,  
Of what he has, and has not.

*Alarum afar off, as at a sea-fight.**Re-enter* ANTONY.

*Ant.* All is lost;  
This foul Egyptian hath betrayed me. 10  
My fleet hath yielded to the foe; and yonder  
They cast their caps up and carouse together  
Like friends long lost. Triple-turn'd whore! 'tis  
thou  
Hast sold me to this novice; and my heart  
Makes only wars on thee. Bid them all fly;  
For when I am revenged upon my charm,  
I have done all. Bid them all fly; begone.

[Exit SCARUS.]

O sun, thy uprise shall I see no more;  
Fortune and Antony part here; even here  
Do we shake hands. All come to this? The hearts  
That spaniel'd me at heels, to whom I gave 21  
Their wishes, do discandy, melt their sweets  
On blossoming Cæsar; and this pine bark'd,  
That overtopp'd them all. Betray'd I am.  
O this false soul of Egypt! this grave charm—

Whose eye beck'd forth my wars, and call'd  
them home;

Whose bosom was my crownet, my chief end—  
Like a right gipsy, hath at fast and loose  
Beguiled me to the very heart of loss.  
What, Eros, Eros!

*Enter* CLEOPATRA.

Ah, thou spell! Avaunt! 30

*Cleo.* Why is my lord enraged against his love?

*Ant.* Vanish, or I shall give thee thy deserving  
And blemish Cæsar's triumph. Let him take thee  
And hoist thee up to the shouting plebeians.  
Follow his chariot, like the greatest spot  
Of all thy sex; most monster-like, be shown  
For poor'st diminutives, for dolts; and let  
Patient Octavia plough thy visage up  
With her prepared nails.

[Exit CLEOPATRA.]

'Tis well thou'rt gone,

40

If it be well to live; but better 'twere  
Thou fell'st into my fury, for one death  
Might have prevented many. Eros, ho!  
The shirt of Nessus is upon me. Teach me,  
Alcides, thou mine ancestor, thy rage.  
Let me lodge Lichas on the horns o' the moon;  
And with those hands, that grasp'd the heaviest  
club,  
Subdue my worthiest self. The witch shall die.  
To the young Roman boy she hath sold me, and  
I fall  
Under this plot; she dies for 't. Eros, ho! [Exit.]

SCENE XIII. *Alexandria: Cleopatra's palace**Enter* CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, IRAS, *and* MARDIAN.

*Cleo.* Help me, my women! O, he is more mad  
Than Telamon for his shield; the boar of Thes-  
saly

Was never so emboss'd.

*Char.* To the monument!  
There lock yourself, and send him word you are  
dead.

The soul and body rive not more in parting  
Than greatness going off.

*Cleo.* To the monument!

Mardian, go tell him I have slain myself;  
Say, that the last I spoke was "Antony,"  
And word it, prithee, piteously. Hence, Mardian,  
And bring me how he takes my death. To the  
monument! [Exeunt. 10]

SCENE XIV. *The same: another room**Enter* ANTONY *and* EROS.*Ant.* Eros, thou yet behold'st me?*Eros.* Ay, noble lord.*Ant.* Sometime we see a cloud that's dragonish;

A vapour sometime like a bear or lion,  
A tower'd citadel, a pendent rock,  
A forked mountain, or blue promontory  
With trees upon 't, that nod unto the world,  
And mock our eyes with air. Thou hast seen  
these signs;

They are black vesper's pageants.

*Eros.* Ay, my lord.

*Ant.* That which is now a horse, even with a  
thought

The rack dislimns, and makes it indistinct, 10  
As water is in water.

*Eros.* It does, my lord.

*Ant.* My good knave Eros, now thy captain is  
Even such a body. Here I am Antony;  
Yet cannot hold this visible shape, my knave.  
I made these wars for Egypt; and the Queen—  
Whose heart I thought I had, for she had mine;  
Which whilst it was mine had annex'd unto 't  
A million more, now lost—she, Eros, has  
Pack'd cards with Cæsar, and false-play'd my  
glory

Unto an enemy's triumph. 20

Nay, weep not, gentle Eros; there is left us  
Ourselves to end ourselves.

*Enter MARDIAN.*

O, thy vile lady!

She has robb'd me of my sword.

*Mar.* No, Antony;  
My mistress loved thee, and her fortunes mingled  
With thine entirely.

*Ant.* Hence, saucy eunuch; peace!  
She hath betray'd me and shall die the death.

*Mar.* Death of one person can be paid but once,  
And that she has discharged. What thou wouldst  
do

Is done unto thy hand. The last she spake  
Was, "Antony! most noble Antony!" 30  
Then in the midst a tearing groan did break  
The name of Antony; it was divided  
Between her heart and lips. She render'd life,  
Thy name so buried in her.

*Ant.* Dead, then?

*Mar.* Dead.

*Ant.* Unarm, Eros; the long day's task is done,  
And we must sleep. [*To MARDIAN*] That thou de-  
part'st hence safe,

Does pay thy labour richly; go. [*Exit MARDIAN.*

*Off, pluck off!*

The seven-fold shield of Ajax cannot keep  
The battery from my heart. O, cleave, my  
sides!

Heart, once be stronger than thy continent, 40  
Crack thy frail case! Apace, Eros, apace.

No more a soldier. Bruised pieces, go;

You have been nobly borne. From me awhile.

[*Exit EROS.*]

I will o'ertake thee, Cleopatra, and  
Weep for my pardon. So it must be, for now  
All length is torture; since the torch is out,  
Lie down, and stray no farther. Now all labour  
Mars what it does; yea, very force entangles  
Itself with strength. Seal then, and all is done.  
Eros!—I come, my queen.—Eros!—Stay for me!  
Where souls do couch on flowers, we'll hand in 51  
hand,  
And with our sprightly port make the ghosts  
gaze.

Dido and her Æneas shall want troops,  
And all the haunt be ours. Come, Eros, Eros!

*Re-enter EROS.*

*Eros.* What would my lord?

*Ant.* Since Cleopatra died,  
I have lived in such dishonour that the gods  
Detest my baseness. I, that with my sword  
Quarter'd the world, and o'er green Neptune's  
back

With ships made cities, condemn myself to lack  
The courage of a woman; less noble mind 60  
Than she which by her death our Cæsar tells,  
"I am conqueror of myself." Thou art sworn,  
Eros,

That, when the exigent should come, which  
now

Is come indeed, when I should see behind me  
The inevitable prosecution of  
Disgrace and horror, that, on my command,  
Thou then wouldst kill me. Do 't; the time is  
come.

Thou strikest not me, 'tis Cæsar thou defeat'st.  
Put colour in thy cheek.

*Eros.* The gods withhold me!  
Shall I do that which all the Parthian darts, 70  
Though enemy, lost aim and could not?

*Ant.* Eros,  
Wouldst thou be window'd in great Rome and  
see

Thy master thus with pleach'd arms, bending  
down

His corrigible neck, his face subdued  
To penetrative shame, whilst the wheel'd seat  
Of fortunate Cæsar, drawn before him, branded  
His baseness that ensued?

*Eros.* I would not see 't.

*Ant.* Come, then; for with a wound I must be  
cured.

Draw that thy honest sword, which thou hast  
worn  
Most useful for thy country.

*Eros.* O, sir, pardon me! 80



*Ant.* When I did make thee free, sworest thou  
not then

To do this when I bade thee? Do it at once;  
Or thy precedent services are all  
But accidents unpurposed. Draw, and come.

*Eros.* Turn from me, then, that noble counte-  
nance,

Wherein the worship of the whole world lies.

*Ant.* Lo thee! [*Turning from him.*]

*Eros.* My sword is drawn.

*Ant.* Then let it do at once

The thing why thou hast drawn it.

*Eros.* My dear master,  
My captain, and my emperor, let me say, 90  
Before I strike this bloody stroke, farewell.

*Ant.* 'Tis said, man; and farewell.

*Eros.* Farewell, great chief. Shall I strike now?

*Ant.* Now, Eros.

*Eros.* Why, there then. [*Kills himself.*] Thus I  
do escape the sorrow

Of Antony's death.

*Ant.* Thrice-nobler than myself!  
Thou teachest me, O valiant Eros, what  
I should, and thou couldst not. My queen and  
Eros

Have by their brave instruction got upon me  
A nobleness in record; but I will be 100  
A bridegroom in my death, and run into 't  
As to a lover's bed. Come, then; and, Eros,  
Thy master dies thy scholar: to do thus  
*Falling on his sword.*

I learn'd of thee. How! not dead? not dead?  
The guard, ho! O, dispatch me!

*Enter DERCETAS and GUARD.*

*1st Guard.* What's the noise?

*Ant.* I have done my work ill, friends. O, make  
an end

Of what I have begun.

*2nd Guard.* The star is fall'n.

*1st Guard.* And time is at his period.

*All.* Alas, and woe!

*Ant.* Let him that loves me strike me dead.

*1st Guard.* Not I. 109

*2nd Guard.* Nor I.

*3rd Guard.* Nor any one. [*Exeunt GUARD.*]

*Der.* Thy death and fortunes bid thy followers  
fly.

This sword but shown to Cæsar, with this tid-  
ings,  
Shall enter me with him.

*Enter DIOMEDES.*

*Dio.* Where's Antony?

*Der.* There, Diomed, there.

*Dio.* Lives he?

Wilt thou not answer, man? [*Exit DERCETAS.*]

*Ant.* Art thou there, Diomed? Draw thy sword,  
and give me

Sufficing strokes for death.

*Dio.* Most absolute lord,

My mistress Cleopatra sent me to thee.

*Ant.* When did she send thee?

*Dio.* Now, my lord.

*Ant.* Where is she?

*Dio.* Lock'd in her monument. She had a  
prophesying fear 120

Of what hath come to pass; for when she saw—  
Which never shall be found—you did suspect  
She had disposed with Cæsar, and that your rage  
Would not be purged, she sent you word she was  
dead;

But, fearing since how it might work, hath sent  
Me to proclaim the truth; and I am come,  
I dread, too late.

*Ant.* Too late, good Diomed. Call my guard, I  
prithee.

*Dio.* What, ho, the Emperor's guard! The  
guard, what, ho!

Come, your lord calls! 130

*Enter four or five of the GUARD of Antony.*

*Ant.* Bear me, good friends, where Cleopatra  
bides;

'Tis the last service that I shall command you.

*1st Guard.* Woe, woe are we, sir, you may not  
live to wear

All your true followers out.

*All.* Most heavy day!

*Ant.* Nay, good my fellows, do not please sharp  
fate

To grace it with your sorrows. Bid that welcome  
Which comes to punish us, and we punish it  
Seeming to bear it lightly. Take me up.

I have led you oft; carry me now, good friends,  
And have my thanks for all. 140

[*Exeunt, bearing ANTONY.*]

SCENE XV. *The same: a monument*

*Enter CLEOPATRA, and her maids aloft, with  
CHARMIAN and IRAS.*

*Cleo.* O Charmian, I will never go from hence.

*Char.* Be comforted, dear madam.

*Cleo.* No, I will not.

All strange and terrible events are welcome,  
But comforts we despise; our size of sorrow,  
Proportion'd to our cause, must be as great  
As that which makes it.

*Enter, below, DIOMEDES.*

How now! is he dead?

*Dio.* His death's upon him, but not dead.

Look out o' the other side your monument;  
His guard have brought him thither.

*Enter, below, ANTONY, borne by the GUARD.*

*Cleo.* O sun,  
Burn the great sphere thou movest in! darkling  
stand 10

The varying shore o' the world. O Antony,  
Antony, Antony! Help, Charmian, help, Iras,  
help;

Help, friends below; let's draw him hither.

*Ant.* Peace!  
Not Cæsar's valour hath o'erthrown Antony,  
But Antony's hath triumph'd on itself.

*Cleo.* So it should be, that none but Antony  
Should conquer Antony; but woe 'tis so!

*Ant.* I am dying, Egypt, dying; only  
I here importune death awhile, until  
Of many thousand kisses the poor last 20  
I lay upon thy lips.

*Cleo.* I dare not, dear—  
Dear my lord, pardon—I dare not,  
Lest I be taken. Not the imperious show  
Of the full-fortuned Cæsar ever shall  
Be brooch'd with me; if knife, drugs, serpents,  
have

Edge, sting, or operation, I am safe.  
Your wife Octavia, with her modest eyes  
And still conclusion, shall acquire no honour  
Demuring upon me. But come, come, Antony—  
Help me, my women—we must draw thee up.  
Assist, good friends. 31

*Ant.* O, quick, or I am gone.

*Cleo.* Here's sport indeed! How heavy weighs  
my lord!

Our strength is all gone into heaviness,  
That makes the weight. Had I great Juno's  
power,

The strong-wing'd Mercury should fetch thee  
up,

And set thee by Jove's side. Yet come a little—  
Wishers were ever fools—O, come, come, come;

*They heave ANTONY aloft to CLEOPATRA.*

And welcome, welcome! die where thou hast  
lived;

Quickened with kissing. Had my lips that power,  
Thus would I wear them out.

*All.* A heavy sight! 40

*Ant.* I am dying, Egypt, dying.

Give me some wine, and let me speak a little.

*Cleo.* No, let me speak; and let me rail so high,  
That the false housewife Fortune break her  
wheel,

Provoked by my offence.

*Ant.* One word, sweet queen:  
Of Cæsar seek your honour, with your safety. O!

*Cleo.* They do not go together.

*Ant.* Gentle, hear me:  
None about Cæsar trust but Proculeius.

*Cleo.* My resolution and my hands I'll trust;  
None about Cæsar. 50

*Ant.* The miserable change now at my end  
Lament nor sorrow at; but please your thoughts  
In feeding them with those my former fortunes  
Wherein I lived, the greatest prince o' the  
world,

The noblest; and do now not basely die,  
Not cowardly put off my helmet to  
My countryman—a Roman by a Roman  
Valiantly vanquish'd. Now my spirit is going;  
I can no more.

*Cleo.* Noblest of men, woo't die?  
Hast thou no care of me? shall I abide 60  
In this dull world, which in thy absence is  
No better than a sty? O, see, my women,

[ANTONY dies.  
The crown o' the earth doth melt. My lord!

O, wither'd is the garland of the war,  
The soldier's pole is fall'n; young boys and girls  
Are level now with men; the odds is gone,  
And there is nothing left remarkable  
Beneath the visiting moon. [Faints.

*Char.* O, quietness, lady!

*Iras.* She is dead too, our sovereign.

*Char.* Lady!  
*Iras.* Madam!

*Char.* O madam, madam, madam!

*Iras.* Royal Egypt, 70  
Empress!

*Char.* Peace, peace, Iras!

*Cleo.* No more, but e'en a woman, and com-  
manded

By such poor passion as the maid that milks  
And does the meanest chares. It were for me  
To throw my sceptre at the injurious gods;  
To tell them that this world did equal theirs  
Till they had stol'n our jewel. All's but naught;  
Patience is sottish, and impatience does  
Become a dog that's mad. Then is it sin 80  
To rush into the secret house of death,  
Ere death dare come to us? How do you, women?  
What, what! good cheer! Why, how now, Char-  
mian!

My noble girls! Ah, women, women, look,  
Our lamp is spent, it's out! Good sirs, take  
heart.

We'll bury him; and then, what's brave, what's  
noble,

Let's do it after the high Roman fashion,  
And make death proud to take us. Come, away;  
This case of that huge spirit now is cold.

Ah, women, women! come; we have no friend



But resolution and the briefest end. 91  
*[Exeunt; those above bearing off  
 Antony's body.]*

## ACT V

SCENE I. *Alexandria: Cæsar's camp*

*Enter CÆSAR, AGRIPPA, DOLABELLA, MEGÆNAS,  
 GALLUS, PROCULEIUS, and others, his council of  
 war.*

*Cæs.* Go to him, Dolabella, bid him yield;  
 Being so frustrate, tell him he mocks  
 The pauses that he makes.

*Dol.* Cæsar, I shall. *[Exit.]*

*Enter DERCETAS, with the sword of ANTONY.*

*Cæs.* Wherefore is that? and what art thou that  
 darest

Appear thus to us?

*Der.* I am call'd Dercetas;  
 Mark Antony I served, who best was worthy  
 Best to be served. Whilst he stood up and spoke,  
 He was my master; and I wore my life  
 To spend upon his haters. If thou please  
 To take me to thee, as I was to him 10  
 I'll be to Cæsar; if thou pleasest not,  
 I yield thee up my life.

*Cæs.* What is 't thou say'st?

*Der.* I say, O Cæsar, Antony is dead.

*Cæs.* The breaking of so great a thing should  
 make

A greater crack. The round world  
 Should have shook lions into civil streets,  
 And citizens to their dens. The death of Antony  
 Is not a single doom; in the name lay  
 A moiety of the world.

*Der.* He is dead, Cæsar.  
 Not by a public minister of justice, 20  
 Nor by a hired knife; but that self hand  
 Which writ his honour in the acts it did  
 Hath, with the courage which the heart did lend  
 it,

Split the heart. This is his sword;  
 I robb'd his wound of it; behold it stain'd  
 With his most noble blood.

*Cæs.* Look you sad, friends?  
 The gods rebuke me, but it is tidings  
 To wash the eyes of kings.

*Agr.* And strange it is,  
 That nature must compel us to lament  
 Our most persisted deeds.

*Mec.* His taints and honours 30  
 Waged equal with him.

*Agr.* A rarer spirit never  
 Did steer humanity; but you, gods, will give us  
 Some faults to make us men. Cæsar is touch'd.

*Mec.* When such a spacious mirror's set before  
 him,

He needs must see himself.

*Cæs.* O Antony!  
 I have follow'd thee to this; but we do lance  
 Diseases in our bodies. I must perforce  
 Have shown to thee such a declining day,  
 Or look on thine; we could not stall together  
 In the whole world. But yet let me lament, 40  
 With tears as sovereign as the blood of hearts,  
 That thou, my brother, my competitor  
 In top of all design, my mate in empire,  
 Friend and companion in the front of war,  
 The arm of mine own body, and the heart  
 Where mine his thoughts did kindle—that our  
 stars,

Unreconcilable, should divide  
 Our equalness to this. Hear me, good friends—  
 But I will tell you at some meetest season.

*Enter an EGYPTIAN.*

The business of this man looks out of him; 50  
 We'll hear him what he says. Whence are you?

*Egyp.* A poor Egyptian yet. The Queen my  
 mistress,

Confined in all she has, her monument,  
 Of thy intents desires instruction,  
 That she preparedly may frame herself  
 To the way she's forced to.

*Cæs.* Bid her have good heart.  
 She soon shall know of us, by some of ours,  
 How honourable and how kindly we  
 Determine for her; for Cæsar cannot live  
 To be ungentle.

*Egyp.* So the gods preserve thee! *[Exit.]* 60

*Cæs.* Come hither, Proculeius. Go and say,  
 We purpose her no shame. Give her what com-  
 forts

The quality of her passion shall require,  
 Lest, in her greatness, by some mortal stroke  
 She do defeat us; for her life in Rome  
 Would be eternal in our triumph. Go,  
 And with your speediest bring us what she says,  
 And how you find of her.

*Pro.* Cæsar, I shall. *[Exit.]*

*Cæs.* Gallus, go you along. *[Exit GALLUS.]*

Where's Dolabella,  
 To second Proculeius?

*All.* Dolabella! 70

*Cæs.* Let him alone, for I remember now  
 How he's employ'd; he shall in time be ready.  
 Go with me to my tent; where you shall see  
 How hardly I was drawn into this war;  
 How calm and gentle I proceeded still  
 In all my writings. Go with me, and see  
 What I can show in this. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE II. *Alexandria: a room in the monument*

*Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, and IRAS.*

*Cleo.* My desolation does begin to make  
A better life. 'Tis paltry to be Cæsar;  
Not being Fortune, he's but Fortune's knave,  
A minister of her will; and it is great  
To do that thing that ends all other deeds;  
Which shackles accidents and bolts up change;  
Which sleeps, and never palates more the dug,  
The beggar's nurse and Cæsar's.

*Enter, to the gates of the monument, PROCULEIUS,  
GALLUS, and Soldiers.*

*Pro.* Cæsar sends greeting to the Queen of  
Egypt;  
And bids thee study on what fair demands 10  
Thou mean'st to have him grant thee.

*Cleo.* What's thy name?

*Pro.* My name is Proculeius.

*Cleo.* Antony  
Did tell me of you, bade me trust you; but  
I do not greatly care to be deceived,  
That have no use for trusting. If your master  
Would have a queen his beggar, you must tell  
him

That majesty, to keep decorum, must  
No less beg than a kingdom. If he please  
To give me conquer'd Egypt for my son,  
He gives me so much of mine own as I 20  
Will kneel to him with thanks.

*Pro.* Be of good cheer;  
You're fall'n into a princely hand, fear nothing.  
Make your full reference freely to my lord,  
Who is so full of grace that it flows over  
On all that need. Let me report to him  
Your sweet dependency; and you shall find  
A conqueror that will pray in aid for kindness,  
Where he for grace is kneel'd to.

*Cleo.* Pray you, tell him  
I am his fortune's vassal, and I send him  
The greatness he has got. I hourly learn 30  
A doctrine of obedience; and would gladly  
Look him i' the face.

*Pro.* This I'll report, dear lady.  
Have comfort, for I know your plight is pitied  
Of him that caused it.

*Gal.* You see how easily she may be surprised.

*Here PROCULEIUS and two of the Guard ascend  
the monument by a ladder placed against a  
window, and, having descended, come behind  
CLEOPATRA. Some of the Guard unbar and open  
the gates.*

[*To PROCULEIUS and the Guard*] Guard her till  
Cæsar come. [Exit.

*Iras.* Royal queen!

*Char.* O Cleopatra! thou art taken, Queen.

*Cleo.* Quick, quick, good hands.

*Drawing a dagger.*

*Pro.* Hold, worthy lady, hold

*Seizes and disarms her.*

Do not yourself such wrong, who are in this 40  
Relieved, but not betray'd.

*Cleo.* What, of death too,  
That rids our dogs of languish?

*Pro.* Cleopatra,  
Do not abuse my master's bounty by  
The undoing of yourself. Let the world see  
His nobleness well acted, which your death  
Will never let come forth.

*Cleo.* Where art thou, Death?  
Come hither, come! Come, come, and take a  
queen

Worth many babes and beggars!

*Pro.* O, temperance, lady!  
*Cleo.* Sir, I will eat no meat, I'll not drink, sir;  
If idle talk will once be necessary, 50  
I'll not sleep neither. This mortal house I'll  
ruin,

Do Cæsar what he can. Know, sir, that I  
Will not wait pinion'd at your master's court;  
Nor once be chastised with the sober eye  
Of dull Octavia. Shall they hoist me up  
And show me to the shouting varletry  
Of censuring Rome? Rather a ditch in Egypt  
Be gentle grave unto me! rather on Nilus' mud  
Lay me stark naked, and let the water-flies  
Blow me into abhorring! rather make 60  
My country's high pyramids my gibbet,  
And hang me up in chains!

*Pro.* You do extend  
These thoughts of horror further than you  
shall

Find cause in Cæsar.

*Enter DOLABELLA.*

*Dol.* Proculeius,  
What thou hast done thy master Cæsar knows,  
And he hath sent for thee. For the Queen,  
I'll take her to my guard.

*Pro.* So, Dolabella,  
It shall content me best. Be gentle to her.  
[*To CLEOPATRA*] To Cæsar I will speak what you  
shall please,

If you'll employ me to him.

*Cleo.* Say, I would die. 70

[*Exeunt PROCULEIUS and Soldiers.*

*Dol.* Most noble empress, you have heard of  
me?

*Cleo.* I cannot tell.

*Dol.* Assuredly you know me.



*Cleo.* No matter, sir, what I have heard or known.

You laugh when boys or women tell their dreams;  
Is 't not your trick?

*Dol.* I understand not, madam.

*Cleo.* I dream'd there was an Emperor Antony.  
O, such another sleep, that I might see  
But such another man!

*Dol.* If it might please ye—

*Cleo.* His face was as the heavens; and therein  
stuck

A sun and moon, which kept their course, and  
lighted 80

The little O, the earth.

*Dol.* Most sovereign creature—

*Cleo.* His legs bestrid the ocean; his rear'd arm  
Crested the world; his voice was property'd  
As all the tun'd spheres, and that to friends;  
But when he meant to quail and shake the orb,  
He was as rattling thunder. For his bounty,  
There was no winter in 't; an autumn 'twas  
That grew the more by reaping. His delights  
Were dolphin-like; they show'd his back above  
The element they lived in. In his livery 90  
Walk'd crowns and crownets; realms and islands  
were

As plates dropp'd from his pocket.

*Dol.* Cleopatra!

*Cleo.* Think you there was, or might be, such a  
man

As this I dream'd of?

*Dol.* Gentle madam, no.

*Cleo.* You lie, up to the hearing of the gods.  
But, if there be, or ever were, one such,  
It's past the size of dreaming. Nature wants  
stuff

To vie strange forms with fancy; yet, to imagine  
An Antony, were nature's piece 'gainst fancy,  
Condemning shadows quite.

*Dol.* Hear me, good madam. 100

Your loss is as yourself great; and you bear it  
As answering to the weight. Would I might  
never

O'ertake pursued success, but I do feel,  
By the rebound of yours, a grief that smites  
My very heart at root.

*Cleo.* I thank you, sir.

Know you what Cæsar means to do with me?

*Dol.* I am loath to tell you what I would you  
knew.

*Cleo.* Nay, pray you, sir—

*Dol.* Though he be honourable—

*Cleo.* He'll lead me, then, in triumph?

*Dol.* Madam, he will; I know 't. 110

*Flourish, and shout within, "Make way there.  
Cæsar!"*

*Enter CÆSAR, GALLUS, PROCULEIUS, MECÆNAS,  
SELEUCUS, and others of his train.*

*Cæs.* Which is the Queen of Egypt?

*Dol.* It is the Emperor, madam.

*CLEOPATRA kneels.*

*Cæs.* Arise, you shall not kneel.

I pray you, rise; rise, Egypt.

*Cleo.* Sir, the gods

Will have it thus; my master and my lord  
I must obey.

*Cæs.* Take to you no hard thoughts.

The record of what injuries you did us,  
Though written in our flesh, we shall remember  
As things but done by chance.

*Cleo.* Sole sir o' the world, 120

I cannot project mine own cause so well  
To make it clear; but do confess I have  
Been laden with like frailties which before  
Have often shamed our sex.

*Cæs.* Cleopatra, know,

We will extenuate rather than enforce.

If you apply yourself to our intents,  
Which towards you are most gentle, you shall  
find

A benefit in this change; but if you seek

To lay on me a cruelty, by taking

Antony's course, you shall bereave yourself 130  
Of my good purposes, and put your children  
To that destruction which I'll guard them from,  
If thereon you rely. I'll take my leave.

*Cleo.* And may, through all the world; 'tis  
yours; and we,

Your scutcheons and your signs of conquest,  
shall

Hang in what place you please. Here, my good  
lord.

*Cæs.* You shall advise me in all for Cleopatra.

*Cleo.* This is the brief of money, plate, and  
jewels,

I am possess'd of; 'tis exactly valued;  
Not perty things admitted. Where's Seleucus?

*Sel.* Here, madam. 141

*Cleo.* This is my treasurer; let him speak, my  
lord,

Upon his peril, that I have reserved  
To myself nothing. Speak the truth, Seleucus.

*Sel.* Madam,

I had rather seal my lips, than, to my peril,  
Speak that which is not.

*Cleo.* What have I kept back?

*Sel.* Enough to purchase what you have made  
known.

*Cæs.* Nay, blush not, Cleopatra; I approve  
Your wisdom in the deed.

*Cleo.* See, Cæsar! O, behold, 150

How pomp is follow'd! mine will now be yours;  
And, should we shift estates, yours would be  
mine.

The ingratitude of this Seleucus does  
Even make me wild. O slave, of no more trust  
Than love that's hired! What, goest thou back?  
thou shalt

Go back, I warrant thee; but I'll catch thine eyes,  
Though they had wings. Slave, soulless villain,  
dog!

O rarely base!

*Cæs.* Good queen, let us entreat you.

*Cleo.* O Cæsar, what a wounding shame is this,  
That thou, vouchsafing here to visit me, 160  
Doing the honour of thy lordliness

To one so meek, that mine own servant should  
Parcel the sum of my disgraces by

Addition of his envy! Say, good Cæsar,  
That I some lady trifles have reserved,  
Immement toys, things of such dignity

As we greet modern friends withal; and say,  
Some nobler token I have kept apart

For Livia and Octavia, to induce

Their mediation; must I be unfolded 170  
With one that I have bred? The gods! it smites  
me

Beneath the fall I have. [*To SELEUCUS*] Prithee,  
go hence;

Or I shall show the cinders of my spirits

Through the ashes of my chance. Wert thou a  
man,

Thou wouldst have mercy on me.

*Cæs.* Forbear, Seleucus.  
[*Exit SELEUCUS.*]

*Cleo.* Be it known that we, the greatest, are mis-  
thought

For things that others do; and, when we fall,  
We answer others' merits in our name,  
Are therefore to be pitied.

*Cæs.* Cleopatra,  
Not what you have reserved, nor what acknowl-  
edged, 180

Put we i' the roll of conquest. Still be 't yours,  
Bestow it at your pleasure; and believe,  
Cæsar's no merchant, to make prize with you  
Of things that merchants sold. Therefore be  
cheer'd;

Make not your thoughts your prisons; no, dear  
queen;

For we intend so to dispose you as  
Yourself shall give us counsel. Feed, and sleep.  
Our care and pity is so much upon you  
That we remain your friend; and so, adieu.

*Cleo.* My master, and my lord!

*Cæs.* Not so. Adieu. 190  
[*Flourish. Exeunt CÆSAR and his train.*]

*Cleo.* He words me, girls, he words me, that I  
should not

Be noble to myself. But, hark thee, Charmian.

*Whispers CHARMIAN.*

*Iras.* Finish, good lady; the bright day is done,  
And we are for the dark.

*Cleo.* Hie thee again.

I have spoke already, and it is provided;

Go put it to the haste.

*Char.* Madam, I will.

*Re-enter DOLABELLA.*

*Dol.* Where is the Queen?

*Char.* Behold, sir. [*Exit.*]

*Cleo.* Dolabella!

*Dol.* Madam, as thereto sworn by your com-  
mand,

Which my love makes religion to obey,  
I tell you this: Cæsar through Syria 200

Intends his journey; and within three days

You with your children will he send before.

Make your best use of this. I have perform'd

Your pleasure and my promise.

*Cleo.* Dolabella,

I shall remain your debtor.

*Dol.* I your servant.

Adieu, good queen; I must attend on Cæsar.

*Cleo.* Farewell, and thanks. [*Exit DOLABELLA.*]

Now, Iras, what think'st thou?

Thou, an Egyptian puppet, shalt be shown

In Rome, as well as I. Mechanic slaves'

With greasy aprons, rules, and hammers, shall

Uplift us to the view; in their thick breaths,

Rank of gross diet, shall we be enclouded,

And forced to drink their vapour.

*Iras.* The gods forbid!

*Cleo.* Nay, 'tis most certain, Iras. Saucy lictors

Will catch at us, like strumpets; and scald

rhymers

Ballad us out o' tune. The quick comedians

Extemporally will stage us, and present

Our Alexandrian revels; Antony

Shall be brought drunken forth, and I shall see

Some squeaking Cleopatra boy my greatness 220

I' the posture of a whore.

*Iras.* O the good gods!

*Cleo.* Nay, that's certain.

*Iras.* I'll never see 't; for, I am sure, my nails

Are stronger than mine eyes.

*Cleo.* Why, that's the way

To fool their preparation, and to conquer

Their most absurd intents.

*Re-enter CHARMIAN.*

Now, Charmian!  
Show me, my women, like a queen. Go fetch



My best attires. I am again for Cydnus,  
To meet Mark Antony. Sirrah Iras, go.  
Now, noble Charmian, we'll dispatch indeed; 230  
And, when thou hast done this chare, I'll give  
    thee leave  
To play till doomsday. Bring our crown and all.  
Wherefore's this noise?

[Exit IRAS. *A noise within.*

*Enter a GUARDSMAN.*

*Guard.* Here is a rural fellow  
That will not be denied your highness' presence:  
He brings you figs.

*Cleo.* Let him come in. [Exit GUARDSMAN.

What poor an instrument  
May do a noble deed! he brings me liberty.  
My resolution's placed, and I have nothing  
Of woman in me. Now from head to foot  
I am marble-constant; now the fleeting moon 240  
No planet is of mine.

*Re-enter GUARDSMAN, with CLOWN bringing in  
a basket.*

*Guard.* This is the man.

*Cleo.* Avoid, and leave him.

[Exit GUARDSMAN.

Hast thou the pretty worm of Nilus there,  
That kills and pains not?

*Crown.* Truly, I have him; but I would not be  
the party that should desire you to touch him, for  
his biting is immortal; those that do die of it do  
seldom or never recover.

*Cleo.* Rememberest thou any that have died  
on't? 249

*Crown.* Very many, men and women too. I  
heard of one of them no longer than yesterday;  
a very honest woman, but something given to lie;  
as a woman should not do, but in the way of hon-  
esty; how she died of the biting of it, what pain  
she felt; truly, she makes a very good report o'  
the worm. But he that will believe all that they  
say, shall never be saved by half that they do.  
But this is most fallible, the worm's an odd worm.

*Cleo.* Get thee hence; farewell. 260

*Crown.* I wish you all joy of the worm.

*Setting down his basket.*

*Cleo.* Farewell.

*Crown.* You must think this, look you, that the  
worm will do his kind.

*Cleo.* Ay, ay; farewell.

*Crown.* Look you, the worm is not to be trusted  
but in the keeping of wise people; for, indeed,  
there is no goodness in the worm.

*Cleo.* Take thou no care; it shall be heeded.

*Crown.* Very good. Give it nothing, I pray  
you, for it is not worth the feeding. 271

*Cleo.* Will it eat me?

*Crown.* You must not think I am so simple but I  
know the devil himself will not eat a woman. I  
know that a woman is a dish for the gods, if the  
devil dress her not. But, truly, these same whore-  
son devils do the gods great harm in their women;  
for in every ten that they make, the devils mar  
five.

*Cleo.* Well, get thee gone; farewell. 280

*Crown.* Yes, forsooth; I wish you joy o' the  
worm. [Exit.

*Re-enter IRAS with a robe, crown, &c.*

*Cleo.* Give me my robe, put on my crown; I  
have

Immortal longings in me. Now no more  
The juice of Egypt's grape shall moist this  
lip.

Yare, yare, good Iras; quick. Methinks I hear  
Antony call; I see him rouse himself  
To praise my noble act; I hear him mock  
The luck of Cæsar, which the gods give men 289  
To excuse their after wrath. Husband, I come:  
Now to that name my courage prove my title!  
I am fire and air; my other elements  
I give to baser life. So; have you done?  
Come then, and take the last warmth of my lips.  
Farewell, kind Charmian; Iras, long farewell.

*Kisses them. Iras falls and dies.*

Have I the aspic in my lips? Dost fall?  
If thou and nature can so gently part,  
The stroke of death is as a lover's pinch,  
Which hurts, and is desired. Dost thou lie still?  
If thus thou vanishest, thou tell'st the world 300  
It is not worth leave-taking.

*Char.* Dissolve, thick cloud, and rain; that I may  
say,

The gods themselves do weep!

*Cleo.* This proves me base.  
If she first meet the curled Antony,  
He'll make demand of her, and spend that kiss  
Which is my heaven to have. Come, thou mortal  
wretch,

*To an asp, which she applies to her breast.*  
With thy sharp teeth this knot intricate  
Of life at once untie. Poor venomous fool,  
Be angry, and dispatch. O, couldst thou speak,  
That I might hear thee call great Cæsar ass 310  
Unpoliced!

*Char.* O eastern star!

*Cleo.* Peace, peace!

Dost thou not see my baby at my breast,  
That sucks the nurse asleep?

*Char.*

O, break! O, break!

*Cleo.* As sweet as balm, as soft as air, as gentle—  
O Antony!—Nay, I will take thee too.

*Applying another asp to her arm.*

What should I stay— [Dies.

*Char.* In this vile world? So, fare thee well.

Now boast thee, Death, in thy possession lies

A lass unparallel'd. Downy windows, close;

And golden Phœbus never be beheld 320

Of eyes again so royal! Your crown's awry;

I'll mend it, and then play.

*Enter the GUARD, rushing in.*

*1st Guard.* Where is the Queen?

*Char.* Speak softly, wake her not.

*1st Guard.* Cæsar hath sent—

*Char.* Too slow a messenger.

*Applies an asp.*

O, come apace, dispatch! I partly feel thee.

*1st Guard.* Approach, ho! All's not well; Cæsar's  
beguiled.

*2nd Guard.* There's Dolabella sent from Cæsar;  
call him.

*1st Guard.* What work is here! Charmian, is this  
well done?

*Char.* It is well done, and fitting for a princess

Descended of so many royal kings. 330

Ah, soldier! [Dies.

*Re-enter DOLABELLA.*

*Dol.* How goes it here?

*2nd Guard.* All dead.

*Dol.* Cæsar, thy thoughts

Touch their effects in this. Thyself art coming

To see perform'd the dreaded act which thou

So sought'st to hinder.

*Within,* "A way there, a way for Cæsar!"

*Re-enter CÆSAR and all his train, marching.*

*Dol.* O sir, you are too sure an augurer;

That you did fear is done.

*Cæs.* Bravest at the last,

She levell'd at our purposes, and, being royal, 339

Took her own way. The manner of their deaths?  
I do not see them bleed.

*Dol.*

Who was last with them?

*1st Guard.* A simple countryman, that brought  
her figs:

This was his basket.

*Cæs.*

Poison'd, then.

*1st Guard.*

O Cæsar,

This Charmian lived but now; she stood and  
spake.

I found her trimming up the diadem

On her dead mistress; tremblingly she stood

And on the sudden dropp'd.

*Cæs.*

O noble weakness!

If they had swallow'd poison, 'twould appear

By external swelling; but she looks like sleep,

As she would catch another Antony 350

In her strong toil of grace.

*Dol.*

Here, on her breast,

There is a vent of blood and something blown.

The like is on her arm.

*1st Guard.* This is an asp's trail; and these fig-  
leaves

Have slime upon them, such as the asp's  
leaves

Upon the caves of Nile.

*Cæs.*

Most probable

That so she died; for her physician tells me

She hath pursued conclusions infinite

Of easy ways to die. Take up her bed;

And bear her women from the monument. 360

She shall be buried by her Antony.

No grave upon the earth shall clip in it

A pair so famous. High events as these

Strike those that make them; and their story is

No less in pity than his glory which

Brought them to be lamented. Our army shall

In solemn show attend this funeral;

And then to Rome. Come, Dolabella, see

High order in this great solemnity. [Exeunt.



# CORIOLANUS

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

CAIUS MARCIUS, afterwards CAIUS MARCIUS CORIO-  
LANUS

TITUS LARTIUS |  
COMINIUS | *generals against the Volscians*

MENENIUS AGRIPPA, *friend to Coriolanus*

SICINIUS VELUTUS |  
JUNIUS BRUTUS | *tribunes of the people*

YOUNG MARCIUS, *son to Coriolanus*

A ROMAN HERALD

NICANOR, *a Roman*

AN ÆDILE

TWO PATRICIANS

TWO OFFICERS

A LIEUTENANT to Lartius

TWO SENATORS

SEVEN CITIZENS

THREE MESSENGERS

THREE SOLDIERS

TULLUS AUFIDIUS, *general of the Volscians*

A LIEUTENANT to Aufidius

THREE CONSPIRATORS with Aufidius

A CITIZEN of Antium

TWO LORDS

TWO SENTRIES

TWO SENATORS

THREE SOLDIERS

ADRIAN, *A Volscian*

THREE SERVANTS to Aufidius

VOLUMNIA, *mother to Coriolanus*

VIRGILIA, *wife to Coriolanus*

VALERIA, *friend to Virgilia*

GENTLEWOMAN, *attending on Virgilia*

NON-SPEAKING: *Roman and Volscian Senators, Patri-  
cians, Soldiers, Citizens, Lictors, and Attendants*

SCENE: *Rome and the neighbourhood; Corioli and the  
neighbourhood; Antium*

## ACT I

### SCENE I. *Rome: a street*

*Enter a company of mutinous CITIZENS, with staves,  
clubs, and other weapons.*

*1st Cit.* Before we proceed any further, hear me speak.

*All.* Speak, speak.

*1st Cit.* You are all resolved rather to die than to famish?

*All.* Resolved, resolved.

*1st Cit.* First, you know Caius Marcius is chief enemy to the people.

*All.* We know't, we know't.

*1st Cit.* Let us kill him, and we'll have corn at our own price. Is't a verdict? 11

*All.* No more talking on't; let it be done.

Away, away!

*2nd Cit.* One word, good citizens.

*1st Cit.* We are accounted poor citizens, the patricians good. What authority surfeits on would relieve us; if they would yield us but the superfluity, while it were wholesome, we might guess they relieved us humanely; but they think we are too dear. The leanness that afflicts us, the object of our misery, is as an inventory to particularize their abundance; our sufferance is a gain to them. Let us revenge this with our pikes, ere we become rakes; for the gods know I speak this in hunger for bread, not in thirst for revenge.

*2nd Cit.* Would you proceed especially against Caius Marcius?

*All.* Against him first; he's a very dog to the commonalty. 29

*2nd Cit.* Consider you what services he has done for his country?

*1st Cit.* Very well; and could be content to give him good report for't, but that he pays himself with being proud.

*2nd Cit.* Nay, but speak not maliciously.

*1st Cit.* I say unto you, what he hath done famously, he did it to that end. Though soft-conscienced men can be content to say it was for his country, he did it to please his mother, and to be partly proud; which he is, even to the altitude of his virtue. 41

*2nd Cit.* What he cannot help in his nature, you account a vice in him. You must in no way say he is covetous.

*1st Cit.* If I must not, I need not be barren of accusations; he hath faults, with surplus, to tire in repetition. [*Shouts within.*] What shouts are these? The other side o' the city is risen; why stay we prating here? To the Capitol!

*All.* Come, come. 50

*1st Cit.* Soft! who comes here?

*Enter MENENIUS AGRIPPA.*

*2nd Cit.* Worthy Menenius Agrippa; one that hath always loved the people.

*1st Cit.* He's one honest enough; would all the rest were so!

*Men.* What work's, my countrymen, in hand? where go you

With bats and clubs? The matter? speak, I pray you.

*1st Cit.* Our business is not unknown to the Senate; they have had inkling this fortnight what we intend to do, which now we'll show 'em in deeds. They say poor suitors have strong breaths; they shall know we have strong arms too.

*Men.* Why, masters, my good friends, mine honest neighbours,

Will you undo yourselves?

*1st Cit.* We cannot, sir, we are undone already.

*Men.* I tell you, friends, most charitable care Have the patricians of you. For your wants, Your suffering in this dearth, you may as well 69 Strike at the heaven with your staves as lift them Against the Roman state, whose course will on The way it takes, cracking ten thousand curbs Of more strong link asunder than can ever Appear in your impediment. For the dearth, The gods, not the patricians, make it, and Your knees to them, not arms, must help. Alack, You are transported by calamity Thither where more attends you, and you slander The helms o' the state, who care for you like fathers

When you curse them as enemies. 80

*1st Cit.* Care for us! True, indeed! they ne'er cared for us yet: suffer us to famish, and their store-houses crammed with grain; make edicts for usury, to support usurers; repeal daily any wholesome act established against the rich, and provide more piercing statutes daily, to chain up and restrain the poor. If the wars eat us not up, they will; and there's all the love they bear us.

*Men.* Either you must 90 Confess yourselves wondrous malicious, Or be accused of folly. I shall tell you A pretty tale. It may be you have heard it; But, since it serves my purpose, I will venture To stale 't a little more.

*1st Cit.* Well, I'll hear it, sir; yet you must not think to fob off our disgrace with a tale. But, an 't please you, deliver.

*Men.* There was a time when all the body's members

Rebell'd against the belly, thus accused it: 100 That only like a gulf it did remain

I' the midst o' the body, idle and unactive, Still cupboarding the viand, never bearing Like labour with the rest, where the other instruments

Did see and hear, devise, instruct, walk, feel, And mutually participate, did minister Unto the appetite and affection common Of the whole body. The belly answer'd—

*1st Cit.* Well, sir, what answer made the belly?

*Men.* Sir, I shall tell you. With a kind of smile, Which ne'er came from the lungs, but even thus—

For, look you, I may make the belly smile As well as speak—it tauntingly replied To the discontented members, the mutinous parts That envied his receipt; even so most fitly As you malign our senators for that They are not such as you.

*1st Cit.* Your belly's answer? What? The kingly-crowned head, the vigilant eye, The counsellor heart, the arm our soldier, 120 Our steed the leg, the tongue our trumpeter, With other muniments and petty helps In this our fabric, if that they—

*Men.* What then? 'Fore me, this fellow speaks: What then? what then?

*1st Cit.* Should by the cormorant belly be restrain'd,

Who is the sink o' the body—

*Men.* Well, what then?

*1st Cit.* The former agents, if they did complain, What could the belly answer?

*Men.* I will tell you; If you'll bestow a small—of what you have little—

Patience awhile, you'll hear the belly's answer.

*1st Cit.* Ye're long about it.

*Men.* Note me this, good friend; Your most grave belly was deliberate, Not rash like his accusers, and thus answer'd: "True is it, my incorporate friends," quoth he, "That I receive the general food at first, Which you do live upon; and fit it is, Because I am the store-house and the shop Of the whole body. But, if you do remember, I send it through the rivers of your blood, Even to the court, the heart, to the seat o' the brain; 140

And, through the cranks and offices of man, The strongest nerves and small inferior veins From me receive that natural competency Whereby they live: and though that all at once, You, my good friends"—this says the belly, mark me—

*1st Cit.* Ay, sir; well, well.

*Men.* "Though all at once cannot See what I do deliver out to each, Yet I can make my audit up, that all



From me do back receive the flour of all,  
And leave me but the bran." What say you to't?  
*1st Cit.* It was an answer. How apply you  
this? 151

*Men.* The senators of Rome are this good belly,  
And you the mutinous members; for examine  
Their counsels and their cares, digest things  
rightly

Touching the weal o' the common, you shall find  
No public benefit which you receive  
But it proceeds or comes from them to you  
And no way from yourselves. What do you  
think,

You, the great toe of this assembly?

*1st Cit.* I the great toe! Why the great toe?

*Men.* For that, being one o' the lowest, basest,  
poorest, 161

Of this most wise rebellion, thou go'st foremost;  
Thou rascal, that art worst in blood to run,  
Lead'st first to win some vantage.  
But make you ready your stiff bats and clubs;  
Rome and her rats are at the point of battle;  
The one side must have bale.

*Enter CAIUS MARCIUS.*

Hail, noble Marcius!

*Mar.* Thanks. What's the matter, you dis-  
sentious rogues,  
That, rubbing the poor itch of your opinion,  
Make yourselves scabs?

*1st Cit.* We have ever your good word. 170

*Mar.* He that will give good words to thee will  
flatter

Beneath abhorring. What would you have, you  
curs,

That like nor peace nor war? the one affrights  
you,

The other makes you proud. He that trusts to  
you,

Where he should find you lions, finds you hares;  
Where foxes, geese. You are no surer, no,

Than is the coal of fire upon the ice,  
Or hailstone in the sun. Your virtue is

To make him worthy whose offence subdues him  
And curse that justice did it. Who deserves  
greatness 180

Deserves your hate; and your affections are  
A sick man's appetite, who desires most that  
Which would increase his evil. He that depends  
Upon your favours swims with fins of lead  
And hews down oaks with rushes. Hang ye!

Trust ye?  
With every minute you do change a mind,  
And call him noble that was now your hate,  
Him vile that was your garland. What's the  
matter,

That in these several places of the city  
You cry against the noble Senate, who, 190  
Under the gods, keep you in awe, which else  
Would feed on one another? What's their seek-  
ing?

*Men.* For corn at their own rates; whereof,  
they say,

The city is well stored.

*Mar.* Hang 'em! They say!  
They'll sit by the fire, and presume to know  
What's done i' the Capitol; who's like to rise,  
Who thrives, and who declines; side factions and  
give out

Conjectural marriages; making parties strong  
And feeling such as stand not in their liking  
Below their cobbled shoes. They say there's  
grain enough! 200

Would the nobility lay aside their ruth,  
And let me use my sword, I'd make a quarry  
With thousands of these quarter'd slaves as high  
As I could pick my lance.

*Men.* Nay, these are almost thoroughly per-  
suaded;

For though abundantly they lack discretion,  
Yet are they passing cowardly. But, I beseech  
you,

What says the other troop?

*Mar.* They are dissolved, hang 'em!  
They said they were an-hungry; sigh'd forth  
proverbs,

That hunger broke stone walls, that dogs must  
eat,

That meat was made for mouths, that the gods  
sent not 211

Corn for the rich men only. With these shreds  
They vented their complainings; which being  
answer'd,

And a petition granted them, a strange one—  
To break the heart of generosity,

And make bold power look pale—they threw  
their caps

As they would hang them on the horns o' the  
moon,

Shouting their emulation.

*Men.* What is granted them?

*Mar.* Five tribunes to defend their vulgar wis-  
doms,  
Of their own choice. One's Junius Brutus, 220  
Sicinius Velutus, and I know not—'Sdeath!  
The rabble should have first unroof'd the city,  
Ere so prevail'd with me. It will in time  
Win upon power and throw forth greater  
themes

For insurrection's arguing.

*Men.* This is strange.

*Mar.* Go, get you home, you fragments!

*Enter a MESSENGER, hastily.*

*Mess.* Where's Caius Marcius?

*Mar.* Here. What's the matter?

*Mess.* The news is, sir, the Volsces are in arms.

*Mar.* I am glad on 't. Then we shall ha' means to vent

Our musty superfluity. See, our best elders.

*Enter COMINIUS, TITUS LARTIUS, and other SENATORS; JUNIUS BRUTUS and SICINIUS VELUTUS.*

*1st Sen.* Marcius, 'tis true that you have lately told us; 231

The Volsces are in arms.

*Mar.* They have a leader, Tullus Aufidius, that will put you to 't.

I sin in envying his nobility,  
And were I anything but what I am,  
I would wish me only he.

*Com.* You have fought together.

*Mar.* Were half to half the world by the ears and he

Upon my party, I'd revolt, to make  
Only my wars with him. He is a lion  
That I am proud to hunt.

*1st Sen.* Then, worthy Marcius, 240  
Attend upon Cominius to these wars.

*Com.* It is your former promise.

*Mar.* Sir, it is;  
And I am constant. Titus Lartius, thou  
Shalt see me once more strike at Tullus' face.  
What, art thou stiff? stand'st out?

*Tit.* No, Caius Marcius;  
I'll lean upon one crutch and fight with t'other,  
Ere stay behind this business.

*Men.* O, true-bred!

*1st Sen.* Your company to the Capitol; where,  
I know,  
Our greatest friends attend us.

*Tit.* [To COMINIUS] Lead you on.

[To MARCIUS] Follow Cominius; we must follow you; 250

Right worthy you priority.

*Com.* Noble Marcius!

*1st Sen.* [To the CITIZENS] Hence to your homes;  
be gone!

*Mar.* Nay, let them follow.  
The Volsces have much corn; take these rats  
thither

To gnaw their garners. Worshipful mutiners,  
Your valour puts well forth. Pray, follow.

[CITIZENS *steal away*. *Exeunt all but*  
SICINIUS and BRUTUS.]

*Sic.* Was ever man so proud as is this Marcius?

*Bru.* He has no equal.

*Sic.* When we were chosen tribunes for the people—

*Bru.* Mark'd you his lip and eyes?

*Sic.* Nay, but his taunts.

*Bru.* Being moved, he will not spare to gird the gods. 260

*Sic.* Be-mock the modest moon.

*Bru.* The present wars devour him. He is grown  
Too proud to be so valiant.

*Sic.* Such a nature,  
Tickled with good success, disdains the shadow  
Which he treads on at noon. But I do wonder  
His insolence can brook to be commanded  
Under Cominius.

*Bru.* Fame, at the which he aims,  
In whom already he's well graced, can not  
Better be held nor more attain'd than by  
A place below the first; for what miscarries 270  
Shall be the general's fault, though he perform  
To the utmost of a man, and giddy censure  
Will then cry out of Marcius "O, if he  
Had borne the business!"

*Sic.* Besides, if things go well,  
Opinion that so sticks on Marcius shall  
Of his demerits rob Cominius.

*Bru.* Come.  
Half all Cominius' honours are to Marcius,  
Though Marcius earn'd them not, and all his  
faults

To Marcius shall be honours, though indeed  
In aught he merit not.

*Sic.* Let's hence, and hear 280  
How the dispatch is made, and in what fashion,  
More than his singularity, he goes  
Upon this present action.

*Bru.* Let's along. [Exeunt.]

#### SCENE II. *Corioli: the Senate-house*

*Enter TULLUS AUFIDIUS and certain SENATORS of*  
*Corioli.*

*1st Sen.* So, your opinion is, Aufidius,  
That they of Rome are enter'd in our counsels  
And know how we proceed.

*Auf.* Is it not yours?  
What ever have been thought on in this state,  
That could be brought to bodily act ere Rome  
Had circumvention? 'Tis not four days gone  
Since I heard thence; these are the words; I think  
I have the letter here; yes, here it is:

[Reads] "They have press'd a power, but it is not  
known

Whether for east or west. The dearth is great; 290  
The people mutinous; and it is rumour'd,  
Cominius, Marcius your old enemy,  
Who is of Rome worse hated than of you,  
And Titus Lartius, a most valiant Roman,



These three lead on this preparation  
Whither 'tis bent. Most likely 'tis for you;  
Consider of it."

*1st Sen.* Our army's in the field.

We never yet made doubt but Rome was  
ready

To answer us.

*Auf.* Nor did you think it folly  
To keep your great pretences veil'd till when 20  
They needs must show themselves; which in the  
hatching,

It seem'd, appear'd to Rome. By the discovery  
We shall be shorten'd in our aim, which was  
To take in many towns ere almost Rome  
Should know we were afoot.

*2nd Sen.* Noble Aufidius,  
Take your commission; hie you to your bands;  
Let us alone to guard Corioli.

If they set down before 's, for the remove  
Bring up your army; but, I think, you'll find  
They've not prepared for us.

*Auf.* O, doubt not that; 30  
I speak from certainties. Nay, more,  
Some parcels of their power are forth already,  
And only hitherward. I leave your honours.  
If we and Caius Marcius chance to meet,  
'Tis sworn between us we shall ever strike  
Till one can do no more.

*All.* The gods assist you!

*Auf.* And keep your honours safe!

*1st Sen.* Farewell.

*2nd Sen.* Farewell.

*All.* Farewell. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *Rome: a room in Marcius' house*

*Enter VOLUMNIA and VIRGILIA. They set them  
down on two low stools, and sew.*

*Vol.* I pray you, daughter, sing; or express  
yourself in a more comfortable sort. If my son  
were my husband, I should freelier rejoice in that  
absence wherein he won honour than in the em-  
bracements of his bed where he would show most  
love. When yet he was but tender-bodied and  
the only son of my womb, when youth with come-  
liness plucked all gaze his way, when for a day  
of kings' entreaties a mother should not sell him  
an hour from her beholding, I, considering how  
honour would become such a person, that it was  
no better than picture-like to hang by the wall, if  
renown made it not stir, was pleased to let him  
seek danger where he was like to find fame. To a  
cruel war I sent him; from whence he returned,  
his brows bound with oak. I tell thee, daughter,  
I sprang not more in joy at first hearing he was a  
man-child than now in first seeing he had proved  
himself a man.

19

*Vir.* But had he died in the business, madam;  
how then?

*Vol.* Then his good report should have been  
my son; I therein would have found issue. Hear  
me profess sincerely: had I a dozen sons, each in  
my love alike and none less dear than thine and  
my good Marcius, I had rather had eleven die  
nobly for their country than one voluptuously  
surfeit out of action.

*Enter a GENTLEWOMAN.*

*Gent.* Madam, the Lady Valeria is come to  
visit you.

*Vir.* Beseech you, give me leave to retire my-  
self. 30

*Vol.* Indeed, you shall not.

Methinks I hear hither your husband's drum,  
See him pluck Aufidius down by the hair,  
As children from a bear, the Volsces shunning  
him.

Methinks I see him stamp thus, and call thus:  
"Come on, you cowards! you were got in fear,  
Though you were born in Rome." His bloody  
brow

With his mail'd hand then wiping, forth he goes,  
Like to a harvest-man that's task'd to mow  
Or all or lose his hire.

*Vir.* His bloody brow! O Jupiter, no blood!

*Vol.* Away, you fool! it more becomes a man  
Than gilt his trophy. The breasts of Hecuba,  
When she did suckle Hector, look'd not lovelier  
Than Hector's forehead when it spit forth blood  
At Grecian sword, contemning. Tell Valeria,  
We are fit to bid her welcome.

[*Exit GENTLEWOMAN.*]

*Vir.* Heavens bless my lord from fell Aufidius!

*Vol.* He'll beat Aufidius' head below his knee  
And tread upon his neck. 50

*Enter VALERIA, with an Usher and GENTLE-  
WOMAN.*

*Val.* My ladies both, good day to you.

*Vol.* Sweet madam.

*Vir.* I am glad to see your ladyship.

*Val.* How do you both? you are manifest house-  
keepers. What are you sewing here? A fine spot,  
in good faith. How does your little son?

*Vol.* I thank your ladyship; well, good madam.

*Val.* He had rather see the swords and hear a  
drum than look upon his schoolmaster. 61

*Val.* O' my word, the father's son. I'll swear,  
'tis a very pretty boy. O' my troth, I looked  
upon him o' Wednesday half an hour together;  
has such a confirmed countenance. I saw him  
run after a gilded butterfly; and when he caught  
it, he let it go again; and after it again; and

over and over he comes, and up again; caught it again; or whether his fall enraged him, or how 'twas, he did so set his teeth and tear it; O, I warrant, how he mammocked it! 71

*Vol.* One on's father's moods.

*Val.* Indeed, la, 'tis a noble child.

*Vir.* A crack, madam.

*Val.* Come, lay aside your stitchery; I must have you play the idle huswife with me this afternoon.

*Vir.* No, good madam; I will not out of doors.

*Val.* Not out of doors!

*Vol.* She shall, she shall. 80

*Vir.* Indeed, no, by your patience; I'll not over the threshold till my lord return from the wars.

*Val.* Fie, you confine yourself most unreasonably. Come, you must go visit the good lady that lies in.

*Vir.* I will wish her speedy strength, and visit her with my prayers; but I cannot go thither.

*Vol.* Why, I pray you?

*Vir.* 'Tis not to save labour, nor that I want love. 91

*Val.* You would be another Penelope. Yet, they say, all the yarn she spun in Ulysses' absence did but fill Ithaca full of moths. Come; I would your cambric were sensible as your finger, that you might leave pricking it for pity. Come, you shall go with us.

*Vir.* No, good madam, pardon me; indeed, I will not forth.

*Val.* In truth, la, go with me; and I'll tell you excellent news of your husband. 101

*Vir.* O, good madam, there can be none yet.

*Val.* Verily, I do not jest with you; there came news from him last night.

*Vir.* Indeed, madam?

*Val.* In earnest, it's true; I heard a senator speak it. Thus it is: the Volsces have an army forth; against whom Cominius the general is gone, with one part of our Roman power. Your lord and Titus Lartius are set down before their city Corioli; they nothing doubt prevailing and to make it brief wars. This is true, on mine honour; and so, I pray, go with us.

*Vir.* Give me excuse, good madam; I will obey you in everything hereafter.

*Vol.* Let her alone, lady. As she is now, she will but disease our better mirth.

*Val.* In troth, I think she would. Fare you well, then. Come, good sweet lady. Prithee, Virgilia, turn thy solemnness out o' door, and go along with us. 121

*Vir.* No, at a word, madam; indeed, I must not. I wish you much mirth.

*Val.* Well, then, farewell.

[*Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE IV. Before Corioli

*Enter, with drum and colours, MARCIUS, TITUS LARTIUS, Captains and Soldiers. To them a MESSENGER.*

*Mar.* Yonder comes news. A wager they have met.

*Lart.* My horse to yours, no.

*Mar.* 'Tis done.

*Lart.* Agreed.

*Mar.* Say, has our general met the enemy?

*Mess.* They lie in view; but have not spoke as yet.

*Lart.* So, the good horse is mine.

*Mar.* I'll buy him of you.

*Lart.* No, I'll nor sell nor give him; lend you him I will

For half a hundred years. Summon the town.

*Mar.* How far off lie these armies?

*Mess.* Within this mile and half.

*Mar.* Then shall we hear their 'larum, and they ours.

Now, Mars, I prithee, make us quick in work, 10  
That we with smoking swords may march from hence,

To help our fielded friends! Come, blow thy blast.

*They sound a parley. Enter TWO SENATORS with others on the walls.*

Tullus Aufidius, is he within your walls?

*1st Sen.* No, nor a man that fears you less than he,

That's lesser than a little. [*Drums afar off.*]

Hark! our drums

Are bringing forth our youth. We'll break our walls,

Rather than they shall pound us up. Our gates, Which yet seem shut, we have put pinn'd with rushes;

They'll open of themselves. [*Alarum afar off.*]

Hark you, far off!

There is Aufidius; list, what work he makes 20  
Amongst your cloven army.

*Mar.* O, they are at it!

*Lart.* Their noise be our instruction. Ladders, ho!

*Enter the army of the Volsces.*

*Mar.* They fear us not, but issue forth their city.

Now put your shields before your hearts, and fight

With hearts more proof than shields. Advance, brave Titus.

They do disdain us much beyond our thoughts,



Which makes me sweat with wrath. Come on,  
my fellows!

He that retires, I'll take him for a Volsce,  
And he shall feel mine edge.

*Alarum. The Romans are beat back to their trenches.*  
*Re-enter MARCIUS, cursing.*

*Mar.* All the contagion of the south light on  
you, 30  
You shames of Rome! you herd of—Boils and  
plagues  
Plaster you o'er, that you may be abhorr'd  
Further than seen and one infect another  
Against the wind a mile! You souls of geese,  
That bear the shapes of men, how have you run  
From slaves that apes would beat! Pluto and hell!  
All hurt behind; backs red, and faces pale  
With flight and agued fear! Mend and charge  
home,  
Or, by the fires of heaven, I'll leave the foe 39  
And make my wars on you. Look to't; come on!  
If you'll stand fast, we'll beat them to their wives,  
As they us to our trenches followed.

*Another alarum. The Volsces fly, and MARCIUS  
follows them to the gates.*

So, now the gates are ope. Now prove good  
seconds;  
'Tis for the followers fortune widens them,  
Not for the fliers. Mark me, and do the like.

*Enters the gates.*

*1st Sol.* Fool-hardiness; not I.

*2nd Sol.* Nor I.

*MARCIUS is shut in.*

*1st Sol.* See, they have shut him in.

*All.* To the pot, I warrant him.

*Alarum continues.*

*Re-enter TITUS LARTIUS.*

*Lart.* What is become of Marcius?

*All.* Slain, sir, doubtless.

*1st Sol.* Following the fliers at the very heels,  
With them he enters; who, upon the sudden, 50  
Clapp'd to their gates. He is himself alone,  
To answer all the city.

*Lart.* O noble fellow!

Who sensibly outdares his senseless sword,  
And, when it bows, stands up. Thou art left,  
Marcius.

A carbuncle entire, as big as thou art,  
Were not so rich a jewel. Thou wast a soldier  
Even to Cato's wish, not fierce and terrible  
Only in strokes; but, with thy grim looks and  
The thunder-like percussion of thy sounds, 59  
Thou madest thine enemies shake, as if the world  
Were feverous and did tremble.

*Re-enter MARCIUS, bleeding, assaulted by the enemy.*

*1st Sol.* Look, sir.

*Lart.* O, 'tis Marcius!

Let's fetch him off, or make remain alike.

[*They fight, and all enter the city.*]

SCENE V. *Corioli: a street*

*Enter certain ROMANS, with spoils.*

*1st Rom.* This will I carry to Rome.

*2nd Rom.* And I this.

*3rd Rom.* A murrain on't! I took this for silver.

*Alarum continues still afar off.*

*Enter MARCIUS and TITUS LARTIUS with a trumpet.*

*Mar.* See here these movers that do prize their  
hours

At a crack'd drachma! Cushions, leaden spoons,  
Irons of a doit, doublets that hangmen would  
Bury with those that wore them, these base  
slaves,

Ere yet the fight be done, pack up. Down with  
them!

And hark, what noise the general makes! To  
him! 10

There is the man of my soul's hate, Aufidius,  
Piercing our Romans; then, valiant Titus, take  
Convenient numbers to make good the city;  
Whilst I, with those that have the spirit, will  
haste

To help Cominius.

*Lart.* Worthy sir, thou bleed'st;

Thy exercise hath been too violent

For a second course of fight.

*Mar.* Sir, praise me not;

My work hath yet not warm'd me; fare you well.  
The blood I drop is rather physical  
Than dangerous to me. To Aufidius thus 20  
I will appear, and fight.

*Lart.* Now the fair goddess, Fortune,  
Fall deep in love with thee; and her great charms  
Misguide thy opposers' swords! Bold gentleman,  
Prosperity be thy page!

*Mar.* Thy friend no less  
Than those she placeth highest! So, farewell.

*Lart.* Thou worthiest Marcius!

[*Exit MARCIUS.*]

Go sound thy trumpet in the market-place;  
Call thither all the officers o' the town,  
Where they shall know our mind. Away!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI. *Near the camp of Cominius*

*Enter COMINIUS, as it were in retire, with soldiers.*

*Com.* Breathe you, my friends. Well fought; we  
are come off

Like Romans, neither foolish in our stands,  
Nor cowardly in retire. Believe me, sirs,  
We shall be charged again. Whiles we have  
struck,

By interims and conveying gusts we have  
heard

The charges of our friends. Ye Roman gods!  
Lead their successes as we wish our own,  
That both our powers, with smiling fronts en-  
countering,  
May give you thankful sacrifice.

*Enter a MESSENGER.*

Thy news?

*Mess.* The citizens of Corioli have issued, 10  
And given to Lartius and to Marcius battle.  
I saw our party to their trenches driven,  
And then I came away.

*Com.* Though thou speak'st truth,  
Methinks thou speak'st not well. How long is it  
since?

*Mess.* Above an hour, my lord.

*Com.* 'Tis not a mile; briefly we heard their  
drums.

How couldst thou in a mile confound an hour,  
And bring thy news so late?

*Mess.* Spies of the Volsces  
Held me in chase, that I was forced to wheel  
Three or four miles about, else had I, sir, 20  
Half an hour since brought my report.

*Com.* Who's yonder,  
That does appear as he were flay'd? O gods!  
He has the stamp of Marcius; and I have  
Before-time seen him thus.

*Mar.* [*Within*] Come I too late?

*Com.* The shepherd knows not thunder from a  
tabor

More than I know the sound of Marcius' tongue  
From every meaner man.

*Enter MARCIUS.*

*Mar.* Come I too late?

*Com.* Ay, if you come not in the blood of  
others,

But mantled in your own.

*Mar.* O, let me clip ye  
In arms as sound as when I woo'd, in heart 30  
As merry as when our nuptial day was done,  
And tapers burn'd to bedward!

*Com.* Flower of warriors,  
How is't with Titus Lartius?

*Mar.* As with a man busied about decrees:  
Condemning some to death, and some to exile;  
Ransoming him, or pitying, threatening the  
other;  
Holding Corioli in the name of Rome,

Even like a fawning greyhound in the leash,  
To let him slip at will.

*Com.* Where is that slave  
Which told me they had beat you to your  
trenches?

Where is he? call him hither.

*Mar.* Let him alone;  
He did inform the truth. But for our gentlemen,  
The common file—a plague! tribunes for them!—  
The mouse ne'er shunn'd the cat as they did  
budge

From rascals worse than they.

*Com.* But how prevail'd you?

*Mar.* Will the time serve to tell? I do not  
think.

Where is the enemy? are you lords o' the field?  
If not, why cease you till you are so?

*Com.* Marcius,  
We have at disadvantage fought and did  
Retire to win our purpose. 50

*Mar.* How lies their battle? Know you on  
which side

They have placed their men of trust?

*Com.* As I guess, Marcius,  
Their bands i' the vaward are the Antiates,  
Of their best trust; o'er them Aufidius,  
Their very heart of hope.

*Mar.* I do beseech you,  
By all the battles wherein we have fought,  
By the blood we have shed together, by the vows  
We have made to endure friends, that you di-  
rectly

Set me against Aufidius and his Antiates;  
And that you not delay the present, but, 60  
Filling the air with swords advanced and darts,  
We prove this very hour.

*Com.* Though I could wish  
You were conducted to a gentle bath  
And balms applied to you, yet dare I never  
Deny your asking. Take your choice of those  
That best can aid your action.

*Mar.* Those are they  
That most are willing. If any such be here—  
As it were sin to doubt—that love this painting  
Wherein you see me smear'd; if any fear  
Lesser his person than an ill report; 70  
If any think brave death outweighs bad life  
And that his country's dearer than himself;  
Let him alone, or so many so minded,  
Wave thus, to express his disposition,  
And follow Marcius.

*They all shout and wave their swords, take him  
up in their arms, and cast up their caps.*

O, me alone! make you a sword of me?  
If these shows be not outward, which of you  
But is four Volsces? none of you but is



Able to bear against the great Aufidius  
A shield as hard as his. A certain number, 80  
Though thanks to all, must I select from all; the  
rest

Shall bear the business in some other fight,  
As cause will be obey'd. Please you to march;  
And four shall quickly draw out my command,  
Which men are best inclined.

*Com.* March on, my fellows.  
Make good this ostentation, and you shall  
Divide in all with us. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE VII. *The gates of Corioli*

TITUS LARTIUS, *having set a guard upon Corioli, going with drum and trumpet toward COMINIUS and CAIUS MARCIUS, enters with a LIEUTENANT, other Soldiers, and a Scout.*

*Lart.* So, let the ports be guarded; keep your duties,  
As I have set them down. If I do send, dispatch  
Those centuries to our aid; the rest will serve  
For a short holding. If we lose the field,  
We cannot keep the town.

*Lieu.* Fear not our care, sir.

*Lart.* Hence, and shut your gates upon's.  
Our guider, come; to the Roman camp conduct  
us. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE VIII. *A field of battle*

*Alarum as in battle. Enter, from opposite sides, MARCIUS and AUFIDIUS.*

*Mar.* I'll fight with none but thee; for I do  
hate thee

Worse than a promise-breaker.

*Auf.* We hate alike.  
Not Afric owns a serpent I abhor  
More than thy fame and envy. Fix thy foot.

*Mar.* Let the first budger die the other's slave,  
And the gods doom him after!

*Auf.* If I fly, Marcius,  
Holloa me like a hare.

*Mar.* Within these three hours, Tullus,  
Alone I fought in your Corioli walls,  
And made what work I pleased. 'Tis not my  
blood

Wherein thou seest me mask'd; for thy revenge  
Wrench up thy power to the highest.

*Auf.* Wert thou the Hector 11  
That was the whip of your bragg'd progeny,  
Thou shouldst not scape me here.

*They fight, and certain Volsces come in the aid of AUFIDIUS. MARCIUS fights till they be driven in breathless.*

Officious, and not valiant, you have shamed me  
In your condemned seconds. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE IX. *The Roman camp.*

*Flourish. Alarum. A retreat is sounded. Flourish. Enter, from one side, COMINIUS with the ROMANS; from the other side, MARCIUS, with his arm in a scarf.*

*Com.* If I should tell thee o'er this thy day's  
work,

Thou'dst not believe thy deeds; but I'll report it  
Where senators shall mingle tears with smiles,  
Where great patricians shall attend and shrug,  
I' the end admire, where ladies shall be frighted,  
And, gladly quaked, hear more; where the dull  
tribunes,

That, with the fusty plebeians, hate thine honours,  
Shall say against their hearts, "We thank the  
gods

Our Rome hath such a soldier."

Yet camest thou to a morsel of this feast, 10  
Having fully dined before.

*Enter TITUS LARTIUS, with his power, from the pursuit.*

*Lart.* O general,  
Here is the steed, we the caparison.

Hadst thou beheld—

*Mar.* Pray now, no more. My mother,  
Who has a charter to extol her blood,  
When she does praise me grieves me. I have done  
As you have done; that's what I can; induced  
As you have been; that's for my country.  
He that has but effected his good will  
Hath overta'en mine act.

*Com.* You shall not be  
The grave of your deserving; Rome must know  
The value of her own. 'Twere a concealment 21  
Worse than a theft, no less than a traducement,  
To hide your doings; and to silence that,  
Which, to the spire and top of praises vouch'd,  
Would seem but modest; therefore, I beseech  
you—

In sign of what you are, not to reward  
What you have done—before our army hear me.

*Mar.* I have some wounds upon me, and they  
smart

To hear themselves remember'd.

*Com.* Should they not,  
Well might they fester 'gainst ingratitude, 30  
And tent themselves with death. Of all the  
horses,

Whereof we have ta'en good and good store,  
of all

The treasure in this field achieved and city,  
We render you the tenth, to be ta'en forth,  
Before the common distribution, at  
Your only choice.

*Mar.* I thank you, general;  
But cannot make my heart consent to take  
A bribe to pay my sword. I do refuse it;  
And stand upon my common part with those  
That have beheld the doing. 40

*A long flourish. They all cry, "Marcius!  
Marcius!" cast up their caps and lances.  
COMINIUS and LARTIUS stand bare.*

*Mar.* May these same instruments, which you  
profane,  
Never sound more! when drums and trumpets  
shall  
I' the field prove flatterers, let courts and cities be  
Made all of false-faced soothing!  
When steel grows soft as the parasite's silk,  
Let him be made a coverture for the wars!  
No more, I say! For that I have not wash'd  
My nose that bled, or foil'd some debile wretch—  
Which, without note, here's many else have  
done—

You shout me forth 50  
In acclamations hyperbolical;  
As if I loved my little should be dieted  
In praises sauced with lies.

*Com.* Too modest are you;  
More cruel to your good report than grateful  
To us that give you truly. By your patience,  
If 'gainst yourself you be incensed, we'll put  
you,  
Like one that means his proper harm, in manacles,  
Then reason safely with you. Therefore, be it  
known,

As to us, to all the world, that Caius Marcius 59  
Wears this war's garland; in token of the which,  
My noble steed, know to the camp, I give him,  
With all his trim belonging; and from this time,  
For what he did before Corioli, call him,  
With all the applause and clamour of the host,  
Caius Marcius Coriolanus! Bear  
The addition nobly ever!

*Flourish. Trumpets sound, and drums.*

*All.* Caius Marcius Coriolanus!

*Cor.* I will go wash;  
And when my face is fair, you shall perceive  
Whether I blush or no. Howbeit, I thank you. 70  
I mean to stride your steed, and at all times  
To undercrest your good addition  
To the fairness of my power.

*Com.* So, to our tent;  
Where, ere we do repose us, we will write  
To Rome of our success. You, Titus Lartius,  
Must to Corioli back. Send us to Rome  
The best, with whom we may articulate,  
For their own good and ours.

*Lart.* I shall, my lord.

*Cor.* The gods begin to mock me. I, that now

Refused most princely gifts, am bound to beg 80  
Of my lord general.

*Com.* Take't; 'tis yours. What is't?  
*Cor.* I sometime lay here in Corioli

At a poor man's house; he used me kindly.  
He cried to me; I saw him prisoner;  
But then Aufidius was within my view,  
And wrath o'erwhelm'd my pity. I request you  
To give my poor host freedom.

*Com.* O, well begg'd!  
Were he the butcher of my son, he should  
Be free as is the wind. Deliver him, Titus.

*Lart.* Marcius, his name?  
*Cor.* By Jupiter! forgot.  
I am weary; yea, my memory is tired. 91  
Have we no wine here?

*Com.* Go we to our tent.  
The blood upon your visage dries; 'tis time  
It should be look'd to. Come. [*Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE X. *The camp of the Volscs*

*A flourish. Cornets. Enter TULLUS AUFIDIUS,  
bloody, with two or three SOLDIERS.*

*Auf.* The town is ta'en!  
*1st Sol.* 'Twill be deliver'd back on good con-  
dition.

*Auf.* Condition!  
I would I were a Roman; for I cannot,  
Being a Volsce, be that I am. Condition!  
What good condition can a treaty find  
I' the part that is at mercy? Five times, Marcius,  
I have fought with thee; so often hast thou beat  
me,

And wouldst do so, I think, should we encounter  
As often as we eat. By the elements, 10  
If e'er again I meet him beard to beard,  
He's mine, or I am his. Mine emulation  
Hath not that honour in't it had; for where  
I thought to crush him in an equal force,  
True sword to sword, I'll potch at him some  
way

Or wrath or craft may get him.  
*1st Sol.* He's the devil.

*Auf.* Bolder, though not so subtle. My va-  
lour's poison'd

With only suffering stain by him; for him  
Shall fly out of itself. Nor sleep nor sanctuary,  
Being naked, sick, nor fane nor Capitol, 20  
The prayers of priests nor times of sacrifice,  
Embarquements all of fury, shall lift up  
Their rotten privilege and custom 'gainst  
My hate to Marcius. Where I find him, were it  
At home, upon my brother's guard, even there,  
Against the hospitable canon, would I  
Wash my fierce hand in's heart. Go you to the  
city;



Learn how 'tis held; and what they are that  
must

Be hostages for Rome.

*1st Sol.* Will not you go?

*Auf.* I am attended at the cypress grove. I  
pray you—

'Tis south the city mills—bring me word thither

How the world goes, that to the pace of it

I may spur on my journey.

*1st Sol.* I shall, sir.

[*Exeunt.*]

## ACT II

### SCENE I. *Rome: a public place*

*Enter MENENIUS with the two Tribunes of the  
people, SICINIUS and BRUTUS.*

*Men.* The augurer tells me we shall have news  
to-night.

*Bru.* Good or bad?

*Men.* Not according to the prayer of the people,  
for they love not Marcius.

*Sic.* Nature teaches beasts to know their friends.

*Men.* Pray you, who does the wolf love?

*Sic.* The lamb.

*Men.* Ay, to devour him; as the hungry ple-  
beians would the noble Marcius.

*Bru.* He's a lamb indeed, that baes like a bear. 11

*Men.* He's a bear indeed, that lives like a lamb.  
You two are old men; tell me one thing that I  
shall ask you.

*Both.* Well, sir.

*Men.* In what enormity is Marcius poor in, that  
you two have not in abundance?

*Bru.* He's poor in no one fault, but stored  
with all. 21

*Sic.* Especially in pride.

*Bru.* And topping all others in boasting.

*Men.* This is strange now. Do you two know  
how you are censured here in the city, I mean of  
us o' the right-hand file? do you?

*Both.* Why, how are we censured?

*Men.* Because you talk of pride now—will you  
not be angry?

*Both.* Well, well, sir, well. 30

*Men.* Why, 'tis no great matter; for a very  
little thief of occasion will rob you of a great deal  
of patience. Give your dispositions the reins, and  
be angry at your pleasures; at the least, if you  
take it as a pleasure to you in being so. You  
blame Marcius for being proud?

*Bru.* We do it not alone, sir.

*Men.* I know you can do very little alone;  
for your helps are many, or else your actions  
would grow wondrous single; your abilities are  
too infant-like for doing much alone. You talk  
of pride. O that you could turn your eyes toward

the napes of your necks, and make but an interior  
survey of your good selves! O that you could!

*Bru.* What then, sir?

*Men.* Why, then you should discover a brace of  
unmeriting, proud, violent, testy magistrates,  
alias fools, as any in Rome. 49

*Sic.* Menenius, you are known well enough too.

*Men.* I am known to be a humorous patrician,  
and one that loves a cup of hot wine with not a  
drop of allaying Tiber in 't; said to be something  
imperfect in favouring the first complaint; hasty  
and tinder-like upon too trivial motion; one that  
converses more with the buttock of the night  
than with the forehead of the morning. What I  
think I utter, and spend my malice in my breath.  
Meeting two such wealsmen as you are—I can-  
not call you Lycurguses—if the drink you give  
me touch my palate adversely, I make a crooked  
face at it. I can't say your worships have deliv-  
ered the matter well, when I find the ass in com-  
pound with the major part of your syllables; and  
though I must be content to bear with those that  
say you are reverend grave men, yet they lie  
deadly that tell you you have good faces. If you  
see this in the map of my microcosm, follows it  
that I am known well enough too? what harm  
can your bisson conspectuities glean out of this  
character, if I be known well enough too?

*Bru.* Come, sir, come, we know you well  
enough.

*Men.* You know neither me, yourselves, nor  
anything. You are ambitious for poor knaves'  
caps and legs. You wear out a good wholesome  
forenoon in hearing a cause between an orange-  
wife and a fosset-seller; and then rejoin the  
controversy of three pence to a second day of  
audience. When you are hearing a matter be-  
tween party and party, if you chance to be  
pinched with the colic, you make faces like mum-  
mers; set up the bloody flag against all patience;  
and, in roaring for a chamber-pot, dismiss the  
controversy bleeding, the more entangled by  
your hearing. All the peace you make in their  
cause is calling both the parties knaves. You are a  
pair of strange ones. 89

*Bru.* Come, come, you are well understood to  
be a perfecter giber for the table than a necessary  
bencher in the Capitol.

*Men.* Our very priests must become mockers,  
if they shall encounter such ridiculous subjects as  
you are. When you speak best unto the purpose,  
it is not worth the wagging of your beards; and  
your beards deserve not so honourable a grave as  
to stuff a botcher's cushion, or to be entombed  
in an ass's pack-saddle. Yet you must be saying  
Marcius is proud; who, in a cheap estimation, is

*Cor.* And live you yet? [*To VALERIA*] O my sweet lady, pardon.

*Vol.* I know not where to turn. O, welcome home;

And welcome, general; and ye're welcome all.

*Men.* A hundred thousand welcomes. I could weep 200

And I could laugh, I am light and heavy. Welcome.

A curse begin at very root on's heart,  
That is not glad to see thee! You are three  
That Rome should dote on; yet, by the faith of men,

We have some old crab-trees here at home that will not

Be grafted to your relish. Yet welcome, warriors.

We call a nettle but a nettle and

The faults of fools but folly.

*Com.* Ever right.

*Cor.* Menenius ever, ever.

*Her.* Give way there, and go on!

*Cor.* [*To VOLUMNIA and VIRGILIA*] Your hand, and yours. 210

Ere in our own house I do shade my head,  
The good patricians must be visited;  
From whom I have received not greetings,  
But with them change of honours.

*Vol.* I have lived

To see inherited my very wishes

And the buildings of my fancy. Only

There's one thing wanting, which I doubt not but

Our Rome will cast upon thee.

*Cor.* Know, good mother,

I had rather be their servant in my way

Than sway with them in theirs.

*Com.* On, to the Capitol! 220

[*Flourish. Cornets. Exeunt in state, as before. BRUTUS and SICINIUS come forward.*]

*Bru.* All tongues speak of him, and the bleared sights

Are spectacl'd to see him. Your prattling nurse

Into a rapture lets her baby cry

While she chats him; the kitchen malkin pins

Her richest lockram 'bout her reechy neck,

Clambering the walls to eye him; stalls, bulks, windows,

Are smother'd up, leads fill'd, and ridges horsed

With variable complexions, all agreeing

In earnestness to see him. Seld-shown flamens

Do press among the popular throngs and puff 230

To win a vulgar station; our veil'd dames

Commit the war of white and damask in

Their nicely-gawdied cheeks to the wanton spoil

Of Phoebus' burning kisses; such a pother

As if that whatsoever god who leads him  
Were slyly crept into his human powers  
And gave him graceful posture.

*Sic.* On the sudden,

I warrant him consul.

*Bru.* Then our office may,

During his power, go sleep.

*Sic.* He cannot temperately transport his honours 240

From where he should begin and end, but will  
Lose those he hath won.

*Bru.* In that there's comfort.

*Sic.* Doubt not

The commoners, for whom we stand, but they

Upon their ancient malice will forget

With the least cause these his new honours,  
which

That he will give them make I as little question  
As he is proud to do't.

*Bru.* I heard him swear,

Were he to stand for consul, never would he

Appear i' the market-place nor on him put

The napless vesture of humility; 250

Nor, showing, as the manner is, his wounds

To the people, beg their stinking breaths.

*Sic.* 'Tis right.

*Bru.* It was his word. O, he would miss it rather

Than carry it but by the suit of the gentry to him  
And the desire of the nobles.

*Sic.* I wish no better

Than have him hold that purpose and to put it

In execution.

*Bru.* 'Tis most like he will.

*Sic.* It shall be to him then as our good wills,

A sure destruction.

*Bru.* So it must fall out

To him or our authorities. For an end, 260

We must suggest the people in what hatred

He still hath held them; that to's power he would

Have made them mules, silenced their pleaders,  
and

Disproportioned their freedoms, holding them,

In human action and capacity,

Of no more soul nor fitness for the world

Than camels in the war, who have their provand

Only for bearing burdens, and sore blows

For sinking them.

*Sic.* This, as you say, suggested

At some time when his soaring insolence 270

Shall touch the people—which time shall not want,

If he be put upon 't; and that's as easy

As to set dogs on sheep—will be his fire

To kindle their dry stubble; and their blaze



Shall darken him for ever.

*Enter a MESSENGER.*

*Bru.* What's the matter?

*Mess.* You are sent for to the Capitol. 'Tis thought

That Marcius shall be consul.

I have seen the dumb men throng to see him and  
The blind to hear him speak. Matrons flung  
gloves,

Ladies and maids their scarfs and handkerchers,  
Upon him as he pass'd. The nobles bended, 281  
As to Jove's statue, and the commons made  
A shower and thunder with their caps and shouts.  
I never saw the like.

*Bru.* Let's to the Capitol;  
And carry with us ears and eyes for the time,  
But hearts for the event.

*Sic.* Have with you. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *The same: the Capitol*

*Enter TWO OFFICERS, to lay cushions.*

*1st Off.* Come, come, they are almost here. How  
many stand for consulships?

*2nd Off.* Three, they say; but 'tis thought of  
every one Coriolanus will carry it.

*1st Off.* That's a brave fellow; but he's vengeance  
proud, and loves not the common people.

*2nd Off.* Faith, there have been many great men  
that have flattered the people, who ne'er loved  
them; and there be many that they have loved,  
they know not wherefore; so that, if they love  
they know not why, they hate upon no better a  
ground; therefore, for Coriolanus neither to care  
whether they love or hate him manifests the true  
knowledge he has in their disposition; and out of  
his noble carelessness lets them plainly see 't.

*1st Off.* If he did not care whether he had their  
love or no, he waded indifferently 'twixt doing  
them neither good nor harm; but he seeks their  
hate with greater devotion than they can render  
it him; and leaves nothing undone that may fully  
discover him their opposite. Now, to seem to  
affect the malice and displeasure of the people is  
as bad as that which he dislikes, to flatter them  
for their love.

*2nd Off.* He hath deserved worthily of his coun-  
try; and his ascent is not by such easy degrees as  
those who, having been supple and courteous to  
the people, bonneted, without any further deed  
to have them at all into their estimation and re-  
port. But he hath so planted his honours in their  
eyes and his actions in their hearts that for their  
tongues to be silent and not confess so much were  
a kind of ingrateful injury; to report otherwise  
were a malice that, giving itself the lie, would

pluck reproof and rebuke from every ear that  
heard it.

*1st Off.* No more of him; he's a worthy man.  
Make way, they are coming. 40

*A sennet. Enter, with Lictors before them, COMI-  
NIUS the consul, MENENIUS, CORIOLANUS, SENA-  
TORS, SICINIUS and BRUTUS. The SENATORS take  
their places; the Tribunes take their places by them-  
selves. CORIOLANUS stands.*

*Men.* Having determined of the Volscs and  
To send for Titus Lartius, it remains,  
As the main point of this our after-meeting,  
To gratify his noble service that  
Hath thus stood for his country; therefore, please  
you,

Most reverend and grave elders, to desire  
The present consul and last general  
In our well-found successes, to report  
A little of that worthy work perform'd  
By Caius Marcius Coriolanus, whom 50  
We met here both to thank and to remember  
With honours like himself.

*1st Sen.* Speak, good Cominius.  
Leave nothing out for length, and make us think  
Rather our state's defective for requital  
Than we to stretch it out. [*To the Tribunes*] Mas-  
ters o' the people,

We do request your kindest ears, and after,  
Your loving motion toward the common body,  
To yield what passes here.

*Sic.* We are convented  
Upon a pleasing treaty, and have hearts  
Inclinable to honour and advance 60  
The theme of our assembly.

*Bru.* Which the rather  
We shall be blest to do, if he remember  
A kinder value of the people than  
He hath hereto prized them at.

*Men.* That's off, that's off;  
I would you rather had been silent. Please you  
To hear Cominius speak?

*Bru.* Most willingly;  
But yet my caution was more pertinent  
Than the rebuke you give it.

*Men.* He loves your people;  
But tie him not to be their bedfellow.  
Worthy Cominius, speak. [*CORIOLANUS offers to  
go away.*] Nay, keep your place. 70

*1st Sen.* Sit, Coriolanus; never shame to hear  
What you have nobly done.

*Cor.* Your honours' pardon.  
I had rather have my wounds to heal again  
Than hear say how I got them.

*Bru.* Sir, I hope  
My words disbench'd you not.

*Cor.* No, sir; yet oft,  
When blows have made me stay, I fled from  
words.

You soothed not, therefore hurt not; but your  
people,  
I love them as they weigh.

*Men.* Pray now, sit down.

*Cor.* I had rather have one scratch my head i'  
the sun

When the alarm were struck than idly sit 80  
To hear my nothings monster'd. [*Exit.*]

*Men.* Masters of the people,  
Your multiplying spawn how can he flatter—  
That's thousand to one good one—when you now  
see

He had rather venture all his limbs for honour  
Than one on's ears to hear it? Proceed, Cominius.

*Com.* I shall lack voice; the deeds of Coriolanus  
Should not be utter'd feebly. It is held  
That valour is the chiefest virtue and

Most dignifies the haver; if it be,  
The man I speak of cannot in the world 90

Be singly counterpoised. At sixteen years,  
When Tarquin made a head for Rome, he fought

Beyond the mark of others. Our then dictator,  
Whom with all praise I point at, saw him fight,

When with his Amazonian chin he drove  
The bristled lips before him. He bestrid

An o'er-press'd Roman and i' the consul's view  
Slew three opposers. Tarquin's self he met,

And struck him on his knee. In that day's feats,  
When he might act the woman in the scene, 100

He proved best man i' the field, and for his meed  
Was brow-bound with the oak. His pupil age

Man-enter'd thus, he waxed like a sea,  
And in the brunt of seventeen battles since

He lurch'd all swords of the garland. For this  
last,

Before and in Corioli, let me say,  
I cannot speak him home. He stopp'd the fliers;

And by his rare example made the coward  
Turn terror into sport; as weeds before

A vessel under sail, so men obey'd 110  
And fell below his stem. His sword, death's

stamp,  
Where it did mark, it took; from face to foot

He was a thing of blood, whose every motion  
Was timed with dying cries. Alone he enter'd

The mortal gate of the city, which he painted  
With shunless destiny; aidless came off,

And with a sudden reinforcement struck  
Corioli like a planet; now all's his.

When, by and by, the din of war gan pierce 119  
His ready sense, then straight his doubled spirit

Re-quicken'd what in flesh was fatigate,  
And to the battle came he; where he did

Run reeking o'er the lives of men, as if  
'Twere a perpetual spoil; and till we call'd  
Both field and city ours, he never stood  
To ease his breast with panting.

*Men.* Worthy man!

*1st Sen.* He cannot but with measure fit the  
honours

Which we devise him.

*Com.* Our spoils he kick'd at,  
And look'd upon things precious as they were  
The common muck of the world. He covets less

Than misery itself would give; rewards 131  
His deeds with doing them, and is content

To spend the time to end it.

*Men.* He's right noble.

Let him be call'd for.

*1st Sen.* Call Coriolanus.

*1st Off.* He doth appear.

*Re-enter CORIOLANUS.*

*Men.* The Senate, Coriolanus, are well pleased  
To make thee consul.

*Cor.* I do owe them still

My life and services.

*Men.* It then remains

That you do speak to the people.

*Cor.* I do beseech you,  
Let me o'erleap that custom, for I cannot 140

Put on the gown, stand naked and entreat them  
For my wounds' sake to give their suffrage.

Please you

That I may pass this doing.

*Sic.* Sir, the people  
Must have their voices; neither will they bate  
One jot of ceremony.

*Men.* Put them not to 't.

Pray you, go fit you to the custom and  
Take to you, as your predecessors have,

Your honour with your form.

*Cor.* It is a part  
That I shall blush in acting, and might well  
Be taken from the people.

*Bru.* Mark you that? 150

*Cor.* To brag unto them, "Thus I did, and thus";  
Show them the unaching scars which I should

hide,  
As if I had received them for the hire  
Of their breath only!

*Men.* Do not stand upon 't.

We recommend to you, tribunes of the people,  
Our purpose to them; and to our noble consul  
Wish we all joy and honour.

*Senators.* To Coriolanus come all joy and hon-  
our! [*Flourish of cornets. Exeunt all but SICI-*

*NIUS and BRUTUS.*

*Bru.* You see how he intends to use the people.



Sic. May they perceive 's intent! He will require them, 160

As if he did condemn what he requested  
Should be in them to give.

Bru. Come, we'll inform them  
Of our proceedings here. On the market-place,  
I know, they do attend us. [Exeunt.

SCENE III. *The same: the Forum*

*Enter seven or eight CITIZENS.*

1st Cit. Once, if he do require our voices, we ought not to deny him.

2nd Cit. We may, sir, if we will.

3rd Cit. We have power in ourselves to do it, but it is a power that we have no power to do; for if he show us his wounds and tell us his deeds, we are to put our tongues into those wounds and speak for them; so, if he tell us his noble deeds, we must also tell him our noble acceptance of them. Ingratitude is monstrous, and for the multitude to be ingrateful were to make a monster of the multitude; of the which we being members, should bring ourselves to be monstrous members.

1st Cit. And to make us no better thought of, a little help will serve; for once we stood up about the corn, he himself stuck not to call us the many-headed multitude.

3rd Cit. We have been called so of many; not that our heads are some brown, some black, some auburn, some bald, but that our wits are so diversely coloured; and truly I think if all our wits were to issue out of one skull, they would fly east, west, north, south, and their consent of one direct way should be at once to all the points o' the compass.

2nd Cit. Think you so? Which way do you judge my wit would fly?

3rd Cit. Nay, your wit will not so soon out as another man's will; 'tis strongly wedged up in a block-head, but if it were at liberty, 'twould, sure, southward.

2nd Cit. Why that way?

3rd Cit. To lose itself in a fog, where being three parts melted away with rotten dews, the fourth would return for conscience sake, to help to get thee a wife.

2nd Cit. You are never without your tricks; you may, you may. 39

3rd Cit. Are you all resolved to give your voices? But that's no matter, the greater part carries it. I say, if he would incline to the people, there was never a worthier man.

*Enter CORIOLANUS in a gown of humility,  
with MENENIUS.*

Here he comes, and in the gown of humility;

mark his behaviour. We are not to stay all together, but to come by him where he stands, by ones, by twos, and by threes. He's to make his requests by particulars; wherein every one of us has a single honour, in giving him our own voices with our own tongues; therefore follow me, and I'll direct you how you shall go by him.

All. Content, content.

[Exeunt CITIZENS.]

Men. O sir, you are not right. Have you not known

The worstiest men have done 't?

Cor. What must I say?

"I pray, sir"—Plague upon 't! I cannot bring My tongue to such a pace. "Look, sir. My wounds!

I got them in my country's service, when Some certain of your brethren roar'd and ran 59  
From the noise of our own drums."

Men. O me, the gods!

You must not speak of that. You must desire them

To think upon you.

Cor. Think upon me! Hang 'em!

I would they would forget me, like the virtues Which our divines lose by 'em.

Men. You'll mar all

I'll leave you. Pray you, speak to 'em, I pray you,

In wholesome manner. [Exit.

Cor. Bid them wash their faces

And keep their teeth clean. [Re-enter two of the CITIZENS.] So, here comes a brace. [Re-enter a THIRD CITIZEN.]

You know the cause, sir, of my standing here.

3rd Cit. We do, sir; tell us what hath brought you to 't. 70

Cor. Mine own desert.

2nd Cit. Your own desert!

Cor. Ay, but not mine own desire.

3rd Cit. How not your own desire?

Cor. No, sir, 'twas never my desire yet to trouble the poor with begging.

3rd Cit. You must think, if we give you anything, we hope to gain by you.

Cor. Well then, I pray, your price o' the consulship? 80

1st Cit. The price is to ask it kindly.

Cor. Kindly! Sir, I pray, let me ha 't. I have wounds to show you, which shall be yours in private. Your good voice, sir; what say you?

2nd Cit. You shall ha 't, worthy sir.

Cor. A match, sir. There's in all two worthy voices begged. I have your alms; adieu.

3rd Cit. But this is something odd.

2nd Cit. An 'twere to give again—but 'tis no matter. [Exeunt the THREE CITIZENS. 90

*Re-enter two other CITIZENS.*

*Cor.* Pray you now, if it may stand with the tune of your voices that I may be consul, I have here the customary gown.

*4th Cit.* You have deserved nobly of your country, and you have not deserved nobly.

*Cor.* Your enigma?

*4th Cit.* You have been a scourge to her enemies, you have been a rod to her friends; you have not indeed loved the common people. 99

*Cor.* You should account me the more virtuous that I have not been common in my love. I will, sir, flatter my sworn brother, the people, to earn a dearer estimation of them; 'tis a condition they account gentle. And since the wisdom of their choice is rather to have my hat than my heart, I will practise the insinuating nod and be off to them most counterfeited; that is, sir, I will counterfeit the bewitchment of some popular man and give it bountiful to the desirers. Therefore, beseech you, I may be consul.

*5th Cit.* We hope to find you our friend; and therefore give you our voices heartily.

*4th Cit.* You have received many wounds for your country.

*Cor.* I will not seal your knowledge with showing them. I will make much of your voices, and so trouble you no further.

*Both Cit.* The gods give you joy, sir, heartily! 100

[*Exeunt.*]

*Cor.* Most sweet voices!

Better it is to die, better to starve, 120  
Than crave the hire which first we do deserve.  
Why in this woolvish toge should I stand here,  
To beg of Hob and Dick, that do appear,  
Their needful vouches? Custom calls me to 't.  
What custom wills, in all things should we do 't,  
The dust on antique time would lie unswept,  
And mountainous error be too highly heapt  
For truth to o'er-peer. Rather than fool it so,  
Let the high office and the honour go  
To one that would do thus. I am half through;  
The one part suffer'd, the other will I do. 131

*Re-enter three CITIZENS more.*

Here come more voices.

Your voices! For your voices I have fought;  
Watch'd for your voices; for your voices bear  
Of wounds two dozen odd; battles thrice six  
I have seen and heard of; for your voices have  
Done many things, some less, some more. Your  
voices.

Indeed, I would be consul.

*6th Cit.* He has done nobly, and cannot go without any honest man's voice. 140

*7th Cit.* Therefore let him be consul. The gods give him joy, and make him good friend to the people!

*All Cit.* Amen, amen. God save thee, noble consul! [*Exeunt.*]

*Cor.* Worthy voices!

*Re-enter MENENIUS, with BRUTUS and SICINIUS.*

*Men.* You have stood your limitation; and the tribunes

Endue you with the people's voice. Remains That, in the official marks invested, you Anon do meet the Senate.

*Cor.* Is this done?

*Sic.* The custom of request you have discharged. The people do admit you, and are summon'd 151  
To meet anon, upon your approbation.

*Cor.* Where? at the Senate-house?

*Sic.* There, Coriolanus.

*Cor.* May I change these garments?

*Sic.* You may, sir.

*Cor.* That I'll straight do; and, knowing myself again,

Repair to the Senate-house.

*Men.* I'll keep you company. Will you along?

*Bru.* We stay here for the people.

*Sic.* Fare you well.

[*Exeunt CORIOLANUS and MENENIUS.*]

He has it now, and by his looks methinks 'Tis warm at 's heart. 160

*Bru.* With a proud heart he wore his humble weeds.

Will you dismiss the people?

*Re-enter CITIZENS.*

*Sic.* How now, my masters! have you chose this man?

*1st Cit.* He has our voices, sir.

*Bru.* We pray the gods he may deserve your loves.

*2nd Cit.* Amen, sir. To my poor unworthy notice,

He mock'd us when he begg'd our voices.

*3rd Cit.* Certainly

He flouted us downright.

*1st Cit.* No, 'tis his kind of speech. He did not mock us.

*2nd Cit.* Not one amongst us, save yourself, but says 170

He used us scornfully. He should have show'd us His marks of merit, wounds received for 's country.

*Sic.* Why, so he did, I am sure.

*Citizens.* No, no; no man saw 'em.

*3rd Cit.* He said he had wounds, which he could show in private;



And with his hat, thus waving it in scorn,  
 "I would be consul," says he; "aged custom,  
 But by your voices, will not so permit me;  
 Your voices therefore." When we granted that,  
 Here was "I thank you for your voices: thank  
 you:

Your most sweet voices. Now you have left your  
 voices, 180

I have no further with you." Was not this mock-  
 ery?

*Sic.* Why either were you ignorant to see 't,  
 Or, seeing it, of such childish friendliness  
 To yield your voices?

*Bru.* Could you not have told him  
 As you were lesson'd, when he had no power,  
 But was a petty servant to the state,  
 He was your enemy, ever spake against  
 Your liberties and the charters that you bear  
 I' the body of the weal; and now, arriving  
 A place of potency and sway o' the state, 190  
 If he should still malignantly remain  
 Fast foe to the *plebeii*, your voices might  
 Be curses to yourselves? You should have said  
 That as his worthy deeds did claim no less  
 Than what he stood for, so his gracious nature  
 Would think upon you for your voices and  
 Translate his malice towards you into love,  
 Standing your friendly lord.

*Sic.* Thus to have said,  
 As you were fore-advised, had touch'd his spirit  
 And tried his inclination; from him pluck'd 200  
 Either his gracious promise, which you might,  
 As cause had call'd you up, have held him to;  
 Or else it would have gall'd his surly nature,  
 Which easily endures not article  
 Tying him to aught; so putting him to rage,  
 You should have ta'en the advantage of his choler  
 And pass'd him unelected.

*Bru.* Did you perceive  
 He did solicit you in free contempt  
 When he did need your loves, and do you think  
 That his contempt shall not be bruising to you,  
 When he hath power to crush? Why, had your  
 bodies 211  
 No heart among you? or had you tongues to cry  
 Against the rectorship of judgement?

*Sic.* Have you  
 Ere now denied the asker? and now again  
 Of him that did not ask, but mock, bestow  
 Your sued-for tongues?

*3rd Cit.* He's not confirm'd; we may deny him  
 yet.

*2nd Cit.* And will deny him.

I'll have five hundred voices of that sound.

*1st Cit.* I twice five hundred and their friends  
 to piece 'em. 220

*Bru.* Get you hence instantly, and tell those  
 friends,  
 They have chose a consul that will from them  
 take

Their liberties; make them of no more voice  
 Than dogs that are as often beat for barking  
 As therefore kept to do so.

*Sic.* Let them assemble,  
 And on a safer judgement all revoke  
 Your ignorant election; enforce his pride,  
 And his old hate unto you; besides, forget not  
 With what contempt he wore the humble weed,  
 How in his suit he scorn'd you; but your loves,  
 Thinking upon his services, took from you 231  
 The apprehension of his present portance,  
 Which most gibly, ungravely, he did fashion  
 After the inveterate hate he bears you.

*Bru.* Lay  
 A fault on us, your tribunes; that we labour'd,  
 No impediment between, but that you must  
 Cast your election on him.

*Sic.* Say, you chose him  
 More after our commandment than as guided  
 By your own true affections, and that your  
 minds,  
 Pre-occupied with what you rather must do 240  
 Than what you should, made you against the  
 grain

To voice him consul. Lay the fault on us.

*Bru.* Ay, spare us not. Say we read lectures to  
 you,  
 How youngly he began to serve his country,  
 How long continued, and what stock he springs of,  
 The noble house o' the Marcians, from whence  
 came

That Ancus Marcius, Numa's daughter's son,  
 Who, after great Hostilius, here was king;  
 Of the same house Publius and Quintus were,  
 That our best water brought by conduits hither;  
 And [Censorinus,] nobly named so, 251  
 Twice being [by the people chosen] censor,  
 Was his great ancestor.

*Sic.* One thus descended,  
 That hath beside well in his person wrought  
 To be set high in place, we did commend  
 To your remembrances; but you have found,  
 Scaling his present bearing with his past,  
 That he's your fixed enemy, and revoke  
 Your sudden approbation.

*Bru.* Say, you ne'er had done't—  
 Harp on that still—but by our putting on; 260  
 And presently, when you have drawn your  
 number,

Repair to the Capitol.

*All.* We will so. Almost all  
 Repent in their election. [Exeunt CITIZENS.]

*Bru.* Let them go on;  
 This mutiny were better put in hazard  
 Then stay, past doubt, for greater.  
 If, as his nature is, he fall in rage  
 With their refusal, both observe and answer  
 The vantage of his anger.  
*Sic.* To the Capitol, come.  
 We will be there before the stream o' the people;  
 And this shall seem, as partly 'tis, their own, 270  
 Which we have goaded onward. [*Exeunt.*]

## ACT III

SCENE I. *Rome: a street*

*Cornets.* Enter CORIOLANUS, MENENIUS, all the  
*Gentry*, COMINIUS, TITUS LARTIUS, and other  
 SENATORS.

*Cor.* Tullus Aufidius then had made new head?  
*Lart.* He had, my lord; and that it was which  
 caused

Our swifter composition.

*Cor.* So then the Volscies stand but as at first,  
 Ready, when time shall prompt them, to make  
 road

Upon's again.

*Com.* They are worn, Lord Consul, so,  
 That we shall hardly in our ages see  
 Their banners wave again.

*Cor.* Saw you Aufidius?  
*Lart.* On safe-guard he came to me; and did  
 curse

Against the Volscies, for they had so vilely 10  
 Yielded the town. He is retired to Antium.

*Cor.* Spoke he of me?

*Lart.* He did, my lord,

*Cor.* How? what?

*Lart.* How often he had met you, sword to  
 sword;

That of all things upon the earth he hated  
 Your person most, that he would pawn his  
 fortunes

To hopeless restitution, so he might  
 Be call'd your vanquisher.

*Cor.* At Antium lives he?

*Lart.* At Antium.

*Cor.* I wish I had a cause to seek him there,  
 To oppose his hatred fully. Welcome home. 20

*Enter SICINIUS and BRUTUS.*

Behold, these are the tribunes of the people,  
 The tongues o' the common mouth. I do despise  
 them;

For they do prank them in authority,  
 Against all noble sufferance.

*Sic.* Pass no further.

*Cor.* Ha! what is that?

*Bru.* It will be dangerous to go on. No further.

*Cor.* What makes this change?

*Men.* The matter?

*Com.* Hath he not pass'd the noble and the com-  
 mon?

*Bru.* Cominius, no.

*Cor.* Have I had children's voices? 30

*1st Sen.* Tribunes, give way; he shall to the  
 market-place.

*Bru.* The people are incensed against him.

*Sic.* Stop,

Or all will fall in broil.

*Cor.* Are these your herd?

Must these have voices, that can yield them now  
 And straight disclaim their tongues? What are  
 your offices?

You being their mouths, why rule you not their  
 teeth?

Have you not set them on?

*Men.* Be calm, be calm.

*Cor.* It is a purposed thing, and grows by plot,  
 To curb the will of the nobility.

Suffer't, and live with such as cannot rule 40  
 Nor ever will be ruled.

*Bru.* Call't not a plot.

The people cry you mock'd them, and of late,  
 When corn was given them gratis, you repined;  
 Scandal'd the suppliants for the people, call'd  
 them

Time-pleasers, flatterers, foes to nobleness.

*Cor.* Why, this was known before.

*Bru.* Not to them all.

*Cor.* Have you inform'd them sithence?

*Bru.* How! I inform them!

*Com.* You are like to do such business.

*Bru.* Not unlike,

Each way, to better yours.

*Cor.* Why then should I be consul? By yond  
 clouds, 50

Let me deserve so ill as you, and make me  
 Your fellow tribune.

*Sic.* You show too much of that  
 For which the people stir. If you will pass  
 To where you are bound, you must inquire your  
 way,

Which you are out of, with a gentler spirit,  
 Or never be so noble as a consul,  
 Nor yoke with him for tribune.

*Men.* Let's be calm.

*Com.* The people are abused; set on. This  
 paltering

Becomes not Rome, nor has Coriolanus

Deserved this so dishonour'd rub, laid falsely 60  
 I' the plain way of his merit.

*Cor.* Tell me of corn!

This was my speech, and I will speak't again—



*Men.* Not now, not now.

*1st Sen.* Not in this heat, sir, now.

*Cor.* Now, as I live, I will. My nobler friends,  
I crave their pardons;

For the mutable rank-scented many, let them  
Regard me as I do not flatter, and  
Therein behold themselves. I say again,  
In soothing them we nourish 'gainst our Senate  
The cockle of rebellion, insolence, sedition, 70  
Which we ourselves have plough'd for, sow'd,  
and scatter'd,

By mingling them with us, the honour'd number,  
Who lack not virtue, no, nor power, but that  
Which they have given to beggars.

*Men.* Well, no more.

*1st Sen.* No more words, we beseech you.

*Cor.* How! no more!

As for my country I have shed my blood,  
Not fearing outward force, so shall my lungs  
Coin words till their decay against those measles,  
Which we disdain should tetter us, yet sought  
The very way to catch them.

*Bru.* You speak o' the people 80

As if you were a god to punish, not

A man of their infirmity.

*Sic.* 'Twere well

We let the people know't.

*Men.* What, what? His choler?

*Cor.* Choler!

Were I as patient as the midnight sleep,

By Jove, 'twould be my mind!

*Sic.* It is a mind

That shall remain a poison where it is,

Not poison any further.

*Cor.* Shall remain!

Hear you this Triton of the minnows? mark  
you

His absolute "shall"?

*Com.* 'Twas from the canon.

*Cor.* "Shall"! 90

O good but most unwise patricians! why,  
You grave but reckless senators, have you thus  
Given Hydra here to choose an officer,  
That with his peremptory "shall," being but  
The horn and noise o' the monster's, wants not  
spirit

To say he'll turn your current in a ditch,  
And make your channel his? If he have power,  
Then vail your ignorance; if none, awake  
Your dangerous lenity. If you are learn'd, 100  
Be not as common fools; if you are not,  
Let them have cushions by you. You are ple-  
beians,

If they be senators; and they are no less,  
When, both your voices blended, the great'st  
taste

Most palates theirs. They choose their magis-  
trate,

And such a one as he, who puts his "shall,"  
His popular "shall," against a graver bench  
Than ever frown'd in Greece. By Jove himself!  
It makes the consuls base. And my soul aches  
To know, when two authorities are up,  
Neither supreme, how soon confusion 110  
May enter 'twixt the gap of both and take  
The one by the other.

*Com.* Well, on to the market-place.

*Cor.* Whoever gave that counsel, to give forth  
The corn o' the storehouse gratis, as 'twas used  
Sometime in Greece—

*Men.* Well, well, no more of that.

*Cor.* Though there the people had more abso-  
lute power,

I say, they nourish'd disobedience, fed  
The ruin of the state.

*Bru.* Why, shall the people give  
One that speaks thus their voice?

*Cor.* I'll give my reasons,  
More worthier than their voices. They know the  
corn 120

Was not our recompense, resting well assured  
They ne'er did service for't; being press'd to the  
war,

Even when the navel of the state was touch'd,  
They would not thread the gates. This kind of  
service

Did not deserve corn gratis. Being i' the war,  
Their mutinies and revolts, wherein they show'd  
Most valour, spoke not for them. The accusation  
Which they have often made against the Senate,  
All cause unborn, could never be the motive  
Of our so frank donation. Well, what then? 130  
How shall this bisson multitude digest  
The Senate's courtesy? Let deeds express  
What's like to be their words: "We did request  
it;

We are the greater poll, and in true fear  
They gave us our demands." Thus we debase  
The nature of our seats and make the rabble  
Call our cares fears; which will in time  
Break ope the locks o' the Senate and bring in  
The crows to peck the eagles.

*Men.* Come, enough.

*Bru.* Enough, with over-measure.

*Cor.* No, take more. 140

What may be sworn by, both divine and human,  
Seal what I end withal! This double worship,  
Where one part does disdain with cause, the  
other

Insult without all reason, where gentry, title,  
wisdom,

Cannot conclude but by the yea and no

Of general ignorance—it must omit  
Real necessities, and give way the while  
To unstable slightness; purpose so barr'd, it  
follows,

Nothing is done to purpose. Therefore, beseech  
you—

You that will be less fearful than discreet, 150  
That love the fundamental part of state  
More than you doubt the change on't, that prefer  
A noble life before a long, and wish  
To jump a body with a dangerous physic  
That's sure of death without it, at once pluck out  
The multitudinous tongue; let them not lick  
The sweet which is their poison. Your dishonour  
Mangles true judgement and bereaves the state  
Of that integrity which should become't,  
Not having the power to do the good it would,  
For the ill which doth control't.

*Bru.* Has said enough. 161

*Sic.* Has spoken like a traitor, and shall answer  
As traitors do.

*Cor.* Thou wretch, despite o'erwhelm thee!  
What should the people do with these bald trib-  
unes?

On whom depending, their obedience fails  
To the greater bench. In a rebellion,  
When what's not meet, but what must be, was  
law,

Then were they chosen. In a better hour,  
Let what is meet be said it must be meet, 170  
And throw their power i' the dust.

*Bru.* Manifest treason!

*Sic.* This a consul? no.

*Bru.* The ædiles, ho!

*Enter an ÆDILE.*

Let him be apprehended.

*Sic.* Go, call the people: [*Exit ÆDILE*] in whose  
name myself

Attach thee as a traitorous innovator,  
A foe to the public weal. Obey, I charge thee,  
And follow to thine answer.

*Cor.* Hence, old goat!

*Senators, &c.* We'll surety him.

*Com.* Aged sir, hands off.

*Cor.* Hence, rotten thing! or I shall shake thy  
bones

Out of thy garments.

*Sic.* Help, ye citizens! 180

*Enter a rabble of CITIZENS (Plebeians), with the  
ÆDILES.*

*Men.* On both sides more respect.

*Sic.* Here's he that would take from you all your  
power.

*Bru.* Seize him, ædiles!

*Citizens.* Down with him! down with him!

*Senators, &c.* Weapons, weapons, weapons!

*They all bustle about Coriolanus, crying:*

Tribunes! Patricians! Citizens! What, ho!

Sicinius! Brutus! Coriolanus! Citizens!

Peace, peace, peace! Stay, hold, peace!

*Men.* What is about to be? I am out of breath;  
Confusion's near; I cannot speak. You, tribunes  
To the people! Coriolanus, patience! 191  
Speak, good Sicinius.

*Sic.* Hear me, people; peace!

*Citizens.* Let's hear our tribune; peace!

Speak, speak, speak.

*Sic.* You are at point to lose your liberties.  
Marcius would have all from you; Marcius,  
Whom late you have named for consul.

*Men.* Fie, fie, fie!

This is the way to kindle, not to quench,

*1st Sen.* To unbuild the city and to lay all flat.

*Sic.* What is the city but the people?

*Citizens.* True,

The people are the city. 200

*Bru.* By the consent of all, we were establish'd  
The people's magistrates.

*Citizens.* You so remain.

*Men.* And so are like to do.

*Com.* That is the way to lay the city flat;  
To bring the roof to the foundation  
And bury all, which yet distinctly ranges,  
In heaps and piles of ruin.

*Sic.* This deserves death.

*Bru.* Or let us stand to our authority,  
Or let us lose it. We do here pronounce,  
Upon the part o' the people, in whose power 210  
We were elected theirs, Marcius is worthy  
Of present death.

*Sic.* Therefore lay hold of him;  
Bear him to the rock Tarpeian, and from thence  
Into destruction cast him.

*Bru.* Ædiles, seize him!

*Citizens.* Yield, Marcius, yield!

*Men.* Hear me one word;  
Beseech you, tribunes, hear me but a word.

*Æd.* Peace, peace!

*Men.* [*TO BRUTUS*] Be that you seem, truly your  
country's friend,

And temperately proceed to what you would  
Thus violently redress.

*Bru.* Sir, those cold ways 220  
That seem like prudent helps are very poisonous  
Where the disease is violent. Lay hands upon  
him,

And bear him to the rock.

*Cor.* No, I'll die here.

*Drawing his sword.*

There's some among you have beheld me fighting.



Come, try upon yourselves what you have seen me.

*Men.* Down with that sword! Tribunes, with-draw awhile.

*Bru.* Lay hands upon him.

*Men.* Help Marcius, help,  
You that be noble; help him, young and old!

*Citizens.* Down with him, down with him!

[In this mutiny, the TRIBUNES, the ÆDILES,  
and the People, are beat in.

*Men.* Go, get you to your house; be gone,  
away!

All will be naught else.

230

*2nd Sen.* Get you gone.

*Com.* Stand fast;

We have as many friends as enemies.

*Men.* Shall it be put to that?

*1st Sen.* The gods forbid!

I prithee, noble friend, home to thy house;

Leave us to cure this cause.

*Men.* For 'tis a sore upon us,  
You cannot tent yourself. Be gone, beseech you.

*Com.* Come, sir, along with us.

*Cor.* I would they were barbarians—as they  
are,

Though in Rome litter'd—not Romans—as they  
are not,

Though calved i' the porch o' the Capitol—

*Men.* Be gone; 240

Put not your worthy rage into your tongue;

One time will owe another.

*Cor.* On fair ground

I could beat forty of them.

*Men.* I could myself

Take up a brace o' the best of them; yea, the  
two tribunes.

*Com.* But now 'tis odds beyond arithmetic;  
And manhood is call'd foolery when it stands  
Against a falling fabric. Will you hence,  
Before the tag return, whose rage doth rend  
Like interrupted waters and o'erbear  
What they are used to bear?

*Men.* Pray you, be gone. 250

I'll try whether my old wit be in request

With those that have but little. This must be  
patch'd

With cloth of any colour.

*Com.* Nay, come away.

[*Exeunt CORIOLANUS, COMINIUS, and others.*

*1st Patrician.* This man has marr'd his fortune.

*Men.* His nature is too noble for the world.

He would not flatter Neptune for his trident,  
Or Jove for's power to thunder. His heart's his  
mouth.

What his breast forges, that his tongue must vent;  
And, being angry, does forget that ever 259

He heard the name of death. [*A noise within.*]

Here's goodly work!

*2nd Pat.*

I would they were a-bed!

*Men.* I would they were in Tiber! What the  
vengeance!

Could he not speak 'em fair?

*Re-enter BRUTUS and SICINIUS, with the rabble.*

*Sic.*

Where is this viper

That would depopulate the city and

Be every man himself?

*Men.*

You worthy tribunes—

*Sic.* He shall be thrown down the Tarpeian  
rock

With rigorous hands. He hath resisted law,

And therefore law shall scorn him further trial

Than the severity of the public power

Which he so sets at nought.

*1st Cit.*

He shall well know 270

The noble tribunes are the people's mouths,

And we their hands.

*Citizens.* He shall, sure on't.

*Men.*

Sir, sir—

*Sic.* Peace!

*Men.* Do not cry havoc, where you should but  
hunt

With modest warrant.

*Sic.*

Sir, how comes 't that you

Have help to make this rescue?

*Men.*

Hear me speak.

As I do know the consul's worthiness,

So can I name his faults—

*Sic.*

Consul! what consul?

*Men.* The consul Coriolanus.

*Bru.*

He consul! 280

*Citizens.* No, no, no, no, no.

*Men.* If, by the tribunes' leave, and yours, good  
people,

I may be heard, I would crave a word or two;

The which shall turn you to no further harm

Than so much loss of time.

*Sic.*

Speak briefly then;

For we are peremptory to dispatch

This viperous traitor. To eject him hence

Where but one danger, and to keep him here

Our certain death; therefore it is decreed

He dies to-night.

*Men.*

Now the good gods forbid 290

That our renowned Rome, whose gratitude

Towards her deserved children is enroll'd

In Jove's own book, like an unnatural dam

Should now eat up her own!

*Sic.* He's a disease that must be cut away.

*Men.* O, he's a limb that has but a disease;

Mortal, to cut it off; to cure it, easy.

What has he done to Rome that's worthy death?

Killing our enemies, the blood he hath lost—  
Which, I dare vouch, is more than that he hath,  
By many an ounce—he dropp'd it for his coun-  
try;

And what is left, to lose it by his country,  
Were to us all, that do't and suffer it,  
A brand to the end o' the world.

*Sic.* This is clean kam.

*Bru.* Merely awry. When he did love his  
country,

It honour'd him.

*Men.* The service of the foot  
Being once gangrened is not then respected  
For what before it was.

*Bru.* We'll hear no more.  
Pursue him to his house and pluck him thence;  
Lest his infection, being of catching nature, 310  
Spread further.

*Men.* One word more, one word.  
This tiger-footed rage, when it shall find  
The harm of unscann'd swiftness, will too  
late

Tie leaden pounds to's heels. Proceed by pro-  
cess;

Lest parties, as he is beloved, break out,  
And sack great Rome with Romans.

*Bru.* If it were so—

*Sic.* What do ye talk?

Have we not had a taste of his obedience?  
Our ædiles smote? ourselves resisted? Come.

*Men.* Consider this: he has been bred i' the  
wars 320

Since he could draw a sword, and is ill school'd  
In bolted language; meal and bran together  
He throws without distinction. Give me leave,  
I'll go to him, and undertake to bring him  
Where he shall answer, by a lawful form,  
In peace, to his utmost peril.

*1st Sen.* Noble tribunes,

It is the humane way. The other course  
Will prove too bloody, and the end of it  
Unknown to the beginning.

*Sic.* Noble Menenius,  
Be you then as the people's officer. 330  
Masters, lay down your weapons.

*Bru.* Go not home.

*Sic.* Meet on the market-place. We'll attend  
you there;

Where, if you bring not Marcius, we'll proceed  
In our first way.

*Men.* I'll bring him to you.

[*To the SENATORS*] Let me desire your company.

He must come,

Or what is worst will follow.

*1st Sen.* Pray you, let's to him.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *A room in Coriolanus's house*

*Enter CORIOLANUS with PATRICIANS.*

*Cor.* Let them pull all about mine ears, present  
me

Death on the wheel or at wild horses' heels,  
Or pile ten hills on the Tarpeian rock,  
That the precipitation might down stretch  
Below the beam of sight, yet will I still  
Be thus to them.

*1st Patrician.* You do the nobler.

*Cor.* I muse my mother

Does not approve me further, who was wont  
To call them woollen vassals, things created 9  
To buy and sell with groats, to show bare heads  
In congregations, to yawn, be still and wonder  
When one but of my ordinance stood up  
To speak of peace or war.

*Enter VOLUMNIA.*

I talk of you.

Why did you wish me milder? Would you have  
me

False to my nature? Rather say I play  
The man I am.

*Vol.* O, sir, sir, sir,

I would have had you put your power well on,  
Before you had worn it out.

*Cor.* Let go.

*Vol.* You might have been enough the man you  
are,

With striving less to be so. Lesser had been 20  
The thwartings of your dispositions, if  
You had not show'd them how ye were disposed  
Ere they lack'd power to cross you.

*Cor.* Let them hang.

*1st Patrician.* Ay, and burn too.

*Enter MENENIUS and Senators.*

*Men.* Come, come, you have been too rough,  
something too rough;

You must return and mend it.

*1st Sen.* There's no remedy;

Unless, by not so doing, our good city  
Cleave in the midst, and perish.

*Vol.* Pray, be counsell'd.

I have a heart as little apt as yours,  
But yet a brain that leads my use of anger 30  
To better vantage.

*Men.* Well said, noble woman!

Before he should thus stoop to the herd, but that  
The violent fit o' the time craves it as physic  
For the whole state, I would put mine armour on,  
Which I can scarcely bear.

*Cor.* What must I do?

*Men.* Return to the tribunes.



*Cor.* Well, what then? what then?

*Men.* Repent what you have spoke.

*Cor.* For them! I cannot do it to the gods;  
Must I then do't to them?

*Vol.* You are too absolute;  
Though therein you can never be too noble, 40  
But when extremities speak. I have heard you  
say,

Honour and policy, like unsever'd friends,  
I' the war do grow together. Grant that, and  
tell me,

In peace what each of them by the other lose,  
That they combine not there.

*Cor.* Tush, tush!

*Men.* A good demand.

*Vol.* If it be honour in your wars to seem  
The same you are not, which, for your best ends,  
You adopt your policy, how is it less or worse,  
That it shall hold companionship in peace  
With honour, as in war, since that to both 50  
It stands in like request?

*Cor.* Why force you this?

*Vol.* Because that now it lies you on to speak  
To the people; not by your own instruction,  
Nor by the matter which your heart prompts you,  
But with such words that are but rored in  
Your tongue, though but bastards and syllables  
Of no allowance to your bosom's truth.  
Now, this no more dishonours you at all  
Than to take in a town with gentle words,  
Which else would put you to your fortune and  
The hazard of much blood. 61

I would dissemble with my nature where  
My fortunes and my friends at stake required  
I should do so in honour. I am in this,  
Your wife, your son, these senators, the nobles;  
And you will rather show our general louts  
How you can frown than spend a fawn upon 'em,  
For the inheritance of their loves and safeguard  
Of what that want might ruin.

*Men.* Noble lady!  
Come, go with us; speak fair. You may salve so,  
Not what is dangerous present, but the loss 71  
Of what is past.

*Vol.* I prithee now, my son,  
Go to them, with this bonnet in thy hand;  
And thus far having stretch'd it—here be with  
them—

Thy knee bussing the stones—for in such business  
Action is eloquence, and the eyes of the ignorant  
More learned than the ears—waving thy head,  
Which often, thus, correcting thy stout heart,  
Now humble as the ripest mulberry  
That will not hold the handling; or say to them,  
Thou art their soldier, and being bred in broils 81  
Hast not the soft way which, thou dost confess,

Were fit for thee to use as they to claim,  
In asking their good loves, but thou wilt frame  
Thyself, forsooth, hereafter theirs, so far  
As thou hast power and person.

*Men.* This but done,  
Even as she speaks, why, their hearts were  
yours;

For they have pardons, being ask'd, as free  
As words to little purpose.

*Vol.* Prithee now,  
Go, and be ruled; although I know thou hadst 90  
rather  
Follow thine enemy in a fiery gulf  
Than flatter him in a bower. Here is Cominius.

*Enter COMINIUS.*

*Com.* I have been i' the market-place; and, sir,  
'tis fit

You make strong party, or defend yourself  
By calmness or by absence. All's in anger.

*Men.* Only fair speech.

*Com.* I think 'twill serve, if he  
Can thereto frame his spirit.

*Vol.* He must, and will.  
Prithee now, say you will, and go about it.

*Cor.* Must I go show them my unbarbed sconce?  
Must I with base tongue give my noble heart  
A lie that it must bear? Well, I will do 't; 101  
Yet, were there but this single plot to lose,  
This mould of Marcius, they to dust should  
grind it  
And throw 't against the wind. To the market-  
place!

You have put me now to such a part which never  
I shall discharge to the life.

*Com.* Come, come, we'll prompt you.

*Vol.* I prithee now, sweet son, as thou hast said  
My praises made thee first a soldier, so,  
To have my praise for this, perform a part  
Thou hast not done before.

*Cor.* Well, I must do 't.  
Away, my disposition, and possess me 111  
Some harlot's spirit! my throat of war be turn'd,  
Which quired with my drum, into a pipe  
Small as an eunuch, or the virgin voice  
That babies lulls asleep! the smiles of knaves  
Tent in my cheeks, and schoolboys' tears take up  
The glasses of my sight! a beggar's tongue  
Make motion through my lips, and my arm'd  
knees,

Who bow'd but in my stirrup, bend like his  
That hath received an alms! I will not do 't, 120  
Lest I surcease to honour mine own truth  
And by my body's action teach my mind  
A most inherent baseness.

*Vol.* At thy choice, then.

To beg of thee, it is my more dishonour  
Than thou of them. Come all to ruin; let  
Thy mother rather feel thy pride than fear  
Thy dangerous stoutness, for I mock at death  
With as big heart as thou. Do as thou list.  
Thy valiantness was mine, thou suck'st it from  
me,

But owe thy pride thyself.

*Cor.* Pray, be content. 130

Mother, I am going to the market-place;  
Chide me no more. I'll mountebank their loves,  
Cog their hearts from them, and come home  
beloved

Of all the trades in Rome. Look, I am going.  
Commend me to my wife. I'll return consul,  
Or never trust to what my tongue can do  
I' the way of flattery further.

*Vol.* Do your will. [*Exit.*

*Com.* Away! the tribunes do attend you. Arm  
yourself

To answer mildly; for they are prepared  
With accusations, as I hear, more strong 140  
Than are upon you yet.

*Cor.* The word is "mildly." Pray you, let us  
go:

Let them accuse me by invention, I  
Will answer in mine honour.

*Men.* Ay, but mildly.

*Cor.* Well, mildly be it then. Mildly! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *The same: the Forum*

*Enter SICINIUS and BRUTUS.*

*Bru.* In this point charge him home, that he  
affects

Tyrannical power. If he evade us there,  
Enforce him with his envy to the people,  
And that the spoil got on the Antiates  
Was ne'er distributed.

*Enter an ÆDILE.*

What, will he come?

*Æd.* He's coming.

*Bru.* How accompanied?

*Æd.* With old Menenius, and those senators  
That always favour'd him.

*Sic.* Have you a catalogue  
Of all the voices that we have procured  
Set down by the poll?

*Æd.* I have; 'tis ready. 10

*Sic.* Have you collected them by tribes?

*Æd.* I have.

*Sic.* Assemble presently the people hither;  
And when they hear me say, "It shall be so  
I' the right and strength o' the commons," be it  
either

For death, for fine, or banishment, then let them,

If I say fine, cry "Fine!" if death, cry "Death!"

Insisting on the old prerogative

And power i' the truth o' the cause.

*Æd.*

I shall inform them.

*Bru.* And when such time they have begun to  
cry,

Let them not cease, but with a din confused 20

Enforce the present execution

Of what we chance to sentence.

*Æd.*

Very well.

*Sic.* Make them be strong and ready for this  
hint,

When we shall hap to give't them.

*Bru.*

Go about it. [*Exit ÆDILE.*

Put him to choler straight. He hath been used  
Ever to conquer, and to have his worth  
Of contradiction. Being once chafed, he cannot  
Be rein'd again to temperance; then he speaks  
What's in his heart; and that is there which looks  
With us to break his neck.

*Sic.*

Well, here he comes. 30

*Enter CORIOLANUS, MENENIUS, and COMINIUS,  
with SENATORS and PATRICIANS.*

*Men.* Calmly, I do beseech you.

*Cor.* Ay, as an ostler, that for the poorest piece  
Will bear the knave by the volume. The hon-  
our'd gods

Keep Rome in safety, and the chairs of justice  
Supplied with worthy men! plant love among 's!  
Throng our large temples with the shows of  
peace,

And not our streets with war!

*1st Sen.*

Amen, amen.

*Men.* A noble wish.

*Re-enter ÆDILE, with CITIZENS.*

*Sic.* Draw near, ye people.

*Æd.* List to your tribunes. Audience! peace,  
I say! 40

*Cor.* First, hear me speak.

*Both Tri.* Well, say. Peace, ho!

*Cor.* Shall I be charged no further than this  
present?

Must all determine here?

*Sic.*

I do demand,

If you submit you to the people's voices,  
Allow their officers, and are content

To suffer lawful censure for such faults  
As shall be proved upon you?

*Cor.*

I am content.

*Men.* Lo, citizens, he says he is content.

The warlike service he has done, consider; think  
Upon the wounds his body bears, which show 50  
Like graves i' the holy churchyard.

*Cor.*

Scratches with briers,



Scars to move laughter only.

*Men.* Consider further,  
That when he speaks not like a citizen,  
You find him like a soldier. Do not take  
His rougher accents for malicious sounds,  
But, as I say, such as become a soldier  
Rather than envy you.

*Com.* Well, well, no more.

*Cor.* What is the matter  
That being pass'd for consul with full voice,  
I am so dishonour'd that the very hour  
You take it off again? 60

*Sic.* Answer to us.

*Cor.* Say, then. 'Tis true, I ought so.

*Sic.* We charge you that you have contrived to  
take

From Rome all season'd office and to wind  
Yourself into a power tyrannical;  
For which you are a traitor to the people.

*Cor.* How! traitor!

*Men.* Nay, temperately; your promise.

*Cor.* The fires i' the lowest hell fold-in the  
people!

Call me their traitor! Thou injurious tribune!  
Within thine eyes sat twenty thousand deaths, 70  
In thy hands clutch'd as many millions, in  
Thy lying tongue both numbers, I would say  
"Thou liest" unto thee with a voice as free  
As I do pray the gods.

*Sic.* Mark you this, people?

*Citizens.* To the rock, to the rock with him!

*Sic.* Peace!

We need not put new matter to his charge.  
What you have seen him do and heard him speak,  
Beating your officers, cursing yourselves,  
Opposing laws with strokes, and here defying  
Those whose great power must try him; even  
this, 80

So criminal and in such capital kind,  
Deserves the extremest death.

*Bru.* But since he hath  
Served well for Rome—

*Cor.* What do you prate of service?

*Bru.* I talk of that, that know it.

*Cor.* You?

*Men.* Is this the promise that you made your  
mother?

*Com.* Know, I pray you—

*Cor.* I'll know no further.

Let them pronounce the steep Tarpeian death,  
Vagabond exile, faying, pent to linger  
But with a grain a day, I would not buy 90  
Their mercy at the price of one fair word;  
Nor check my courage for what they can give,  
To have't with saying "Good morrow."

*Sic.* For that he has,

As much as in him lies, from time to time  
Envied against the people, seeking means  
To pluck away their power, as now at last  
Given hostile strokes, and that not in the pres-  
ence

Of dreaded justice, but on the ministers  
That do distribute it; in the name o' the people  
And in the power of us the tribunes, we, 100  
Even from this instant, banish him our city,  
In peril of precipitation  
From off the rock Tarpeian never more  
To enter our Rome gates. I' the people's name,  
I say it shall be so.

*Citizens.* It shall be so, it shall be so; let him  
away.

He's banish'd, and it shall be so.

*Com.* Hear me, my masters, and my common  
friends—

*Sic.* He's sentenced; no more hearing.

*Com.* Let me speak.

I have been consul, and can show for Rome 110  
Her enemies' marks upon me. I do love  
My country's good with a respect more tender,  
More holy and profound, than mine own life,  
My dear wife's estimate, her womb's increase,  
And treasure of my loins; then if I would  
Speak that—

*Sic.* We know your drift; speak what?

*Bru.* There's no more to be said, but he is  
banish'd,

As enemy to the people and his country.

It shall be so.

*Citizens.* It shall be so, it shall be so.

*Cor.* You common cry of curs! whose breath I  
hate 120

As reek o' the rotten fens, whose loves I prize

As the dead carcasses of unburied men

That do corrupt my air, I banish you;

And here remain with your uncertainty!

Let every feeble rumour shake your hearts!

Your enemies, with nodding of their plumes,

Fan you into despair! Have the power still

To banish your defenders; till at length

Your ignorance, which finds not till it feels,

Making not reservation of yourselves, 130

Still your own foes, deliver you as most

Abated captives to some nation

That won you without blows! Despising,

For you, the city, thus I turn my back;

There is a world elsewhere.

[*Exeunt* CORIOLANUS, COMINIUS, MENE-  
NIUS, SENATORS, and PATRICIANS.]

*Æd.* The people's enemy is gone, is gone!

*Citizens.* Our enemy is banish'd! he is gone!

Hoo! hoo! [*Shouting, and throwing up their  
caps.*]

*Sic.* Go, see him out at gates, and follow him,  
As he hath follow'd you, with all despite;  
Give him deserved vexation. Let a guard 140  
Attend us through the city.

*Citizens.* Come, come; let's see him out at  
gates; come.

The gods preserve our noble tribunes! Come.

[*Exeunt.*]

## ACT IV

### SCENE I. *Rome: before a gate of the city*

*Enter* CORIOLANUS, VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, MENENIUS, COMINIUS, *with the young Nobility of Rome.*

*Cor.* Come, leave your tears: a brief farewell.

The beast

With many heads butts me away. Nay, mother,  
Where is your ancient courage? You were used  
To say extremity was the trier of spirits;  
That common chances common men could bear;  
That when the sea was calm all boats alike  
Show'd mastership in floating; fortune's blows,  
When most struck home, being gentle wounded,  
craves

A noble cunning. You were used to load me  
With precepts that would make invincible 10  
The heart that conn'd them.

*Vir.* O heavens! O heavens!

*Cor.* Nay, I prithee, woman—

*Vol.* Now the red pestilence strike all trades in  
Rome,

And occupations perish!

*Cor.* What, what, what!

I shall be loved when I am lack'd. Nay, mother,  
Resume that spirit when you were wont to say,  
If you had been the wife of Hercules,  
Six of his labours you'd have done, and saved  
Your husband so much sweat. Cominius, 19  
Droop not; adieu. Farewell, my wife, my mother.  
I'll do well yet. Thou old and true Menenius,  
Thy tears are saltier than a younger man's,  
And venomous to thine eyes. My sometime  
general,

I have seen thee stern, and thou hast oft beheld  
Heart-hardening spectacles; tell these sad  
women

'Tis fond to wail inevitable strokes,  
As 'tis to laugh at 'em. My mother, you wot well  
My hazards still have been your solace; and  
Believe't not lightly—though I go alone,  
Like to a lonely dragon, that his fen 30  
Makes fear'd and talk'd of more than seen—your  
son

Will or exceed the common or be caught  
With cautelous baits and practice.

*Vol.*

My first son,  
Whither wilt thou go? Take good Cominius  
With thee awhile. Determine on some course,  
More than a wild exposure to each chance  
That starts i' the way before thee.

*Cor.*

O the gods!

*Com.* I'll follow thee a month, devise with thee  
Where thou shalt rest, that thou mayst hear of us  
And we of thee. So if the time thrust forth 40  
A cause for thy repeal, we shall not send  
O'er the vast world to seek a single man,  
And lose advantage, which doth ever cool  
I' the absence of the needer.

*Cor.*

Fare ye well.

Thou hast years upon thee; and thou art too full  
Of the wars' surfeits to go rove with one  
That's yet unbruised; bring me but out at gate.  
Come, my sweet wife, my dearest mother, and  
My friends of noble touch, when I am forth,  
Bid me farewell, and smile. I pray you, come. 50  
While I remain above the ground, you shall  
Hear from me still, and never of me aught  
But what is like me formerly.

*Men.*

That's worthily  
As any ear can hear. Come, let's not weep.  
If I could shake off but one seven years  
From these old arms and legs, by the good gods,  
I'd with thee every foot.

*Cor.*

Give me thy hand.

Come.

[*Exeunt.*]

### SCENE II. *The same: a street near the gate*

*Enter* SICINIUS, BRUTUS, and an ÆDILE.

*Sic.* Bid them all home; he's gone, and we'll no  
further.

The nobility are vex'd, whom we see have sided  
In his behalf.

*Bru.*

Now we have shown our power,  
Let us seem humbler after it is done  
Than when it was a-doing.

*Sic.*

Bid them home.

Say their great enemy is gone, and they  
Stand in their ancient strength.

*Bru.*

Dismiss them home. [*Exit* ÆDILE.  
Here comes his mother.

*Sic.*

Let's not meet her.

*Bru.*

Why?

*Sic.* They say she's mad.

*Bru.* They have ta'en note of us; keep on your  
way. 10

*Enter* VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, and MENENIUS.

*Vol.* O, ye're well met. The hoarded plague  
o' the gods

Requite your love!

*Men.*

Peace, peace; be not so loud.



*Vol.* If that I could for weeping, you should hear—

Nay, and you shall hear some. [*To BRUTUS*]  
Will you be gone?

*Vir.* [*To SICINIUS*] You shall stay too. I would I had the power

To say so to my husband.

*Sic.* Are you mankind?

*Vol.* Ay, fool; is that a shame? Note but this fool.

Was not a man my father? Hadst thou foxship  
To banish him that struck more blows for Rome  
Than thou hast spoken words?

*Sic.* O blessed heavens!

*Vol.* More noble blows than ever thou wise words; 21

And for Rome's good. I'll tell thee what; yet go.

Nay, but thou shalt stay too. I would my son  
Were in Arabia, and thy tribe before him,  
His good sword in his hand.

*Sic.* What then?

*Vir.* What then!

He'd make an end of thy posterity.

*Vol.* Bastards and all.

Good man, the wounds that he does bear for Rome!

*Men.* Come, come, peace.

*Sic.* I would he had continued to his country  
As he began, and not unknit himself 31  
The noble knot he made.

*Bru.* I would he had.

*Vol.* "I would he had"! 'Twas you incensed the rabble;

Cats, that can judge as fitly of his worth  
As I can of those mysteries which heaven  
Will not have earth to know.

*Bru.* Pray, let us go.

*Vol.* Now, pray, sir, get you gone;

You have done a brave deed. Ere you go, hear this:

As far as doth the Capitol exceed  
The meanest house in Rome, so far my son— 40

This lady's husband here, this, do you see—  
Whom you have banish'd, does exceed you all.  
*Bru.* Well, well, we'll leave you.

*Sic.* Why stay we to be baited

With one that wants her wits?

*Vol.* Take my prayers with you.  
[*Exeunt TRIBUNES.*]

I would the gods had nothing else to do  
But to confirm my curses! Could I meet 'em  
But once a-day, it would unclog my heart  
Of what lies heavy to't.

*Men.* You have told them home;

And, by my troth, you have cause. You'll sup  
with me?

*Vol.* Anger's my meat; I sup upon myself, 50  
And so shall starve with feeding. Come, let's go.

Leave this faint puling and lament as I do,

In anger, Juno-like. Come, come, come.

*Men.* Fir, fie, fie! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *A highway between Rome and Antium*

*Enter a ROMAN and a VOLSCIE, meeting.*

*Rom.* I know you well, sir, and you know me.  
Your name, I think, is Adrian.

*Vols.* It is so, sir. Truly, I have forgot you.

*Rom.* I am a Roman; and my services are,  
as you are, against 'em. Know you me yet?

*Vols.* Nicanor? no.

*Rom.* The same, sir.

*Vols.* You had more beard when I last saw you; but your favour is well approved by your tongue. What's the news in Rome? I have a note from the Volscian state, to find you out there. You have well saved me a day's journey.

*Rom.* There hath been in Rome strange insurrections; the people against the senators, patricians, and nobles.

*Vols.* Hath been! Is it ended, then? Our state thinks not so. They are in a most warlike preparation, and hope to come upon them in the heat of their division. 19

*Rom.* The main blaze of it is past, but a small thing would make it flame again; for the nobles receive so to heart the banishment of that worthy Coriolanus, that they are in a ripe aptness to take all power from the people and to pluck from them their tribunes for ever. This lies glowing, I can tell you, and is almost mature for the violent breaking out.

*Vols.* Coriolanus banished!

*Rom.* Banished, sir.

*Vols.* You will be welcome with this intelligence, Nicanor. 29

*Rom.* The day serves well for them now. I have heard it said, the fittest time to corrupt a man's wife is when she's fallen out with her husband. Your noble Tullus Aufidius will appear well in these wars, his great opposer, Coriolanus, being now in no request of his country.

*Vols.* He cannot choose. I am most fortunate, thus accidentally to encounter you. You have ended my business, and I will merrily accompany you home.

*Rom.* I shall, between this and supper, tell you most strange things from Rome; all tending to the good of their adversaries. Have you an army ready, say you?

*Vols.* A most royal one; the centurions and their charges, distinctly billeted, already in the

entertainment, and to be on foot at an hour's warning. 50

*Rom.* I am joyful to hear of their readiness, and am the man, I think, that shall set them in present action. So, sir, heartily well met, and most glad of your company.

*Vols.* You take my part from me, sir; I have the most cause to be glad of yours.

*Rom.* Well, let us go together. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE IV. *Antium: before Aufidius's house*

*Enter CORIOLANUS in mean apparel, disguised and muffled.*

*Cor.* A goodly city is this Antium. City,  
'Tis I that made thy widows; many an heir  
Of these fair edifices 'fore my wars  
Have I heard groan and drop. Then know me not,  
Lest that thy wives with spits and boys with  
stones  
In puny battle slay me.

*Enter a CITIZEN.*

Save you, sir.

*Cit.* And you.

*Cor.* Direct me, if it be your will,  
Where great Aufidius lies. Is he in Antium?

*Cit.* He is, and feasts the nobles of the state  
At his house this night.

*Cor.* Which is his house, beseech you? 10

*Cit.* This, here before you.

*Cor.* Thank you, sir; farewell. *[Exit CITIZEN.]*

O world, thy slippery turns! Friends now fast  
sworn,

Whose double bosoms seem to wear one heart,  
Whose hours, whose bed, whose meal, and ex-  
ercise,

Are still together, who twin, as 'twere, in love  
Unseparable, shall within this hour,

On a dissension of a doit, break out

To bitterest enmity; so, fellest foes,

Whose passions and whose plots have broke their  
sleep

To take the one the other, by some chance, 20  
Some trick not worth an egg, shall grow dear  
friends

And interjoin their issues. So with me;

My birth-place hate I, and my love's upon

This enemy town. I'll enter. If he slay me,

He does fair justice; if he give me way,

I'll do his country service. *[Exit.]*

SCENE V. *The same: a hall in Aufidius's house*

*Music within. Enter a SERVINGMAN.*

*1st Serv.* Wine, wine, wine! What service is  
here! I think our fellows are asleep. *[Exit.]*

*Enter a SECOND SERVINGMAN.*

*2nd Serv.* Where's Cotus? my master calls for  
him. Cotus! *[Exit.]*

*Enter CORIOLANUS.*

*Cor.* A goodly house! the feast smells well; but I  
Appear not like a guest.

*Re-enter the FIRST SERVINGMAN.*

*1st Serv.* What would you have, friend?  
Whence are you? Here's no place for you; pray,  
go to the door. *[Exit.]*

*Cor.* I have deserved no better entertainment,  
In being Coriolanus. 11

*Re-enter SECOND SERVINGMAN.*

*2nd Serv.* Whence are you, sir? Has the porter  
his eyes in his head, that he gives entrance to  
such companions? Pray, get you out.

*Cor.* Away!

*2nd Serv.* Away! get you away.

*Cor.* Now thou'rt troublesome.

*2nd Serv.* Are you so brave? I'll have you  
talked with anon.

*Enter a THIRD SERVINGMAN. The FIRST meets  
him.*

*3rd Serv.* What fellow's this? 20

*1st Serv.* A strange one as ever I looked on. I  
cannot get him out o' the house; prithee call my  
master to him. *[Retires]*

*3rd Serv.* What have you to do here, fellow?  
Pray you, avoid the house.

*Cor.* Let me but stand; I will not hurt your  
hearth.

*3rd Serv.* What are you?

*Cor.* A gentleman.

*3rd Serv.* A marvellous poor one. 30

*Cor.* True, so I am.

*3rd Serv.* Pray you, poor gentleman, take up  
some other station; here's no place for you; pray  
you, avoid. Come.

*Cor.* Follow your function, go, and batten on  
cold bits. *[Pushes him away.]*

*3rd Serv.* What, you will not? Prithee, tell my  
master what a strange guest he has here.

*2nd Serv.* And I shall. *[Exit.]*

*3rd Serv.* Where dwellest thou? 40

*Cor.* Under the canopy.

*3rd Serv.* Under the canopy?

*Cor.* Ay.

*3rd Serv.* Where's that?

*Cor.* I' the city of kites and crows.

*3rd Serv.* I' the city of kites and crows! What  
an ass it is! Then thou dwellest with daws too?



*Cor.* No, I serve not thy master.

*3rd Serv.* How, sir! do you meddle with my master? 51

*Cor.* Ay; 'tis an honest service than to meddle with thy mistress.

Thou pratest, and pratest; serve with thy trencher, hence!

[*Beats him away. Exit THIRD SERVINGMAN.*]

*Enter AUFIDIUS with the SECOND SERVINGMAN.*

*Auf.* Where is this fellow?

*2nd Serv.* Here, sir: I'd have beaten him like a dog, but for disturbing the lords within.

[*Retires.*]

*Auf.* Whence comest thou? What wouldst thou? Thy name?

Why speak'st not? Speak, man. What's thy name?

*Cor.* If, Tullus, [*Unmuffling.*] 60

Not yet thou knowest me, and, seeing me, dost not

Think me for the man I am, necessity

Commands me name myself.

*Auf.* What is thy name?

*Cor.* A name unmusical to the Volscians' ears, And harsh in sound to thine.

*Auf.* Say, what's thy name?

Thou hast a grim appearance, and thy face Bears a command in 't; though thy tackle's torn, Thou show'st a noble vessel. What's thy name?

*Cor.* Prepare thy brow to frown. Know'st thou me yet?

*Auf.* I know thee not. Thy name? 70

*Cor.* My name is Caius Marcius, who hath done

To thee particularly and to all the Volscies Great hurt and mischief; thereto witness may My surname, Coriolanus. The painful service, The extreme dangers, and the drops of blood Shed for my thankless country are requited But with that surname; a good memory, And witness of the malice and displeasure Which thou shouldst bear me. Only that name remains;

The cruelty and envy of the people 80 Permitted by our dastard nobles, who Have all forsook me, hath devour'd the rest; And suffer'd me by the voice of slaves to be Whoop'd out of Rome. Now this extremity Hath brought me to thy hearth; not out of hope— Mistake me not—to save my life, for if I had fear'd death, of all the men i' the world I would have 'voided thee, but in mere spite To be full quit of those my banishers, Stand I before thee here. Then if thou hast 90 A heart of wreak in thee, that wilt revenge

Thine own particular wrongs and stop those mains

Of shame seen through thy country, speed thee straight,

And make my misery serve thy turn. So use it

That my revengeful services may prove

As benefits to thee, for I will fight

Against my canker'd country with the spleen

Of all the under fiends. But if so be

Thou dar'st not this and that to prove more fortunes

Thou'rt tired, then, in a word, I also am 100

Longer to live most weary, and present

My throat to thee and to thy ancient malice;

Which not to cut would show thee but a fool,

Since I have ever follow'd thee with hate,

Drawn tuns of blood out of thy country's breast,

And cannot live but to thy shame, unless

It be to do thee service.

*Auf.* O Marcius, Marcius!

Each word thou hast spoke hath weeded from my heart

A root of ancient envy. If Jupiter

Should from yond cloud speak divine things, 110

And say "Tis true," I'd not believe them more

Than thee, all noble Marcius. Let me twine

Mine arms about that body, where against

My grained ash an hundred times hath broke

And scarr'd the moon with splinters. Here I clip

The anvil of my sword, and do contest

As hotly and as nobly with thy love

As ever in ambitious strength I did

Contend against thy valour. Know thou first,

I loved the maid I married; never man 120

Sigh'd truer breath; but that I see thee here,

Thou noble thing! more dances my rapt heart

Than when I first my wedded mistress saw

Besride my threshold. Why, thou Mars! I tell thee,

We have a power on foot; and I had purpose

Once more to hew thy target from thy brawn,

Or lose mine arm for 't. Thou hast beat me out

Twelve several times, and I have nightly since

Dreamt of encounters 'twixt thyself and me;

We have been down together in my sleep, 130

Unbuckling helms, fisting each other's throat,

And waked half dead with nothing. Worthy

Marcius,

Had we no quarrel else to Rome, but that

Thou art thence banish'd, we would muster all

From twelve to seventy, and pouring war

Into the bowels of ungrateful Rome,

Like a bold flood o'er-bear. O, come, go in,

And take our friendly senators by the hands;

Who now are here, taking their leaves of me,

Who am prepared against your territories. 140

Though not for Rome itself.

*Cor.* You bless me, gods!

*Auf.* Therefore, most absolute sir, if thou wilt have

The leading of thine own revenges, take  
The one half of my commission; and set down—  
As best thou art experienced, since thou know'st  
Thy country's strength and weakness—thine  
own ways;

Whether to knock against the gates of Rome,  
Or rudely visit them in parts remote,  
To fright them, ere destroy. But come in;  
Let me commend thee first to those that shall  
Say yea to thy desires. A thousand welcomes!  
And more a friend than e'er an enemy;  
Yet, Marcius, that was much. Your hand; most  
welcome!

[*Exeunt CORIOLANUS and AUFIDIUS. The*

*TWO SERVINGMEN come forward.*

*1st Serv.* Here's a strange alteration!

*2nd Serv.* By my hand, I had thought to have  
struck him with a cudgel; and yet my mind  
gave me his clothes made a false report of him.

*1st Serv.* What an arm he has! he turned me  
about with his finger and his thumb, as one would  
set up a top. 161

*2nd Serv.* Nay, I knew by his face that there  
was something in him. He had, sir, a kind of face,  
methought—I cannot tell how to term it.

*1st Serv.* He had so; looking as it were—would  
I were hanged, but I thought there was more in  
him than I could think.

*2nd Serv.* So did I, I'll be sworn. He is simply  
the rarest man i' the world.

*1st Serv.* I think he is; but a greater soldier than  
he you wot one. 171

*2nd Serv.* Who, my master?

*1st Serv.* Nay, it's no matter for that.

*2nd Serv.* Worth six on him.

*1st Serv.* Nay, not so neither; but I take him to  
be the greater soldier.

*2nd Serv.* Faith, look you, one cannot tell how  
to say that. For the defence of a town, our gen-  
eral is excellent.

*1st Serv.* Ay, and for an assault too. 180

*Re-enter THIRD SERVINGMAN.*

*3rd Serv.* O slaves, I can tell you news—news,  
you rascals!

*1st and 2nd Serv.* What, what, what? Let's par-  
take.

*3rd Serv.* I would not be a Roman, of all na-  
tions; I had as lieve be a condemned man.

*1st and 2nd Serv.* Wherefore? Wherefore?

*3rd Serv.* Why, here's he that was wont to  
thwack our general, Caius Marcius.

*1st Serv.* Why do you say "thwack our gen-  
eral"? 191

*3rd Serv.* I do not say "thwack our general";  
but he was always good enough for him.

*2nd Serv.* Come, we are fellows and friends; he  
was ever too hard for him; I have heard him say  
so himself.

*1st Serv.* He was too hard for him directly, to  
say the troth on 't. Before Corioli he scotched  
him and notched him like a carbonado.

*2nd Serv.* An he had been cannibally given, he  
might have broiled and eaten him too. 201

*1st Serv.* But, more of thy news?

*3rd Serv.* Why, he is so made on here within,  
as if he were son and heir to Mars; set at upper  
end o' the table; no question asked him by any of  
the senators, but they stand bald before him. Our  
general himself makes a mistress of him; sancti-  
fies himself with 's hand and turns up the white  
o' the eye to his discourse. But the bottom of  
the news is, our general is cut i' the middle  
and but one half of what he was yesterday; for  
the other has half, by the entreaty and grant  
of the whole table. He'll go, he says, and sowl  
the porter of Rome gates by the ears. He will  
mow all down before him, and leave his passage  
polled.

*2nd Serv.* And he's as like to do 't as any man I  
can imagine.

*3rd Serv.* Do 't! he will do 't; for, look you, sir,  
he has as many friends as enemies; which friends,  
sir, as it were, durst not, look you, sir, show  
themselves, as we term it, his friends whilst he's  
in directitude.

*1st Serv.* Directitude! what's that?

*3rd Serv.* But when they shall see, sir, his crest  
up again, and the man in blood, they will out of  
their burrows, like conies after rain, and revel  
all with him.

*1st Serv.* But when goes this forward?

*3rd Serv.* To-morrow; to-day; presently; you  
shall have the drum struck up this afternoon.  
'Tis, as it were, a parcel of their feast, and to be  
executed ere they wipe their lips.

*2nd Serv.* Why, then we shall have a stirring  
world again. This peace is nothing but to rust  
iron, increase tailors, and breed ballad-makers.

*1st Serv.* Let me have war, say I; it exceeds  
peace as far as day does night; it's spritely, wak-  
ing, audible, and full of vent. Peace is a very  
apoplexy, lethargy; mulled, deaf, sleepy, insen-  
sible; a getter of more bastard children than war's  
a destroyer of men. 241

*2nd Serv.* 'Tis so; and as war, in some sort, may  
be said to be a ravisher, so it cannot be denied  
but peace is a great maker of cuckolds.



1st Serv. Ay, and it makes men hate one another.

3rd Serv. Reason; because they then less need one another. The wars for my money. I hope to see Romans as cheap as Volscians. They are rising, they are rising. 250

All. In, in, in, in! [Exeunt.]

SCENE VI. *Rome: a public place*

Enter SICINIUS and BRUTUS.

Sic. We hear not of him, neither need we fear him;

His remedies are tame i' the present peace  
And quietness of the people, which before  
Were in wild hurry. Here do we make his  
friends

Blush that the world goes well, who rather had,  
Though they themselves did suffer by 't, behold  
Dissentious numbers pestering streets than see  
Our tradesmen singing in their shops and going  
About their functions friendly.

Bru. We stood to 't in good time. [Enter MENE-  
NIUS.] Is this Menenius? 10

Sic. 'Tis he, 'tis he. O, he is grown most kind of late.

Both Tri. Hail, sir!

Men. Hail to you both!

Sic. Your Coriolanus

Is not much miss'd, but with his friends.  
The commonwealth doth stand, and so would do,  
Were he more angry at it.

Men. All's well; and might have been much better, if

He could have temporized.

Sic. Where is he, hear you?

Men. Nay, I hear nothing; his mother and his wife

Hear nothing from him.

Enter three or four CITIZENS.

Citizens. The gods preserve you both!

Sic. God-den, our neighbours. 20

Bru. God-den to you all, god-den to you all.

1st Cit. Ourselves, our wives, and children, on our knees,

Are bound to pray for you both.

Sic. Live, and thrive!

Bru. Farewell, kind neighbours. We wish'd  
Coriolanus

Had loved you as we did.

Citizens. Now the gods keep you!

Both Tri. Farewell, farewell.

[Exeunt CITIZENS.]

Sic. This is a happier and more comely time  
Than when these fellows ran about the streets,  
Crying confusion.

Bru.

Caius Marcius was  
A worthy officer i' the war; but insolent, 30  
O'ercome with pride, ambitious past all thinking,  
Self-loving—

Sic. And affecting one sole throne,  
Without assistance.

Men. I think not so.

Sic. We should by this, to all our lamentation,  
If he had gone forth consul, found it so.

Bru. The gods have well prevented it, and  
Rome  
Sits safe and still without him.

Enter an ÆDILE.

Æd. Worthy tribunes,  
There is a slave, whom we have put in prison,  
Reports, the Volscs with two several powers  
Are enter'd in the Roman territories, 40  
And with the deepest malice of the war  
Destroy what lies before 'em.

Men. 'Tis Aufidius,  
Who, hearing of our Marcius' banishment,  
Thrusts forth his horns again into the world;  
Which were inshell'd when Marcius stood for  
Rome,

And durst not once peep out.

Sic. Come, what talk you  
Of Marcius?

Bru. Go see this rumourer whipp'd. It can-  
not be  
The Volscs dare break with us.

Men. Cannot be!  
We have record that very well it can,  
And three examples of the like have been 50  
Within my age. But reason with the fellow,  
Before you punish him, where he heard this,  
Lest you shall chance to whip your information  
And beat the messenger who bids beware  
Of what is to be dreaded.

Sic. Tell not me.

I know this cannot be.

Bru. Not possible.

Enter a MESSENGER.

Mess. The nobles in great earnestness are going  
All to the Senate-house. Some news is come  
That turns their countenances.

Sic. 'Tis this slave— 59  
Go whip him 'fore the people's eyes—his raising;  
Nothing but his report.

Mess. Yes, worthy sir,  
The slave's report is seconded; and more,  
More fearful, is deliver'd.

Sic. What more fearful?

Mess. It is spoke freely out of many mouths—  
How probable I do not know—that Marcius,

Join'd with Aufidius, leads a power 'gainst Rome,  
And vows revenge as spacious as between  
The young'st and oldest thing.

*Sic.* This is most likely!

*Bru.* Only, that the weaker sort may  
wish

Good Marcius home again.

*Sic.* The very trick on 't. 70

*Men.* This is unlikely;

He and Aufidius can no more atone  
Than violentest contrariety.

*Enter a SECOND MESSENGER.*

*2nd Mess.* You are sent for to the Senate.

A fearful army, led by Caius Marcius  
Associated with Aufidius, rages  
Upon our territories; and have already  
O'erborne their way, consumed with fire, and  
took  
What lay before them.

*Enter COMINIUS.*

*Com.* O, you have made good work!

*Men.* What news? what news? 80

*Com.* You have help to ravish your own daughters and

To melt the city leads upon your pates,  
To see your wives dishonour'd to your noses—

*Men.* What's the news? what's the news?

*Com.* Your temples burned in their cement, and  
Your franchises, whereon you stood, confined  
Into an auger's bore.

*Men.* Pray now, your news?

You have made fair work, I fear me. Pray, your  
news?

If Marcius should be join'd with Volscians—

*Com.* If!

He is their god. He leads them like a thing 90  
Made by some other deity than nature,

That shapes man better; and they follow him,  
Against us brats with no less confidence  
Than boys pursuing summer butterflies,  
Or butchers killing flies.

*Men.* You have made good work,  
You and your apron-men; you that stood so  
much

Upon the voice of occupation and  
The breath of garlic-eaters!

*Com.* He will shake  
Your Rome about your ears.

*Men.* As Hercules  
Did shake down mellow fruit. You have made  
fair work! 100

*Bru.* But is this true, sir?

*Com.* Ay; and you'll look pale  
Before you find it other. All the regions

Do smilingly revolt; and who resist  
Are mock'd for valiant ignorance,  
And perish constant fools. Who is 't can blame  
him?

Your enemies and his find something in him.

*Men.* We are all undone, unless

The noble man have mercy.

*Com.* Who shall ask it?

The tribunes cannot do 't for shame; the people  
Deserve such pity of him as the wolf 110  
Does of the shepherds. For his best friends, if  
they

Should say, "Be good to Rome," they charged  
him even

As those should do that had deserved his hate,  
And therein show'd like enemies.

*Men.* 'Tis true.

If he were putting to my house the brand  
That should consume it, I have not the face  
To say, "Beseech you, cease." You have made  
fair hands,

You and your crafts! you have crafted fair!

*Com.* You have brought  
A trembling upon Rome, such as was never  
So incapable of help.

*Both Tri.* Say not we brought it. 120

*Men.* How! Was it we? We loved him; but,  
like beasts

And cowardly nobles, gave way unto your clusters,

Who did hoot him out o' the city.

*Com.* But I fear  
They'll roar him in again. Tullus Aufidius,  
The second name of men, obeys his points  
As if he were his officer. Desperation  
Is all the policy, strength, and defence,  
That Rome can make against them.

*Enter a troop of CITIZENS.*

*Men.* Here come the clusters.

And is Aufidius with him? You are they 129  
That made the air unwholesome, when you cast  
Your stinking greasy caps in hooting at  
Coriolanus' exile. Now he's coming;  
And not a hair upon a soldier's head  
Which will not prove a whip. As many coxcombs  
As you threw caps up will he tumble down,  
And pay you for your voices. 'Tis no matter;  
If he could burn us all into one coal,  
We have deserved it.

*Citizens.* Faith, we hear fearful news.

*1st Cit.* For mine own part,  
When I said banish him, I said 'twas pity. 140

*2nd Cit.* And so did I.

*3rd Cit.* And so did I; and, to say the truth, so  
did very many of us. That we did, we did for the



best; and though we willingly consented to his banishment, yet it was against our will.

*Com.* Ye're goodly things, you voices!

*Men.* You have made  
Good work, you and your cry! Shall's to the Capitol?

*Com.* O, ay, what else?

[*Exeunt* COMINIUS and MENENIUS.]

*Sic.* Go, masters, get you home; be not dismay'd. 150

These are a side that would be glad to have  
This true which they so seem to fear. Go home,  
And show no sign of fear.

*1st Cit.* The gods be good to us! Come, masters,  
let's home. I ever said we were i' the wrong when  
we banished him.

*2nd Cit.* So did we all. But, come, let's home.

[*Exeunt* CITIZENS.]

*Bru.* I do not like this news.

*Sic.* Nor I.

*Bru.* Let's to the Capitol. Would half my  
wealth 160

Would buy this for a lie!

*Sic.* Pray, let us go.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VII. *A camp, at a small distance  
from Rome*

*Enter* AUFIDIUS and his LIEUTENANT.

*Auf.* Do they still fly to the Roman?

*Lieu.* I do not know what witchcraft's in him,  
but

Your soldiers use him as the grace 'fore meat,  
Their talk at table, and their thanks at end;  
And you are darken'd in this action, sir,  
Even by your own.

*Auf.* I cannot help it now,  
Unless, by using means, I lame the foot  
Of our design. He bears himself more proudlier,  
Even to my person, than I thought he would  
When first I did embrace him. Yet his nature 10  
In that's no changeling; and I must excuse  
What cannot be amended.

*Lieu.* Yet I wish, sir—  
I mean for your particular—you had not  
Join'd in commission with him; but either  
Had borne the action of yourself, or else  
To him had left it solely.

*Auf.* I understand thee well; and be thou sure,  
When he shall come to his account, he knows not  
What I can urge against him. Although it seems,  
And so he thinks, and is no less apparent 20  
To the vulgar eye, that he bears all things fairly,  
And shows good husbandry for the Volsian  
state,  
Fights dragon-like, and does achieve as soon

As draw his sword; yet he hath left undone  
That which shall break his neck or hazard mine,  
Whene'er we come to our account.

*Lieu.* Sir, I beseech you, think you he'll carry  
Rome?

*Auf.* All places yield to him ere he sits down;  
And the nobility of Rome are his;  
The senators and patricians love him too; 30  
The tribunes are no soldiers; and their people  
Will be as rash in the repeal, as hasty  
To expel him thence. I think he'll be to Rome  
As is the osprey to the fish, who takes it  
By sovereignty of nature. First he was  
A noble servant to them; but he could not  
Carry his honours even. Whether 'twas pride,  
Which out of daily fortune ever taints  
The happy man; whether defect of judgement,  
To fail in the disposing of those chances 40  
Which he was lord of; or whether nature,  
Not to be other than one thing, not moving  
From the casque to the cushion, but commanding  
peace

Even with the same austerity and garb  
As he controll'd the war; but one of these—  
As he hath spices of them all, not all,  
For I dare so far free him—made him fear'd,  
So hated, and so banish'd; but he has a merit,  
To choke it in the utterance. So our virtues 50  
Lie in the interpretation of the time;  
And power, unto itself most commendable,  
Hath not a tomb so evident as a chair  
To extol what it hath done.  
One fire drives out one fire; one nail, one nail;  
Rights by rights falter, strengths by strengths do  
fail.

Come, let's away. When, Caius, Rome is thine,  
Thou art poor'st of all; then shortly art thou  
mine. [*Exeunt.*]

## ACT V

SCENE I. *Rome: a public place*

*Enter* MENENIUS, COMINIUS, SICINIUS, BRUTUS,  
and others.

*Men.* No, I'll not go. You hear what he hath  
said

Which was sometime his general; who loved him

In a most dear particular. He call'd me father;  
But what o' that? Go, you that banish'd him;  
A mile before his tent fall down, and knee  
The way into his mercy. Nay, if he coy'd  
To hear Cominius speak, I'll keep at home.

*Com.* He would not seem to know me.

*Men.* Do you hear?

*Com.* Yet one time he did call me by my name.

I urged our old acquaintance, and the drops  
That we have bled together. Coriolanus  
He would not answer to; forbad all names;  
He was a kind of nothing, titleless,  
Till he had forged himself a name o' the fire  
Of burning Rome.

*Men.* Why, so; you have made good work!  
A pair of tribunes that have rack'd fair Rome  
To make coals cheap—a noble memory!

*Com.* I minded him how royal 'twas to pardon  
When it was less expected. He replied  
It was a bare petition of a state  
To one whom they had punish'd.

*Men.* Very well;  
Could he say less?

*Com.* I offer'd to awaken his regard  
For 's private friends. His answer to me was  
He could not stay to pick them in a pile  
Of noisome musty chaff. He said 'twas folly,  
For one poor grain or two, to leave unburnt,  
And still to nose the offence.

*Men.* For one poor grain or two!  
I am one of those; his mother, wife, his child,  
And this brave fellow too, we are the grains.  
You are the musty chaff; and you are smelt  
Above the moon. We must be burnt for you.

*Sic.* Nay, pray, be patient. If you refuse your  
aid

In this so never-needed help, yet do not  
Upbraid's with our distress. But, sure, if you  
Would be your country's pleader, your good  
tongue,

More than the instant army we can make,  
Might stop our countryman.

*Men.* No, I'll not meddle.  
*Sic.* Pray you, go to him.

*Men.* What should I do?  
*Bru.* Only make trial what your love can do  
For Rome, towards Marcius.

*Men.* Well, and say that Marcius  
Return me, as Cominius is return'd,  
Unheard; what then?

But as a discontented friend, grief-shot  
With his unkindness? say 't be so?

*Sic.* Yet your good will  
Must have that thanks from Rome, after the  
measure

As you intended well.

*Men.* I'll undertake 't;  
I think he'll hear me. Yet, to bite his lip  
And hum at good Cominius, much unhearts me.  
He was not taken well; he had not dined.

The veins unfill'd, our blood is cold, and then  
We pout upon the morning, are unapt  
To give or to forgive; but when we have stuff'd  
These pipes and these conveyances of our blood

With wine and feeding, we have suppler souls  
Than in our priest-like fasts. Therefore I'll watch  
him

Till he be dieted to my request,  
And then I'll set upon him.

*Bru.* You know the very road into his kindness,  
And cannot lose your way.

*Men.* Good faith, I'll prove him,  
Speed how it will. I shall ere long have knowl-  
edge

Of my success. [Exit.

*Com.* He'll never hear him.

*Sic.* Not?

*Com.* I tell you, he does sit in gold, his eye  
Red as 'twould burn Rome; and his injury  
The gaoler to his pity. I kneel'd before him;  
'Twas very faintly he said "Rise"; dismiss'd me  
Thus, with his speechless hand. What he would  
do

He sent in writing after me; what he would  
not,

Bound with an oath to yield to his conditions.

So that all hope is vain,

Unless his noble mother, and his wife;

Who, as I hear, mean to solicit him

For mercy to his country. Therefore, let's hence,  
And with our fair entreaties haste them on.

[Exeunt.

SCENE II. *Entrance of the Volscian camp before  
Rome*

TWO SENTINELS on guard. Enter to them,  
MENENIUS.

*1st Sen.* Stay! Whence are you?

*2nd Sen.* Stand, and go back.

*Men.* You guard like men; 'tis well. But, by  
your leave,

I am an officer of state, and come  
To speak with Coriolanus.

*1st Sen.* From whence?

*Men.* From Rome.

*1st Sen.* You may not pass, you must return. Our  
general

Will no more hear from thence.

*2nd Sen.* You'll see your Rome embraced with  
fire before

You'll speak with Coriolanus.

*Men.* Good my friends,  
If you have heard your general talk of Rome,

And of his friends there, it is lots to blanks,  
My name hath touch'd your ears: it is Menenius.

*1st Sen.* Be it so; go back. The virtue of your  
name

Is not here passable.

*Men.* I tell thee, fellow,  
Thy general is my lover. I have been



The book of his good acts, whence men have read

His fame unparallel'd, haply amplified;  
For I have ever verified my friends,  
Of whom he's chief, with all the size that verity  
Would without lapsing suffer; nay, sometimes,  
Like to a bowl upon a subtle ground, 20  
I have tumbled past the throw; and in his praise  
Have almost stamp'd the leasing: therefore, fellow,

I must have leave to pass.

1st Sen. Faith, sir, if you had told as many lies in his behalf as you have uttered words in your own, you should not pass here; no, though it were as virtuous to lie as to live chastely. Therefore, go back.

Men. Prithee, fellow, remember my name is Menenius, always factionary on the party of your general. 31

2nd Sen. Howsoever you have been his liar, as you say you have, I am one that, telling true under him, must say, you cannot pass. Therefore, go back.

Men. Has he dined, canst thou tell? for I would not speak with him till after dinner.

1st Sen. You are a Roman, are you?

Men. I am, as thy general is. 39

1st Sen. Then you should hate Rome, as he does. Can you, when you have pushed out your gates the very defender of them, and, in a violent popular ignorance, given your enemy your shield, think to front his revenges with the easy groans of old women, the virginal palms of your daughters, or with the palsied intercession of such a decayed dotant as you seem to be? Can you think to blow out the intended fire your city is ready to flame in, with such weak breath as this? No, you are deceived; therefore, back to Rome, and prepare for your execution. You are condemned, our general has sworn you out of reprieve and pardon.

Men. Sirrah, if thy captain knew I were here, he would use me with estimation.

1st Sen. Come, my captain knows you not.

Men. I mean, thy general.

1st Sen. My general cares not for you. Back, I say, go; lest I let forth your half-pint of blood; back—that's the utmost of your having. Back.

Men. Nay, but, fellow, fellow—

*Enter CORIOLANUS and AUFIDIUS.*

Cor. What's the matter?

Men. Now, you companion, I'll say an errand for you; you shall know now that I am in estimation; you shall perceive that a Jack guardant cannot office me from my son Coriolanus. Guess,

but by my entertainment with him, if thou standest not i' the state of hanging, or of some death more long in spectatorship, and crueller in suffering; behold now presently, and swoon for what's to come upon thee. [*To CORIOLANUS*] The glorious gods sit in hourly synod about thy particular prosperity, and love thee no worse than thy old father Menenius does! O my son, my son! thou art preparing fire for us; look thee, here's water to quench it. I was hardly moved to come to thee; but being assured none but myself could move thee, I have been blown out of your gates with sighs; and conjure thee to pardon Rome, and thy petitionary countrymen. The good gods assuage thy wrath, and turn the dregs of it upon this varlet here—this, who, like a block, hath denied my access to thee.

Cor. Away!

Men. How! Away!

Cor. Wife, mother, child, I know not. My affairs

Are servanted to others. Though I owe My revenge properly, my remission lies 90  
In Volscian breasts. That we have been familiar, Ingrate forgetfulness shall poison, rather Than pity note how much. Therefore, be gone. Mine ears against your suits are stronger than Your gates against my force. Yet, for I loved thee,

Take this along; I writ it for thy sake,

*Gives a letter.*

And would have sent it. Another word, Menenius,

I will not hear thee speak. This man, Aufidius, Was my beloved in Rome; yet thou behold'st!

Auf. You keep a constant temper. 100

*[Exeunt CORIOLANUS and AUFIDIUS.]*

1st Sen. Now, sir, is your name Menenius?

2nd Sen. 'Tis a spell, you see, of much power. You know the way home again.

1st Sen. Do you hear how we are shent for keeping your greatness back?

2nd Sen. What cause, do you think, I have to swoon?

Men. I neither care for the world nor your general. For such things as you, I can scarce think there's any, ye're so slight. He that hath a will to die by himself fears it not from another. Let your general do his worst. For you, be that you are, long; and your misery increase with your age! I say to you, as I was said to, "Away!"

*[Exit.]*

1st Sen. A noble fellow, I warrant him.

2nd Sen. The worthy fellow is our general. He's the rock, the oak not to be wind-shaken.

*[Exeunt.]*

SCENE III. *The tent of* CORIOLANUS*Enter* CORIOLANUS, AUFIDUS, *and others.**Cor.* We will before the walls of Rome to-morrowSet down our host. My partner in this action,  
You must report to the Volscian lords how plainly

I have borne this business.

*Auf.* Only their ends  
You have respected; stopp'd your ears against  
The general suit of Rome; never admitted  
A private whisper, no, not with such friends  
That thought them sure of you.*Cor.* This last old man,  
Whom with a crack'd heart I have sent to Rome,  
Loved me above the measure of a father; 10  
Nay, godded me, indeed. Their latest refuge  
Was to send him; for whose old love I have,  
Though I show'd sourly to him, once more  
offer'dThe first conditions, which they did refuse  
And cannot now accept; to grace him only  
That thought he could do more, a very little  
I have yielded to. Fresh embassies and suits,  
Nor from the state nor private friends, hereafter  
Will I lend ear to. Ha! what shout is this?*Shout within.*Shall I be tempted to infringe my vow 20  
In the same time 'tis made? I will not.*Enter, in mourning habits, VIRGILIA, VOLUMNIA  
leading young MARCIUS, VALERIA, and Attendants.*My wife comes foremost; then the honour'd  
mouldWherein this trunk was framed, and in her hand  
The grandchild to her blood. But, out, affection!  
All bond and privilege of nature, break!  
Let it be virtuous to be obstinate.What is that curt'sy worth? or those doves' eyes,  
Which can make gods forsworn? I melt, and am  
notOf stronger earth than others. My mother bows;  
As if Olympus to a molehill should 30In supplication nod; and my young boy  
Hath an aspect of intercession, which  
Great nature cries "Deny not." Let the Volscies  
Plough Rome, and harrow Italy, I'll never  
Be such a gosling to obey instinct, but stand,  
As if a man were author of himself  
And knew no other kin.*Vir.* My lord and husband!*Cor.* These eyes are not the same I wore in  
Rome.*Vir.* The sorrow that delivers us thus changed  
Makes you think so.*Cor.*

Like a dull actor now,

40

I have forgot my part, and I am out,  
Even to a full disgrace. Best of my flesh,  
Forgive my tyranny; but do not say  
For that "Forgive our Romans." O, a kiss  
Long as my exile, sweet as my revenge!  
Now, by the jealous queen of heaven, that kiss  
I carried from thee, dear, and my true lip  
Hath virgin'd it e'er since. You gods! I prate,  
And the most noble mother of the world  
Leave unsaluted. Sink, my knee, i' the earth; 50*Kneels.*Of thy deep duty more impression show  
Than that of common sons.*Vol.*

O, stand up blest!

Whilst, with no softer cushion than the flint,  
I kneel before thee; and improperly  
Show duty, as mistaken all this while  
Between the child and parent. [*Kneels.*]*Cor.*

What is this?

Your knees to me? to your corrected son?  
Then let the pebbles on the hungry beach  
Fillip the stars; then let the mutinous winds  
Strike the proud cedars 'gainst the fiery sun; 60  
Murdering impossibility, to make  
What cannot be, slight work.*Vol.*

Thou art my warrior;

I help to frame thee. Do you know this lady?

*Cor.* The noble sister of Publicola,  
The moon of Rome, chaste as the icicle  
That's curdied by the frost from purest snow  
And hangs on Dian's temple. Dear Valeria!*Vol.* This is a poor epitome of yours,  
Which by the interpretation of full time  
May show like all yourself.*Cor.*

The god of soldiers, 70

With the consent of supreme Jove, inform  
Thy thoughts with nobleness; that thou mayst  
proveTo shame invulnerable, and stick i' the wars  
Like a great sea-mark, standing every flaw,  
And saving those that eye thee!*Vol.*

Your knee, sirrah.

*Cor.* That's my brave boy!*Vol.* Even he, your wife, this lady, and myself,  
Are suitors to you.*Cor.*

I beseech you, peace;

Or, if you'd ask, remember this before:  
The thing I have forsworn to grant may never 80  
Be held by you denials. Do not bid me  
Dismiss my soldiers, or capitulate  
Again with Rome's mechanics. Tell me not  
Wherein I seem unnatural. Desire not  
To allay my rages and revenges with  
Your colder reasons.*Vol.*

O, no more, no more!



You have said you will not grant us anything;  
 For we have nothing else to ask, but that  
 Which you deny already. Yet we will ask;  
 That, if you fail in our request, the blame 90  
 May hang upon your hardness; therefore hear us.  
*Cor.* Aufidius, and you Volscies, mark; for we'll  
 Hear nought from Rome in private. Your request?

*Vol.* Should we be silent and not speak, our  
 raiment

And state of bodies would bewray what life  
 We have led since thy exile. Think with thyself  
 How more unfortunate than all living women  
 Are we come hither; since that thy sight, which  
 should

Make our eyes flow with joy, hearts dance with  
 comforts,

Constrains them weep and shake with fear and  
 sorrow; 100

Making the mother, wife, and child to see  
 The son, the husband, and the father tearing  
 His country's bowels out. And to poor we  
 Thine enmity's most capital; thou barr'st us  
 Our prayers to the gods, which is a comfort  
 That all but we enjoy; for how can we,  
 Alas, how can we for our country pray,  
 Where to we are bound, together with thy  
 victory,

Where to we are bound? alack, or we must lose  
 The country, our dear nurse, or else thy person,  
 Our comfort in the country. We must find 111

An evident calamity, though we had  
 Our wish, which side should win; for either thou  
 Must, as a foreign recreant, be led  
 With manacles through our streets, or else  
 Triumphant tread on thy country's ruin,  
 And bear the palm for having bravely shed  
 Thy wife and children's blood. For myself, son,  
 I purpose not to wait on fortune till

These wars determine. If I cannot persuade thee  
 Rather to show a noble grace to both parts 121

Than seek the end of one, thou shalt no sooner  
 March to assault thy country than to tread—  
 Trust to 't, thou shalt not—on thy mother's womb,  
 That brought thee to this world.

*Vir.* Ay, and mine,  
 That brought you forth this boy, to keep your  
 name

Living to time.

*Young Mar.* A' shall not tread on me;  
 I'll run away till I am bigger, but then I'll fight.

*Cor.* Not of a woman's tenderness to be,  
 Requires nor child nor woman's face to see. 130  
 I have sat too long. [*Rising.*]

*Vol.* Nay, go not from us thus.

If it were so that our request did tend  
 To save the Romans, thereby to destroy

The Volscies whom you serve, you might con-  
 demn us,

As poisonous of your honour. No; our suit  
 Is that you reconcile them: while the Volscies  
 May say, "This mercy we have show'd"; the  
 Romans,

"This we received"; and each in either side  
 Give the all-hail to thee, and cry, "Be blest  
 For making up this peace!" Thou know'st, great  
 son, 140

The end of war's uncertain, but this certain,  
 That, if thou conquer Rome, the benefit  
 Which thou shalt thereby reap is such a name,  
 Whose repetition will be dogg'd with curses;  
 Whose chronicle thus writ: "The man was noble,  
 But with his last attempt he wiped it out;  
 Destroy'd his country, and his name remains  
 To the ensuing age abhorr'd." Speak to me, son.  
 Thou hast affected the fine strains of honour,  
 To imitate the graces of the gods; 150  
 To tear with thunder the wide cheeks o' the air,  
 And yet to charge thy sulphur with a bolt  
 That should but rive an oak. Why dost not  
 speak?

Think'st thou it honourable for a noble man  
 Still to remember wrongs? Daughter, speak you;  
 He cares not for your weeping. Speak thou, boy;  
 Perhaps thy childishness will move him more  
 Than can our reasons. There's no man in the  
 world

More bound to 's mother; yet here he lets me  
 prate 159

Like one i' the stocks. Thou hast never in thy life  
 Show'd thy dear mother any courtesy,  
 When she, poor hen, fond of no second brood,  
 Has cluck'd thee to the wars and safely home,  
 Loaden with honour. Say my request's unjust,  
 And spurn me back. But if it be not so,  
 Thou art not honest; and the gods will plague  
 thee

That thou restrain'st from me the duty which  
 To a mother's part belongs. He turns away.  
 Down, ladies; let us shame him with our knees.  
 To his surname Coriolanus 'longs more pride 170  
 Than pity to our prayers. Down! an end;  
 This is the last. So we will home to Rome,  
 And die among our neighbours. Nay, behold 's!  
 This boy, that cannot tell what he would have,  
 But kneels and holds up hands for fellowship,  
 Does reason our petition with more strength  
 Than thou hast to deny 't. Come, let us go.  
 This fellow had a Volscian to his mother;  
 His wife is in Corioli, and his child  
 Like him by chance. Yet give us our dispatch.  
 I am hush'd until our city be afire, 181  
 And then I'll speak a little.

*He holds her by the hand, silent.*

*Cor.* O mother, mother!  
What have you done? Behold, the heavens do  
ope,

The gods look down, and this unnatural scene  
They laugh at. O my mother, mother! O!

You have won a happy victory to Rome;  
But, for your son—believe it, O, believe it,  
Most dangerously you have with him prevail'd,  
If not most mortal to him. But, let it come.

Aufidius, though I cannot make true wars, 190  
I'll frame convenient peace. Now, good Aufidius,  
Were you in my stead, would you have heard  
A mother less? or granted less, Aufidius?

*Auf.* I was moved withal.

*Cor.* I dare be sworn you were:

And, sir, it is no little thing to make  
Mine eyes to sweat compassion. But, good sir,  
What peace you'll make, advise me. For my part,  
I'll not to Rome, I'll back with you; and pray  
you,

Stand to me in this cause. O mother! wife!

*Auf.* [*Aside.*] I am glad thou hast set thy mercy  
and thy honour 200

At difference in thee. Out of that I'll work  
Myself a former fortune.

*The Ladies make signs to CORIOLANUS.*

*Cor.* Ay, by and by;

[*To VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, &c.*

But we will drink together; and you shall bear  
A better witness back than words, which we,  
On like conditions, will have counter-seal'd.  
Come, enter with us. Ladies, you deserve  
To have a temple built you. All the swords  
In Italy, and her confederate arms,  
Could not have made this peace. [*Exeunt.* 209

SCENE IV. *Rome: a public place*

*Enter MENENIUS and SICINIUS.*

*Men.* See you yond coign o' the Capitol, yond  
corner-stone?

*Sic.* Why, what of that?

*Men.* If it be possible for you to displace it  
with your little finger, there is some hope the  
ladies of Rome, especially his mother, may pre-  
vail with him. But I say there is no hope in't.  
Our throats are sentenced and stay upon execu-  
tion.

*Sic.* Is't possible that so short a time can alter  
the condition of a man? 10

*Men.* There is differency between a grub and  
a butterfly; yet your butterfly was a grub. This  
Marcius is grown from man to dragon; he has  
wings; he's more than a creeping thing.

*Sic.* He loved his mother dearly.

*Men.* So did he me; and he no more remem-

bers his mother now than an eight-year-old horse.  
The tartness of his face sours ripe grapes; when  
he walks, he moves like an engine and the  
ground shrinks before his treading. He is able to  
pierce a corslet with his eye; talks like a knell,  
and his hum is a battery. He sits in his state, as  
a thing made for Alexander. What he bids be  
done is finished with his bidding. He wants noth-  
ing of a god but eternity and a heaven to throne  
in.

*Sic.* Yes, mercy, if you report him truly.

*Men.* I paint him in the character. Mark what  
mercy his mother shall bring from him. There is  
no more mercy in him than there is milk in a male  
tiger; that shall our poor city find; and all this is  
long of you.

*Sic.* The gods be good unto us!

*Men.* No, in such a case the gods will not be  
good unto us. When we banished him, we re-  
spected not them; and, he returning to break our  
necks, they respect not us.

*Enter a MESSENGER*

*Mess.* Sir, if you'd save your life, fly to your  
house.

The plebeians have got your fellow-tribune  
And hale him up and down, all swearing, if 40  
The Roman ladies bring not comfort home,  
They'll give him death by inches.

*Enter a SECOND MESSENGER.*

*Sic.* What's the news?

*2nd Mess.* Good news, good news; the ladies  
have prevail'd,  
The Volscians are dislodged, and Marcius gone.  
A merrier day did never yet greet Rome,  
No, not the expulsion of the Tarquins.

*Sic.* Friend,

Art thou certain this is true? is it most certain?

*2nd Mess.* As certain as I know the sun is fire.  
Where have you lurk'd, that you make doubt  
of it? 49

Ne'er through an arch so hurried the blown tide,  
As the recomforted through the gates. Why,  
hark you! *Trumpets; hautboys; drums beat;*  
*all together.*

The trumpets, sackbuts, psalteries and fifes,  
Tabors and cymbals and the shouting Romans,  
Make the sun dance. Hark you!

*A shout within.*

*Men.* This is good news;  
I will go meet the ladies. This Volumnia  
Is worth of consuls, senators, patricians,  
A city full of tribunes, such as you,  
A sea and land full. You have pray'd well to-day.  
This morning for ten thousand of your throats 59



I'd not have given a doit. Hark, how they joy!

*Music still, with shouts.*

Sic. First, the gods bless you for your tidings;  
next,

Accept my thankfulness.

2nd Mess. Sir, we have all

Great cause to give great thanks.

Sic. They are near the city?

2nd Mess. Almost at point to enter.

Sic. We will meet them,

And help the joy. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE V. *The same: a street near the gate*

*Enter two SENATORS with VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, VALERIA, &c. passing over the stage, followed by Patricians, and others.*

1st Sen. Behold our patroness, the life of Rome!  
Call all your tribes together, praise the gods,  
And make triumphant fires; strew flowers before  
them!

Unshout the noise that banish'd Marcius,  
Repeal him with the welcome of his mother;

Cry, "Welcome, ladies, welcome!"

All. Welcome, ladies,  
Welcome! *[A flourish with drums and trumpets.]*

*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI. *Antium: a public place*

*Enter TULLUS AUFIDIUS, with Attendants.*

Auf. Go tell the lords o' the city I am here;  
Deliver them this paper. Having read it,  
Bid them repair to the market-place; where I,  
Even in theirs and in the commons' ears,  
Will vouch the truth of it. Him I accuse  
The city ports by this hath enter'd and  
Intends to appear before the people, hoping  
To purge himself with words. Dispatch.

*[Exeunt Attendants.]*

*Enter three or four CONSPIRATORS of AUFIDIUS' faction.*

Most welcome!

1st Con. How is it with our general?

Auf. Even so 10  
As with a man by his own alms empoison'd,  
And with his charity slain.

2nd Con. Most noble sir,  
If you do hold the same intent wherein  
You wish'd us parties, we'll deliver you  
Of your great danger.

Auf. Sir, I cannot tell.  
We must proceed as we do find the people.

3rd Con. The people will remain uncertain  
whilst

'Twixt you there's difference; but the fall of either  
Makes the survivor heir of all.

*Auf.*

I know it;

And my pretext to strike at him admits 20

A good construction. I raised him, and I pawn'd  
Mine honour for his truth; who being so height-  
en'd,

He water'd his new plants with dews of flattery,  
Seducing so my friends; and, to this end,  
He bow'd his nature, never known before  
But to be rough, unswayable, and free.

3rd Con. Sir, his stoutness

When he did stand for consul, which he lost  
By lack of stooping—

*Auf.*

That I would have spoke of.  
Being banish'd for't, he came unto my hearth; 30  
Presented to my knife his throat. I took him;  
Made him joint-servant with me; gave him way  
In all his own desires; nay, let him choose  
Out of my files, his projects to accomplish,  
My best and freshest men, served his designments  
In mine own person; help to reap the fame  
Which he did end all his; and took some pride  
To do myself this wrong; till, at the last,  
I seem'd his follower, not partner, and  
He waged me with his countenance, as if 40  
I had been mercenary.

1st Con.

So he did, my lord.  
The army marvell'd at it, and, in the last,  
When he had carried Rome and that we look'd  
For no less spoil than glory—

*Auf.*

There was it,  
For which my sinews shall be stretch'd upon him.  
At a few drops of women's rheum, which are  
As cheap as lies, he sold the blood and labour  
Of our great action. Therefore shall he die,  
And I'll renew me in his fall. But, hark!

*Drums and trumpets sound, with great shouts of the People.*

1st Con. Your native town you enter'd like a 50  
post,

And had no welcomes home; but he returns,  
Splitting the air with noise.

2nd Con.

And patient fools,  
Whose children he hath slain, their base throats  
tear

With giving him glory.

3rd Con.

Therefore, at your vantage,  
Ere he express himself, or move the people  
With what he would say, let him feel your sword,  
Which we will second. When he lies along,  
After your way his tale pronounced shall bury  
His reasons with his body.

*Auf.*

Say no more.

Here come the lords.

60

*Enter the LORDS of the city.*

All the Lords. You are most welcome home.

*Auf.* I have not deserved it.  
But, worthy lords, have you with heed perused  
What I have written to you?

*Lords.* We have.  
*1st Lord.* And grieve to hear't.

What faults he made before the last, I think  
Might have found easy fines; but there to end  
Where he was to begin and give away  
The benefit of our levies, answering us  
With our own charge, making a treaty where  
There was a yielding—this admits no excuse.

*Auf.* He approaches. You shall hear him. 70

*Enter CORIOLANUS, marching with drum and  
colours; Commoners being with him.*

*Cor.* Hail, lords! I am return'd your soldier,  
No more infected with my country's love  
Than when I parted hence, but still subsisting  
Under your great command. You are to know  
That prosperously I have attempted and  
With bloody passage led your wars even to  
The gates of Rome. Our spoils we have brought  
home

Do more than counterpoise a full third part  
The charges of the action. We have made peace  
With no less honour to the Antiates 80  
Than shame to the Romans; and we here deliver,  
Subscribed by the consuls and patricians,  
Together with the seal o' the Senate, what  
We have compounded on.

*Auf.* Read it not, noble lords;  
But tell the traitor, in the high'st degree  
He hath abused your powers.

*Cor.* "Traitor!" how now!

*Auf.* Ay, traitor, Marcius!

*Cor.* "Marcius!"

*Auf.* Ay, Marcius, Caius Marcius. Dost thou  
think

I'll grace thee with that robbery, thy stol'n name,  
Coriolanus, in Corioli? 90

You lords and heads o' the state, perfidiously  
He has betray'd your business, and given up,  
For certain drops of salt, your city Rome,  
I say "your city," to his wife and mother;  
Breaking his oath and resolution like  
A twist of rotten silk, never admitting  
Counsel o' the war, but at his nurse's tears  
He whined and roar'd away your victory,  
That pages blush'd at him and men of heart  
Look'd wondering each at other.

*Cor.* Hear'st thou, Mars? 100

*Auf.* Name not the god, thou boy of tears!

*Cor.* Ha!

*Auf.* No more.

*Cor.* Measureless liar, thou hast made my heart  
Too great for what contains it. "Boy!" O slave!

Pardon me, lords, 'tis the first time that ever  
I was forced to scold. Your judgements, my  
grave lords,

Must give this cur the lie; and his own notion—  
Who wears my stripes impress'd upon him; that  
Must bear my beating to his grave—shall join  
To thrust the lie unto him. 110

*1st Lord.* Peace, both, and hear me speak.

*Cor.* Cut me to pieces, Volsces; men and lads,  
Stain all your edges on me. "Boy!" False hound!  
If you have writ your annals true, 'tis there,  
That, like an eagle in a dove-cote, I  
Flutter'd your Volscians in Corioli.  
Alone I did it. "Boy!"

*Auf.* Why, noble lords,  
Will you be put in mind of his blind fortune,  
Which was your shame, by this unholy braggart,  
'Fore your own eyes and ears?

*All Consps.* Let him die for't. 120

*All the people.* Tear him to pieces. Do it presently.  
He killed my son. My daughter. He killed my  
cousin Marcus. He killed my father.

*2nd Lord.* Peace, ho! no outrage; peace!  
The man is noble and his fame folds-in  
This orb o' the earth. His last offences to us  
Shall have judicious hearing. Stand, Aufidius,  
And trouble not the peace.

*Cor.* O that I had him,  
With six Aufidiuses, or more, his tribe, 130  
To use my lawful sword!

*Auf.* Insolent villain!

*All Consps.* Kill, kill, kill, kill, kill him!

*The CONSPIRATORS draw, and KILL CORIOLANUS.*

*AUFIDIUS stands on his body.*

*Lords.* Hold, hold, hold, hold!

*Auf.* My noble masters, hear me speak.

*1st Lord.* O Tullus—

*2nd Lord.* Thou hast done a deed whereat  
valour will weep.

*3rd Lord.* Tread not upon him. Masters all, be  
quiet;  
Put up your swords.

*Auf.* My lords, when you shall know—as in  
this rage,  
Provoked by him, you cannot—the great danger  
Which this man's life did owe you, you'll rejoice  
That he is thus cut off. Please it your honours  
To call me to your Senate, I'll deliver 141  
Myself your loyal servant, or endure  
Your heaviest censure.

*1st Lord.* Bear from hence his body;  
And mourn you for him. Let him be regarded  
As the most noble corse that ever herald  
Did follow to his urn.

*2nd Lord.* His own impatience



Takes from Aufidius a great part of blame.  
Let's make the best of it.

*Auf.* My rage is gone;  
And I am struck with sorrow. Take him up. 149  
Help, three o' the chiefest soldiers; I'll be one.  
Beat thou the drum, that it speak mournfully;

Trail your steel pikes. Though in this city he  
Hath widow'd and unchilded many a one,  
Which to this hour bewail the injury,  
Yet he shall have a noble memory.  
*Assist. [Exeunt, bearing the body of Coriolanus.*  
*A dead march sounded.*

# TIMON OF ATHENS

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

TIMON of Athens

LUCIUS

LUCULLUS *flattering lords*

SEMPRONIUS

VENTIDIUS, *one of Timon's false friends*

ALCIBIADES, *an Athenian captain*

APEMANTUS, *a churlish philosopher*

FLAVIUS, *steward to Timon*

A POET

A PAINTER

A JEWELLER

A MERCHANT

AN OLD ATHENIAN

A PAGE

A FOOL

THREE STRANGERS

A SOLDIER

THREE BANDITTI

FOUR SENATORS

FOUR LORDS

THREE MESSENGERS

FLAMINIUS

LUCILIUS

SERVILIUS

CAPHIS

PHILOTUS

TITUS

HORTENSIVS

THREE SERVANTS to Timon

TWO SERVANTS to Varro

A SERVANT to Isidore

A SERVANT to Lucullus

A SERVANT to Lucius

PHRYNIA

TIMANDRA

*Servants to Timon*

*Servants to Timon's creditors*

*mistresses to Alcibiades*

CUPID

AMAZONS

*in the mask*

NON-SPEAKING: *Lords, Senators, Officers, Soldiers, Banditti, and Attendants*

SCENE: *Athens, and the neighbouring woods*

## ACT I

### SCENE I. Athens: A hall in Timon's house

Enter POET, PAINTER, JEWELLER, MERCHANT, and others, at several doors.

Poet. Good day, sir.

Pain. I am glad you're well.

Poet. I have not seen you long. How goes the world?

Pain. It wears, sir, as it grows.

Poet. Ay, that's well known;

But what particular rarity? What strange, Which manifold record not matches? See, Magic of bounty! all these spirits thy power Hath conjured to attend. I know the merchant.

Pain. I know them both; th' other's a jeweller.

Mer. O, 'tis a worthy lord.

Jew. Nay, that's most fix'd.

Mer. A most incomparable man, breathed, as it were,

To an untirable and continue goodness;

He passes.

Jew. I have a jewel here—

Mer. O, pray, let's see't. For the Lord Timon, sir?

Jew. If he will touch the estimate: but, for that—

Poet. [Reciting to himself] "When we for recompense have praised the vile,

It stains the glory in that happy verse Which aptly sings the good."

Mer. 'Tis a good form.

Looking at the jewel.

Jew. And rich. Here is a water, look ye.

Pain. You are rapt, sir, in some work, some dedication

To the great lord.

Poet. A thing slipp'd idly from me. 20

Our poesy is as a gum, which oozes From whence 'tis nourish'd. The fire i' the flint Shows not till it be struck; our gentle flame Provokes itself and like the current flies Each bound it chafes. What have you there?

Pain. A picture, sir. When comes your book forth?

Poet. Upon the heels of my presentment, sir.

Let's see your piece.

Pain. 'Tis a good piece.

Poet. So 'tis; this comes off well and excellent.

Pain. Indifferent.

Poet. Admirable. How this grace 30

Speaks his own standing! What a mental power This eye shoots forth! How big imagination Moves in this lip! to the dumbness of the gesture One might interpret.

Pain. It is a pretty mocking of the life.

Here is a touch; is't good?

Poet. I will say of it,



*Pain.* You're a dog.

*Apem.* Thy mother's of my generation. What's she, if I be a dog?

*Tim.* Wilt dine with me, Apemantus?

*Apem.* No; I eat not lords.

*Tim.* An thou shouldst, thou'dst anger ladies.

*Apem.* O, they eat lords; so they come by great bellies. 210

*Tim.* That's a lascivious apprehension.

*Apem.* So thou apprehendest it; take it for thy labour.

*Tim.* How dost thou like this jewel, Apemantus?

*Apem.* Not so well as plain-dealing, which will not cost a man a doit.

*Tim.* What dost thou think 'tis worth?

*Apem.* Not worth my thinking. How now poet! 220

*Poet.* How now, philosopher!

*Apem.* Thou liest.

*Poet.* Art not one?

*Apem.* Yes.

*Poet.* Then I lie not.

*Apem.* Art not a poet?

*Poet.* Yes.

*Apem.* Then thou liest. Look in thy last work, where thou hast feigned him a worthy fellow.

*Poet.* That's not feigned; he is so. 230

*Apem.* Yes, he is worthy of thee, and to pay thee for thy labour. He that loves to be flattered is worthy o' the flatterer. Heavens, that I were a lord!

*Tim.* What wouldst do then, Apemantus?

*Apem.* E'en as Apemantus does now; hate a lord with my heart.

*Tim.* What, thyself?

*Apem.* Ay.

*Tim.* Wherefore? 240

*Apem.* That I had no angry wit to be a lord.

Art not thou a merchant?

*Mer.* Ay, Apemantus.

*Apem.* Traffic confound thee, if the gods will not!

*Mer.* If traffic do it, the gods do it.

*Apem.* Traffic's thy god; and thy god confound thee!

*Trumpet sounds. Enter a MESSENGER.*

*Tim.* What trumpet's that?

*Mess.* 'Tis Alcibiades, and some twenty horse, All of companionship. 251

*Tim.* Pray, entertain them; give them guide to us. [Exit some Attendants.]

You must needs dine with me; go not you hence

Till I have thank'd you. When dinner's done,

Show me this piece. I am joyful of your sights.

*Enter ALCIBIADES, with the rest.*

Most welcome, sir!

*Apem.* So, so, there!

Aches contract and starve your supple joints!

That there should be small love 'mongst these sweet knaves,

And all this courtesy! The strain of man's bred out

Into baboon and monkey. 260

*Alcib.* Sir, you have saved my longing, and I feed

Most hungrily on your sight.

*Tim.* Right welcome, sir!

Ere we depart, we'll share a bounteous time In different pleasures. Pray you, let us in.

[Exit all except APEMANTUS.]

*Enter TWO LORDS.*

*1st Lord.* What time o' day is't, Apemantus?

*Apem.* Time to be honest.

*1st Lord.* That time serves still.

*Apem.* The more accursed thou, that still omitt'st it.

*2nd Lord.* Thou art going to Lord Timon's feast? 270

*Apem.* Ay, to see meat fill knaves and wine heat fools.

*2nd Lord.* Fare thee well, fare thee well.

*Apem.* Thou art a fool to bid me farewell twice.

*2nd Lord.* Why, Apemantus?

*Apem.* Shouldst have kept one to thyself, for I mean to give thee none.

*1st Lord.* Hang thyself!

*Apem.* No, I will do nothing at thy bidding. Make thy requests to thy friend.

*2nd Lord.* Away, unpeaceable dog, or I'll spurn thee hence! 281

*Apem.* I will fly, like a dog, the heels o' the ass. [Exit.]

*1st Lord.* He's opposite to humanity.

Come, shall we in

And taste Lord Timon's bounty? He outgoes The very heart of kindness.

*2nd Lord.* He pours it out; Plutus, the god of gold,

Is but his steward. No meed but he repays

Sevenfold above itself; no gift to him, But breeds the giver a return exceeding 290

All use of quittance.

*1st Lord.* The noblest mind he carries

That ever govern'd man.

*2nd Lord.* Long may he live in fortunes!

Shall we in?

*1st Lord.* I'll keep you company. [Exit.]

SCENE II. *A banqueting-room in Timon's house. Hautboys playing loud music. A great banquet served in; FLAVIUS and others attending; then enter LORD TIMON, ALCIBIADES, LORDS, SENATORS, and VENTIDIUS. Then comes, dropping after all, APEMANTUS, discontentedly, like himself.*

*Ven.* Most honour'd Timon,  
It hath pleased the gods to remember my father's  
age,

And call him to long peace.

He is gone happy, and has left me rich.

Then, as in grateful virtue I am bound

To your free heart, I do return those talents,  
Doubled with thanks and service, from whose  
help

I derived liberty.

*Tim.* O, by no means,  
Honest Ventidius; you mistake my love.

I gave it freely ever; and there's none 10  
Can truly say he gives, if he receives.

If our betters play at that game, we must not dare  
To imitate them; faults that are rich are fair.

*Ven.* A noble spirit!

*Tim.* Nay, my lords,

*They all stand ceremoniously looking on TIMON.*

Ceremony was but devised at first  
To set a gloss on faint deeds, hollow welcomes,  
Recanting goodness, sorry ere 'tis shown;  
But where there is true friendship, there needs  
none.

Pray, sit; more welcome are ye to my fortunes  
Than my fortunes to me. 20

*They sit.*

*1st Lord.* My lord, we always have confess'd it.

*Apem.* Ho, ho, confess'd it! Hang'd it, have  
you not?

*Tim.* O, Apemantus, you are welcome.

*Apem.* No;  
You shall not make me welcome.

I come to have thee thrust me out of doors.

*Tim.* Fie, thou'rt a churl; ye've got a humour  
there

Does not become a man; 'tis much to blame.

They say, my lords, "*ira furor brevis est*"; but  
yond man is ever angry. Go, let him have a table  
by himself, for he does neither affect company,  
nor is he fit for't, indeed. 31

*Apem.* Let me stay at thine apperil, Timon.

I come to observe; I give thee warning on't.

*Tim.* I take no heed of thee; thou'rt an Athen-  
ian, therefore welcome. I myself would have no  
power; prithee, let my meat make thee silent.

*Apem.* I scorn thy meat; 'twould choke me, for  
I should ne'er flatter thee. O you gods, what a  
number of men eat Timon, and he sees 'em not!

It grieves me to see so many dip their meat in  
one man's blood; and all the madness is, he  
cheers them up too.

I wonder men dare trust themselves with men.

Methinks they should invite them without knives;  
Good for their meat, and safer for their lives.

There's much example for't; the fellow that sits  
next him now, parts bread with him, pledges the  
breath of him in a divided draught, is the readiest  
man to kill him; 't has been proved. If I were a  
huge man, I should fear to drink at meals; 51  
Lest they should spy my windpipe's dangerous  
notes.

Great men should drink with harness on their  
throats.

*Tim.* My lord, in heart; and let the health go  
round.

*2nd Lord.* Let it flow this way, my good lord.

*Apem.* Flow this way! A brave fellow! he keeps  
his tides well. Those healths will make thee and  
thy state look ill, Timon. Here's that which is  
too weak to be a sinner, honest water, which  
ne'er left man i' the mire. 60

This and my food are equals; there's no odds.

Feasts are too proud to give thanks to the gods.

*Apemantus' grace*

Immortal gods, I crave no pelf;

I pray for no man but myself.

Grant I may never prove so fond,

To trust man on his oath or bond;

Or a harlot, for her weeping;

Or a dog, that seems a-sleeping;

Or a keeper with my freedom;

Or my friends, if I should need 'em. 70

Amen. So fall to 't.

Rich men sin, and I eat rots.

*Eats and drinks.*

Much good dich thy good heart, Apemantus!

*Tim.* Captain Alcibiades, your heart's in the  
field now.

*Alcib.* My heart is ever at your service, my  
lord.

*Tim.* You had rather be at a breakfast of ene-  
mies than a dinner of friends. 79

*Alcib.* So they were bleeding-new, my lord,  
there's no meat like 'em. I could wish my best  
friend at such a feast.

*Apem.* Would all those flatterers were thine  
enemies then, that then thou mightst kill 'em and  
bid me to 'em!

*1st Lord.* Might we but have that happiness,  
my lord, that you would once use our hearts,  
whereby we might express some part of our  
zeals, we should think ourselves for ever per-  
fect. 90



*Tim.* O, no doubt, my good friends, but the gods themselves have provided that I shall have much help from you. How had you been my friends else? Why have you that charitable title from thousands, did not you chiefly belong to my heart? I have told more of you to myself than you can with modesty speak in your own behalf; and thus far I confirm you. O you gods, think I, what need we have any friends, if we should ne'er have need of 'em? They were the most needless creatures living, should we ne'er have use for 'em, and would most resemble sweet instruments hung up in cases that keep their sounds to themselves. Why, I have often wished myself poorer, that I might come nearer to you. We are born to do benefits; and what better or properer can we call our own than the riches of our friends? O, what a precious comfort 'tis, to have so many, like brothers, commanding one another's fortunes! O joy, e'en made away ere 't can be born! Mine eyes cannot hold out water, methinks; to forget their faults, I drink to you.

*Apem.* Thou weepst to make them drink, Timon.

*2nd Lord.* Joy had the like conception in our eyes And at that instant like a babe sprung up.

*Apem.* Ho, ho! I laugh to think that babe a bastard.

*3rd Lord.* I promise you, my lord, you moved me much.

*Apem.* Much!

*Tucket, within.*

*Tim.* What means that trumpet?

*Enter a SERVANT.*

How now? 120

*Serv.* Please you, my lord, there are certain ladies most desirous of admittance.

*Tim.* Ladies! what are their wills?

*Serv.* There comes with them a forerunner, my lord, which bears that office, to signify their pleasures.

*Tim.* I pray, let them be admitted.

*Enter CUPID.*

*Cup.* Hail to thee, worthy Timon, and to all That of his bounties taste! The five best senses Acknowledge thee their patron: and come freely

To gratulate thy plenteous bosom. Th' ear, 131  
Taste, touch and smell, pleased from thy table rise;

They only now come but to feast thine eyes.

*Tim.* They're welcome all; let 'em have kind admittance:

Music, make their welcome! [Exit CUPID.]

*1st Lord.* You see, my lord, how ample you're beloved.

*Music.* Re-enter CUPID, with a mask of LADIES as Amazons with lutes in their hands, dancing and playing.

*Apem.* Hoy-day, what a sweep of vanity comes this way!

They dance! they are mad women.

Like madness is the glory of this life,

As this pomp shows to a little oil and root. 140

We make ourselves fools to sport ourselves;

And spend our flatteries to drink those men

Upon whose age we void it up again,

With poisonous spite and envy.

Who lives that's not depraved or depraves?

Who dies, that bears not one spurn to their graves

Of their friends' gift?

I should fear those that dance before me now

Would one day stamp upon me. 'T has been done;

Men shut their doors against a setting sun. 150

*The LORDS rise from table, with much adoring of TIMON; and to show their loves, each singles out an AMAZON, and all dance, men with women, a lofty strain or two to the hautboys, and cease.*

*Tim.* You have done our pleasures much grace, fair ladies,

Set a fair fashion on our entertainment,

Which was not half so beautiful and kind;

You have added worth unto 't and lustre,

And entertain'd me with mine own device;

I am to thank you for 't.

*1st Lady.* My lord, you take us even at the best.

*Apem.* 'Faith, for the worst is filthy; and would not hold taking, I doubt me.

*Tim.* Ladies, there is an idle banquet attends you. 160

Please you to dispose yourselves.

*All Ladies.* Most thankfully, my lord.

[Exit CUPID and LADIES.]

*Tim.* Flavius.

*Flav.* My lord?

*Tim.* The little casket bring me hither.

*Flav.* Yes, my lord. More jewels yet! [Aside.]

There is no crossing him in 's humour;

Else I should tell him—well, i' faith, I should,

When all's spent, he'd be cross'd then, an he could.

'Tis pity bounty had not eyes behind,

That man might ne'er be wretched for his mind.

[Exit.]

*1st Lord.* Where be our men? 171

*Serv.* Here, my lord, in readiness.

*2nd Lord.* Our horses!

*Re-enter FLAVIUS, with the casket.*

*Tim.* O my friends,  
I have one word to say to you. Look you, my  
good lord,  
I must entreat you, honour me so much  
As to advance this jewel; accept it and wear it,  
Kind my lord.  
*1st Lord.* I am so far already in your gifts—  
*All.* So are we all.

*Enter a SERVANT.*

*Serv.* My lord, there are certain nobles of the  
Senate 180  
Newly alighted, and come to visit you.

*Tim.* They are fairly welcome.

*Flav.* I beseech your honour,  
Vouchsafe me a word; it does concern you near.

*Tim.* Near! why then, another time I'll hear  
thee.

I prithee, let's be provided to show them enter-  
tainment.

*Flav.* [*Aside*] I scarce know how.

*Enter a SECOND SERVANT.*

*2nd Serv.* May it please your honour, Lord  
Lucius,

Out of his free love, hath presented to you  
Four milk-white horses, trapp'd in silver.

*Tim.* I shall accept them fairly; let the presents  
Be worthily entertain'd.

*Enter a THIRD SERVANT.*

How now! what news? 191  
*3rd Serv.* Please you, my lord, that honourable  
gentleman, Lord Lucullus, entreats your com-  
pany to-morrow to hunt with him, and has sent  
your honour two brace of greyhounds.

*Tim.* I'll hunt with him; and let them be re-  
ceived,

Not without fair reward.

*Flav.* [*Aside*] What will this come to?  
He commands us to provide, and give great gifts,  
And all out of an empty coffer.

Nor will he know his purse, or yield me this, 200  
To show him what a beggar his heart is,  
Being of no power to make his wishes good.  
His promises fly so beyond his state  
That what he speaks is all in debt; he owes  
For every word. He is so kind that he now  
Pays interest for't; his land's put to their books.  
Well, would I were gently put out of office  
Before I were forced out!

Happier is he that has no friend to feed  
Than such that do e'en enemies exceed. 210  
I bleed inwardly for my lord.

*Exit.*

*Tim.*

You do yourselves  
Much wrong, you bate too much of your own  
merits.

Here, my lord, a trifle of our love.

*2nd Lord.* With more than common thanks I  
will receive it.

*3rd Lord.* O, he's the very soul of bounty!

*Tim.* And now I remember, my lord, you  
gave

Good words the other day of a bay courser  
I rode on. It is yours, because you liked it.

*2nd Lord.* O, I beseech you, pardon me, my  
lord, in that.

*Tim.* You may take my word, my lord; I know,  
no man 220

Can justly praise but what he does affect.

I weigh my friend's affection with mine own;  
I'll tell you true. I'll call to you.

*All Lords.* O, none so welcome.

*Tim.* I take all and your several visitations  
So kind to heart, 'tis not enough to give;  
Methinks, I could deal kingdoms to my friends,  
And ne'er be weary. Alcibiades,  
Thou art a soldier, therefore seldom rich;  
It comes in charity to thee. For all thy living  
Is 'mongst the dead, and all the lands thou hast  
Lie in a pitch'd field.

*Alcib.* Ay, defiled land, my lord. 231

*1st Lord.* We are so virtuously bound—

*Tim.* And so  
Am I to you.

*2nd Lord.* So infinitely endear'd—

*Tim.* All to you. Lights, more lights!

*1st Lord.* The best of happiness,  
Honour and fortunes, keep with you, Lord  
Timon!

*Tim.* Ready for his friends.

[*Exeunt all but APEMANTUS and TIMON.*]

*Apem.* What a coil's here!  
Serving of becks and jutting-out of bums!

I doubt whether their legs be worth the sums  
That are given for 'em. Friendship's full of dregs.  
Methinks, false hearts should never have sound  
legs.

Thus honest fools lay out their wealth on court'-  
sies.

*Tim.* Now, Apemantus, if thou wert not sullen,  
I would be good to thee.

*Apem.* No, I'll nothing. For if I should be bribed  
too, there would be none left to rail upon thee,  
and then thou wouldst sin the faster. Thou givest  
so long, Timon, I fear me thou wilt give away  
thyself in paper shortly. What need these feasts,  
pomps, and vain-glories? 249

*Tim.* Nay, an you begin to rail on society once,  
I am sworn not to give regard to you.



Farewell; and come with better music. [Exit.

*Apern.* So;

Thou wilt not hear me now; thou shalt not then;

I'll lock thy heaven from thee.

O, that men's ears should be

To counsel deaf, but not to flattery! [Exit.

## ACT II

### SCENE I. *A Senator's house*

*Enter SENATOR, with papers in his hand.*

*Sen.* And late, five thousand; to Varro and to Isidore

He owes nine thousand; besides my former sum,

Which makes it five and twenty. Still in motion

Of raging waste? It cannot hold; it will not.

If I want gold, steal but a beggar's dog,

And give it Timon, why, the dog coins gold.

If I would sell my horse, and buy twenty more

Better than he, why, give my horse to Timon,

Ask nothing, give it him, it foals me, straight,

And able horses. No porter at his gate, 10

But rather one that smiles and still invites

All that pass by. It cannot hold; no reason

Can found his state in safety. Caphis, ho!

Caphis, I say!

*Enter CAPHIS.*

*Caph.* Here, sir; what is your pleasure?

*Sen.* Get on your cloak, and haste you to Lord Timon;

Importune him for my moneys; be not ceased

With slight denial, nor then silenced when—

“Commend me to your master,” and the cap

Plays in the right hand, thus; but tell him,

My uses cry to me, I must serve my turn 20

Out of mine own; his days and times are past

And my reliances on his fracted dates

Have smit my credit. I love and honour him,

But must not break my back to heal his finger;

Immediate are my needs, and my relief

Must not be toss'd and turn'd to me in words,

But find supply immediate. Get you gone.

Put on a most importunate aspect,

A visage of demand; for, I do fear,

When every feather sticks in his own wing, 30

Lord Timon will be left a naked gull,

Which flashes now a phoenix. Get you gone.

*Caph.* I go, sir.

*Sen.* “I go, sir!” Take the bonds along with you,

And have the dates in compt.

*Caph.*

I will, sir.

*Sen.*

Go. [Exeunt.

SCENE II. *The same: a hall in Timon's house*

*Enter FLAVIUS, with many bills in his hand.*

*Flavius.* No care, no stop! so senseless of expense,

That he will neither know how to maintain it,

Nor cease his flow of riot; takes no account

How things go from him, nor resumes no care

Of what is to continue; never mind

Was to be so unwise, to be so kind.

What shall be done? He will not hear, till feel.

I must be round with him, now he comes from hunting.

Fie, fie, fie, fie!

*Enter CAPHIS, and the SERVANTS of ISIDORE and VARRO.*

*Caph.* Good even, Varro. What,

You come for money?

*Var. Serv.* Is 't not your business too? 10

*Caph.* It is; and yours too, Isidore?

*Isid. Serv.* It is so.

*Caph.* Would we were all discharged!

*Var. Serv.* I fear it.

*Caph.* Here comes the lord.

*Enter TIMON, ALCIBIADES, and LORDS, &c.*

*Tim.* So soon as dinner's done, we'll forth again,

My Alcibiades. With me? What is your will?

*Caph.* My lord, here is a note of certain dues.

*Tim.* Dues! Whence are you?

*Caph.* Of Athens here, my lord.

*Tim.* Go to my steward.

*Caph.* Please it your lordship, he hath put me off

To the succession of new days this month. 20

My master is awaked by great occasion

To call upon his own, and humbly prays you

That with your other noble parts you'll suit

In giving him his right.

*Tim.* Mine honest friend,

I prithee, but repair to me next morning.

*Caph.* Nay, good my lord—

*Tim.* Contain thyself, good friend.

*Var. Serv.* One Varro's servant, my good lord—

*Isid. Serv.* From Isidore;

He humbly prays your speedy payment.

*Caph.* If you did know, my lord, my master's wants—

*Var. Serv.* 'Twas due on forfeiture, my lord, six weeks 30

And past.

*Isid. Serv.* Your steward puts me off, my lord;

And I am sent expressly to your lordship.

*Tim.* Give me breath.

That I might so have rated my expense,  
As I had leave of means?

*Flav.* You would not hear me,  
At many leisures I proposed.

*Tim.* Go to.  
Perchance some single vantages you took,  
When my indisposition put you back;  
And that unaptness made your minister, 140  
Thus to excuse yourself.

*Flav.* O my good lord,  
At many times I brought in my accounts,  
Laid them before you; you would throw them  
off,  
And say you found them in mine honesty.  
When, for some trifling present, you have bid me  
Return so much, I have shook my head and  
wept;

Yea, 'gainst the authority of manners, pray'd you  
To hold your hand more close. I did endure  
Nor seldom, nor no slight checks, when I have  
Prompted you in the ebb of your estate 150  
And your great flow of debts. My loved lord,  
Though you hear now, too late—yet now's a  
time—

The greatest of your having lacks a half  
To pay your present debts.

*Tim.* Let all my land be sold.  
*Flav.* 'Tis all engaged, some forfeited and gone;  
And what remains will hardly stop the mouth  
Of present dues. The future comes apace;  
What shall defend the interim? and at length  
How goes our reckoning?

*Tim.* To Lacedæmon did my land extend. 160

*Flav.* O my good lord, the world is but a word;  
Were it all yours to give it in a breath,  
How quickly were it gone!

*Tim.* You tell me true.

*Flav.* If you suspect my husbandry or falsehood,  
Call me before the exactest auditors  
And set me on the proof. So the gods bless me,  
When all our offices have been oppress'd  
With riotous feeders, when our vaults have wept  
With drunken spilth of wine, when every room  
Hath blazed with lights and bray'd with min-  
streelsy, 170

I have retired me to a wasteful cock,  
And set mine eyes at flow.

*Tim.* Prithee, no more.

*Flav.* Heavens, have I said, the bounty of this  
lord!

How many prodigal bits have slaves and peas-  
ants

This night englutted! Who is not Timon's?  
What heart, head, sword, force, means, but is  
Lord Timon's?

Great Timon, noble, worthy, royal Timon!

Ah, when the means are gone that buy this praise,  
The breath is gone whereof this praise is made.  
Feast-won, fast-lost; one cloud of winter show-  
ers,

These flies are couch'd.

*Tim.* Come, sermon me no further.  
No villainous bounty yet hath pass'd my heart;  
Unwisely, not ignobly, have I given.

Why dost thou weep? Canst thou the conscience  
lack,

To think I shall lack friends? Secure thy heart;  
If I would broach the vessels of my love,  
And try the argument of hearts by borrowing,  
Men and men's fortunes could I frankly use  
As I can bid thee speak.

*Flav.* Assurance bless your thoughts!

*Tim.* And, in some sort, these wants of mine  
are crown'd, 190

That I account them blessings; for by these  
Shall I try friends. You shall perceive how you  
Mistake my fortunes; I am wealthy in my  
friends.

Within there! Flaminius! Servilius!

*Enter FLAMINIUS, SERVILIUS, and other  
SERVANTS.*

*Servants.* My lord? my lord?

*Tim.* I will dispatch you severally; you to Lord  
Lucius; to Lord Lucullus you, I hunted with his  
honour to-day; you, to Sempronius. Commend  
me to their loves, and, I am proud, say, that my  
occasions have found time to use 'em toward a  
supply of money. Let the request be fifty talents.

*Flam.* As you have said, my lord.

*Flav.* [Aside] Lord Lucius and Lucullus? hum!

*Tim.* Go you, sir, to the senators—

Of whom, even to the state's best health, I have  
Deserved this hearing—bid 'em send o' the in-  
stant

A thousand talents to me.

*Flav.* I have been bold—  
For that I knew it the most general way—  
To them to use your signet and your name; 210  
But they do shake their heads, and I am here  
No richer in return.

*Tim.* Is't true? can't be?

*Flav.* They answer, in a joint and corporate  
voice,

That now they are at fall, want treasure, cannot  
Do what they would; are sorry—you are hon-  
ourable—

But yet they could have wish'd—they know  
not—

Something hath been amiss—a noble nature  
May catch a wrench—would all were well—'tis  
pity—



And so, intending other serious matters,  
After distasteful looks and these hard fractions,  
With certain half-caps and cold-moving nods  
They froze me into silence.

*Tim.* You gods, reward them!

Prithee, man, look cheerly. These old fellows  
Have their ingratitude in them hereditary.  
Their blood is caked, 'tis cold, it seldom flows;  
'Tis lack of kindly warmth they are not kind;  
And nature, as it grows again toward earth,  
Is fashion'd for the journey, dull and heavy.  
[*To a SERVANT*] Go to Ventidius. [*To FLAVIUS*]

Prithee, be not sad, 229  
Thou art true and honest; ingeniously I speak,  
No blame belongs to thee. [*To SERVANT*] Ventidius lately

Buried his father; by whose death he's stepp'd  
Into a great estate. When he was poor,  
Imprison'd, and in scarcity of friends,  
I clear'd him with five talents. Greet him from me;

Bid him suppose some good necessity  
Touches his friend, which craves to be remember'd

With those five talents [*Exit SERVANT*]. [*To FLAVIUS*] That had, give 't these fellows

To whom 'tis instant due. Ne'er speak, or think,  
That Timon's fortunes 'mong his friends can sink.

*Flav.* I would I could not think it. That thought  
is bounty's foe;  
Being free itself, it thinks all others so. [*Exeunt.*]

### ACT III

#### SCENE I. *A room in Lucullus' house*

FLAMINIUS waiting. Enter a SERVANT to him.

*Serv.* I have told my lord of you; he is coming down to you.

*Flam.* I thank you, sir.

Enter LUCULLUS.

*Serv.* Here's my lord.

*Lucul.* [*Aside*] One of Lord Timon's men? a gift, I warrant. Why, this hits right; I dreamt of a silver basin and ewer to-night. Flaminius, honest Flaminius; you are very respectively welcome, sir. Fill me some wine. [*Exit SERVANT.*]  
And how does that honourable, complete, free-hearted gentleman of Athens, thy very bountiful good lord and master? 11

*Flam.* His health is well, sir.

*Lucul.* I am right glad that his health is well, sir. And what hast thou there under thy cloak, pretty Flaminius?

*Flam.* 'Faith, nothing but an empty box, sir;

which, in my lord's behalf, I come to entreat your honour to supply; who, having great and instant occasion to use fifty talents, hath sent to your lordship to furnish him, nothing doubting your present assistance therein. 21

*Lucul.* La, la, la, la! "nothing doubting," says he? Alas, good lord! a noble gentleman 'tis, if he would not keep so good a house. Many a time and often I ha' dined with him, and told him on't, and come again to supper to him, of purpose to have him spend less, and yet he would embrace no counsel, take no warning by my coming. Every man has his fault, and honesty is his. I ha' told him on 't, but I could ne'er get him from 't. 31

*Re-enter SERVANT, with wine.*

*Serv.* Please your lordship, here is the wine.

*Lucul.* Flaminius, I have noted thee always wise. Here's to thee.

*Flam.* Your lordship speaks your pleasure.

*Lucul.* I have observed thee always for a towardly prompt spirit—give thee thy due—and one that knows what belongs to reason; and canst use the time well, if the time use thee well; good parts in thee. [*To SERVANT*] Get you gone, sirrah [*Exit SERVANT*]. Draw nearer, honest Flaminius. Thy lord's a bountiful gentleman; but thou art wise; and thou knowest well enough, although thou comest to me, that this is no time to lend money, especially upon bare friendship, without security. Here's three solidares for thee; good boy, wink at me, and say thou sawest me not. Fare thee well.

*Flam.* Is 't possible the world should so much differ,

And we alive that lived? Fly, damned baseness,  
To him that worships thee! 51

*Throwing the money back.*

*Lucul.* Ha! now I see thou art a fool, and fit for thy master. [*Exit.*]

*Flam.* May these add to the number that may scald thee!

Let molten coin be thy damnation,  
Thou disease of a friend, and not himself!  
Has friendship such a faint and milky heart,  
It turns in less than two nights? O you gods,  
I feel my master's passion! this slave,  
Unto his honour, has my lord's meat in him. 60  
Why should it thrive and turn to nutriment,  
When he is turn'd to poison?

O, may diseases only work upon 't!  
And, when he's sick to death, let not that part of nature

Which my lord paid for, be of any power  
To expel sickness, but prolong his hour! [*Exit.*]

SCENE II. *A public place**Enter LUCIUS, with THREE STRANGERS.*

*Luc.* Who, the Lord Timon? He is my very good friend, and an honourable gentleman.

*1st Stran.* We know him for no less, though we are but strangers to him. But I can tell you one thing, my lord, and which I hear from common rumours: now Lord Timon's happy hours are done and past, and his estate shrinks from him.

*Luc.* Fie, no, do not believe it; he cannot want for money. 10

*2nd Stran.* But believe you this, my lord, that, not long ago, one of his men was with the Lord Lucullus to borrow so many talents, nay, urged extremely for 't and showed what necessity belonged to 't, and yet was denied.

*Luc.* How!

*2nd Stran.* I tell you, denied, my lord.

*Luc.* What a strange case was that! now, before the gods, I am ashamed on 't. Denied that honourable man! there was very little honour showed in 't. For my own part, I must needs confess, I have received some small kindnesses from him, as money, plate, jewels, and such-like trifles, nothing comparing to his; yet, had he mistook him and sent to me, I should ne'er have denied his occasion so many talents.

*Enter SERVILIUS.*

*Ser.* See, by good hap, yonder's my lord; I have sweat to see his honour. My honoured lord—  
[*To LUCIUS.*]

*Luc.* Servilius! you are kindly met, sir. Fare thee well. Commend me to thy honourable virtuous lord, my very exquisite friend.

*Ser.* May it please your honour, my lord hath sent—

*Luc.* Ha! what has he sent? I am so much endeared to that lord; he's ever sending. How shall I thank him, thinkest thou? And what has he sent now?

*Ser.* Has only sent his present occasion now, my lord; requesting your lordship to supply his instant use with so many talents. 41

*Luc.* I know his lordship is but merry with me; He cannot want fifty-five hundred talents.

*Ser.* But in the mean time he wants less, my lord. If his occasion were not virtuous, I should not urge it half so faithfully.

*Luc.* Dost thou speak seriously, Servilius?

*Ser.* Upon my soul, 'tis true, sir.

*Luc.* What a wicked beast was I to disfigure myself against such a good time, when I might ha' shown myself honourable! How unluckily it happened that I should purchase the day before

for a little part, and undo a great deal of honour! Servilius, now, before the gods, I am not able to do—the more beast, I say. I was sending to use Lord Timon myself, these gentlemen can witness; but I would not, for the wealth of Athens, I had done 't now. Commend me bountifully to his good lordship; and I hope his honour will conceive the fairest of me, because I have no power to be kind; and tell him this from me, I count it one of my greatest afflictions, say, that I cannot pleasure such an honourable gentleman. Good Servilius, will you befriend me so far as to use mine own words to him?

*Ser.* Yes, sir, I shall.

*Luc.* I'll look you out a good turn, Servilius.

*[Exit SERVILIUS.]*

True, as you said, Timon is shrunk indeed; And he that's once denied will hardly speed.

*[Exit.]*

*1st Stran.* Do you observe this, Hostilius?

*2nd Stran.* Ay, too well. 70

*1st Stran.* Why, this is the world's soul; and just of the same piece

Is every flatterer's spirit. Who can call him His friend that dips in the same dish? for, in My knowing, Timon has been this lord's father, And kept his credit with his purse, Supported his estate; nay, Timon's money Has paid his men their wages. He ne'er drinks, But Timon's silver treads upon his lip; And yet—O, see the monstrousness of man When he looks out in an ungrateful shape!— 80 He does deny him, in respect of his, What charitable men afford to beggars.

*3rd Stran.* Religion groans at it.

*1st Stran.* For mine own part,

I never tasted Timon in my life, Nor came any of his bounties over me, To mark me for his friend; yet, I protest, For his right noble mind, illustrious virtue And honourable carriage, Had his necessity made use of me, I would have put my wealth into donation, 90 And the best half should have return'd to him, So much I love his heart. But I perceive Men must learn now with pity to dispense, For policy sits above conscience. [Exeunt.]

SCENE III. *A room in Sempronius' house**Enter SEMPRONIUS, and a SERVANT of TIMON'S.*

*Sem.* Must he needs trouble me in 't—hum!— 'bove all others?

He might have tried Lord Lucius or Lucullus; And now Ventidius is wealthy too, Whom he redeem'd from prison. All these Owe their estates unto him.



*Serv.* My lord,  
They have all been touch'd and found base metal,  
for  
They have all denied him.

*Sem.* How! have they denied him?  
Has Ventidius and Lucullus denied him?  
And does he send to me? Three? hum!  
It shows but little love or judgement in him. 10  
Must I be his last refuge? His friends, like physi-  
cians,  
Thrice give him over; must I take the cure upon  
me?

Has much disgraced me in 't; I'm angry at him,  
That might have known my place. I see no sense  
for 't,  
But his occasions might have woo'd me first;  
For, in my conscience, I was the first man  
That e'er received gift from him;  
And does he think so backwardly of me now,  
That I'll requite it last? No!

So it may prove an argument of laughter 20  
To the rest, and 'mongst lords I be thought a fool.  
I'd rather than the worth of thrice the sum,  
Had sent to me first, but for my mind's sake;  
I'd sent such a courage to do him good. But now re-  
turn,

And with their faint reply this answer join;  
Who bates mine honour shall not know my coin.  
[Exit.

*Serv.* Excellent! Your lordship's a goodly vil-  
lain. The devil knew not what he did when he  
made man politic; he crossed himself by 't; and I  
cannot think but, in the end, the villanies of man  
will set him clear. How fairly this lord strives to  
appear foul! takes virtuous copies to be wicked,  
like those that under hot ardent zeal would set  
whole realms on fire;

Of such a nature is his politic love.  
This was my lord's best hope; now all are fled,  
Save only the gods. Now his friends are dead,  
Doors, that were ne'er acquainted with their  
wards

Many a bounteous year, must be employ'd  
Now to guard sure their master. 40  
And this is all a liberal course allows;  
Who cannot keep his wealth must keep his  
house. [Exit.

SCENE IV. *The same: a hall in Timon's house*

Enter TWO SERVANTS of VARRO, and the SERVANT  
of LUCIUS, meeting TITUS, HORTENSIVS, and  
other SERVANTS of TIMON'S creditors, waiting his  
coming out.

1st Var. *Serv.* Well met; good morrow, Titus  
and Hortensius.

Tit. The like to you, kind Varro.

*Hor.* Lucius!  
What, do we meet together?  
*Luc. Serv.* Ay, and I think  
One business does command us all; for mine  
Is money.  
Tit. So is theirs and ours.

Enter PHILOTUS.

*Luc. Serv.* And Sir Philotus too!  
*Phi.* Good day at once.  
*Luc. Serv.* Welcome, good brother.  
What do you think the hour?  
*Phi.* Labouring for nine.  
*Luc. Serv.* So much?  
*Phi.* Is not my lord seen yet?  
*Luc. Serv.* Not yet.  
*Phi.* I wonder on 't; he was wont to shine at  
seven. 10  
*Luc. Serv.* Ay, but the days are wax'd shorter  
with him.

You must consider that a prodigal course  
Is like the sun's; but not, like his, recoverable.  
I fear 'tis deepest winter in Lord Timon's purse;  
That is, one may reach deep enough, and yet  
Find little.

*Phi.* I am of your fear for that.  
Tit. I'll show you how to observe a strange  
event.

Your lord sends now for money.  
*Hor.* Most true, he does.  
Tit. And he wears jewels now of Timon's gift,  
For which I wait for money. 20  
*Hor.* It is against my heart.

*Luc. Serv.* Mark, how strange it shows,  
Timon in this should pay more than he owes;  
And e'en as if your lord should wear rich jewels,  
And send for money for 'em.

*Hor.* I'm weary of this charge, the gods can wit-  
ness.

I know my lord hath spent of Timon's wealth,  
And now ingratitude makes it worse than stealth.

1st Var. *Serv.* Yes, mine's three thousand  
crowns. What's yours?

*Luc. Serv.* Five thousand mine.  
1st Var. *Serv.* 'Tis much deep; and it should  
seem by the sum, 30

Your master's confidence was above mine;  
Else, surely, his had equall'd.

Enter FLAMINIUS.

Tit. One of Lord Timon's men.  
*Luc. Serv.* Flaminius! Sir, a word. Pray, is my  
lord ready to come forth?

*Flam.* No, indeed, he is not.

Tit. We attend his lordship; pray, signify so  
much.

*Flam.* I need not tell him that; he knows you are too diligent. [Exit. 40

*Enter FLAVIUS in a cloak, muffled.*

*Luc. Serv.* Ha! is not that his steward muffled so?

He goes away in a cloud. Call him, call him.

*Tit.* Do you hear, sir?

*2nd Var. Serv.* By your leave, sir—

*Flav.* What do ye ask of me, my friend?

*Tit.* We wait for certain money here, sir.

*Flav.* Ay,

If money were as certain as your waiting,

'Twere sure enough.

Why then prefer'd you not your sums and bills,

When your false masters eat of my lord's meat?

Then they could smile and fawn upon his debts 51

And take down the interest into their gluttonous maws.

You do yourselves but wrong to stir me up;

Let me pass quietly.

Believe't, my lord and I have made an end;

I have no more to reckon, he to spend.

*Luc. Serv.* Ay, but this answer will not serve.

*Flav.* If 'twill not serve, 'tis not so base as you; For you serve knaves. [Exit. 61

*1st Var. Serv.* How! what does his cashiered workshop mutter?

*2nd Var. Serv.* No matter what; he's poor, and that's revenge enough. Who can speak broader than he that has no house to put his head in? such may rail against great buildings.

*Enter SERVILIUS.*

*Tit.* O, here's Servilius; now we shall know some answer.

*Ser.* If I might beseech you, gentlemen, to repair some other hour, I should derive much from 't; for, take 't of my soul, my lord leans wondrously to discontent. His comfortable temper has forsook him; he's much out of health, and keeps his chamber.

*Luc. Serv.* Many do keep their chambers are not sick:

And, if it be so far beyond his health, Methinks he should the sooner pay his debts, And make a clear way to the gods.

*Ser.* Good gods!

*Tit.* We cannot take this for answer, sir.

*Flam.* [Within] Servilius, help! My lord! my lord!

*Enter TIMON, in a rage; FLAMINIUS following.*

*Tim.* What, are my doors opposed against my passage? 80

Have I been ever free, and must my house

Be my retentive enemy, my gaol?

The place which I have feasted, does it now, Like all mankind, show me an iron heart?

*Luc. Serv.* Put in now, Titus.

*Tit.* My lord, here is my bill.

*Luc. Serv.* Here's mine.

*Hor.* And mine, my lord.

*Both Var. Serv.* And ours, my lord.

*Phi.* All our bills. 90

*Tim.* Knock me down with 'em! Cleave me to the girdle.

*Luc. Serv.* Alas, my lord—

*Tim.* Cut my heart in sums.

*Tit.* Mine, fifty talents.

*Tim.* Tell out my blood.

*Luc. Serv.* Five thousand crowns, my lord.

*Tim.* Five thousand drops pays that. What yours? and yours?

*1st Var. Serv.* My lord—

*2nd Var. Serv.* My lord—

*Tim.* Tear me, take me, and the gods fall upon you! [Exit. 100

*Hor.* 'Faith, I perceive our masters may throw their caps at their money. These debts may well be called desperate ones, for a madman owes 'em. [Exeunt. 110

*Re-enter TIMON and FLAVIUS.*

*Tim.* They have e'en put my breath from me, the slaves.

Creditors? devils!

*Flav.* My dear lord—

*Tim.* What if it should be so?

*Flav.* My lord—

*Tim.* I'll have it so. My steward!

*Flav.* Here, my lord. 110

*Tim.* So fitly? Go, bid all my friends again,

Lucius, Lucullus, and Sempronius;

All, sirrah, all.

I'll once more feast the rascals.

*Flav.*

O my lord,

You only speak from your distracted soul;

There is not so much left, to furnish out

A moderate table.

*Tim.*

Be 't not in thy care; go, I charge thee, invite them all. Let in the tide Of knaves once more; my cook and I'll provide. [Exeunt. 110

SCENE V. *The same: the Senate-house*

*The Senate sitting.*

*1st Sen.* My lord, you have my voice to it; the fault's

Bloody; 'tis necessary he should die.

Nothing emboldens sin so much as mercy.

*2nd Sen.* Most true; the law shall bruise him.



*Alcib.*

Banish me!

Banish your dotage; banish usury,

That makes the Senate ugly. 100

*1st Sen.* If, after two days' shine, Athens contain thee,

Attend our weightier judgement. And, not to swell our spirit,

He shall be executed presently.

[*Exeunt SENATORS.*]*Alcib.* Now the gods keep you old enough; that you may live

Only in bone, that none may look on you!

I'm worse than mad. I have kept back their foes,

While they have told their money and let out

Their coin upon large interest, I myself

Rich only in large hurts. All those for this?

Is this the balsam that the usuring Senate 110

Pours into captains' wounds? Banishment!

It comes not ill; I hate not to be banish'd;

It is a cause worthy my spleen and fury,

That I may strike at Athens. I'll cheer up

My discontented troops, and lay for hearts.

'Tis honour with most lands to be at odds;

Soldiers should brook as little wrongs as gods.

[*Exit.*]SCENE VI. *The same: a banqueting-room in Timon's house**Music. Tables set out: Servants attending. Enter divers LORDS, SENATORS and others, at several doors.**1st Lord.* The good time of day to you, sir.*2nd Lord.* I also wish it to you. I think this honourable lord did but try us this other day.*1st Lord.* Upon that were my thoughts tiring, when we encountered. I hope it is not so low with him as he made it seem in the trial of his several friends.*2nd Lord.* It should not be, by the persuasion of his new feasting. 9*1st Lord.* I should think so. He hath sent me an earnest inviting, which many my near occasions did urge me to put off; but he hath conjured me beyond them, and I must needs appear.*2nd Lord.* In like manner was I in debt to my importunate business, but he would not hear my excuse. I am sorry, when he sent to borrow of me, that my provision was out.*1st Lord.* I am sick of that grief too, as I understand how all things go. 20*2nd Lord.* Every man here's so. What would he have borrowed of you?*1st Lord.* A thousand pieces.*2nd Lord.* A thousand pieces!*1st Lord.* What of you?*2nd Lord.* He sent to me, sir—Here he comes.*Enter TIMON and Attendants.**Tim.* With all my heart, gentlemen both; and how fare you?*1st Lord.* Ever at the best, hearing well of your lordship. 30*2nd Lord.* The swallow follows not summer more willing than we your lordship.*Tim.* [Aside] Nor more willingly leaves winter; such summer-birds are men. Gentlemen, our dinner will not recompense this long stay. Feast your ears with the music awhile, if they will fare so harshly o' the trumpets' sound; we shall to 't presently.*1st Lord.* I hope it remains not unkindly with your lordship that I returned you an empty messenger. 41*Tim.* O, sir, let it not trouble you.*2nd Lord.* My noble lord—*Tim.* Ah, my good friend, what cheer?*2nd Lord.* My most honourable lord, I am e'en sick of shame that, when your lordship this other day sent to me, I was so unfortunate a beggar.*Tim.* Think not on 't, sir.*2nd Lord.* If you had sent but two hours before— 51*Tim.* Let it not cumber your better remembrance. [The banquet brought in.] Come, bring in all together.*2nd Lord.* All covered dishes!*1st Lord.* Royal cheer, I warrant you.*3rd Lord.* Doubt not that, if money and the season can yield it.*1st Lord.* How do you? What's the news?*3rd Lord.* Alcibiades is banished. Hear you of it? 61*1st and 2nd Lord.* Alcibiades banished!*3rd Lord.* 'Tis so, be sure of it.*1st Lord.* How! how!*2nd Lord.* I pray you, upon what?*Tim.* My worthy friends, will you draw near?*3rd Lord.* I'll tell you more anon. Here's a noble feast toward.*2nd Lord.* This is the old man still.*3rd Lord.* Will't hold? will't hold? 70*2nd Lord.* It does; but time will—and so—*3rd Lord.* I do conceive.*Tim.* Each man to his stool, with that spur as he would to the lip of his mistress; your diet shall be in all places alike. Make not a city feast of it, to let the meat cool ere we can agree upon the first place. Sit, sit. The gods require our thanks.

You great benefactors, sprinkle our society with thankfulness. For your own gifts, make yourselves praised; but reserve still to give, lest your

And give them title, knee, and approbation  
 With senators on the bench. This is it  
 That makes the wappen'd widow wed again;  
 She, whom the spital-house and ulcerous sores  
 Would cast the gorge at, this embalms and  
 spices

40

To the April day again. Come, damned earth,  
 Thou common whore of mankind, that put'st odds  
 Among the rout of nations, I will make thee  
 Do thy right nature. [*March afar off.*] Ha! a  
 drum? Thou'rt quick,  
 But yet I'll bury thee. Thou'lt go, strong thief,  
 When gouty keepers of thee cannot stand.  
 Nay, stay thou out for earnest.

*Keeping some gold.*

*Enter ALCIBIADES, with drum and fife, in warlike manner; PHRYNIA and TIMANDRA.*

*Alcib.* What art thou there? speak.

*Tim.* A beast, as thou art. The canker gnaw  
 thy heart,

For showing me again the eyes of man!

50

*Alcib.* What is thy name? Is man so hateful to  
 thee,

That art thyself a man?

*Tim.* I am Misanthropos and hate mankind.

For thy part, I do wish thou wert a dog,

That I might love thee something.

*Alcib.* I know thee well;  
 But in thy fortunes am unlearn'd and strange.

*Tim.* I know thee too; and more than that I  
 know thee,

I not desire to know. Follow thy drum;  
 With man's blood paint the ground, gules, gules!  
 Religious canons, civil laws are cruel;

60

Then what should war be? This fell whore of  
 thine

Hath in her more destruction than thy sword,  
 For all her cherubin look.

*Phry.* Thy lips rot off!

*Tim.* I will not kiss thee; then the rot returns  
 To thine own lips again.

*Alcib.* How came the noble Timon to this  
 change?

*Tim.* As the moon does, by wanting light to  
 give.

But then renew I could not, like the moon;  
 There were no suns to borrow of.

*Alcib.* Noble Timon,  
 What friendship may I do thee?

*Tim.* None, but to

70

Maintain my opinion.

*Alcib.* What is it, Timon?

*Tim.* Promise me friendship, but perform  
 none. If thou wilt not promise, the gods plague  
 thee, for thou art a man! If thou dost perform,

confound thee, for thou art a man!

*Alcib.* I have heard in some sort of thy miseries.

*Tim.* Thou saw'st them, when I had prosperity.

*Alcib.* I see them now; then was a blessed time.

*Tim.* As thine is now, held with a brace of  
 harlots.

*Timan.* Is this the Athenian minion, whom the  
 world

80

Voiced so regardfully?

*Tim.* Art thou Timandra?

*Timan.* Yes.

*Tim.* Be a whore still. They love thee not that  
 use thee;

Give them diseases, leaving with thee their lust.

Make use of thy salt hours; season the slaves

For tubs and baths; bring down rose-cheeked  
 youth

To the tub-fast and the diet.

*Timan.* Hang thee, monster!

*Alcib.* Pardon him, sweet Timandra; for his  
 wits

Are shrow'd and lost in his calamities.

I have but little gold of late, brave Timon,

90

The want whereof doth daily make revolt

In my penurious band. I have heard, and grieved,

How cursed Athens, mindless of thy worth,

Forgetting thy great deeds, when neighbour  
 states,

But for thy sword and fortune, trod upon them—

*Tim.* I prithee, beat thy drum, and get thee  
 gone.

*Alcib.* I am thy friend, and pity thee, dear  
 Timon.

*Tim.* How dost thou pity him whom thou dost  
 trouble?

I had rather be alone.

*Alcib.* Why, fare thee well.

Here is some gold for thee.

*Tim.* Keep it, I cannot eat it.

100

*Alcib.* When I have laid proud Athens on a  
 heap—

*Tim.* Warr'st thou 'gainst Athens?

*Alcib.* Ay, Timon, and have cause.

*Tim.* The gods confound them all in thy con-  
 quest;

And thee after, when thou hast conquer'd!

*Alcib.* Why me, Timon?

*Tim.* That, by killing of villains,  
 Thou wast born to conquer my country.

Put up thy gold. Go on. Here's gold. Go on.

Be as a planetary plague, when Jove

Will o'er some high-iced city hang his poison

In the sick air. Let not thy sword skip one.

110

Pity not honour'd age for his white beard;

He is an usurer. Strike me the counterfeit mat-  
 ron;



Thy grave-stone daily; make thine epitaph 380  
That death in me at others' lives may laugh.

[*To the gold*] O thou sweet king-killer, and dear divorce

'Twixt natural son and sire! thou bright defiler  
Of Hymen's purest bed! thou valiant Mars!  
Thou ever young, fresh, loved, and delicate wooer,

Whose blush doth thaw the consecrated snow  
That lies in Dian's lap! thou visible god,  
That soldier'st close impossibilities,  
And makest them kiss! that speak'st with every tongue,

To every purpose! O thou touch of hearts! 390  
Think, thy slave man rebels, and by thy virtue  
Set them into confounding odds, that beasts  
May have the world in empire!

*Apem.* Would 'twere so!  
But not till I am dead. I'll say thou'st gold.  
Thou wilt be throng'd to shortly.

*Tim.* Throng'd to! *Ay.*  
*Apem.*

*Tim.* Thy back, I prithee.

*Apem.* Live, and love thy misery.

*Tim.* Long live so, and so die. [*Exit APEMAN-  
TUS.*] I am quit.

Moe things like men! Eat, Timon, and abhor them.

*Enter BANDITTI.*

*1st Ban.* Where should he have this gold? It is some poor fragment, some slender ort of his remainder. The mere want of gold, and the falling-from of his friends, drove him into this melancholy.

*2nd Ban.* It is noised he hath a mass of treasure.

*3rd Ban.* Let us make the assay upon him. If he care not for't, he will supply us easily; if he covetously reserve it, how shall's get it?

*2nd Ban.* True; for he bears it not about him, 'tis hid.

*1st Ban.* Is not this he? 410  
*Banditti.* Where?

*2nd Ban.* 'Tis his description.

*3rd Ban.* He; I know him.

*Banditti.* Save thee, Timon.

*Tim.* Now, thieves?

*Banditti.* Soldiers, not thieves.

*Tim.* Both too; and women's sons.

*Banditti.* We are not thieves, but men that much do want.

*Tim.* Your greatest want is, you want much of meat.

Why should you want? Behold, the earth hath roots; 420  
Within this mile break forth a hundred springs;

The oaks bear mast, the briers scarlet hips;  
The bounteous housewife, Nature, on each bush  
Lays her full mess before you. Want! why want?  
*1st Ban.* We cannot live on grass, on berries,  
water,

As beasts and birds and fishes.

*Tim.* Nor on the beasts themselves, the birds,  
and fishes;

You must eat men. Yet thanks I must you con  
That you are thieves profess'd, that you work not  
In holier shapes: for there is boundless theft 430  
In limited professions. Rascal thieves,  
Here's gold. Go, suck the subtle blood o' the  
grape,

Till the high fever seethe your blood to froth,  
And so 'scape hanging. Trust not the physician;  
His antidotes are poison, and he slays  
Moe than you rob. Take wealth and lives to-  
gether;

Do villainy, do, since you protest to do't.  
Like workmen. I'll example you with thievery:  
The sun's a thief, and with his great attraction  
Robs the vast sea; the moon's an arrant thief, 440  
And her pale fire she snatches from the sun;  
The sea's a thief, whose liquid surge resolves  
The moon into salt tears; the earth's a thief,  
That feeds and breeds by a composture stolen  
From general excrement; each thing's a thief;  
The laws, your curb and whip, in their rough  
power

Have uncheck'd theft. Love not yourselves.

Away,  
Rob one another. There's more gold. Cut  
throats.

All that you meet are thieves. To Athens go,  
Break open shops; nothing can you steal, 450  
But thieves do lose it. Steal no less for this  
I give you; and gold confound you howsoever!  
Amen.

*3rd Ban.* Has almost charmed me from my  
profession, by persuading me to it.

*1st Ban.* 'Tis in the malice of mankind that he  
thus advises us; not to have us thrive in our  
mystery.

*2nd Ban.* I'll believe him as an enemy, and give  
over my trade. 460

*1st Ban.* Let us first see peace in Athens. There  
is no time so miserable but a man may be true.

[*Exeunt BANDITTI.*]

*Enter FLAVIUS.*

*Flav.* O you gods!  
Is yond despised and ruinous man my lord?  
Full of decay and failing? O monument  
And wonder of good deeds evilly bestow'd!  
What an alteration of honour

Has desperate want made!  
 What viler thing upon the earth than friends 470  
 Who can bring noblest minds to basest ends!  
 How rarely does it meet with this time's guise,  
 When man was wish'd to love his enemies!  
 Grant I may ever love, and rather woo  
 Those that would mischief me than those that  
 do!

Has caught me in his eye. I will present  
 My honest grief unto him; and, as my lord,  
 Still serve him with my life. My dearest master!

*Tim.* Away! what art thou?

*Flav.* Have you forgot me, sir?

*Tim.* Why dost ask that? I have forgot all  
 men; 480

Then, if thou grant'st thou'rt a man, I have for-  
 got thee.

*Flav.* An honest poor servant of yours.

*Tim.* Then I know thee not.

I never had honest man about me, I; all  
 I kept were knaves, to serve in meat to villains.

*Flav.* The gods are witness,  
 Ne'er did poor steward wear a truer grief  
 For his undone lord than mine eyes for you.

*Tim.* What, dost thou weep? Come nearer.

Then I love thee,

Because thou art a woman and disclaim'st 490  
 Flinty mankind, whose eyes do never give  
 But thorough lust and laughter. Pity's sleeping:  
 Strange times, that weep with laughing, not with  
 weeping!

*Flav.* I beg of you to know me, good my lord,  
 To accept my grief and whilst this poor wealth  
 lasts

To entertain me as your steward still.

*Tim.* Had I a steward

So true, so just, and now so comfortable?  
 It almost turns my dangerous nature mild.  
 Let me behold thy face. Surely, this man 500  
 Was born of woman.

Forgive my general and exceptless rashness,  
 You perpetual-sober gods! I do proclaim  
 One honest man—mistake me not—but one;  
 No more, I pray—and he's a steward.  
 How fain would I have hated all mankind!  
 And thou redeem'st thyself; but all, save thee,  
 I fell with curses.

Methinks thou art more honest now than wise;  
 For, by oppressing and betraying me, 510  
 Thou mightst have sooner got another service;  
 For many so arrive at second masters,  
 Upon their first lord's neck. But tell me true—  
 For I must ever doubt, though ne'er so sure—  
 Is not thy kindness subtle, covetous,  
 If not a usuring kindness, and, as rich men deal  
 gifts,

Expecting in return twenty for one?

*Flav.* No, my most worthy master; in whose  
 breast

Doubt and suspect, alas, are placed too late.

You should have fear'd false times when you did  
 feast; 520

Suspect still comes where an estate is least.

That which I show, Heaven knows, is merely  
 love,

Duty, and zeal to your unmatched mind,  
 Care of your food and living; and, believe it,  
 My most honour'd lord,

For any benefit that points to me,

Either in hope or present, I'd exchange

For this one wish, that you had power and wealth  
 To requite me, by making rich yourself.

*Tim.* Look thee, 'tis so! Thou singly honest  
 man, 530

Here, take. The gods out of my misery  
 Have sent thee treasure. Go, live rich and happy;  
 But thus condition'd; thou shalt build from men;  
 Hate all, curse all, show charity to none,  
 But let the famish'd flesh slide from the bone  
 Ere thou relieve the beggar; give to dogs  
 What thou deny'st to men; let prisons swallow  
 'em,

Debts wither 'em to nothing; be men like blasted  
 woods,

And may diseases lick up their false bloods!

And so farewell and thrive.

*Flav.* O, let me stay, 540  
 And comfort you, my master.

*Tim.* If thou hatest curses,  
 Stay not; fly, whilst thou art blest and free.

Ne'er see thou man, and let me ne'er see thee.

[Exit FLAVIUS. TIMON retires to his cave.]

## ACT V

### SCENE I. *The woods: Before Timon's cave*

*Enter POET and PAINTER; TIMON watching them  
 from his cave.*

*Pain.* As I took note of the place, it cannot be  
 far where he abides.

*Poet.* What's to be thought of him? Does the  
 rumour hold for true that he's so full of gold?

*Pain.* Certain. Alcibiades reports it; Phrynia  
 and Timandra had gold of him. He likewise en-  
 riched poor straggling soldiers with great quan-  
 tity. 'Tis said he gave unto his steward a mighty  
 sum.

*Poet.* Then this breaking of his has been but a  
 try for his friends. 11

*Pain.* Nothing else. You shall see him a palm in  
 Athens again, and flourish with the highest.  
 Therefore 'tis not amiss we tender our loves to



Hang them or stab them, drown them in a draught,  
 Confound them by some course, and come to me,  
 I'll give you gold enough.

*Both.* Name them, my lord, let's know them.

*Tim.* You that way and you this, but two in company;  
 Each man apart, all single and alone, 110  
 Yet an arch-villain keeps him company.

If where thou art two villains shall not be,  
 Come not near him. If thou wouldst not reside  
 But where one villain is, then him abandon.  
 Hence, pack! there's gold; you came for gold,  
 ye slaves!

[*To PAINTER*] You have work'd for me; there's payment for you. Hence!

[*To POET*] You are an alchemist; make gold of that.

Out, rascal dogs!

*Beats them out, and then retires to his cave.*

*Enter FLAVIUS and TWO SENATORS.*

*Flav.* It is in vain that you would speak with Timon;

For he is set so only to himself 120  
 That nothing but himself which looks like man  
 Is friendly with him.

*1st Sen.* Bring us to his cave.  
 It is our part and promise to the Athenians  
 To speak with Timon.

*2nd Sen.* At all times alike  
 Men are not still the same. 'Twas time and griefs  
 That framed him thus; time, with his fairer hand,  
 Offering the fortunes of his former days,  
 The former man may make him. Bring us to him,  
 And chance it as it may.

*Flav.* Here is his cave. 129  
 Peace and content be here! Lord Timon! Timon!  
 Look out, and speak to friends. The Athenians,  
 By two of their most reverend Senate, greet thee.  
 Speak to them, noble Timon.

*TIMON comes from his cave.*

*Tim.* Thou sun, that comfort'st, burn! Speak,  
 and be hang'd.

For each true word, a blister! and each false  
 Be as a cauterizing to the root o' the tongue,  
 Consuming it with speaking!

*1st Sen.* Worthy Timon—

*Tim.* Of none but such as you, and you of Timon.

*1st Sen.* The senators of Athens greet thee,  
 Timon.

*Tim.* I thank them; and would send them back  
 the plague, 140  
 Could I but catch it for them.

*1st Sen.* O, forget  
 What we are sorry for ourselves in thee.  
 The senators with one consent of love  
 Entreat thee back to Athens; who have thought  
 On special dignities, which vacant lie  
 For thy best use and wearing.

*2nd Sen.* They confess  
 Toward thee forgetfulness too general, gross;  
 Which now the public body, which doth seldom  
 Play the recanter, feeling in itself  
 A lack of Timon's aid, hath sense withal 150  
 Of its own fail, restraining aid to Timon;  
 And send forth us, to make their sorrow'd render,  
 Together with a recompense more fruitful  
 Than their offence can weigh down by the dram;  
 Ay, even such heaps and sums of love and wealth  
 As shall to thee blot out what wrongs were theirs  
 And write in thee the figures of their love,  
 Ever to read them thine.

*Tim.* You witch me in it;  
 Surprise me to the very brink of tears.  
 Lend me a fool's heart and a woman's eyes, 160  
 And I'll bewep these comforts, worthy senators.

*1st Sen.* Therefore, so please thee to return with us

And of our Athens, thine and ours, to take  
 The captainship, thou shalt be met with thanks,  
 Allow'd with absolute power, and thy good name  
 Live with authority; so soon we shall drive back  
 Of Alcibiades the approaches wild,  
 Who, like a boar too savage, doth root up  
 His country's peace.

*2nd Sen.* And shakes his threatening sword  
 Against the walls of Athens.

*1st Sen.* Therefore, Timon— 170

*Tim.* Well, sir, I will; therefore, I will, sir;  
 thus:

If Alcibiades kill my countrymen,  
 Let Alcibiades know this of Timon,  
 That Timon care not. But if he sack fair Athens,  
 And take our goodly aged men by the beards,  
 Giving our holy virgins to the stain  
 Of contumelious, beastly, mad-brain'd war,  
 Then let him know, and tell him Timon speaks it,  
 In pity of our aged and our youth,  
 I cannot choose but tell him, that I care not, 180  
 And let him take't at worst; for their knives care  
 not,

While you have throats to answer. For myself,  
 There's not a whittle in the unruly camp  
 But I do prize it at my love before  
 The reverend'st throat in Athens. So I leave you  
 To the protection of the prosperous gods,  
 As thieves to keepers.

*Flav.* Stay not, all's in vain.

*Tim.* Why, I was writing of my epitaph;

With all licentious measure, making your wills  
The scope of justice; till now myself and such  
As slept within the shadow of your power  
Have wander'd with our traversed arms and  
breathed

Our sufferance vainly. Now the time is flush,  
When crouching marrow in the bearer strong  
Cries of itself "No more." Now breathless  
wrong

Shall sit and pant in your great chairs of ease, 11  
And pury insolence shall break his wind  
With fear and horrid flight.

1st Sen. Noble and young,  
When thy first griefs were but a mere conceit,  
Ere thou hadst power or we had cause of fear,  
We sent to thee to give thy rages balm,  
To wipe out our ingratitude with loves  
Above their quantity.

2nd Sen. So did we woo  
Transformed Timon to our city's love  
By humble message and by promised means.  
We were not all unkind, nor all deserve  
The common stroke of war.

1st Sen. These walls of ours  
Were not erected by their hands from whom  
You have received your griefs; nor are they such  
That these great towers, trophies, and schools  
should fall

For private faults in them.

2nd Sen. Nor are they living  
Who were the motives that you first went out;  
Shame that they wanted cunning, in excess  
Hath broke their hearts. March, noble lord,  
Into our city with thy banners spread. 30  
By decimation, and a tithed death—  
If thy revenges hunger for that food  
Which nature loathes—take thou the destined  
tenth,

And by the hazard of the spotted die  
Let die the spotted.

1st Sen. All have not offended;  
For those that were, it is not square to take  
On those that are, revenges; crimes, like lands,  
Are not inherited. Then, dear countryman,  
Bring in thy ranks, but leave without thy rage;  
Spare thy Athenian cradle and those kin 40  
Which in the bluster of thy wrath must fall  
With those that have offended; like a shepherd,  
Approach the fold and cull the infected forth,  
But kill not all together.

2nd Sen. What thou wilt,  
Thou rather shalt enforce it with thy smile  
Than hew to't with thy sword.

1st Sen. Set but thy foot  
Against our rampired gates, and they shall ope;  
So thou wilt send thy gentle heart before,  
To say thou'lt enter friendly.

2nd Sen. Throw thy glove,  
Or any token of thine honour else, 50  
That thou wilt use the wars as thy redress  
And not as our confusion, all thy powers  
Shall make their harbour in our town, till we  
Have seal'd thy full desire.

Alcib. Then there's my glove;  
Descend, and open your uncharged ports.  
Those enemies of Timon's and mine own  
Whom you yourselves shall set out for reproof  
Fall and no more. And, to atone your fears  
With my more noble meaning, not a man  
Shall pass his quarter, or offend the stream 60  
Of regular justice in your city's bounds,  
But shall be render'd to your public laws  
At heaviest answer.

Both. 'Tis most nobly spoken.

Alcib. Descend, and keep your words.

*The SENATORS descend, and open the gates.*

*Enter SOLDIER.*

Sold. My noble general, Timon is dead;  
Entomb'd upon the very hem o' the sea;  
And on his grave-stone this insculpture, which  
With wax I brought away, whose soft impres-  
sion

Interprets for my poor ignorance.

Alcib. [*Reads the epitaph*] "Here lies a wretched  
corse, of wretched soul bereft.

Seek not my name. A plague consume you  
wicked caitiffs left!

Here lie I, Timon; who, alive, all living men did  
hate.

Pass by and curse thy fill, but pass and stay not  
here thy gait."

These well express in thee thy latter spirits.

Though thou abhorrdst in us our human griefs,  
Scorn'dst our brain's flow and those our droplets  
which

From niggard nature fall, yet rich conceit  
Taught thee to make vast Neptune weep for aye  
On thy low grave, on faults forgiven. Dead

Is noble Timon, of whose memory 80  
Hereafter more. Bring me into your city,  
And I will use the olive with my sword,  
Make war breed peace, make peace stint war,  
make each

Prescribe to other as each other's leech.

Let our drums strike.

[*Exeunt.*]



# PERICLES, Prince of Tyre

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

GOWER, *as Chorus*  
 ANTIOCHUS, *King of Antioch*  
 PERICLES, *Prince of Tyre*  
 HELICANUS | *two lords of Tyre*  
 ESCANES  
 SIMONIDES, *King of Pentapolis*  
 CLEON, *governor of Tarsus*  
 LYSIMACHUS, *governor of Mytilene*  
 CERIMON, *a lord of Ephesus*  
 THALIARD, *a lord of Antioch*  
 PHILEMON, *servant to Cerimon*  
 LEONINE, *servant to Dionyza*  
 MARSHAL  
 A PANDAR  
 BOULT, *his servant*  
 A MESSENGER  
 THREE LORDS of Tyre  
 A LORD of Tarsus  
 THREE FISHERMEN  
 A KNIGHT, *attending on Simonides*

TWO SAILORS of Pentapolis  
 A SERVANT to Cerimon  
 THREE PIRATES  
 TWO GENTLEMEN of Mytilene  
 A SAILOR of Tyre  
 A SAILOR of Mytilene  
 FIVE KNIGHTS, *suitors to Thaisa*  
 THE DAUGHTER of Antiochus  
 DIONYZA, *wife to Cleon*  
 THAISA, *daughter to Simonides*  
 MARINA, *daughter to Pericles and Thaisa*  
 Lychorida, *nurse to Marina*  
 A BAWD  
 DIANA  
 NON-SPEAKING: *Lords, Knights, Gentlemen, Sailors, and Attendants*  
 SCENE: *Antioch, Tyre, Tarsus, Pentapolis and the sea-coast near it, Ephesus, Mytilene and the sea-coast near it, and at sea*



## ACT I

*Before the palace of Antioch*

*Enter GOWER.*

To sing a song that old was sung,  
 From ashes ancient Gower is come,  
 Assuming man's infirmities,  
 To glad your ear, and please your eyes.  
 It hath been sung at festivals,  
 On ember-eves and holy-ales;  
 And lords and ladies in their lives  
 Have read it for restoratives.  
 The purchase is to make men glorious;  
*Et bonum quo antiquius, eo melius.*  
 If you, born in these latter times  
 When wit's more ripe, accept my rhymes,  
 And that to hear an old man sing  
 May to your wishes pleasure bring,  
 I life would wish, and that I might  
 Waste it for you, like taper-light.  
 This Antioch, then, Antiochus the Great  
 Built up this city, for his chiefest seat,  
 The fairest in all Syria;  
 I tell you what mine authors say.  
 This king unto him took a fere,  
 Who died and left a female heir,  
 So buxom, blithe, and full of face,  
 As heaven had lent her all his grace;  
 With whom the father liking took,  
 And her to incest did provoke.

Bad child; worse father! to entice his own  
 To evil should be done by none.  
 But custom what they did begin  
 Was with long use account no sin. 30  
 The beauty of this sinful dame  
 Made many princes thither frame,  
 To seek her as a bed-fellow,  
 In marriage-pleasures play-fellow;  
 Which to prevent he made a law  
 To keep her still, and men in awe,  
 That whoso ask'd her for his wife,  
 His riddle told not, lost his life.  
 So for her many a wight did die,  
 As yon grim looks do testify. 40  
 What now ensues, to the judgement of your  
 eye  
 I give, my cause who best can justify. [Exit.

*SCENE I. Antioch: a room in the palace*

*Enter ANTIOCHUS, PRINCE PERICLES, and followers.*

Ant. Young prince of Tyre, you have at large  
 received  
 The danger of the task you undertake.  
 Per. I have, Antiochus, and, with a soul  
 Embolden'd with the glory of her praise,  
 Think death no hazard in this enterprise.  
 Ant. Bring in our daughter, clothed like a bride,  
 For the embracements even of Jove himself;  
 At whose conception, till Lucina reign'd,

Nature this dowry gave, to glad her presence,  
The senate-house of planets all did sit, 10  
To knit in her their best perfections.

*Music. Enter the DAUGHTER of Antiochus.*

*Per.* See where she comes, apparell'd like the  
spring,  
Graces her subjects, and her thoughts the king  
Of every virtue gives renown to men!  
Her face the book of praises, where is read  
Nothing but curious pleasures, as from thence  
Sorrow were ever razed, and testy wrath  
Could never be her mild companion.  
You gods that made me man, and sway in love,  
That have inflamed desire in my breast 20  
To taste the fruit of yon celestial tree  
Or die in the adventure, be my helps,  
As I am son and servant to your will,  
To compass such a boundless happiness!

*Ant.* Prince Pericles—

*Per.* That would be son to great Antiochus.

*Ant.* Before thee stands this fair Hesperides,  
With golden fruit, but dangerous to be touch'd;  
For death-like dragons here affright thee hard.  
Her face, like heaven, enticeth thee to view 30  
Her countless glory, which desert must gain,  
And which, without desert, because thine eye  
Presumes to reach, all thy whole heap must die.  
Yon sometimes famous princes, like thyself,  
Drawn by report, adventurous by desire,  
Tell thee, with speechless tongues and semblance  
pale,

That without covering, save yon field of stars,  
Here they stand martyrs, slain in Cupid's wars;  
And with dead cheeks advise thee to desist  
For going on death's net, whom none resist. 40

*Per.* Antiochus, I thank thee, who hath taught  
My frail mortality to know itself,  
And by those fearful objects to prepare  
This body, like to them, to what I must;  
For death remember'd should be like a mirror,  
Who tells us life's but breath, to trust it error.  
I'll make my will then, and, as sick men do  
Who know the world, see heaven, but, feeling  
woe,

Gripe not at earthly joys as erst they did;  
So I bequeath a happy peace to you 50  
And all good men, as every prince should do;  
My riches to the earth from whence they came;  
But my unspotted fire of love to you. [*To the*  
*DAUGHTER of Antiochus.*]

Thus ready for the way of life or death,  
I wait the sharpest blow, Antiochus.

*Ant.* Scorning advice, read the conclusion, then:  
Which read and not expounded, 'tis decreed,  
As these before thee, thou thyself shalt bleed.

*Daugh.* Of all say'd yet, mayst thou prove  
prosperous!

Of all say'd yet, I wish thee happiness! 60

*Per.* Like a bold champion, I assume the lists,  
Nor ask advice of any other thought  
But faithfulness and courage.

"I am no viper, yet I feed  
On mother's flesh which did me breed.

I sought a husband, in which labour

I found that kindness in a father.

He's father, son, and husband mild;

I mother, wife, and yet his child.

How they may be, and yet in two, 70  
As you will live, resolve it you."

Sharp physic is the last; but, O you powers  
That give heaven countless eyes to view men's  
acts,

Why cloud they not their sights perpetually,  
If this be true, which makes me pale to read it?

Fair glass of light, I loved you, and could still,

*Takes hold of the hand of the PRINCESS.*

Were not this glorious casket stored with ill.

But I must tell you, now my thoughts revolt;

For he's no man on whom perfections wait

That, knowing sin within, will touch the gate. 80

You are a fair viol, and your sense the strings;

Who, finger'd to make man his lawful music,

Would draw heaven down, and all the gods, to  
hearken;

But being play'd upon before your time,

Hell only danceth at so harsh a chime.

Good sooth, I care not for you.

*Ant.* Prince Pericles, touch not, upon thy life,

For that's an article within our law,

As dangerous as the rest. Your time's expired.

Either expound now, or receive your sentence. 90

*Per.* Great king,

Few love to hear the sins they love to act,

'Twould braid yourself too near for me to  
tell it.

Who has a book of all that monarchs do,

He's more secure to keep it shut than shown;

For vice repeated is like the wandering wind,

Blows dust in others' eyes, to spread itself;

And yet the end of all is bought thus dear,

The breath is gone, and the sore eyes see clear

To stop the air would hurt them. The blind mole  
casts 100

Copp'd hills towards heaven, to tell the earth is  
throng'd

By man's oppression; and the poor worm doth  
die for 't.

Kings are earth's gods; in vice their law's their  
will;

And if Jove stray, who dares say Jove doth ill?

It is enough you know; and it is fit,



What being more known grows worse, to smother it.  
All love the womb that their first being bred,  
Then give my tongue like leave to love my head.

*Ant.* [*Aside*] Heaven, that I had thy head! he has found the meaning;

But I will gloze with him.—Young Prince of Tyre,

Though by the tenour of our strict edict, 111  
Your exposition misinterpreting,  
We might proceed to cancel of your days;  
Yet hope, succeeding from so fair a tree  
As your fair self, doth tune us otherwise.  
Forty days longer we do respite you;  
If by which time our secret be undone,  
This mercy shows we'll joy in such a son;  
And until then your entertain shall be  
As doth befit our honour and your worth. 120

[*Exeunt all but PERICLES.*]

*Per.* How courtesy would seem to cover sin,  
When what is done is like an hypocrite,  
The which is good in nothing but in sight!  
If it be true that I interpret false,  
Then were it certain you were not so bad  
As with foul incest to abuse your soul;  
Where now you're both a father and a son,  
By your untimely claspings with your child,  
Which pleasure fits an husband, not a father;  
And she an eater of her mother's flesh, 130  
By the defiling of her parent's bed;  
And both like serpents are, who though they feed  
On sweetest flowers, yet they poison breed.  
Antioch, farewell! for wisdom sees, those men  
Blush not in actions blacker than the night,  
Will shun no course to keep them from the light.  
One sin, I know, another doth provoke;  
Murder's as near to lust as flame to smoke;  
Poison and treason are the hands of sin,  
Ay, and the targets, to put off the shame; 140  
Then, lest my life be cropp'd to keep you clear,  
By flight I'll shun the danger which I fear. [*Exit.*]

*Re-enter ANTIOCHUS.*

*Ant.* He hath found the meaning, for which we mean  
To have his head.  
He must not live to trumpet forth my infamy,  
Nor tell the world Antiochus doth sin  
In such a loathed manner;  
And therefore instantly this prince must die,  
For by his fall my honour must keep high.  
Who attends us there?

*Enter THALIARD.*

*Thal.* Doth your Highness call? 150  
*Ant.* Thaliard,

You are of our chamber, and our mind partakes  
Her private actions to your secrecy;  
And for your faithfulness we will advance you.  
Thaliard, behold, here's poison, and here's gold;  
We hate the Prince of Tyre, and thou must kill him.

It fits thee not to ask the reason why,  
Because we bid it. Say, is it done?

*Thal.* My lord,  
'Tis done.

*Ant.* Enough. 160

*Enter a MESSENGER.*

Let your breath cool yourself, telling your haste.

*Mess.* My lord, Prince Pericles is fled. [*Exit.*]

*Ant.* As thou

Wilt live, fly after; and like an arrow shot  
From a well-experienced archer hits the mark  
His eye doth level at, so thou ne'er return  
Unless thou say, "Prince Pericles is dead."

*Thal.* My lord,  
If I can get him within my pistol's length,  
I'll make him sure enough; so, farewell to your Highness.

*Ant.* Thaliard, adieu! [*Exit THALIARD.*] Till  
Pericles be dead, 170  
My heart can lend no succour to my head. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II. *Tyre: a room in the palace*

*Enter PERICLES.*

*Per.* [*To LORDS without*] Let none disturb us.—

Why should this change of thoughts,  
The sad companion, dull-eyed melancholy,  
Be my so used a guest as not an hour  
In the day's glorious walk or peaceful night,  
The tomb where grief should sleep, can breed  
me quiet?

Here pleasures court mine eyes, and mine eyes  
shun them,

And danger, which I fear'd, is at Antioch,  
Whose arm seems far too short to hit me here.  
Yet neither pleasure's art can joy my spirits,  
Nor yet the other's distance comfort me. 190  
Then it is thus: the passions of the mind,  
That have their first conception by mis-dread,  
Have after-nourishment and life by care;  
And what was first but fear what might be done,  
Grows elder now and cares it be not done.  
And so with me. The great Antiochus,  
'Gainst whom I am too little to contend,  
Since he's so great can make his will his act,  
Will think me speaking, though I swear to silence;

Nor boots it me to say I honour him, 20  
If he suspect I may dishonour him;  
And what may make him blush in being known,

He'll stop the course by which it might be known;  
 With hostile forces he'll o'erspread the land,  
 And with the ostent of war will look so huge,  
 Amazement shall drive courage from the state;  
 Our men be vanquish'd ere they do resist,  
 And subjects punish'd that ne'er thought offence:  
 Which care of them, not pity of myself,  
 Who am no more but as the tops of trees,  
 Which fence the roots they grow by and defend  
 them, 30  
 Makes both my body pine and soul to languish,  
 And punish that before that he would punish.

*Enter HELICANUS, with other LORDS.*

*1st Lord.* Joy and all comfort in your sacred  
 breast!

*2nd Lord.* And keep your mind, till you return  
 to us,

Peaceful and comfortable!

*Hel.* Peace, peace, and give experience tongue.  
 They do abuse the King that flatter him,  
 For flattery is the bellows blows up sin;  
 The thing the which is flatter'd, but a spark 40  
 To which that blast gives heat and stronger  
 glowing;

Whereas reproof, obedient and in order,  
 Fits kings, as they are men, for they may err.  
 When Signior Sooth here does proclaim a peace,  
 He flatters you, makes war upon your life.  
 Prince, pardon me, or strike me, if you please;  
 I cannot be much lower than my knees.

*Per.* All leave us else; but let your cares o'er-  
 look

What shipping and what lading's in our haven,  
 And then return to us. [*Exeunt LORDS.*] Helicanus,  
 thou 50

Hast moved us. What seest thou in our looks?

*Hel.* An angry brow, dread lord.

*Per.* If there be such a dart in princes' frowns,  
 How durst thy tongue move anger to our face?

*Hel.* How dare the plants look up to heaven,  
 from whence

They have their nourishment?

*Per.* Thou know'st I have power  
 To take thy life from thee.

*Hel.* [*Kneeling*] I have ground the axe myself;  
 Do you but strike the blow.

*Per.* Rise, prithee, rise.

Sit down. Thou art no flatterer. 60  
 I thank thee for it; and heaven forbid  
 That kings should let their ears hear their faults  
 hid!

Fit counsellor and servant for a prince,  
 Who by thy wisdom makest a prince thy servant,  
 What wouldst thou have me do?

*Hel.* To bear with patience

Such griefs as you yourself do lay upon yourself.

*Per.* Thou speak'st like a physician, Helicanus,  
 That minister'st a potion unto me  
 That thou wouldst tremble to receive thyself.  
 Attend me, then. I went to Antioch, 70  
 Where as thou know'st, against the face of death  
 I sought the purchase of a glorious beauty,  
 From whence an issue I might propagate  
 Are arms to princes and bring joys to subjects.  
 Her face was to mine eye beyond all wonder;  
 The rest—hark in thine ear—as black as incest;  
 Which by my knowledge found, the sinful father  
 Seem'd not to strike, but smooth. But thou  
 know'st this,

'Tis time to fear when tyrants seem to kiss.

Which fear so grew in me, I hither fled, 80

Under the covering of a careful night,  
 Who seem'd my good protector; and, being here,  
 Bethought me what was past, what might suc-  
 ceed.

I knew him tyrannous; and tyrants' fears  
 Decrease not, but grow faster than the years;  
 And should he doubt it, as no doubt he doth,  
 That I should open to the listening air  
 How many worthy princes' bloods were shed 89  
 To keep his bed of blackness unlaid ope,  
 To lop that doubt, he'll fill this land with arms  
 And make pretence of wrong that I have done  
 him;

When all, for mine, if I may call offence,  
 Must feel war's blow, who spares not innocence:  
 Which love to all, of which thyself art one,  
 Who now reproveth me for it—

*Hel.* Alas, sir!

*Per.* Drew sleep out of mine eyes, blood from  
 my cheeks,

Musings into my mind, with thousand doubts  
 How I might stop this tempest ere it came;  
 And finding little comfort to relieve them,  
 I thought it princely charity to grieve them. 100

*Hel.* Well, my lord, since you have given me  
 leave to speak,

Freely will I speak. Antiochus you fear;  
 And justly too, I think, you fear the tyrant,  
 Who either by public war or private treason  
 Will take away your life.

Therefore, my lord, go travel for a while,  
 Till that his rage and anger be forgot,  
 Or till the Destinies do cut his thread of life.  
 Your rule direct to any; if to me, 109  
 Day serves not light more faithful than I'll be.

*Per.* I do not doubt thy faith;  
 But should he wrong my liberties in my absence?

*Hel.* We'll mingle our bloods together in the  
 earth,  
 From whence we had our being and our birth.



Although they gave their creatures in abundance,  
As houses are defiled for want of use,  
They are now starved for want of exercise.  
Those palates who, not yet two summers young-  
er,

Must have inventions to delight the taste, 40  
Would now be glad of bread, and beg for it.  
Those mothers who, to nouse up their babes,  
Thought nought too curious, are ready now  
To eat those little darlings whom they loved.  
So sharp are hunger's teeth that man and wife  
Draw lots who first shall die to lengthen life.  
Here stands a lord, and there a lady weeping;  
Here many sink, yet those which see them fall  
Have scarce strength left to give them burial.  
Is not this true? 50

*Dio.* Our cheeks and hollow eyes do witness it.

*Cle.* O, let those cities that of Plenty's cup  
And her prosperities so largely taste  
With their superfluous riots, hear these tears!  
The misery of Tarsus may be theirs.

*Enter a LORD.*

*Lord.* Where's the Lord Governor?

*Cle.* Here.

Speak out thy sorrows which thou bring'st in  
haste,

For comfort is too far for us to expect.

*Lord.* We have descried, upon our neighbour-  
ing shore, 60

A portly sail of ships make hitherward.

*Cle.* I thought as much.

One sorrow never comes but brings an heir,  
That may succeed as his inheritor;  
And so in ours. Some neighbouring nation,  
Taking advantage of our misery,  
Hath stuff'd these hollow vessels with their  
power,

To beat us down, the which are down already;  
And make a conquest of unhappy me,  
Whereas no glory's got to overcome. 70

*Lord.* That's the least fear; for, by the sem-  
blance

Of their white flags display'd, they bring us  
peace,

And come to us as favourers, not as foes.

*Cle.* Thou speak'st like him's untutor'd to re-  
peat,  
"Who makes the fairest show means most de-  
ceit."

But bring they what they will and what they  
can,

What need we fear?

The ground's the lowest, and we are half way  
there.

Go tell their general we attend him here,

To know for what he comes, and whence he  
comes,

And what he craves. 81

*Lord.* I go, my lord. [Exit.

*Cle.* Welcome is peace, if he on peace consist;  
If wars, we are unable to resist.

*Enter PERICLES with Attendants.*

*Per.* Lord Governor, for so we hear you are,  
Let not our ships and number of our men  
Be like a beacon fired to amaze your eyes.  
We have heard your miseries as far as Tyre,  
And seen the desolation of your streets.  
Nor come we to add sorrow to your tears, 90  
But to relieve them of their heavy load;  
And these our ships, you happily may think  
Are like the Trojan horse was stuff'd within  
With bloody veins, expecting overthrow,  
Are stored with corn to make your needy bread,  
And give them life whom hunger starved half  
dead.

*All.* The gods of Greece protect you!  
And we'll pray for you.

*Per.* Arise, I pray you, rise.  
We do not look for reverence, but for love,  
And harbourage for ourselves, our ships, and men.

*Cle.* The which when any shall not gratify, 101  
Or pay you with unthankfulness in thought,  
Be it our wives, our children, or ourselves,  
The curse of heaven and men succeed their evils!  
Till when—the which I hope shall ne'er be  
seen—

Your Grace is welcome to our town and us.

*Per.* Which welcome we'll accept; feast here  
awhile,  
Until our stars that frown lend us a smile. [Exeunt.

## ACT II

*Enter GOWER.*

*Gow.* Here have you seen a mighty king  
His child, I wis, to incest bring;  
A better prince and benign lord,  
That will prove awful both in deed and word.  
Be quiet then as men should be,  
Till he hath pass'd necessity.  
I'll show you those in troubles reign,  
Losing a mite, a mountain gain.  
The good in conversation,  
To whom I give my benison, 110  
Is still at Tarsus, where each man  
Thinks all is writ he spoken can,  
And, to remember what he does,  
Build his statue to make him glorious.  
But tidings to the contrary

And here, I hope, is none that envies it.  
 In framing an artist, Art hath thus decreed  
 To make some good, but others to exceed;  
 And you are her labour'd scholar. Come, queen  
 o' the feast—

For, daughter, so you are—here take your place.  
 Marshal the rest as they deserve their grace.

*Knights.* We are honour'd much by good  
*Simonides.*

*Sim.* Your presence glads our days. Honour we  
 love;

For who hates honour hates the gods above.

*Marshal.* Sir, yonder is your place.

*Per.* Some other is more fit.

*1st Knight.* Contend not, sir; for we are gentle-  
 men

That neither in our hearts nor outward eyes  
 Envy the great nor do the low despise.

*Per.* You are right courteous knights.

*Sim.* Sit, sir, sit.

[*Aside.*] By Jove, I wonder, that is king of  
 thoughts,

These cates resist me, she but thought upon.

*Thai.* [*Aside.*] By Juno, that is queen of mar-  
 riage,

All viands that I eat do seem unsavoury,  
 Wishing him my meat.—Sure, he's a gallant  
 gentleman.

*Sim.* [*Aside.*] He's but a country gentleman;  
 Has done no more than other knights have done;  
 Has broken a staff or so; so let it pass.

*Thai.* [*Aside.*] To me he seems like diamond to  
 glass.

*Per.* [*Aside.*] Yon king's to me like to my father's  
 picture,

Which tells me in that glory once he was;  
 Had princes sit, like stars, about his throne,  
 And he the sun, for them to reverence;  
 None that beheld him but, like lesser lights,  
 Did vail their crowns to his supremacy;  
 Where now his son's like a glow-worm in the  
 night,

The which hath fire in darkness, none in light;  
 Whereby I see that Time's the king of men:  
 He's both their parent, and he is their grave,  
 And gives them what he will, not what they  
 crave.

*Sim.* What, are you merry, knights?

*Knights.* Who can be other in this royal pres-  
 ence?

*Sim.* Here, with a cup that's stored unto the  
 brim—

As you do love, fill to your mistress' lips—  
 We drink this health to you.

*Knights.* We thank your Grace.

*Sim.* Yet pause awhile;

Yon knight doth sit too melancholy,  
 As if the entertainment in our court  
 Had not a show might countervail his worth.  
 Note it not you, Thaisa?

*Thai.* What is it

To me, my father?

*Sim.* O, attend, my daughter.

Princes in this should live like gods above,

Who freely give to every one that comes

To honour them;

And princes not doing so are like to gnats,  
 Which make a sound, but, kill'd, are wonder'd  
 at.

Therefore to make his entrance more sweet,  
 Here, say we drink this standing-bowl of wine to  
 him.

*Thai.* Alas, my father, it befits not me

Unto a stranger knight to be so bold.

He may my proffer take for an offence,  
 Since men take women's gifts for impudence.

*Sim.* How!

Do as I bid you, or you'll move me else.

*Thai.* [*Aside.*] Now, by the gods, he could not  
 please me better.

*Sim.* And furthermore tell him we desire to  
 know of him

Of whence he is, his name, and parentage.

*Thai.* The King my father, sir, has drunk to  
 you.

*Per.* I thank him.

*Thai.* Wishing it so much blood unto your life.

*Per.* I thank both him and you, and pledge him  
 freely.

*Thai.* And further he desires to know of you  
 Of whence you are, your name, and parentage.

*Per.* A gentleman of Tyre; my name, Pericles;  
 My education been in arts and arms;

Who, looking for adventures in the world  
 Was by the rough seas reft of ships and men,  
 And after shipwreck driven upon this shore.

*Thai.* He thanks your Grace; names himself  
 Pericles,

A gentleman of Tyre,

Who only by misfortune of the seas  
 Bereft of ships and men, cast on this shore.

*Sim.* Now, by the gods, I pity his misfortune,  
 And will awake him from his melancholy.

Come, gentlemen, we sit too long on trifles,  
 And waste the time, which looks for other  
 revels.

Even in your armours, as you are address'd,  
 Will very well become a soldier's dance.

I will not have excuse, with saying this  
 Loud music is too harsh for ladies' heads,  
 Since they love men in arms as well as beds.

*The KNIGHTS dance.*

60

70

30

40

50

90



So, this was well ask'd, 'twas so well perform'd.  
Come, sir; 100  
Here is a lady that wants breathing too;  
And I have heard, you knights of Tyre  
Are excellent in making ladies trip;  
And that their measures are as excellent.  
*Per.* In those that practise them they are, my lord.

*Sim.* O, that's as much as you would be denied  
Of your fair courtesey.

*The KNIGHTS and Ladies dance.*

Unclasp, unclasp.

Thanks, gentlemen, to all; all have done well,  
[*TO PERICLES*] But you the best. Pages and lights,  
to conduct

These knights unto their several lodgings! [*TO*  
*PERICLES*] Yours, sir, 110

We have given order to be next our own.

*Per.* I am at your Grace's pleasure.

*Sim.* Princes, it is too late to talk of love;  
And that's the mark I know you level at.  
Therefore each one betake him to his rest;  
To-morrow all for speeding do their best.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV. *Tyre: a room in the Governor's house*

*Enter HELICANUS and ESCANES.*

*Hel.* No, Escanes, know this of me,  
Antiochus from incest lived not free;  
For which, the most high gods not minding  
longer  
To withhold the vengeance that they had in  
store,  
Due to this heinous capital offence,  
Even in the height and pride of all his glory,  
When he was seated in a chariot  
Of an inestimable value, and his daughter with  
him,  
A fire from heaven came and shrivell'd up  
Their bodies, even to loathing; for they so stunk,  
That all those eyes adored them ere their fall 11  
Scorn now their hand should give them burial.

*Esca.* 'Twas very strange.

*Hel.* And yet but justice; for though  
This king were great, his greatness was no guard  
To bar heaven's shaft, but sin had his reward.

*Esca.* 'Tis very true.

*Enter THREE LORDS.*

*1st Lord.* See, not a man in private conference  
Or council has respect with him but he.

*2nd Lord.* It shall no longer grieve without re-  
proof.

*3rd Lord.* And cursed be he that will not second  
it. 20

*1st Lord.* Follow me, then. Lord Helicane, a word.

*Hel.* With me? and welcome. Happy day, my lords.

*1st Lord.* Know that our griefs are risen to the top,

And now at length they overflow their banks.

*Hel.* Your griefs! for what? Wrong not your prince you love.

*1st Lord.* Wrong not yourself, then, noble Helicane;

But if the Prince do live, let us salute him,  
Or know what ground's made happy by his breath.

If in the world he live, we'll seek him out;  
If in his grave he rest, we'll find him there; 30  
And be resolved he lives to govern us,  
Or, dead, give 's cause to mourn his funeral,  
And leave us to our free election.

*2nd Lord.* Whose death indeed's the strongest  
in our censure;

And knowing this kingdom is without a head—

Like goodly buildings left without a roof  
Soon fall to ruin—your noble self,  
That best know how to rule and how to reign,  
We thus submit unto—our sovereign.

*All.* Live, noble Helicane! 40

*Hel.* For honour's cause, forbear your suffrages.  
If that you love Prince Pericles, forbear.

Take I your wish, I leap into the seas,  
Where's hourly trouble for a minute's ease.

A twelvemonth longer, let me entreat you to  
Forbear the absence of your king;

If in which time expired he not return,  
I shall with aged patience bear your yoke.

But if I cannot win you to this love,  
Go search like nobles, like noble subjects, 50

And in your search spend your adventurous  
worth;

Whom if you find, and win unto return,  
You shall like diamonds sit about his crown.

*1st Lord.* To wisdom he's a fool that will not  
yield;

And since Lord Helicane enjoineth us,  
We with our travels will endeavour us.

*Hel.* Then you love us, we you, and we'll clasp  
hands.

When peers thus knit, a kingdom ever stands.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V. *Pentapolis: a room in the palace*

*Enter SIMONIDES, reading a letter, at one door;*  
*the KNIGHTS meet him.*

*1st Knight.* Good morrow to the good Simon-  
ides.

*Sim.* Knights, from my daughter this I let you know,  
That for this twelvemonth she'll not undertake  
A married life.  
Her reason to herself is only known,  
Which yet from her by no means can I get.  
*2nd Knight.* May we not get access to her, my lord?  
*Sim.* 'Faith, by no means; she hath so strictly  
tied  
Her to her chamber that 'tis impossible.  
Ore twelve moons more she'll wear Diana's  
livery;  
This by the eye of Cynthia hath she vow'd,  
And on her virgin honour will not break it.  
*3rd Knight.* Loath to bid farewell, we take our  
leaves. [*Exeunt KNIGHTS.*]  
*Sim.* So,  
They are well dispatch'd; now to my daughter's  
letter.  
She tells me here she'll wed the stranger knight,  
Or never more to view nor day nor light.  
'Tis well, mistress; your choice agrees with  
mine;  
I like that well. Nay, how absolute she's in 't,  
Not minding whether I dislike or no! 20  
Well, I do commend her choice;  
And will no longer have it be delay'd.  
Soft! here he comes. I must dissemble it.

*Enter PERICLES.*

*Per.* All fortune to the good Simonides!  
*Sim.* To you as much, sir! I am beholding to you  
For your sweet music this last night. I do  
Protest my ears were never better fed  
With such delightful pleasing harmony.  
*Per.* It is your Grace's pleasure to commend;  
Not my desert.  
*Sim.* Sir, you are music's master. 30  
*Per.* The worst of all her scholars, my good lord.  
*Sim.* Let me ask you one thing.  
What do you think of my daughter, sir?  
*Per.* A most virtuous princess.  
*Sim.* And she is fair too, is she not?  
*Per.* As a fair day in summer, wondrous fair.  
*Sim.* Sir, my daughter thinks very well of you;  
Ay, so well, that you must be her master,  
And she will be your scholar; therefore look to it.  
*Per.* I am unworthy for her schoolmaster. 40  
*Sim.* She thinks not so; peruse this writing else.  
*Per.* [*Aside*] What's here?  
A letter, that she loves the knight of Tyre!  
'Tis the King's subtilty to have my life.  
O, seek not to entrap me, gracious lord,  
A stranger and distressed gentleman,  
That never aim'd so high to love your daughter,

But bent all offices to honour her.  
*Sim.* Thou hast bewitch'd my daughter, and  
thou art 50  
A villain.  
*Per.* By the gods, I have not.  
Never did thought of mine levy offence;  
Nor never did my actions yet commence  
A deed might gain her love or your displeasure.  
*Sim.* Traitor, thou liest.  
*Per.* Traitor!  
*Sim.* Ay, traitor.  
*Per.* Even in his throat—unless it be the King—  
That calls me traitor, I return the lie.  
*Sim.* [*Aside*] Now, by the gods, I do applaud his  
courage.  
*Per.* My actions are as noble as my thoughts,  
That never relish'd of a base descent. 60  
I came unto your court for honour's cause,  
And not to be a rebel to her state;  
And he that otherwise accounts of me,  
This sword shall prove he's honour's enemy.  
*Sim.* No?  
Here comes my daughter, she can witness it.

*Enter THASIA.*

*Per.* Then, as you are as virtuous as fair,  
Resolve your angry father, if my tongue  
Did e'er solicit, or my hand subscribe 70  
To any syllable that made love to you.  
*Thai.* Why, sir, say if you had,  
Who takes offence at that would make me  
glad?  
*Sim.* Yea, mistress, are you so peremptory?  
[*Aside*] I am glad on't with all my heart.—  
I'll tame you; I'll bring you in subjection.  
Will you, not having my consent,  
Bestow your love and your affections  
Upon a stranger? [*Aside*] who, for aught I know,  
May be, nor can I think the contrary, 80  
As great in blood as I myself.—  
Therefore hear you, mistress; either frame  
Your will to mine—and you, sir, hear you,  
Either be ruled by me, or I will make you—  
Man and wife.  
Nay, come, your hands and lips must seal it too.  
And being join'd, I'll thus your hopes destroy;  
And for a further grief—God give you joy!—  
What, are you both pleased?  
*Thai.* Yes, if you love me, sir.  
*Per.* Even as my life my blood that fosters it.  
*Sim.* What, are you both agreed? 90  
*Both.* Yes, if it please your Majesty.  
*Sim.* It pleaseth me so well that I will see you  
wed;  
And then with what haste you can get you to  
bed. [*Exeunt.*]



Than nobleness and riches. Careless heirs  
 May the two latter darken and expend;  
 But immortality attends the former, 30  
 Making a man a god. 'Tis known, I ever  
 Have studied physic, through which secret art,  
 By turning o'er authorities, I have,  
 Together with my practice, made familiar  
 To me and to my aid the blest infusions  
 That dwell in vegetives, in metals, stones;  
 And I can speak of the disturbances  
 That nature works, and of her cures; which doth  
 give me

A more content in course of true delight  
 Than to be thirsty after tottering honour, 40  
 Or tie my treasure up in silken bags,  
 To please the fool and Death.

*2nd Gent.* Your honour has through Ephesus  
 pour'd forth

Your charity, and hundreds call themselves  
 Your creatures, who by you have been restored.  
 And not your knowledge, your personal pain,  
 but even

Your purse, still open, hath built Lord Cerimon  
 Such strong renown as time shall ne'er decay.

*Enter two or three SERVANTS with a chest.*

*1st Serv.* So; lift there.

*Cer.* What is that?

*1st Serv.* Sir, even now

Did the sea toss upon our shore this chest. 50

'Tis of some wreck.

*Cer.* Set't down, let's look upon't.

*2nd Gent.* 'Tis like a coffin, sir.

*Cer.* Whate'er it be,

'Tis wondrous heavy. Wrench it open straight:

If the sea's stomach be o'ercharged with gold,  
 'Tis a good constraint of fortune it belches upon  
 us.

*2nd Gent.* 'Tis so, my lord.

*Cer.* How close 'tis caulk'd and bitumed!

Did the sea cast it up?

*1st Serv.* I never saw so huge a billow, sir,  
 As toss'd it upon shore.

*Cer.* Wrench it open;

Soft! it smells most sweetly in my sense. 60

*2nd Gent.* A delicate odour.

*Cer.* As ever hit my nostril. So, up with it.

O you most potent gods! what's here? a corse!

*1st Gent.* Most strange!

*Cer.* Shrouded in cloth of state; balm'd and en-  
 treasured

With full bags of spices! A passport too!

Apollo, perfect me in the characters!

*Reads from a scroll.*

"Here I give to understand,  
 If e'er this coffin drive a-land,

I, King Pericles, have lost

70

This queen, worth all our mundane cost.

Who finds her, give her burying;

She was the daughter of a king.

Besides this treasure for a fee,

The gods requite his charity!"

If thou livest, Pericles, thou hast a heart

That even cracks for woe! This chanced tonight.

*2nd Gent.* Most likely, sir.

*Cer.*

Nay, certainly to-night;

For look how fresh she looks! They were too  
 rough 79

That threw her in the sea. Make a fire within.

Fetch hither all my boxes in my closet.

*[Exit a Servant.]*

Death may usurp on nature many hours,

And yet the fire of life kindle again

The o'erpress'd spirits. I heard of an Egyptian

That had nine hours lien dead,

Who was by good appliance recovered.

*Re-enter a Servant, with boxes, napkins,  
 and fire.*

Well said, well said; the fire and cloths.

The rough and woeful music that we have,

Cause it to sound, beseech you.

The viol once more. How thou stirr'st, thou

block!

90

The music there! I pray you, give her air.

Gentlemen,

This queen will live. Nature awakes; a warmth

Breathes out of her. She hath not been entranced

Above five hours. See how she gins to blow

Into life's flower again!

*1st Gent.*

The heavens,

Through you, increase our wonder and set up

Your fame for ever.

*Cer.*

She is alive; behold,

Her eyelids, cases to those heavenly jewels

Which Pericles hath lost, 100

Begin to part their fringes of bright gold;

The diamonds of a most praised water

Do appear, to make the world twice rich. Live,

And make us weep to hear your fate, fair crea-  
 ture,

Rare as you seem to be. *[She moves.]*

*Thai.*

O dear Diana,

Where am I? Where's my lord? What world is  
 this?

*2nd Gent.* Is not this strange?

*1st Gent.*

Most rare.

*Cer.*

Hush, my gentle neighbours!

Lend me your hands; to the next chamber bear  
 her.

Get linen. Now this matter must be look'd to,  
 For her relapse is mortal. Come, come; 110

To do my work with haste.

*Mar.* Why will you kill me?

*Leon.* To satisfy my lady.

*Mar.* Why would she have me kill'd?

Now, as I can remember, by my troth,  
I never did her hurt in all my life.

I never spake bad word, nor did ill turn

To any living creature. Believe me, la,

I never kill'd a mouse, nor hurt a fly.

I trod upon a worm against my will, 80

But I wept for it. How have I offended,

Wherein my death might yield her any profit,

Or my life imply her any danger?

*Leon.* My commission

Is not to reason of the deed, but do it.

*Mar.* You will not do't for all the world, I hope.

You are well favour'd, and your looks foreshow

You have a gentle heart. I saw you lately,

When you caught hurt in parting two that fought.

Good sooth, it show'd well in you. Do so now.

Your lady seeks my life; come you between, 90

And save poor me, the weaker.

*Leon.* I am sworn,

And will dispatch.

*He seizes her.*

*Enter PIRATES.*

*1st Pirate.* Hold, villain!

[*LEONINE runs away.*]

*2nd Pirate.* A prize! a prize!

*3rd Pirate.* Half-part, mates, half-part.

Come, let's have her aboard suddenly.

[*Exeunt PIRATES with MARINA.*]

*Re-enter LEONINE.*

*Leon.* These roguing thieves serve the great  
pirate Valdes;

And they have seized Marina. Let her go;

There's no hope she will return. I'll swear she's  
dead,

And thrown into the sea. But I'll see further. 100

Perhaps they will but please themselves upon her,

Not carry her aboard. If she remain,

Whom they have ravish'd must by me be slain.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II. *Mytilene: a room in a brothel*

*Enter PANDAR, BAWD, and BOULT.*

*Pand.* Boul't!

*Boul't.* Sir?

*Pand.* Search the market narrowly; Mytilene  
is full of gallants. We lost too much money this  
mart by being too wenchless.

*Bawd.* We were never so much out of crea-  
tures. We have but poor three, and they can do  
no more than they can do; and they with con-

tinual action are even as good as rotten. 9

*Pand.* Therefore let's have fresh ones, what-  
e'er we pay for them. If there be not a con-  
science to be used in every trade, we shall never  
prosper.

*Bawd.* Thou sayest true. 'Tis not our bringing  
up of poor bastards—as, I think, I have brought  
up some eleven—

*Boul't.* Ay, to eleven; and brought them down  
again. But shall I search the market?

*Bawd.* What else, man? The stuff we have, a  
strong wind will blow it to pieces, they are so  
pitifully sodden. 21

*Pand.* Thou sayest true; they're too unwhole-  
some, o' conscience. The poor Transylvanian is  
dead, that lay with the little baggage.

*Boul't.* Ay, she quickly pooped him, she made  
him roast-meat for worms. But I'll go search the  
market. [*Exit.*]

*Pand.* Three or four thousand chequins were as  
pretty a proportion to live quietly, and so give  
over. 30

*Bawd.* Why to give over, I pray you? Is it a  
shame to get when we are old?

*Pand.* O, our credit comes not in like the com-  
modity, nor the commodity wages not with the  
danger; therefore, if in our youths we could  
pick up some pretty estate, 'twere not amiss to  
keep our door hatched. Besides, the sore terms  
we stand upon with the gods will be strong with  
us for giving over. 39

*Bawd.* Come, other sorts offend as well as we.

*Pand.* As well as we! Ay, and better too; we  
offend worse. Neither is our profession any trade;  
it's no calling. But here comes Boul't.

*Re-enter BOULT, with the PIRATES and MARINA.*

*Boul't* [*To MARINA*] Come your ways. My  
masters, you say she's a virgin?

*1st Pirate.* O, sir, we doubt it not.

*Boul't.* Master, I have gone through for this  
piece, you see. If you like her, so; if not, I have  
lost my earnest.

*Bawd.* Boul't, has she any qualities? 50

*Boul't.* She has a good face, speaks well, and  
has excellent good clothes. There's no further  
necessity of qualities can make her be refused.

*Bawd.* What's her price, Boul't?

*Boul't.* I cannot be bated one doit of a thousand  
pieces.

*Pand.* Well, follow me, my masters, you shall  
have your money presently. Wife, take her in;  
instruct her what she has to do, that she may not  
be raw in her entertainment. 60

[*Exeunt PANDAR and PIRATES.*]

*Bawd.* Boul't, take you the marks of her, the



Thou hold'st a place, for which the pained'st fiend  
Of hell would not in reputation change.  
Thou art the damned doorkeeper to every  
Coistrel that comes inquiring for his Tib;  
To the choleric fisting of every rogue  
Thy ear is liable; thy food is such

As hath been belch'd on by infected lungs. 179

*Boult.* What would you have me do? go to the wars, would you? where a may may serve seven years for the loss of a leg, and have not money enough in the end to buy him a wooden one?

*Mar.* Do anything but this thou doest. Empty Old receptacles, or common shores, of filth; Serve by indenture to the common hangman. Any of these ways are yet better than this; For what thou professest, a baboon, could he speak,

Would own a name too dear. O, that the gods  
Would safely deliver me from this place! 191

Here, here's gold for thee.

If that thy master would gain by me,  
Proclaim that I can sing, weave, sew, and dance,  
With other virtues, which I'll keep from boast;  
And I will undertake all these to teach.

I doubt not but this populous city will  
Yield many scholars.

*Boult.* But can you teach all this you speak of?

*Mar.* Prove that I cannot, take me home again,  
And prostitute me to the basest groom 201  
That doth frequent your house.

*Boult.* Well, I will see what I can do for thee. If  
I can place thee, I will.

*Mar.* But amongst honest women.

*Boult.* Faith, my acquaintance lies little  
amongst them. But since my master and mis-  
tress have bought you, there's no going but by  
their consent; therefore I will make them ac-  
quainted with your purpose, and I doubt not but  
I shall find them tractable enough. Come, I'll  
do for thee what I can; come your ways.

[*Exeunt.*]

## ACT V

*Enter GOWER.*

*Gow.* Marina thus the brothel 'scapes, and  
chances

Into an honest house, our story says.

She sings like one immortal, and she dances

As goddess-like to her admired lays;

Deep clerks she dumbs; and with her needl com-  
poses

Nature's own shape, of bud, bird, branch, or  
berry,

That even her art sisters the natural roses;

Her inkle, silk, twin with the rubied cherry,  
That pupils lacks she none of noble race,  
Who pour their bounty on her; and her gain 10  
She gives the cursed bawd. Here we her place;  
And to her father turn our thoughts again,  
Where we left him, on the sea. We there him  
lost;

Whence, driven before the winds, he is arrived  
Here where his daughter dwells; and on this  
coast

Suppose him now at anchor. The city strived  
God Neptune's annual feast to keep; from whence  
Lysimachus our Tyrian ship espies,  
His banners sable, trimm'd with rich expense;  
And to him in his barge with fervour hies. 20  
In your supposing once more put your sight  
Of heavy Pericles; think this his bark.

Where what is done in action, more, if might,  
Shall be discover'd; please you, sit and hark.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE I. *On board Pericles' ship, off Mytilene.*  
*A close pavilion on deck, with a curtain before it,*  
*Pericles within it, reclined on a couch. A barge*  
*lying beside the Tyrian vessel*

*Enter TWO SAILORS, one belonging to the Tyrian*  
*vessel, the other to the barge; to them HELICANUS.*

*Tyr. Sail.* [*To the SAILOR of Mytilene*]

Where is lord Helicanus? He can resolve you.  
O, here he is.

Sir, there's a barge put off from Mytilene,  
And in it is Lysimachus the governor,  
Who craves to come aboard. What is your will?

*Hel.* That he have his. Call up some gentlemen.

*Tyr. Sail.* Ho, gentlemen! my lord calls.

*Enter two or three GENTLEMEN.*

*1st Gent.* Doth your lordship call?

*Hel.* Gentlemen, there's some of worth would  
come aboard;

I pray ye, greet them fairly. 10

[*The GENTLEMEN and the TWO SAILORS descend,*  
*and go on board the barge.*]

*Enter, from thence, LYSIMACHUS and LORDS; with*  
*the GENTLEMEN and the TWO SAILORS.*

*Tyr. Sail.* Sir,

This is the man that can, in aught you would,  
Resolve you.

*Lys.* Hail, reverend sir! the gods preserve you!

*Hel.* And you, sir, to outlive the age I am,  
And die as I would do.

*Lys.* You wish me well.

Being on shore, honouring of Neptune's triumphs,  
Seeing this goodly vessel ride before us,  
I made to it, to know of whence you are.

*Hel.* First, what is your place? 20