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PLAYS, VOL. VII (4TH EDITION)***

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A SELECT COLLECTION OF OLD ENGLISH PLAYS, VOL. VII

Fourth Edition

Originally published by Robert Dodsley in the Year 1744.

Now first chronologically arranged, revised and enlarged with the Notes of all the Commentators, and new Notes.

1876.

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Tancred And Gismunda
The Wounds Of Civil War
Mucedorus
The Two Angry Women Of Abington
Look About You

EDITION

The Tragedie of Tancred and Gismund. Compiled by the Gentlemen of the Inner Temple, and by them presented before her Maiestie. Newly reuiued and polished according to the decorum of these daies. By R.W. London, Printed by Thomas Scarlet, and are to be solde by R. Robinson, 1591, 4to.

[Some copies are dated 1592; but there was only a single edition. Of the original text, as written in

1568, there is no printed copy; but MSS. of it are in MS. Lansdowne 786, and Hargrave MS. 205, neither of which appears to present any evidence of identity with the copy mentioned by Isaac Reed below as then in private hands. Both these MSS. have now been collated with the text of 1591, and the conclusion must be, that Wilmot, though he unquestionably revived, did not do so much, as he might wish to have it inferred, in *polishing* the play. The production was formed on a classical model, and bears marks of resemblance in tone and style to the "Jocasta" of Euripides, as paraphrased by Gascoigne in 1566. The Lansdowne MS. of "Tancred and Gismunda" was written, about 1568-70, while the Hargrave is much more modern.]

INTRODUCTION.

It appears from William Webbe's Epistle prefixed to this piece, that after its first exhibition it was laid aside, and at some distance of time was new-written by R. Wilmot. The reader, therefore, may not be displeased with a specimen of it in its original dress. It is here given from the fragment of an ancient MS. taken out of a chest of papers formerly belonging to Mr Powell, father-in-law to the author of "Paradise Lost," at Forest Hill, about four miles from Oxford, where in all probability some curiosities of the same kind may remain, the contents of these chests (for I think there are more than one) having never yet been properly examined. The following extract is from the conclusion of the piece.—*Reed*. [Reed's extract has been collated with the two MSS. before-mentioned; where the Powell MS. may now be, the editor cannot say. The differences, on the whole, are not material; but the Lansdowne MS. 786 has supplied a few superior readings and corrections.]

But in thy brest if eny spark remaine
Of thy dere love. If ever yet I coulde
So moche of thee deserve, or at the least
If with my last desire I may obtaine
This at thy handes, geve me this one request
And let me not spend my last breath in vaine.
My life desire I not, which neither is
In thee to geve nor in my self to save,
Althoughe I wolde. Nor yet I aske not this
As mercye for myne Erle in ought to crave,
Whom I to well do knowe howe thou hast slayen.
No, no, father, thy hard and cruell wronge
With pacience as I may I will sustaine
In woefull life which now shall not be longe.
But this one suite, father, if unto me
Thou graunt, though I cannot the same reacquite
Th'immortall goddes shall render unto thee
Thy due reward and largely guerdon it,
That sins it pleased thee not thus secretly
I might enjoy my love, his corps and myne
May nathelesse together graved be
And in one tombe our bodies both to shrine
With which this small request eke do I praie
That on the same graven in brasse thou place
This woefull epitaphe which I shall saye,
That all lovers may rue this mornefull case;
Loe here within one tombe where harbor twaine
Gismonda Quene and Countie Pallurine!
She loved him, he for her love was slayen,
For whoes revenge eke lyes she here in shrine.

[GISMONDA *dieth*

TANCRED. O me alas, nowe do the cruell paines
Of cursed death my dere daughter bereave.
Alas whie bide I here? the sight constraines
Me woefull man this woefull place to leaue.

SCENE III.

TANCRED *cometh out of GISMOND'S Chamber.*

TANCRED. O dolorous happe, ruthefull and all of woe
Alas I carefull wretche what resteth me?
Shall I now live that with these eyes did soe
Beholde my daughter die? what, shall I see
Her death before my face that was my lyfe
And I to lyve that was her lyves decay?
Shall not this hand reache to this hart the knife
That maye bereve bothe sight and life away,
And in the shadowes darke to seke her ghoste
And wander there with her? shall not, alas,
This spedy death be wrought, sithe I have lost
My dearest ioy of all? what, shall I passe
My later dayes in paine, and spende myne age
In teres and plaint! shall I now leade my life
All solitarie as doeth bird in cage,
And fede my woefull yeres with wailfull grefe?
No, no, so will not I my dayes prolonge
To seke to live one houre sith she is gone:
This brest so can not bende to suche a wronge,
That she shold dye and I to live alone.
No, this will I: she shall have her request
And in most royall sorte her funerall
Will I performe. Within one tombe shall rest
Her earle and she, her epitaph withall
Graved thereon shal be. This will I doe
And when these eyes some aged teres have shed
The tomb my self then will I crepe into
And with my blood all bayne their bodies dead.
This heart there will I perce, and reve this brest
The irksome life, and wreke my wrathful ire
Upon my self. She shall have her request,
And I by death will purchace my desyre.

FINIS.

EPILOGUS.

If now perhappes ye either loke to see
Th'unhappie lovers, or the cruell sire
Here to be buried as fittes their degree
Or as the dyeng ladie did require
Or as the ruthefull kinge in deepe despaire
Behight of late (who nowe himself hath slayen)
Or if perchaunse you stand in doutfull fere
Sithe mad Megera is not returnde againe
Least wandring in the world she so bestowe
The snakes that crall about her furious face
As they may raise new ruthes, new kindes of woe
Bothe so and there, and such as you percuse
Wold be full lothe so great so nere to see
I am come forth to do you all to wete
Through grefe wherin the lordes of Salerne be
The buriall pompe is not prepared yet:
And for the furie, you shall onderstand
That neither doeth the litle greatest god
Finde such rebelling here in Britain land
Against his royall power as asketh rod
Of ruth from hell to wreke his names decaie
Nor Pluto heareth English ghostes complaine
Our dames disteyned lyves. Therefore ye maye
Be free from feare, sufficeth to maintaine

The vertues which we honor in you all,
So as our Britain ghostes when life is past
Maie praise in heven, not plaine in Plutoes hall
Our dames, but hold them vertuouous and chast,
Worthie to live where furie never came,
Where love can see, and beares no deadly bowe,
Whoes lyves eternall tromp of glorious fame
With joyfull sounde to honest eares shall blowe.

FINIS.

The Tragedie of Gismonde of Salerne.

Such is a specimen of the play as it was originally acted before Queen Elizabeth, at the Inner Temple, in the year 1568. It was the production of five gentlemen, who were probably students of that society; and by one of them, Robert Wilmot, afterwards much altered and published in the year 1591.[1] [Wilmot had meanwhile become rector of North Okenham, in Essex];[2] and in his Dedication to the Societies of the Inner and Middle Temples, he speaks of the censure which might be cast upon him from the indecorum of publishing a dramatic work arising from his calling. When he died, or whether he left any other works, are points equally uncertain.

"Nearly a century after the date of that play," observes Lamb, in his 'Extracts from the Garrick Plays,' "Dryden produced his admirable version of the same story from Boccaccio. The speech here extracted (the scene between the messengers and Gismunda) may be compared with the corresponding passage in the 'Sigismunda and Guiscardo' with no disadvantage to the older performance. It is quite as weighty, as pointed, and as passionate."

To the Right Worshipful and Virtuouous Ladies, the Lady MARY PETER and the Lady ANNE GRAY,
long health of body, with quiet of mind, in the favour of God and men for ever.

It is most certain (right virtuouous and worshipful) that of all human learning, poetry (how contemptible soever it is in these days) is the most ancient; and, in poetry, there is no argument of more antiquity and elegancy than is the matter of love; for it seems to be as old as the world, and to bear date from the first time that man and woman was: therefore in this, as in the finest metal, the freshest wits have in all ages shown their best workmanship. So amongst others these gentlemen, which with what sweetness of voice and liveliness of action they then expressed it, they which were of her Majesty's right Honourable maidens can testify.

Which being a discourse of two lovers, perhaps it may seem a thing neither fit to be offered unto your ladyships, nor worthy me to busy myself withal: yet can I tell you, madames, it differeth so far from the ordinary amorous discourses of our days, as the manners of our time do from the modesty and innocency of that age.

And now for that weary winter is come upon us, which bringeth with him drooping days and tedious nights, if it be true, that the motions of our minds follow the temperature of the air wherein we live, then I think the perusing of some mournful matter, tending to the view of a notable example, will refresh your wits in a gloomy day, and ease your weariness of the loursing night. Which if it please you, may serve ye also for a solemn revel against this festival time, for *Gismund's* bloody shadow, with a little cost, may be entreated in her self-like person to speak to ye.

Having therefore a desire to be known to your W., I devised this way with myself to procure the same, persuading myself, there is nothing more welcome to your wisdoms than the knowledge of wise, grave, and worthy matters, tending to the good instructions of youths, of whom you are mothers.

In this respect, therefore, I shall humbly desire ye to bestow a favourable countenance upon this little labour, which when ye have graced it withal, I must and will acknowledge myself greatly indebted unto your ladyships in this behalf: neither shall I amongst the rest, that admire your rare virtues (which are not a few in Essex), cease to commend this undeserved gentleness.

Thus desiring the king of heaven to increase his graces in ye both, granting that your ends may be as honourable as your lives are virtuouous, I leave with a vain babble of many needless words to trouble you longer.

Your Worships' most dutiful
and humble Orator,
ROBERT WILMOT.

TO HIS FRIEND R.W.

Master R.W., look not now for the terms of an intreater: I will beg no longer; and for your promises, I will refuse them as bad payment: neither can I be satisfied with anything but a peremptory performance of an old intention of yours, the publishing I mean of those waste papers (as it pleaseth you to call them, but, as I esteem them, a most exquisite invention) of Gismund's tragedy. Think not to shift me off with longer delays, nor allege more excuses to get further respite, lest I arrest you with my *actum est*, and commence such a suit of unkindness against you, as when the case shall be scann'd before the judges of courtesy, the court will cry out of your immoderate modesty. And thus much I tell you before: you shall not be able to wage against me in the charges growing upon this action, especially if the worshipful company of the Inner-Temple gentlemen patronise my cause, as undoubtedly they will, yea, and rather plead partially for me, than let my cause miscarry, because themselves are parties. The tragedy was by them most pithily framed, and no less curiously acted in view of her Majesty, by whom it was then as princely accepted, as of the whole honourable audience notably applauded: yea, and of all men generally desired, as a work, either in stateliness of show, depth of conceit, or true ornaments of poetical art, inferior to none of the best in that kind: no, were the Roman Seneca the censorer. The brave youths that then (to their high praises) so feelingly performed the same in action, did shortly after lay up the book unregarded, or perhaps let it run abroad (as many parents do their children once past dandling) not respecting so much what hard fortune might befall it being out of their fingers, as how their heroic wits might again be quickly conceived have been ever since wonderful fertile. But this orphan of theirs (for he wand'reth as it were fatherless) hath notwithstanding, by the rare and beautiful perfections appearing in him, hitherto never wanted great favourers and loving preservers. Among whom I cannot sufficiently commend your charitable zeal and scholarly compassion towards him, that have not only rescued and defended him from the devouring jaws of oblivion, but vouchsafed also to apparel him in a new suit at your own charges, wherein he may again more boldly come abroad, and by your permission return to his old parents, clothed perhaps not in richer or more costly furniture than it went from them, but in handsomeness and fashion more answerable to these times, wherein fashions are so often altered. Let one word suffice for your encouragement herein; namely, that your commendable pains in disrobing him of his antique curiosity, and adorning him with the approved guise of our stateliest English terms (not diminishing, but more augmenting his artificial colours of absolute poesy, derived from his first parents) cannot but be grateful to most men's appetites, who upon our experience we know highly to esteem such lofty measures of sententiously composed tragedies.

How much you shall make me and the rest of your private friends beholden to you, I list not to discourse: and therefore grounding upon these alleged reasons; that the suppressing of this tragedy, so worthy for the press, were no other thing than wilfully to defraud yourself of an universal thank, your friends of their expectations, and sweet Gismund of a famous eternity, I will cease to doubt of any other pretence to cloak your bashfulness, hoping to read it in print (which lately lay neglected amongst your papers) at our next appointed meeting.

I bid you heartily farewell. From Pyrgo in Essex, August the eighth, 1591.

Tuus fide & facultate

GUIL. WEBBE.[3]

To the Worshipful and Learned Society, the GENTLEMEN STUDENTS of the Inner Temple, with the rest of his singular good Friends, the GENTLEMEN of the Middle Temple, and to all other courteous Readers, R.W. wisheth increase of all health, worship, and learning, with the immortal glory of the graces adorning the same.

Ye may perceive (right Worshipful) in perusing the former epistle sent to me, how sore I am beset with the importunities of my friends to publish this pamphlet: truly I am and have been (if there be in me any soundness of judgment) of this opinion, that whatsoever is committed to the press is commended to eternity, and it shall stand a lively witness with our conscience, to our comfort or confusion, in the reckoning of that great day.

Advisedly, therefore, was that proverb used of our elder philosophers, *Manum a tabula*: withhold thy hand from the paper, and thy papers from the print or light of the world: for a lewd word escaped is irrevocable, but a bad or base discourse published in print is intolerable.

Hereupon I have endured some conflicts between reason and judgment, whether it were convenient for the commonwealth, with the *indecorum* of my calling (as some think it) that the memory of Tancred's tragedy should be again by my means revived, which the oftener I read over, and the more I considered thereon, the sooner I was won to consent thereunto: calling to mind that neither the thrice

reverend and learned father, M. Beza, was ashamed in his younger years to send abroad, in his own name, his tragedy of "Abraham,"[4] nor that rare Scot (the scholar of our age) Buchanan, his most pathetic Jephtha.

Indeed I must willingly confess this work simple, and not worth comparison to any of theirs: for the writers of them were grave men; of this, young heads: in them is shown the perfection of their studies; in this, the imperfection of their wits. Nevertheless herein they all agree, commending virtue, detesting vice, and lively deciphering their overthrow that suppress not their unruly affections. These things noted herein, how simple soever the verse be, I hope the matter will be acceptable to the wise.

Wherefore I am now bold to present Gismund to your sights, and unto yours only, for therefore have I conjured her, by the love that hath been these twenty-four years betwixt us, that she wax not so proud of her fresh painting, to straggle in her plumes abroad, but to contain herself within the walls of your house; so am I sure she shall be safe from the *tragedian tyrants* of our time, who are not ashamed to affirm that there can no amorous poem savour of any sharpness of wit, unless it be seasoned with scurrilous words.

But leaving them to their lewdness, I hope you, and all discreet readers, will thankfully receive my pains, the fruits of my first harvest: the rather, perceiving that my purpose in this tragedy tendeth only to the exaltation of virtue and suppression of vice, with pleasure to profit and help all men, but to offend or hurt no man. As for such as have neither the grace, nor the good gift, to do well themselves, nor the common honesty to speak well of others, I must (as I may) hear and bear their baitings with patience.

Yours devoted in his ability,

R. WILMOT.

A PREFACE TO THE QUEEN'S MAIDENS OF HONOUR.[5]

1. A SONNET OF THE QUEEN'S MAIDS.

They which tofore thought that the heaven's throne
Is placed above the skies, and there do feign
The gods and all the heavenly powers to reign,
They err, and but deceive themselves alone.
Heaven (unless you think mo be than one)
Is here in earth, and by the pleasant side
Of famous Thames at Greenwich court doth 'bide.
And as for other heaven is there none.
There are the goddesses we honour so:
There Pallas sits: there shineth Venus' face:
Bright beauty there possesseth all the place:
Virtue and honour there do live and grow:
There reigneth she such heaven that doth deserve,
Worthy whom so fair goddesses should serve.

2. ANOTHER TO THE SAME.

Flowers of prime, pearls couched all in gold,
Light of our days, that glads the fainting hearts
Of them that shall your shining gleams behold,
Salve of each sore, recure of inward smarts,
In whom virtue and beauty striveth so
As neither yields: behold here, for your gain,
Gismund's unlucky love, her fault, her woe,
And death; at last her cruel father slain
Through his mishap; and though you do not see,
Yet read and rue their woful tragedy.
So Jove, as your high virtues done deserve,
Grant you such pheers[6] as may your virtues serve
With like virtues; and blissful Venus send
Unto your happy loves an happy end.

3. ANOTHER TO THE SAME.

Gismund, that whilome liv'd her father's joy
And died his death, now dead, doth (as she may)
By us pray you to pity her annoy.
And, to requite the same, doth humbly pray,
Heavens to forefend[7] your loves from like decay.
The faithful earl doth also make request,
Wishing those worthy knights whom ye embrace,
The constant truth that lodged in his breast.
His hearty love, not his unhappy case,
Befall to such as triumph in your grace.
The king prays pardon of his cruel hest,[8]
And for amends desires it may suffice.
That by his blood he warneth all the rest
Of fond fathers, that they in kinder wise
Intreat the jewels where their comfort lies.
We, as their messengers, beseech ye all
On their behalfts to pity all their smarts.
And for ourselves (although the worth be small)
We pray ye to accept our humble hearts,
Avow'd to serve with prayer and with praise
Your honours, all unworthy other ways.[9]

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.[10]

CUPID.

TANCRED, *the King.*

GISMUNDA, *the King's Daughter.*

LUCRECE, *her Aunt.*

GUISCARD, *Count Palurin.*

RENUCHIO, *Captain of the Guard.*

JULIO, *Lord Chamberlain.*

MEGAERA.

CHORUSES.[11]

ARGUMENT OF THE TRAGEDY.[12]

Tancred, the Prince of Salerne, overloves
His only daughter (wonder of that age)
Gismund, who loves the County[13] Palurin
Guiscard, who quites her likings with his love:
A letter in a cane describes the means
Of their two meetings in a secret cave.
Unconstant fortune leadeth forth the king
To this unhappy sight, wherewith in rage
The gentle earl he doometh to his death,
And greets his daughter with her lover's heart.
Gismunda fills the goblet with her tears,
And drinks a poison which she had distill'd,
Whereof she dies, whose deadly countenance
So grieves her father, that he slew himself.

ANOTHER OF THE SAME, MORE AT LARGE, IN PROSE.[14]

Tancred, King of Naples and Prince of Salerne, gave his only daughter Gismund (whom he most dearly loved) in marriage to a foreign prince, after whose death she returned home to her father, who having felt great grief of her absence whilst her husband lived, immeasurably esteeming her, determined never to suffer any second marriage to bereave him of her. She, on the other side, waxing weary of that her father's purpose, bent her mind to the secret love of the County Palurin: to whom (he being likewise inflamed with love of her) by a letter subtly enclosed in a cloven cane, she gave to understand

a convenient way for their desired meetings, through an old ruinous vault, whose mouth opened directly under her chamber floor. Into this vault when she was one day descended (for the conveyance of her lover), her father in the mean season (whose only joy was in his daughter) came to her chamber, and not finding her there, supposing her to have been walked abroad for her[15] disport, he threw him down on her bed, and covered his head with a curtain, minding to abide and rest there till her return. She, nothing suspecting this her father's unseasonable coming, brought up her lover out of the cave into her chamber, where her father espied their secret love: and he (not espied of them) was upon this sight stricken with marvellous grief; but either for that the sudden despite had amazed him, and taken from him all use of speech, or for that he resolved himself to a more convenient revenge, he then spake nothing, but noted their return into the vault, and secretly departed. Afterward, bewailing his mishap, he commanded the earl to be attached, imprisoned, strangled, unbowelled, and his heart in a cup of gold to be presented to his daughter:[16] she thankfully receiveth the present, filling the cup (wherein the heart was) with her tears, with a venomous potion (by her distilled for that purpose) she drank to her earl. Which her father hearing of, came too late to comfort his dying daughter, who for her last request besought him that her lover and herself might in one tomb be together buried for a perpetual memory of their faithful loves; which request he granted, adding to the burial himself, slain with his own hands, to his own reproach, and the terror of all other hard-hearted fathers.

Introductio in Actum Secundum.

Before the second act there was heard a sweet noise of still pipes, which sounding, Lucrece entered, attended by a maiden of honour with a covered goddard of gold, and, drawing the curtains, she offereth unto Gismunda to taste thereof; which when she had done, the maid returned, and Lucrece raiseth up Gismunda from her bed, and then it followeth *ut* in act ii. sc. 1.

Introductio in Actum Tertium.

Before this act the hautboys sounded a lofty almain, and Cupid ushereth after him Guiscard and Gismunda, hand in hand; Julio and Lucrece, Renuchio and another maiden of honour. The measures trod, Gismunda gives a cane into Guiscard's hand, and they are all led forth again by Cupid, *ut sequitur*.

Introductio in Actum Quartum.

Before this act there was heard a consort of sweet music, which playing, Tancred cometh forth, and draweth Gismunda's curtains, and lies down upon her bed; then from under the stage ascendeth Guiscard, and he helpeth up Gismunda: they amorously embrace and depart. The king ariseth enraged. Then was heard and seen a storm of thunder and lightning, in which the furies rise up, *ut sequitur*.

Introductio in Actum Quintum.

Before this act was a dead march played, during which entered on the stage Renuchio, Captain of the Guard, attended upon by the guard. They took up Guiscard from under the stage; then after Guiscard had kindly taken leave of them all, a strangling-cord was fastened about his neck, and he haled forth by them. Renuchio bewaileth it; and then, entering in, bringeth forth a standing cup of gold, with a bloody heart reeking hot in it, and then saith, *ut sequitur*.

TANCRED AND GISMUNDA.[17]

ACT I., SCENE 1.

CUPID cometh out of the heavens in a cradle of flowers, drawing forth upon the stage, in a blue twist of silk, from his left hand, Vain Hope, Brittle Joy: and with a carnation twist of silk from his right hand, Fair Resemblance, Late Repentance.

CUPID. There rest my chariot on the mountaintops.[18]
I, that in shape appear unto your sight[19]
A naked boy, not cloth'd but with my wings,
And that great God of Love, who with his might

Ruleth the vast wide world and living things.[20]
This left hand bears Vain Hope, short joyful state,
With Fair Resemblance, lovers to allure:
This right hand holds Repentance all too late,
War, fire,[21] blood, and pains without recure.
On sweet ambrosia is not my food,
Nectar is not my drink: as to the rest
Of all the gods: I drink the lover's blood.
And feed upon the heart[22] within his breast.
Well hath my power in heaven and earth been try'd,
And deepest hell my piercing force hath known.
The marble seas[23] my wonders hath descry'd,
Which elder age throughout the world hath blown.[24]
To me the king of gods and men doth yield,
As witness can the Greekish maid,[25] whom I
Made like a cow go glowing through[26] the field,
Lest jealous Juno should the 'scape espy.
The doubled night, the sun's restrained course,
His secret stealths, the slander to eschew,
In shape transform'd,[27] we[28] list not to discourse.
All that and more we forced him to do.
The warlike Mars hath not subdu'd our[29] might,
We fear'd him not, his fury nor disdain,
That can the gods record, before whose sight
He lay fast wrapp'd in Vulcan's subtle chain.
He that on earth yet hath not felt our power,
Let him behold the fall and cruel spoil
Of thee, fair Troy, of Asia the flower,
So foul defac'd, and levell'd[30] with the soil
Who forc'd Leander with his naked breast
So many nights to cut the frothy waves,
But Hero's love, that lay inclos'd in Sest?
The stoutest hearts to me shall yield them slaves.
Who could have match'd the huge Alcides'[31] strength?
Great Macedon[32] what force might have subdu'd?
Wise Scipio who overcame at length,
But we, that are with greater force endu'd?
Who could have conquered the golden fleece[33]
But Jason, aided by Medea's art?
Who durst have stol'n fair Helen out of Greece
But I, with love that bold'ned Paris' heart?
What bond of nature, what restraint avails[34]
Against our power? I vouch to witness truth.
The myrrh tree,[35] that with shamefast tears bewails
Her father's love, still weepeth yet for ruth,[36]
But now, this world not seeing in these days
Such present proofs of our all-daring[37] power,
Disdains our name, and seeketh sundry ways
To scorn and scoff, and shame us every hour.
A brat, a bastard, and an idle boy:
A[38] rod, a staff, a whip to beat him out!
And to be sick of love, a childish toy:
These are mine honours now the world about,
My name disgrac'd to raise again therefore,
And in this age mine ancient renown
By mighty acts intending to restore,
Down to the earth in wrath now am I come;
And in this place such wonders shall ye hear,
As these your stubborn and disdainful hearts
In melting tears and humble yielding fear
Shall soon relent by sight of others' smarts.
This princely palace will I enter in,
And there inflame the fair Gismunda so,
Enraging all her secret veins within,

Through fiery love that she shall feel much woe.[39]
Too-late-Repentance, thou shalt bend my bow;
Vain Hope, take out my pale, dead, heavy shaft,
Thou, Fair Resemblance, foremost forth shalt go,
With Brittle Joy: myself will not be least,
But after me comes Death and deadly Pain.
Thus shall ye march, till we return again.[40]
Meanwhile, sit still, and here I shall you show
Such wonders, that at last with one accord
Ye shall relent, and say that now you know
Love rules the world, Love it a mighty lord.[41]

[CUPID *with his train entereth into KING TANCRED'S palace.*

ACT I., SCENE 2.

*GISMUNDA in purple cometh out of her chamber,
attended by four maids that are the Chorus.*

GISMUNDA. "O vain, unsteadfast state of mortal things!
Who trust this world, leans to a brittle stay:
Such fickle fruit his flattering bloom forth brings,
Ere it be ripe, it falleth to decay."
The joy and bliss that late I did possess,
In weal at will, with one I loved best,
Is turned now into so deep distress,
As teacheth me to know the world's unrest.[42]
For neither wit nor princely stomachs serve
Against his force, that slays without respect
The noble and the wretch: ne doth reserve
So much as one for worthiness elect.
Ah me, dear lord! what well of tears may serve
To feed the streams of my foredulled eyes,
To weep thy death, as thy death doth deserve,
And wail thy want in full sufficing wise?
Ye lamps of heaven, and all ye heavenly powers,[43]
Wherein did he procure your high disdain?
He never sought with vast huge mountain towers
To reach aloft, and over-view your reign:
Or what offence of mine was it unwares,
That thus your fury should on me be thrown,
To plague a woman with such endless cares?
I fear that envy hath the heavens this shown:
The sun his glorious virtues did disdain;
Mars at his manhood mightily repin'd;
Yea, all the gods no longer could sustain,
Each one to be excelled in his kind.
For he my lord surpass'd them every one;[44]
Such was his honour all the world throughout.
But now, my love, oh! whither art thou gone?
I know thy ghost doth hover hereabout,
Expecting me, thy heart, to follow thee:
And I, dear love, would fain dissolve this strife.
But stay awhile, I may perhaps foresee
Some means to be disburden'd of this life,
"And to discharge the duty of a wife,[45]
Which is, not only in this life to love,
But after death her fancy not remove."
Meanwhile accept of these our daily rites,
Which with my maidens I shall do to thee,
Which is in songs to cheer our dying sprites
With hymns of praises of thy memory.

_Cantant.

Quae mihi cantio nondum occurrit_.[46]

ACT I, SCENE 3.

The song ended, TANCRED the King cometh out of his palace with his guard.

TANCRED. Fair daughter, I have sought thee out with grief,
To ease the sorrows of thy vexed heart.
How long wilt thou torment thy father thus,
Who daily dies to see thy needless tears?
Such bootless plaints, that know nor mean nor end,
Do but increase the floods of thy lament;
And since the world knows well there was no want
In thee of ought, that did to him belong,
Yet all, thou seest, could not his life prolong.
Why then dost thou provoke the heavens to wrath?
His doom of death was dated by his stars,
"And who is he that may withstand his fate?"
By these complaints small good to him thou dost,
Much grief to me, more hurt unto thyself,
And unto nature greatest wrong of all.

GISMUNDA. Tell me not of the date of nature's days,
Then in the April of her springing age:
No, no, it was my cruel destiny,
That spited at the pleasance of my life.

TANCRED. My daughter knows the proof of nature's course.
"For as the heavens do guide the lamp of life,
So can they reach no farther forth the flame,
Than whilst with oil they do maintain the same."

GISMUNDA. Curst be the stars, and vanish may they curst,
Or fall from heaven, that in their dire aspect[47]
Abridg'd the health and welfare of my love.

TANCRED. Gismund, my joy, set all these griefs apart;
"The more thou art with hard mishap beset,
The more thy patience should procure thine ease."

GISMUNDA. What hope of hap may cheer my hapless chance?
What sighs, what tears may countervail my cares?
What should I do, but still his death bewail,
That was the solace of my life and soul?
Now, now, I want the wonted guide and stay
Of my desires and of my wreckless thoughts.
My lord, my love, my life, my liking gone,
In whom was all the fulness of my joy,
To whom I gave the first-fruits of my love,
Who with the comfort of his only sight
All care and sorrows could from me remove.
But, father, now my joys forepast to tell,
Do but revive the horrors of my hell.
As she that seems in darkness to behold
The gladsome pleasures of the cheerful light.

TANCRED. What then avails thee fruitless thus to rue
His absence, whom the heavens cannot return?
Impartial death thy husband did subdue,
Yet hath he spar'd thy kingly father's life:
Who during life to thee a double stay,
As father and as husband, will remain,

With double love to ease thy widow's want,
Of him whose want is cause of thy complaint.
Forbear thou therefore all these needless tears,
That nip the blossoms of thy beauty's pride.

GISMUNDA. Father, these tears love challengeth of due.

TANCRED. But reason saith thou shouldst the same subdue.

GISMUNDA. His funerals are yet before my sight.

TANCRED. In endless moans princes should not delight.

GISMUNDA. The turtle pines in loss of her true mate.

TANCRED. And so continues poor and desolate.

GISMUNDA. Who can forget a jewel of such price?

TANCRED. She that hath learn'd to master her desires.
"Let reason work, what time doth easily frame
In meanest wits, to bear the greatest ills."

GISMUNDA. So plenteous are the springs
Of sorrows that increase my passions,
As neither reason can recure my smart,
Nor can your care nor fatherly comfort
Appease the stormy combats of my thoughts;
Such is the sweet remembrance of his life.
Then give me leave: of pity, pity me,
And as I can, I shall allay these griefs.

TANCRED. These solitary walks thou dost frequent,
Yield fresh occasions to thy secret moans:
We will therefore thou keep us company,
Leaving thy maidens with their harmony.
Wend[48] thou with us. Virgins, withdraw yourselves.

*[TANCRED and GISMUNDA, with the guard, depart into the palace;
the four maidens stay behind, as Chorus to the Tragedy.]*

CHORUS 1. The diverse haps which always work our care,
Our joys so far, our woes so near at hand,
Have long ere this, and daily do declare
The fickle foot on which our state doth stand.
"Who plants his pleasures here to gather root,
And hopes his happy life will still endure,
Let him behold how death with stealing foot
Steps in when he shall think his joys most sure."
No ransom serveth to redeem our days
If prowess could preserve, or worthy deeds,
He had yet liv'd, whose twelve labours displays
His endless fame, and yet his honour spreads.
And that great king,[49] that with so small a power
Bereft the mighty Persian of his crown,
Doth witness well our life is but a flower,
Though it be deck'd with honour and renown.

CHORUS 2. "What grows to-day in favour of the heaven,
Nurs'd with the sun and with the showers sweet,
Pluck'd with the hand, it withereth ere even.
So pass our days, even as the rivers fleet."
The valiant Greeks, that unto Troia gave
The ten years' siege, left but their names behind.
And he that did so long and only save
His father's walls,[50] found there at last his end.
Proud Rome herself, that whilome laid her yoke
On the wide world, and vanquish'd all with war,

Yet could she not remove the fatal stroke
Of death from them that stretch'd her pow'r so far.

CHORUS 3. Look, what the cruel sisters once decree'd,
The Thunderer himself cannot remove:
They are the ladies of our destiny,
To work beneath what is conspir'd above.
But happy he that ends this mortal life
By speedy death: who is not forc'd to see
The many cares, nor feel the sundry griefs,
Which we sustain in woe and misery.
Here fortune rules who, when she list to play,
Whirleth her wheel, and brings the high full low:
To-morrow takes, what she hath given to-day,
To show she can advance and overthrow.
Not Euripus'[51] (unquiet flood) so oft
Ebbs in a day, and floweth to and fro,
As fortune's change plucks down that was aloft,
And mingleth joy with interchange of woe.

CHORUS 4. "Who lives below, and feeleth not the strokes,
Which often-times on highest towers do fall,
Nor blustering winds, wherewith the strongest oaks
Are rent and torn, his life is sur'st of all:"
For he may fortune scorn, that hath no power
On him, that is well pleas'd with his estate:
He seeketh not her sweets, nor fears her sour,
But lives contented in his quiet rate,
And marking how these worldly things do vade,[52]
Rejoiceth to himself, and laughs to see
The folly of men, that in their wits have made
Fortune a goddess, placed in the sky.

Exegit ROD. STAF.

FINIS ACTUS I.

ACT II, SCENE 1.

GISMUNDA AND LUCRECE.

GISMUNDA. Dear aunt, my sole companion in distress,
And true copartner of my thoughtful cares:
When with myself I weigh my present state,
Comparing it with my forepassed days,
New heaps of cares afresh begin t'assay
My pensive heart, as when the glittering rays
Of bright Phoebus are suddenly o'erspread
With dusky clouds, that dim his golden light:
Namely, when I, laid in my widow's bed,
Amid the silence of the quiet night,
With curious thought the fleeting course observe
Of gladsome youth, how soon his flower decays,
"How time once past may never have recourse,
No more than may the running streams revert
To climb the hills, when they been rolled down
The hollow vales. There is no curious art,
Nor worldly power: no, not the gods can hold
The sway of flying time, nor him return,
When he is past: all things unto his might
Must bend, and yield unto the iron teeth

Of eating time." This in the shady night
When I record: how soon my youth withdraws
Itself away, how swift my pleasant spring
Runs out his race,—this, this, aunt, is the cause,
When I advise me sadly[53] on this thing,
That makes my heart in pensive dumps dismay'd.
For if I should my springing years neglect,
And suffer youth fruitless to fade away;
Whereto live I? or whereto was I born?
Wherefore hath nature deck'd me with her grace?
Why have I tasted these delights of love,
And felt the sweets of Hymeneus' bed?
But to say sooth, dear aunt, it is not I,
Sole and alone, can thus content to spend
My cheerful years: my father will not still
Prolong my mournings, which have griev'd him,
And pleas'd me too long. Then this I crave,
To be resolv'd of his princely mind.
For, stood it with the pleasure of his will
To marry me, my fortune is not such,
So hard, that I so long should still persist
Makeless alone in woful widowhood.
And shall I tell mine aunt? Come hither then,
Give me that hand: By thine own right hand,
I charge thy heart my counsels to conceal.
Late have I seen, and seeing took delight,
And with delight, I will not say, I love
A prince, an earl, a county in the court.
But love and duty force me to refrain,
And drive away these fond affections,
Submitting them unto my father's hest.
But this, good aunt, this is my chiefest pain,
Because I stand at such uncertain stay.
For, if my kingly father would decree
His final doom, that I must lead my life
Such as I do, I would content me then
To frame my fancies to his princely hest,
And as I might, endure the grief thereof.
But now his silence doubleth all my doubts,
Whilst my suspicious thoughts 'twixt hope and fear
Distract me into sundry passions:
Therefore, good aunt, this labour must be yours,
To understand my father's will herein,
For well I know your wisdom knows the means,
So shall you both allay my stormy thoughts,
And bring to quiet my unquiet mind.

LUCRECE. Sufficeth this, good niece, that you have said;
For I perceive what sundry passions
Strive in your breast, which oftentimes ere this
Your countenance confused did bewray.
The ground whereof since I perceive to grow
On just respect of this your sole estate,
And skilful care of fleeting youth's decay,
Your wise foresight such sorrowing to eschew
I much commend, and promise as I may
To break this matter, and impart your mind
Unto your father, and to work it so,
As both your honour shall not be impeach'd,
Nor he unsatisfied of your desire.
Be you no farther griev'd, but return
Into your chamber. I shall take this charge,
And you shall shortly truly understand
What I have wrought, and what the king affirms.

GISMUNDA. I leave you to the fortune of my stars.

[GISMUNDA *departeth into her chamber*, LUCRECE
abiding on the stage.

LUCRECE. The heavens, I hope, will favour your request.
My niece shall not impute the cause to be
In my default, her will should want effect:
But in the king is all my doubt, lest he
My suit for her new marriage should reject.
Yet shall I prove him: and I heard it said,
He means this evening in the park to hunt.[54]
Here will I wait attending his approach.

ACT II., SCENE 2.

TANCRED *cometh out of his palace with GUISCARD,*
the COUNTY PALURIN, JULIO, the Lord Chamberlain,
RENUCHIO, captain of his guard, all ready to hunt.

TANCRED. Uncouple all our hounds; lords, to the chase—
Fair sister Lucre[ce], what's the news with you?

LUCRECE. Sir, as I always have employ'd my power
And faithful service, such as lay in me,
In my best wise to honour you and yours:
So now my bounden duty moveth me
Your majesty most humbly to entreat
With patient ears to understand the state
Of my poor niece, your daughter.

TANCRED. What of her?
Is she not well? Enjoys she not her health?
Say, sister: ease me of this jealous fear?

LUCRECE. She lives, my lord, and hath her outward health;
But all the danger of her sickness lies
In the disquiet of her princely mind.

TANCRED. Resolve me; what afflicts my daughter so?

LUCRECE. Since when the princess hath entomb'd her lord,
Her late deceased husband of renown;
Brother, I see, and very well perceive,
She hath not clos'd together in his grave
All sparks of nature, kindness, nor of love:
But as she lives, so living may she feel
Such passions as our tender hearts oppress,
Subject unto th'impressions of desire:
For well I wot my niece was never wrought
Of steel, nor carved from the stony rock:
Such stern hardness we ought not to expect
In her, whose princely heart and springing years
Yet flow'ring in the chiefest heat of youth,
Is led of force to feed on such conceits,
As easily befalls that age, which asketh ruth
Of them, whom nature bindeth by foresight
Of their grave years and careful love to reach
The things that are above their feeble force:
And for that cause, dread lord, although—

TANCRED. Sister, I say,
If you esteem or ought respect my life,
Her honour and the welfare of our house,
Forbear, and wade[55] no farther in this speech.

Your words are wounds. I very well perceive
The purpose of this smooth oration:
This I suspected, when you first began
This fair discourse with us. Is this the end
Of all our hopes, that we have promised
Unto ourself by this her widowhood?
Would our dear daughter, would our only joy,
Would she forsake us? would she leave us now,
Before she hath clos'd up our dying eyes,
And with her tears bewail'd our funeral?
No other solace doth her father crave;
But, whilst the fates maintain his dying life,
Her healthful presence gladsome to his soul,
Which rather than he willing would forego,
His heart desires the bitter taste of death.
Her late marriage hath taught us to our grief,
That in the fruits of her perpetual sight
Consists the only comfort and relief
Of our unwieldy age: for what delight,
What joy, what comfort, have we in this world;
Now grown in years, and overworn with cares,
Subject unto the sudden stroke of death,
Already falling, like the mellowed fruit,
And dropping by degrees into our grave?
But what revives us, what maintains our soul
Within the prison of our wither'd breast,
But our Gismunda and her cheerful sight?
O daughter, daughter! what desert of mine,
Wherein have I been so unkind to thee,
Thou shouldst desire to make my naked house
Yet once again stand desolate by thee?
O, let such fancies vanish with their thoughts:
Tell her I am her father, whose estate,
Wealth, honour, life, and all that we possess,
Wholly relies upon her presence here.
Tell her, I must account her all my joy,
Work as she will: but yet she were unjust
To haste his death, that liveth by her sight.

LUCRECE. Her gentle heart abhors such ruthless thoughts.

TANCRED. Then let her not give place to these desires.

LUCRECE. She craves the right that nature challengeth.

TANCRED. Tell her, the king commandeth otherwise.

LUCRECE. The king's commandment always should be just.

TANCRED. Whate'er it be, the king's command is just.

LUCRECE. Just to command: but justly must he charge.

TANCRED. He chargeth justly that commands as king.

LUCRECE. The king's command concerns the body best.

TANCRED. The king commands obedience of the mind.

LUCRECE. That is exempted by the law of kind.

TANCRED. That law of kind^[56] to children doth belong.

LUCRECE. In due obedience to their open wrong?

TANCRED. I then, as king and father, will command.

LUCRECE. No more than may with right of reason stand.

TANCRED. Thou knowest our mind, resolve[57] her, depart—
Return the chase, we have been chas'd enough.

[TANCRED *returneth into his palace, and leaveth the hunt.*

LUCRECE. He cannot hear, anger hath stopp'd his ears,
And over-love his judgment hath decay'd
Ah, my poor niece! I shrewdly fear thy cause,
Thy just complaint, shall never be reliev'd.

ACT II., SCENE 3.

GISMUNDA *cometh alone out of her chamber.*

GISMUNDA. By this I hope my aunt hath mov'd the king,
And knows his mind, and makes return to me
To end at once all this perplexity.
Lo, where she stands. O, how my trembling heart
In doubtful thoughts panteth within my breast.
For in her message doth rely my smart,
Or the sweet quiet of my troubled mind.

LUCRECE. Niece, on the point you lately willed me
To treat of with the king on your behalf,
I brake even now with him so far, till he
In sudden rage of grief, ere I scarce had
My tale out-told, pray'd me to stint my suit,
As that from which his mind abhorred most.
And well I see his fancy to refute,
Is but displeasure gain'd and labour lost.
So firmly fixed stands his kingly will
That, till his body shall be laid in grave,
He will not part from the desired sight
Of your presence, which silder he should have,
If he had once allied you again
In marriage to any prince or peer—
This is his final resolution.

GISMUNDA. A resolution that resolves my blood
Into the icy drops of Lethe's flood.

LUCRECE. Therefore my counsel is, you shall not stir,
Nor farther wade in such a case as this:
But since his will is grounded on your love,
And that it lies in you to save or spill
His old forewasted age, you ought t'eschew
The thing that grieves so much his crazed heart,
And in the state you stand content yourself:
And let this thought appease your troubled mind,
That in your hands relies your father's death
Or blissful life; and since without your sight
He cannot live, nor can his thoughts endure
Your hope of marriage, you must then relent,
And overrule these fond affections;
Lest it be said you wrought your father's end.

GISMUNDA. Dear aunt, I have with patient ears endur'd
The hearing of my father's hard behest;
And since I see that neither I myself,
Nor your request, can so prevail with him,
Nor any sage advice persuade his mind
To grant me my desire, in willing wise
I must submit me unto his command,
And frame my heart to serve his majesty.

And (as I may) to drive away the thoughts
That diversely distract my passions,
Which as I can, I'll labour to subdue,
But sore I fear I shall but toil in vain,
Wherein, good aunt, I must desire your pain.

LUCRECE. What lies in me by comfort or advice,
I shall discharge with all humility.

[GISMUNDA and LUCRECE depart into GISMUNDA'S chamber.

CHORUS 1. Who marks our former times and present years,
What we are now, and looks what we have been,
He cannot but lament with bitter tears
The great decay and change of all women.
For as the world wore on, and waxed old,
So virtue quail'd,[58] and vice began to grow.
So that that age, that whilome was of gold,
Is worse than brass, more vile than iron now.
The times were such (that if we aught believe
Of elder days), women examples were
Of rare virtues: Lucrece disdain'd to live
Longer than chaste; and boldly without fear
Took sharp revenge on her enforced heart
With her own hands: for that it not withstood
The wanton will, but yielded to the force
Of proud Tarquin, who bought her fame with blood.

CHORUS 2. Queen Artemisia thought an heap of stones
(Although they were the wonder of that age)
A worthless grave, wherein to rest the bones
Of her dear lord, but with bold courage
She drank his heart, and made her lovely breast
His tomb, and failed not of wifely faith,
Of promis'd love and of her bound behest,
Until she ended had her days by death.
Ulysses' wife (such was her steadfastness)
Abode his slow return whole twenty years:
And spent her youthful days in pensiveness,
Bathing her widow's bed with brinish tears.[59]

CHORUS 3. The stout daughter of Cato, Brutus' wife, Portia,
When she had heard his death, did not desire
Longer to live: and lacking use of knife
(A most strange thing) ended her life by fire,
And ate whot-burning coals. O worthy dame!
O virtues worthy of eternal praise!
The flood of Lethe cannot wash out thy fame,
To others' great reproach, shame, and dispraise.

CHORUS 4. Rare are those virtues now in women's mind!
Where shall we seek such jewels passing strange?
Scarce can you now among a thousand find
One woman stedfast: all delight in change.
Mark but this princess, that lamented here
Of late so sore her noble husband's death,
And thought to live alone without a pheer;
Behold how soon she changed hath that breath!
I think those ladies that have lived 'tofore,
A mirror and a glass to womenkind;
By those their virtues they did set such store,
That unto us they none bequeath'd behind;
Else in so many years we might have seen
As virtuous as ever they have been.

CHORUS 1. Yet let not us maidens condemn our kind,

Because our virtues are not all so rare:
For we may freshly yet record in mind,
There lives a virgin,[60] one without compare,
Who of all graces hath her heavenly share;
In whose renown, and for whose happy days,
Let us record this paeon of her praise.

Cantant.

FINIS ACTUS II. *Per* HEN. NO.[61]

ACT III., SCENE 1.

CUPID. So now they feel what lordly Love can do,
That proudly practise to deface his name;
In vain they wrastle with so fierce a foe;
Of little sparks arise a blazing flame.
"By small occasions love can kindle heat,
And waste the oaken breast to cinder dust."
Gismund I have enticed to forget
Her widow's weeds, and burn in raging lust:
'Twas I enforc'd her father to deny
Her second marriage to any peer;
'Twas I allur'd her once again to try
The sour sweets that lovers buy too dear.
The County Palurin, a man right wise,
A man of exquisite perfections,
I have like wounded with her piercing eyes,
And burnt her heart with his reflections.
These two shall joy in tasting of my sweet,
To make them prove more feelingly the grief
That bitter brings: for when their joys shall fleet,
Their dole shall be increas'd without relief.
Thus Love shall make worldlings to know his might;
Thus Love shall force great princes to obey;
Thus Love shall daunt each proud, rebelling spirit;
Thus Love shall wreak his wrath on their decay.
Their ghosts shall give black hell to understand,
How great and wonderful a god is Love:
And this shall learn the ladies of this land
With patient minds his mighty power to prove.
From whence I did descend, now will I mount
To Jove and all the gods in their delights:
In throne of triumph there will I recount,
How I by sharp revenge on mortal wights
Have taught the earth, and learned hellish sprites
To yield with fear their stubborn hearts to Love,
Lest their disdain his plagues and vengeance
prove.

[CUPID *remounteth into the heavens.*

ACT III., SCENE 2.

LUCRECE *cometh out of* GISMUNDA'S *chamber solitary.*

LUCRECE. Pity, that moveth every gentle heart
To rue their griefs, that be distress'd in pain,
Enforceth me to wail my niece's smart,

Whose tender breast no long time may sustain
The restless toil, that her unquiet mind
Hath caus'd her feeble body to endure;
But why it is (alack!) I must not find,
Nor know the man, by whom I might procure
Her remedy, as I of duty ought,
As to the law of kinship doth belong.
With careful heart the secret means I sought,
Though small effect is of my travail sprung:
Full often as I durst I have assay'd
With humble words the princess to require
To name the man which she hath so deny'd,[62]
That it abash'd me further to desire,
Or ask from whence those cloudy thoughts proceed,
Whose stony force, that smoky sighs forth send,
Is lively witness how that careful dread
And hot desire within her do contend:
Yet she denies what she confess'd of yore,
And then conjoin'd me to conceal the same;
She loved once, she saith, but never more,
Nor ever will her fancy thereto frame.
Though daily I observed in my breast
What sharp conflicts disquiet her so sore,
That heavy sleep cannot procure her rest,
But fearful dreams present her evermore
Most hideous sights her quiet to molest;
That starting oft therewith, she doth awake,
To muse upon those fancies which torment
Her thoughtful heart with horror, that doth make
Her cold chill sweat break forth incontinent
From her weak limbs. And while the quiet night
Gives others rest, she, turning to and fro,
Doth wish for day: but when the day brings light,
She keeps her bed, there to record her woe.
As soon as when she riseth, flowing tears
Stream down her cheeks, immixed with deadly groans,
Whereby her inward sorrow so appears,
That as salt tears the cruel cause bemoans.
In case she be constrained to abide
In prease[63] of company, she scarcely may
Her trembling voice restrain it be not spy'd,
From careful plaints her sorrows to bewray.
By which restraint the force doth so increase,
When time and place give liberty to plain,
That as small streams from running never cease,
Till they return into the seas again;
So her laments, we fear, will not amend,
Before they bring her princely life to end.
To others' talk when as she should attend,
Her heaped cares her senses so oppress,
That what they speak, or whereto their words tend,
She knows not, as her answers do express.
Her chief delight is still to be alone,
Her pensive thoughts within themselves debate:
But whereupon this restless life is grown,
Since I know not, nor how the same t'abate;
I can no more but wish it as I may,
That he which knows it, would the same allay,
For which the Muses with my song shall pray.

ACT III., SCENE 3.

After the song, which was by report very sweetly repeated by the Chorus, LUCRECE departeth into GISMUNDA'S chamber, and GUISCARD cometh out of the palace with JULIO and RENUCHIO, gentlemen, to whom he turneth, and saith:

GUISCARD. Leave me, my friends; this solitary walk
Enticeth me to break your company.
Leave me, my friends, I can endure no talk.
Let me entreat this common courtesy. [*The gentlemen depart.*]
What grievous pain they 'dure, which neither may
Forget their loves, ne yet enjoy their love,
I know by proof, and daily make assay.
Though Love hath brought my lady's heart to love,
My faithful love with like love to requite;
This doth not quench, but rather cause to flame
The creeping fire which, spreading in my breast
With raging heat, grants me no time of rest.
If they bewail their cruel destiny,
Which spend their love, where they no love can find,
Well may I plain, since fortune haleth[64] me
To this torment of far more grievous kind;
Wherein I feel as much extremity,
As may be felt in body or in mind.
For by that sight, which should recure my pain,
My sorrows are redoubled all in vain.
Now I perceive that only I alone
Am her belov'd, her looks assure me so:
The thought thereof provokes me to bemoan
Her heavy plight that grieveth at my woe.
This intercourse of our affections—
I her to serve, she thus to honour me—
Bewrays the truth of our elections,
Delighting in this mutual sympathy.
Thus love for love entreat's the queen of love,
That with her help Love's solace we may prove.
I see my mistress seeks as well as I
To stay the strife of her perplexed mind:
Full fain she would our secret company,
If she the wished way thereof might find.
Heavens, have ye seen, or hath the age of man
Recorded such a miracle as this—
In equal love two noble hearts to frame,
That never spake one with another's bliss?
I am assured that she doth assent
To my relief, that I should reap the same,
If she could frame the means of my content,
Keeping herself from danger of defame.
In happy hour right now I did receive
This cane from her; which gift though it be small,
Receiving it, what joys I did conceive
Within my fainting spirits therewithal!
Who knoweth love aright, may well conceive
By like adventures that to them befall.
"For needs the lover must esteem that well,
Which comes from her, with whom his heart doth dwell."
Assuredly it is not without cause
She gave me this; something she meant thereby:
For therewithal I might perceive her pause
Awhile, as though some weighty thing did lie
Upon her heart, which she concealed, because
The standers-by should not our loves descry:
This clift bewrays that it hath been disclos'd;
Perhaps herein she hath something inclos'd: [*He breaks it.*]
O thou great thunderer! who would not serve,
Where wit with beauty chosen have their place?
Who could devise more wisely to conserve

Things from suspect? O Venus, for this grace
That deigns me, all unworthy, to deserve
So rare a love, in heaven I should thee place.
This sweet letter some joyful news contains,
I hope it brings recourse to both our pains.

[He reads it.]

*Mine own, as I am yours, whose heart, I know,
No less than mine, for lingering help of woe
Doth long too long: love, tendering your case
And mine, hath taught recourse of both our pain.
My chamber-floor doth hide a cave, where was
An old vault's mouth: the other in the plain
Doth rise southward, a furlong from the wall.
Descend you there. This shall suffice. And so
I yield myself, mine honour, life, and all,
To you. Use you the same, as there may grow
Your bliss and mine, mine earl, and that the same
Free may abide from danger of defame.
Farewell; and fare so well, as that your joy,
Which only can, may comfort mine annoy.*

Yours more than her own,

GISMUND.

O blissful chance my sorrows to assuage!
Wonder of nature, marvel of our age!
Comes this from Gismund? did she thus unfold
This letter in the cane? may it be so?
It were too sweet a joy; I am deceiv'd.
Why shall I doubt, did she not give it me?
Therewith she smil'd, she joy'd, she raught^[65] the cane,
And with her own sweet hand she gave it me:
And as we danc'd, she dallied with the cane,
And sweetly whisper'd I should be her king,
And with this cane, the sceptre of our rule,
Command the sweets of her surprised heart.
Therewith she raught from her alluring locks
This golden tress, the favour of her grace,
And with her own sweet hand she gave it me:
O peerless queen, my joy, my heart's decree!
And, thou fair letter, how shall I welcome thee?
Both hand and pen, wherewith thou written wert,
Blest may ye be, such solace that impart!
And blessed be this cane, and he that taught
Thee to descry the hidden entry thus:
Not only through a dark and dreadful vault,
But fire and sword, and through whatever be,
Mistress of my desires, I come to thee.

[GISCARD departeth in haste unto the palace.]

CHORUS 1. Right mighty is thy power, O cruel Love,
High Jove himself cannot resist thy bow;
Thou sent'st him down, e'en from the heavens above,
In sundry shapes here to the earth below:
Then how shall mortal men escape thy dart,
The fervent flame and burning of thy fire;
Since that thy might is such, and since thou art
Both of the seas and land the lord and sire?

CHORUS 2. But why doth she that sprang from Jove's high head,
And Phoebus's sister sheen, despise thy power,
Ne fear thy bow? Why have they always led
A maiden life, and kept untouch'd the flower?
Why doth Aegistus love, and to obtain
His wicked will, conspire his uncle's death?

Or why doth Phaedra burn, from whom is slain
Theseus' chaste son, or Helen, false of faith?
"For love assaults not but the idle heart,
And such as live in pleasure and delight;
He turneth oft their gladsome joys to smart,
Their play to plaint, their sport into despite."

CHORUS 3. 'Tis true, that Dian chaseth with her bow
The flying hart, the goat, and foamy boar:
By hill, by dale: in heat, in frost, in snow:
She recketh not, but laboureth evermore;
Love seeks not her, ne knoweth where[66] to find.
Whilst Paris kept his herd on Ida down,
Cupid ne'er sought him out, for he is blind;
But when he left the field to live in town,
He fell into his snare, and brought that brand
From Greece to Troy, which after set on fire
Strong Ilium, and all the Phryges land:
"Such are the fruits of love, such is his hire." [67]

CHORUS 4. Who yieldeth unto him his captive heart,
Ere he resist, and holds his open breast
Withouten war to take his bloody dart,
Let him not think to shake off, when him list,
His heavy yoke. "Resist his first assault;
Weak is his bow, his quenched brand is cold;
Cupid is but a child, and cannot daunt
The mind that bears him, or his virtues bold."
But he gives poison so to drink in gold,
And hideth under pleasant baits his hook;
But ye beware, it will be hard to hold
Your greedy minds, but if ye wisely look
What sly snake lurks under those flowers gay.
But ye mistrust some cloudy smokes, and fear
A stormy shower after so fair a day:
Ye may repent, and buy your pleasure dear;
For seldom-times is Cupid wont to send
"Unto an idle love a joyful end."

FINIS ACTUS. *G. Al.*

ACT IV., SCENE 1.

Before this act MEGAERA riseth out of hell, with the other furies, ALECTO and TYSIPHONE dancing an hellish round; which done, she saith:

MEGAERA. Sisters, begone, bequeath the rest to me,
That yet belongs unto this tragedy.

[The two furies depart down.]

Vengeance and death from forth the deepest hell
I bring the cursed house, where Gismund dwells.
Sent from the grisly god, that holds his reign
In Tartar's ugly realm, where Pelops' sire
(Who with his own son's flesh, whom he had slain,
Did feast the gods) with famine hath his hire;
To gape and catch at flying fruits in vain,
And yielding waters to his gasping throat;
Where stormy Aeol's son with endless pain
Rolls up the rock; where Tytius hath his lot
To feed the gripe that gnaws his growing heart; [68]
Where proud Ixion, whirled on the wheel,

Pursues himself; where due deserved smart
 The damned ghosts in burning flame do feel—
 From thence I mount: thither the winged god,
 Nephew to Atlas that upholds the sky,
 Of late down from the earth with golden rod
 To Stygian ferry Salerne souls did guide,
 And made report how Love, that lordly boy,
 Highly disdainning his renown's decay,
 Slipp'd down from heaven, and filled with fickle joy
 Gismunda's heart, and made her throw away
 Chasteness of life to her immortal shame:
 Minding to show, by proof of her foul end,
 Some terror unto those that scorn his name.
 Black Pluto (that once found Cupid his friend
 In winning Ceres' daughter, queen of hells;)
 And Parthie, moved by the grieved ghost
 Of her late husband, that in Tartar dwells,
 Who pray'd due pains for her, that thus hath lost
 All care of him and of her chastity.
 The senate then of hell, by grave advice
 Of Minos, Aeac, and of Radamant,
 Commands me draw this hateful air, and rise
 Above the earth, with dole and death to daunt
 The pride and present joys, wherewith these two
 Feed their disdain'd hearts; which now to do,
 Behold I come with instruments of death.
 This stinging snake, which is of hate and wrath,
 I'll fix upon her father's heart full fast,
 And into hers this other will I cast,
 Whose rankling venom shall infect them so
 With envious wrath and with recureless woe,
 Each shall be other's plague and overthrow.
 "Furies must aid, when men surcease to know
 Their gods: and hell sends forth revenging pain
 On those whom shame from sin cannot restrain."

ACT IV., SCENE 2.

*MEGAERA entereth into the palace, and meeteth with
 TANCRED coming out of GISMUNDA'S chamber with
 RENUCHIO and JULIO, upon whom she throweth her
 snake.[69]*

TANCRED. Gods! are ye guides of justice and revenge?
 O thou great Thunderer! dost thou behold
 With watchful eyes the subtle 'scapes of men
 Harden'd in shame, sear'd up in the desire
 Of their own lusts? why then dost thou withhold
 The blast of thy revenge? why dost thou grant
 Such liberty, such lewd occasion
 To execute their shameless villainy?
 Thou, thou art cause of all this open wrong,
 Thou, that forbear'st thy vengeance all too long.
 If thou spare them, rain then upon my head
 The fulness of thy plagues with deadly ire,
 To reave this ruthless soul, who all too sore
 Burns in the wrathful torments of revenge.
 O earth, the mother of each living wight,
 Open thy womb, devour this wither'd corpse.
 And thou, O hell (if other hell there be
 Than that I feel), receive my soul to thee.
 O daughter, daughter (wherefore do I grace
 Her with so kind a name?) O thou fond girl,

The shameful ruin of thy father's house,
Is this my hoped joy? Is this the stay
Must glad my grief-ful years that waste away?
For life, which first thou didst receive from me,
Ten thousand deaths shall I receive by thee.
For all the joys I did repose in thee.
Which I, fond man, did settle in thy sight,
Is this thy recompense—that I must see
The thing so shameful and so villanous:
That would to God this earth had swallowed
This worthless burthen into lowest deeps,
Rather than I, accursed, had beheld
The sight that hourly massacres my life?
O whither, whither fly'st thou forth, my soul?
O whither wand'reth my tormented mind?
Those pains, that make the miser^[70] glad of death,
Have seiz'd on me, and yet I cannot have
What villains may command—a speedy death.
Whom shall I first accuse for this outrage?
That God that guideth all, and guideth so
This damned deed? Shall I blaspheme their names—
The gods, the authors of this spectacle?
Or shall I justly curse that cruel star,
Whose influence assign'd this destiny?
But may that traitor, shall that vile wretch live,
By whom I have receiv'd this injury?
Or shall I longer make account of her,
That fondly prostitutes her widow's shame?—
I have bethought me what I shall request. [*He kneels.*
On bended knees, with hands heav'd up to heaven,
This, sacred senate of the gods, I crave:
First on the traitor your consuming ire;
Next on the cursed strumpet dire revenge;
Last on myself, the wretched father, shame. [*He riseth.*
O! could I stamp, and therewithal command
Armies of furies to assist my heart,
To prosecute due vengeance on their souls!
Hear me, my friends; but as ye love your lives,
Reply not to me; hearken and stand amaz'd.
When I, as is my wont, O fond delight!
Went forth to seek my daughter, now my death—
Within her chamber, as I thought, she was;
But there I found her not—I deemed then
For her disport she and her maidens were
Down to the garden walk'd to comfort them;
And thinking thus, it came into my mind
There all alone to tarry her return:
And thereupon I, weary, threw myself
Upon her widow's bed, for so I thought,
And in the curtain wrapp'd my cursed head.
Thus as I lay, anon I might behold
Out of the vault, up through her chamber floor,
My daughter Gismund bringing hand in hand
The County Palurin. Alas! it is too true;
At her bed's feet this traitor made me see
Her shame, his treason, and my deadly grief—
Her princely body yielded to this thief;
The high despite whereof so wounded me
That, trance-like, as a senseless stone I lay;
For neither wit nor tongue could use the mean
T'express the passions of my pained heart.
Forceless, perforce, I sank down to this pain,
As greedy famine doth constrain the hawk
Piecemeal to rend and tear the yielding prey:

So far'd it with me in that heavy stound.
But now what shall I do? how may I seek
To ease my mind, that burneth with desire
Of dire revenge? For never shall my thoughts
Grant ease unto my heart, till I have found
A mean of vengeance to requite his pains,
That first convey'd this sight unto my soul.—
Renuchio!

RENUCHIO. What is your highness' will?

TANCRED. Call my daughter: my heart boils, till I see
Her in my sight, to whom I may discharge
All the unrest that thus distempereth me. [*Exit* RENUCHIO.
Should I destroy them both? O gods, ye know
How near and dear our daughter is to us.
And yet my rage persuades me to imbrue
My thirsty hands in both their trembling bloods,
Therewith to cool my wrathful fury's heat.
But, Nature, why repin'st thou at this thought?
Why should I think upon a father's debt
To her that thought not on a daughter's due?
But still, methinks, if I should see her die,
And therewithal reflex her dying eyes
Upon mine eyes, that sight would slit my heart:
Not much unlike the cockatrice, that slays
The object of his foul infections,
O, what a conflict doth my mind endure!
Now fight my thoughts against my passions:
Now strive my passions against my thoughts:
Now sweats my heart, now chill cold falls it dead.
Help, heavens, and succour, ye celestial powers!
Infuse your secret virtue on my soul.
Shall nature win? shall justice not prevail?
Shall I, a king, be proved partial?
"How shall our subjects then insult on us,
When our examples, that are light to them,
Shall be eclipsed with our proper deeds?"
And may the arms be rent from the tree,
The members from the body be dissever'd?
And can the heart endure no violence?
My daughter is to me mine only heart,
My life, my comfort, my continuance;
Shall I be then not only so unkind
To pass all nature's strength, and cut her off?
But therewithal so cruel to myself,
Against all law of kind to shred in twain
The golden thread that doth us both maintain?
But were it that my rage should so command,
And I consent to her untimely death,
Were this an end to all our miseries?
No, no, her ghost will still pursue our life,
And from the deep her bloodless, ghastful spirit
Will, as my shadow in the shining day,
Follow my footsteps, till she take revenge.
I will do thus: therefore the traitor dies,
Because he scorned the favour of his king,
And our displeasure wilfully incurr'd:
His slaughter, with her sorrow for his blood,
Shall to our rage supply delightful food.
Julio—

JULIO. What is't your majesty commands?

TANCRED. Julio, if we have not our hope in vain,

Nor all the trust we do repose in thee,
Now must we try, if thou approve the same.
Herein thy force and wisdom we must see,
For our command requires them both of thee.

JULIO. How by your grace's bounty I am bound
Beyond the common bond, wherein each man
Stands bound unto his king: how I have found
Honour and wealth by favour in your sight,
I do acknowledge with most thankful mind.
My truth (with other means to serve your grace,
Whatever you in honour shall assign)
Hath sworn her power true vassal to your hest:
For proof let but your majesty command,
I shall unlock the prison of my soul;
Although unkindly horror would gainsay,
Yet in obedience to your highness' will,
By whom I hold the tenor of this life,
This hand and blade will be the instruments
To make pale death to grapple with my heart.

TANCREDE. Well, to be short, for I am griev'd too long
By wrath without revenge, I think you know
Whilom there was a palace builded strong
For war within our court, where dreadless peace
Hath planted now a weaker entrance.
But of that palace yet one vault remains
Within our court, the secret way whereof
Is to our daughter Gismund's chamber laid:
There is also another mouth hereof
Without our wall, which now is overgrown;
But you may find it out, for yet it lies
Directly south a furlong from our palace!
It may be known—hard-by an ancient stoop,[71]
Where grew an oak in elder days decay'd;
There will we that you watch; there shall you see
A villain traitor mount out of a vault.
Bring him to us; it is th'Earl Palurin.
What is his fault, neither shall you inquire,
Nor list we to disclose. These cursed eyes
Have seen the flame, this heart hath felt the fire
That cannot else be quench'd but with his blood.
This must be done: this will we have you do.

JULIO. Both this, and else whatever you think good.

[JULIO *departeth into the palace.*]

ACT IV., SCENE 3.

RENUCHIO *bringeth GISMUND out of her chamber, to whom TANCREDE saith.*

TANCREDE. Renuchio, depart: leave us alone. [*Exit RENUCHIO.*]
Gismund, if either I could cast aside
All care of thee! or if thou wouldst have had
Some care of me, it would not now betide,
That either thorough thy fault my joy should fade,
Or by thy folly I should bear the pain
Thou hast procur'd: but now 'tis neither I
Can shun the grief, whom thou hast more than slain:
Nor may'st thou heal or ease the grievous wound
Which thou hast given me. That unstained life,
Wherein I joy'd, and thought it thy delight,

Why hast thou lost it? Can it be restor'd?
Where is thy widowhood, there is thy shame.
Gismund, it is no man's nor men's report,
That have by likely proofs inform'd me thus.
Thou know'st how hardly I could be induc'd
To vex myself, and be displeas'd with thee,
With flying tales of flattering sycophants.
No, no, there was in us such settled trust
Of thy chaste life and uncorrupted mind
That if these eyes had not beheld thy shame.
In vain ten thousand censures could have told
That thou didst once unprincelike make agree
With that vile traitor County Palurin:
Without regard had to thyself or me,
Unshamefastly to stain thy state and mine.
But I, unhappiest, have beheld the same,
And, seeing it, yet feel th'exceeding grief
That slays my heart with horror of that thought:
Which grief commands me to obey my rage,
And justice urgeth some extreme revenge,
To wreak the wrongs that have been offer'd us.
But nature, that hath lock'd within thy breast
Two lives, the same inclineth me to spare
Thy blood, and so to keep mine own unspilt.
This is that overweening love I bear
To thee undutiful, and undeserved.
But for that traitor, he shall surely die;
For neither right nor nature doth entreat
For him, that wilfully, without all awe
Of gods or men, or of our deadly hate,
Incurr'd the just displeasure of his king;
And to be brief, I am content to know
What for thyself thou canst object to us,
Why thou should'st not together with him die.
So to assuage the griefs that overthrow
Thy father's heart.

GISMUND. O king and father, humbly give her leave
To plead for grace, that stands in your disgrace.
Not that she recks this life,[72] for I confess
I have deserv'd, when so it pleaseth you,
To die the death, mine honour and my name,
As you suppose, distained with reproach:
And well contented shall I meet the stroke
That must dissever this detested head
From these lewd limbs. But this I wish were known,
That now I live not for myself alone.
For when I saw that neither my request,
Nor the entreaty of my careful aunt,
Could win your highness' pleasure to our will;
"Then love, heat of the heart, life of the soul,
Fed by desire, increasing by restraint,"
Would not endure controlment any more,
But violently enforc'd my feeble heart
(For who am I, alas! still to resist
Such endless conflicts?) to relent and yield:
Therewith I chose him for my lord and ppeer,
Guiscard mine Earl, that holds my love full dear.
Then if it be so settled in your mind,
He shall not live, because he dar'd to love
Your daughter: thus I give your grace to know.
Within his heart there is inclos'd my life.
Therefore, O father, if that name may be
Sweet to your ears, and that we may prevail
By name of father, that you favour us:

But otherwise, if now we cannot find
That which our falsed hope did promise us;
Why then proceed, and rid our trembling hearts
Of these suspicions; since neither in this case
His good deserts in service to your grace,
Which always have been just, nor my desires,
May mitigate the cruel rage of grief
That strains your heart, but that mine Earl must die;
Then all in vain you ask, what I can say,
Why I should live. Sufficeth for my part
To say I will not live, and so resolve.

TANCREDE. Dar'st thou so desperate decree thy death?

GISMUND. A dreadless heart delights in such decrees.

TANCREDE. Thy kind abhorreth such unkindly thoughts.

GISMUND. Unkindly thoughts they are to them that live
In kindly love.

TANCREDE. As I do unto thee.

GISMUND. To take his life who is my love from me?

TANCREDE. Have I then lost thy love?

GISMUND. If he shall lose
His life, that is my love.

TANCREDE.

Thy love? Begone.
Return into thy chamber.

GISMUND.

I will go.

[GISMUND *departeth to her chamber.*]

ACT IV., SCENE 4.

JULIO *with his guard bringeth in the COUNTY PALURIN prisoner.*

JULIO. If it please your highness, hither have we brought
This captive Earl, as you commanded us.
Whom, as we were foretold, even there we found.
Where by your majesty we were enjoin'd
To watch for him. What more your highness wills.
This heart and hand shall execute your best.

TANCREDE. Julio, we thank your pains. Ah, Palurin!
Have we deserved in such traitorous sort
Thou shouldst abuse our kingly courtesies,
Which we too long in favour have bestow'd
Upon thy false, dissembling heart with us?
What grief thou therewithal hast thrown on us,
What shame upon our house, what dire distress
Our soul endures, cannot be uttered.
And durst thou, villain, dare to undermine
Our daughter's chamber? durst thy shameless face
Be bold to kiss her? th'rest we will conceal.
Sufficeth that thou know'st I too well know
All thy proceedings in thy private shames.

Herein what hast thou won? thine own content,
With the displeasure of thy lord and king;
The thought whereof if thou hadst had in mind
The least remorse of love and loyalty
Might have restrain'd thee from so foul an act.
But, Palurin, what may I deem of thee,
Whom neither fear of gods, nor love of him,
Whose princely favour hath been thine uprear,
Could quench the fuel of thy lewd desires?
Wherefore content thee, that we are resolv'd
(And therefore laid to snare thee with this bait)
That thy just death, with thine effused blood,
Shall cool the heat and choler of our mood.

GUISCARD. My lord the king, neither do I mislike
Your sentence, nor do your smoking sighs,
Reach'd from the entrails of your boiling heart,
Disturb the quiet of my calmed thoughts:
For this I feel, and by experience prove,
Such is the force and endless might of love,
As never shall the dread of carrion death,
That hath envy'd our joys, invade my breast.
For if it may be found a fault in me,
That evermore hath lov'd your majesty,
Likewise to honour and to love your child;
If love unto you both may be a fault—
But unto her my love exceeds compare—
Then this hath been my fault, for which I joy,
That in the greatest lust of all my life,
I shall submit for her sake to endure
The pangs of death. O mighty lord of Love,
Strengthen thy vassal boldly to receive
Large wounds into this body for her sake!
Then use my life or death, my lord and king,
For your relief to ease your grieved soul:
For whether I live, or else that I must die
To end your pains, I am content to bear;
Knowing by death I shall bewray the truth
Of that sound heart, which living was her own,
And died alive for her, that lived mine.

TANCRED. Thine, Palurin? What! lives my daughter thine?
Traitor, thou wrong'st me, for she liveth mine.
Rather I wish ten thousand sundry deaths,
Than I to live, and see my daughter thine.
Thine that is dearer than my life to me?
Thine whom I hope to see an emp[er]ress?
Thine whom I cannot pardon from my sight?
Thine unto whom we have bequeath'd our crown?—
Julio, we will that thou inform from us
Renuchio the captain of our guard,
That we command this traitor be convey'd
Into the dungeon underneath our tower;
There let him rest, until he be resolv'd
What farther we intend; which to understand
We will Renuchio repair to us.

JULIO. O, that I might your majesty entreat
With clemency to beautify your seat
Toward this prince, distress'd by his desires,
Too many, all too strong to captivate.

TANCRED. "This is the soundest safety for a king,
To cut them off, that vex or hinder him."

JULIO. "This have I found the safety of a king,

To spare the subjects that do honour him."

TANCRED. Have we been honour'd by this lecher's lust?

JULIO. No, but by his devout submission.

TANCRED. Our fortune says we must do what we may.

JULIO. "This is praise-worth, not to do what you may."

TANCRED. And may the subject countermand the king?

JULIO. No, but entreat him.

TANCRED. What he shall decree?

JULIO. What wisdom shall discern.

TANCRED. Nay, what our word
Shall best determine. We will not reply.
Thou know'st our mind: our heart cannot be eas'd,
But with the slaughter of this Palurin.

[The KING hasteth into his palace.

GUISCARD. O thou great god, who from thy highest throne
Hast stooped down, and felt the force of love,
Bend gentle ears unto the woful moan
Of me poor wretch, to grant that I require!
Help to persuade the same great god, that he
So far remit his might, and slack his fire
From my dear lady's kindled heart, that she
May hear my death without her hurt. Let not
Her face, wherein there is as clear a light
As in the rising moon: let not her cheeks,
As red as is the party-colour'd rose,
Be paled with the news hereof: and so
I yield myself, my seely soul and all,
To him, for her, for whom my death shall show
I liv'd; and as I liv'd, I died her thrall.
Grant this, thou Thunderer: this shall suffice,
My breath to vanish in the liquid skies.

[GUISCARD *is led to prison.*

CHORUS 1. Who doth not know the fruits of Paris' love,
Nor understand the end of Helen's joy?
He may behold the fatal overthrow
Of Priam's house and of the town of Troy—
His death at last and her eternal shame;
For whom so many noble knights were slain.
So many a duke, so many a prince of fame
Bereft his life, and left there in the plain.
Medea's armed hand, Eliza's sword,
Wretched Leander drenched in the flood.
Phillis, so long that waited for her lord:
All these too dearly bought their loves with blood.

CHORUS 2. But he in virtue that his lady serves.
Ne wills but what unto her honour 'longs,
He never from the rule of reason swerves;
He feeleth not the pangs ne raging throngs
Of blind Cupid: he lives not in despair,
As done his servants; neither spends his days
In joy and care, vain hope and throbbing fear:
But seeks alway what may his sovereign please
In honour: he that thus serves, reaps the fruit
Of his sweet service; and no jealous dread,
Nor base suspect of aught to let his suit,

Which causeth oft the lover's heart to bleed,
Doth fret his mind, or burneth in his breast:
He wailleth not by day, nor wakes by night,
When every other living thing doth rest;
Nor finds his life or death within her sight.

CHORUS 3. Remember thou in virtue serve therefore
Thy chaste lady: beware thou do not love,
As whilom Venus did the fair Adone,
But as Diana lov'd th'Amazon's son;
Through whose request the gods to him alone
Restor'd new life. The twine that was undone,
Was by the sisters twisted up again.
The love of virtue in thy lady's looks,
The love of virtue in her learned talk;
This love yields matter for eternal books.
This love enticeth him abroad to walk,
There to invent and write new roundelays
Of learn'd conceit, her fancies to allure
To vain delights: such humours he allays,
And sings of virtue and her garments pure.

CHORUS 4. Desire not of thy sovereign the thing
Whereof shame may ensue by any mean;
Nor wish thou aught that may dishonour bring.
So whilom did the learned Tuscan[73] serve
His fair lady; and glory was their end.
Such are the praises lovers done deserve,
Whose service doth to virtue and honour tend.

FINIS ACTUS IV. COMPOSIT CH. HAT.[74]

ACT V., SCENE 1.

RENUCHIO *cometh out of the palace.*

RENUCHIO. O cruel fate! O miserable chance!
O dire aspect of hateful destinies!
O woe may not be told! Suffic'd it not
That I should see, and with these eyes behold
So foul, so bloody, and so base a deed:
But more to aggravate the heavy cares
Of my perplexed mind, must only I,
Must I alone be made the messenger,
That must deliver to her princely ears
Such dismal news, as when I shall disclose,
I know it cannot but abridge her days?
As when the thunder and three-forked fire,
Rent through the clouds by Jove's almighty power,
Breaks up the bosom of our mother earth,
And burns her heart, before the heat be felt.
In this distress, whom should I most bewail,
My woe, that must be made the messenger
Of these unworthy and unwelcome news?
Or shall I moan thy death, O noble Earl?
Or shall I still lament the heavy hap,
That yet, O Queen, attends thy funeral?

CHORUS 1. What moans be these?
Renuchio, is this Salerne I see?
Doth here King Tancred hold the awful crown?

Is this the place where civil people be?
Or do the savage Scythians here abound?

CHORUS 2. What mean these questions? whither tend these words?
Resolve us maidens, and release our fears.
Whatever news thou bring'st, discover them.
Detain us not in this suspicious dread!
"The thought whereof is greater than the woe."

RENUCHIO. O, whither may I cast my looks? to heaven?
Black pitchy clouds from thence rain down revenge.
The earth shall I behold, stain'd with the gore
Of his heart-blood, that died most innocent?
Which way soe'er I turn mine eyes, methinks
His butcher'd corpse stands staring in my face.

CHORUS 3. We humbly pray thee to forbear these words,
So full of terror to our maiden hearts:
"The dread of things unknown breeds the suspect
Of greater dread, until the worst be known."
Tell therefore what hath chanc'd, and whereunto
This bloody cup thou holdest in thy hand.

RENUCHIO. Since so is your request, that I shall do,
Although my mind so sorrowful a thing
Repines to tell, and though my voice eschews
To say what I have seen; yet since your will
So fixed stands to hear for what I rue,
Your great desires I shall herein fulfil.
Fast by Salerne city, amidst the plain,
There stands a hill whose bottom, huge and round.
Thrown out in breadth, a large space doth contain:
And gathering up in height, small from the ground,
Still less and less it mounts: there sometime was
A goodly tower uprear'd, that flower'd in fame
While fate and fortune serv'd; but time doth pass,
And with his sway suppresseth all the same:
For now the walls be even'd with the plain,
And all the rest so foully lies defac'd,
As but the only shade doth there remain
Of that, which there was built in time forepass'd:
And yet that shows what worthy work tofore
Hath there been rear'd. One parcel of that tower^[75]
Yet stands, which eating time could not devour:
A strong turret, compact of stone and rock,
Hugy without, but horrible within:
To pass to which, by force of handy stroke,
A crooked strait is made, that enters in,
And leads into this ugly loathsome place.
Within the which, carved into the ground,
A deep dungeon^[76] there runs of narrow space.
Dreadful and dark, where never light is found:
Into this hollow cave, by cruel hest
Of King Tancred, were divers servants sent
To work the horror of his furious breast,
Erst nourish'd in his rage, and now stern bent
To have the same perform'd. I woful man,
Amongst the rest, was one to do the thing.
That to our charge so straitly did belong,
In sort as was commanded by the king.
Within which dreadful prison when we came,
The noble County Palurin, that there
Lay chain'd in gyves,^[77] fast fetter'd in his bolts,
Out of the dark dungeon we did uprear,
And hal'd him thence into a brighter place,

That gave us light to work our tyranny.
But when I once beheld his manly face,
And saw his cheer, no more appall'd with fear
Of present death, than he whom never dread
Did once amate:[78] my heart abhorred then
To give consent unto so foul a deed:
That wretched death should reave so worthy a man.
On false fortune I cried with loud complaint,
That in such sort o'erwhelms nobility.
But he, whom never grief ne fear could taint,
With smiling cheer himself oft willeth me
To leave to plain his case, or sorrow make
For him; for he was far more glad apaid
Death to embrace thus for his lady's sake,
Than life or all the joys of life, he said.
For loss of life, quoth he, grieves me no more
Than loss of that which I esteemed least:
My lady's grief, lest she should rue therefore,
Is all the cause of grief within my breast.
He pray'd therefore, that we would make report
To her of those his last words he would say:
That, though he never could in any sort
Her gentleness requite, nor never lay
Within his power to serve her as he would;
Yet she possess'd his heart with hand and might,
To do her all the honour that he could.
This was to him, of all the joys that might
Revive his heart, the chiefest joy of all,
That to declare the faithful heart which he
Did bear to her, fortune so well did fall,
That in her love he should both live and die.
After these words he stay'd, and spake no more,
But joyfully beholding us each one,
His words and cheer amazed us so sore,
That still we stood; when forthwith thereupon:
But, why slack you, quoth he, to do the thing
For which you come? make speed, and stay no more:
Perform your master's will. Now tell the king
He hath his life, for which he long'd so sore:
And with those words himself with his own hand
Fast'ned the bands about his neck. The rest
Wond'ring at his stout heart, astonied[79] stand
To see him offer thus himself to death.
What stony breast, or what hard heart of flint
Would not relent to see this dreary sight?
So goodly a man, whom death nor fortune's dint
Could once disarm, murder'd with such despite;
And in such sort bereft, amidst the flowers
Of his fresh years, that ruthless was to seen:
"For violent is death, when he devours
Young men or virgins, while their years be green."
Lo! now our servants seeing him take the bands,
And on his neck himself to make them fast;
Without delay set to their cruel hands,
And sought to work their fierce intent with haste.
They stretch the bloody bands; and when the breath
Began to fail his breast, they slack'd again:
Thrice did they pull, and thrice they loosed him,
So did their hands repine against their hearts:
And ofttimes loosed to his greater pain.
"But date of death, that fixed is so fast,
Beyond his course there may no wight extend;"
For strangled is this noble Earl at last,
Bereft of life, unworthy such an end.

CHORUS. O damned deed!

RENUCHIO. What, deem you this to be
All the sad news that I have to unfold?
Is here, think you, end of the cruelty
That I have seen?

CHORUS. Could any heavier woe
Be wrought to him, than to destroy him so?

RENUCHIO. What, think you this outrage did end so well?
The horror of the fact, the greatest grief,
The massacre, the terror is to tell.

CHORUS. Alack! what could be more? they threw percase
The dead body to be devour'd and torn
Of the wild beasts.

RENUCHIO. Would God it had been cast a savage prey
To beasts and birds: but lo, that dreadful thing
Which e'en the tiger would not work, but to
Suffice his hunger, that hath the tyrant king
Withouten ruth commanded us to do,
Only to please his wrathful heart withal.
Happy had been his chance, too happy, alas!
If birds or beasts had eaten up his corpse,
Yea, heart and all within this cup I bring,
And am constrained now unto the face
Of his dear lady to present the same.

CHORUS. What kind of cruelty is this you name?
Declare forthwith, and whereunto doth tend
This farther plaint.

RENUCHIO. After his breath was gone,
Forced perforce thus from his panting breast,
Straight they despoiled him; and not alone
Contented with his death, on the dead corpse,
Which ravenous beasts forbear to lacerate,
Even upon this our villains fresh begun
To show new cruelty; forthwith they pierce
His naked belly, and unripp'd it so,
That out the bowels gush'd. Who can rehearse
Their tyranny, wherewith my heart yet bleeds?
The warm entrails were torn out of his breast,
Within their hands trembling, not fully dead;
His veins smok'd, his bowels all-to reeked,
Ruthless were rent, and thrown about the place:
All clotted lay the blood in lumps of gore,
Sprent[80] on his corpse, and on his paled face;
His trembling heart, yet leaping, out they tore,
And cruelly upon a rapier
They fix'd the same, and in this hateful wise
Unto the king this heart they do present:
A sight long'd for to feed his ireful eyes.
The king perceiving each thing to be wrought
As he had will'd, rejoicing to behold
Upon the bloody sword the pierced heart,
He calls then for this massy cup of gold,
Into the which the woful heart he cast;
And reaching me the same: now go, quoth he,
Unto my daughter, and with speedy haste
Present her this, and say to her from me,
Thy father hath here in this cup thee sent
That thing to joy and comfort thee withal,
Which thou lovedst best, even as thou wert content

To comfort him with his chief joy of all.

CHORUS. O hateful fact! O passing cruelty!
O murder wrought with too much hard despite!
O heinous deed, which no posterity
Will once believe!

RENUCHIO. Thus was Earl Palurin
Strangled unto the death, yea, after death
His heart and blood disbowell'd from his breast.
But what availeth plaint? It is but breath
Forewasted all in vain. Why do I rest
Here in this place? Why go I not, and do
The hateful message to my charge committed?
O, were it not that I am forced thereto
By a king's will, here would I stay my feet,
Ne one whit farther wade in this intent!
But I must yield me to my prince's hest;
Yet doth this somewhat comfort mine unrest,
I am resolv'd her grief not to behold,
But get me gone, my message being told.
Where is the princess' chamber?

CHORUS. Lo, where she comes.

ACT V., SCENE 2.

GISMUND *cometh out of her chamber, to whom*
RENUCHIO *delivereth his cup, saying:*

RENUCHIO. Thy father, O queen, here in this cup hath sent
The thing to joy and comfort thee withal
Which thou lovedst best, even as thou wast content
To comfort him with his chief joy of all.

GISMUNDA. I thank my father, and thee, gentle squire,
For this thy travail; take thou, for thy pains,
This bracelet, and commend me to the king. [RENUCHIO *departeth*.
So, now is come the long-expected hour,
The fatal hour I have so looked for;
Now hath my father satisfied his thirst
With guiltless blood, which he so coveted.
What brings this cup? Ah me! I thought no less,
It is mine Earl's, my County's pierced heart.
Dear heart, too dearly hast thou bought my love;
Extremely rated at too high a price!
Ah, my sweet heart, sweet wast thou in thy life,
But in thy death thou provest passing sweet.
A fitter hearse than this of beaten gold
Could not be 'lotted to so good an heart:
My father therefore well provided thus
To close and wrap thee up in massy gold,
And therewithal to send thee unto me,
To whom of duty thou dost best belong.
My father hath in all his life bewray'd
A princely care and tender love to me;
But this surpasseth—in his later days
To send me this, mine own dear heart, to me.
Wert thou not mine, dear heart, whilst that my love
Danced and play'd upon thy golden strings?
Art thou not mine, dear heart, now that my love
Is fled to heaven, and got him golden wings?
Thou art mine own, and still mine own shalt be,
Therefore my father sendeth thee to me.

Ah, pleasant harborough[81] of my heart's thought!
Ah, sweet delight, the quickener of my soul!
Seven times accursed be the hand that wrought
Thee this despite, to mangle thee so foul:
Yet in this wound I see mine own true love,
And in this wound thy magnanimity,
And in this wound I see thy constancy.
Go, gentle heart, go rest thee in thy tomb,
Receive this token at thy last farewell. [*She kisseth it.*
Thine own true heart anon will follow thee,
Which panting lusteth[82] for thy company.
Thus hast thou run, poor heart! thy mortal race,
And rid thy life from fickle fortune's snares;
Thus hast thou lost this world and worldly cares,
And of thy foe, to honour thee withal,
Receiv'd a golden grave to thy desert.
Nothing doth want to thy just funeral,
But my salt tears to wash thy bloody wound:
Which to the end thou might'st receive, behold
My father sends thee in this cup of gold;
And thou shalt have them, though I was resolv'd
To shed no tears, but with a cheerful face
Once did I think to wet thy funeral
Only with blood and with no weeping eye.
This done, forthwith my soul shall fly to thee;
For therefore did my father send thee me.
Ah, my pure heart! with sweeter company
Or more content, how safer may I prove
To pass to places all unknown with thee!
Why die I not therefore? why do I stay?
Why do I not this woful life forego,
And with these hands enforce this breath away?
What means this gorgeous glittering head-attire?
How ill beseem these billaments[83] of gold
Thy mournful widowhood? away with them—

[*She undresseth her hair.*

So let thy tresses, flaring in the wind,
Untrimmed hang about thy bared neck.
Now, hellish furies, set my heart on fire,
Bolden my courage, strengthen ye my hands,
Against their kind, to do a kindly deed.
But shall I then unwreaken[84] down descend?
Shall I not work some just revenge on him
That thus hath slain my love? shall not these hands
Fire his gates, and make the flame to climb
Up to the pinnacles with burning brands,
And on his cinders wreak my cruel teen[85]?
Be still, fond girl; content thee first to die,
This venom'd water shall abridge thy life:

[*She taketh a vial of poison out of her pocket.*

This for the same intent provided I,
Which can both ease and end this raging strife.
Thy father by thy death shall have more woe,
Than fire or flames within his gates can bring:
Content thee then in patience hence to go,
Thy death his blood shall wreak upon the king.
Now not alone (a grief to die alone)
"The only mirror of extreme annoy;"
But not alone thou diest, my love, for I
Will be copartner of thy destiny.
Be merry then, my soul; can'st thou refuse
To die with him, that death for thee did choose?

CHORUS 1. What damned fury hath possessed our Queen?
Why sit we still beholding her distress?

Madam, forbear, suppress this headstrong rage.

GISMUNDA. Maidens, forbear your comfortable words.

CHORUS 2. O worthy Queen, rashness doth overthrow
The author of his resolution.

GISMUNDA. Where hope of help is lost, what booteth fear?

CHORUS 3. Fear will avoid the sting of infamy.

GISMUNDA. May good or bad reports delight the dead?

CHORUS 4. If of the living yet the dead have care.

GISMUNDA. An easy grief by counsel may be cur'd.

CHORUS 1. But headstrong mischiefs princes should avoid.

GISMUNDA. In headlong griefs and cases desperate?

CHORUS 2. Call to your mind, Gismund, you are the Queen.

GISMUNDA. Unhappy widow, wife, and paramour.

CHORUS 3. Think on the king.

GISMUNDA. The king, the tyrant king?

CHORUS 4. Your father.

GISMUNDA. Yes, the murtherer of my love.

CHORUS 4. His force.

GISMUNDA. The dead fear not the force of men.

CHORUS 1. His care and grief.

GISMUNDA. That neither car'd for me,
Nor grieved at the murther of my love.
My mind is settled; you with these vain words
Withhold me but too long from my desire.
Depart ye to my chamber.

CHORUS. We will haste
To tell the king hereof.

[CHORUS *depart into the palace.*]

GISMUNDA. I will prevent
Both you and him. Lo, here this hearty draught,
The last that in this world I mean to taste,
Dreadless of death, mine Earl, I drink to thee.
So now work on; now doth my soul begin
To hate this light, wherein there is no love;
No love of parents to their children;
No love of princes to their subjects true;
No love of ladies to their dearest loves:
Now pass I to the pleasant land of love,
Where heavenly love immortal flourisheth.
The gods abhor the company of men;
Hell is on earth; yea, hell itself is heaven
Compar'd with earth. I call to witness heaven;
Heaven, said I? No; hell[86] record I call,
And thou, stern goddess of revenging wrongs,
Witness with me, I die for his pure love.
That lived mine.

[*She lieth down, and covereth her face with her hair.*]

ACT V., SCENE 3.

TANCRED *in haste cometh out of his palace with* JULIO.

TANCRED. Where is my daughter?

JULIO. Behold, here, woful king!

TANCRED. Ah me! break, heart; and thou, fly forth, my soul.
What, doth my daughter Gismund take it so?
What hast thou done? O, let me see thine eyes!
O, let me dress up those untrimmed locks![87]
Look up, sweet child, look up, mine only joy,
'Tis I, thy father, that beseecheth thee:
Rear up thy body, strain thy dying voice
To speak to him; sweet Gismund, speak to me.

GISMUNDA. Who stays my soul? who thus disquiets me?

TANCRED. 'Tis I, thy father; ah! behold my tears,
Like pearly dew, that trickle down my cheeks,
To wash my silver hairs.

GISMUNDA. O father king,
Forbear your tears, your plaint will not avail.

TANCRED. O my sweet heart, hast thou receiv'd thy life
From me, and wilt thou, to requite the same,
Yield me my death? yea, death, and greater grief—
To see thee die for him, that did defame
Thine honour thus, my kingdom, and thy name?

GISMUNDA. Yea, therefore, father, gave you life to me,
That I should die, and now my date is done.
As for your kingdom and mine own renown,
Which you affirm dishonoured to be,
That fault impute it where it is; for he,
That slew mine Earl, and sent his heart to me,
His hands have brought this shame and grief on us.
But, father, yet if any spark remain
Of your dear love; if ever yet I could
So much deserve, or at your hands desire,
Grant that I may obtain this last request.

TANCRED. Say, lovely child, say on, whate'er it be,
Thy father grants it willingly to thee.

GISMUNDA. My life I crave not, for it is not now
In you to give, nor in myself to save;
Nor crave I mercy for mine Earl and me,
Who hath been slain with too much cruelty.
With patience I must a while abide
Within this life, which now will not be long.
But this is my request—father, I pray
That, since it pleased so your majesty,
I should enjoy my love alive no more,
Yet ne'ertheless let us not parted be,
Whom cruel death could never separate:
But as we liv'd and died together here,
So let our bodies be together tomb'd:
Let him with me, and I with him, be laid
Within one shrine, wherever you appoint.
This if you grant me, as I trust you will,
Although I live not to requite this grace,
Th'immortal gods due recompense shall give
To you for this: and so, vain world, farewell—
My speech is painful, and mine eyesight fails.

TANCRED. My daughter dies—see how the bitter pangs
Of tyrannous death torments her princely heart!
She looks on me, at me she shakes her head;
For me she groans; by me my daughter dies;
I, I the author of this tragedy.—
On me, on me, ye heavens, throw down your ire!
Now dies my daughter! [*she dies*] hence with
princely robes! [*He throws aside his robes.*]
O fair in life! thrice fairer in thy death!
Dear to thy father in thy life thou wert,
But in thy death dearest unto his heart;
I kiss thy paled cheeks, and close thine eyes.
This duty once I promis'd to myself
Thou shouldst perform to me; but ah! false hope,
Now ruthless, wretched king, what resteth thee?
Wilt thou now live wasted with misery?
Wilt thou now live, that with these eyes didst see
Thy daughter dead? wilt thou now live to see
Her funerals, that of thy life was stay?
Wilt thou now live that wast her life's decay?
Shall not this hand reach to this heart the stroke?
Mine arms are not so weak, nor are my limbs
So feebled with mine age, nor is my heart
So daunted with the dread of cowardice,
But I can wreak due vengeance on that head,
That wrought the means these lovers now be dead.
Julio, come near, and lay thine own right hand
Upon my thigh[88]—now take thine oath of me.

JULIO. I swear to thee, my liege lord, to discharge
Whatever thou enjoimest Julio.

TANCRED. First, then, I charge thee that my daughter have
Her last request: thou shalt within one tomb
Inter her Earl and her, and thereupon
Engrave some royal epitaph of love.
That done, I swear thee thou shalt take my corpse
Which thou shalt find by that time done to death,
And lay my body by my daughter's side—
Swear this, swear this, I say.

JULIO. I swear.
But will the king do so unkingly now?

TANCRED. A kingly deed the king resolves to do.

JULIO. To kill himself?

TANCRED. To send his soul to ease.

JULIO. Doth Jove command it?

TANCRED. Our stars compel it.

JULIO. The wise man overrules his stars.

TANCRED. So we.

JULIO. Undaunted should the minds of kings endure.

TANCRED. So shall it in this resolution.
Julio, forbear: and as thou lov'st the king,
When thou shalt see him welt'ring in his gore.
Stretching his limbs, and gasping in his groans,
Then, Julio, set to thy helping hand,
Redouble stroke on stroke, and drive the stab
Down deeper to his heart, to rid his soul.
Now stand aside, stir not a foot, lest thou

Make up the fourth to fill this tragedy.
These eyes that first beheld my daughter's shame;
These eyes that longed for the ruthless sight
Of her Earl's heart; these eyes that now have seen
His death, her woe, and her avenging teen;
Upon these eyes we must be first aveng'd.
Unworthy lamps of this accursed lump,
Out of your dwellings! [*Puts out his eyes*] So; it fits us thus
In blood and blindness to go seek the path
That leadeth down to everlasting night.
Why fright'st thou, dastard? be thou desperate;
One mischief brings another on his neck,
As mighty billows tumble in the seas,
Now, daughter, seest thou not how I amerce
My wrath, that thus bereft thee of thy love,
Upon my head? Now, fathers, learn by me,
Be wise, be warn'd to use more tenderly
The jewels of your joys. Daughter, I come.

[*Kills himself.*]

FINIS.

EPILOGUE.

SPOKEN BY JULIO.

Lo here the sweets of grisly pale despair!
These are the blossoms of this cursed tree,
Such are the fruits of too much love and care,
O'erwhelmed in the sense of misery.
With violent hands he that his life doth end,
His damned soul to endless night doth wend.
Now resteth it that I discharge mine oath,
To see th'unhappy lovers and the king
Laid in one tomb. I would be very loth
You should wait here to see this mournful thing:
For I am sure, and do ye all to wit,
Through grief wherein the lords of Salerne be,
These funerals are not prepared yet:
Nor do they think on that solemnity.
As for the fury, ye must understand,
Now she hath seen th'effect of her desire,
She is departed, and hath left our land.
Granting this end unto her hellish ire.
Now humbly pray we, that our English dames
May never lead their loves into mistrust;
But that their honours may avoid the shames,
That follow such as live in wanton lust.
We know they bear them on their virtues bold,
With blissful chastity so well content
That, when their lives and loves abroad are told,
All men admire their virtuous government;
Worthy to live where fury never came,
Worthy to live where love doth always see,
Worthy to live in golden trump of fame,
Worthy to live and honoured still to be.
Thus end our sorrows with the setting sun:
Now draw the curtains, for our scene is done.

R.W.

THE WOUNDS OF CIVIL WAR.

_EDITION.

The Wounds of Civill War. Lively set forth in the true Tragedies of Marius and Scilla. As it hath beene publicly plaide in London, by the Right Honourable the Lord high Admirall his Servants. Written by Thomas Lodge, Gent. O vita! misero longa, faelici brevis. *London, Printed by John Danter, and are to be sold at the signe of the Sunne in Paules Church-yard.* 1594. 4to.

MR. COLLIER'S PREFACE.[89]

Thomas Lodge, in his "Alarum against Usurers," 1584, speaks of his "birth," and of "the offspring from whence he came," as if he were at least respectably descended; and on the authority of Anthony Wood, it has been asserted by all subsequent biographers that he was of a Lincolnshire family. [The fact is, that Lodge was the second son of Sir Thomas Lodge, Lord Mayor of London, who died in 1584, by his wife, the daughter of Sir William Laxton.] Thomas Salter, about the year 1580, dedicated his "Mirror of Modesty" to [the poet's mother, Lady Anne Lodge].

Langbaine seems to be under a mistake when he states that Lodge was of Cambridge. Wood claims him for the University of Oxford,[90] where he traces him as early as 1573, when he must have been about seventeen years old, if he were born, as is generally supposed, in 1556. We are told by himself that he was a Servitor of Trinity College, and that he was educated under Sir Edward Hoby. At what time and for what cause Lodge left Oxford is not known; but Stephen Gosson, in the dedication of his "Plays Confuted in Five Actions," printed about 1582,[91] accuses him of having become "a vagrant person, visited by the heavy hand of God," as if he had taken to the stage, and thereby had incurred the vengeance of heaven. In 1584, when Lodge answered Gosson, he was a student of Lincoln's Inn;[92] and to "his courteous friends, the Gentlemen of the Inns of Court," he dedicated his "Alarum against Usurers." He afterwards, as he informs Lord Hunsdon, in the epistle before his "Rosalynde," 1590, "fell from books to arms;" and he calls it "the work of a soldier and a scholar," adding that he had sailed with Captain Clarke to the islands of Terceras and the Canaries. In 1596, he published his "Margarite of America," and he mentions that it was written in the Straits of Magellan, on a voyage with Cavendish. To this species of vagrancy, however, Gosson did not refer.

That Lodge was vagrant in his pursuits we have sufficient evidence; for, after having perhaps been upon the stage, having entered himself at Lincoln's Inn, having become a soldier, and having sailed with Clarke and Cavendish, he went, according to Wood, to study medicine at Avignon.[93] This change, if it took place at all, which may admit of doubt,[94] did not occur until after 1596. In 1595 his "Fig for Momus" appeared. Besides Satires, it contains Epistles and Eclogues; and in one of the latter Lodge speaks in his own person, under the character of "Golde" (the same letters that compose his name), and there states his determination no longer to pursue ill-rewarded poetry—

"Which sound rewards, since this neglected time,
Repines to yield to men of high desert,
I'll cease to ravel out my wits in rhyme,
For such who make so base account of art;
And since by wit there is no means to climb,
I'll hold the plough awhile, and ply the cart;
And if my muse to wonted course return,
I'll write and judge, peruse, commend and burn."

The dedication of his "Wit's Misery, and the World's Madness," is dated "from my house, at Low Layton, 5th November 1596."

The principal reasons for supposing that Lodge studied medicine are the existence of a "Treatise of the Plague," published by "Thomas Lodge, Doctor in Physic," in 1603, and of a collection of medical recipes in MS., called "The Poor Man's Legacy," addressed to the Countess of Arundel, and sold among the books of the Duke of Norfolk.[95] [There can be little or no question that the physician and poet

were one and the same. In "England's Parnassus," 1600, he is called indifferently Thomas Lodge and Doctor Lodge.] The author of the "Treatise of the Plague" expressly tells the Lord Mayor of London, in the dedication, that he was "bred and brought up" in the city. Thomas Heywood, in his "Troja Britannica," 1609, enumerates the celebrated physicians then living—

"As famous Butler, Pedy, Turner, Poe,
Atkinson, Lyster, *Lodge*, who still survive."—C. 3.

It hardly deserves remark that Lodge is placed last in this list; but had he been the same individual who had written for the stage, was the friend of so many dramatists, and was so well known as a lyric poet, it seems likely that Heywood would have said more about him.[96] It is a singular coincidence, that having written how to prevent and cure the plague, he should die of that disease during the great mortality of 1625. Wood's expressions on this point, however, are not decisive: "He made his last *exit* (of the plague, I think) in September 1625, leaving then behind him a widow called Joan." It has been conjectured [rather foolishly] that he was a Roman Catholic, from a statement made by one of his biographers that, while he practised medicine in London, he was much patronised by persons of that persuasion.

There are but two existing dramatic productions on the title-pages of which the name of Lodge is found:[97] the one he wrote alone, and the other in partnership with Robert Greene:—

(1.) The Wounds of Civill War. Lively set forth in the true Tragedies of Marius and Scilla, &c. Written by Thomas Lodge, Gent. 1594, 4to.

(2.) A Looking Glasse for London and Englande. Made by Thomas Lodge, Gentleman, and Robert Greene, *in Artibus Magister*. 1594, 1598, 1602, 1617, all in 4to.[98]

The most remarkable [of his works], and that which has been most often reprinted, is his "Rosalynde" which, as is well known, Shakespeare closely followed in "As You Like It." [99]

Anterior to the date of any of his other pieces must have been Lodge's defence of stage-plays, because Stephen Gosson replied to it about 1582. It was long thought, on the authority of Prynne, that Lodge's tract was called "The Play of Plays," but Mr Malone ascertained that to be a different production. The only copy of Lodge's pamphlet seen by Mr Malone was without a title, and it was probably the same that was sold among the books of Topham Beauclerc in 1781. It is spoken of in "The French Academy" [1589] as having "lately passed the press;" but Lodge himself, in his "Alarum against Usurers," very clearly accounts for its extreme rarity: he says, "by reason of the slenderness of the subject (because it was in defence of plaies and play-makers) the godly and reverent that had to deal in the cause, misliking it, forbad the publishing;" and he charges Gosson with "comming by a private unperfect copping," on which he framed his answer, entitled, "Plays confuted in Five Actions."

Mr Malone ("Shakespeare," by Boswell, ii. 250) contends that Spenser alludes to Lodge, in his "Tears of the Muses," under the name of Alcon, in the following lines:—

"And there is pleasing Alcon, could he raise
His tunes from lays to matters of more skill;"

and he adds that Spenser calls Lodge Alcon, from one of the characters in "A Looking Glasse for London and Englande;" but this argument would apply just as much to Lodge's coadjutor Greene. Mr Malone further argues that Lodge, roused by this applause (which he repaid in his "Phyllis"), produced not long afterwards a "matter of more skill," in "The Wounds of Civil War."

THE MOST LAMENTABLE AND TRUE

TRAGEDIES OF

MARIUS AND SYLLA.[100]

Enter on the Capitol SULPITIUS, Tribune, CAIUS MARIUS, Q. POMPEY, Consul, JUNIUS BRUTUS, LUCRETIUS, CAIUS GRANIUS, LECTORIUS, LUCIUS MERULA, *Jupiter's Priest*, and CINNA; whom placed, and their Lictors before them with their rods and axes,

SULPITIUS *beginneth.*

SULPITIUS. Grave senators, and fathers of this state,
Our strange protractions and unkind delays
Where weighty wars doth call us out to fight,
Our factious wits, to please aspiring lords,
(You see) have added power unto our foes,
And hazarded rich Phrygia and Bithinia,
With all our Asian holds and cities too.
Thus Sylla seeking to be general,
Who is invested in our consul's pall,[101]
Hath forced murders in a quiet state;
The cause whereof even Pompey may complain,
Who, seeking to advance a climbing friend,
Hath lost by death a sweet and courteous son.
Who now in Asia but Mithridates
Laughs at these fond dissensions I complain?
While we, in wrangling for a general,
Forsake our friends, forestal our forward war,
And leave our legions full of dalliance:
Waiting our idle wills at Capua.
Fie, Romans! shall the glories of your names,
The wondrous beauty of this capitol,
Perish through Sylla's insolence and pride;
As if that Rome were robb'd of true renown,
And destitute of warlike champions now?
Lo, here the man, the rumour of whose fame,
Hath made Iberia tremble and submit:
See Marius, that in managing estate,
Though many cares and troubles he hath pass'd,
And spent his youth, upon whose reverend head
The milk-white pledge of wisdom sweetly spreads.
He, six times consul, fit for peace or war,
Sits drooping here, content to brook disgrace,
Who glad to fight through follies of his foes
Sighs for your shame, whilst you abide secure.
And I that see and should recure these wrongs,
Through Pompey's late vacation and delay,
Have left to publish him for general,
That merits better titles far than these.
But, nobles, now the final day is come,
When I, your tribune, studying for renown,
Pronounce and publish Marius general,
To lead our legions against Mithridates,
And crave, grave fathers, signs of your content.

Q. POMPEY. Believe me, noble Romans and grave senators,
This strange election, and this new-made law
Will witness our unstable government,
And dispossess Rome of her empery:
For although Marius be renown'd in arms,
Famous for prowess, and grave in warlike drifts,
Yet may the sunshine of his former deeds
Nothing eclipse our Sylla's dignity.
By lot and by election he was made
Chief general against Mithridates,
And shall we then abridge him of that rule?
'Twere injury to Sylla and to Rome:
Nor would the height of his all-daring mind
Brook to the death so vile and foul disgrace.

J. BRUTUS. Why, Pompey, as if the senate had not power
To appoint, dispose, and change their generals!
Rome shall belike be bound to Sylla's rule,
Whose haughty pride and swelling thoughts puff'd-up

Foreshows the reaching to proud Tarquin's state.
Is not his ling'ring to our Roman loss
At Capua, where he braves it out with feasts,
Made known, think you, unto the senate here?
Yes, Pompey, yes; and hereof are we sure,
If Romans' state on Sylla's pride should lie,
Rome's conquests would to Pontus' regions fly;
Therefore, grave and renowned senators,
(Pillars that bear and hold our rule aloft,
You stately, true, and rich pyramids)
Descend into the depth of your estates;
Then shall you find that Sylla is more fit
To rule in Rome domestical affairs,
Than have the conquest of Bithinia,
Which, if once got, he'll but by death forego:
Therefore I say [let] Marius [be] our general.

LUCRETIUS. So thus we strive abroad to win renown,
And nought regard at home our waning states.
Brutus, I say, the many brave exploits,
The warlike acts that Sylla has achiev'd
Show him a soldier and a Roman too,
Whose care is more for country than himself.
Sylla nill brook[102], that in so many wars,
So hard adventures and so strange extremes,
Hath borne the palm and prize of victory,
Thus with dishonour to give up his charge.
Sylla hath friends and soldiers at command,
That first will make the towers of Rome to shake,
And force the stately capitol to dance,
Ere any rob him of his just renown.
Then we that through the Caspian shores have run,
And spread with ships the Oriental sea,
At home shall make a murder of our friends,
And massacre our dearest countrymen.

LECTORIUS. The power of Sylla nought will 'vail 'gainst Rome;
And let me die, Lucretius, ere I see
Our senate dread for any private man. Therefore,
Renown'd Sulpitius, send for Sylla back:
Let Marius lead our men in Asia.

L. MERULA. The law the senate wholly doth affirm:
Let Marius lead our men in Asia.

CINNA. Cinna affirms the senate's censure just,
And saith let Marius lead the legions forth.

C. GRANIUS. Honour and victory follow Marius' steps!
For him doth Granius wish to fight for Rome.

SULPITIUS. Why then, you sage and ancient sires of Rome,
Sulpitius here again doth publish forth,
That Marius by the senate here is made
Chief general to lead the legions out
Against Mithridates and his competitors.
Now victory, for honour of Rome, follow Marius!

[Here let MARIUS rouse himself.]

MARIUS. Sage and imperial senators of Rome,
Not without good advisement have you seen
Old Marius silent during your discourse:
Yet not for that he fear'd to plead his cause,
Or raise his honour trodden down by age,
But that his words should not allure his friends
To stand on stricter terms for his behoof.

Six times the senate by election hath
Made Marius consul over warlike Rome,
And in that space nor Rome nor all the world
Could ever say that Marius was untrue.
These silver hairs, that hang upon my face,
Are witnesses of my unfeigned zeal.
The Cymbrians, that erewhile invaded France,
And held the Roman empire in disdain,
Lay all confounded under Marius' sword:
Fierce Scipio, the mirror once of Rome,
Whose loss as yet my inward soul bewails,
Being ask'd who should succeed and bear his rule,
Even this, quoth he, shall Scipio's armour bear;
And therewithal clapp'd me upon the back.[103]
If then, grave lords, my former-passed youth
Was spent in bringing honours unto[104] Rome,
Let then my age and latter date of years,
Be sealed up for honour unto Rome.

Here enter SYLLA, with Captains and Soldiers.

SULPITIUS. Sylla, what mean these arms and warlike troops?
These glorious ensigns and these fierce alarm[s]
'Tis proudly done to brave the capitol!

SYLLA. These arms, Sulpitius, are not borne for hate,
But maintenance of my confirmed state:
I come to Rome with no seditious thoughts,
Except I find too froward injuries.

SULPITIUS. But wisdom would you did forbear
To yield these slight suspicions of contempt,
Where as the senate studieth high affairs.

SYLLA. What serious matters have these lords in hand?

SULPITIUS. The senators with full decree appoint
Old Marius for their captain-general,
To lead thy legions into Asia,
And fight against the fierce Mithridates.

SYLLA. To Marius? Jolly stuff! Why then I see
Your lordships mean to make a babe of me.

J. BRUTUS. 'Tis true, Sylla, the senate hath agreed
That Marius shall those bands and legions bear,
Which you now hold, against Mithridates.

SYLLA. Marius should[105] lead them then, if Sylla said not no;
And I should be a consul's shadow then.
Trustless senators and ungrateful Romans,
For all the honours I have done to Rome,
For all the spoils I brought within her walls,
Thereby for to enrich and raise her pride,
Repay you me with this ingratitude?
You know, unkind, that Sylla's wounded helm
Was ne'er hung up once, or distain'd with rust:
The Marcians that before me fell amain,
And like to winter-hail on every side,
Unto the city Nuba I pursued,
And for your sakes were thirty thousand slain.
The HIPPINIANS and the SAMNITES Sylla brought
As tributaries unto famous Rome:
Ay, where did Sylla ever draw his sword,
Or lift his warlike hand above his head
For Romans' cause, but he was conqueror?
And now, unthankful, seek you to disgrace

And tear the plumes that Sylla's sword hath won?
Marius, I tell thee Sylla is the man
Disdains to stoop or vail his pride to thee.
Marius, I say thou may'st nor shalt not have
The charge that unto Sylla doth belong,
Unless thy sword could tear it from my heart,
Which in a thousand folds impales[106] the same.

MARIUS. And, Sylla, hereof be thou full assur'd:
The honour, whereto mine undaunted mind
And this grave senate hath enhanced me,
Thou nor thy followers shall derogate.
The space[107] of years that Marius hath o'erpass'd
In foreign broils and civil mutinies,
Hath taught him this: that one unbridled foe
My former fortunes never shall o'erago.

SYLLA. Marius, I smile at these thy foolish words;
And credit me, should laugh outright, I fear,
If that I knew not how thy froward age
Doth make thy sense as feeble as thy joints.

MARIUS. Sylla, Sylla, Marius' years have taught
Him how to pluck so proud a younker's plumes;
And know, these hairs, that dangle down my face,
In brightness like the silver Rhodope,
Shall add so haughty courage to my mind,
And rest such piercing objects 'gainst thine eyes,
That mask'd in folly age shall force thee stoop.

SYLLA. And by my hand I swear, ere thou shalt 'maze me so,
My soul shall perish but I'll have thy beard.
Say, grave senators, shall Sylla be your general?

SULPITIUS. No: the senate, I, and Rome herself agrees
There's none but Marius shall be general.
Therefore, Sylla, these daring terms unfit
Beseem not thee before the capitol.

SYLLA. Beseem not me? Senators, advise you.
Sylla hath vowed, whose vows the heavens record,
Whose oaths have pierc'd and search'd the deepest vast,
Ay, and whose protestations reign on earth:
This capitol, wherein your glories shine,
Was ne'er so press'd and throng'd with scarlet gowns
As Rome shall be with heaps of slaughtered souls,
Before that Sylla yield his titles up.
I'll make[108] her streets, that peer into the clouds,
Burnish'd with gold and ivory pillars fair,
Shining with jasper, jet, and ebony,
All like the palace of the morning sun,
To swim within a sea of purple blood,
Before I lose the name of general.

MARIUS. These threats against thy country and these lords,
Sylla, proceed from forth a traitor's heart;
Whose head I trust to see advanced up
On highest top of all this capitol,
As erst was many of thy progeny,
Before thou vaunt thy victories in Rome.

SYLLA. Greybeard, if so thy heart and tongue agree,
Draw forth thy legions and thy men at arms;
Rear up thy standard and thy steeled crest,
And meet with Sylla in the fields of Mars,
And try whose fortune makes him general.

MARIUS. I take thy word: Marius will meet thee there,
And prove thee, Sylla, traitor unto Rome,
And all that march under thy trait'rous wings.
Therefore they that love the Senate and Marius,
Now follow him.

SYLLA. And all that love Sylla come down to him:
For the rest, let them follow Marius,
And the devil himself be their captain.

*[Here let the Senate rise and cast away their gowns,
having their swords by their sides. Exit MARIUS, and
with him SULPITIUS, JUNIUS, BRUTUS, LECTORIUS.]*

Q. POMPEY. Sylla, I come to thee.

LUCRETIUS. Sylla, Lucretius will die with thee.

SYLLA. Thanks, my noble lords of Rome.

*[Here let them go down, and SYLLA offers to go
forth, and ANTHONY calls him back:]*

ANTHONY. Stay, Sylla; hear Anthony breathe forth
The pleading plaints of sad declining Rome.

SYLLA. Anthony, thou know'st thy honey words do pierce
And move the mind of Sylla to remorse:
Yet neither words nor pleadings now must serve:
When as mine honour calls me forth to fight:
Therefore, sweet Anthony, be short for Sylla's haste.

ANTHONY. For Sylla's haste! O, whither wilt thou fly?
Tell me, my Sylla, what dost thou take in hand?
What wars are these thou stirrest up in Rome?
What fire is this is kindled by thy wrath?
A fire that must be quench'd by Romans' blood.
A war that will confound our empery;
And last, an act of foul impiety.
Brute beasts nill break the mutual law of love,
And birds affection will not violate:
The senseless trees have concord 'mongst themselves,
And stones agree in links of amity.
If they, my Sylla, brook not to have jar,
What then are men, that 'gainst themselves do war?
Thou'lt say, my Sylla, honour stirs thee up;
Is't honour to infringe the laws of Rome?
Thou'lt say, perhaps, the titles thou hast won
It were dishonour for thee to forego;
O, is there any height above the highest,
Or any better than the best of all?
Art thou not consul? art thou not lord of Rome?
What greater titles should our Sylla have?
But thou wilt hence, thou'lt fight with Marius,
The man the senate, ay, and Rome hath chose.
Think this, before thou never lift'st aloft,
And lettest fall thy warlike hand adown,
But thou dost raze and wound thy city Rome:
And look, how many slaughter'd souls lie slain
Under thy ensigns and thy conquering lance,
So many murders mak'st thou of thyself.

SYLLA. Enough, my Anthony, for thy honey'd tongue
Washed in a syrup of sweet conserves[109],
Driveth confused thoughts through Sylla's mind:
Therefore suffice thee, I may nor will not hear.
So farewell, Anthony; honour calls me hence:

Sylla will fight for glory and for Rome.

[*Exit SYLLA and his followers.*]

L. MERULA. See, noble Anthony, the trustless state of rule,
The stayless hold of matchless sovereignty:
Now fortune beareth Rome into the clouds,
To throw her down into the lowest hells;
For they that spread her glory through the world,
Are they that tear her proud, triumphant plumes:
The heart-burning pride of proud Tarquinius
Rooted from Rome the sway of kingly mace,
And now this discord, newly set abroad,
Shall raze our consuls and our senates down.

ANTHONY. Unhappy Rome, and Romans thrice accurs'd!
That oft with triumphs fill'd your city walls
With kings and conquering rulers of the world,
Now to eclipse, in top of all thy pride,
Through civil discords and domestic broils.
O Romans, weep the tears of sad lament,
And rend your sacred robes at this exchange,
For fortune makes our Rome a banding ball[110],
Toss'd from her hand to take the greater fall.

GRANIUS. O, whence proceed these foul, ambitious thoughts,
That fire men's hearts and make them thirst for rule?
Hath sovereignty so much bewitch'd the minds
Of Romans, that their former busied cares,
Which erst did tire in seeking city's good,
Must now be chang'd to ruin of her walls?
Must they, that rear'd her stately temples up,
Deface the sacred places of their gods?
Then may we wail, and wring our wretched hands,
Sith both our gods, our temples, and our walls,
Ambition makes fell fortune's spiteful thralls.

[*Exeunt all.*]

[*A great alarum. Let young MARIUS chase POMPEY over the stage, and old MARIUS chase LUCRETIUS. Then let enter three or four Soldiers, and his ancient with his colours, and SYLLA after them with his hat in his hand: they offer to fly away.*]

SYLLA. Why, whither fly you, Romans,
What mischief makes this flight?
Stay, good my friends: stay, dearest countrymen!

1ST SOLDIER. Stay, let us hear what our Lord Sylla say'th.

SYLLA. What, will you leave your chieftains, Romans, then,
And lose your honours in the gates of Rome?
What, shall our country see, and Sylla rue,
These coward thoughts so fix'd and firm'd in you?
What, are you come from Capua to proclaim
Your heartless treasons in this happy town?
What, will you stand and gaze with shameless looks,
Whilst Marius' butchering knife assails our throats?
Are you the men, the hopes, the stays of state?
Are you the soldiers prest[111] for Asia?
Are you the wonder'd legions of the world,
And will you fly these shadows of resist?
Well, Romans, I will perish through your pride,
That thought by you to have return'd in pomp;
And, at the least, your general shall prove,
Even in his death, your treasons and his love.
Lo, this the wreath that shall my body bind,
Whilst Sylla sleeps with honour in the field:

And I alone, within these colours shut,
Will blush your dastard follies in my death.
So, farewell, heartless soldiers and untrue,
That leave your Sylla, who hath loved you. [*Exit.*

1ST SOLDIER. Why, fellow-soldiers, shall we fly the field,
And carelessly forsake our general?
What, shall our vows conclude with no avail?
First die, sweet friends, and shed your purple blood,
Before you lose the man that wills you good.
Then to it, brave Italians, out of hand!
Sylla, we come with fierce and deadly blows
To venge thy wrongs and vanquish all thy foes.

[*Exeunt to the alarum.*

ACTUS SECUNDUS, SCENA PRIMA.

Enter SYLLA triumphant; LUCRETIUS, POMPEY, with Soldiers.

SYLLA. You, Roman soldiers, fellow-mates in arms,
The blindfold mistress of uncertain chance
Hath turn'd these traitorous climbers from the top,
And seated Sylla in the chiefest place—
The place beseeming Sylla and his mind.
For, were the throne, where matchless glory sits
Empal'd with furies, threatening blood and death,
Begirt with famine and those fatal fears,
That dwell below amidst the dreadful vast,
Tut, Sylla's sparkling eyes should dim with clear[112]
The burning brands of their consuming light,
And master fancy with a forward mind,
And mask repining fear with awful power:
For men of baser metal and conceit
Cannot conceive the beauty of my thought.
I, crowned with a wreath of warlike state,
Imagine thoughts more greater than a crown,
And yet befitting well a Roman mind.
Then, gentle ministers of all my hopes,
That with your swords made way unto my wish,
Hearken the fruits of your courageous fight.
In spite of all these Roman basilisks,
That seek to quell us with their currish looks,
We will to Pontus: we'll have gold, my hearts;
Those oriental pearls shall deck our brows.
And you, my gentle friends, you Roman peers:
Kind Pompey, worthy of a consul's name,
You shall abide the father of the state,
Whilst these brave lads, Lucretius, and I,
In spite of all these brawling senators,
Will, shall, and dare attempt on Asia,
And drive Mithridates from out his doors.

POMPEY. Ay, Sylla, these are words of mickle worth,
Fit for the master of so great a mind.
Now Rome must stoop, for Marius and his friends
Have left their arms, and trust unto their heels.

SYLLA. But, Pompey, if our Spanish jennets' feet
Have learnt to post it of their mother-wind,
I hope to trip upon the greybeard's heels,

Till I have cropp'd his shoulders from his head.
And for his son, the proud, aspiring boy,
His beardless face and wanton, smiling brows,
Shall, if I catch him, deck yond' capitol.
The father, son, the friends and soldiers all,
That fawn on Marius, shall with fury fall.

LUCRETIUS. And what event shall all these troubles bring?

SYLLA. This—Sylla in fortune will exceed a king.
But, friends and soldiers, with dispersed bands
Go seek out Marius' fond confederates:
Some post along those unfrequented paths,
That track by nooks unto the neighbouring sea:
Murder me Marius, and maintain my life.
And that his favourites in Rome may learn
The difference betwixt my fawn and frown,
Go cut them short, and shed their hateful blood,
To quench these furies of my froward mood.

[*Exit Soldiers.*]

LUCRETIUS. Lo, Sylla, where our senators approach;
Perhaps to 'gratulate thy good success.

Enter ANTHONY, GRANIUS, LEPIDUS.

SYLLA. Ay, that *perhaps* was fitly placed there:
But, my Lucretius, these are cunning lords,
Whose tongues are tipp'd with honey to deceive.
As for their hearts, if outward eyes may see them,
The devil scarce with mischief might agree them.

LEPIDUS. Good fortune to our consul, worthy Sylla.

SYLLA. And why not general 'gainst the King of Pontus?

GRANIUS. And general against the King of
Pontus.

SYLLA. Sirrah, your words are good, your thoughts are ill.
Each milkwhite hair amid this mincing beard,
Compar'd with millions of thy treacherous thoughts,
Would change their hue through vigour of thy hate.
But, did not pity make my fury thrall,
This sword should finish hate, thy life, and all.
I prythee, Granius, how doth Marius?

GRANIUS. As he that bides a thrall to thee and fate:
Living in hope, as I and others do,
To catch good fortune, and to cross thee too.

SYLLA. Both blunt and bold, but too much mother-wit.
To play with fire, where fury streams about:
Curtail your tale, fond man; cut off the rest;
But here I will dissemble for the best.

GRANIUS. Sylla, my years have taught me to discern
Betwixt ambitious pride and princely zeal;
And from thy youth these peers of Home have mark'd
A rash revenging humour[113] in thy brain.
Thy tongue adorn'd with flowing eloquence,
And yet I see imprinted in thy brows
A fortunate but froward governance.
And though thy rival Marius, mated late
By backward working of his wretched fate,
Is fall'n; yet, Sylla, mark what I have seen
Even here in Rome. The fencer Spectacus

Hath been as fortunate as thou thyself;
But when that Crassus' sword assayed his crest,
The fear of death did make him droop for woe.

SYLLA. You saw in Rome this brawling fencer die,
When Spectacus by Crassus was subdued.
Why so? but, sir, I hope you will apply,
And say like Spectacus that I shall die.
Thus peevish old, discoursing by a fire,
Amidst their cups will prate how men aspire.
Is this the greeting, Romans, that you give
Unto the patron of your monarchy?
Lucretius, shall I play a pretty jest?

LUCRETIUS. What Sylla will, what Roman dare withstand?

SYLLA. A brief and pleasing answer, by my head.
Why, tell me, Granius, dost thou talk in sport?

GRANIUS. No, Sylla, my discourse is resolute.
Not coin'd to please thy fond and cursed thoughts:
For were my tongue betray'd with pleasing words
To feed the humours of thy haughty mind,
I rather wish the rot should root it out.

SYLLA. The bravest brawler that I ever heard.
But, soldiers, since I see he is oppress'd
With crooked choler, and our artists teach
That fretting blood will press through open'd veins,
Let him that has the keenest sword arrest
The greybeard, and cut off his head in jest.
Soldiers, lay hands on Granius.

GRANIUS. Is this the guerdon[114] then of good advice?

SYLLA. No, but the means to make fond men more wise.
Tut, I have wit, and carry warlike tools,
To charm the scolding prate of wanton fools.
Tell me of fencers and a tale of fate!
No, Sylla thinks of nothing but a state.

GRANIUS. Why, Sylla, I am arm'd the worst to try.

SYLLA, I pray thee then, Lucretius, let him die.

[Exeunt with GRANIUS.]

Beshrew me, lords, but in this jolly vein
'Twere pity but the prating fool were slain.
I fear me Pluto will be wrath with me,
For to detain so grave a man as he.

ANTHONY. But seek not, Sylla, in this quiet state
To work revenge upon an aged man,
A senator, a sovereign of this town.

SYLLA. The more the cedar climbs, the sooner down:
And, did I think the proudest man in Rome
Would wince at that which I have wrought or done,
I would and can control his insolence.
Why, senators, is this the true reward,
Wherewith you answer princes for their pain,
As when this sword hath made our city free,
A braving mate should thus distemper me?
But, Lepidus and fellow-senators,
I am resolved, and will not brook your taunts:
Who wrongeth Sylla, let him look for stripes.

ANTHONY. Ay, but the milder passions show the man;
For as the leaf doth beautify the tree,
The pleasant flow'rs bedeck the painted spring,
Even so in men of greatest reach and power
A mild and piteous thought augments renown.
Old Anthony did never see, my lord,
A swelling show'r, that did continue long:
A climbing tower that did not taste the wind:
A wrathful man not wasted with repent.
I speak of love, my Sylla, and of joy,
To see how fortune lends a pleasant gale
Unto the spreading sails of thy desires;
And, loving thee, must counsel thee withal:
For, as by cutting fruitful vines increase,
So faithful counsels work a prince's peace.

SYLLA. Thou honey-talking father, speak thy mind.

ANTHONY. My Sylla, scarce those tears are dried up,
That Roman matrons wept to see this war:
Along the holy streets the hideous groans
Of murdered men infect the weeping air:
Thy foes are fled, not overtaken yet,
And doubtful is the hazard of this war:
Yea, doubtful is the hazard of this war,
For now our legions draw their wasteful swords
To murder whom? Even Roman citizens!
To conquer whom? Even Roman citizens!
Then, if that Sylla love these citizens,
If care of Rome, if threat of foreign foes,
If fruitful counsels of thy forward friends,
May take effect, go fortunate, and drive
The King of Pontus out of Asia;
Lest, while we dream on civil mutinies,
Our wary foes assail our city walls.

POMPEY. My long-concealed thoughts, Mark Anthony,
Must seek discovery through thy pliant words.
Believe me, Sylla, civil mutinies
Must not obscure thy glories and our names.
Then, sith that factious Marius is suppress'd,
Go spread thy colours 'midst the Asian fields;
Meanwhile myself will watch this city's weal.

SYLLA. Pompey, I know thy love, I mark thy words,
And, Anthony, thou hast a pleasing vein;
But, senators, I harbour^[115] in my head
With every thought of honour some revenge.

Enter LUCRETIUS with the head.

Speak, what, shall Sylla be your general?

LEPIDUS. We do decree that Sylla shall be general?

SYLLA. And wish you Sylla's weal and honour too?

ANTHONY. We wish both Sylla's weal and honour too.

SYLLA. Then take away the scandal of this state,
Banish the name of tribune out of town;
Proclaim false Marius and his other friends
Foemen and traitors to the state of Rome,
And I will wend and work so much by force,
As I will master false Mithridates.

LEPIDUS. The name of tribune hath continued long.

SYLLA. So shall not Lepidus, if he withstand me.
Sirrah, you see the head of Granius:
Watch you his hap, unless you change your words.
Pompey, now please me: Pompey, grant my suit.

POMPEY. Lictors, proclaim this our undaunted doom.
We will that Marius and his wretched sons:
His friends Sulpitius, Claudius, and the rest
Be held for traitors, and acquit the men,
That shall endanger their unlucky lives;
And henceforth tribune's name and state shall cease.
Grave senators, how like you this decree?

LEPIDUS. Even as our consuls wish, so let it be.

SYLLA. Then, Lepidus, all friends in faith for me,
So leave I Rome to Pompey and my friends,
Resolv'd to manage those our Asian wars.
Frolic, brave soldiers, we must foot it now:
Lucretius, you shall bide the brunt with me.
Pompey, farewell, and farewell, Lepidus.
Mark Anthony, I leave thee to thy books;
Study for Rome and Sylla's royalty.
But, by my sword, I wrong this greybeard's head;
Go, sirrah, place it on the capitol:
A just promotion fit for Sylla's foe.
Lordings, farewell: come, soldiers, let us go.

[*Exit.*

POMPEY. Sylla, farewell, and happy be thy chance,
Whose war both Rome and Romans must advance.

[*Exeunt Senators.*

*Enter the Magistrates of Minturnum with MARIUS very melancholy: LUCIUS FAVORINUS,
PAUSANIUS, with some attendants.*

PAUSANIUS. My lord, the course of your unstayed fate,
Made weak through that your late unhappy fight,
Withdraws our wills that fain would work your weal:
For long experience and the change of times,
The innocent suppressions of the just,
In leaning to forsaken men's relief,
Doth make us fear, lest our unhappy town
Should perish through the angry Roman's sword.

MARIUS. Lords of Minturnum, when I shap'd my course,
To fly the danger of pursuing death,
I left my friends, and all alone attain'd,
In hope of succours, to this little town,
Relying on your courtesies and truth.
What foolish fear doth then amaze you thus?

FAVORINUS. O Marius, thou thyself, thy son, thy friends,
Are banished, and exiles out of Rome,
Proclaim'd for traitors, reft of your estates,
Adjudg'd to death with certain warrantise:
Should then so small a town, my lord, as this
Hazard their fortunes to supply your wants?

MARIUS. Why, citizens, and what is Marius?
I tell you, not so base as to despair,
Yea, able to withstand ingratitude.
Tell me of foolish laws, decreed at Rome
To please the angry humours of my foe!
Believe me, lords, I know and am assur'd,

That magnanimity can never fear,
And fortitude so conquer silly fate,
As Sylla, when he hopes to have my head,
May hap ere long on sudden lose his own.

PAUSANIUS. A hope beseeming Marius; but, I fear,
Too strange to have a short and good event.

MARIUS. Why, Sir Pausanius, have you not beheld
Campania plains fulfill'd with greater foes,
Than is that wanton milk-sop, nature's scorn.
Base-minded men to live in perfect hope,
Whose thoughts are shut within your cottage eaves,
Refuse not Marius, that must favour you:
For these are parts of unadvised men,
With present fear to lose a perfect friend,
That can, will, may control, command, subdue,
That braving boy, that thus bewitcheth you.

FAVORINUS. How gladly would we succour you, my lord,
But that we fear—

MARIUS. What? the moonshine in the water!
Thou wretched stepdame of my fickle state,
Are these the guerdons of the greatest minds?
To make them hope and yet betray their hap,
To make them climb to overthrow them straight?
Accurs'd thy wreak[116], thy wrath, thy bale, thy weal,
That mak'st me sigh the sorrows that I feel!
Untrodden paths my feet shall rather trace,
Than wrest my succours from inconstant hands:
Rebounding rocks shall rather ring my ruth,
Than these Campanian piles, where terrors bide:
And nature, that hath lift my throne so high,
Shall witness Marius' triumphs, if he die.
But she, that gave the lictor's rod and axe
To wait my six times consulship in Rome,
Will not pursue where erst she flattered so.
Minturnum then, farewell, for I must go;
But think for to repent you of your no.

PAUSANIUS. Nay stay, my lord, and deign in private here
To wait a message of more better worth:
Your age and travels must have some relief;
And be not wrath, for greater men than we
Have feared Rome and Roman tyranny.

MARIUS. You talk it now like men confirmed in faith.
Well, let me try the fruits of your discourse,
For care my mind and pain my body wrongs.

PAUSANIUS. Then, Favorinus, shut his lordship up
Within some secret chamber in the state.
Meanwhile, we will consult to keep him safe,
And work some secret means for his supply.

MARIUS. Be trusty, lords; if not, I can but die.
[Exit MARIUS.]

PAUSANIUS. Poor, hapless Roman, little wottest thou
The weary end of thine oppressed life.

LUCIUS. Why, my Pausanius, what imports these words?

PAUSANIUS. O Lucius, age hath printed in my thoughts
A memory of many troubles pass'd.
The greatest towns and lords of Asia

Have stood on tickle terms through simple truth:
The Rhodian records well can witness this.
Then, to prevent our means of overthrow,
Find out some stranger, that may suddenly
Enter the chamber, where as Marius lies,
And cut him short; the present of whose head
Shall make the Romans praise us for our truth,
And Sylla prest to grant us privilege.

LUCIUS. A barbarous act to wrong the men that trust.

PAUSANIUS. In country's cause injustice proveth just.
Come, Lucius, let not silly thought of right
Subject our city to the Roman's might:
For why you know in Marius only end
Rome will reward, and Sylla will befriend.

LUCIUS. Yet all successions will us discommend.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter MARIUS the younger, CETHEGUS, LECTORIUS, with Roman Lords and Soldiers.

YOUNG MARIUS. The wayward lady of this wicked world,
That leads in luckless triumph wretched men,
My Roman friends, hath forced our desires,
And fram'd our minds to brook too base relief.
What land or Lybian desert is unsought
To find my father Marius and your friend?
Yea, they whom true relent could never touch—
These fierce Numidians, hearing our mishaps,
Weep floods of moan to wail our wretched fates.
Thus we, that erst with terrors did attain
The Bactrian bounds, and in our Roman wars
Enforc'd the barbarous borderers of the Alps
To tremble with the terrors of our looks,
Now fly, poor men, affrighted without harms:
Seeking amidst the desert rocks and dens
For him, that whilom in our capitol
Even with a beck commanded Asia.
Thou woful son of such a famous man,
Unsheathe thy sword, conduct these warlike men
To Rome, unhappy mistress of our harms:
And there, since tyrants' power hath thee oppress'd,
And robb'd thee of thy father, friends, and all,
So die undaunted, killing of thy foes,
That were the offspring of these wretched woes.

LECTORIUS. Why, how now, Marius, will you mate us thus,
That with content adventure for your love?
Why, noble youth, resolve yourself on this,
That son and father both have friends in Rome,
That seek old Marius' rest and your relief.

YOUNG MARIUS. Lectorius, friends are geason[117] now-a-days,
And grow to fume, before they taste the fire.
Adversities bereaving man's avails,
They fly like feathers dallying in the wind:
They rise like bubbles in a stormy rain,
Swelling in words, and flying faith and deeds.

CETHEGUS. How fortunate art thou, my lovely lord,
That in thy youth may'st reap the fruits of age;
And having lost occasion's holdfast now,
May'st learn hereafter how to entertain her well.
But sudden hopes do swarm about my heart:
Be merry, Romans; see, where from the coast

A weary messenger doth post him fast.

*Enter CINNA'S SLAVE, with a letter enclosed,
posting in haste.*

LECTORIUS. It should be Cinna's slave, or else I err,
For in his forehead I behold the scar,
Wherewith he marketh still his barbarous swains.

YOUNG MARIUS. O, stay him, good Lectorius, for me-seems
His great post-haste some pleasure should present.

LECTORIUS. Sirrah, art thou of Rome?

SLAVE. Perhaps, sir, no.

LECTORIUS. Without perhaps, say, sirrah, is it so?

SLAVE. This is Lectorius, Marius' friend, I trow;
Yet were I best to learn the certainty,
Lest some dissembling foes should me descry. [*Aside.*]

YOUNG MARIUS. Sirrah, leave off this foolish dalliance,
Lest with my sword I wake you from your trance.

SLAVE. O happy man, O labours well-achiev'd!
How hath this chance my weary limbs revived:
O noble Marius! O princely Marius!

YOUNG MARIUS. What means this peasant by his great rejoice?

SLAVE. O worthy Roman, many months have past
Since Cinna, now the consul and my lord,
Hath sent me forth to seek thy friends and thee.
All Lybia, with our Roman presidents,
Numidia, full of unfrequented ways,
These weary limbs have trod to seek you out,
And now, occasion pitying of my pains,
I late arriv'd upon this wished shore,
Found out a sailor born in Capua,
That told me how your lordship pass'd this way.

YOUNG MARIUS. A happy labour, worthy some reward.
How fares thy master? What's the news at Rome?

SLAVE. Pull out the pike from off this javelin-top,
And there are tidings for these lords and thee.

YOUNG MARIUS. A policy beseeming Cinna well:
Lectorius, read, and break these letters up.[118]

LETTER.

To his Honourable friend Marius the younger, greeting.

Being consul (for the welfare both of father and son, with other thy accomplices), I have, under an honest policy, since my instalment in the consulship, caused all Sylla's friends that were indifferent, with the other neighbouring cities, to revolt. Octavius, my fellow-consul, with the rest of the senate, mistrusting me, and hearing how I sought to unite the old citizens with the new, hath wrought much trouble, but to no effect. I hope the soldiers of Capua shall follow our faction, for Sylla, hearing of these hurly-burlies, is hasting homeward, very fortunate in his wars against Mithridates. And it is to be feared that some of his friends here have certified him of my proceedings, and purpose to restore you. Cethegus and Lectorius I hear say are with you. Censorinus and Albinovanus will shortly visit you. Therefore haste and seek out your father, who is now, as I hear, about Minturnum. Levy what power you can with all expedition, and stay not.

Rome, the 5 Kalends of December.

Your unfeigned friend,

CINNA, *Consul.*

YOUNG MARIUS. Yea, fortune, shall young Marius climb aloft?
Then woe to my repining foes in Rome!
And if I live, sweet queen of change, thy shrines
Shall shine with beauty 'midst the capitol.
Lectorius, tell me what were best be done?

LECTORIUS. To sea, my lord; seek your warlike sire:
Send back this peasant with your full pretence,
And think already that our pains have end,
Since Cinna, with his followers, is your friend.

YOUNG MARIUS. Yea, Romans, we will furrow through the foam
Of swelling floods, and to the sacred twins
Make sacrifice, to shield our ships from storms.
Follow me, lords; come, gentle messenger,
Thou shalt have gold and glory for thy pains.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACTUS TERTIUS. SCENA PRIMA.

Enter CINNA, OCTAVIUS, ANTHONY, Lictors, Citizens.

CINNA. Upbraiding senators, bewitch'd with wit,
That term true justice innovation;
You ministers of Sylla's mad conceits,
Will consuls, think you, stoop to your controls?
These younger citizens, my fellow-lords,
Bound to maintain both Marius and his son,
Crave but their due, and will be held as good
For privilege as those of elder age;
For they are men conform'd to feats of arms,
That have both wit and courage to command.
These favourites of Octavius, that[119] with age
And palsies shake their javelins in their hands,
Like heartless men attainted all with fear:
And should they then overtop the youth?
No, nor this consul, nor Mark Anthony,
Shall make my followers faint or lose their right;
But I will have them equal with the best.

ANTHONY. Why then the senate's name, whose reverend rule
Hath blazed our virtues 'midst the western isle,
Must be obscur'd by Cinna's forced power.
O citizens! are laws of country left?
Is justice banish'd from this capitol?
Must we, poor fathers, see your drooping bands
Enter the sacred synod of this state?
O brutish fond presumptions of this age!
Rome! would the mischiefs might obscure my life,
So I might counsel consuls to be wise.
Why, countrymen, wherein consists this strife?
Forsooth the younger citizens will rule;
The old men's heads are dull and addle now;
And in elections youth will bear the sway.
O Cinna, see I not the woful fruits
Of these ambitious stratagems begun?
Each flattering tongue that dallieth pretty words
Shall change our fortunes and our states at once.
Had I ten thousand tongues to talk the care,
So many eyes to weep their woful miss,

So many pens to write these many wrongs,
My tongue your thoughts, my eyes your tears, should move,
My pen your pains by reason should approve.

CINNA. Why, Anthony, seal up those sugar'd lips,
For I will bring my purpose to effect.

ANTHONY. Doth Cinna like to interrupt me, then?

CINNA. Ay, Cinna, sir, will interrupt you now.
I tell thee, Mark, old Marius is at hand,
The very patron of this happy law,
Who will revenge thy cunning eloquence.

ANTHONY. I talk not, I, to please or him or thee,
But what I speak, I think and practise too:
'Twere better Sylla learnt to mend in Rome,
Than Marius come to tyrannise in Rome.

OCTAVIUS. Nay, Marius shall not tyrannise in Rome,
Old citizens; as Sylla late ordain'd,
King Tullius' laws shall take their full effect:
The best and aged men shall in their choice,
Both bear the day, and firm [th'] election.

CINNA. O brave! Octavius, you will beard me then,
The elder consul and old Marius' friend;
And these Italian freemen must be wrong'd.
First shall the fruit of all thine honours fail,
And this my poniard shall despatch thy life.

LEPIDUS. Such insolence was never seen in Rome:
Nought wanteth here but name to make a king.

OCTAVIUS. Strike, villain, if thou list, for I am prest
To make as deep a furrow in thy breast!

YOUNG CITIZEN. The young men's voices shall prevail, my lords.

OLD CITIZEN. And we will firm our honours by our bloods.

[*Thunder.*

ANTHONY. O false ambitious pride in young and old!
Hark, how the heavens our follies hath controll'd.

OLD CITIZEN. What, shall we yield for this religious fear?

ANTHONY. If not religious fear, what may repress
These wicked passions, wretched citizens?
O Rome, poor Rome, unmeet for these misdeeds,
I see contempt of heaven will breed a cross.
Sweet Cinna, govern rage with reverence. [*Thunder.*
O fellow-citizens, be more advis'd!

LEPIDUS. We charge you, consuls, now dissolve the court;
The gods condemn this brawl and civil jars.

OCTAVIUS. We will submit our honours to their wills:
You, ancient citizens, come follow me.

[*Exit OCTAVIUS; with him ANTHONY and LEPIDUS.*

CINNA. High Jove himself hath done too much for thee,
Else should this blade abate thy royalty.
Well, young Italian citizens, take heart,
He is at hand that will maintain your right;
That, entering in these fatal gates of Rome,
Shall make them tremble that disturb you now.

You of Preneste and of Formiae,
With other neighbouring cities in Campania,
Prepare to entertain and succour Marius.

YOUNG CITIZEN. For him we live, for him we mean to die.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter OLD MARIUS *with his* KEEPER *and two* SOLDIERS.

MARIUS. Have these Minturnians, then, so cruelly
Presum'd so great injustice 'gainst their friends?

JAILER. Ay, Marius, all our nobles have decreed
To send thy head a present unto Rome.

MARIUS. A Tantal's present it will prove, my friend,
Which with a little smarting stress will end
Old Marius' life, when Rome itself at last
Shall rue my loss, and then revenge my death.
But tell me, jailer, could'st thou be content,
In being Marius, for to brook this wrong.

JAILER. The high estate your lordship once did wield,
The many friends that fawn'd, when fortune smil'd,
Your great promotions and your mighty wealth,
These, were I Marius, would amate me so,[120]
As loss of them would vex me more than death.

MARIUS. Is lordship then so great a bliss, my friend?

JAILER. No title may compare with princely rule.

MARIUS. Are friends so faithful pledges of delight?

JAILER. What better comforts than are faithful friends?

MARIUS. Is wealth a mean to lengthen life's content?

JAILER. Where great possessions bide, what care can touch?

MARIUS. These stales[121] of fortune are the common plagues,
That still mislead the thoughts of simple men.
The shepherd-swain that, 'midst his country-cot,
Deludes his broken slumbers by his toil,
Thinks lordship sweet, where care with lordship dwells.
The trustful man that builds on trothless vows,
Whose simple thoughts are cross'd with scornful nays,
Together weeps the loss of wealth and friend:
So lordship, friends, wealth spring and perish fast,
Where death alone yields happy life at last.
O gentle governor of my contents,
Thou sacred chieftain of our capitol,
Who in thy crystal orbs with glorious gleams
Lend'st looks of pity mix'd with majesty,
See woful Marius careful for his son,
Careless of lordship, wealth, or worldly means,
Content to live, yet living still to die:
Whose nerves and veins, whose sinews, by the sword
Must lose their workings through distempering stroke,
But yet whose mind, in spite of fate and all,
Shall live by fame, although the body fall.

JAILER. Why mourneth Marius this recureless chance?

MARIUS. I pray thee, jailer, would'st thou gladly die?

JAILER. If needs, I would.

MARIUS. Yet were you loth to try?

JAILER. Why, noble lord, when goods, friends, fortune fail,
What more than death might woful man avail?

MARIUS. Who calls for death, my friend, for all his scorns?
With Aesop's slave will leave his bush of thorns.
But since these trait'rous lords will have my head,
Their lordships here upon this homely bed
Shall find me sleeping, breathing forth my breath,
Till they their shame, and I my fame, attain by death.
Live, gentle Marius, to revenge my wrong!
And, sirrah, see they stay not over-long;
For he that erst hath conquer'd kingdoms many,
Disdains in death to be subdu'd by any.
[He lies down.]

Enter LUCIUS FAVORINUS, PAUSANIUS, *with*
PEDRO, *a Frenchman.*

JAILER. The most undaunted words that ever were.
The mighty thoughts of his imperious mind,
Do wound my heart with terror and remorse.

PAUSANIUS. 'Tis desperate, not perfect nobleness:
For to a man that is prepar'd to die,
The heart should rend, the sleep should leave the eye.
But say, Pedro, will you do the deed?

PEDRO.[122] Mon monsieurs, per la sang Dieu, me will make a trou so large in ce belly, dat he sal cry hough, come un porceau. Featre de lay, il a tue me fadre, he kill my modre. Faith a my trote mon espee fera le fay dun soldat, sau sau. Ieievera come il founta pary: me will make a spitch-cock of his persona.

L. FAVORINUS. If he have slain thy father and thy friends,
The greater honour shall betide the deed;
For to revenge on righteous estimate
Beseems the honour of a Frenchman's name.

PEDRO. Mes messieurs, de fault avoir argent; me no point de argent, no point kill Marius.

PAUSANIUS. Thou shalt have forty crowns; will that content thee?

PEDRO. Quarante escus, per le pied de madam, me give more dan foure to se prittie damosele, dat have le dulces tittinos, le levres Cymbrines. O, they be fines!

L. FAVORINUS. Great is the hire, and little is the pain;
Make therefore quick despatch, and look for gain.
See where he lies in drawing on his death,
Whose eyes, in gentle slumber sealed up,
Present no dreadful visions to his heart.

PEDRO. Bien, monsieur, je demourera content: Marius, tu es mort. Speak dy preres in dy sleepe, for me sal cut off your head from your epaules, before you wake. Qui es stia? what kinde a man be dis?

L. FAVORINUS. Why, what delays are these? why gaze ye thus?

PEDRO. Nostre dame! Jesu! estiene! O my siniors, der be a great diable in ce eyes, qui dart de flame, and with de voice d'un bear cries out, Villain! dare you kill Marius? Je tremble: aida me, siniors, autrement I shall be murdered.

PAUSANIUS. What sudden madness daunts this stranger thus?

PEDRO. O me, no can kill Marius; me no dare kill Marius! adieu, messieurs, me be dead, si je touche Marius. Marius est un diable. Jesu Maria, sava moy![123] [*Exit fugiens.*]

PAUSANIUS. What fury haunts this wretch on sudden thus?

L. FAVORINUS. Ah, my Pausanius, I have often heard,
That yonder Marius in his infancy
Was born to greater fortunes than we deem:
For, being scarce from out his cradle crept,
And sporting prettily with his compeers,
On sudden seven young eagles soar'd amain,
And kindly perch'd upon his tender lap.
His parents, wondering at this strange event,
Took counsel of the soothsayers in this;
Who told them that these sevenfold eagles' flight
Forefigured his seven times consulship:[124]
And we ourselves (except bewitch'd with pride)
Have seen him six times in the capitol,
Accompanied with rods and axes too.
And some divine instinct so presseth me,
That sore I tremble, till I set him free.

PAUSANIUS. The like assaults attain my wand'ring mind,
Seeing our bootless war with matchless fate.
Let us entreat him to forsake our town;
So shall we gain a friend of Rome and him.

[MARIUS *awaketh.*

But mark how happily he doth awake.

MARIUS. What, breathe I yet, poor man, with mounting sighs,
Choking the rivers of my restless eyes?
Or is their rage restrain'd with matchless ruth?
See how amaz'd these angry lords behold
The poor, confused looks of wretched Marius.
Minturnians, why delays your headsman thus
To finish up this ruthless tragedy?

L. FAVORINUS. Far be it, Marius, from our thoughts or hands
To wrong the man protected by the gods:
Live happy, Marius, so thou leave our town.

MARIUS. And must I wrestle once again with fate,
Or will these princes dally with mine age?

PAUSANIUS. No, matchless Roman; thine approved mind,
That erst hath alter'd our ambitious wrong,
Must flourish still, and we thy servants live
To see thy glories, like the swelling tides,
Exceed the bounds of fate and Roman rule.
Yet leave us, lord, and seek some safer shed,
Where, more secure, thou may'st prevent mishaps;
For great pursuits and troubles thee await.

MARIUS. Ye piteous powers, that with successful hopes
And gentle counsels thwart my deep despairs,
Old Marius to your mercies recommends
His hap, his life, his hazard, and his son.
Minturnians, I will hence, and you shall fly
Occasions of those troubles you expect.
Dream not on dangers, that have sav'd my life.
Lordings, adieu: from walls to woods I wend;
To hills, dales, rocks, my wrong for to commend.

[*Exit.*

L. FAVORINUS. Fortune, vouchsafe his many woes to end.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter SYLLA[125] in triumph in his chair triumphant of gold, drawn by four Moors; before the chariot, his colours, his crest, his captains, his prisoners: ARCATHIUS, Mithridates' son; ARISTION, ARCHELAUS, bearing crowns of gold, and manacled. After the chariot, his soldier's bands; BASILLUS, LUCRETIUS, LUCULLUS, besides prisoners of divers nations

and sundry disguises.

SYLLA. You men of Rome, my fellow-mates in arms,
Whose three years' prowess, policy, and war,
One hundred threescore thousand men at arms
Hath overthrown and murder'd in the field;
Whose valours to the empire have restor'd
All Grecia, Asia, and Ionia,
With Macedonia, subject to our foe,
You see the froward customs of our state
Who, measuring not our many toils abroad,
Sit in their cells, imagining our harms:
Replenishing our Roman friends with fear.
Yea, Sylla, worthy friends, whose fortunes, toils,
And stratagems these strangers may report,
Is by false Cinna and his factious friends
Revil'd, condemn'd, and cross'd without a cause:
Yea, Romans, Marius must return to Rome,
Of purpose to upbraid your general.
But this undaunted mind that never droop'd;
This forward body, form'd to suffer toil,
Shall haste to Rome, where every foe shall rue
The rash disgrace both of myself and you.

LUCRETIUS. And may it be that those seditious brains
Imagine these presumptuous purposes?

SYLLA. And may it be? Why, man, and wilt thou doubt,
Where Sylla deigns these dangers to aver?
Sirrah, except not so, misdoubt not so:
See here Aneparius' letters, read the lines,
And say, Lucretius, that I favour thee,
That darest but suspect thy general.

[Read the letters and deliver them.]

LUCRETIUS. The case conceal'd hath mov'd the more misdoubt;
Yet pardon my presumptions, worthy Sylla,
That to my grief have read these hideous harms.

SYLLA. Tut, my Lucretius, fortune's ball is toss'd
To form the story of my fatal power:
Rome shall repent; babe, mother, shall repent:
Air, weeping cloudy sorrows, shall repent:
Wind, breathing many sorrows, shall repent—
To see those storms, concealed in my breast,
Reflect the hideous flames of their unrest.
But words are vain, and cannot quell our wrongs:
Brief periods serve for them that needs must post it.
Lucullus, since occasion calls me hence,
And all our Roman senate think it meet,
That thou pursue the wars I have begun,
As by their letters I am certified,
I leave thee Cymbria's legions to conduct,
With this proviso that, in ruling still,
You think on Sylla and his courtesies.

LUCULLUS. The weighty charge of this continued war,
Though strange it seem, and over-great to wield,
I will accept, if so the army please.

SOLDIERS. Happy and fortunate be Lucullus our general.

SYLLA. If he be Sylla's friend, else not at all:
For otherwise the man were ill-bested,
That gaining glories straight should lose his head.
But, soldiers, since I needly must to Rome,
Basillus' virtues shall have recompense.

Lo, here the wreath, Valerius, for thy pains,
Who first didst enter Archilaus' trench:
This pledge of virtue, sirrah, shall approve
Thy virtues, and confirm me in thy love.

BASILLUS. Happy be Sylla, if no foe to Rome.

SYLLA. I like no ifs from such a simple groom.
I will be happy in despite of state.
And why? because I never feared fate.
But come, Arcathius, for your father's sake:
Enjoin your fellow-princes to their tasks,
And help to succour these my weary bones.
Tut, blush not, man, a greater state than thou
Shall pleasure Sylla in more baser sort.
Aristion is a jolly-timber'd man,
Fit to conduct the chariot of a king:
Why, be not squeamish, for it shall go hard,
But I will give you all a great reward.

ARCATHIUS. Humbled by fate, like wretched men we yield.

SYLLA. Arcathius, these are fortunes of the field.
Believe me, these brave captives draw by art,
And I will think upon their good desert.
But stay you, strangers, and respect my words.
Fond heartless men, what folly have I seen!
For fear of death can princes entertain
Such bastard thoughts, that now from glorious arms
Vouchsafe to draw like oxen in a plough?
Arcathius, I am sure Mithridates
Will hardly brook the scandal of his name:
'Twere better in Pisae[127] to have died,
Aristion, than amidst our legions thus to draw.

ARISTION. I tell thee, Sylla, captives have no choice,
And death is dreadful to a captive man.

SYLLA. In such imperfect mettles[128] as is yours:
But Romans, that are still allur'd by fame,
Choose rather death than blemish of their name.
But I have haste, and therefore will reward you.
Go, soldiers, with as quick despatch as may be,
Hasten their death, and bring them to their end,
And say in this that Sylla is your friend.

ARCATHIUS. O, ransom thou our lives, sweet conqueror!

SYLLA. Fie, foolish men, why fly you happiness?
Desire you still to lead a servile life?
Dare you not buy delights with little pains?
Well, for thy father's sake, Arcathius,
I will prefer thy triumphs with the rest.
Go, take them hence, and when we meet in hell,
Then tell me, princes, if I did not well.

[Exeunt milites.]

Lucullus, thus these mighty foes are down,
Now strive thou for the King of Pontus' crown.
I will to Rome; go thou, and with thy train
Pursue Mithridates, till he be slain.

LUCULLUS. With fortune's help: go calm thy country's woes,
Whilst I with these seek out our mighty foes.

*Enter MARIUS solus, from the Numidian mountains,
feeding on roots.*

MARIUS. Thou, that hast walk'd with troops of flocking friends,
Now wand'rest 'midst the labyrinth of woes;
Thy best repast with many sighing ends,
And none but fortune all these mischiefs knows.
Like to these stretching mountains, clad with snow,
No sunshine of content my thoughts approacheth:
High spire their tops, my hopes no height do know,
But mount so high as time their tract reproacheth.
They find their spring, where winter wrongs my mind,
They weep their brooks, I waste my cheeks with tears.
O foolish fate, too froward and unkind,
Mountains have peace, where mournful be my years.
Yet high as they my thoughts some hopes would borrow;
But when I count the evening end with sorrow.
Death in Minturnum threaten'd Marius' head,
Hunger in these Numidian mountains dwells:
Thus with prevention having mischief fled,
Old Marius finds a world of many hells,
Such as poor simple wits have oft repin'd;
But I will quell, by virtues of the mind,
Long years misspent in many luckless chances,
Thoughts full of wrath, yet little worth succeeding,
These are the means for those whom fate advances:
But I, whose wounds are fresh, my heart still bleeding,
Live to entreat this blessed boon from fate,
That I might die with grief to live in state.
Six hundred suns with solitary walks
I still have sought for to delude my pain,
And friendly echo, answering to my talks,
Rebounds the accent of my ruth again:
She, courteous nymph, the woful Roman pleaseth,
Else no consorts but beasts my pains appeaseth.
Each day she answers in yon neighbouring mountain,
I do expect, reporting of my sorrow,
Whilst lifting up her locks from out the fountain,
She answereth to my questions even and morrow:
Whose sweet rebounds, my sorrow to remove,
To please my thoughts I mean for to approve.
Sweet nymph, draw near, thou kind and gentle echo,

[*Echo*[129]. *I.*

What help to ease my weary pains have I?
What comfort in distress to calm my griefs?

Griefs.

Sweet nymph, these griefs are grown, before I thought so.

I thought so.

Thus Marius lives disdain'd of all the gods.

Gods.

With deep despair late overtaken wholly.

O lie.

And will the heavens be never well appeased?

Appeased.

What mean have they left me to cure my smart?

Art.

Nought better fits old Marius' mind than war.

Then war[130].

Then full of hope, say, Echo, shall I go?

Go.

Is any better fortune then at hand?

At hand.

Then farewell, Echo, gentle nymph, farewell.

Farewell.

O pleasing folly to a pensive man!
Well, I will rest fast by this shady tree,
Waiting the end that fate alloteth me.

[Sits down.

Enter MARIUS *the son*, ALBINOVANUS, CETHEGUS,
LECTORIUS, *with Soldiers*.

YOUNG MARIUS. My countrymen, and favourites of Rome,
This melancholy desert where we meet,
Resembleth well young Marius' restless thoughts.
Here dreadful silence, solitary caves,
No chirping birds with solace singing sweetly,
Are harbour'd for delight; but from the oak,
Leafless and sapless through decaying age,
The screech-owl chants her fatal-boding lays.
Within my breast care, danger, sorrow dwell;
Hope and revenge sit hammering in my heart:
The baleful babes of angry Nemesis
Disperse their furious fires upon my soul.

LECTORIUS. Fie, Marius, are you discontented still,
When as occasion favoureth your desire!
Are not these noble Romans come from Rome?
Hath not the state recall'd your father home?

YOUNG MARIUS. And what of this? What profit may I reap,
That want my father to conduct us home?

LECTORIUS. My lord, take heart; no doubt this stormy flaw[131],
That Neptune sent to cast us on this shore,
Shall end these discontentments at the last.

MARIUS. Whom see mine eyes? What, is not yon my son?

YOUNG MARIUS. What solitary father walketh there?

MARIUS. It is my son! these are my friends I see.
What, have sore-pining cares so changed me?
Or are my looks distemper'd through the pains
And agonies that issue from my heart?
Fie, Marius! frolic, man! thou must to Rome,
There to revenge thy wrongs, and wait thy tomb.

YOUNG MARIUS. Now, fortune, frown and palter if thou please.
Romans, behold my father and your friend.
O father!

MARIUS. Marius, thou art fitly met.
Albinovanus, and my other friends,
What news at Rome? What fortune brought you hither?

ALBINOVANUS. My lord, the Consul Cinna hath restor'd
The doubtful course of your betrayed state,
And waits your present swift approach to Rome,
Your foeman Sylla posteth very fast
With good success from Pontus, to prevent
Your speedy entrance into Italy.
The neighbouring cities are your very friends;
Nought rests, my lord, but you depart from hence.

YOUNG MARIUS. How many desert ways hath Marius sought,
How many cities have I visited!
To find my father, and relieve his wants!

MARIUS. My son, I 'quite thy travails with my love.
And, lords and citizens, we will to Rome,
And join with Cinna. Have you shipping here?
What, are these soldiers bent to die with me?

SOLDIERS. Content to pledge our lives for Marius.

LECTORIUS. My lord, here, in the next adjoining port,
Our ships are rigg'd, and ready for to sail.

MARIUS. Then let us sail unto Etruria,
And cause our friends, the Germans, to revolt,
And get some Tuscans to increase our power.
Deserts, farewell! Come, Romans, let us go—
A scourge for Rome, that hath depress'd us so.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACTUS QUARTUS, SCENA PRIMA.

Enter MARK ANTHONY, LEPIDUS, OCTAVIUS, FLACCUS, *Senators.*

OCTAVIUS. What helps, my lords, to overhale these cares?
What means or motions may these mischiefs end?
You see how Cinna, that should succour Rome
Hath levied arms to bring a traitor in.
O worthless traitor, woe to thine and thee,
That thus disquieteth both Rome and us?

ANTHONY. Octavius, these are scourges for our sins;
These are but ministers to heap our plague.
These mutinies are gentle means and ways,
Whereby the heavens our heavy errors charm.
Then with content and humbled eyes behold
The crystal shining globe of glorious Jove;
And, since we perish through our own misdeeds,
Go let us flourish in our fruitful prayers.

LEPIDUS. 'Midst these confusions, mighty men of Rome,
Why waste we out these troubles all in words?
Weep not your harms, but wend we straight to arms,
Lo, Ostia[132] spoil'd, see Marius at our gate!
And shall we die like milksops, dreaming thus?

OCTAVIUS. A bootless war to see our country spoil'd.

LEPIDUS. Fruitless is dalliance, whereas dangers be.

ANTHONY. My lord, may courage wait on conquer'd men?

LEPIDUS. Ay, even in death most courage doth appear.

OCTAVIUS. Then, waiting death, I mean to seat me here;
Hoping that consuls' name and fear of laws
Shall justify my conscience and my cause.

Enter a MESSENGER.

Now, sirrah, what confused looks are these?
What tidings bringest thou of dreariment?[133]

MESSENGER. My lords, the Consul Cinna, with his friends,
Have let in Marius by *Via Appia*,
Whose soldiers waste and murder all they meet;
Who, with the consul and his other friends,
With expedition hasteth to this place.

ANTHONY. Then to the downfall of my happiness,
Then to the ruin of this city Rome.
But if mine inward ruth were laid in sight,

My streams of tears should drown my foes' despite.

OCTAVIUS. Courage, Lord Anthony: if fortune please,
She will and can these troubles soon appease;
But if her backward frowns approach us nigh,
Resolve with us with honour for to die.

LEPIDUS. No storm of fate shall bring my sorrows down;
But if that fortune list, why, let her frown.

ANTHONY. Where states oppress'd by cruel tyrants be,
Old Anthony, there is no place for thee.

[Drum strikes within.]

Hark, by this thundering noise of threatening drums,
Marius with all his faction hither comes.

OCTAVIUS. Then like a traitor he shall know, ere long,
In levying arms he doth his country wrong.

*Enter MARIUS, his Son, CINNA, CETHEGUS, LECTORIUS, with
Soldiers: upon sight of whom MARK ANTHONY presently flies.*

MARIUS. And have we got the goal of honour now,
And in despite of consuls enter'd Rome?
Then rouse thee, Marius. leave thy ruthless thoughts;
And for thy many cares and toils sustain'd,
Afflict thy foes with quite as many pains.
Go, soldiers, seek out Bebius and his friends,
Attilius, Munitorius, with the rest;
Cut off their heads, for they did cross me once;
And if your care can compass my decree,
Remember that same fugitive Mark Anthony,
Whose fatal end shall be my fruitful peace.
I tell thee, Cinna, nature armeth beasts
With just revenge, and lendeth in their kinds
Sufficient warlike weapons of defence;
If then by nature beasts revenge their wrong,
Both heavens and nature grant me vengeance now.
Yet whilst I live and suck this subtle air,
That lendeth breathing coolness to my lights,
The register of all thy righteous acts,
Thy pains, thy toils, thy travails for my sake,
Shall dwell by kind impressions in my heart,
And I with links of true, unfeigned love
Will lock these Roman favourites in my breast,
And live to hazard life for their relief.

CINNA. My lord, your safe and swift return to Rome
Makes Cinna fortunate and well a-paid;
Who, through the false suggestions of my foes,
Was made a cypher^[134] of a consul here:
Lo, where he sits commanding in his throne,
That wronged Marius, me, and all these lords.

YOUNG MARIUS. To 'quite his love, Cinna, let me alone.
How fare these lords that, lumping, pouting, proud,
Imagine now to quell me with their looks?
Now welcome, sirs, is Marius thought so base?
Why stand you looking babies in my face?
Who welcomes me, him Marius makes his friend;
Who lowers on me, him Marius means to end.

FLACCUS. Happy and fortunate thy return to Rome.

LEPIDUS. And long live Marius^[135] with fame in Rome.

MARIUS. I thank you, courteous lords, that are so kind.

YOUNG MARIUS. But why endures your grace that braving mate,
To sit and face us in his robes of state?

MARIUS. My son, he is a consul at the least,
And gravity becomes Octavius best,
But, Cinna, would in yonder empty seat
You would for Marius' freedom once entreat.

CINNA presseth up, and OCTAVIUS stayeth him.

OCTAVIUS. Avaunt, thou traitor, proud and insolent!
How dar'st thou press near civil government.

MARIUS. Why, Master Consul, are you grown so hot?
I'll have a present cooling card for you.
Be therefore well advis'd, and move me not:
For though by you I was exil'd from Rome,
And in the desert from a prince's seat
Left to bewail ingratitude of Rome;
Though I have known your thirsty throats have long'd
To bathe themselves in my distilling blood,
Yet Marius, sirs, hath pity join'd with power.
Lo, here the imperial ensign which I wield,
That waveth mercy to my wishers-well:
And more: see here the dangerous trote of war,
That at the point is steel'd with ghastly death.

OCTAVIUS. Thou exile, threaten'st thou a consul then?
Lictors, go draw him hence! such braving mates
Are not to boast their arms in quiet states.

MARIUS. Go draw me hence! What! no relent, Octavius?

YOUNG MARIUS. My lord, what heart indurate with revenge
Could leave this lozel[136], threat'ning murder thus?
Vouchsafe me leave to taint that traitor seat
With flowing streams of his contagious blood.

OCTAVIUS. The father's son, I know him by his talk,
That scolds in words, when fingers cannot walk.
But Jove, I hope, will one day send to Rome
The blessed patron of this monarchy,
Who will revenge injustice by his sword.

CINNA. Such braving hopes, such cursed arguments:
So strict command, such arrogant controls!
Suffer me, Marius, that am consul now,
To do thee justice, and confound the wretch.

MARIUS. Cinna, you know I am a private man,
That still submit my censures to your will.

CINNA. Then, soldiers, draw this traitor from the throne,
And let him die, for Cinna wills it so.

YOUNG MARIUS. Ay, now, my Cinna, noble consul, speaks.
Octavius, your checks shall cost you dear.

OCTAVIUS. And let me die, for Cinna wills it so!
Is then the reverence of this robe contemn'd?
Are these associates of so small regard?
Why then, Octavius willingly consents
To entertain the sentence of his death.
But let the proudest traitor work his will;
I fear no strokes, but here will sit me still.
Since justice sleeps, since tyrants reign in Rome,
Octavius longs for death to die in Rome.

CINNA. Then strike him where he sits; then hale him hence.

OCTAVIUS. Heavens punish Cinna's pride and thy offence.

[A Soldier stabs him; he is carried away.]

CINNA. Now is he fallen that threaten'd Marius;
Now will I sit and plead for Marius.

MARIUS. Thou dost me justice, Cinna, for you see
These peers of Rome of [137] late exiled me.

LEPIDUS. Your lordship doth injustice to accuse
Those, who in your behalf did not offend.

FLACCUS. We grieve to see the aged Marius
Stand like a private man in view of Rome.

CINNA. Then bid him sit; and lo, an empty place:
Revoke his exile from his government,
And so prevent your farther detriment.

LEPIDUS. We will account both Marius and his friends,
His son and all his followers, free in Rome:
And since we see the dangerous times at hand,
And hear of Sylla's confidence and haste,
And know his hate and rancour to these lords,
We [138] him create for consul, to prevent
The policies of Sylla and his friends.

CINNA. Then, both confirm'd by state and full consent,
The rods and axe to Marius I present,
And here invest thee with the consul's pall.

FLACCUS. Long, fortunate, and happy life betide
Old Marius in his sevenfold consulship.

YOUNG MARIUS. And so let Marius live and govern Rome,
As cursed Sylla never look on Rome.

MARIUS. Then plac'd in consul's throne, you Roman states,
[He takes his seat.]
Recall'd from banishment by your decrees,
Install'd in this imperial seat to rule,
Old Marius thanks his friends and favourites,
From whom this final favour he requires:
That, seeing Sylla by his murderous blade
Brought fierce seditions first to head in Rome,
And forced laws to banish innocents,
I crave by course of reason and desert,
That he may be proclaimed, as erst was I,
A traitor and an enemy of Rome.
Let all his friends be banish'd out of town;
Then, cutting off the branch where troubles spring,
Rome shall have peace and plenty in her walls.

CINNA. In equity it needs must be, my friends,
That one be guilty of our common harms:
And since that Marius is accounted free,
Sylla with all his friends must traitors be.

YOUNG MARIUS. My father's reasons, Romans, are of force;
For if you see, and live not to secure,
You know that, in so great a state as this,
Two mighty foes can never well agree.

LEPIDUS. Then let us seek to please our consul first,
And then prepare to keep the exile out.

Cinna, as Marius and these lords agree,
Firm this edict, and let it pass for me.

CINNA. Then, Romans, in the name of all this state,
I here proclaim and publish this decree;
That Sylla with his friends, allies, and all,
Are banish'd exiles, traitors unto Rome:
And to extinguish both his name and state,
We will his house be razed to the ground,
His goods confiscate: this our censure is.
Lictor, proclaim this in the market-place,
And see it executed out of hand.

[*Exit Lictor.*]

MARIUS. Now see I, senators, the thought, the care,
The virtuous zeal that leads your toward minds
To love your friends, and watch your common good:
And now, establish'd consul in this place,
Old Marius will foresee advenient harms.
Sylla, the scourge of Asia, as we hear,
Is press'd to enter Italy with sword.
He comes in pomp to triumph here in Rome:
But, senators, you know the wavering wills
Of foolish men—I mean the common sort—
Who, through report of innovations,
Of flattering humours of well-temper'd tongues,
Will change, and draw a second mischief on.
I like your care, and will myself apply
To aim and level at my country's weal.
To intercept these errors by advice,
My son young Marius, Cethegus, and my friends,
Shall to Praeneste, to prevent and stop
The speedy purpose of our forward foe.
Meanwhile, ourselves will fortify this town,
This beauty of the world, this maiden-town;
Where streaming Tybris, with a pleasant tide,
Leads out the stately buildings of the world.
Marius, my hope, my son, you know your charge:
Take those Iberian legions in your train,
And we will spare some Cymbrians to your use.
Remember thou art Marius' son, and dream
On nought but honour and a happy death!

YOUNG MARIUS. I go, my lord, in hope to make the world
Report my service and my duty too;
And that proud challenger of Asia
Shall find that Marius' son hath force and wit.

[*Exit cum CETHIGO.*]

MARIUS. Go, thou, as fortunate as Greeks to Troy;
As glorious as Alcides in thy toils;
As happy as Sertorius in thy fight;
As valiant as Achilles in thy might:
Go, glorious, valiant, happy, fortunate,
As all those Greeks and him of Roman state!

Enter, led in with Soldiers, CORNELIA and FULVIA.

CORNELIA. Traitors! why drag you thus a prince's wife,
As if that beauty were a thrall to fate?
Are Romans grown more barbarous than Greeks,
That hate more greater than Cassandra now?
The Macedonian monarch was more kind,
That honour'd and reliev'd in warlike camp
Darius' mother, daughters, and his wife.
But you unkind to Roman ladies now,

Perhaps as constant as the ancient queens;
For they, subdu'd, had friendship in disgrace,
Where we, unconquer'd, live in woful case.

MARIUS. What plaintive pleas presents that lady there?
Why, soldiers, make you prisoners here in Rome?

1ST SOLDIER. Dread consul, we have found Cornelia here And Sylla's daughter posting out of town.

MARIUS. Ladies of worth, both beautiful and wise,
But near allied unto my greatest foe:
Yet Marius' mind, that never meant disgrace,
More likes their courage than their comely face.
Are you Cornelia, madam, Sylla's wife?

CORNELIA. I am Cornelia, Sylla's wife; what then?

MARIUS. And is this Fulvia, Sylla's daughter, too?

FULVIA. And this is Fulvia, Sylla's daughter, too.

MARIUS. Two welcome guests, in whom the majesty
Of my conceit and courage must consist.
What think you, senators and countrymen?
See, here are two, the fairest stars of Rome.
The dearest dainties of my warlike foe,
Whose lives upon your censures do subsist.[139]

LEPIDUS. Dread consul, the continuance of their lives
Shall egg on Sylla to a greater haste;
And, in bereaving of their vital breath,
Your grace shall force more fury from your foe.
Of these extremes we leave the choice to you.

MARIUS. Then think that some strange fortune shall ensue.

FULVIA. Poor Fulvia, now thy happy days are done!
Instead of marriage pomp, the fatal lights
Of funerals must masque about thy bed:
Nor shall thy father's arms with kind embrace
Hem in thy shoulders, trembling now for fear.
I see in Marius' looks such tragedies,
As fear my heart; and fountains fill mine eyes.

CORNELIA. Fie, Fulvia! shall thy father's daughter faint,
Before the threats of danger shall approach?
Dry up those tears, and like a Roman maid,
Be bold and silent, till our foe have said.

MARIUS. Cornelia, wife unto my traitor-foe,
What gadding mood hath forc'd thy speedy flight
To leave thy country, and forsake thy friends?

CORNELIA. Accursed Marius, offspring of my pains,
Whose furious wrath hath wrought thy country's woe,
What may remain for me or mine in Rome,
That see the tokens of thy tyrannies?
Vile monster, robb'd of virtue, what revenge
Is this, to wreak thine anger on the walls?
To raze our house, to banish all our friends,
To kill the rest, and captive us at last?
Think'st thou by barbarous deeds to boast thy state,
Or spoiling Sylla, to depress his hate?
No, Marius, but for every drop of blood
And inch of wrong he shall return thee two.

FLACCUS. Madam, in danger wisdom doth advise
In humble terms to reconcile our foes.

MARIUS. She is a woman, Flaccus; let her talk,
That breathes forth bitter words instead of blows.

CORNELIA. And in regard of that, immodest man,
Thou shouldst desist from outrage and revenge.

LECTORIUS. What, can your grace endure these cursed scoffs?

MARIUS. Why, my Lectorius, I have ever learnt
That ladies cannot wrong me with upbraids;
Then let her talk, and my concealed hate
Shall heap revengement upon Sylla's pate.

FULVIA. Let fevers first afflict thy feeble age;
Let palsies make thy stubborn fingers faint;
Let humours, streaming from thy moisten'd brains,
With clouds of dimness choke thy fretful eyes,
Before these monstrous harms assail my sire.

MARIUS. By'r lady,[140] Fulvia, you are gaily read:
Your mother well may boast you for her own;
For both of you have words and scoffs at will.
And since I like the compass of your wit,
Myself will stand, and, ladies, you shall sit.
And, if you please to wade in farther words,
Let's see what brawls your memories affords.

CORNELIA. Your lordship's passing mannerly in jest;
But that you may perceive we smell your drift,
We both will sit, and countenance your shift.

MARIUS. Where constancy and beauty do consort,
There ladies' threatenings turn to merry sport.
How fare these beautiful? what, well at ease?

FULVIA. As ready as at first for to displease;
For, full confirm'd that we shall surely die,
We wait our ends with Roman constancy.

MARIUS. Why, think you Marius hath confirm'd your death?

FULVIA. What other fruit may spring from tyrant's hands?

MARIUS. In faith then, ladies, thus the matter stands:
Since you mistake my love and courtesy,
Prepare yourselves, for you shall surely die.

CORNELIA. Ay, Marius, now I know thou dost not lie;
And that thou mayst, unto thy lasting blame,
Extinguish in our deaths thy wished fame,
Grant us this boon that, making choice of death,
We may be freed from fury of thine ire.

MARIUS. An easy boon; ladies, I condescend.

CORNELIA. Then suffer us in private chamber close
To meditate a day or two alone;
And, tyrant, if thou find us living then,
Commit us straight unto thy slaughtering-men.

MARIUS. Ladies, I grant; for Marius nill deny A suit so easy and of such import; For pity 'twere that
dames of constancy Should not be agents of their misery. [*Here he whispers* LECTORIUS. Lectorius,
hark, despatch. [*Exit* LECTORIUS.

CORNELIA. So, Fulvia, now the latest doom is fix'd,
And nought remains but constant Roman hearts
To bear the brunt of irksome fury's spite.
Rouse thee, my dear, and daunt those faint conceits,
That trembling stand aghast at bitter death.

Bethink thee now that Sylla was thy sire,
Whose courage heaven nor fortune could abate:
Then, like the offspring of fierce Sylla's house,
Pass with the thrice-renowned Phrygian dame,
As to thy marriage, so unto thy death:
For nought to wretches is more sweet than death.

FULVIA. Madam, confirm'd as well to die as live,
Fulvia awaiteth nothing but her death.
Yet had my father known the course of change,
Or seen our loss by lucky augury,
This tyrant nor his followers had liv'd
To 'joy the ruin of fierce Sylla's house.

MARIUS. But, lady, they that dwell on fortune's call
No sooner rise, but subject are to fall.

FULVIA. Marius, I doubt not but our constant ends
Shall make thee wail thy tyrant's government.

MARIUS. When tyrant's rule doth breed my care and woe,
Then will I say two ladies told me so.
But here comes Lectorius. Now, my lord.
Have you brought those things?

Enter LECTORIUS.

LECTORIUS. I have, noble consul.

MARIUS. Now, ladies, you are resolute to die?

CORNELIA. Ay, Marius, for terror cannot daunt us.
Tortures were framed to dread the baser eye,
And not t'appal a princely majesty.

MARIUS. And Marius lives to triumph o'er his foes,
That train their warlike troops amidst the plains,
And are enclos'd and hemm'd with shining arms,
Not to appal such princely majesty.
Virtue, sweet ladies, is of more regard
In Marius' mind, where honour is enthron'd,
Than Rome or rule of Roman empery.

[Here he puts chains about their necks.]

The bands, that should combine your snow-white wrists,
Are these which shall adorn your milk-white necks.
The private cells, where you shall end your lives,
Is Italy, is Europe—nay the world.
Th'Euxinian Sea, the fierce Sicilian Gulf,
The river Ganges and Hydaspes' stream
Shall level lie, and smooth as crystal ice,
While Fulvia and Cornelia pass thereon.
The soldiers, that should guard you to your deaths,
Shall be five thousand gallant youths of Rome,
In purple robes cross-barr'd with pales of gold,
Mounted on warlike coursers for the field,
Fet[141] from the mountain-tops of Corsica,
Or bred in hills of bright Sardinia,
Who shall conduct and bring you to your lord.
Ay, unto Sylla, ladies, shall you go,
And tell him Marius holds within his hands
Honour for ladies, for ladies rich reward;
But as for Sylla and for his compeers,
Who dare 'gainst Marius vaunt their golden crests,
Tell him for them old Marius holds revenge,
And in his hands both triumphs life and death.

CORNELIA. Doth Marius use with glorious words to jest,

And mock his captives with these glosing[142] terms?

MARIUS. No, ladies;
Marius hath sought for honour with his sword,
And holds disdain to triumph in your falls.
Live, Cornelia: live, fair and fairest Fulvia!
If you have done or wrought me injury,
Sylla shall pay it through his misery.

FULVIA. So gracious, famous consul, are thy words,
That Rome and we shall celebrate thy worth,
And Sylla shall confess himself o'ercome.

CORNELIA. If ladies' prayers or tears may move the heavens,
Sylla shall vow himself old Marius' friend.

MARIUS. Ladies, for that I nought at all regard:
Sylla's my foe, I'll triumph over him;
For other conquest glory doth not win.
Therefore come on,
That I may send you unto Sylla.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter a CLOWN, drunk, with a pint of wine in his hand, and two or three SOLDIERS.

1ST SOLDIER. Sirrah, dally not with us; you know where he is.

CLOWN. O, sir, a quart is a quart in any man's purse, and drink is drink, and can my master live without his drink, I pray you?

2D SOLDIER. You have a master then, sirrah?

CLOWN. Have I a master, thou scoundrel? I have an orator to my master, a wise man to my master. But, fellows, I must make a parenthesis of this pint-pot, for words make men dry: now, by my troth, I drink to Lord Anthony.

3D SOLDIER. Fellow-soldiers, the weakness of his brain hath made his tongue walk largely; we shall have some novelties by-and-by.

CLOWN. O most surpassing wine,
Thou marrow of the vine!
More welcome unto me
Than whips to scholars be.
Thou art, and ever was,
A means to mend an ass;
Thou makest some to sleep,
And many mo to weep,
And some be glad and merry,
With heigh down derry, derry.
Thou makest some to stumble,
And many mo to fumble,
And me have pinky neyne.[143]
More brave and jolly wine!
What need I praise thee mo,
For thou art good, with heigh-ho!

3D SOLDIER. If wine then be so good, I prithee, for thy part, Tell us where Lord Anthony is, and thou shalt have a quart.

CLOWN. First shall the snow be black,
And pepper lose his smack,
And stripes forsake my back:
First merry drunk with sack,
I will go boast and track,
And all your costards crack,
Before I do the knack
Shall make me sing alack.

Alack, the old man is weary,
For wine hath made him merry.
With a heigh-ho.

1ST SOLDIER. I prythee leave these rhymes, and tell us where thy master is?

CLOWN. Faith, where you shall not be,
Unless ye go with me.
But shall I tell them so?
O, no, sir, no, no, no.
The man hath many a foe,
As far as I do know:
You do not flout me, I hope.
See how this liquor fumes,
And how my force presumes.
You would know where Lord Anthony is? I perceive you.
Shall I say he is in yond farmhouse? I deceive you.
Shall I tell you this wine is for him? The gods forfend,
And so I end. Go, fellow-fighters, there's a bob for ye.

2D SOLDIER. My masters, let us follow this clown, for questionless this grave orator is in yonder farmhouse[144]. But who cometh yonder?

Enter OLD ANTHONY.

ANTHONY. I wonder why my peasant stays so long,
And with my wonder hasteth on my woe,
And with my woe I am assailed with fear,
And with my fear await with faintful breath
The final period of my pains by death.

1ST SOLDIER. Yond's the man we seek for, soldiers. Unsheathe your swords, and make a riddance of Marius' ancient enemy.

CLOWN. Master, fly, fly,
Or else you shall die!
A plague on this wine,
Hath made me so fine!
And will you not be gone?
Then I'll leave you alone,
And sleep upon your woe,
With a lamentable heigh-ho.

[Exit.

ANTHONY. Betrayed at last by witless oversight!
Now, Anthony, prepare thyself to die.
Lo, where the monstrous ministers of wrath
Menace thy murder with their naked swords.

2D SOLDIER. Anthony, well-met: the consul Marius, with other confederate senators, have adjudged thee death, therefore prepare thyself, and think we favour thee in this little protraction.

ANTHONY. Immortal powers, that know the painful cares
That wait upon my poor distressed heart,
O, bend your brows, and level all your looks
Of dreadful awe upon these daring men!
And thou, sweet niece of Atlas, on whose lips
And tender tongue the pliant muses sit,
Let gentle course of sweet aspiring speech,
Let honey-flowing terms of weary woe,
Let fruitful figures and delightful lines
Enforce a spring of pity from their eyes,
Amaze the murd'rous passions of their minds,
That they may favour woful Anthony.
O countrymen, what shall become of Rome,
When reverend duty droopeth through disgrace?
O countrymen, what shall become of Rome,

When woful nature, widow of her joys,
Weeps on our walls to see her laws depress'd?
O Romans, hath not Anthony's discourse
Seal'd up the mouths of false seditious men,
Assoil'd[145] the doubts and quaint controls of power,
Relieved the mournful matron with his pleas?
And will you seek to murder Anthony?
The lions brook with kindness their relief;
The sheep reward the shepherd with their fleece;
Yet Romans seek to murder Anthony.

1ST SOLDIER. Why, what enchanting terms of art are these, That force my heart to pity his distress?

2D SOLDIER. His action, speech, his favour and his grace, My rancour rage and rigour doth deface.

3D SOLDIER. So sweet his words, that now of late, meseems, His art doth draw my soul from out my lips.

ANTHONY. What envious eyes, reflecting nought but rage,
What barbarous heart, refresh'd with nought but blood,
That rends not to behold the senseless trees
In doly[146] season drooping without leaves?
The shepherd sighs upon the barren hills,
To see his bleating lambs with faintful looks
Behold the valleys robb'd of springing flowers,
That whilom wont to yield them yearly food.
Even meanest things, exchang'd from former state,
The virtuous mind with some remorse doth mate.
Can then your eyes with thundering threats of rage
Cast furious gleams of anger upon age?
Can then your hearts with furies mount so high,
As they should harm the Roman Anthony?
I, far more kind than senseless tree, have lent
A kindly sap to our declining state,
And like a careful shepherd have foreseen
The heavy dangers of this city Rome;
And made the citizens the happy flock,
Whom I have fed with counsels and advice:
But now those locks that, for their reverend white,
Surpass the down on Aesculapius' chin:
But now that tongue, whose terms and fluent style
For number pass'd the hosts of heavenly fires:
But now that head, within whose subtle brains
The queen of flowing eloquence did dwell—

Enter a CAPTAIN.

These locks, this tongue, this head, this life, and all,
To please a tyrant, trait'rously must fall.

CAPTAIN. Why, how now, soldiers, is he living yet?
And will you be bewitched with his words?
Then take this fee, false orator, from me: [*Stabs him.*
Elysium best beseems thy faintful limbs.

ANTHONY. O blissful pains! now Anthony must die, Which serv'd and lov'd Rome and her empery.
[_*Moritur*[147].

CAPTAIN. Go, curtal off that neck with present stroke,
And straight present it unto Marius.

1ST SOLDIER. Even in this head did all the muses dwell: The bees, that sat upon the Grecian's lips,
Distill'd their honey on his temper'd tongue.

2D SOLDIER. The crystal dew of fair Castalian springs
With gentle floatings trickled on his brains:
The graces kissed his kind and courteous brows,

Apollo gave the beauties of his harp,

Enter LECTORIUS *pensive*.

And melodies unto his pliant speech.

CAPTAIN. Leave these presumptuous praises, countrymen:

And see Lectorius, pensive where he comes.

Lo, here, my lord, the head of Anthony;

See here the guerdon fit for Marius' foe,

Whom dread Apollo prosper in his rule.

LECTORIUS. O Romans, Marius sleeps among the dead,

And Rome laments the loss of such a friend.

CAPTAIN. A sudden and a woful chance, my lord,

Which we intente[148] fain would understand.

LECTORIUS. Though swoll'n with sighs, my heart for sorrow burst,

And tongue with tears and plaints be choked up,

Yet will I furrow forth with forced breath

A speedy passage to my pensive speech.

Our consul Marius, worthy soldiers,

Of late within a pleasant plot of ground

Sat down for pleasure near a crystal spring,

Accompanied with many lords of Rome.

Bright was the day, and on the spreading trees

The frolic citizens[149] of forest sung

Their lays and merry notes on perching boughs;

When suddenly appeared in the east

Seven mighty eagles with their talons fierce,

Who, waving oft about our consul's head,

At last with hideous cry did soar away.

When suddenly old Marius aghast,

With reverend smile, determin'd with a sigh

The doubtful silence of the standers-by.

Romans, said he, old Marius now must die:

These seven fair eagles, birds of mighty Jove,

That at my birthday on my cradle sat,

Now at my last day warn[150] me to my death,

And lo, I feel the deadly pangs approach.

What should I more? In brief, with many prayers

For Rome, his son—his goods and lands dispos'd—

Our worthy consul to our wonder died.

The city is amaz'd, for Sylla hastes

To enter Rome with fury, sword and fire.

Go place that head upon the capitol,

And to your wards, for dangers are at hand.

[Exit.

CAPTAIN. Had we foreseen this luckless chance before,

Old Anthony had liv'd and breathed yet.

[Exeunt.

ACTUS QUINTUS.

A great skirmish in Rome and long, some slain. At last enter SYLLA triumphant, with POMPEY, METELLUS, Citizens, Soldiers.

SYLLA. Now, Romans, after all these mutinies,

Seditious, murders and conspiracies,

Imagine with impartial hearts at last,
What fruits proceed from these contentious brawls.
Your streets, where erst the fathers of your state
In robes of purple walked up and down,
Are strewd with mangled members, streaming blood:
And why? the reasons of this ruthless wrack
Are your seditious innovations,
Your fickle minds inclin'd to foolish change.
Ungrateful men! whilst I with tedious pain
In Asia seal'd my duty with my blood,
Making the fierce Dardanians faint for fear,
Spreading my colours in Galatia,
Dipping my sword in the Enetans' blood,
And foraging the fields of Phocida,
You called my foe from exile with his friends;
You did proclaim me traitor here in Rome;
You raz'd my house, you did defame my friends.
But, brawling wolves, you cannot bite the moon,
For Sylla lives, so forward to revenge,
As woe to those that sought to do me wrong.
I now am entered Rome in spite of force,
And will so hamper all my cursed foes.
As be he tribune, consul, lord, or knight,
That hateth Sylla, let him look to die.
And first to make an entrance to mine ire,
Bring me that traitor Carbo out of hand.

POMPEY. O Sylla, in revenging injuries,
Inflict the pain where first offence did spring,
And for my sake establish peace in Rome,
And pardon these repentant citizens.

SYLLA. Pompey, I love thee, Pompey, and consent
To thy request; but, Romans, have regard,
Lest over-reaching in offence again,
I load your shoulders with a double pain.

[_Exeunt citizens.

Bring in_ CARBO *bound*.

But, Pompey, see where jolly Carbo comes,
Footing it featly like a mighty man.
What, no obeisance, sirrah, to your lord?

CARBO[151]. My lord? No, Sylla: he that thrice hath borne
The name of consul scorns to stoop to him,
Whose heart doth hammer nought but mutinies.

POMPEY. And doth your lordship then disdain to stoop?

CARBO. Ay, to mine equal, Pompey, as thou art.

SYLLA. Thine equal, villain? no, he is my friend;
Thou, but a poor anatomy of bones,
Cas'd in a knavish tawny withered skin.
Wilt thou not stoop? art thou so stately then?

CARBO. Sylla, I honour gods, not foolish men.

SYLLA. Then break that wither'd bough, that will not bend[152],
And, soldiers, cast him down before my feet: [*They throw him down*.
Now, prating sir, my foot upon thy neck,
I'll be so bold to give your lordship check.
Believe me, soldiers, but I over-reach;
Old Carbo's neck at first was made to stretch.

CARBO. Though body bend, thou tyrant most unkind,

Yet never shalt thou humble Carbo's mind.

SYLLA. O sir, I know, for all your warlike pith
A man may mar your worship with a with.[153]
You, sirrah, levied arms to do me wrong;
You brought your legions to the gates of Rome;
You fought it out in hope that I would faint;
But, sirrah, now betake you to your books,
Entreat the gods to save your sinful soul:
For why this carcase must in my behalf
Go feast the ravens that serve our augurs' turn.
Methinks I see already, how they wish
To bait their beaks in such a jolly dish.

CARBO. Sylla, thy threats and scoffs amate me not.
I prythee, let thy murderers hale me hence;
For Carbo rather likes to die by sword,
Than live to be a mocking-stock to thee.

SYLLA. The man hath haste; good soldiers, take him hence:
It would be good to alter his pretence.
But be advis'd that, when the fool is slain,
You part the head and body both in twain.
I know that Carbo longs to know the cause,
And shall: thy body for the ravens[154], thy head for daws.

CARBO. O matchless ruler of our capitol,
Behold poor Rome with grave and piteous eye
Fulfilled with wrong and wretched tyranny!
[Exit CARBO _cum militibus.

Enter_ SCIPIO, NORBANUS, *and* CARINNA.[155]

SYLLA. Tut, the proud man's prayer will never pierce the sky.
But whither press these mincing senators?

NORBANUS. We press with prayers, we come with mournful tears,
Entreating Sylla by those holy bands,
That link fair Juno with her thundering Jove,
Even by the bonds of hospitality,
To pity Rome afflicted through thy wrath.
Thy soldiers (Sylla) murder innocents:
O, whither will thy lawless fury stretch,
If little ruth ensue thy country's harms?

SYLLA. Gay words, Norbanus, full of eloquence,
Accompanied with action and conceit:
But I must teach thee judgment therewithal
Dar'st thou approach my presence, that hast borne
Thine arms in spite of Sylla and his friends?
I tell thee, foolish man, thy judgment wanted
In this presumptuous purpose that is pass'd:
And, loitering scholar, since you fail in art,
I'll learn you judgment shortly to your smart.
Despatch him, soldiers; I must see him die.
And you, Carinna, Carbo's ancient friend,
Shall follow straight your headless[156] general.
And, Scipio, were it not I lov'd thee well,
Thou should'st accompany these slaves to hell:
But get you gone, and if you love yourself.

[Exit SCIPIO.

CARINNA. Pardon me, Sylla! pardon, gentle Sylla!

SYLLA. Sirrah, this gentle name was coin'd too late,
And shadow'd in the shrouds of biting hate.

Despatch! [*Kill him.*] why so; good fortune to my friends—
As for my foes, even such shall be their ends.
Convey them hence. Metellus, gentle Metellus,
Fetch me Sertorius from Iberia:
In doing so thou standest me in stead,
For sore I long to see the traitor's head.

METELLUS. I go, confirm'd to conquer him by sword,
Or in th'exploit to hazard life and all. [*Exit.*]

SYLLA. Now, Pompey, let me see: those senators
Are dangerous stops of our pretended[157] state,
And must be curtail'd, lest they grow too proud.
I do proscribe just forty senators,
Which shall be leaders in my tragedy.
And for our gentlemen are over-proud,
Of them a thousand and six hundred die;
A goodly army, meet to conquer hell.
Soldiers, perform the course of my decree.
Their friends my foes, their foes shall be my friends.
Go sell their goods by trumpet at your wills:
Meanwhile Pompey shall see, and Rome shall rue,
The miseries that shortly shall ensue.

[*Exeunt.*]

*Alarum, skirmish, a retreat. Enter YOUNG MARIUS
upon the walls of PRAENESTE with some Soldiers,
all in black and wonderful melancholy.*

YOUNG MARIUS. O endless course of needy man's avail!
What silly thoughts, what simple policies,
Make man presume upon this traitorous life!
Have I not seen the depth of sorrow once,
And then again have kiss'd the queen of chance.
O Marius, thou, Tillitius, and thy friends,
Hast seen thy foe discomfited in fight:
But now the stars have form'd my final harms.
My father Marius lately dead in Rome;
My foe with honour doth triumph in Rome,
My friends are dead and banished from Rome.
Ay, Marius, father, friends, more blest than thee!
They dead, I live; I thrall'd, they are free.
Here in Praeneste am I cooped up,
Amongst a troop of hunger-starved men,
Set to prevent false Sylla's fierce approach,
But now exempted both of life and all.
Well, fortune, since thy fleeting change hath cast
Poor Marius from his hopes and true desires,
My resolution shall exceed thy power.
Thy colour'd wings steeped in purple blood,
Thy blinding wreath distain'd in purple blood,
Thy royal robes wash'd in my purple blood,
Shall witness to the world thy thirst of blood;
And when the tyrant Sylla shall expect
To see the son of Marius stoop to fear,
Then, then, O, then, my mind shall well appear,
That scorn my life, and hold mine honour dear.

[*Alarum. A retreat.*]

Hark how these murderous Romans, viper-like,
Seek to bewray their fellow-citizens.
O wretched world, from whence with speedy flight
True love, true zeal, true honour late is fled!

SOLDIER. What makes my lord so careless and secure,

To leave the breach and here lament alone?

YOUNG MARIUS. Not fear, my friend, for I could never fly;
But study how with honour for to die.
I pray thee, call the chiefest citizens;
I must advise them in a weighty cause:
Here shall they meet me; and, until they come,
I will go view the danger of the breach.

[Exit YOUNG MARIUS, with the Soldiers.]

Enter, with drums and Soldiers, LUCRETIUS, with other Romans, as TUDITANUS, &c.

LUCRETIUS. Say, Tuditanus, didst thou ever see
So desperate defence as this hath been.

TUDITANUS. As in Numidia, tigers wanting food,
Or, as in Lybia, lions full of ire,
So fare these Romans on Praeneste walls.

LUCRETIUS. Their valour, Tuditanus, and resist,
The man-like fight of younger Marius,
Makes me amaz'd to see their miseries,
And pity them, although they be my foes.
What said I? Foes? O Rome, with ruth I see
Thy state consum'd through folly and dissension!
Well, sound a parley; I will see if words

[Sound a parley—YOUNG MARIUS appears upon the walls with the Citizens.]

Can make them yield, which will not fly for strokes.

YOUNG MARIUS. What seeks this Roman warrior at our hands?

LUCRETIUS. That seeks he, Marius, that he wisheth thee:
An humble heart and then a happy peace.
Thou see'st thy fortunes are depress'd and down;
Thy victuals spent; thy soldiers weak with want;
The breach laid open, ready to assault:
Now, since thy means and maintenance are done,
Yield, Marius, yield. Praenestians, be advis'd;
Lucretius is advis'd to favour you.
I pray thee, Marius, mark my last advice:
Relent in time; let Sylla be thy friend;
So thou in Rome may'st lead a happy life,
And those with thee shall pray for Marius still.

YOUNG MARIUS. Lucretius, I consider on thy words:
Stay there awhile; thou shalt have answer straight.

LUCRETIUS. Apollo grant that my persuasions may
Preserve these Roman soldiers from the sword.

YOUNG MARIUS. My friends and citizens of Praeneste town,
You see the wayward working of our stars;
Our hearts confirm'd to fight, our victuals spent.
If we submit, it's Sylla must remit;
A tyrant, traitor, enemy to Rome,
Whose heart is guarded still with bloody thoughts.
These flattering vows Lucretius here avows,
Are pleasing words to colour poison'd thoughts.
What, will you live with shame, or die with fame?

1ST CITIZEN. A famous death, my lord, delights us most.

2D CITIZEN. We of thy faction, Marius, are resolv'd To follow thee in life and death together.

YOUNG MARIUS. Words full of worth, beseeming noble minds:

The very balsamum to mend my woes.
O countrymen! you see Campania spoil'd;
A tyrant threat'ning mutinies in Rome;
A world despoil'd of virtue, faith, and trust.
If then, no peace, no liberty, no faith,
Conclude with me, and let it be no life!
Live not to see your tender infants slain;
These stately towers made level with the land;
This body mangled by our enemy's sword:
But full resolv'd to do as Marius doth,
Unsheathe your poniards, and let every friend
Bethink him of a soldier-like farewell.
Sirrah, display my standard on the walls,
And I will answer yond Lucretius:
Who loveth Marius, now must die with Marius!

LUCRETIUS. What answer will your lordship then return us?

YOUNG MARIUS. Lucretius, we that know what Sylla is—
How dissolute, how trothless and corrupt,
In brief conclude to die, before we yield:
But so to die—Lucretius, mark me well—
As loth to see the fury of our swords
Should murder friends and Roman citizens.
Fie, countrymen! what fury doth infect
Your warlike bosoms, that were wont to fight
With foreign foes, not with Campanian friends.
Now unadvised youth must counsel eld;
For governance is banish'd out of Rome.
Woe to that bough, from whence these blooms are sprung!
Woe to that Aetna, vomiting this fire!
Woe to that brand, consuming country's weal!
Woe to that Sylla, careless and secure,
That gapes with murder for a monarchy!
Go, second Brutus, with a Roman mind,
And kill that tyrant. And for Marius' sake,
Pity the guiltless wives of these your friends.
Preserve their weeping infants from the sword,
Whose fathers seal their honours with their bloods.
Farewell, Lucretius: first I press in place [*Stab.*
To let thee see a constant Roman die.
Praenestians, lo, a wound, a fatal wound!
The pain but small, the glory passing great!
Praenestians, see a second stroke! why so; [*Again.*
I feel the dreeping dimness of the night,
Closing the coverts of my careful eyes.
Follow me, friends; for Marius now must die
With fame, in spite of Sylla's tyranny.[158]
[*Moritur.*

1ST CITIZEN. We follow thee our chieftain even in death. Our town is thine, Lucretius; but we pray
For mercy for our children and our wives. [*Moritur.*

2D CITIZEN. O, save my son, Lucretius; let him live. [*Moritur.*

LUCRETIUS. A wondrous and bewitched constancy,
Beseeming Marius' pride and haughty mind.
Come, let us charge the breach; the town is ours.
Both male and female, put them to the sword:
So please you, Sylla, and fulfil his word.

[*Exeunt.*

A little skirmish. A retreat. Enter in royally LUCRETIUS.

LUCRETIUS. Now, Romans, we have brought Praeneste low,
And Marius sleeps amidst the dead at last:

So then to Rome, my countrymen, with joy,
Where Sylla waits the tidings of our fight.
Those prisoners that are taken, see forthwith
With warlike javelins you put them to death.
Come, let us march! See Rome in sight, my hearts,
Where Sylla waits the tidings of our war.

*Enter SYLLA, VALERIUS FLACCUS, LEPIDUS, POMPEY, Citizens'
Guard: SYLLA, seated in his robes of state, is saluted by
the Citizens, &c.*

FLACCUS. Romans, you know, and to your griefs have seen
A world of troubles hatched here at home,
Which through prevention being well-nigh cross'd
By worthy Sylla and his warlike band,
I, consul, with these fathers think it meet
To fortify our peace and city's weal,
To name some man of worth that may supply
Dictator's power and place; whose majesty
Shall cross the courage of rebellious minds.
What think you, Romans, will you condescend?

SYLLA. Nay, Flaccus, for their profits they must yield;
For men of mean condition and conceit
Must humble their opinions to their lords.
And if my friends and citizens consent,
Since I am born to manage mighty things,
I will, though loth, both rule and govern them.
I speak not this, as though I wish to reign,
But for to know my friends: and yet again
I merit, Romans, far more grace than this.

FLACCUS. Ay, countrymen, if Sylla's power and mind,
If Sylla's virtue, courage, and device,
If Sylla's friends and fortunes merit fame,
None then but he should bear dictator's name.

POMPEY. What think you, citizens, why stand ye mute?
Shall Sylla be dictator here in Rome?

CITIZENS. By full consent Sylla shall be dictator.

FLACCUS. Then in the name of Rome I here present
The rods and axes into Sylla's hand;
And fortunate prove Sylla, our dictator.

[Trumpets sound: cry within, SYLLA Dictator.]

SYLLA. My fortunes, Flaccus, cannot be impeach'd.
For at my birth the planets passing kind
Could entertain no retrograde aspects:
And that I may with kindness 'quite their love,
My countrymen, I will prevent the cause
'Gainst all the false encounters of mishap.
You name me your dictator, but prefix
No time, no course, but give me leave to rule
And yet exempt me not from your revenge.
Thus by your pleasures being set aloft,
Straight by your furies I should quickly fall.
No, citizens, who readeth Sylla's mind,
Must form my titles in another kind:
Either let Sylla be dictator ever,
Or flatter Sylla with these titles never.

CITIZENS. Perpetual be thy glory and renown:
Perpetual lord dictator shalt thou be.

POMPEY. Hereto the senate frankly doth agree.

SYLLA. Then so shall Sylla reign, you senators.
Then so shall Sylla rule, you citizens,
As senators and citizens that please me
Shall be my friends; the rest cannot disease me.

Enter LUCRETIUS, with Soldiers.

But see, whereas Lucretius is return'd!
Welcome, brave Roman: where is Marius?
Are these Praenestians put unto the sword?

LUCRETIUS. The city, noble Sylla, razed is,
And Marius dead—not by our swords, my lord,
But with more constancy than Cato died.

SYLLA. What, constancy! and but a very boy?
Why then I see he was his father's son.
But let us have this constancy described.

LUCRETIUS. After our fierce assaults and their resist,
Our siege, their sallying out to stop our trench,
Labour and hunger reigning in the town,
The younger Marius on the city's wall
Vouchsaf'd an inter-parley at the last;
Wherein with constancy and courage too
He boldly arm'd his friends, himself, to death;
And, spreading of his colours on the wall,
For answer said he could not brook to yield,
Or trust a tyrant such as Sylla was.

SYLLA. What, did the brainsick boy upbraid me so?
But let us hear the rest, Lucretius.

LUCRETIUS. And, after great persuasions to his friends
And worthy resolution of them all,
He first did sheathe his poniard in his breast,
And so in order died all the rest.

SYLLA. Now, by my sword, this was a worthy jest.[159]
Yet, silly boy, I needs must pity thee,
Whose noble mind could never mated be.
Believe me, countrymen, a sudden thought,
A sudden change in Sylla now hath wrought.
Old Marius and his son were men of name,
Nor fortune's laughs nor low'rs their minds could tame,
And when I count their fortunes that are past,
I see that death confirm'd their fames at last.
Then he that strives to manage mighty things,
Amidst his triumphs gains a troubled mind.
The greatest hope, the greatest harm it brings,
And poor men in content their glory find.
If then content be such a pleasant thing,
Why leave I country life to live a king?
Yet kings are gods, and make the proudest stoop;
Yea, but themselves are still pursued with hate:
And men were made to mount and then to droop.
Such chances wait upon uncertain fate.
That where she kisseth once, she quelleth twice;
Then whoso lives content is happy, wise.
What motion moveth this philosophy?
O Sylla, see the ocean ebbs and flows:[160]
The spring-time wanes, when winter draweth nigh:
Ay, these are true and most assured notes.
Inconstant chance such tickle turns has lent.
As whoso fears no fall, must seek content.

FLACCUS. Whilst graver thoughts of honour should allure thee,
What maketh Sylla muse and mutter thus?

SYLLA. I, that have pass'd amidst the mighty troops
Of armed legions, through a world of war,
Do now bethink me, Flaccus, of my chance:
How I alone, where many men were slain,
In spite of fate am come to Rome again.
And though^[161] I wield the reverend stiles of state;
She^[162], Sylla, with a beck could break thy neck.
What lord of Rome hath dar'd as much as I?
Yet, Flaccus, know'st thou not that I must die?
The labouring sisters on the weary looms
Have drawn my web of life at length, I know;
And men of wit must think upon their tombs:
For beasts with careless steps to Lethe go
Where men, whose thoughts and honours climb on high,
Living with fame, must learn with fame to die.

POMPEY. What lets, my lord, in governing this state,
To live in rest, and die with honour too?

SYLLA. What lets me, Pompey? why, my courteous friend,
Can he remain secure that wields a charge,
Or think of wit when flatterers do commend,
Or be advis'd that careless runs at large?
No, Pompey: honey words make foolish minds,
And pow'r the greatest wit with error blinds.
Flaccus, I murder'd Anthony, thy friend;
Romans, some here have lost at my command
Their fathers, mothers, brothers, and allies;
And think you, Sylla, thinking these misdeeds,
Bethinks not on your grudges and mislike?
Yes, countrymen, I bear them still in mind:
Then, Pompey, were I not a silly man
To leave my rule, and trust these Romans then?

POMPEY. Your grace hath small occasions of mistrust,
Nor seek these citizens for your disclaim.

SYLLA. But, Pompey, now these reaching plumes of pride,
That mounted up my fortunes to the clouds,
By grave conceits shall straight be laid aside,
And Sylla thinks of far more simple shrouds.
For having tried occasion in the throne,
I'll see if she dare frown, when state is gone.
Lo, senators, the man that sat aloft,
Now deigns to give inferiors highest place.
Lo, here the man whom Rome repined oft,
A private man content to brook disgrace.
Romans, lo, here the axes, rods, and all:
I'll master fortune, lest she make me thrall.
Now whoso list accuse me, tell my wrongs,
Upbraid me in the presence of this state.
Is none these jolly citizens among,
That will accuse, or say I am ingrate?
Then will I say, and boldly boast my chances,
That nought may force the man whom fate advances.

FLACCUS. What meaneth Sylla in this sullen mood,
To leave his titles on the sudden thus?

SYLLA. Consul, I mean with calm and quiet mind
To pass my days, till^[163] happy death I find.

POMPEY. What greater wrong than leave thy country so?

SYLLA. Both it and life must Sylla leave in time.

CITIZEN. Yet during life have care of Rome and us.

SYLLA. O wanton world, that flatter'st in thy prime,
And breathest balm and poison mixed in one!
See how these wavering Romans wish'd my reign,
That whilom fought and sought to have me slain. [*Aside.*]
My countrymen, this city wants no store
Of fathers, warriors, to supply my room;
So grant me peace, and I will die for Rome.

Enter two Burglars to them, POPPEY and CURTALL.

CURTALL. These are very indiscreet counsels, neighbour Poppey, and I will follow your misadvisement.

POPPEY. I tell you, Goodman Curtall, the wench hath wrong. O vain world, O foolish men! Could a man in nature cast a wench down, and disdain in nature to lift her up again? Could he take away her dishonesty without bouncing up the banns of matrimony? O learned poet, well didst thou write fustian verse.

These maids are daws That go to the laws, And a babe in the belly.

CURTALL. Tut, man, 'tis the way the world must follow, for

Maids must be kind, Good husbands to find.

POPPEY. But mark the fierser[164],

If they swell before, It will grieve them sore.

But see, yond's Master Sylla: faith, a pretty fellow is a.

SYLLA. What seek my countrymen? what would my friends?

CURTALL. Nay, sir, your kind words shall not serve the turn: why, think you to thrust your soldiers into our kindred with your courtesies, sir?

POPPEY. I tell you, Master Sylla, my neighbour will have the law: he had the right, he will have the wrong; for therein dwells the law.

CONSUL. What desire these men of Rome?

CURTALL. Neighbour, sharpen the edge-tool of your wits upon the whetstone of indiscretion, that your words may shine like the razors of Palermo[165]: [*to POPPEY*] you have learning with ignorance, therefore speak my tale.

POPPEY. Then, worshipful Master Sylla, be it known unto you,
That my neighbour's daughter Dority
Was a maid of restority;
Fair, fresh, and fine
As a merry cup of wine;
Her eyes like two potch'd eggs,
Great and goodly her legs;
But mark my doleful ditty,
Alas! for woe and pity!
A soldier of your's
Upon a bed of flowers
Gave her such a fall,
As she lost maidenhead and all.
And thus in very good time
I end my rudeful rhyme.

SYLLA. And what of this, my friend? why seek you me,
Who have resign'd my titles and my state,
To live a private life, as you do now?
Go move the Consul Flaccus in this cause,
Who now hath power to execute the laws.

CURTALL. And are you no more master dicator, nor generality of the soldiers?

SYLLA. My powers do cease, my titles are resign'd.

CURTALL. Have you signed your titles? O base mind, that being in the Paul's steeple of honour, hast cast thyself into the sink of simplicity.

Fie, beast!

Were I a king, I would day by day
Suck up white bread and milk,
And go a-jetting in a jacket of silk;
My meat should be the curds,
My drink should be the whey,
And I would have a mincing lass to love me every day.

POPPEY. Nay, goodman Curtall, your discretions are very simple; let me cramp him with a reason. Sirrah, whether is better good ale or small-beer? Alas! see his simplicity that cannot answer me: why, I say ale.

CURTALL. And so say I, neighbour.

POPPEY. Thou hast reason; ergo, say I, 'tis better be a king than a clown. Faith, Master Sylla, I hope a man may now call ye knave by authority.

SYLLA. With what impatience hear I these upbraids,
That whilom plagued the least offence with death.
O Sylla, these are stales of destiny
By some upbraids to try thy constancy.
My friends, these scorns of yours perhaps may move
The next dictator shun to yield his state,
For fear he find as much as Sylla doth.
But, Flaccus, to prevent their farther wrong,
Vouchsafe some lictor may attach the man,
And do them right that thus complain abuse.

FLACCUS. Sirrah, go you and bring the soldier,
That hath so loosely lean'd to lawless lust:
We will have means sufficient, be assured,
To cool his heat, and make the wanton chaste.

CURTALL. We thank your mastership. Come, neighbour, let us jog.
Faith, this news will set my daughter Dorothy agog.

[Exeunt cum Lictore.]

SYLLA. Grave senators and Romans, now you see
The humble bent of Sylla's changed mind.
Now will I leave you, lords, from courtly train
To dwell content amidst my country cave,
Where no ambitious humours shall approach
The quiet silence of my happy sleep:
Where no delicious jouissance or toys
Shall tickle with delight my temper'd ears;
But wearying out the lingering day with toil,
Tiring my veins, and furrowing of my soul,
The silent night, with slumber stealing on,
Shall lock these careful closets of mine eyes.
O, had I known the height of happiness,
Or bent mine eyes upon my mother-earth,
Long since, O Rome, had Sylla with rejoice
Forsaken arms to lead a private life!

FLACCUS. But in this humbleness of mind, my lord,
Whereas experience prov'd and art do meet,
How happy were these fair Italian fields,
If they were graced with so sweet a sun.
Then I for Rome, and Rome with me, requires
That Sylla will abide, and govern Rome.

SYLLA. O Flaccus, if th'Arabian phoenix strive
By nature's warning to renew her kind,
When, soaring nigh the glorious eye of heaven,
She from her cinders doth revive her sex,
Why should not Sylla learn by her to die,
That erst have been the Phoenix of this land?
And drawing near the sunshine of content,
Perish obscure to make your glories grow.
For as the higher trees do shield the shrubs
From posting Phlegon's[166] warmth and breathing fire,
So mighty men obscure each other's fame,
And make the best deservers fortune's game.

Enter GENIUS.

But ah, what sudden furies do affright?
What apparitious fantasies are these?
O, let me rest, sweet lords, for why methinks
Some fatal spells are sounded in mine ears.

GENIUS. *Subsequitur tua mors: privari lumine Syllam,
Numina Parcarum jam fera precipiunt
Precipiunt fera jam Parcarum numina Syllam
Lumine privari: mors tua subsequitur.
Elysium petis, ô faelix! et fatidici astri
Praescius: Heroes, ô, petis innumeros!
Innumeros petis, ô, Heroes, praescius astri
Fatidici: et faelix, ô, petis Elysium!*
[Evanescit subitò.

SYLLA. *Ergó-ne post dulces annos properantia fata?
Ergo-ne jam tenebrae praemia lucis erunt?
Attamen, ut vitae fortunam gloria mortis
Vincat, in extremo funere cantet olor.*

POMPEY. How fares my lord? what dreadful thoughts are these?
What doubtful answers on a sudden thus?

SYLLA. Pompey, the man that made the world to stoop,
And fetter'd fortune in the chains of power,
Must droop and draw the chariot of fate
Along the darksome banks of Acheron.
The heavens have warn'd me of my present fall.
O, call Cornelia forth: let Sylla see
His daughter Fulvia, ere his eyes be shut.

[*Exit one for* CORNELIA.

FLACCUS. Why, Sylla, where is now thy wonted hope
In greatest hazard of unstayed chance.
What, shall a little biting blast of pain
Blemish the blossoms of thy wonted pride?

SYLLA. My Flaccus, worldly joys and pleasures fade;
Inconstant time, like to the fleeting tide,
With endless course man's hopes doth overbear:
Nought now remains that Sylla fain would have,
But lasting fame, when body lies in grave.

Enter CORNELIA, FULVIA.

CORNELIA. How fares my lord? How doth my gentle Sylla.

SYLLA. Ah, my Cornelia! passing happy now:
Free from the world, allied unto the heavens:
Not curious of incertain chances now.

CORNELIA. Words full of woe, still adding to my grief,

A cureless cross of many hundred harms.
O, let not Rome and poor Cornelia lose,
The one her friend, the other her delight.

SYLLA. Cornelia, man hath power by some instinct
And gracious revolution of the stars,
To conquer kingdoms, not to master fate:
For when the course of mortal life is run,
Then Clotho ends the web her sister spun.
Pompey, Lord Flaccus, fellow-senators,
In that I feel the faintful dews of death
Steeping mine eyes within their chilly wet,
The care I have of wife and daughter both,
Must on your wisdom happily rely.
With equal distribution see you part
My lands and goods betwixt these lovely twain:
Only bestow a hundred thousand sesterces
Upon my friends and fellow-soldiers.
Thus, having made my final testament,
Come, Fulvia, let thy father lay his head
Upon thy lovely bosom, and entreat
A virtuous boon and favour at thy hands.
Fair Roman maid, see that thou wed thy fairness[167]
To modest, virtuous, and delightful thoughts:
Let Rome, in viewing thee, behold thy sire.
Honour Cornelia, from whose fruitful womb
Thy plenteous beauties sweetly did appear;
And with this lesson, lovely maid, farewell.

FULVIA. O tedious and unhappy chance for me.

SYLLA. Content thee, Fulvia, for it needs must be.
Cornelia, I must leave thee to the world;
And by those loves that I have lent thee oft,
In mutual wedlock-rites and happy war,
Remember Sylla in my Fulvia still.
Consul, farewell! my Pompey, I must hence:
And farewell, Rome: and, Fortune, now I bless thee,
That both in life and death would'st not oppress me!

[*Dies.*

CORNELIA. O hideous storms of never-daunted fate!
Now are those eyes, whose sweet reflections cool'd
The smother'd rancours of rebellious thoughts,
Clad with the sable mantles of the night;
And like the tree that, robb'd of sun and showers,
Mourns desolate withouten leaf or sap,
So poor Cornelia, late bereft of love,
Sits sighing, hapless, joyless, and forlorn.

FULVIA. Gone is the flow'r that did adorn our fields;
Fled are those sweet reflections of delight:
Dead is my father! Fulvia, dead is he
In whom thy life, for whom thy death, must be.

FLACCUS. Ladies, to tire the time in restless moan
Were tedious unto friends and nature too.
Sufficeth you, that Sylla so is dead,
As fame shall sing his power, though life be fled.

POMPEY. Then to conclude his happiness, my lords,
Determine where shall be his funeral.

LEPIDUS. Even there where other nobles are interr'd.

POMPEY. Why, Lepidus, what Roman ever was,
That merited so high a name as he?

Then why with simple pomp and funeral
Would you entomb so rare a paragon?

CORNELIA. An urn of gold shall hem his ashes in:
The vestal virgins with their holy notes
Shall sing his famous, though too fatal, death.
I and my Fulvia with dispersed hair
Will wait upon this noble Roman's hearse.

FULVIA. And Fulvia, clad in black and mournful pall,
Will wait upon her father's funeral.

POMPEY. Come, bear we hence this trophy of renown,
Whose life, whose death, was far from fortune's frown.

[_Exeunt omnes.

The funerals of_ SYLLA _in great pomp.

Deo juvante, nil nocet livor malus:
Et non juvante nil juvat labor gravis_.

FINIS.

MUCEDORUS.

_EDITIONS.

A Most pleasant Comedie of Mucedorus the kings sonne of Valentia and Amadine the Kings daughter of Arragon, with the merie conceites of Mouse. Newly set foorth, as it hath bin sundrie times plaide in the honorable Cittie of London. Very delectable and full of mirth. London Printed for William Iones, dwelling at Holborne conduit, at the signe of the Gunne_. 1598. 4°.

A Most pleasant Comedie of Mucedorus the Kings sonne of Valentia, and Amadine the Kings daughter of Aragon. With the merry conceites of Mouse. Amplified with new additions, as it was acted before the Kings Maiestie at White-hall on Shroue-Sunday night. By his Highnes Seruants vsually playing at the Globe. Very delectable, and full of conceited Mirth. Imprinted at London for William Iones, dwelling neare Holborne Conduit, at the signe of the Gunne. 1610. 4°.

An edition of 1606 is mentioned in "Beauclerc's Catalogue," 1781, as noticed by Hazlitt. There were others in 1613, 1615, 1619, 1668, and without date, all in 4°.

This drama, at one time conjecturally given to Shakespeare, is now first reprinted from the original copy of 1598, collated with that of 1610; and the additions are inserted between brackets. Whether the additions and corrections were the work of the original writer, or of some one else, is uncertain; but it does not appear improbable that they were the author's.

From the play of "Mucedorus" was formed a ballad entitled "The Wandering Prince and Princess, or Mucedorus and Amadine."

THE PROLOGUE.[168]

Most sacred Majesty, whose great deserts
Thy subject England, nay, the world, admires:
Which heaven grant still increase! O, may your praise

Multiplying with your hours, your fame still raise.
Embrace your Council: love with faith them guide,
That both at one bench, by each other's side.
So may your life pass on, and run so even,
That your firm zeal plant you a throne in heaven,
Where smiling angels shall your guardians be
From blemish'd traitors, stain'd with perjury.
And, as the night's inferior to the day,
So be all earthly regions to your sway!
Be as the sun to day, the day to night,
For from your beams Europe shall borrow light.
Mirth drown your bosom, fair delight your mind,
And may our pastime your contentment find.
[Exit Prologue.]

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

_Eight[169] persons may easily play it.

The _KING and RUMBELO. *For one.*
MUCEDORUS, *the Prince of Valencia. For one.*
AMADINE, *the KING'S daughter of Arragon. For one.*
SEGASTO, *a Nobleman. For one.*
ENVY: TREMELIO, *a Captain. | For one.*
BREMO, *a wild man. |*
COMEDY, *a boy, an old woman. | For one.*
ARIENA, AMADINE'S *maid. |*
COLLEN, *a Councillor, a Messenger. For one.*
MOUSE, *the Clown. For one.*

MUCEDORUS.

Enter COMEDY joyfully, with a garland of bays on her head.

Why so; thus do I hope to please:
Music revives, and mirth is tolerable,
Comedy, play thy part, and please;
Make merry them that come to joy with thee.
Joy, then, good gentles; I hope to make you laugh.
Sound forth Bellona's silver-tuned strings.
Time fits us well, the day and place is ours.

Enter ENVY, his arms naked, besmeared with blood.

ENVY. Nay, stay, minion; there lies a block!
What, all on mirth? I'll interrupt your tale,
And mix your music with a tragic end.

COMEDY. What monstrous ugly hag is this,
That dares control the pleasures of our will?
Vaunt, churlish cur, besmear'd with gory blood,
That seem'st to check the blossoms of delight,
And stifle the sound of sweet Bellona's breath,
Blush, monster, blush, and post away with shame,
That seekest disturbance of a goddess' deeds.

ENVY. Post hence thyself, thou counterchecking trull;
I will possess this habit, spite of thee,
And gain the glory of thy wished port.

I'll thunder music shall appal the nymphs,
And make them shiver their clattering strings:
Flying for succour to their Danish caves.

Sound drums within, and cry, Stab, stab!

Hearken, thou shalt hear a noise
Shall fill the air with a shrilling sound,
And thunder music to the gods above:
Mars shall himself breathe down
A peerless crown upon brave Envy's head,
And raise his chival with a lasting fame.
In this brave music Envy takes delight,
Where I may see them wallow in their blood,
To spurn at arms and legs quite shivered off,
And hear the cry of many thousand slain,
How lik'st thou this, my trull? this sport alone for me!

COMEDY. Vaunt, bloody cur, nurs'd up with tigers' sap,
That so dost seek to quail a woman's mind.
Comedy is mild, gentle, willing for to please,
And seeks to gain the love of all estates.
Delighting in mirth, mix'd all with lovely tales,
And bringeth things with treble joy to pass.
Thou bloody envious disdainer of men's joys,
Whose name is fraught with bloody stratagems,
Delights in nothing but in spoil and death,
Where thou may'st trample in their lukewarm blood,
And grasp their hearts within thy cursed paws.
Yet veil thy mind; revenge thou not on me;
A silly woman begs it at thy hands.
Give me the leave to utter out my play;
Forbear this place; I humbly crave thee, hence!
And mix not death 'mongst pleasing comedies,
That treat nought else but pleasure and delight.
If any spark of human rests in thee,
Forbear; begone; tender the suit of me.

ENVY. Why, so I will; forbearance shall be such,
As treble death shall cross thee with despite,
And make thee mourn, where most thou joyest,
Turning thy mirth into a deadly dole:
Whirling thy pleasures with a peal of death,
And drench thy methods in a sea of blood.
This will I do; thus shall I bear with thee;
And, more to vex thee with a deeper spite,
I will with threats of blood begin thy play:
Favouring thee with envy and with hate.

COMEDY. Then, ugly monster, do thy worst;
I will defend them in despite of thee:
And though thou think'st with tragic fumes
To brave my play unto my deep disgrace,
I force it not, I scorn what thou canst do;
I'll grace it so, thyself shall it confess,
From tragic stuff to be a pleasant comedy.

ENVY. Why then, Comedy, send thy actors forth,
And I will cross the first steps of their tread,
Making them fear the very dart of death.

COMEDY. And I'll defend them, maugre all thy spite.
So, ugly fiend, farewell, till time shall serve,
That we may meet to parley for the best.

ENVY. Content, Comedy; I'll go spread my branch
And scattered blossoms from mine envious tree,

Shall prove two monsters, spoiling of their joys.

[_Exit.

[*Sound.*] *Enter* MUCEDORUS *and* ANSELMO, *his friend.*

MUCEDORUS. Anselmo.

ANSELMO. My lord and friend.

MUCEDORUS. True, my Anselmo, both thy lord and friend,
Whose dear affections bosom with my heart,
And keep their domination in one orb.

ANSELMO. Whence ne'er disloyalty shall root it forth,
But faith plant firmer in your choice respect.

MUCEDORUS. Much blame were mine, if I should other deem,
Nor can coy Fortune contrary allow.
But, my Anselmo, loth I am to say,
I must estrange that friendship.
Misconstrue not; 'tis from the realm, not thee:
Though lands part bodies, hearts keep company.
Thou know'st that I imparted often have
Private relations with my royal sire,
Had as concerning beauteous Amadine,
Rich Arragon's blight jewel, whose face (some say)
That blooming lilies never shone so gay,
Excelling, not excell'd: yet, lest report
Does mangle verity, boasting of what is not,
Wing'd with desire, thither I'll straight repair,
And be my fortunes, as my thoughts are, fair!

ANSELMO. Will you forsake Valencia, leave the court,
Absent you from the eye of sovereignty?
Do not, sweet prince, adventure on that task,
Since danger lurks each where; be won from it.

MUCEDORUS. Desist dissuasion,
My resolution brooks no battery,
Therefore, if thou retain thy wanted form,
Assist what I intend.

ANSELMO. Your miss will breed a blemish in the court,
And throw a frosty dew upon that beard,
Whose front Valencia stoops to.

MUCEDORUS. If thou my welfare tender, then no more;
Let love's strong magic charm thy trivial phrase,
Wasted as vainly as to gripe the sun.
Augment not then more answers; lock thy lips,
Unless thy wisdom suit me with disguise,
According to my purpose.

ANSELMO. That action craves no counsel,
Since what you rightly are, will more command,
Than best usurped shape.

MUCEDORUS. Thou still art opposite in disposition;
A more obscure servile habiliment
Beseems this enterprise.

ANSELMO. Then like a Florentine or mountebank!

MUCEDORUS. 'Tis much too tedious; I dislike thy judgment,
My mind is grafted on an humbler stock.

ANSELMO. Within my closet does there hang a cassock—
Though base the weed is, 'twas a shepherd's—

Which I presented in Lord Julio's masque.

MUCEDORUS. That, my Anselmo, and none else but that,
Mask Mucedorus from the vulgar view.

That habit suits my mind; fetch me that weed.

[*Exit ANSELMO.*]

Better than kings have not disdain'd that state,
And much inferior, to obtain their mate.

Re-enter ANSELMO with a shepherd's coat, which he gives to MUCEDORUS.

MUCEDORUS. So let our respect command thy secrecy.
At once a brief farewell;
Delay to lovers is a second hell.

[*Exit MUCEDORUS.*]

ANSELMO. Prosperity forerun thee: awkward chance
Never be neighbour to thy wishes' venture:
Content and Fame advance thee: ever thrive,
And glory thy mortality survive!

Enter MOUSE with a bottle of hay.

MOUSE. O, horrible, terrible! Was ever poor gentleman so scar'd out of his seven senses? A bear? Nay, sure it cannot be a bear, but some devil in a bear's doublet; for a bear could never have had that agility to have frighted me. Well, I'll see my father hanged before I'll serve his horse any more. Well, I'll carry home my bottle of hay, and for once make my father's horse turn Puritan, and observe fasting-days, for he gets not a bit. But soft! this way she followed me; therefore I'll take the other path; and because I'll be sure to have an eye on him, I will take hands with some foolish creditor, and make every step backward.

[*As he goes backwards, the bear comes in, and he tumbles over her, and runs away, and leaves his bottle of hay behind him.*]

Enter SEGASTO running, and AMADINE after him, being pursued with a bear.

SEGASTO. O, fly, madam, fly, or else we are but dead!

AMADINE. Help, Segasto! help, help, sweet Segasto, or else I die!

[*SEGASTO runs away.*]

SEGASTO. Alas, madam! there is no way but flight;
Then haste, and save yourself.

AMADINE. Why then I die; ah! help me in distress.

Enter MUCEDORUS like a shepherd, with a sword drawn and a bear's head in his hand.

MUCEDORUS. Stay, lady, stay; and be no more dismay'd;
That cruel beast, most merciless and fell,
Which hath bereaved thousands of their lives,
Affrighted many with his hard pursues,
Prying from place to place to find his prey,
Prolonging thus his life by others' death,
His carcase now lies headless, void of breath.

AMADINE. That foul, deformed monster, is he dead?

MUCEDORUS. Assure yourself thereof—behold his head;
Which, if it please you, lady, to accept,
With willing heart I yield it to your majesty.

AMADINE. Thanks, worthy shepherd, thanks a thousand times;
This gift, assure thyself, contents me more
Than greatest bounty of a mighty prince,
Although he were the monarch of the world.

MUCEDORUS. Most gracious goddess, more than mortal wight—

Your heavenly hue of right imports no less—
Most glad am I, in that it was my chance
To undertake this enterprise in hand,
Which doth so greatly glad your princely mind.

AMADINE. No goddess, shepherd, but a mortal wight—
A mortal wight distressed as thou seest:
My father here is King of Arragon:
I, Amadine, his only daughter am,
And after him sole heir unto the crown.
Now, whereas it is my father's will
To marry me unto Segasto, one,
Whose wealth through father's former usury
Is known to be no less than wonderful,
We both of custom oftentimes did use,
Leaving the court, to walk within the fields
For recreation, especially [in] the spring,
In that it yields great store of rare delights;
And, passing farther than our wonted walks,
Scarce ent'red were within these luckless woods.
But right before us down a steep-fall hill,
A monstrous ugly bear did hie him fast
To meet us both—I faint to tell the rest,
Good shepherd—but suppose the ghastly looks,
The hideous fears, the thousand hundred woes,
Which at this instant Amadine sustained.

MUCEDORUS. Yet, worthy princess, let thy sorrow cease,
And let this sight your former joys revive.

AMADINE. Believe me, shepherd, so it doth no less.

MUCEDORUS. Long may they last unto your heart's content.
But tell me, lady, what is become of him,
Segasto call'd, what is become of him?

AMADINE. I know not, I; that know the powers divine;
But God grant this, that sweet Segasto live!

MUCEDORUS. Yet hard-hearted he, in such a case,
So cowardly to save himself by flight,
And leave so brave a princess to the spoil.

AMADINE. Well, shepherd, for thy worthy valour tried,
Endangering thyself to set me free,
Unrecompensed, sure, thou shalt not be.
In court thy courage shall be plainly known;
Throughout the kingdom will I spread thy name.
To thy renown and never-dying fame;
And that thy courage may be better known,
Bear thou the head of this most monstrous beast
In open sight to every courtier's view.
So will the king, my father, thee reward:
Come, let's away and guard me to the court.

[MUCEDORUS. With all my heart.]

[_Exeunt.

Enter_ SEGASTO *solus*.

SEGASTO. When heaps of harms do hover over-head,
'Tis time as then, some say, to look about,
And so [of] ensuing harms to choose the least.
But hard, yea hapless, is that wretch's chance,
Luckless his lot and caitiff-like accurs'd,
At whose proceedings fortune ever frowns—

Myself, I mean, most subject unto thrall;
For I, the more I seek to shun the worst,
The more by proof I find myself accurs't.
Erewhiles assaulted with an ugly bear:
Fair Amadine in company all alone:
Forthwith by flight I thought to save myself,
Leaving my Amadine unto her shifts;
For death it was for to resist the bear,
And death no less of Amadine's harms to hear.
Accursed I in ling'ring life thus long
In living thus, each minute of an hour
Doth pierce my heart with darts of thousand deaths:
If she by flight her fury do escape,
What will she think?
Will she not say—yea, flatly to my face,
Accusing me of mere disloyalty—
A trusty friend is tried in time of need;
But I, when she in danger was of death,
And needed me, and cried, Segasto, help!
I turn'd my back, and quickly ran away,
Unworthy I to bear this vital breath!
But what, what needs these plaints?
If Amadine do live, then happy I.
She will in time forgive, and so forget.
Amadine is merciful, not Juno-like,
In harmful heart to harbour hatred long.

Enter MOUSE the Clown running, crying, Clubs!

MOUSE. Clubs, prongs, pitchforks, bills! O help!
A bear, a bear, a bear!

SEGASTO. Still bears, and nothing else but bears?
Tell me, sirrah, where she is.

CLOWN. O sir, she is run down the woods:
I see her white head and her white belly.

SEGASTO. Thou talkest of wonders, to tell me of white bears;
But, sirrah, didst thou ever see any such?

CLOWN. No, faith, I never saw any such;
But I remember my father's words,
He bad me take heed I was not caught with a white bear.

SEGASTO. A lamentable tale, no doubt.

CLOWN. I tell you what, sir; as I was going afield to serve my father's great horse, and carried a bottle of hay upon my head—now, do you see, sir?—I, fast hoodwinked, that I could see nothing, perceiving the bear coming, I threw my hay into the hedge and ran away.

SEGASTO. What, from nothing?

CLOWN. I warrant you, yes; I saw something; for there was two load of thorns besides my bottle of hay, and that made three.

SEGASTO. But tell me, sirrah; the bear that thou didst see,
Did she not bear a bucket on her arm?

CLOWN. Ha, ha, ha! I never saw bear go a-milking in all my life.
But hark you, sir, I did not look so high as her arm;
I saw nothing but her white head and her white belly.

SEGASTO. But tell me, sirrah, where dost thou dwell?

CLOWN. Why, do you not know me?

SEGASTO. Why, no; how should I know thee?

CLOWN. Why then you know nobody, and you know not me[170]. I tell you, sir, I am the goodman Rat's son, of the next parish over the hill.

SEGASTO. Goodman Rat's son; why, what's thy name?

CLOWN. Why, I am very near kin unto him.

SEGASTO. I think so; but what's thy name.

CLOWN. My name? I have [a] very pretty name; I'll tell you what my name is—my name is Mouse.

SEGASTO. What, plain Mouse?

CLOWN. Ay, plain Mouse, without either welt or gard.
But do you hear, sir, I am but a very young Mouse,
For my tail is scarce grown out yet. Look you here else.

SEGASTO. But I pray thee, who gave thee that name?

CLOWN. Faith, sir, I know not that; but if you would fain know, ask my father's great horse, for he hath been half a year longer with my father than I have.

SEGASTO. This seems to be a merry fellow;
I care not if I take him home with me.
Mirth is a comfort to a troubled mind,
A merry man a merry master makes. [*Aside*.
How say'st thou, sirrah? wilt thou dwell with me?

CLOWN. Nay, soft, sir, two words to a bargain; pray you, what occupation are you?

SEGASTO. No occupation; I live upon my lands.

CLOWN. Your lands; away, you are no master for me. Why, do you think that I am so mad, to go seek my living in the lands amongst the stones, briars and bushes, and tear my holiday apparel? Not I, by your leave.

SEGASTO. Why, I do not mean thou shalt.

CLOWN. How then?

SEGASTO. Why, thou shalt be my man, and wait upon me at the court.

CLOWN. What's that?

SEGASTO. Where the king lies.

CLOWN. What's that same king—a man or a woman?

SEGASTO. A man, as thou art.

CLOWN. As I am? Hark you, sir; pray you, what kin is he to goodman King of our parish, the churchwarden?

SEGASTO. No kin to him; he is the king of the whole land.

CLOWN. King of the land? I never see him.

SEGASTO. If thou wilt dwell with me, thou shalt see him every day.

CLOWN. Shall I go home again to be torn in pieces with bears? No, not I;
I will go home and put on a clean shirt, and then go drown myself.

SEGASTO. Thou shalt not need, if thou wilt dwell with me; thou shalt want nothing.

CLOWN. Shall I not? Then here's my hand: I'll dwell with you. And hark you, sir! now you have entertained me, I will tell you what I can do. I can keep my tongue from picking and stealing, and my hands from lying and slandering, I warrant you, as well as ever you had man, in all your life.

SEGASTO. Now will I to court with sorrowful heart, rounded with doubts.
If Amadine do live, then happy I: yea, happy I, if Amadine do live!

[_ Exeunt.

Enter the_ KING, *with a young Prince prisoner,*
AMADINE[171], *with COLLEN and Councillors.*

KING. Now, brave lords, [that] our wars are brought to end;
Our foes [have had] the foil, and we in safety rest,
It us behoves to use such clemency
In peace, as valour in the wars. It is
As great honour to be bountiful
At home, as to be conquerors in the field.
Therefore, my lords, the more to my content,
Your liking, and your country's safeguard,
We are dispos'd in marriage for to give
Our daughter to Lord Segasto here,
Who shall succeed the diadem after me,
And reign hereafter as I tofore have done,
Your sole and lawful King of Arragon:
What say you, lordings, like you of my advice?

COLLEN. An't please your majesty, we do not only allow of your highness's pleasure, but also vow faithfully in what we may to further it.

KING. Thanks, good my lords, if long Adrostus live,
He will at full requite your courtesies.
Tremelio, in recompense of thy late valour done,
Take unto thee the Catalonian prince[172],
Lately our prisoner taken in the wars.
Be thou his keeper; his ransom shall be thine;
We'll think of it, when leisure shall afford.
Meanwhile, do use him well; his father is a king.

TREMELIO. Thanks to your majesty, his usage shall be such
As he thereat shall think no cause to grutch.

[Exeunt TREMELIO and Prince.

KING. Then march we on to court, and rest our wearied limbs.
But, Collen, I have a tale in secret kept for thee:
When thou shalt hear a watchword from thy king,
Think then some weighty matter is at hand,
That highly shall concern our state,
Then, Collen, look thou be not far from me:
And for thy service thou tofore hast done,
Thy truth and valour prov'd in every point,
I shall with bounties thee enlarge therefore:
So guard us to the court.

COLLEN. What so my sovereign doth command me do,
With willing mind I gladly yield consent.

[_Exeunt.

Enter_ SEGASTO *and the CLOWN, with weapons about him.*

SEGASTO. Tell me, sirrah, how do you like your weapons?

CLOWN. O, very well, very well; they keep my sides warm.

SEGASTO. They keep the dogs from your shins very well, do they not?

CLOWN. How, keep the dogs from my shins? I would scorn but my shins could keep the dogs from them.

SEGASTO. Well, sirrah, leaving idle talk, tell me,
Dost thou know Captain Tremelio's chamber?

CLOWN. Ay, very well, it hath a door.

SEGASTO. I think so; for so hath every chamber.
But dost thou know the man?

CLOWN. Ay forsooth, he hath a nose on his face.

SEGASTO. Why, so hath every one.

CLOWN. That's more than I know.

SEGASTO. But dost thou remember the Captain, that was here with the King even now, that brought the young prince prisoner?

CLOWN. O, very well.

SEGASTO. Go unto him, and bid him come to me. Tell him I have a matter in secret to impart to him.

CLOWN. I will, master; master, what's his name?

SEGASTO. Why, Captain Tremelio.

CLOWN. O, the meal-man. I know him very well. He brings meal every Saturday; but hark you, master, must I bid him come to you, or must you come to him?

SEGASTO. No, sirrah, he must come to me.

CLOWN. Hark you, master; how, if he be not at home?
What shall I do then?

SEGASTO. Why then, leave word with some of his folks.

CLOWN. How, [173] master, if there be nobody within?
I will leave word with his dog.

SEGASTO. Why, can his dog speak?

CLOWN. I cannot tell; wherefore doth he keep his chamber else?

SEGASTO. To keep out such knaves as thou art.

CLOWN. Nay, by'r Lady, then go yourself.

SEGASTO. You will go, sir, will ye not?

CLOWN. Yes, marry, will I. O, 'tis come to my head;
And a' be not within, I'll bring his chamber to you.

SEGASTO. What, wilt thou pluck down the King's house?

CLOWN. Nay, by'r Lady, I'll know the price of it first. Master, it is such a hard name, I have forgotten it again. I pray you, tell me his name.

SEGASTO. I tell thee, Captain Tremelio.

CLOWN. O, Captain Treble-knave, Captain Treble-knave.

Enter TREMELIO.

TREMELIO. How now, sirrah, dost thou call me?

CLOWN. You must come to my master, Captain Treble-knave.

TREMELIO. My Lord Segasto, did you send for me?

SEGASTO. I did, Tremelio. Sirrah, about your business.

CLOWN. Ay, marry, what's that, can you tell?

SEGASTO. No, not well.

CLOWN. Marry, then, I can; straight to the kitchen-dresser, to John the cook, and get me a good piece of beef and brewis; and then to the buttery-hatch, to Thomas the butler for a jack of beer, and there for an hour I'll so belabour myself; and therefore I pray you call me not till you think I have done, I pray you, good master.

SEGASTO. Well, sir, away. [*Exit* MOUSE.
Tremelio, this it is. Thou knowest the valour of Segasto,

Spread through all the kingdom of Arragon,
And such as hath found triumph and favours,
Never daunted at any time? But now a shepherd
[Is] admired at in court for worthiness,
And Segasto's honour [is] laid aside.
My will therefore is this, that thou dost find
Some means to work the shepherd's death; I know
Thy strength sufficient to perform my desire, and thy love no otherwise
than to revenge my injuries.

TREMELIO. It is not the frowns of a shepherd that Tremelio fears,
Therefore account it accomplished, what I take in hand.

SEGASTO. Thanks, good Tremelio, and assure thyself,
What I promise that will I perform.

TREMELIO. Thanks, my good lord, and in good time see where
He cometh. Stand by awhile, and you shall see
Me put in practice your intended drifts.
Have at thee, swain, if that I hit thee right!

Enter MUCEDORUS.

MUCEDORUS. Vile coward, so without cause to strike a man—Turn, coward, turn; now strike, and do
thy worst. [MUCEDORUS *killeth him*.

SEGASTO. Hold, shepherd, hold; spare him, kill him not.
Accursed villain, tell me, what hast thou done?
Ah, Tremelio, trusty Tremelio!
I sorrow for thy death, and since that thou
Living didst prove faithful to Segasto,
So Segasto now living shall honour the dead corpse
Of Tremelio with revenge. Bloodthirsty villain,
Born and bred to merciless murder, tell me
How durst thou be so bold, as once to lay
Thy hands upon the least of mine? Assure thyself
Thou shalt be us'd according to the law.

MUCEDORUS. Segasto, cease; these threats are needless.
But in mine own defence accuse not me
Of murder that have done nothing.

SEGASTO. Nay, shepherd, reason not with me;
I'll manifest the fact unto the King,
Whose doom will be thy death, as thou deserv'st.
What ho, Mouse, come away!

Enter MOUSE.

CLOWN. Why, how now, what's the matter?
I thought you would be calling before I had done.

SEGASTO. Come, help, away with my friend.

CLOWN. Why, is he drunk? cannot he stand on his feet?

SEGASTO. No, he is not drunk; he is slain.

CLOWN. Flain! no, by[r] Lady, he is not flain.

SEGASTO. He's killed, I tell thee.

CLOWN. What, do you use to kill your friends?
I will serve you no longer.

SEGASTO. I tell thee the shepherd kill'd him.

CLOWN. O, did a so?
But, master, I will have all his apparel

If I carry him away.

SEGASTO. Why, so thou shalt.

CLOWN. Come, then, I will help; mass, master, I think
His mother sang *looby* to him, he is so heavy.

[*Exeunt.*

MUCEDORUS. Behold the fickle state of man, always mutable;
Never at one.

Sometimes we feed on fancies
With the sweet of our desires: sometimes again
We feel the heat of extreme miseries.
Now am I in favour about the court and country,
To-morrow those favours will turn to frowns,
To-day I live revenged on my foe,
To-morrow I die, my foe revenged on me.

[*_Exit.*

Enter *_ BREMO, a wild man.*

BREMO. No passenger this morning? what, not one?
A chance that seldom doth befall.
What, not one? then lie thou there,
And rest thyself, till I have further need.

[*Lays down his club.*

Now, Bremo, sith thy leisure so affords,
An endless thing. Who knows not Bremo's strength,
Who like a king commands within these woods.
The bear, the boar, dares not abide my sight,
But hastes away to save themselves by flight.
The crystal waters in the bubbling brooks,
When I come by, doth swiftly slide away,
And claps themselves in closets under banks,
Afraid to look bold Bremo in the face:
The aged oaks at Bremo's breath do bow,
And all things else are still at my command,
Else what would I?
Rend them in pieces, and pluck them from the earth,
And each way else I would revenge myself.
Why, who comes here, with whom I dare not fight?
Who fights with me, and doth not die the death?
Not one. What favour shows this sturdy stick to those, that here
Within these woods are combatants with me?
Why, death, and nothing else but present death.
With restless rage I wander through these woods;
No creature here but feareth Bremo's force,
Man, woman, child; beast and bird,
And everything that doth approach my sight,
Are forc'd to fall, if Bremo once do frown.
Come, cudgel, come, my partner in my spoils,
For here I see this day it will not be.
But when it falls, that I encounter any,
One pat sufficeth for to work my will.
What, comes not one? Then let's begone;
A time will serve, when we shall better speed.

[*_Exit.*

Enter the *_ KING, SEGASTO, the SHEPHERD, and the
CLOWN, with others.*

KING. Shepherd,
Thou hast heard thine accusers. Murder
Is laid to thy charge; what canst thou say?
Thou hast deserved death.

MUCEDORUS. Dread sovereign, I must needs confess
I slew this captain in mine own defence,
Not of any malice, but by chance;
But mine accuser hath a further meaning.

SEGASTO. Words will not here prevail,
I seek for justice, and justice craves his death.

KING. Shepherd, thine own confession hath condemned thee.
Sirrah, take him away, and do him to execution straight.

CLOWN. So he shall, I warrant him. But do you hear, Master King, he is kin to a monkey; his neck is bigger than his head.

SEGASTO. Sirrah, away with him, and hang him about the middle.

CLOWN. Yes, forsooth, I warrant you. Come on, sir, a so like a sheep-biter a looks.

Enter AMADINE, and a boy with a bear's head.

AMADINE. Dread sovereign and well-beloved sire,
On benden knees I crave the life of this
Condemn'd shepherd, which heretofore preserved
The life of thy sometime distressed daughter.

KING. Preserved the life of my sometime distressed daughter?
How can that be? I never knew the time,
Wherein thou wast distress'd. I never knew the day
But that I have maintained thy estate,
As best beseem'd the daughter of a king:
I never saw the shepherd until now.
How comes it then, that he preserv'd thy life?

AMADINE. Once walking with Segasto in the woods,
Further than our accustom'd manner was,
Right before us down a steep-fall hill,
A monstrous ugly bear did hie him fast
To meet us both—now whether this be true,
I refer it to the credit of Segasto.

SEGASTO. Most true, an't like your majesty.

KING. How then?

AMADINE. The bear, being eager to obtain his prey,
Made forward to us with an open mouth,
As if he meant to swallow us both at once.
The sight whereof did make us both to dread,
But specially your daughter Amadine,
Who for I saw no succour incident,
But in Segasto's valour, I grew desperate,
And he most coward-like began to fly.
Left me distress'd to be devour'd of him—
How say you, Segasto? is it not true?

KING. His silence verifies it to be true. What then?

AMADINE. Then I amaz'd, distressed, all alone,
Did hie me fast to 'scape that ugly bear.
But all in vain; for why he reached after me,
And oft I hardly did^[174] escape his paws,
Till at the length this shepherd came,
And brought to me his head.
Come hither, boy; lo, here it is,
Which I present unto your majesty.

KING. The slaughter of this bear deserves great fame.

SEGASTO. The slaughter of a man deserves great blame.

KING. Indeed occasion oftentimes so falls out.

SEGASTO. Tremelio in the wars, O King, preserved thee.

AMADINE. The shepherd in the woods, O King, preserved me.

SEGASTO. Tremelio fought, when many men did yield.

AMADINE. So would the shepherd, had he been in field.

CLOWN. So would my master, had he not run away. [*Aside.*]

SEGASTO. Tremelio's force saved thousands from the foe.

AMADINE. The shepherd's force hath saved thousands mo.

CLOWN. Ay, shipsticks, nothing else. [*Aside.*]

KING. Segasto, cease to accuse the shepherd;
His worthiness deserves a recompense,
All we are bound to do the shepherd good.
Shepherd, whereas
It was my sentence thou should'st die,
So shall my sentence stand, for thou shalt die.

SEGASTO. Thanks to your majesty.

KING. But soft, Segasto, not for this offence.
Long may'st thou live; and when the Sisters shall decree
To cut in twain the twisted thread of life,
Then let him die: for this I set him free,
And for thy valour I will honour thee.

MUCEDORUS. Thanks to your majesty.

KING. Come, daughter, let us now depart
To honour the worthy valour of the shepherd
With our rewards.

[*Exeunt.*]

CLOWN. O master, hear you; you have made a fresh hand now; you would be slow, you. Why, what will you do now? You have lost me a good occupation by this means. Faith, master, now I cannot hang the shepherd. I pray you, let me take the pains to hang you: it is but half an hour's exercise.

SEGASTO. You are still in your knavery; but, sith I cannot have his life,
I will procure his banishment for ever.
Come on, sirrah.

CLOWN. Yes, forsooth, I come.
Laugh at him, I pray you.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter_ MUCEDORUS *solus.*

MUCEDORUS. From Amadine, and from her father's court,
With gold and silver, and with rich rewards
Flowing from the banks of golden treasuries.
More may I boast, and say, but I,
Was never shepherd in such dignity.

Enter the MESSENGER and the CLOWN.

MESSENGER. All hail, worthy shepherd!

CLOWN. All hail, lousy shepherd!

MUCEDORUS. Welcome, my friends, from whence come you?

MESSENGER. The King and Amadine greet thee well,

And after greetings done, bids thee depart the court
Shepherd, begone.

CLOWN. Shepherd, take law legs; fly away, shepherd.

MUCEDORUS. Whose words are these? Come these from Amadine?

MESSENGER. Ay, from Amadine.

CLOWN. Ay, from Amadine.

MUCEDORUS. Ah! luckless fortune, worse than Phaeton's tale,
My former bliss is now become my bale.

CLOWN. What, wilt thou poison thyself?

MUCEDORUS. My former heaven is now become my hell.

CLOWN. The worst alehouse
That I ever came in in all my life.

MUCEDORUS. What shall I do?

CLOWN. Even go hang thyself half an hour.

MUCEDORUS. Can Amadine so churlishly command,
To banish the shepherd from her father's court?

MESSENGER. What should shepherds do in the court?

CLOWN. What should shepherds do among us?
Have we not lords enough o'er[175] us in the court?

MUCEDORUS. Why, shepherds are men, and kings are no more.

MESSENGER. Shepherds are men, and masters over their flock.

CLOWN. That's a lie; who pays them their wages, then?

MESSENGER. Well, you are always interrupting of me,
But you are best look to him,
Lest you hang for him, when he is gone.

[_Exit.

The_ CLOWN *sings*.

CLOWN. *And you shall hang for company,
For leaving me alone.*

Shepherd, stand forth, and hear thy sentence.
Shepherd, begone within three days, in pain of
My displeasure; shepherd, begone; shepherd, begone,
Begone, begone, begone; shepherd, shepherd, shepherd.

[Exit.

MUCEDORUS. And must I go, and must I needs depart?
Ye goodly groves, partakers of my songs,
In time tofore, when fortune did not frown,
Pour forth your complaints, and wail awhile with me.
And thou bright sun, my comfort in the cold,
Hide, hide thy face, and leave me comfortless.
Ye wholesome herbs and sweet-smelling savours—
Yea, each thing else prolonging life of man—
Change, change your wonted course, that I,
Wanting your aid, in woful sort may die.

Enter AMADINE [*and* ARIENA, *her maid*.]

AMADINE. Ariena, if anybody ask for me,
Make some excuse, till I return.

ARIENA. What, and Segasto call?

AMADINE. Do thou the like to him? I mean not to stay long. [*Exit.*]

MUCEDORUS. This voice so sweet my pining spirits revives.

AMADINE. Shepherd, well-met; tell me how thou doest.

MUCEDORUS. I linger life, yet wish for speedy death.

AMADINE. Shepherd, although thy banishment
Already be decreed, and all against my will,
Yet Amadine—

MUCEDORUS. Ah, Amadine! to hear
Of banishment is death—ay, double death to me;
But since I must depart, one thing I crave.

AMADINE. Say on, with all my heart.

MUCEDORUS. That in absence either far or near,
You honour me as servant with your name.

AMADINE. Not so.

MUCEDORUS. And why?

AMADINE. I honour thee as sovereign of my heart.

MUCEDORUS. A shepherd and a sovereign nothing like.

AMADINE. Yet like enough, where there is no dislike.

MUCEDORUS. Yet great dislike, or else no banishment.

AMADINE. Shepherd, it is only Segasto that
Procures thy banishment.

MUCEDORUS. Unworthy wights are most in jealousy.

AMADINE. Would God they would
Free thee from banishment, or likewise banish me.

MUCEDORUS. Amen say I, to have your company.

AMADINE. Well, shepherd, sith thou sufferest
This for my sake,
With thee in exile also let me live,
On this condition, shepherd, thou canst love.

MUCEDORUS. No longer love, no longer let me live.

AMADINE. Of late I loved one indeed, now love
I none but only thee.

MUCEDORUS. Thanks, worthy princess:
I burn likewise, yet smother up the blast,
I dare not promise what I may perform.

AMADINE. Well, shepherd, hark what I shall say,
I will return unto my father's court,
There^[176] to provide me of such necessities
As for my journey I shall think most fit.
This being done, I will return to thee. Do thou
Therefore appoint the place, where we may meet.

MUCEDORUS. Down in the valley where I slew the bear;
And there doth grow a fair broad branchèd beech,
That overshades a well: so who comes first,
Let them abide the happy meeting of
Us both. How like you this?

AMADINE. I like it very well.

MUCEDORUS. Now, if you please, you may appoint the time.

AMADINE. Full three hours hence, God willing, I will return.

MUCEDORUS. The thanks that Paris gave the Grecian queen,
The like doth Mucedorus yield.

AMADINE. Then, Mucedorus, for three hours, farewell.

[*Exit.*

MUCEDORUS. Your departure, lady, breeds a privy pain.

[*_Exit.*

Enter_ SEGASTO *solus.*

SEGASTO. 'Tis well, Segasto, that thou hast thy will.
Should such a shepherd, such a simple swain,
As he eclipse thy credit, famous through
The court? No, ply, Segasto, ply;
Let it not in Arragon be said,
A shepherd hath Segasto's honour won.

Enter MOUSE, *the Clown, calling his master.*

CLOWN. What ho! master, will you come away?

SEGASTO. Will you come hither, I pray you, what's the matter?

CLOWN. Why, is it not past eleven o'clock?

SEGASTO. How then, sir?

CLOWN. I pray you, come away to dinner.

SEGASTO. I pray you, come hither.

CLOWN. Here's such a-do with you, will you never come?

SEGASTO. I pray you, sir, what news of the message I sent you about?

CLOWN. I tell you, all the messes be on the table already—
(There wants not so much as a mess of mustard) half an hour ago.

SEGASTO. Come, sir, your mind is all upon your belly.
You have forgotten what I did bid you do.

CLOWN. Faith, I know nothing, but you bad me go to breakfast.

SEGASTO. Was that all?

CLOWN. Faith, I have forgotten it, the very scent of the meat made me forget[177] it quite.

SEGASTO. You have forgotten the errand I bid you do?

CLOWN. What arrant? an arrant knave or an arrant whore?

SEGASTO. Why, thou knave, did I not bid thee banish the shepherd?

CLOWN. O, the shepherd's bastard?

SEGASTO. I tell thee, the shepherd's banishment.

CLOWN. I tell you, the shepherd's bastard shall be well kept; I'll look to it myself. But I pray you,
come away to dinner.

SEGASTO. Then you will not tell me whether you have banished him, or no?

CLOWN. Why, I cannot say *banishment*, and you would give me a thousand pounds to say so.

SEGASTO. Why, you whoreson slave, have you forgotten that I sent you and another to drive away
the shepherd.

CLOWN. What an ass are you; here's a stir indeed, here's message, arrant, banishment, and I cannot tell what.

SEGASTO. I pray you, sir, shall I know whether you have drove him away.

CLOWN. Faith, I think I have; and you will not believe me, ask my staff.

SEGASTO. Why, can thy staff tell?

CLOWN. Why, he was with me too.

SEGASTO. Then happy I, that have obtain'd my will.

CLOWN. And happier I, if you would go to dinner.

SEGASTO. Come, sirrah, follow me.

CLOWN. I warrant you, I will not lose an inch of you now you are going to dinner, I promise you. I thought [it] seven year, before I could get him away. [_Aside.]

[Exeunt.]

Enter_ AMADINE *sola*

AMADINE. God grant my long delay procures no harm,
Nor this my tarrying frustrate my pretence.
My Mucedorus surely stays for me,
And thinks me over long. At length I come,
My present promise to perform.
Ah, what a thing is firm, unfeigned love!
What is it which true love dares not attempt?
My father he may make, but I must match;
Segasto loves; but Amadine must like,
Where likes her best; compulsion is a thrall.
No, no, the hearty choice is all in all,
The shepherd's virtue Amadine esteems.
But what, methinks my shepherd is not come;
I muse at that, the hour is sure at hand.
Well, here I'll rest, till Mucedorus come.
[_She sits her down.]

Enter_ BREMO, *looking about; hastily [he] taketh hold of her.*

BREMO. A happy prey! now, Bremo, feed on flesh:
Dainties, Bremo, dainties, thy hungry paunch to fill:
Now glut thy greedy guts with lukewarm blood.
Come, fight with me; I long to see thee dead.

AMADINE. How can she fight, that weapons cannot wield?

BREMO. What, canst not fight? Then lie thou down and die.

AMADINE. What, must I die?

BREMO. What needs these words? I thirst to suck thy blood.

AMADINE. Yet pity me, and let me live awhile.

BREMO. No pity I; I'll feed upon thy flesh,
I'll tear thy body piecemeal joint from joint.

AMADINE. Ah, how I want my shepherd's company!

BREMO. I'll crush thy bones betwixt two oaken trees.

AMADINE. Haste, shepherd, haste, or else thou com'st too late.

BREMO. I'll suck the sweetness from thy marrow bones.

AMADINE. Ah, spare, ah, spare to shed my guiltless blood!

BREMO. With this my bat will I beat out
Thy brains. Down, down, I say:
Prostrate thyself upon the ground.

AMADINE. Then, Mucedorus, farewell, my hoped joys, farewell!
Yea, farewell life, and welcome present death. [*She kneels.*
To thee, O God, I yield my dying ghost.

BREMO. Now, Bremo, play thy part.
How now, what sudden chance is this?
My limbs do tremble, and my sinews shake;
My unweak'ned arms have lost their former force.
Ah, Bremo, Bremo! what a foil hast thou,
That yet at no time ever wast afraid
To dare the greatest gods to fight with thee, [*He strikes.*
And now want strength for one down-driving blow?
Ah, how my courage fails, when I should strike!
Some new-come spirit abiding in my breast,
Say'th, *Spare her, Bremo; spare her, do not kill.*
Shall I[178] spare her, which never spared any?
To it, Bremo, to it; essay[179] again.
I cannot wield my weapons in my hand;
Methinks I should not strike so fair a one,
I think her beauty hath bewitch'd my force,
Or else within me altered nature's course.
Ay, woman, wilt thou live in woods with me?

AMADINE. Fain would I live, yet loth to live in woods.

BREMO. Thon shalt not choose; it shall be as I say; And therefore follow me. [_Exeunt.

Enter_ MUCEDORUS *solus.*

MUCEDORUS. It was my will an hour ago and more,
As was my promise, for to make return;
But other business hind'red my pretence.
It is a world to see, when man appoints,
And purposely one certain thing decrees,
How many things may hinder his intent.
What one would wish, the same is farthest off.
But yet th'appointed time cannot be past,
Nor hath her presence yet prevented[180] me.
Well, here I'll stay, and expect the coming.

[*They cry within, Hold him, stay him, hold!*

MUCEDORUS. Some one or other is pursued, no doubt;
Perhaps some search for me; 'tis good
To doubt the worst, therefore I will be gone.
[_Exit.

Cry within, Hold him, hold him! Enter_ MOUSE, *the
Clown, with a pot.*

CLOWN. Hold him, hold him, hold him! here's a stir indeed. Here came hue after the crier, and I was set close at mother Nip's house, and there I call'd for three pots of ale, as 'tis the manner of us courtiers. Now, sirrah, I had taken the maidenhead of two of them—now, as I was lifting up the third to my mouth, there came, Hold him, hold him! Now I could not tell whom to catch hold on; but I am sure I caught one, perchance a may be in this pot. Well, I'll see. Mass, I cannot see him yet; well, I'll look a little further. Mass, he is a little slave, if a be here; why here's nobody. All this goes well yet; but if the old trot should come for her pot?—ay, marry, there's the matter. But I care not; I'll face her out, and call her old rusty, dusty, musty, fusty, crusty firebrand, and worse than all that, and so face her out of her pot. But soft! here she comes.

Enter *the* OLD WOMAN.

OLD WOMAN. Come on, you knave; where's my pot, you knave?

CLOWN. Go, look your pot; come not to me for your pot, 'twere good for you.

OLD WOMAN. Thou liest, thou knave; thou hast my pot.

CLOWN. You lie, and you say it. I, your pot? I know what I'll say.

OLD WOMAN, Why, what wilt thou say?

CLOWN. But say I have him, and thou dar'st.

OLD WOMAN. Why, thou knave, thou hast not only my pot, but my drink unpaid for.

CLOWN. You lie like an old—I will not say whore.

OLD WOMAN. Dost thou call me whore? I'll cap thee for my pot.

CLOWN. Cap me, and thou darest; search me, whether I have it or no.

[_She searcheth him, and he drinketh over her head, and casts down the pot. She stumbleth at it, then they fall together by the ears; she takes her pot and goes out.

Enter_ SEGASTO.

SEGASTO. How now, sirrah, what's the matter?

CLOWN. O, flies, master, flies.

SEGASTO. Flies? where are they?

CLOWN. O, here, master, all about your face.

SEGASTO. Why, thou liest; I think thou art mad.

CLOWN. Why, master, I have kill'd a dungcartful at the least.

SEGASTO. Go to, sirrah. Leaving this idle talk, give ear to me.

CLOWN. How, give you one of my ears? not, and you were ten masters.

SEGASTO. Why, sir, I bad you give ear to my words.

CLOWN. I tell you, I will not be made a curtal for no man's pleasure.

SEGASTO. I tell thee, attend what I say. Go thy ways straight, and rear the whole town.

CLOWN. How, rear the town? even go yourself; it is more than I can do. Why, do you think I can rear a town, that can scarce rear a pot of ale to my head? I should rear a town, should I not!

SEGASTO. Go to the constable, and make a privy search; for the shepherd is run away with the King's daughter.

CLOWN. How? is the shepherd run away with the King's daughter, or is the King's daughter run away with the shepherd?

SEGASTO. I cannot tell; but they are both gone together.

CLOWN. What a fool she is to run away with the shepherd! Why, I think I am a little handsomer man than the shepherd myself; but tell me, master, must I make a privy search, or search in the privy?

SEGASTO. Why, dost thou think they will be there?

CLOWN. I cannot tell.

SEGASTO. Well, then, search everywhere; leave no place unsearched for them. [*Exit.*

CLOWN. O, now am I in office, now will I to that old firebrand's house, and will not leave one place unsearched. Nay, I'll to her ale-stand, and drink as long as I can stand; and when I have done, I'll let out all the rest, to see if he be not hid in the barrel. And I find him not there, I'll to the cupboard. I'll not leave one corner of her house unsearched. I'faith, ye old crust, I will be with you now. [*_Exit.*

[Sound music.]

Enter the KING OF VALENTIA, ANSELMO, RODERIGO,
LORD BORACHIUS, *with others.*

KING OF VALENTIA. Enough of music; it but adds to torment.
Delights to vexed spirits are as dates
Set to a sickly man, which rather cloy than comfort:
Let me entreat you to entreat no more.

RODERIGO. Let yon strings sleep; have done there.

[*Let the music cease.*]

KING OF VALENTIA. Mirth to a soul disturb'd is[181] embers turn'd,
Which sudden gleam with molestation,
But sooner lose their sight for it.
'Tis gold bestow'd upon a rioter,
Which not relieves, but murders him:
'Tis a drug given to the healthful,
Which infects, not cures.
How can a father, that hath lost his son:
A prince both wise, virtuous, and valiant,
Take pleasure in the idle acts of time?
No, no; till Mucedorus I shall see again,
All joy is comfortless, all pleasure pain.

ANSELMO. Your son, my lord, is well.

KING OF VALENTIA. I prythee, speak that thrice.

ANSELMO. The prince, your son, is safe.

KING OF VALENTIA. O, where, Anselmo? surfeit me with that.

ANSELMO. In Arragon, my liege; and at his 'parture,
[He] bound my secrecy by his affection's love,
Not to disclose it.
But care of him, and pity of your age,
Makes my tongue blab what my breast vow'd—
Concealment.

KING OF VALENTIA. Thou not deceiv'st me? I ever thought thee
What I find thee now, an upright, loyal man.
But what desire or young-fed humour, nurs'd
Within the brain, drew him so privately
To Arragon?

ANSELMO. A forcing adamant:
Love, mix'd with fear and doubtful jealousy:
Whether report gilded a worthless trunk,
Or Amadine deserved her high extolment.

KING OF VALENTIA. See our provision be in readiness,
Collect us followers of the comeliest hue,
For our chief guardians; we will thither wend.
The crystal eyes of heaven shall not thrice wink,
Nor the green flood six times his shoulders turn,
Till we salute the Arragonian king.
Music, speak loudly; now the season's apt,
For former dolours are in pleasure wrapt.

[*Exeunt omnes*]

Enter MUCEDORUS, *to disguise himself.*

MUCEDORUS. Now, Mucedorus, whither wilt thou go?
Home to thy father to thy native soil,
Or try some long abode within these woods?
Well, I will hence depart, and hie me home.

What, hie me home, said I? that may not be;
In Amadine rests my felicity.
Then, Mucedorus, do as thou didst decree:
Attire thee hermit-like within these groves;
Walk often to the beech, and view the well;
Make settles there, and seat thyself thereon;
And when thou feelest thyself to be athirst,
Then drink a hearty draught to Amadine.
No doubt, she thinks on thee, and will one day
Come pledge thee at this well.
Come, habit, thou art fit for me. [*He disguiseth himself.*
No shepherd now: a hermit I must be.
Methinks this fits me very well.
Now must I learn to bear a walking-staff,
And exercise some gravity withal.

Enter the CLOWN.

CLOWN. Here's through the woods and through the woods, to look out a shepherd and stray king's daughter. But soft! who have we here? what art thou?

MUCEDORUS. I am an hermit.

CLOWN. An emmet? I never saw such a big emmet in all my life before.

MUCEDORUS. I tell you, sir, I am an hermit: one that leads a solitary life within these woods.

CLOWN. O, I know thee now, thou art he[182] that eats up all the hips and haws; we could not have one piece of fat bacon for thee all this year.

MUCEDORUS. Thou dost mistake me; but I pray thee, tell me what dost thou seek in these woods?

CLOWN. What do I seek? for a stray king's daughter run away with a shepherd.

MUCEDORUS. A stray king's daughter run away with a shepherd.
Wherefore? canst thou tell?

CLOWN. Yes, that I can; 'tis this. My master and Amadine walking one day abroad, nearer to these woods than they were used (about what I cannot tell); but toward them comes running a great bear. Now my master he played the man, and ran away; and Amadine, crying after him;—now, sir, comes me a shepherd, and he strikes off the bear's head. Now, whether the bear were dead before or no, I cannot tell; for bring twenty bears before me, and bind their hands and feet, and I'll kill them all. Now, ever since, Amadine hath been in love with the shepherd; and for goodwill she's even run away with the shepherd.

MUCEDORUS. What manner of man was a? canst describe him unto me?

CLOWN. Scribe him? ay, I warrant you, that I can. A was a little, low, broad, tall, narrow, big, well-favoured fellow: a jerkin of white cloth, and buttons of the same cloth.

MUCEDORUS. Thou describest him well; but if I chance to see any such, pray you, where shall I find you, or what's your name?

CLOWN. My name is called Master Mouse.

MUCEDORUS. O Master Mouse, I pray you, what office might you bear in the court?

CLOWN. Marry, sir, I am a rusher of the stable.

MUCEDORUS. O, usher of the table.

CLOWN. Nay, I say rusher, and I'll prove my office good. For look, sir, when any comes from under the sea or so, and a dog chance to blow his nose backward, then with a whip I give him the good time of the day, and straw rushes presently. Therefore I am a rusher: a high office, I promise ye.

MUCEDORUS. But where shall I find you in the court?

CLOWN. Why, where it is best being, either in the kitchen a eating, or in the buttery drinking. But if you come, I will provide for thee a piece of beef and brewis knuckle-deep in fat. Pray you, take pains; remember Master Mouse. [*Exit.*

MUCEDORUS. Ay, sir, I warrant I will not forget you.
Ah, Amadine! what should become of thee?
Whither shouldst thou go so long unknown?
With watch and ward each passage is beset,
Doubtless she hath lost herself within these woods,
And wand'ring to and fro she seeks the well,
Which yet she cannot find;
Therefore will I seek her out.

[_Exit.

Enter_ BREMO *and* AMADINE.

BREMO. Amadine!
How like you Bremo and his woods?

AMADINE. As like the woods of Bremo's cruelty.
Though I were dumb, and could not answer him,
The beasts themselves would with relenting tears
Bewail thy savage and unhuman deeds.

BREMO. My love, why dost thou murmur to thyself?
Speak louder, for thy Bremo hears thee not.

AMADINE. My Bremo? no, the shepherd is my love.

BREMO. Have I not saved thee from sudden death,
Giving thee leave to live, that thou might'st love?
And dost thou whet me on to cruelty?
Come, kiss me (sweet) for all my favours past.

AMADINE. I may not, Bremo, and therefore pardon me.

BREMO. See how she flings away from me;
I will follow and give a rend[183] to her. [*Aside.*
Deny my love; ah, worm of beauty!
I will chastise thee; come, come,
Prepare thy head upon the block.

AMADINE. O, spare me, Bremo! love should limit life,
Not to be made a murderer of himself.
If thou wilt glut thy loving heart with blood,
Encounter with the lion or the bear,
And (like a wolf) prey not upon a lamb.

BREMO. Why, then, dost thou repine at me?
If thou wilt love me, thou shalt be my queen;
I will crown thee with a complet made of ivory,
And make the rose and lily wait on thee.
I'll rend the burly branches from the oak,[184]
To shadow thee from burning sun:
The trees shall spread themselves where thou dost go;
And as they spread, I'll trace along with thee.

AMADINE. You may; for who but you? [*Aside.*

BREMO. Thou shalt be fed with quails and partridges,
With blackbirds, larks, thrushes, and nightingales.
Thy drink shall be goats' milk and crystal water,
Distill'd from the fountains and the clearest springs,
And all the dainties that the woods afford
I'll freely give thee to obtain thy love.

AMADINE. You may; for who but you? [*Aside.*

BREMO. The day I'll spend to recreate my love,
With all the pleasures that I can devise,
And in the night I'll be thy bed-fellow,
And lovingly embrace thee in mine arms.

AMADINE. One may; so may not you. [*Aside.*]

BREMO. The satyrs and the wood-nymphs shall attend
On thee, and lull thee asleep with music's sound,
And in the morning, when thou dost awake,
The lark shall sing good morrow to my queen,
And whilst he sings, I'll kiss my Amadine.

AMADINE. You may; for who but you? [*Aside.*]

BREMO. When thou art up, the wood-lanes shall be strawed
With violets, cowslips, and sweet marigolds,
For thee to trample and to trace upon;
And I will teach thee how to kill the deer,
To chase the hart, and how to rouse the roe,
If thou wilt live to love and honour me.

AMADINE. You may; for who but you?

Enter MUCEDORUS.

BREMO. Welcome, sir, an hour ago I look'd for such a guest.
Be merry, wench, we'll have a frolic feast,
Here's flesh enough for to suffice us both,
Say, sirrah, wilt thou fight, or dost thou yield to die?

MUCEDORUS. I want a weapon; how can I fight?

BREMO. Thou want'st a weapon? why, then thou yield'st to die.

MUCEDORUS. I say not so; I do not yield to die.

BREMO. Thou shalt not choose; I long to see thee dead.

AMADINE. Yet spare him, Bremo, spare him.

BREMO. Away, I say, I will not spare him.

MUCEDORUS. Yet give me leave to speak.

BREMO. Thou shalt not speak.

AMADINE. Yet give him leave to speak for my sake.

BREMO. Speak on; but be not over-long.

MUCEDORUS. In time of yore, when men (like brutish beasts)
Did lead their lives in loathsome cells and woods,
And wholly gave themselves to witless will
(A rude, unruly rout), then man to man became
A present prey: then might prevailed:
The weakest went to wall,
Right was unknown; for wrong was all in all.
As men thus lived in this^[185] great outrage,
Behold, one Orpheus came (as poets tell),
And them from rudeness unto reason brought:
Who led by reason, some forsook the woods;
Instead of caves, they built them castles strong;
Cities and towns were founded by them then.
Glad were they, [that] they found such ease,
And in the end they grew to perfect amity.
Weighing their former wickedness,
They term'd the time, wherein they lived then
A golden age, a goodly golden age.
Now, Bremo, for so I hear thee called,
If men which lived tofore, as thou dost now,
Wildly^[186] in wood, addicted all to spoil,
Returned were by worthy Orpheus' means,
Let me (like Orpheus) cause thee to return

From murder, bloodshed, and like cruelty.
What, should we fight before we have a cause?
No, let us live and love together faithfully—
I'll fight for thee—

BREMO. Fight for me or die? Or fight, or else thou diest?

AMADINE. Hold, Bremo, hold!

BREMO. Away, I say; thou troublest me.

AMADINE. You promised me to make me your queen.

BREMO. I did; I mean no less.

AMADINE. You promised that I should have my will.

BREMO. I did; I mean no less.

AMADINE. Then save this hermit's life; for he may save us both.

BREMO. At thy request I'll spare him,
But never any after him. Say, hermit,
What canst thou do?

MUCEDORUS. I'll wait on thee; sometime upon thy queen.
Such service shalt thou shortly have as Bremo never had.

[_Exeunt.

Enter_ SEGASTO, *the* CLOWN, *and* RUMBELO.

SEGASTO. Come, sirs; what, shall I never have you
Find out Amadine and the shepherd.

CLOWN. And I have been through the woods, and through the woods,
And could see nothing but an emmet.

RUMBELO. Why, I see a thousand emmets; thou meanest a little one?

CLOWN. Nay, that emmet that I saw was bigger than thou art.

RUMBELO. Bigger than I? what a fool have you to your man? I pray you, master, turn him away.

SEGASTO. But dost thou hear, was he not a man?

CLOWN. I think he was, for he said he did lead a salt-seller's life about the woods.

SEGASTO. Thou wouldest say, a solitary life about the woods?

CLOWN. I think it was so indeed.

RUMBELO. I thought what a fool thou art.

CLOWN. Thou art a wise man; why, he did nothing but sleep since he went.

SEGASTO. But tell me, Mouse, how did he go?

CLOWN. In a white gown, and a white hat on his head, and a staff in his hand.

SEGASTO. I thought so; it was a hermit that walked a solitary life in the woods. Well, get you to dinner; and after never leave seeking, till you bring some news of them, or I'll hang you both. [*Exit.*

CLOWN. How now, Rumbelo, what shall we do now?

RUMBELO. Faith, I'll home to dinner, and afterward to sleep.

CLOWN. Why, then thou wilt be hanged.

RUMBELO. Faith, I care not; for I know I shall never find them. Well, I'll once more abroad, and if I cannot find them, I'll never come home again.

CLOWN. I tell thee what, Rumbelo; thou shalt go in at one end of the wood, and I at the other, and we

will meet both together in the midst.

RUMBELO. Content; let's away to dinner.

[_Exeunt.

Enter_ MUCEDORUS *solus*.

MUCEDORUS. Unknown to any here within these woods,
With bloody Bremono I lead my life.
The monster he doth murder all he meets;
He spareth none, and none doth him escape.
Who would continue—who, but only I—
In such a cruel cutthroat's company?
Yet Amadine is there; how can I choose?
Ah, silly soul! how oftentimes she sits
And sighs, and calls, *Come, shepherd, come;*
Sweet Mucedorus, come and set me free,
When Mucedorus present stands her by!
But here she comes.

Enter AMADINE.

What news, fair lady, as you walk these woods?

AMADINE. Ah, hermit! none but bad, and such
As thou knowest.

MUCEDORUS. How do you like
Your Bremono and his woods?

AMADINE. Not my Bremono,
Nor Bremono's[187] woods.

MUCEDORUS. And why not yours?
Methinks he loves you well.

AMADINE. I like him not.
His love to me is nothing worth.

MUCEDORUS. Lady, in this (methinks) you offer wrong,
To hate the man that ever loves you best.

AMADINE. Hermit,[188] I take no pleasure in his love,
Neither doth Bremono like me best.

MUCEDORUS. Pardon my boldness, lady,[189] sith we both
May safely talk now out of Bremono's sight. Unfold
To me (if so you please) the full discourse,
How, when, and why you came into these woods,
And fell into this bloody butcher's hands.

AMADINE. Hermit, I will;
Of late a worthy shepherd I did love—

MUCEDORUS. A shepherd, lady? Sure, a man unfit
To match with you!

AMADINE. Hermit, 'tis[190] true; and when we had—

MUCEDORUS. Stay there, the wild man comes;
Refer the rest until another time.

Enter BREMO.

BREMO. What secret tale is this, what whispering have we here?
Villain, I charge thee tell thy tale again.

MUCEDORUS. If needs I must, lo! here it is again:
When as we both had lost the sight of thee,
It griev'd us both, but specially the queen.

Who in thy absence ever fears the worst,
Lest some mischance befall your royal grace.
Shall my sweet Bremono wander through the woods:
Toil to and fro for to redress my wants:
Hazard his life, and all to cherish me?
I like not this, quoth she.
And thereupon [she] crav'd to know of me,
If I could teach her handle weapons well.
My answer was, I had small skill therein,
But glad, most mighty king, to learn of thee.
And this was all.

BREMO. Was't so?
None can dislike of this. I'll teach
You both to fight. But first, my queen, begin:
Here, take this weapon; see how thou canst use it.

AMADINE. This is too big;
I cannot wield it in my arm.

BREMO. Is't so, we'll have a knotty crabtree staff for thee:
But, sirrah, tell me, what say'st thou?

MUCEDORUS. With all my heart I willing am to learn.

BREMO. Then take my staff, and see how thou canst wield it.

MUCEDORUS. First teach me how to hold it in my hand.

BREMO. Thou hold'st it well. [To *Amadine*.]
Look how he doth;
Thou mayest the sooner learn.

MUCEDORUS. Next tell me how and when 'tis best to strike.

BREMO. 'Tis best to strike when time doth serve,
'Tis best to lose no time.

MUCEDORUS. Then now or never is my time to strike.

BREMO. And when thou strikest, be sure to hit the head.

MUCEDORUS. The head?

BREMO. The very head.

MUCEDORUS. Then have at thine,
So lie there and die; [*He strikes him down dead*.]
A death, no doubt, according to desert,
Or else a worse, as thou deservest a worse.

AMADINE. It glads my heart this tyrant's death to see.

MUCEDORUS. Now, lady, it remains in you
To end the tale you lately had begun,
Being interrupted by this wicked wight—
You said you loved a shepherd?

AMADINE. Ay, so I do, and none but only him;
And will do still, as long as life shall last.

MUCEDORUS. But tell me, lady, sith I set you free,
What course of life do you intend to take?

AMADINE. I will (disguised) wander through the world
Till I have found him out.

MUCEDORUS. How, if you find your shepherd in these woods?

AMADINE. Ah! none so happy then as Amadine.[191]

MUCEDORUS. In tract of time a man may alter much: Say, lady, do you know your shepherd well?
[He discovers himself.]

AMADINE. My Mucedorus, hath he set me free?

MUCEDORUS. He hath set thee free.

AMADINE. And lived so long
Unknown to Amadine?

MUCEDORUS. Ay, that's a question
Whereof you may not be resolved.
You know that I am banish'd from the court,
I know likewise each passage is beset,
So that we cannot long escape unknown,
Therefore my will is this, that we return,
Right through the thickets, to the wild man's cave,
And there a while live on his provision,
Until the search and narrow watch be past:
This is my counsel, and I think it best.

AMADINE. I think the very same.

MUCEDORUS. Come, let's begone.

Enter the CLOWN, who searches and falls over the wild man, and so carries him away.

CLOWN. Nay, soft, sir, are you here? a bots on you!
I was like to be hanged for not finding you,
We would borrow a certain stray king's daughter of you;
A wench, a wench, sir, we would have.

MUCEDORUS. A wench of me? I'll make thee eat my sword.

CLOWN. O Lord, nay, and you are so lusty,
I'll call a cooling card for you:
Ho, master, master, come away quickly!

Enter SEGASTO.

SEGASTO. What's the matter?

CLOWN. Look, master, Amandine and the shepherd! O brave!

SEGASTO. What, minion, have I found you out?

CLOWN. Nay, that's a lie, I found her out myself.

SEGASTO. Thou gadding huswife,
What cause hadst thou to gad abroad,
When as thou knowest our wedding-day so nigh?

AMADINE. Not so, Segasto; no such thing in hand.
Show your assurance, then I'll answer you?

SEGASTO. Thy father's promise my assurance is.

AMADINE. But what he promis'd he hath not perform'd.

SEGASTO. It rests in thee to perform the same.

AMADINE. Not I.

SEGASTO. And why?

AMADINE. So is my will, and therefore even so.

CLOWN. Master, with a nonny, nonny, no.[192]

SEGASTO. Ah, wicked villain! art thou here?

MUCEDORUS. What needs these words? we weigh them not.

SEGASTO. We weigh them not! proud shepherd, I scorn thy company.

CLOWN. We'll not have a corner of thy company.

MUCEDORUS. I scorn not thee, nor yet the least of thine.

CLOWN. That's a lie, a would have kill'd me with his pugs-nando.

SEGASTO. This stoutness, Amadine, contents me not.

AMADINE. Then seek another, that may you better please.

MUCEDORUS. Well, Amadine. it only rests in thee
Without delay to make thy choice of three.
There stands Segasto: here a shepherd stands:
There stands the third. Now make thy choice.

CLOWN. A lord at the least I am.

AMADINE. My choice is made; for I will none but thee.

SEGASTO. A worthy mate, no doubt, for such a wife.

MUCEDORUS. And, Amadine, why wilt thou none but me?
I cannot keep thee, as thy father did;
I have no lands for to maintain thy state;
Moreover, if thou mean to be my wife,
Commonly this must be thy use:
To bed at midnight, up at four,
Drudge all day, and trudge from place to place,
Whereby our daily victuals for to win:
And last of all, which is the worst of all,
No princess then, but a plain shepherd's wife.

CLOWN. Then God gi' you good morrow, goody shepherd! [*Aside*.

AMADINE. It shall not need; if Amadine do live,
Thou shalt be crowned King of Arragon.

CLOWN. O master, laugh; when he's king, then I'll be a queen. [*Aside*.

MUCEDORUS. Then know that, which never tofore was known,
I am no shepheard, no Arragonian I,
But born of royal blood. My father's of Valentia
King, my mother Queen: who, for thy secret[193] sake,
Took this hard task in hand.

AMADINE. Ah, how I joy my fortune is so good!

SEGASTO. Well, now I see Segasto shall not speed;
But, Mucedorus, I as much do joy
To see thee here within our Court of Arragon,
As if a kingdom had befallen me this time.
I with my heart surrender her to thee.
[He giveth her unto him.
And loose[194] what right to Amadine I have.

CLOWN. What, [a] barn's door, and born where my father
Was constable. A bots on thee! how dost thee? [*Aside*.

MUCEDORUS. Thanks, Segasto; but yet you levell'd at the crown.

CLOWN. Master, bear this and bear all.

SEGASTO. Why so, sir?

CLOWN. He sees you take a goose by the crown.

SEGASTO. Go to, sir, away, post you to the King,

Whose heart is fraught with careful doubts;
Glad him up, and tell him these good news,
And we will follow as fast as we may.

CLOWN. I go, master; I run, master.

[_Exeunt severally.

Enter the_ KING *and* COLLEN.

KING. Break, heart, and end my pallid[195] woes!
My Amadine, the comfort of my life,
How can I joy, except she were in sight?
Her absence breedeth sorrow to my soul,
And with a thunder breaks my heart in twain.

COLLEN. Forbear those passions, gentle King,
And you shall see 'twill turn unto the best,
And bring your soul to quiet and to joy.

KING. Such joy as death, I do assure me that,
And nought but death, unless of her I hear,
And that with speed; I cannot sigh thus long—
But what a tumult do I hear within?

[*They cry within, Joy and happiness!*

COLLEN. I hear a noise of overpassing joy
Within the court. My lord, be of good comfort.
And here comes one in haste.

Enter the CLOWN, running.

CLOWN. A King, a king, a king!

COLLEN. Why, how now, sirrah? what's the matter?

CLOWN. O, 'tis news for a king; 'tis worth money.

KING. Why, sirrah, thou shalt have silver and gold, if it be good.

CLOWN. O, 'tis good, 'tis good. Amadine—

KING. O, what of her? tell me, and I will make thee a knight.

CLOWN. How, a sprite? no, by Lady, I will not be a sprite, masters. Get ye away; if I be a sprite, I shall be so lean, I shall make you all afraid.

COLLEN. Thou sot, the King means to make thee a gentleman.

CLOWN. Why, I shall want 'pparel.

KING. Thou shalt want for nothing.

CLOWN. Then stand away; trick[196] up thyself; here they come.

Enter SEGASTO, MUCEDORUS, and AMADINE.

AMADINE. My gracious father, pardon thy disloyal daughter.

KING. What, do mine eyes behold my daughter
Amadin? Rise up, dear daughter,
And let these my embracing arms show some
Token of thy father's joy, which, ever since
Thy departure, hath languished in sorrow.

AMADINE. Dear father,
Never were your sorrows greater than my griefs:
Never you so desolate as I comfortless.
Yet, nevertheless, acknowledging myself
To be the cause of both, on bended knees

I humbly crave your pardon.

KING. I'll pardon thee, dear daughter, but as for Him—

AMADINE. Ah, father! what of him?

KING. As sure as I am king, and wear the crown,
I will revenge on that accursed wretch.

MUCEDORUS. Yet, worthy prince, work not thy will in wrath:
Show favour.

KING. Ay, such favour as thou deservest.

MUCEDORUS. I do deserve the daughter of a king.

KING. O, impudent! a shepherd and so insolent?

MUCEDORUS. No shepherd [am] I, but a worthy prince.

KING. In fair conceit, not princely born.

MUCEDORUS. Yes, princely born; my father is a king,
My mother queen, and of Valentia both.

KING. What, Mucedorus? welcome to our court!
What cause hadst thou to come to me disguis'd?

MUCEDORUS. No cause to fear; I caused no offence,
But this—desiring thy daughter's virtues for to see,
Disguis'd myself from out my father's court,
Unknown to any. In secret I did rest,
And passed many troubles near to death;
So hath your daughter my partaker been,
As you shall know hereafter more at large,
Desiring you, you will give her to me,
Even as mine own, and sovereign of my life,
Then shall I think my travels are well spent.

KING. With all my heart, but this—
Segasto claims my promise made tofore,
That he should have her as his only wife,
Before my council, when we came from war.
Segasto, may I crave thee let it pass,
And give Amadine as wife to Mucedorus.

SEGASTO. With all my heart, were it a far greater thing,
And what I may to furnish up their rites,
With pleasing sports and pastimes you shall see.

KING. Thanks, good Segasto; I will think of this.

MUCEDORUS. Thanks, good my lord; and while I live,
Account of me in what I can or may.

AMADINE. And, good Segasto, these great courtesies
Shall not be forgot.

CLOWN. Why, hark you, master! bones, what have you done? What, given away the wench you made me take such pains for? you are wise indeed; mass, and I had known of that, I would have had her myself. Faith, master, now we may go to breakfast with a woodcock-pie.

SEGASTO. Go, sir; you were best leave this knavery.

KING. Come on, my lords, let's now to court,
Where we may finish up the joyfullest day
That ever happ'd to a distressed king.[197]
With mirth and joy and great solemnity
We'll finish up these Hymen's rites most pleasantly.

CLOWN. Ho, lords! at the first, I am one too; but hear, Master King, by your leave, a cast. Now you have done with them, I pray you begin with me.

KING. Why, what wouldst thou have?

CLOWN. O, you forgot now! a little apparel to make's handsome. What, should lords go so beggarly as I do?

KING. What I did promise thee, I will perform.
Attend on me: come, let's depart.

[They all speak.

We'll wait on you with all our hearts.

CLOWN. And with a piece of my liver too.

[Exeunt omnes.

Enter COMEDY and ENVY.

COMEDY. How now, Envy? what, blushest thou already?
Peep forth, hide not thy head with shame;
But with a courage praise a woman's deeds.
Thy threats were vain, thou couldst do me no hurt,
Although thou seem'st to cross me with despite,
I overwhelm'd and turn'd upside down thy block,
And made thyself to stumble at the same.

ENVY. Though stumbled, yet not overthrown:
Thou canst not draw my heart to mildness,
Yet must I needs confess thou hast done well,
And play'd thy part with mirth and pleasant glee.
Say all this; yet canst thou not conquer me,
Although this time thou hast got—
Yet not the conquest neither,
A double revenge another time I'll have.[198]

COMEDY. Then, caitiff cursed, stoop upon thy knee;
Yield to a woman, though not to me,
And from her foes high God defend her still,
That they 'gainst her may never work their will.

ENVY. Envy, were he never so stout
Would beck and bow unto her majesty.
Indeed, Comedy, thou hast overrun me now,
And forc'd me stoop unto a woman's sway.
God grant her grace amongst us long may reign,
And those that would not have it so,
Would that by Envy soon their hearts they might forego.

COMEDY. The council, nobles, and this realm,
Lord, guide it still with thy most holy hand!
The Commons and the subjects, grant them grace.
Their prince to serve, her to obey, and treason to deface:
Long may she reign in joy and great felicity,
Each Christian heart do say amen with me.

[Exeunt.

FINIS.

THE TWO ANGRY WOMEN OF ABINGTON.

_EDITION.

The Pleasant Historie of the two angrie women of Abington. With the humorous mirth of Dick Coomes and Nicholas Prouerbes, two Seruingmen. As it was lately playde by the right Honorable the Earle of Nottingham, Lord high Admirall, his seruants. By Henry Porter Gent. Imprinted at London for Ioseph Hunt, and William Ferbrand, and are to be solde at the Corner of Colman-streete, neere Loathburie_. 1599. 4^o.

Another 4^o, printed for Ferbrand alone, was published during the same year.—*Dyce*.

[DYCE'S PREFACE.][199]

The text of the former 4^o, which is, I apprehend, the earlier impression, has been adopted in the present reprint, except where the readings of the other edition have been occasionally preferred, and where obvious typographical errors have been rectified. Every minute particular in which the second 4^o differs from the first, I have thought it unnecessary to note. The absurd punctuation and faulty metrical arrangement of the old copy have not been followed; and I must be allowed to add that I have retained the original spelling only in accordance to the decision of the Percy Council.[200]

Though Henry Porter was a dramatist of considerable reputation, all his productions, except the copy now reprinted, appear to have utterly perished; and, I believe, the only materials to be found for his biography are the subjoined memoranda in the Diary of Henslowe:[201]—

Pd this 23 of Aguste 1597 to Harey Porter to carye to | T. Nashe now at this tyme in the ffilet for wrytinge of | s *the eylle of Dogges* ten shellinges to bee paide agen to | x me when he canne I say ten shillinges |

Lent unto the company the 30 of Maye 1598 to bye a boocke | li [202] called *Love prevented* the some of fower powndes dd. | iiij to Thomas Dowton, Mr Porter |

Lent unto the company the 18 of Aguste 1598 to bye a Booke | li called *Hoote Anger sone cowld* of Mr Porter, Mr Cheattell | vj and bengemen Johnson in full payment, the some of |

Lent unto Thomas Dowton the 22 of Desember 1598 to bye a | li boocke of Harey Porter called *the 2 pte of the 2 angrey* | v *Wemen of Abengton* |

Let unto Harey Porter at the request of the company in | earnest of his booke called *ij merey women of abington* | the some of forty shellings and for the resayte of that | s money he gave me his faythfull promise that I should have | xl alle his bookes which he writte ether him selfe or with | any other which some was dd. the 28th of febreary 1598[-9]. |

Lent unto Harey Cheattell the 4 of March 1598[-9] in | s earneste of his boocke which Harey Porter and he is a | x writtinge the some of—called *the Spencers*. |

Lent Harey Porter the 11 of Aprell 1599 the some of | s d
| ii vj

Lent Hary Porter the 16 of Aprell 1599 the some of[203] | d
| xij

Lent Harey Porter the 5 of Maye 1599 the some of | s d
| ii vj

Lent Harey Porter the 15 of Maye 1599 the some of | s d
| ii vj

Be it knowne unto all men that I Henry Porter do owe unto Phillip Henschlowe the some of x's of lawfull money of

England which I did borrowe of hym the 26 of Maye a'o. dom.
1599 Henry Porter[204].

"The Two Angry Women of Abington" is thus noticed by the late Charles Lamb: "The pleasant comedy from which these extracts are taken is contemporary with some of the earliest of Shakespeare's, and is no whit inferior to either the 'Comedy of Errors' or the 'Taming of the Shrew,' for instance. It is full of business, humour, and merry malice. Its night scenes are peculiarly sprightly and wakeful. The versification unencumbered, and rich with compound epithets." [205] A.D.

THE PROLOGUE.

Gentlemen, I come to ye like one that lacks and would borrow, but was loth to ask, lest he should be denied: I would ask, but I would ask to obtain; O, would I knew that manner of asking! To beg were base; and to couch low, and to carry an humble show of entreaty, were too dog-like, that fawns on his master to get a bone from his trencher: out, cur! I cannot abide it; to put on the shape and habit of this new world's new-found beggars, mistermed soldiers[206], as thus: "Sweet gentlemen, let a poor scholar implore and exerate that you would make him rich in the possession of a mite of your favours, to keep him a true man in wit, and to pay for his lodging among the Muses! so God him help, he is driven to a most low estate! 'tis not unknown what service of words he hath been at; he lost his limbs in a late conflict of flout; a brave repulse and a hot assault it was, he doth protest, as ever he saw, since he knew what the report of a volley of jests were; he shall therefore desire you"—A plague upon it, each beadle disdained would whip him from your company. Well, gentlemen, I cannot tell how to get your favours better than by desert: then the worse luck, or the worse wit, or somewhat, for I shall not now deserve it. Well, then[207], I commit myself to my fortunes and your contents; contented to die, if your severe judgments shall judge me to be stung to death with the adder's hiss.

THE NAMES OF THE SPEAKERS.[208]

M[ASTER] GOURSEY.
MIST[RESS] GOURSEY.
M[ASTER] BARNES.
MIST[RESS] BARNES.
FRANK GOURSEY.
PHILIP [BARNES.]
BOY.
MALL BARNES.
DICK COOMES.
HODGE.
NICHOLAS PROVERBS.
SIR RALPH SMITH.
[LADY SMITH.]
WILL, *Sir Ralph's man.*
[Other Attendants.]

THE PLEASANT COMEDY OF THE TWO ANGRY WOMEN OF ABINGTON.

Enter MASTER GOURSEY and his wife, and MASTER BARNES and his wife, with their two sons, and their two servants.

MASTER GOURSEY. Good Master Barnes, this entertain of yours,
So full of courtesy and rich delight,
Makes me misdoubt my poor ability
In quittance of this friendly courtesy.

MR BAR. O Master Goursey, neighbour-amity

Is such a jewel of high-reckoned worth,
As for the attain of it what would not I
Disburse, it is so precious in my thoughts!

MR GOUR. Kind sir, near-dwelling amity indeed
Offers the heart's inquiry better view
Than love that's seated in a farther soil:
As prospectives[209], the[210] nearer that they be,
Yield better judgment to the judging eye;
Things seen far off are lessened in the eye,
When their true shape is seen being hard by.

MR BAR. True, sir, 'tis so; and truly I esteem
Mere[211] amity, familiar neighbourhood,
The cousin german unto wedded love.

MR GOUR. Ay, sir, there's surely some alliance 'twixt them,
For they have both the offspring from the heart:
Within the heart's-blood-ocean still are found
Jewels of amity and gems of love.

MR BAR. Ay, Master Goursey, I have in my time
Seen many shipwrecks of true honesty;
But incident such dangers ever are
To them that without compass sail so far:
Why, what need men to swim, when they may wade?—
But leave this talk, enough of this is said:
And, Master Goursey, in good faith, sir, welcome;—
And, Mistress Goursey, I am much in debt
Unto your kindness that would visit me.

MRS GOUR. O Master Barnes, you put me but in mind
Of that which I should say; 'tis we that are
Indebted to your kindness for this cheer:
Which debt that we may repay, I pray let's have
Sometimes your company at our homely house.

MRS BAR. That, Mistress Goursey, you shall surely have;
He'll[212] be a bold guest, I warrant ye,
And bolder too with you than I would have him.

MRS. GOUR. How, do you mean he will be bold with me?

MRS BAR. Why, he will trouble you at home, forsooth,
Often call in, and ask ye how ye do;
And sit and chat with you all day till night,
And all night too,[213] if he might have his will.

MR BAR. Ay, wife, indeed I thank her for her kindness;
She hath made me much good cheer passing that way.

MRS BAR. Passing well-done of her, she is a kind wench.
I thank ye, Mistress Goursey, for my husband;
And if it hap your husband come our way
A-hunting or such ordinary sports,
I'll do as much for yours as you for mine.

MR GOUR. Pray do, forsooth.—God's Lord, what means the woman?
She speaks it scornfully: faith, I care not;
Things are well-spoken, if they be well-taken. [*Aside.*]
What, Mistress Barnes, is it not time to part?

MRS BAR. What's a-clock, sirrah?

NICHOLAS. 'Tis but new-struck one.

MR GOUR. I have some business in the town by three.

MR BAR. Till then let's walk into the orchard, sir.
What, can you play at tables?

MR GOUR. Yes, I can.

MR BAR. What, shall we have a game?

MR GOUR. And if you please.

MR BAR. I'faith, content; we'll spend an hour so.
Sirrah, fetch the tables.[214]

NICH. I will, sir.
[*Exit.*]

PHIL. Sirrah Frank, whilst they are playing here,
We'll to the green to bowls.

FRAN. Philip, content. Coomes, come hither, sirrah:
When our fathers part, call us upon the green.
Philip, come, a rubbers[215], and so leave.

PHIL. Come on.
[*Exeunt PHILIP and FRANCIS.*]

COOMES. 'Sbloud, I do not like the humour of these springals; they'll spend all their fathers' good at gaming. But let them trowl the bowls upon the green. I'll trowl the bowls in the buttery by the leave of God and Master Barnes: and his men be good fellows, so it is; if they be not, let them go snick up[216].
[*Exit.*]

Enter_ NICHOLAS *with the tables.*

MR BAR. So, set them down.
Mistress Goursey, how do you like this game?

MRS GOUR. Well, sir.

MR BAR. Can ye play at it?

MRS GOUR. A little, sir.

MR BAR. Faith, so can my wife.

MR GOUR. Why, then, Master Barnes, and if you please,
Our wives shall try the quarrel 'twixt us two,
And we'll look on.

MR BAR. I am content. What, women[217], will you play?

MRS GOUR. I care not greatly.

MRS BAR. Nor I, but that I think she'll play me false.

MR GOUR. I'll see she shall not.

MRS BAR. Nay, sir, she will be sure you shall not see;
You, of all men, shall not mark her hand;
She hath such close conveyance in her play.

MR GOUR. Is she so cunning grown? Come, come, let's see.

MRS GOUR. Yea, Mistress Barnes, will ye not house your jests,
But let them roam abroad so carelessly?
Faith, if your jealous tongue utter another,
I'll cross ye with a jest, and ye were my mother.—
Come, shall we play? [*Aside.*]

MRS BAR. Ay, what shall we play a game?

MRS GOUR. A pound a game.

MR GOUR. How, wife?

MRS GOUR. Faith, husband, not a farthing less.

MR GOUR. It is too much; a shilling were good game.

MRS GOUR. No, we'll be ill-huswives once;
You have been oft ill husbands: let's alone.

MR BAR. Wife, will you play so much?

MRS BAR. I would be loth to be so frank a gamester
As Mistress Goursey is; and yet for once
I'll play a pound a game as well as she.

MR BAR. Go to, you'll have your will
[Offer to go from them.]

MRS BAR. Come, there's my stake.

MRS GOUR. And there's mine.

MRS BAR. Throw for the dice. Ill luck! then they are yours.

MR BAR. Master Goursey, who says that gaming's bad,
When such good angels[218] walk 'twixt every cast?

MR GOUR. This is not noble sport, but royal play.

MR BAR. It must be so, where royals[218] walk so fast.

MRS BAR. Play right, I pray.

MRS GOUR. Why, so I do.

MRS BAR. Where stands your man?

MRS GOUR. In his right place.

MRS BAR. Good faith, I think ye play me foul an ace.

MR BAR. No, wife, she plays ye true.

MRS BAR. Peace, husband, peace; I'll not be judg'd by you.

MRS GOUR. Husband, Master Barnes, pray, both go walk!
We cannot play if standers-by do talk.

MR GOUR. Well, to your game; we will not trouble ye.
[Go from them.]

MRS GOUR. Where stands your man now?

MRS BAR. Doth he not stand right?

MRS GOUR. It stands between the points.

MRS BAR. And that's my spite.
But yet methinks the dice runs much uneven.
That I throw but deuce-ace and you eleven.

MRS GOUR. And yet you see that I cast down the hill.

MRS BAR. Ay, I beshrew ye, 'tis not with my will.

MRS GOUR. Do ye beshrew me?

MRS BAR. No, I beshrew the dice,
That turn you up more at once than me at twice.

MRS GOUR. Well, you shall see them turn for you anon.

MRS BAR. But I care not for them, when your game is done.

MRS GOUR. My game! what game?

MRS BAR. Your game, your game at tables.

MRS GOUR. Well, mistress, well; I have read Aesop's fables,
And know your moral meaning well enough.

MRS BAR. Lo, you'll be angry now! here's[219] good stuff.

MR GOUR. How now, women?[220] who hath won the game?

MRS GOUR. Nobody yet.

MR BAR. Your wife's the fairest for't.

MRS BAR. Ay, in your eye.

MRS GOUR. How do you mean?

MRS BAR. He holds you fairer for't than I.

MRS GOUR. For what, forsooth?

MRS BAR. Good gamester, for your game.

MR BAR. Well, try it out; 'tis all but in the bearing[221].

MRS BAR. Nay, if it come to bearing, she'll be best.

MRS GOUR. Why, you're as good a bearer as the rest.

MRS BAR. Nay, that's not so; you bear one man too many.

MRS GOUR. Better do so than bear not any.

MR BAR. Beshrew me, but my wife's jests grow too bitter;
Plainer speeches for her were more fitter[222]:
Malice lies embowelled in her tongue,
And new hatch'd hate makes every jest a wrong. [*Aside.*]

MRS GOUR. Look ye, mistress, now I hit ye.

MRS BAR. Why, ay, you never use to miss a blot[223],
Especially when it stands so fair to hit.

MRS GOUR. How mean ye, Mistress Barnes?

MRS BAR. That Mistress Goursey's in the hitting vein.

MRS GOUR. I hot[224] your man.

MRS BAR. Ay, ay, my man, my man; but, had I known,
I would have had my man stood nearer home.

MRS GOUR. Why, had ye kept your man in his right place,
I should not then have hit him with an ace.

MRS BAR. Right, by the Lord! a plague upon the bones!

MRS GOUR. And a hot mischief on the curser too!

MR BAR. How now, wife?

MR GOUR. Why, what's the matter, woman?

MRS GOUR. It is no matter; I am—

MRS BAR. Ay, you are—

MRS GOUR. What am I?

MRS BAR. Why, that's as you will be ever.

MRS GOUR. That's every day as good as Barnes's wife.

MRS BAR. And better too: then, what needs all this trouble?
A single horse is worse than that bears double.

MR BAR. Wife, go to, have regard to what you say;
Let not your words pass forth the verge of reason,
But keep within the bounds of modesty;
For ill-report doth like a bailiff stand,
To pound the straying and the wit-lost tongue,
And makes it forfeit into folly's hands.
Well, wife, you know it is no honest part
To entertain such guests with jests and wrongs:
What will the neighbouring country vulgar say,
When as they hear that you fell out at dinner?
Forsooth, they'll call it a pot-quarrel straight;
The best they'll name it is a woman's jangling.
Go to, be rul'd, be rul'd.

MRS BAR. God's Lord, be rul'd, be rul'd!
What, think ye I have such a baby's wit,
To have a rod's correction for my tongue?
School infancy! I am of age to speak,
And I know when to speak: shall I be chid
For such a—

MRS GOUR. What-a? nay, mistress, speak it out;
I scorn your stopp'd compares: compare not me
To any but your equals, Mistress Barnes.

MR GOUR. Peace, wife, be quiet.

MR BAR. O, persuade, persuade!
Wife, Mistress Goursey, shall I win your thoughts
To composition of some kind effects?
Wife, if you love your credit, leave this strife,
And come shake hands with Mistress Goursey here.

MRS BAR. Shall I shake hands? let her go shake her heels;
She gets nor hands nor friendship at my hands:
And so, sir, while I live, I will take heed,
What guests I bid again unto my house.

MR BAR. Impatient woman, will you be so stiff
In this absurdness?

MRS BAR. I am impatient now I speak;
But, sir, I'll tell you more another time:
Go to, I will not take it as I have done.

[*Exit.*]

MRS GOUR. Nay, she might stay; I will not long be here
To trouble her. Well, Master Barnes,
I am sorry that it was our haps to-day,
To have our pleasures parted with this fray:
I am sorry too for all that is amiss,
Especially that you are mov'd in this;
But be not so, 'tis but a woman's jar:
Their tongues are weapons, words their blows of war;
'Twas but a while we buffeted, you saw,
And each of us was willing to withdraw;
There was no harm nor bloodshed, you did see:
Tush, fear us not, for we shall well agree.
I take my leave, sir. Come, kind-hearted man,
That speaks his wife so fair—ay, now and then;
I know you would not for an hundreth pound,
That I should hear your voice's churlish sound;

I know you have a far more milder tune
Than "Peace, be quiet, wife;" but I have done.
Will ye go home? the door directs the way;
But, if you will not, my duty is to stay[225].

MR BAR. Ha, ha! why, here's a right woman, is there not?
They both have din'd, yet see what stomachs they have!

MR. GOUR. Well, Master Barnes, we cannot do withal[226]:
Let us be friends still—

MR BAR. O Master Goursey, the mettle of our minds,
Having the temper of true reason in them.
Affords[227] a better edge of argument
For the maintain of our familiar loves
Than the soft leaden wit of women can;
Wherefore with all the parts of neighbour-love
I [do] impart[228] myself to Master Goursey.

MR GOUR. And with exchange of love I do receive it:
Then here we'll part, partners of two curs'd wives.

MR BAR. O, where shall we find a man so bless'd that is not?
But come; your business and my home-affairs
Makes me deliver that unfriendly word
'Mongst friends—farewell.

MR GOUR. Twenty farewells, sir.

MR BAR. But hark ye, Master Goursey;
Look ye persuade at home, as I will do:
What, man! we must not always have them foes.

MR GOUR. If I can help it.

MR BAR. God help, God help!
Women are even untoward creatures still.

[Exeunt.

Enter PHILIP, FRANCIS, and his BOY, from bowling.

PHIL. Come on, Frank Goursey: you have had good luck
To win the game.

FRAN. Why, tell me, is't not good,
That never play'd before upon your green?

PHIL. 'Tis good, but that it cost me ten good crowns;
That makes it worse.

FRAN. Let it not grieve thee, man; come o'er to us;
We will devise some game to make you win
Your money back again, sweet Philip.

PHIL. And that shall be ere long, and if I live:
But tell me, Francis, what good horses have ye,
To hunt this summer?

FRAN. Two or three jades, or so.

PHIL. Be they but jades?

FRAN. No, faith; my wag-string here
Did founder one the last time that he rid—
The best grey nag that ever I laid my leg over.

BOY. You mean the flea-bitten.

FRAN. Good sir, the same.

BOY. And was the same the best that e'er you rid on?

FRAN. Ay, was it, sir.

BOY. I'faith, it was not, sir.

FRAN. No! where had I one so good?

BOY. One of my colour, and a better too.

FRAN. One of your colour? I ne'er remember him:
One of that colour!

BOY. Or of that complexion.

FRAN. What's that ye call complexion in a horse?

BOY. The colour, sir.

FRAN. Set me a colour on your jest, or I will—

BOY. Nay, good sir, hold your hands!

FRAN. What, shall we have it?

BOY. Why, sir, I cannot paint.

FRAN. Well, then, I can;
And I shall find a pencil for ye, sir.

BOY. Then I must find the table, if you do.

FRAN. A whoreson, barren, wicked urchin!

BOY. Look how you chafe! you would be angry more,
If I should tell it you.

FRAN. Go to, I'll anger ye, and if you do not.

BOY. Why, sir, the horse that I do mean
Hath a leg both straight and clean,
That hath nor spaven, splint, nor flaw,
But is the best that ever ye saw;
A pretty rising knee—O knee!
It is as round as round may be;
The full flank makes the buttock round:
This palfrey standeth on no ground,
When as my master's on her back,
If that he once do say but, tack:[229]
And if he prick her, you shall see
Her gallop amain, she is so free;
And if he give her but a nod,
She thinks it is a riding-rod;
And if he'll have her softly go,
Then she trips it like a doe;
She comes so easy with the rein,
A twine-thread turns her back again;
And truly I did ne'er see yet
A horse play prouder on the bit:
My master with good managing
Brought her first unto the ring:[230]
He likewise taught her to corvet,
To run, and suddenly to set;
She's cunning in the wild-goose race,
Nay, she's apt to every pace;
And to prove her colour good,
A flea, enamour'd of her blood,
Digg'd for channels in her neck,
And there made many a crimson speck:

I think there's none that use to ride
But can her pleasant trot abide;
She goes so even upon the way,
She will not stumble in a day;
And when my master—

FRAN. What do I?

BOY. Nay, nothing, sir.

PHIL. O, fie, Frank, fie!
Nay, nay, your reason hath no justice now,
I must needs say; persuade him first to speak,
Then chide him for it! Tell me, pretty wag,
Where stands this prancer, in what inn or stable?
Or hath thy master put her out to run,
Then in what field, what champion,[231] feeds this courser,
This well-pac'd, bonny steed that thou so praisest?

BOY. Faith, sir, I think—

FRAN. Villain, what do ye think?

BOY. I think that you, sir, have been ask'd by many,
But yet I never heard that ye told any.

PHIL. Well, boy, then I will add one more to many.
And ask thy master where this jennet feeds.
Come, Frank, tell me—nay, prythee, tell me, Frank,
My good horse-master, tell me—by this light,
I will not steal her from thee; if I do,
Let me be held a felon to thy love.

FRAN. No, Philip, no.

PHIL. What, wilt thou wear a point[232] but with one tag?
Well, Francis, well, I see you are a wag.

Enter COOMES.

COOMES. 'Swounds, where be these timber-turners, these trowl-the-bowls, these green-men, these—

FRAN. What, what, sir?

COOMES. These bowlers, sir.

FRAN. Well, sir, what say you to bowlers?

COOMES. Why, I say they cannot be saved.

FRAN. Your reason, sir?

COOMES. Because they throw away their souls at every mark.

FRAN. Their souls! how mean ye?

PHIL. Sirrah, he means the soul of the bowl.

FRAN. Lord, how his wit holds bias like a bowl!

COOMES. Well, which is the bias?

FRAN. This next to you.

COOMES. Nay, turn it this way, then the bowl goes true.

BOY. Rub, rub!

COOMES. Why rub?

BOY. Why, you overcast the mark, and miss the way.

COOMES. Nay, boy, I use to take the fairest of my play.

PHIL. Dick Coomes, methinks thou art[233] very pleasant:
Where[234] got'st thou this merry humour?

COOMES. In your father's cellar, the merriest place in th' house.

PHIL. Then you have been carousing hard?

COOMES. Yes, faith, 'tis our custom, when your father's men and we meet.

PHIL. Thou art very welcome thither, Dick.

COOMES. By God, I thank ye, sir, I thank ye, sir: by God, I have a quart of wine for ye, sir, in any place of the world. There shall not a servingman in Barkshire fight better for ye than I will do, if you have any quarrel in hand: you shall have the maidenhead of my new sword; I paid a quarter's wages for't, by Jesus.

PHIL. O, this meat-failer Dick!
How well't has made the apparel of his wit,
And brought it into fashion of an honour!
Prythee, Dick Coomes, but tell me how thou dost?

COOMES. Faith, sir, like a poor man of service.

PHIL. Or servingman.

COOMES. Indeed, so called by the vulgar.

PHIL. Why, where the devil hadst thou that word?

COOMES. O, sir, you have the most eloquent ale in all the[235] world; our blunt soil affords none such.

FRAN. Philip, leave talking with this drunken fool. Say, sirrah, where's my father?

COOMES. "Marry, I thank ye for my very good cheer,—O Lord, it is not so much worth.—You see I am bold with ye.—Indeed, you are not so bold as welcome; I pray ye, come oft'ner.—Truly, I shall trouble ye." All these ceremonies are despatch'd between them, and they are gone.

FRAN. Are they so?

COOMES. Ay, before God, are they.

FRAN. And wherefore came not you to call me then?

COOMES. Because I was loth to change my game.

FRAN. What game?

COOMES. You were at one sort of bowls as I was at another.

PHIL. Sirrah, he means the butt'ry bowls of beer.

COOMES. By God, sir, we tickled it.

FRAN. Why, what a swearing keeps this drunken ass?
Canst thou not say but swear at every word?

PHIL. Peace, do not mar his humour, prythee, Frank.

COOMES. Let him alone; he's a springall; he knows not what belongs to an oath.

FRAN. Sirrah, be quiet, or I do protest—

COOMES. Come, come, what do you protest?

FRAN. By heaven, to crack your crown.

COOMES. To crack my crown! I lay ye a crown of that, lay it down, and ye dare; nay, 'sblood, I'll venture a quarter's wages of that. Crack my crown, quotha!

FRAN. Will ye not yet be quiet? will ye urge me?

COOMES. Urge ye, with a pox! who urges ye? You might have said so much to a clown, or one that had not been o'er the sea to see fashions: I have, I tell ye true; and I know what belongs to a man. Crack my crown, and ye can.

FRAN. And I can, ye rascal!

PHIL. Hold, hair-brain, hold! dost thou not see he's drunk?

COOMES. Nay, let him come: though he be my master's son, I am my master's man, and a man is a man in any ground of England. Come, and he dares, a comes upon his death: I will not budge an inch, no, 'sblood, will I[236] not.

FRAN. Will ye not?

PHIL. Stay, prythee, Frank. Coomes, dost thou hear?

COOMES. Hear me no hears: stand away, I'll trust none of you all. If I have my back against a cartwheel, I would not care if the devil came.

PHIL. Why, ye fool, I am your friend.

COOMES. Fool on your face! I have a wife.

FRAN. She's a whore, then.

COOMES. She's as honest as Nan Lawson.

PHIL. What's she?

COOMES. One of his whores.

PHIL. Why, hath he so many?

COOMES. Ay, as many as there be churches in London.

PHIL. Why, that's a hundred and nine.

BOY. Faith, he lies a hundred.

PHIL. Then thou art a witness to nine.

BOY. No, by God, I'll be witness to none.

COOMES. Now do I stand like the George at Colebrook.

BOY. No, thou stand'st like the Bull at St Alban's.

COOMES. Boy, ye lie—the Horns.[237]

BOY. The bull's bitten; see, how he butts!

PHIL. Coomes, Coomes, put up;[238] my friend and thou art friends.

COOMES. I'll hear him say so first.

PHIL. Frank, prythee, do; be friends, and tell him so.

FRAN. Go to, I am.

BOY. Put up, sir; and ye be a man, put up.

COOMES. I am easily persuaded, boy.

PHIL. Ah, ye mad slave!

COOMES. Come, come, a couple of whoremasters I found ye, and so I leave ye. [*Exit.*]

PHIL. Lo, Frank, dost thou not see he's drunk,
That twits thee[239] with thy disposition?

FRAN. What disposition?

PHIL. Nan Lawson, Nan Lawson.

FRAN. Nay, then—

PHIL. Go to, ye wag, 'tis well:
If ever ye get a wife, i'faith I'll tell.
Sirrah, at home we have a servingman;
He is[240] not humour'd bluntly as Coomes is,
Yet his condition[241] makes me often merry:
I'll tell thee, sirrah, he's a fine neat fellow,
A spruce slave; I warrant ye, he will[242] have
His cruel garters[243] cross about the knee,
His woollen hose as white as th'driven snow,
His shoes dry-leather neat, and tied with red ribbons,
A nosegay bound with laces in his hat—
Bridelaces, sir—and his hat all green[244],
Green coverlet for such a grass-green wit.
"The goose that grazeth on the green," quoth he,
"May I eat on, when you shall buried be!"
All proverbs is his speech, he's proverbs all.

FRAN. Why speaks he proverbs?

PHIL. Because he would speak truth,
And proverbs, you'll confess, are old-said sooth.

FRAN. I like this well, and one day I will see him:
But shall we part?

PHIL. Not yet, I'll bring ye somewhat on your way,
And as we go, between your boy and you
I'll know where that brave prancer stands at livery.

FRAN. Come, come, you shall not.

PHIL. I'faith, I will.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter MASTER BARNES and his Wife.

MR BAR. Wife, in my mind to-day you were to blame,
Although my patience did not blame ye for it:
Methought the rules of love and neighbourhood
Did not direct your thoughts; all indiscreet[245]
Were your proceedings in the entertain
Of them that I invited to my house.
Nay, stay, I do not chide, but counsel, wife,
And in the mildest manner that I may:
You need not view me with a servant's eye,
Whose vassal[246] senses tremble at the look
Of his displeas'd master. O my wife,
You are myself! when self sees fault in self,
Self is sin-obstinate, if self amend not:
Indeed, I saw a fault in thee myself,
And it hath set a foil upon thy fame,
Not as the foil doth grace the diamond.

MRS BAR. What fault, sir, did you see in me to-day?

MR BAR. O, do not set the organ of thy voice
On such a grunting key of discontent!
Do not deform the beauty of thy tongue
With such misshapen answers. Rough wrathful words
Are bastards got by rashness in the thoughts:
Fair demeanours are virtue's nuptial babes,
The offspring of the well-instructed soul;
O, let them call thee mother, then, my wife!
So seem not barren of good courtesy.

MRS BAR. So; have ye done?

MR BAR. Ay, and I had done well,
If you would do what I advise for well.

MRS BAR. What's that?

MR BAR. Which is, that you would be good friends
With Mistress Goursey.

MRS BAR. With Mistress Goursey!

MR BAR. Ay, sweet wife.

MRS BAR. Not so, sweet husband.

MR BAR. Could you but show me any grounded cause.

MRS BAR. The grounded cause I ground, because I will not.

MR BAR. Your will hath little reason, then, I think.

MRS BAR. Yes, sir, my reason equalleth my will.

MR BAR. Let's hear your reason, for your will is great.

MRS BAR. Why, for I will not.

MR BAR. Is all your reason "for I will not," wife?
Now, by my soul, I held ye for more wise,
Discreet, and of more temp'rature in sense,
Than in a sullen humour to affect
That woman's[247] will—borne, common, scholar phrase:
Oft have I heard a timely-married girl,
That newly left to call her mother mam,
Her father dad: but yesterday come from
"That's my good girl, God send thee a good husband!"
And now being taught to speak the name of husband,
Will, when she would be wanton in her will,
If her husband ask'd her why, say "for I will."
Have I chid men for[248] [an] unmanly choice,
That would not fit their years? have I seen thee
Pupil such green young things, and with thy counsel
Tutor their wits? and art thou now infected
With this disease of imperfection?
I blush for thee, ashamed at thy shame.

MRS BAR. A shame on her that makes thee rate me so!

MR BAR. O black-mouth'd rage, thy breath is boisterous,
And thou mak'st virtue shake at this high storm!
She is[249] of good report; I know thou know'st it.

MRS BAR. She is not, nor I know not, but I know
That thou dost love her, therefore think'st her so;
Thou bear'st with her, because she bears with thee.
Thou may'st be ashamed to stand in her defence:
She is a strumpet, and thou art no honest man
To stand in her defence against thy wife.
If I catch her in my walk, now, by Cock's[250] bones,
I'll scratch out both her eyes.

MR BAR. O God!

MRS BAR. Nay, never say "O God" for the matter:
Thou art the cause; thou bad'st her to my house,
Only to blear the eyes of Goursey, did'st not?
But I will send him word, I warrant thee,
And ere I sleep too, trust upon it, sir.

[*Exit.*

MR BAR. Methinks this is a mighty fault in her;
I could be angry with her: O, if I be so,
I shall but put a link unto a torch,
And so give greater light to see her fault.
I'll rather smother it in melancholy:
Nay, wisdom bids me shun that passion;
Then I will study for a remedy.
I have a daughter,—now, heaven invoke,
She be not of like spirit as her mother!
If so, she'll be a plague unto her husband,
If that he be not patient and discreet,
For that I hold the ease of all such trouble.
Well, well, I would my daughter had a husband,
For I would see how she would demean herself
In that estate; it may be, ill enough,—
And, so God shall help me, well-remembered now!
Frank Goursey is his father's son and heir:
A youth that in my heart I have good hope on;
My senses say a match, my soul applauds
The motion: O, but his lands are great,
He will look high; why, I will strain myself
To make her dowry equal with his land.
Good faith, and 'twere a match, 'twould be a means
To make their mothers friends. I'll call my daughter,
To see how she's dispos'd to marriage.—
Mall, where are ye?

Enter MALL.

MALL. Father, here I am.

MR BAR. Where is your mother?

MALL. I saw her not, forsooth, since you and she
Went walking both together to the garden.

MR BAR. Dost thou hear me, girl? I must dispute with thee.

MALL. Father, the question then must not be hard,
For I am very weak in argument.

MR BAR. Well, this it is; I say 'tis good to marry.

MALL. And this say I, 'tis not good to marry.

MR BAR. Were it not good, then all men would not marry;
But now they do.

MALL. Marry, not all; but it is good to marry.

MR BAR. Is it both good and bad; how can this be?

MALL. Why, it is good to them that marry well;
To them that marry ill, no greater hell.

MR BAR. If thou might marry well, wouldst thou agree?

MALL. I cannot tell; heaven must appoint for me.

MR BAR. Wench, I am studying for thy good indeed.

MALL. My hopes and duty wish your thoughts good speed.

MR BAR. But tell me, wench, hast thou a mind to marry?

MALL. This question is too hard for bashfulness;
And, father, now ye pose my modesty.
I am a maid, and when ye ask me thus,

I, like a maid, must blush, look pale and wan,
And then look red[251] again; for we change colour,
As our thoughts change. With true-fac'd passion
Of modest maidenhead I could adorn me,
And to your question make a sober cour'sey,
And with close-clipp'd civility be silent;
Or else say "No, forsooth," or "Ay, forsooth."
If I said, "No, forsooth," I lied forsooth:
To lie upon myself were deadly sin,
Therefore I will speak truth and shame the devil.
Father, when first I heard ye name a husband,
At that same very time my spirits quickened.
Despair before had kill'd them, they were dead:
Because it was my hap so long to tarry,
I was persuaded I should never marry;
And sitting sewing thus upon the ground,
I fell in trance of meditation;
But coming to myself, "O Lord," said I,
"Shall it be so I must I unmarried die?"
And, being angry, father, farther, said—
"Now, by Saint Anne, I will not die a maid!"
Good faith, before I came to this ripe growth,
I did accuse the labouring time of sloth;
Methought the year did run but slow about,
For I thought each year ten I was without.
Being fourteen and toward the tother year,
Good Lord, thought I, fifteen will ne'er be here!
For I have heard my mother say that then
Pretty maids were fit for handsome men:
Fifteen past, sixteen, and seventeen too,
What, thought I, will not this husband do?
Will no man marry me? have men forsworn
Such beauty and such youth? shall youth be worn
As rich men's gowns, more with age than use?
Why, then I let restrained fancy loose,
And bad it gaze for pleasure; then love swore me
To do whate'er my mother did before me;
Yet, in good faith, I have been very loth,
But now it lies in you to save my oath:
If I shall have a husband, get him quickly,
For maids that wear cork shoes may step awry.

MR BAR. Believe me, wench, I do not reprehend[252] thee,
But for this pleasant answer do commend thee.
I must confess, love doth thee mighty wrong,
But I will see thee have thy right ere long;
I know a young man, whom I hold most fit
To have thee both for living and for wit:
I will go write about it presently.

MALL. Good father, do. [*Exit* [BARNES]].

O God, methinks I should
Wife it as fine as any woman could!
I could carry a port to be obeyed,
Carry a mastering eye upon my maid,
With "Minion, do your business, or I'll make ye,"
And to all house authority betake me.
O God! would I were married! by my troth,
But if I be not, I swear I'll keep my oath.

Enter MRS BARNES.

MRS BAR. How now, minion, where have you been gadding?

MALL. Forsooth, my father called me forth to him.

MRS BAR. Your father! and what said he to ye, I pray?

MALL. Nothing, forsooth.

MRS BAR. Nothing! that cannot be; something he said.

MALL. Ay, something that as good as nothing was.

MRS BAR. Come, let me hear that something-nothing, then.

MALL. Nothing but of a husband for me, mother.

MRS BAR. A husband! that was something; but what husband?

MALL. Nay, faith, I know not, mother: would I did!

MRS BAR. Ay, "would ye did!" i'faith, are ye so hasty?

MALL. Hasty, mother! why, how old am I?

MRS BAR. Too young to marry.

MALL. Nay, by the mass, ye lie.

Mother, how old were you when you did marry?

MRS BAR. How old soe'er I was, yet you shall tarry.

MALL. Then the worse for me. Hark, mother, hark!

The priest forgets that e'er he was a clerk:
When you were at my years, I'll hold my life,
Your mind was to change maidenhead for wife.
Pardon me, mother, I am of your mind,
And, by my troth, I take it but by kind.[253]

MRS BAR. Do ye hear, daughter? you shall stay my leisure.

MALL. Do you hear, mother? would you stay from pleasure,
When ye have mind to it? Go to, there's no wrong
Like this, to let maids lie alone so long:
Lying alone they muse but in their beds,
How they might lose their long-kept maidenheads.
This is the cause there is so many scapes,
For women that are wise will not lead apes
In hell: I tell ye, mother, I say true;
Therefore come husband: maidenhead adieu! [*Exit.*]

MRS BAR. Well, lusty guts, I mean to make ye stay,
And set some rubs in your mind's smoothest way[254].

Enter PHILIP.

PHIL. Mother—

MRS BAR. How now, sirrah; where have you been walking?

PHIL. Over the meads, half-way to Milton, mother,
To bear my friend, Frank Goursey, company.

MRS BAR. Where's your blue coat[255], your sword and buckler, sir?
Get you such like habit for a serving-man,
If you will wait upon the brat of Goursey.

PHIL. Mother, that you are mov'd, this makes me wonder;
When I departed, I did leave ye friends:
What undigested jar hath since betided?

MRS BAR. Such as almost doth choke thy mother, boy,
And stifles her with the conceit of it;
I am abus'd, my son, by Goursey's wife.

PHIL. By Mistress Goursey.

MRS BAR. Mistress Flirt—yea[256], foul strumpet,
Light-a-love, short-heels! Mistress Goursey
Call her again, and thou wert better no.

PHIL. O my dear mother, have some patience!

MRS BAR. Ay, sir, have patience, and see your father
To rifle up the treasure of my love,
And play the spendthrift upon such an harlot!
This same will make me have patience, will it not?

PHIL. This same is women's most impatience:
Yet, mother, I have often heard ye say,
That you have found my father temperate,
And ever free from such affections.

MRS BAR. Ay, till[257] my too much love did glut his thoughts,
And make him seek for change.

PHIL. O, change your mind!
My father bears more cordial love to you.

MRS BAR. Thou liest, thou liest, for he loves Goursey's wife,
Not me.

PHIL. Now I swear, mother, you are much to blame;
I durst be sworn he loves you as his soul.

MRS BAR. Wilt thou be pampered by affection?
Will nature teach thee such vild[258] perjury?
Wilt thou be sworn, ay, forsworn,[259] careless boy?
And if thou swear't, I say he loves me not.

PHIL. [Mother] he loves[260] ye but too well, I swear,
Unless ye knew much better how to use him.

MRS BAR. Doth he so, sir? thou unnatural boy!
"Too well," sayest thou? that word shall cost thee[261] somewhat:
O monstrous! have I brought thee up to this?
"Too well!" O unkind, wicked, and degenerate,
Hast thou the heart to say so of thy mother?
Well, God will plague thee for't, I warrant thee:
Out on thee, villain! fie upon thee, wretch!
Out of my sight, out of my sight, I say!

PHIL. This air is pleasant, and doth please me well,
And here I will stay.

MRS BAR. Wilt thou, stubborn villain?

Enter MR BARNES.

MR BAR. How now, what's the matter?

MRS BAR. Thou sett'st thy son to scoff and mock at me:
Is't not sufficient I am wrong'd of thee,
But he must be an agent to abuse me?
Must I be subject to my cradle too?
O God, O God, amend it!

[Exit.

MR BAR. Why, how now, Philip? is this true, my son?

PHIL. Dear father, she is much impatient:
Ne'er let that hand assist me in my need,
If I more said than that she thought amiss
To think that you were so licentious given;
And thus much more, when she inferr'd it more,
I swore an oath you lov'd her but too well:

In that as guilty I do hold myself.
Now that I come to more considerate trial,
I know my fault: I should have borne with her:
Blame me for rashness, then, not for want of duty.

MR BAR. I do absolve thee; and come hither, Philip:
I have writ a letter unto Master Goursey,
And I will tell thee the contents thereof;
But tell me first, think'st thou Frank Goursey loves thee?

PHIL. If that a man devoted to a man,
Loyal, religious in love's hallowed vows—
If that a man that is sole laboursome
To work his own thoughts to his friend's delight,
May purchase good opinion with his friend,
Then I may say, I have done this so well,
That I may think Frank Goursey loves me well.

MR BAR. 'Tis well; and I am much deceived in him,
And if he be not sober, wise, and valiant.

PHIL. I hope my father takes me for thus wise,
I will not glue myself in love to one
That hath not some desert of virtue in him:
Whate'er you think of him, believe me, father,
He will be answerable to your thoughts
In any quality commendable.

MR BAR. Thou cheer'st my hopes in him; and, in good faith,
Thou'st^[262] made my love complete unto thy friend:
Philip, I love him, and I love him so,
I could afford him a good wife, I know.

PHIL. Father, a wife!

MR BAR. Philip, a wife.

PHIL. I lay my life—my sister!

MR BAR. Ay, in good faith.

PHIL. Then, father, he shall have her; he shall, I swear.

MR BAR. How canst thou say so, knowing not his mind?

PHIL. All's one for that; I will go to him straight.
Father, if you would seek this seven-years'-day,
You could not find a fitter match for her;
And he shall have her, I swear he shall;
He were as good be hanged, as once deny^[263] her.
I'faith, I'll to him.

MR BAR. Hairbrain, hairbrain, stay!
As yet we do not know his father's mind:
Why, what will Master Goursey say, my son,
If we should motion it without his knowledge?
Go to, he's a wise and discreet gentleman,
And that expects from me all honest parts;
Nor shall he fail his expectation;
First I do mean to make him privy to it:
Philip, this letter is to that effect.

PHIL. Father, for God's^[264] sake, send it quickly, then:
I'll call your man. What, Hugh! where's Hugh, there, ho?

MR BAR. Philip, if this would prove a match,
It were the only means that could be found
To make thy mother friends with Mistress Goursey.

PHIL. How, a match! I'll warrant ye, a match.
My sister's fair, Frank Goursey he is rich;
Her[265] dowry, too, will be sufficient;
Frank's young,[266] and youth is apt to love;
And, by my troth, my sister's maidenhead
Stands like a game at tennis: if the ball
Hit into the hole, or hazard, farewell all:

MR BAR. How now, where's Hugh?

[*Enter* NICHOLAS.]

PHIL. Why, what doth this proverbial with us?
Why, where's Hugh?

MR BAR. Peace, peace.

PHIL. Where's Hugh, I say?

MR BAR. Be not so hasty, Philip.

PHIL. Father, let me alone,
I do it but to make myself some sport.
This formal fool, your man, speaks nought but proverbs,
And speak men what they can to him, he'll answer
With some rhyme-rotten sentence or old saying,
Such spokes as th'ancient of the parish use,
With, "Neighbour, 'tis an old proverb and a true,
Goose giblets are good meat, old sack better than new;"
Then says another, "Neighbour, that is true;"
And when each man hath drunk his gallon round—
A penny pot, for that's the old man's gallon—
Then doth he lick his lips, and stroke his beard,
That's glued together with his slavering drops
Of yeasty ale, and when he scarce can trim
His gouty fingers, thus he'll phillip it,
And with a rotten hem, say, "Ay, my hearts,
Merry go sorry! cock and pie, my hearts!"
But then their saving penny proverb comes,
And that is this, "They that will to the wine,
By'r Lady[267] mistress, shall lay their penny to mine."
This was one of this penny-father's[268] bastards,
For, on my life, he was never[269] begot
Without the consent of some great proverb-monger.

MR BAR. O, ye are a wag.

PHIL. Well, now unto my business.
'Swounds, will that mouth, that's made of old-said saws
And nothing else, say nothing to us now?

NICH. O Master Philip, forbear; you must not leap over the stile, before you come at it; haste makes waste; soft fire makes sweet malt; not too fast for falling; there's no haste to hang true men.[270]

PHIL. Father, we ha't, ye see, we ha't. Now will I see if my memory will serve for some proverbs too. O—a painted cloth were as well worth a shilling as a thief worth a halter; well, after my hearty commendations, as I was at the making hereof; so it is, that I hope as you speed, so you're sure; a swift horse will tire, but he that trots easily will endure. You have most learnedly proverb'd it, commending the virtue of patience or forbearance, but yet, you know, forbearance is no quittance.

NICH. I promise ye, Master Philip, you have spoken as true as steel.

PHIL. Father, there's a proverb well applied.

NICH. And it seemeth unto me, ay, it seems to me, that you, Master Philip, mock me: do you not know, *qui mocat mocabitur*? mock age, and see how it will prosper.

PHIL. Why, ye whoreson proverb-book bound up in folio,

Have ye no other sense to answer me
But every word a proverb? no other English?
Well, I'll fulfil a proverb on thee straight.

NICH. What is it, sir?

PHIL. I'll fetch my fist from thine ear.

NICH. Bear witness, he threatens me!

PHIL. That same is the coward's common proverb.
But come, come, sirrah, tell me where Hugh is.

NICH. I may, and I will; I need not, except I list; you shall not command me, you give me neither meat, drink, nor wages; I am your father's man, and a man's a man, and a have but a hose on his head; do not misuse me so, do not; for though he that is bound must obey, yet he that will not tarry, may[271] run away—so he may.

MR BAR. Peace, Nick, I'll see he shall use thee well;
Go to, peace, sirrah: here, Nick, take this letter,
Carry it to him to whom it is directed.

NICH. To whom is it?

MR BAR. Why, read it: canst thou read?

NICH. Forsooth, though none of the best, yet meanly.

MR BAR. Why, dost thou not use it?

NICH. Forsooth, as use makes perfectness, so seldom seen is soon forgotten.

MR BAR. Well-said: but go; it is to Master Goursey.

PHIL. Now, sir, what proverb have ye to deliver a letter?

NICH. What need you to care? who speaks to you? you may speak when ye are spoken to, and keep your wind to cool your pottage. Well, well, you are my master's son, and you look for his land; but they that hope for dead men's shoes may hap go barefoot: take heed, as soon goes the young sheep to the pot as the old. I pray God save my master's life, for seldom comes the better!

PHIL. O, he hath given it me! Farewell, Proverbs.

NICH. Farewell, frost.[272]

PHIL. Shall I fling an old shoe after ye?

NICH. No; you should say, God send fair weather after me!

PHIL. I mean for good luck.

NICH. A good luck on ye!

[*Exit.*]

MR BAR. Alas, poor fool! he uses all his wit.
Philip, in faith[273] this mirth hath cheered thought,
And cosen'd it of his right play of passion.
Go after Nick, and, when thou think'st he's there,
Go in and urge to that which I have writ:
I'll in these meadows make a circling walk,
And in my meditation conjure so,
As that same[274] fiend of thought, self-eating anger,
Shall by my spells of reason[275] vanish quite:
Away, and let me hear from thee to-night.

PHIL. To-night! yes, that you shall: but hark ye, father;
Look that you my sister waking keep,
For Frank, I swear, shall kiss her, ere I sleep.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter FRANK and BOY.

FRAN. I am very dry with walking o'er the green.—
Butler, some beer! Sirrah, call the butler.

BOY. Nay, faith, sir, we must have some smith to give the butler a drench, or cut him in the forehead, for he hath got a horse's disease, namely the staggers; to-night he's a good huswife, he reels all that he wrought to-day; and he were good now to play at dice, for he casts[276] excellent well.

FRAN. How mean'st thou? is he drunk?

BOY. I cannot tell; but I am sure he hath more liquor in him than a whole dicker of hides; he's soak'd throughly, i'faith.

FRAN. Well, go and call him; bid him bring me drink.

BOY. I will, sir.
[*Exit.*]

FRAN. My mother pouts, and will look merrily
Neither upon my father nor on me:
He says she fell out with Mistress Barnes to-day;
Then I am sure they'll not be quickly friends.
Good Lord, what kind of creatures women are!
Their love is lightly[277] won and lightly lost;
And then their hate is deadly and extreme:
He that doth take a wife betakes himself
To all the cares and troubles of the world.
Now her disquietness doth grieve my father,
Grieves me, and troubles all the house besides.
What, shall I have some drink? [*Horn sounded within*].—How now? a horn!
Belike the drunken knave is fall'n asleep,
And now the boy doth wake him with his horn.

Enter BOY.

How now, sirrah, where's the butler?

BOY. Marry, sir, where he was even now, asleep; but I wak'd him, and when he wak'd he thought he was in Master Barnes's buttery, for he stretch'd himself thus, and yawning, said, "Nick, honest Nick, fill a fresh bowl of ale; stand to it, Nick, and thou beest a man of God's making, stand to it;" and then I winded my horn, and he's horn-mad.

Enter HODGE.

HOD. Boy, hey! ho, boy! and thou beest a man, draw.—O, here's a blessed moonshine, God be thanked!—Boy, is not this goodly weather for barley?

BOY. Spoken like a right malster, Hodge: but dost thou hear? thou art not drunk?

HOD. No, I scorn that, i'faith.

BOY.[278] But thy fellow Dick Coomes is mightily drunk.

HOD. Drunk! a plague on it, when a man cannot carry his drink well! 'sblood, I'll stand to it.

BOY. Hold, man; see, and thou canst stand first.

HOD. Drunk! he's a beast, and he be drunk; there's no man that is a sober man will be drunk; he's a boy, and he be drunk.

BOY. No, he's a man as thou art.

HOD. Thus 'tis, when a man will not be ruled by his friends: I bad him keep under the lee, but he kept down the weather two bows; I told him he would be taken with a planet, but the wisest of us all may fall.

BOY. True, Hodge. [*Boy trips him.*]

HOD. Whoop! lend me thy hand, Dick, I am fall'n into a well; lend me thy hand, I shall be drowned

else.

BOY. Hold fast by the bucket, Hodge.

HOD. A rope on it!

BOY. Ay, there is a rope on it; but where art thou, Hodge?

HOD. In a well; I prythee, draw up.

BOY. Come, give up thy body; wind up, hoist

HOD. I am over head and ears.

BOY. In all, Hodge, in all.

FRAN. How loathsome is this beast-man's shape to me,
This mould of reason so unreasonable!—
Sirrah, why dost thou trip him down, seeing he's drunk?

BOY. Because, sir, I would have drunkards cheap.[279]

FRAN. How mean ye?

BOY. Why, they say that, when anything hath a fall, it is cheap; and so of drunkards.

FRAN. Go to, help him up: [*Knocking without*] but, hark, who knocks?

[*BOY goes to the door, and returns.*]

BOY. Sir, here's one of Master Barnes's men with a letter to my old master.

FRAN. Which of them is it?

BOY. They call him Nicholas, sir.

FRAN. Go, call him in.

[*Exit BOY.*]

Enter COOMES.

COOMES. By your leave, ho! How now, young master, how is't?

FRAN. Look ye, sirrah, where your fellow lies:
He's[280] in a fine taking, is he not?

COOMES. Whoop, Hodge! where art thou, man, where art thou?

HOD. O, in a well.

COOMES. In a well, man! nay, then, thou art deep in understanding.

FRAN. Ay, once to-day you were almost so, sir.

COOMES. Who, I! go to, young master, I do not like this humour in ye, I tell ye true; give every man his due, and give him no more: say I was in such a case! go to, 'tis the greatest indignation that can be offered to a man; and, but a man's more godlier given, you were able to make him swear out his heart-blood. What, though that honest Hodge have cut his finger here, or, as some say, cut a feather: what, though he be mump, misled, blind, or as it were—'tis no consequent to me: you know I have drunk all the ale-houses in Abington dry, and laid the taps on the tables, when I had done: 'sblood, I'll challenge all the true rob-pots in Europe to leap up to the chin in a barrel of beer, and if I cannot drink it down to my foot, ere I leave, and then set the tap in the midst of the house, and then turn a good turn on the toe on it, let me be counted nobody, a pingler,[281]—nay, let me be[282] bound to drink nothing but small-beer seven years after—and I had as lief be hanged.

Enter NICHOLAS.

FRAN. Peace, sir, I must speak with one.—
Nicholas, I think, your name is.

NICH. True as the skin between your brows.

FRAN. Well, how doth thy master?

NICH. Forsooth, live, and the best doth no better.

FRAN. Where is the letter he hath sent me?

NICH. *Ecce signum!* here it is.

FRAN. 'Tis right as Philip said, 'tis a fine fool [*Aside*].
—This letter is directed to my father;
I'll carry it to him. Dick Coomes, make him drink.
[Exit.

COOMES. Ay, I'll make him drunk,[283] and he will.

NICH. Not so, Richard; it is good to be merry and wise.

DICK[284] [COOMES]. Well, Nicholas, as thou art Nicholas, welcome; but as thou art Nicholas and a boon companion, ten times welcome. Nicholas, give me thy hand: shall we be merry? and we shall, say but we shall, and let the first word stand.

NICH. Indeed, as long lives the merry man as the sad; an ounce of debt will not pay a pound of care.

COOMES. Nay, a pound of care will not pay an ounce of debt.

NICH. Well, 'tis a good horse never stumbles: but who lies here?

COOMES. 'Tis our Hodge, and I think he lies asleep: you made him drunk at your house to-day; but I'll pepper some of you for't.

NICH. Ay, Richard, I know you'll put a man over the shoes, and if you can; but he's a fool will take more than will do him good.

COOMES. 'Sblood, ye shall take more than will do ye good, or I'll make ye clap under the table.

NICH. Nay, I hope, as I have temperance to forbear drink, so have I patience to endure drink: I'll do as company doth; for when a man doth to Rome come, he must do as there is done.[285]

COOMES. Ha, my resolved Nick, frologozene! Fill the pot, hostess; swouns, you whore! Harry Hook's a rascal. Help me, but carry my fellow Hodge in, and we'll c'rouse[286] it, i'faith.

[Exeunt.

Enter PHILIP.

PHIL. By this, I think, the letter is delivered,
And 'twill be shortly time that I step in,
And woo their favours for my sister's fortune:
And yet I need not; she may do as well,
But yet not better, as the case doth stand,
Between our mothers; it may make them friends;
Nay, I would swear that she would do as well,
Were she a stranger to one quality,
But they are so acquainted, they'll ne'er part.
Why, she will flout the devil, and make blush
The boldest face of man that e'er man saw;
He that hath best opinion of his wit,
And hath his brainpan fraught with bitter jests,
Or of his own, or stol'n, or howsoever,
Let him stand ne'er so high in his own conceit,
Her wit's a sun that melts him down like butter,
And makes him sit at table pancake-wise,
Flat, flat, God knows, and ne'er a word to say;
Yet she'll not leave him then, but like a tyrant
She'll persecute the poor wit-beaten man,
And so bebang him with dry bobs and scoffs,
When he is down, most coward-like, good faith,
As I have pitied the poor patient.
There came a farmer's son a-wooing to her,

A proper man: well-landed too he was,
A man that for his wit need not to ask
What time a year 'twere good to sow his oats,
Nor yet his barley; no, nor when to reap,
To plough his fallows, or to fell his trees,
Well-experienc'd thus each kind of way;
After a two months' labour at the most—
And yet 'twas well he held it out so long—
He left his love, she had so lac'd his lips
He could say nothing to her but "God be with ye!"
Why she, when men have din'd and call for cheese,
Will straight maintain jests bitter to disgest;[287]
And then some one will fall to argument,
Who if he over-master her with reason,
Then she'll begin to buffet him with mocks.
Well, I do doubt Francis hath so much spleen,
They'll ne'er agree; but I will moderate.
By this time it is time, I think, to enter:
This is the house; shall I knock? no; I will not.
[Nor] wait, while one comes out to answer [me]:[288]
I'll in, and let them be as bold with us.

[Exit.

Enter MASTER GOURSEY, reading a letter.

MR GOUR. *If that they like, her dowry shall be equal
To your son's wealth or possibility:
It is a means to make our wives good friends,
And to continue friendship 'twixt us two.*
'Tis so, indeed: I like this motion,
And it hath my consent, because my wife
Is sore infected and heart-sick with hate;
And I have sought the Galen of advice,
Which only tells me this same potion
To be most sovereign for her sickness' cure.

Enter FRANK and PHILIP.

Here comes my son, conferring with his friend.—
Francis, how do you like your friend's discourse?
I know he is persuading to this motion.

FRAN. Father, as matter that befits a friend,
But yet not me, that am too young to marry.

MR GOUR. Nay, if thy mind be forward with thy years,
The time is lost thou tarriest. Trust me, boy,
This match is answerable to thy birth;
Her blood and portion give each other grace;
These indented lines promise a sum,
And I do like the value: if it hap
Thy liking to accord to my consent,
It is a match. Wilt thou go see the maid?

FRAN. Ne'er trust me, father, the shackles[289] of marriage,
Which I do see in others, seem so severe,
I dare not put my youngling liberty
Under the awe of that instruction;
And yet I grant the limits of free youth
Going astray are often restrain'd by that.
But mistress wedlock, to my scholar-thoughts,
Will be too curs'd, I fear: O, should she snip
My pleasure-aiming mind, I shall be sad,
And swear, when I did marry, I was mad!

MR GOUR. But, boy, let my experience teach thee this—
Yet, in good faith, thou speak'st not much amiss—

When first thy mother's fame to me did come,
Thy grandsire thus then came to me his son,
And even my words to thee to me he said,
And as to me thou say'st to him I said,
But in a greater huff and hotter blood,—
I tell ye, on youth's tip-toes then I stood:
Says he (good faith, this was his very say),
"When I was young, I was but reason's fool,
And went to wedding as to wisdom's school;
It taught me much, and much I did forget,
But, beaten much, by it I got some wit;
Though I was shackled from an often scout,
Yet I would wanton it, when I was out;
'Twas comfort old acquaintance then to meet,
Restrained liberty attain'd is sweet."
Thus said my father to thy father[290], son,
And thou mayst do this too, as I have done.

PHIL. In faith, good counsel, Frank: what say'st thou to it?

FRAN. Philip, what should I say?

PHIL. Why, either ay or no.

FRAN. O, but which rather?

PHIL. Why, that which was persuaded by thy father.

FRAN. That's ay then[291]. Ay. O, should it fall out ill,
Then I, for I am guilty of that ill!—
I'll not be guilty. No.

PHIL. What, backward gone!

FRAN. Philip, no whit backward; that is, on.

PHIL. On, then.

FRAN. O, stay!

PHIL. Tush, there is no good luck in this delay.
Come, come; late-comers, man, are shent.

FRAN. Heigho, I fear I shall repent!
Well, which way, Philip[292]?

PHIL. Why, this way.

FRAN. Canst thou tell,
And takest upon thee to be my guide to hell?—
But which way, father?

MR GOUR. That way.

FRAN. Ay, you know,
You found the way to sorrow long ago.
Father, God be wi' ye[293]: you have sent your son
To seek on earth an earthly day of doom,
Where I shall be adjudged, alack the ruth,
To penance for the follies of my youth!
Well, I must go; but, by my troth, my mind
Is not capable to love [in][294] that kind.
O, I have look'd upon this mould of men,
As I have done upon a lion's den!
Praised I have the gallant beast I saw,
Yet wish'd me no acquaintance with his paw:
And must I now be grated with them? well,
Yet I may hap to prove a Daniel;
And, if I do, sure it would make me laugh,

To be among wild beasts and yet be safe.
Is there a remedy to abate their rage?
Yes, many catch them, and put them in a cage.
Ay, but how catch them? marry, in your hand
Carry me forth a burning firebrand,
For with his sparkling shine, old rumour says,
A firebrand the swiftest runner frays:
This I may do; but, if it prove not so,
Then man goes out to seek his adjunct woe.
Philip, away! and, father, now adieu!
In quest of sorrow I am sent by you.

MR GOUR. Return, the messenger of joy, my son.

FRAN. Seldom in this world such a work is done.

PHIL. Nay, nay, make haste, it will be quickly night.

FRAN. Why, is it not good to woo by candle-light?

PHIL. But, if we make not haste, they'll be a-bed.

FRAN. The better, candles out and curtains spread.

[*Exeunt* FRANCIS and PHILIP.]

MR GOUR. I know, though that my son's years be not many,
Yet he hath wit to woo as well as any.
Here comes my wife: I am glad my boy is gone.

Enter MISTRESS GOURSEY.

Ere she came hither. How now, wife? how is't?
What, are ye yet in charity and love
With Mistress Barnes?

MRS GOUR. With Mistress Barnes! why Mistress[295] Barnes, I pray?

MR GOUR. Because she is your neighbour and—

MRS GOUR. And what?
And a jealous, slandering, spiteful quean she is,
One that would blur my reputation
With her opprobrious malice, if she could;
She wrongs her husband, to abuse my fame:
'Tis known that I have lived in honest name
All my lifetime, and been your right true wife.

MR GOUR. I entertain no other thought, my wife,
And my opinion's sound of your behaviour.

MRS GOUR. And my behaviour is as sound as it;
But her ill-speeches seeks to rot my credit,
And eat it with the worm of hate and malice.

MR GOUR. Why, then, preserve it you by patience.

MRS GOUR. By patience! would ye have me shame myself,
And cosen myself to bear her injuries?
Not while her eyes be open, will I yield
A word, a letter, a syllable's value.
But equal and make even her wrongs to me
To her again.

MR GOUR. Then, in good faith, wife, ye are more to blame.

MRS GOUR. Am I to blame, sir? pray, what letter's this?
[*Snatches the letter.*]

MR GOUR. There is a dearth of manners in ye, wife,

Rudely to snatch it from me. Give it me.

MRS GOUR. You shall not have it, sir, till I have read it.

MR GOUR. Give me it, then, and I will read it to you.

MRS GOUR. No, no, it shall not need: I am a scholar
Good enough to read a letter, sir.

MR GOUR. God's passion, if she know but the contents,
She'll seek to cross this match! she shall not read it. [*Aside.*]
Wife, give it me; come, come, give it me.

MRS GOUR. Husband, in very deed, you shall not have it.

MR GOUR. What, will you move me to impatience, then?

MRS GOUR. Tut, tell not me of your impatience;
But since you talk, sir, of impatience,
You shall not have the letter, by this light,
Till I have read it; soul, I'll burn it first!

MR GOUR. Go to, ye move me, wife; give me the letter;
In troth, I shall grow angry, if you do not.

MRS GOUR. Grow to the house-top with your anger, sir!
Ne'er tell me, I care not thus much for it.

MR GOUR. Well, I can bear enough, but not too much.
Come, give it me; 'twere best you be persuaded;
By God—ye make me swear—now God forgive me!—
Give me, I say, and stand not long upon it;
Go to, I am angry at the heart, my very heart.

MRS GOUR. Heart me no hearts! you shall not have it, sir,
No, you shall not; ne'er look so big,
I will not be afraid at your great looks;
You shall not have it, no, you shall not have it.

MR GOUR. Shall I not have it? in troth, I'll try that:
Minion, I'll ha''t; shall I not ha''t?—I am loth—
Go to, take pausement, be advis'd—
In faith, I will; and stand not long upon it—
A woman of your years! I am asham'd
A couple of so long continuance
Should thus—God's foot—I cry God heart'ly mercy!—
Go to, ye vex me; and I'll vex ye for it;
Before I leave ye, I will make ye glad
To tender it on your knees; hear ye, I will, I will.
What, worse and worse stomach! true faith,
Shall I be cross'd by you in my old age?
And where I should have greatest comfort, too,
A nurse of you?—nurse in the devil's name!—
Go to, mistress; by God's precious deer,
If ye delay—

MRS GOUR. Lord, Lord, why, in what a fit
Are you in, husband! so enrag'd, so mov'd,
And for so slight a cause, to read a letter!
Did this letter, love, contain my death,
Should you deny my sight of it, I would not
Nor see my sorrow nor eschew my danger,
But willingly yield me a patient
Unto the doom that your displeasure gave.
Here is the letter; not for that your incensement

[*Gives back the letter.*]

Makes me make offer of it, but your health,
Which anger, I do fear, hath craz'd[296],

And viper-like hath suck'd away the blood
That wont was to be cheerful in this cheek:
How pale ye look!

MR GOUR. Pale! Can ye blame me for it? I tell you true,
An easy matter could not thus have moved me.
Well, this resignation—and so forth—but, woman,
This fortnight shall I not forget ye for it.—
Ha, ha, I see that roughness can do somewhat!
I did not think, good faith, I could have set
So sour a face upon it, and to her,
My bed-embracer, my right bosom friend.
I would not that she should have seen the letter—
As poor a man as I am—by my troth,
For twenty pound: well, I am glad I have it. [*Aside.*]
Ha, here's ado about a thing of nothing!
What, stomach, ha! 'tis happy you're come down.
[*Exit.*]

MRS GOUR. Well, crafty[297] fox, I'll hunt ye, by my troth,
Deal ye so closely! Well, I see his drift:
He would not let me see the letter, lest
That I should cross the match; and I will cross it.
Dick Coomes!

Enter COOMES.

COOMES. Forsooth.

MRS GOUR. Come hither, Dick; thou art a man I love,
And one whom I have much in my regard.

COOMES. I thank ye for it, mistress, I thank ye for it.

MRS GOUR. Nay, here's my hand, I will do very much
For thee, if e'er thou stand'st in need of me;
Thou shalt not lack, whilst thou hast a day to live,
Money, apparel—

COOMES. And sword and bucklers?

MRS GOUR. And sword and bucklers too, my gallant Dick, So thou wilt use but this in my defence.
[*Pointing to his sword.*]

COOMES. This! no, faith, I have no mind to this; break my head, if this break not, if we come to any
tough play. Nay, mistress, I had a sword, ay, the flower of Smithfield for a sword, a right fox,[298]
i'faith; with that, and a man had come over with a smooth and a sharp stroke, it would have cried
twang, and then, when I had doubled my point, trac'd my ground, and had carried my buckler before
me like a garden-butt, and then come in with a cross blow, and over the pick[299] of his buckler two
ells long, it would have cried twang, twang, metal, metal: but a dog hath his day; 'tis gone, and there
are few good ones made now. I see by this dearth of good swords, that[300] dearth of sword-and-
buckler fight begins to grow out:[301] I am sorry for it; I shall never see good manhood again, if it be
once gone; this poking fight of rapier and dagger will come up then; then a man, a tall[302] man, and a
good sword-and-buckler man, will be spitted like a cat or a coney; then a boy will be as good as a man,
unless the Lord show mercy unto us; well, I had as lief be hang'd as live to see that day. Well, mistress,
what shall I do? what shall I do?

MRS GOUR. Why, this, brave Dick. Thou knowest that Barnes's wife
And I am foes: now, man me to her house;
And though it be dark, Dick, yet we'll have no light.
Lest that thy master should prevent our journey
By seeing our depart. Then, when we come,
And if that she and I do fall to words,
Set in thy foot and quarrel with her men,
Draw, fight, strike, hurt, but do not kill the slaves,
And make as though thou strookest[303] at a man,
And hit her, and thou canst,—a plague upon her!—

She hath misus'd me, Dick: wilt thou do this?

COOMES. Yes, mistress, I will strike her men; but God forbid that e'er Dick Coomes should be seen to strike a woman!

MRS GOUR. Why, she is mankind;^[304] therefore thou mayest strike her.

COOMES. Mankind! nay, and she have any part of a man, I'll strike her, I warrant.

MRS GOUR. That's my good Dick, that's my sweet Dick!

COOMES. 'Swouns, who would not be a man of valour to have such words of a gentlewoman! one of their words are more to me than twenty of these russet-coats, cheese-cakes, and butter-makers. Well, I thank God, I am none of these cowards; well, and a man have any virtue in him, I see he shall be regarded. [*Aside.*]

MRS GOUR. Art thou resolved, Dick? wilt thou do this for me?
And if thou wilt, here is an earnest-penny
Of that rich guerdon I do mean to give thee.

[*Gives money.*]

COOMES. An angel,^[305] mistress! let me see. Stand you on my left hand, and let the angel lie on my buckler on my right hand, for fear of losing. Now, here stand I to be tempted. They say, every man hath two spirits attending on him, either good or bad; now, I say, a man hath no other spirits but either his wealth or his wife: now, which is the better of them? Why, that is as they are used; for use neither of them well, and they are both nought. But this is a miracle to me, that gold that is heavy hath the upper, and a woman that is light doth soonest fall, considering that light things aspire, and heavy things soonest go down: but leave these considerations to Sir John;^[306] they become a black-coat better than a blue.^[307] Well, mistress, I had no mind to-day to quarrel; but a woman is made to be a man's seducer; you say, quarrel?

MRS GOUR. Ay.

COOMES. There speaks an angel: is it good?

MRS GOUR. Ay.

COOMES. Then, I cannot do amiss; the good angel goes with me.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter_ SIR RALPH SMITH, *his* LADY, WILL, [*and* ATTENDANTS].

SIR RALPH. Come on, my hearts: i'faith, it is ill-luck,
To hunt all day, and not kill anything.
What sayest thou, lady? art thou weary yet?

LADY. I must not say so, sir.

SIR RALPH. Although thou art!

WILL. And can you blame her, to be forth so long,
And see no better sport?

SIR RALPH. Good faith, 'twas very hard.

LADY. No, 'twas not ill,
Because, you know, it is not good to kill.

SIR RALPH. Yes, venison, lady.

LADY. No, indeed, nor them;
Life is as dear in deer as 'tis in men.

SIR RALPH. But they are kill'd for sport.

LADY. But that's bad play,
When they are made to sport their lives away.

SIR RALPH. 'Tis fine to see them run.

LADY. What, out of breath?
They run but ill that run themselves to death.

SIR RALPH. They might make, then, less haste, and keep their wind.

LADY. Why, then, they see the hounds brings death behind.

SIR RALPH. Then, 'twere as good for them at first to stay,
As to run long, and run their lives away.

LADY. Ay, but the stoutest of you all that's here
Would run from death and nimbly scud for fear.
Now, by my troth, I pity these poor elves.[308]

SIR RALPH. Well, they have made us but bad sport to-day.

LADY. Yes, 'twas my sport to see them 'scape away.

WILL. I wish that I had been at one buck's fall.

LADY. Out, thou wood-tyrant! thou art worst of all.

WILL. A wood-man,[309] lady, but no tyrant I.

LADY. Yes, tyrant-like thou lov'st to see lives die.

SIR RALPH. Lady, no more: I do not like this luck,
To hunt all day, and yet not kill a buck.
Well, it is late; but yet I swear I will
Stay here all night, but I a buck will kill.

LADY. All night! nay, good Sir Ralph Smith, do not so.

SIR RALPH. Content ye, lady. Will, go fetch my bow:
A berry[310] of fair roes I saw to-day
Down by the groves, and there I'll take my[311] stand,
And shoot at one—God send a lucky hand!

LADY. Will ye not, then, Sir Ralph, go home with me?

SIR RALPH. No, but my men shall bear thee company.—
Sirs, man her home. Will, bid the huntsmen couple,
And bid them well reward their hounds to-night.—
Lady, farewell. Will, haste ye with the bow;
I'll stay for thee here by the grove below.

WILL. I will; but 'twill be dark, I shall not see:
How shall I see ye, then?

SIR RALPH. Why, halloo to me, and I will answer thee.

WILL. Enough, I will.

SIR RALPH. Farewell.

[Exit.]

LADY. How willingly dost thou consent to go
To fetch thy master that same killing bow!

WILL. Guilty of death I willing am in this,
Because 'twas our ill-haps to-day to miss:
To hunt, and not to kill, is hunter's sorrow.
Come, lady, we'll have venison ere to-morrow.

[Exeunt.]

Enter PHILIP, FRANK [*and* BOY].

PHIL. Come, Frank, now are we hard by the[312] house:
But how now? Sad?

FRAN. No, to study how to woo thy sister.

PHIL. How, man? how to woo her! why, no matter how;
I am sure thou wilt not be ashamed to woo.
Thy cheeks not subject to a childish blush,
Thou hast a better warrant by thy wit;
I know thy oratory can unfold
[A] quick invention, plausible discourse,
And set such painted beauty on thy tongue,
As it shall ravish every maiden sense;
For, Frank, thou art not like the russet youth
I told thee of, that went to woo a wench,
And being full stuff'd up with fallow wit
And meadow-matter, ask'd the pretty maid
How they sold corn last market-day with them,
Saying, "Indeed, 'twas very dear with [us]."
And, do ye hear, ye[313] had not need be so,
For she[314] will, Francis, throughly[315] try your wit;
Sirrah, she'll bow the metal of your wits,
And, if they crack, she will not hold ye current;
Nay, she will weigh your wit, as men weigh angels,[316]
And, if it lack a grain, she will not change with ye.
I cannot speak it but in passion,
She is a wicked wench to make a jest;
Ah me, how full of flouts and mocks she is!

FRAN. Some aqua-vitae reason to recover
This sick discourser! Sound[317] not, prythee, Philip.
Tush, tush, I do not think her as thou sayest:
Perhaps she's[318] opinion's darling, Philip,
Wise in repute, the crow's bird. O my friend,
Some judgments slave themselves to small desert,
And wondernise the birth of common wit,
When their own[319] strangeness do but make that strange,
And their ill errors do but make that good:
And why should men debase to make that good?
Perhaps such admiration wins her wit.

PHIL. Well, I am glad to hear this bold prepare
For this encounter. Forward, hardy Frank!
Yonder's the window with the candle in't;
Belike she's putting on her night attire:
I told ye, Frank, 'twas late. Well, I will call her,
Marry, softly, that my mother may not hear.
Mall, sister Mall!

Enter MALL in the window.

MAL. How now, who's there?

PHIL. 'Tis I.

MAL. 'Tis I! Who I? I, quoth the dog, or what?
A Christcross row I?[320]

PHIL. No, sweet pinkany.[321]

MAL. O, is't you, wild-oats?

PHIL. Ay, forsooth, wanton.

MAL. Well said, scapethrift.

FRAN. Philip, be these your usual best salutes? [*Aside.*]

PHIL. Is this the harmless chiding of that dove? [*Aside.*]

FRAN. Dove! One of those that draw the queen of love? [*Aside.*]

MAL. How now? who's that, brother? who's that with ye?

PHIL. A gentleman, my friend.

MAL. By'r lady, he hath a pure wit.

FRAN. How meane your holy judgment?

MAL. O, well put-in, sir!

FRAN. Up, you would say.

MAL. Well climb'd, gentleman!
I pray, sir, tell me, do you cart the queen of love?

FRAN. Not cart her, but couch her in your eye,
And a fit place for gentle love to lie.

MAL. Ay, but methinks you speak without the book,
To place a four[322]-wheel waggon in my look:
Where will you have room to have the coachman sit?

FRAN. Nay, that were but small manners, and not fit:
His duty is before you bare to stand,
Having a lusty whipstock[323] in his hand.

MAL. The place is void; will you provide me one?

FRAN. And if you please, I will supply the room.

MAL. But are ye cunning in the carman's lash?
And can ye whistle well?

FRAN. Yes, I can well direct the coach of love.

MAL. Ah, cruel carter! would you whip a dove?

PHIL. Hark ye, sister—

MAL. Nay, but hark ye, brother;
Whose white boy[324] is that same? know ye his mother?

PHIL. He is a gentleman of a good house.

MAL. Why, is his house of gold?
Is it not made of lime and stone like this?

PHIL. I mean he's well-descended.

MAL. God be thanked!
Did he descend some steeple or some ladder?

PHIL. Well, you will still be cross; I tell ye, sister—
This gentleman, by all your friends' consent
Must be your husband.

MAL. Nay, not all, some sing another note;
My mother will say no, I hold a groat.
But I thought 'twas somewhat, he would be a carter;
He hath been whipping lately some blind bear,
And now he would ferk the blind boy here with us.

PHIL. Well, do you hear, you, sister, mistress [that] would have—
You that do long for somewhat, I know what—
My father told me—go to, I'll tell all,
If ye be cross—do you hear me? I have labour'd
A year's work in this afternoon for ye:
Come from your cloister, votary, chaste nun,
Come down and kiss Frank Goursey's mother's son.

MAL. Kiss him, I pray?

PHIL. Go to, stale maidenhead! come down, I say,
You seventeen and upward, come, come down;
You'll stay till twenty else for your wedding gown.

MAL. Nun, votary, stale maidenhead, seventeen and upward!
Here be names! what, nothing else?

FRAN. Yes, or a fair-built steeple without bells.

MAL. Steeple! good people, nay, another cast.

FRAN. Ay, or a well-made ship without a mast.

MAL. Fie, not so big, sir, by one part of four.

FRAN. Why, then, ye are a boat without an oar.

MAL. O well row'd wit! but what's your fare, I pray?

FRAN. Your fair self must be my fairest pay.

MAL. Nay, and you be so dear, I'll choose another.

FRAN. Why, take your first man, wench, and go no further. [*Aside.*]

PHIL. Peace, Francis. Hark ye, sister, this I say:
You know my mind; or answer ay or nay.
[Your] wit and judgment hath resolv'd his mind,
And he foresees what after he shall find:
If such discretion, then, shall govern you,
Vow love to him, he'll do the like to you.

MAL. Vow love! who would not love such a comely feature,
Nor high nor low, but of the middle stature?
A middle man, that's the best size indeed;
I like him well: love grant us well to speed!

FRAN. And let me see a woman of that tallness,
So slender and of such a middle smallness,
So old enough, and in each part so fit,
So fair, so kind, endued with so much wit,
Of so much wit as it is held a wonder,
'Twere pity to keep love and her asunder;
Therefore go up, my joy, call down my bliss;
Bid her come seal the bargain with a kiss.

MAL. Frank, Frank, I come through dangers, death, and harms,
To make love's patent[325] with my[326] seal of arms.

PHIL. But, sister, softly, lest my mother hear.

MAL. Hush, then; mum, mouse in cheese[327], cat is near.
[*Exit MAL.*]

FRAN. Now, in good faith, Philip, this makes me smile,
That I have wooed and won in so small while.

PHIL. Francis, indeed my sister, I dare say.
Was not determined to say thee nay;
For this same tother thing, call'd maiden-head,
Hangs by so small a hair or spider's thread,
And worn so too[328] with time, it must needs fall,
And, like a well-lur'd hawk, she knows her call.

[*Enter MALL.*]

MAL. Whist, brother, whist! my mother heard me tread,
And ask'd, Who's there? I would not answer her;
She call'd, A light! and up she's gone to seek me:
There when she finds me not, she'll hither come;

Therefore dispatch, let it be quickly done.
Francis, my love's lease I do let to thee,
Date of my life and thine: what sayest thou to me?
The ent'ring, fine, or income thou must pay,
Are kisses and embraces every day;
And quarterly I must receive my rent;
You know my mind.

FRAN. I guess at thy intent:
Thou shalt not miss a minute of thy time.

MAL. Why, then, sweet Francis, I am only thine.—
Brother, bear witness.

PHIL. Do ye deliver this as your deed?

MAL. I do, I do.

PHIL. God send ye both good speed!
God's Lord, my mother! Stand aside,
And closely too, lest that you be espied.

[*Enter* MISTRESS BARNES.]

MRS BAR. Who's there?

PHIL. Mother, 'tis I.

MRS BAR. You disobedient ruffian, careless wretch,
That said your father lov'd me but too well?
I'll think on't, when thou think'st I have forgot it:
Who's with thee else?—How now, minion? you!
With whom? with him!—Why, what make you here, sir,

[*Discovers* FRANCIS *and* MALL.]

And thus late too? what, hath your mother sent ye
To cut my throat, that here you be in wait?—
Come from him, mistress, and let go his hand.—
Will ye not, sir?

FRAN. Stay, Mistress Barnes, or mother—what ye will;
She is[329] my wife, and here she shall be still.

MRS BAR. How, sir? your wife! wouldst thou my daughter have?
I'll rather have her married to her grave.[330]
Go to; be gone, and quickly, or I swear
I'll have my men beat ye for staying here.

PHIL. Beat him, mother! as I am true[331] man,
They were better beat the devil and his dam.

MRS BAR. What, wilt thou take his part?

PHIL. To do him good,
And 'twere to wade hitherto up in blood.

FRAN. God-a-mercy, Philip!—But, mother, hear me.

MRS BAR. Call'st thou me mother? no, thy mother's name
Carries about with it reproach and shame.
Give me my daughter: ere that she shall wed
A strumpet's son, and have her so misled,
I'll marry her to a carter; come, I say,
Give me her from thee.

FRAN. Mother, not to-day,
Nor yet to-morrow, till my life's last morrow
Make me leave that which I with leave did borrow:
Here I have borrowed love, I'll not deny[332] it.—

Thy wedding night's my day, then I'll repay it.—
Till then she'll trust me. Wench, is't[333] not so?
And if it be, say ay, if not, say no.

MAL. Mother, good mother, hear me! O good God,
Now we are even, what, would you make us odd?
Now, I beseech ye, for the love of Christ,
To give me leave once to do what I list.
I am as you were, when you were a maid;
Guess by yourself how long you would have stay'd,
Might you have had your will: as good begin
At first as last, it saves us from much sin;
Lying alone, we muse on things and things,
And in our minds one thought another brings:
This maid's life, mother, is an idle life,
Therefore I'll be, ay, I will be a wife;
And, mother, do not mistrust[334] my age or power,
I am sufficient, I lack ne'er an hour;
I had both wit to grant, when he did woo me,
And strength to bear whate'er he can do to me.

MRS BAR. Well, bold-face, but I mean to make ye stay.
Go to, come from him, or I'll make ye come:
Will ye not come?

PHIL. Mother, I pray, forbear;
This match is for my sister.

MRS BAR. Villain, 'tis not;
Nor she shall not be so match'd now.[335]

PHIL. In troth, she shall, and your unruly hate
Shall not rule us; we'll end all this debate
By this begun device.

MRS BAR. Ay, end what you begun! Villains, thieves,
Give me my daughter! will ye rob me of her?—
Help, help! they'll rob me here, they'll rob me here!

Enter MASTER BARNES and his men.

MR BAR. How now? what outcry's here? why, how now, woman?

MRS BAR. Why, Goursey's son, confederate[336] with this boy,
This wretch unnatural and undutiful,
Seeks hence to steal my daughter: will you suffer it?
Shall he, that's son to my arch-enemy,
Enjoy her? Have I brought her up to this?
O God, he shall not have her, no, he shall not!

MR BAR. I am sorry she knows it. [*Aside.*]—Hark ye, wife,
Let reason moderate your rage a little.
If you examine but his birth and living,
His wit and good behaviour, you will say,
Though that ill-hate make your opinion bad,
He doth deserve as good a wife as she.

MRS BAR. Why, will you give consent he shall enjoy her?

MR BAR. Ay, so that thy mind would agree with mine?

MRS BAR. My mind shall ne'er agree to this agreement.

Enter MISTRESS GOURSEY and COOMES.[337]

MR BAR. And yet it shall go forward:—but who's here?
What, Mistress Goursey! how knew she of this?

PHIL. Frank, thy mother!

FRAN. 'Sowns, where? a plague upon it!
I think the devil is set to cross this match.

MRS GOUR. This is the house, Dick Coomes, and yonder's [th'] light:
Let us go near. How now? methinks I see
My son stand hand in hand with Barnes his daughter.
Why, how now, sirrah? is this time of night
For you to be abroad? what have we here?
I hope that love hath not thus coupled you.

FRAN. Love, by my troth, mother, love: she loves me,
And I love her; then we must needs agree.

MRS BAR. Ay, but I'll keep her sure enough from thee.

MRS GOUR. It shall not need, I'll keep him safe enough;
Be sure he shall not graft in such a stock.

MRS BAR. What stock, forsooth? as good a stock as thine:
I do not mean that he shall graft in mine.

MRS GOUR. Nor shall he, mistress. Hark, boy; th'art but mad
To love the branch that hath a root so bad.

FRAN. Then, mother, I will graft a pippin on a crab.

MRS GOUR. It will not prove well.

FRAN. But I will prove my skill.

MRS BAR. Sir, but you shall not.

FRAN. Mothers both, I will.

MR BAR. Hark, Philip: send away thy sister straight;
Let Francis meet her where thou shalt appoint;
Let them go several to shun suspicion,
And bid them go to Oxford both this night;
There to-morrow say that we will meet them,
And there determine of their marriage. [*Aside.*]

PHIL. I will: though it be very late and dark.
My sister will endure it for a husband. [*Aside.*]

MR BAR. Well, then, at Carfax,[338] boy, I mean to meet them. [*Aside.*]

PHIL. Enough. *Exit* [MASTER BARNES.]
Would they would begin to chide!
For I would have them brawling, that meanwhile
They may steal hence, to meet where I appoint it. [*Aside.*]
What, mother, will you let this match go forward?
Or, Mistress Goursey, will you first agree?

MRS GOUR. Shall I agree first?

PHIL. Ay, why not? come, come.

MRS GOUR. Come from her, son, and if thou lov'st thy mother.

MRS BAR. With the like spell, daughter, I conjure thee.

MRS GOUR. Francis, by fair means let me win thee from her,
And I will gild my blessing, gentle son,
With store of angels. I would not have thee
Check thy good fortune by this cos'ning choice:
O, do not thrall thy happy liberty
In such a bondage! if thou'lt needs be bound,
Be then to better worth; this worthless choice
Is not fit for thee.

MRS BAR. Is't not fit for him? wherefore is't not fit?
Is he too brave[339] a gentleman, I pray?
No, 'tis not fit; she shall not fit his turn:
If she were wise, she would be fitter for
Three times his better. Minion, go in, or I'll make ye;
I'll keep ye safe from him, I warrant ye.

MRS GOUR. Come, Francis, come from her.

FRAN. Mothers, with both hands shove I hate from love,
That like an ill-companion would infect
The infant mind of our affection:
Within this cradle shall this minute's babe
Be laid to rest; and thus I'll hug my joy.

MRS GOUR. Wilt thou be obstinate, thou self-will'd boy?
Nay, then, perforce I'll part ye, since ye will not.

COOMES. Do ye hear, mistress? pray ye give me leave to talk two or three cold words with my young master.—Hark ye, sir, ye are my master's son, and so forth; and indeed I bear ye some good-will, partly for his sake, and partly for your own; and I do hope you do the like to me,—I should be sorry else. I must needs say ye are a young man; and for mine own part, I have seen the world, and I know what belongs to causes, and the experience that I have, I thank God I have travelled for it.

FRAN. Why, how far have ye travell'd for it?

BOY. From my master's house to the ale-house.

COOMES. How, sir?

BOY. So, sir.

COOMES. Go to. I pray, correct your boy; 'twas ne'er a good world, since a boy would face a man so.

FRAN. Go to. Forward, man.

COOMES. Well, sir, so it is, I would not wish ye to marry without my mistress' consent.

FRAN. And why?

COOMES. Nay, there's ne'er a why but there is a wherefore; I have known some have done the like, and they have danc'd a galliard at beggars'-bush[340] for it.

BOY. At beggars'-bush! Hear him no more, master; he doth bedaub ye with his dirty speech. Do ye hear, sir? how far stands beggars'-bush from your father's house, sir? Why, thou whoreson refuge[341] of a tailor, that wert 'prentice to a tailor half an age, and because, if thou hadst served ten ages thou wouldst prove but a botcher, thou leapst from the shop-board to a blue coat, doth it become thee to use thy terms so? well, thou degree above a hackney, and ten degrees under a page, sew up your lubber lips, or 'tis not your sword and buckler shall keep my poniard from your breast.

COOMES. Do ye hear, sir? this is your boy.

FRAN. How then?

COOMES. You must breech him for it.

FRAN. Must I? how, if I will not?

COOMES. Why, then, 'tis a fine world, when boys keep boys, and know not how to use them.

FRAN. Boy, ye rascal!

MRS GOUR. Strike him, and thou darest.

COOMES. Strike me? alas, he were better strike his father! Sowns, go to, put up your bodkin.[342]

FRAN. Mother, stand by; I'll teach that rascal—

COOMES. Go to, give me good words, or, by God's dines,[343] I'll buckle ye for all your bird-spit.

FRAN. Will you so, sir?

PHIL. Stay, Frank, this pitch of frenzy will defile thee;
Meddle not with it: thy unreprieved valour
Should be high-minded; couch it not so low.
Dost hear me? take occasion to slip hence,
But secretly, let not thy mother see thee:
At the back-side there is a coney-green;[344]
Stay there for me, and Mall and I will come to thee. [*Aside.*]

FRAN. Enough, I will [*Aside.*] Mother, you do me wrong
To be so peremptory in your command,
And see that rascal to abuse me so.

COOMES. Rascal! take that and take all! Do ye hear, sir? I do not mean to pocket up this wrong.

Boy. I know why that is.

COOMES. Why?

Boy. Because you have ne'er a pocket.

COM. A whip, sirrah, a whip! But, sir, provide your tools against to-morrow morning; 'tis somewhat dark now, indeed: you know Dawson's close, between the hedge and the pond; 'tis good even ground; I'll meet you there; and I do not, call me cut;[345] and you be a man, show yourself a man; we'll have a bout or two; and so we'll part for that present.

FRAN. Well, sir, well.

NICH. Boy, have they appointed to fight?

BOY. Ay, Nicholas; wilt not thou go see the fray?

NICH. No, indeed; even as they brew, so let them bake. I will not thrust my hand into the flame, and [I] need not; 'tis not good to have an oar in another man's boat; little said is soon amended, and in little meddling cometh great rest; 'tis good sleeping in a whole skin; so a man might come home by Weeping-Cross:[346] no, by lady, a friend is not so soon gotten as lost; blessed are the peace-makers; they that strike with the sword, shall be beaten with the scabbard.

PHIL. Well-said, Proverbs: ne'er another to that purpose?

NICH. Yes, I could have said to you, sir, Take heed is a good reed.[347]

PHIL. Why to me, take heed?

NICH. For happy is he whom other men's harms do make to beware.

PHIL. O, beware, Frank! Slip away, Mall, you know what I told ye. I'll hold our mothers both in talk meanwhile. [*Aside.*] Mother and Mistress Barnes, methinks you should not stand in hatred so hard one with another.

MRS BAR. Should I not, sir? should I not hate a harlot,
That robs me of my right, vild[348] boy?

MRS GOUR. That title I return unto thy teeth, [*Exeunt FRANCIS and MALL.* And spit the name of harlot in thy face.

MRS BAR. Well, 'tis not time of night to hold out chat
With such a scold as thou art; therefore now
Think that I hate thee, as I do the devil.

MRS GOUR. The devil take thee, if thou dost not, wretch!

MRS BAR. Out upon thee, strumpet!

MRS GOUR. Out upon thee, harlot!

MRS BAR. Well, I will find a time to be reveng'd:
Meantime I'll keep my daughter from thy son.—
Where are ye, minion? how now, are ye gone?

PHIL. She went in, mother.

MRS GOUR. Francis, where are ye?

MRS BAR. He is not here. O, then, they slipp'd away,
And both together!

PHIL. I'll assure ye, no:
My sister she went in—into the house.

MRS BAR. But then she'll out again at the back door,
And meet with him: but I will search about
All these same fields and paths near to my house:
They are not far, I am sure, if I make haste.

[*Exit.*]

MRS GOUR. O God, how went he hence, I did not see him?
It was when Barnes's wife did scold with me;
A plague on[349] her!—Dick, why didst not thou look to him?

COOMES. What should I look for him? no, no.
I look not for him while[350] to-morrow morning.

MRS GOUR. Come, go with me to help me look him out.
Alas! I have nor light, nor link, nor torch!
Though it be dark, I will take any pains
To cross this match. I prithee, Dick, away.

COOMES. Mistress, because I brought ye out, I'll bring ye home; but, if I should follow, so he might
have the law on his side.

MRS GOUR. Come, 'tis no matter; prythee, go with me.

Exeunt [MRS GOURSEY and COOMES.]

MR BAR. Philip, thy mother's gone to seek thy sister,
And in a rage, i'faith: but who comes here?

PHIL. Old Master Goursey, as I think, 'tis he.

MR BAR. 'Tis so, indeed.

[*Enter* MASTER GOURSEY.]

MR GOUR. Who's there?

MR BAR. A friend of yours.

MR GOUR. What, Master Barnes! did ye not see my wife?

MR BAR. Yes, sir, I saw her; she was here even now.

MR GOUR. I doubted that; that made me come unto you:
But whither is she gone?

PHIL. To seek your son, who slipp'd away from her
To meet with Mall my sister in a place,
Where I appointed; and my mother too
Seeks for my sister; so they both are gone:
My mother hath a torch; marry, your wife
Goes darkling up and down, and Coomes before her.

MR GOUR. I thought that knave was with her; but 'tis well:
I pray God, they may come by ne'er a light,
But both be led a dark dance in the night!

HOD. Why, is my fellow, Dick, in the dark with my mistress? I pray God, they be honest, for there may
be much knavery in the dark: faith, if I were there, I would have some knavery with them. [*Aside*] Good
master, will ye carry the torch yourself, and give me leave to play at blind-man-buff with my mistress.

PHIL. On that condition thou wilt do thy best
To keep thy mistress and thy fellow, Dick,

Both from my sister and thy master's son,
I will entreat thy master let thee go.

HOD. O, ay, I warrant ye, I'll have fine tricks to cosen them.

MR GOUR. Well, sir, then, go your ways; I give you leave.

HOD. O brave! but whereabout are they?

PHIL. About our coney-green they surely are,
If thou canst find them.

HOD. O, let me alone to grope for cunnies.

[*Exit.*]

PHIL. Well, now will I to Frank and to my sister.
Stand you two heark'ning near the coney-green;
But sure your light in you must not be seen;
Or else let Nicholas stand afar off with it,
And as his life keep it from Mistress Goursey.
Shall this be done?

MR BAR. Philip, it shall.

PHIL. God be with ye! I'll be gone.

[*Exit.*]

MR BAR. Come on, Master Goursey: this same is a means
To make our wives friends, if they resist not.

MR GOUR. Tut, sir, howsoever, it shall go forward.

MR BAR. Come, then, let's do as Philip hath advis'd.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter MALL.

MAL. Here is the place where Philip bad me stay,
Till Francis came; but wherefore did my brother
Appoint it here? why in the coney-burrow?
He had some meaning in't, I warrant ye.
Well, here I'll set me down under this tree,
And think upon the matter all alone.
Good Lord, what pretty things these conies are!
How finely they do feed till they be fat,
And then what a sweet meat a coney is!
And what smooth skins they have, both black and gray!
They say they run more in the night than day:
What is the reason? mark; why in the light
They see more passengers than in the night;
For harmful men many a hay[351] do set,
And laugh to see them tumble in the net;
And they put ferrets in the holes—fie, fie!—
And they go up and down where conies lie;
And they lie still, they have so little wit:
I marvel the warrener will suffer it;
Nay, nay, they are so bad, that they themselves
Do give consent to catch these pretty elves.
How if the warrener should spy me here?
He would take me for a coney, I dare swear.
But when that Francis comes, what will he say?
"Look, boy, there lies a coney in my way!"
But, soft, a light! who's that? soul, my mother!
Nay, then, all-hid[352]: i'faith, she shall not see me;
I'll play bo-peep with her behind this tree.

[*Enter* MISTRESS BARNES.]

MRS BAR. I marvel where this wench doth[353] hide herself
So closely; I have search'd in many a bush.

MAL. Belike my mother took me for a thrush. [*Aside.*]

MRS BAR. She's hid in this same warren, I'll lay money.

MAL. Close as a rabbit-sucker[354] from an old coney. [*Aside.*]

MRS BAR. O God, I would to God that I could find her!
I would keep her from her love's toys yet.

MAL. Ay, so you might, if your daughter had no wit. [*Aside.*]

MRS BAR. What a vild[355] girl 'tis, that would hav't so young!

MAL. A murrain take that dissembling tongue!
Ere your calf's teeth were out, you thought it long. [*Aside.*]

MRS BAR. But, minion, yet I'll keep you from the man.

MAL. To save a lie, mother, say, if you can. [*Aside.*]

MRS BAR. Well, now to look for her.

MAL. Ay, there's the spite:
What trick shall I now have to 'scape her light? [*Aside.*]

MRS BAR. Who's there? what, minion, is it you?—
Beshrew her heart, what a fright she put me to!
But I am glad I found her, though I was afraid. [*Aside.*]
Come on your ways; you are[356] a handsome maid!
Why [steal] you forth a-doors so late at night?
Why, whither go ye? come, stand still, I say.

MAL. No, indeed, mother; this is my best way.

MRS BAR. 'Tis not the best way; stand by me, I tell ye.

MAL. No; you would catch me, mother. O, I smell ye!

MRS BAR. Will ye not stand still?

MAL. No, by lady, no.

MRS BAR. But I will make ye.

MAL. Nay, then, trip-and-go.

MRS BAR. Mistress, I'll make ye weary, ere I have done.

MAL. Faith, mother, then, I'll try, how you can run.

MRS BAR. Will ye?

MAL. Yes, faith. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter [FRANK and BOY.]

FRAN. Mall, sweet-heart, Mall! what, not a word?

BOY. A little farther, master; call again.

FRAN. Why, Mall! I prythee, speak; why, Mall, I say!
I know thou art not far, if thou wilt[357] speak;
Why, Mall!—
But now I see she's in her merry vein,
To make me call, and put me to more pain.
Well, I must bear with her; she'll bear with me:
But I will call, lest that it be not so.—
What, Mall! what, Mall, I say! Boy, are we right?
Have we not miss'd the way this same dark night?

BOY. Mass, it may be so: as I am true[358] man,
I have not seen a coney since I came;
Yet at the coney-burrow we should meet.
But, hark! I hear the trampling of some feet.

FRAN. It may be so, then; therefore, let's lie close.

[*Enter* MISTRESS GOURSEY *and* COOMES.]

MRS GOUR. Where art thou, Dick?

COOMES. Where am I, quoth-a! marry, I may be where anybody will say I am; either in France or at Rome, or at Jerusalem, they may say I am, for I am not able to disprove them, because I cannot tell where I am.

MRS GOUR. O, what a blindfold walk have we had, Dick,
To seek my son! and yet I cannot find him.

COOMES. Why, then, mistress, let's go home.

MRS GOUR. Why, 'tis so dark we shall not find the way.

FRAN. I pray God, ye may not, mother, till it be day! [*Aside.*

COOMES. 'Sblood, take heed, mistress, here's a tree.

MRS GOUR. Lead thou the way, and let me hold by thee.

BOY. Dick Coomes, what difference is there between a blind man and he that cannot see?

FRAN. Peace, a pox on thee!

COOMES. Swounds, somebody spake.

MRS GOUR. Dick, look about;
It may be here we may find them out.

COOMES. I see the glimpse[359] of somebody here.—
And ye be a sprite, I'll fray the bugbear.—
There a-goes, mistress.

MRS GOUR. O, sir, have I spied you?

FRAN. A plague on the boy! 'was he that descried[360] me.

[*Exeunt.*

[*Enter* PHILIP.]

PHIL. How like a beautiful lady mask'd in black
Looks that same large circumference of heaven!
The sky, that was so fair three hours ago,
Is in three hours become an Ethiop;
And being angry at her beautiful change,
She will not have one of those pearled stars
To blab her sable metamorphosis:[361]
'Tis very dark. I did appoint my sister
To meet me at the coney-borough below,
And Francis too; but neither can I see.
Belike my mother happ'ned on that place,
And fray'd them from it, and they both are now
Wand'ring about the[362] fields: how shall I find them?
It is so dark, I scarce can see my hand:
Why, then, I'll hollow for them—no, not so;
So will his voice betray him to our mothers,
And if he answer, and bring them where he is.
What shall I then do? it must not be so—
'Sblood,[363] it must be so; how else, I pray?
Shall I stand gaping here all night till day,
And then be ne'er the near?[364] So ho, so ho!

[*Enter WILL.*]

WILL. So ho! I come: where are ye? where art thou? here!

PHIL. How now, Frank, where hast thou[365] been?

WILL. Frank! what Frank? 'sblood, is Sir Ralph mad? [*Aside.*]
Here's the bow.

PHIL. I have not been much private with that voice:
Methinks Frank Goursey's talk and his doth tell me
I am mistaken; especially by his bow;
Frank had no bow. Well, I will leave this fellow,
And hollow somewhat farther in the fields. [*Aside.*]
—Dost thou hear, fellow? I perceive by thee
That we are both mistaken: I took thee
For one thou art not; likewise thou took'st me
For Sir Ralph Smith, but sure I am not he:
And so, farewell; I must go seek my friend.
So ho!

[*Exit.*]

WILL. So ho, so ho! nay, then, Sir Ralph, so whore!
For a whore she was sure, if you had her here
So late. Now, you are Sir Ralph Smith![366]
Well do ye counterfeit and change your voice,
But yet I know ye. But what should be that Francis?
Belike that Francis cosen'd him of his wench,
And he conceals himself to find her out;
'Tis so, upon my life. Well, I will go,
And help him ring his peal of so ho, so ho! [*Exit.*]

Enter FRANK.

FRAN. A plague on Coomes! a plague upon the boy!
A plague, too—not on my mother for an hundreth pound!
'Twas time to run; and yet I had not thought
My mother could have followed me so close,
Her legs with age I thought had foundered;
She made me quite run through a quickset hedge,
Or she had taken me. Well, I may say,
I have run through the briars for a wench;
And yet I have her not—the worse luck mine.
Methought I heard one hollow hereabout;
I judge it Philip; O, the slave will laugh,
When as he hears how that my mother scar'd me!
Well, here I'll stand until I hear him hollow,
And then I'll answer him; he is not far.

[*Enter SIR RALPH SMITH.*]

SIR RALPH. My man is hollowing for me up and down,
And yet I cannot meet with him. So ho!

FRAN. So ho!

SIR RALPH. Why, what a pox, wert thou so near me, man,
And wouldst not speak?

FRAN. 'Sblood, ye're very hot.

SIR RALPH. No, sir, I am cold enough with staying here
For such a knave as you.

FRAN. Knave! how now, Philip?
Art mad, art mad?

SIR RALPH. Why, art not thou my man,

That went to fetch my bow?[367]

FRAN. Indeed, a bow
Might shoot me ten bows down the weather so:
I your man!

SIR RALPH. What art thou, then?

FRAN. A man: but what's thy name?

SIR RALPH. Some call me Ralph.

FRAN. Then, honest Ralph, farewell.

SIR RALPH. Well-said, familiar Will! plain Ralph, i'faith.

[*Hollow within* PHILIP *and* WILL.][368]

FRAN. There calls my man.

SIR RALPH. But there goes mine away;
And yet I'll hear what this next call will say,
And here I'll tarry, till he call again.
[*Retires.*][369]

[*Enter* WILL.]

WILL. So ho!

FRAN. So ho! where art thou, Philip?

WILL. 'Sblood,[370] Philip!
But now he call'd me Francis: this is fine. [*Aside.*]

FRAN. Why studieth thou? I prythee, tell me, Philip,
Where the wench[371] is.

WILL. Even now he ask'd me (Francis) for the wench,
And now he asks[372] me (Philip) for the wench. [*Aside.*]
Well, Sir Ralph, I must needs tell ye now,
'Tis[373] not for your[374] credit to be forth
So late a-wenching in this order.[375]

FRAN. What's this? so late a-wenching, doth he say? [*Aside*]
—Indeed, 'tis true I am thus late a-wenching,
But I am forc'd to wench without a wench.

WILL. Why, then, you might have ta'n your bow at first,
And gone and kill'd a buck, and not have been
So long a-drabbing, and be ne'er the near.[376]

FRAN. Swounds, what a puzzle am I in this night!
But yet I'll put this fellow farther [question. *Aside*]
—Dost thou hear, man? I am not Sir Ralph Smith,
As thou dost think I am; but I did meet him,
Even as thou sayest, in pursuit of a wench.
I met the wench too, and she ask'd for thee,
Saying 'twas thou that wert her love, her dear,
And that Sir Ralph was not an honest knight
To train her thither, and to use her so.

WILL. 'Sblood, my wench! swounds, were he ten Sir Ralphs—

FRAN. Nay, 'tis true, look to it; and so, farewell.
[*Exit.*]

WILL. Indeed, I do love Nan our dairymaid:
And hath he traine[d] her forth to that intent,
Or for another? I carry his crossbow,
And he doth cross me, shooting in my bow.

What shall I do?

[*Exit.*][377]

Enter PHILIP.

PHIL. So ho!

SIR RALPH. So ho!

PHIL. Francis, art thou there?

SIR RALPH. No, here's no Francis. Art thou Will, my man?

PHIL. Will Fool your man, Will goose[378] your man!
My back, sir, scorns to wear your livery.

SIR RALPH. Nay, sir, I mov'd but such a question to you,
And it hath not disparag'd you, I hope;
'Twas but mistaking; such a night as this
May well deceive a man. God be w'ye,[379] sir.

[*Exit.*]

PHIL. God's will, 'tis Sir Ralph Smith, a virtuous knight!
How gently entertains he my hard answer!
Rude anger made my tongue unmannerly:
I cry him mercy. Well, but all this while
I cannot find a Francis.—Francis, ho!

[*Enter* WILL.]

WILL. Francis, ho! O, you call Francis now!
How have ye us'd my Nan? come, tell me, how.

PHIL. Thy Nan! what Nan?

WILL. Ay, what Nan, now! say, do you not seek a wench?

PHIL. Yes, I do.

WILL. Then, sir, that is she.

PHIL. Art not thou [he] I met withal before?

WILL. Yes, sir; and you did counterfeit before,
And said to me you were not Sir Ralph Smith.

PHIL. No more I am not. I met Sir Ralph Smith;
Even now he ask'd me, if I saw his man.

WILL. O, fine!

PHIL. Why, sirrah, thou art much deceived in me:
Good faith, I am not he thou think'st I am.

WILL. What are ye, then?

PHIL. Why, one that seeks one Francis and a wench.

WILL. And Francis seeks one Philip and a wench.

PHIL. How canst thou tell?

WILL. I met him seeking Philip and a wench.
As I was seeking Sir Ralph and a wench.

PHIL. Why, then, I know the matter: we met cross,
And so we miss'd; now here we find our loss.
Well, if thou wilt, we two will keep together,
And so we shall meet right with one or other.

WILL. I am content: but, do you hear me, sir?

Did not Sir Ralph Smith ask ye for a wench?

PHIL. No, I promise thee, nor did he look
For any but thyself, as I could guess.

WILL. Why, this is strange: but come, sir, let's away:
I fear that we shall walk here, till't be day.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter BOY.

[BOY.] O God, I have run so far into the wind, that I have run myself out of wind! They say a man is near his end, when he lacks breath; and I am at the end of my race, for I can run no farther; then here I be in my breath-bed, not in my death-bed.[380]

Enter COOMES.

COOMES. They say men moil and toil for a poor living; so I moil and toil, and am living, I thank God; in good time be it spoken. It had been better for me my mistress's angel had been light, for then perhaps it had not led me into this darkness. Well, the devil never blesses a man better, when he purses up angels by owl-light. I ran through a hedge to take the boy, but I stuck in the ditch, and lost the boy. [*Falls.*] 'Swounds, a plague on that clod, that molehill, that ditch, or what the devil so e'er it were, for a man cannot see what it was! Well, I would not, for the price of my sword and buckler, anybody should see me in this taking, for it would make me but cut off their legs for laughing at me. Well, down I am, and down I mean to be, because I am weary; but to tumble down thus, it was no part of my meaning: then, since I am down, here I'll rest me, and no man shall remove me.

Enter HODGE.

HOD. O, I have sport in coney, i'faith! I have almost burst myself with laughing at Mistress Barnes. She was following of her daughter; and I, hearing her, put on my fellow Dick's sword-and-buckler voice and his *swounds* and *sblood* words, and led her such a dance in the dark as it passes.[381] "Here she is," quoth I. "Where?" quoth she. "Here," quoth I. O, it hath been a brave here-and-there night! but, O, what a soft-natured thing the dirt is! how it would endure my hard treading, and kiss my feet for acquaintance! and how courteous and mannerly were the clods[382] to make me stumble only of purpose to entreat me lie down and rest me! But now, and I could find my fellow Dick, I would play the knave with him honestly, i'faith. Well, I will grope in the dark for him, or I'll poke with my staff, like a blind man, to prevent a ditch. [*He stumbles*][383] on DICK COOMES.

COOMES. Who's that, with a pox?

HOD. Who art thou, with a pestilence?

COOMES. Why, I am Dick Coomes.

HOD. What, have I found thee. Dick? nay, then, I am for ye, Dick, [*Aside.*] —Where are ye, Dick?

COOMES. What can I tell, where I am?

HOD. Can ye not tell? come, come, ye wait on your mistress well! come on your ways; I have sought you, till I am weary, and call'd ye, till I am hoarse: good Lord, what a jaunt I have had this night, heigho!

COOMES. Is't you, mistress, that came over me? 'Sblood, 'twere a good deed to come over you for this night's work. I cannot afford all this pains for an angel: I tell ye true; a kiss were not cast away upon a good fellow, that hath deserved more that way than a kiss, if your kindness would afford it him: what, shall I have't, mistress?

HOD. Fie, fie, I must not kiss my man.

COOMES. Nay, nay, ne'er stand; shall I, shall I? nobody sees: say but I shall, and I'll smack it[384] soundly, i'faith.

HOD. Away, bawdy man! in truth, I'll tell your master.

COOMES. My master! go to, ne'er tell me of my master: he may pray for them that may, he is past it: and for mine own part, I can do somewhat that way, I thank God; I am not now to learn, and 'tis your part to have your whole desire.

HOD. Fie, fie, I am ashamed of you: would you tempt your mistress to lewdness?

COOMES. To lewdness! no, by my troth, there's no such matter in't, it is for kindness; and, by my troth, if you like my gentle offer, you shall have what courteously I can afford ye.

HOD. Shall I indeed, Dick? I'faith, if I thought nobody would see—

COOMES. Tush, fear not that; swoons, they must have cats' eyes, then.

HOD. Then, kiss me, Dick.

COOMES. A kind wench, i'faith! [*Aside.*]—Where are ye, mistress?

HOD. Here, Dick. O, I am in the dark! Dick, go about.[385]

COOMES. Nay, I'll throw[386] sure: where are ye?

HOD. Here.

COOMES. A plague on this post! I would the carpenter had been hang'd, that set it up, for me.[387] Where are ye now?

HOD. Here.

COOMES. Here! O, I come. [*Exit.*] A plague on it, I am in a pond, mistress!

HOD. Ha, ha! I have led him into a pond.—Where art thou, Dick?

COOMES. [*Within.*] Up to the middle in a pond!

HOD. Make a boat of thy buckler, then, and swim out. Are ye so hot, with a pox? would you kiss my mistress? cool ye there, then, good Dick Coomes. O, when he comes forth, the skirts of his blue coat will drop like a pent[388]-house! O, that I could see, and not be seen; how he would spaniel it, and shake himself, when he comes out of the pond! But I'll be gone; for now he'll fight with a fly, if he but buzz[389] in his ear. [*Exit.*]

Enter COOMES.

COOMES. Here's so-ho-ing with a plague! so hang, and ye will; for I have been almost drown'd. A pox of your stones,[390] and ye call this kissing! Ye talk of a drowned rat, but 'twas time to swim like a dog; I had been serv'd like a drown'd cat else. I would he had digg'd his grave that digg'd the pond! my feet were foul indeed, but a less pail than a pond would have served my turn to wash them. A man shall be serv'd thus always, when he follows any of these females: but 'tis my kind heart that makes me thus forward in kindness unto them: well, God amend them, and make them thankful to them that would do them pleasure. I am not drunk, I would ye should well know it; and yet I have drunk more than will do me good, for I might have had a pump set up with as[391] good March beer as this was, and ne'er set up an ale-bush for the matter. Well, I am somewhat in wrath, I must needs say; and yet I am not more angry than wise, nor more wise than angry; but I'll fight with the next man I meet, and it be but for luck's sake; and if he love to see himself hurt, let him bring light with him; I'll do it by darkling else, by God's dines. Well, here will I walk, whosoever says nay.

Enter NICHOLAS.

NICH. He that worse may, must hold the candle; but my master is not so wise, as God might have made him. He is gone to seek a hare in a hen's nest, a needle in a bottle of hay, which is as seldom seen as a black swan: he is gone to seek my young mistress; and I think she is better lost than found, for whosoever hath her, hath but a wet eel by the tail. But they may do, as they list; the law is in their own hands; but, and they would be rul'd by me, they should set her on the lee-land, and bid the devil split her; beshrew her fingers, she hath made me watch past mine hour; but I'll watch her a good turn for it.

COOMES. How, who's that? Nicholas!—So, first come, first serv'd; I am for him [*Aside.*]

—How now, Proverb, Proverb? 'sblood, how now, Proverb?

NICH. My name is Nicholas, Richard; and I know your meaning, and I hope ye mean no harm. I thank ye: I am the better for your asking.

COOMES. Where have ye been a-whoring thus late, ha?

NICH. Master Richard, the good wife would not seek her daughter in the oven, unless she had been

there herself: but, good Lord, you are knuckle-deep in dirt!—I warrant, when he was in, he swore Walsingham[392], and chaf'd terrible for the time. [*Aside.*] —Look, the water drops from you as fast as hops.

COOMES. What need'st thou to care, whip-her-Jenny[393], tripe-cheeks?[394], out, you fat ass!

NICH. Good words cost nought: ill words corrupt good manners, Richard; for a hasty man never wants woe. And I had thought you had been my friend; but I see all is not gold that glitters; there's falsehood in fellowship; *amicus certus in re certa cernitur*; time and truth tries all; and 'tis an old proverb, and not so old as true, bought wit is the best; I can see day at a little hole; I know your mind as well as though I were within you; 'tis ill halting before a cripple: go to, you seek to quarrel; but beware of had I wist[395]; so long goes the pot to the water, at length it comes home broken; I know you are as good a man as ever drew sword, or as was e'er girt in a girdle, or as e'er went on neat's leather, or as one shall see upon a summer's day, or as e'er look'd man in the face, or as e'er trod on God's earth, or as e'er broke bread or drunk drink; but he is proper that hath proper conditions[396]; but be not you like the cow, that gives a good sop of milk, and casts it down with her[397] heels; I speak plainly, for plain-dealing is a jewel, and he that useth it shall die a beggar; well, that happens in an hour, that happens not in seven years; a man is not so soon whole as hurt; and you should kill a man, you would kiss his—well, I say little, but I think the more. Yet I'll give him good words; 'tis good to hold a candle before the devil; yet, by God's dine[398], I'll take no wrong, if he had a head as big as Brass[399], or look'd as high as Paul's steeple. [*Aside.*]

COOMES. Sirrah, thou grasshopper, that shalt skip from my sword as from a scythe; I'll cut thee out in collops and eggs, in steaks, in slic'd beef, and fry thee with the fire I shall strike from the pike of thy buckler.

NICH. Ay, Brag's a good dog; threat'ned folks live long.

COOMES. What say ye, sir?

NICH. Why, I say not so much as, How do ye?

COOMES. Do ye not so, sir?

NICH. No, indeed, whatsoever I think; and thought is free.

COOMES. You whoreson wafer-cake, by God's dines, I'll crush ye for this!

NICH. Give an inch, and you'll take an ell; I will not put my finger in a hole, I warrant ye: what, man! ne'er crow so fast, for a blind man may kill a hare; I have known when a plain fellow hath hurt a fencer, so I have: what! a man may be as slow as a snail, but as fierce as a lion, and he be moved; indeed, I am patient, I must needs say, for patience in adversity brings a man to the Three Cranes in the Vintry.

COOMES. Do ye hear? set down your torch; draw, fight, I am for ye.

NICH. And I am for ye too, though it be from this midnight to the next morn.

COOMES. Where be your tools?

NICH. Within a mile of an oak, sir; he's a proud horse will not carry his own provender, I warrant ye.

COOMES. Now am I in my quarrelling humour, and now can I say nothing but, zounds, draw! but I'll untruss, and then have to it. [*Aside.*]

Enter [severally] HODGE and BOY.

HOD. Who's there? boy! honest boy, well-met: where hast thou been?

BOY. O Hodge, Dick Coomes hath been as good as a cry of hounds, to make a breath'd[400] hare of me! but didst thou see my master?

HOD. I met him even now, and he ask'd me for thee, and he is gone up and down, whooing like[401] an owl for thee.

BOY. Owl, ye ass!

HOD. Ass! no, nor glass, for then it had been Owlglass[402]: but who's that, boy?

BOY. By the mass, 'tis our Coomes and Nicholas; and it seems they are providing to fight.

HOD. Then we shall have fine sport, i'faith. Sirrah, let's stand close, and when they have fought a

bout or two, we'll run away with the torch, and leave them to fight darkling, shall we?

BOY. Content; I'll get the torch: stand close.

COOMES. So now my back hath room to reach: I do not love to be lac'd in, when I go to lace a rascal. I pray God, Nicholas prove not a fly:[403] it would do me good to deal with a good man now, that we might have half-a-dozen good smart strokes. Ha, I have seen the day I could have danc'd in my fight, one, two, three, four, and five, on the head of him; six, seven, eight, nine, and ten on the sides of him; and, if I went so far as fifteen, I warrant I shewed[404] him a trick of one-and-twenty; but I have not fought this four days, and I lack a little practice of my ward; but I shall make a shift: ha, close [*Aside*].—Are ye disposed, sir?

NICH. Yes, indeed, I fear no colours: change sides, Richard.

COOMES. Change the gallows! I'll see thee hang'd first.

NICH. Well, I see the fool will not leave his bable[405] for the Tower of London.

COOMES. Fool, ye rogue! nay, then, fall to it.

NICH. Good goose, bite not.

COOMES. 'Sblood, how pury I am! Well, I see exercise is all: I must practice my weapons oft'ner; I must have a goal or two at foot-ball, before I come to my right kind [*Aside*]. Give me thy hand, Nicholas: thou art a better man than I took thee for, and yet thou art not so good a man as I.

NICH. You dwell by ill-neighbours, Richard; that makes ye praise yourself.

COOMES. Why, I hope thou wilt say I am a man?

NICH. Yes, I'll say so, if I should see ye hang'd.

COOMES. Hang'd, ye rogue! nay, then, have at ye.

[*While they fight, exeunt HODGE and BOY with the torch.*]

Zounds, the light is gone!

NICH. O Lord, it is as dark as pitch!

COOMES. Well, here I'll lie, with my buckler thus, lest striking up and down at randall[406] the rogue might hurt me, for I cannot see to save it, and I'll hold my peace, lest my voice should bring him where I am. [*Stand aside.*]

NICH. 'Tis good to have a cloak for the rain; a bad shift is better than none at all; I'll sit here, as if I were as dead as a door-nail. [*Stand aside.*][407]

Enter MR BARNES and MR GOURSEY.

MR GOUR. Hark! there's one hallooes.

MR BARNES. And there's another.

MR GOUR. And everywhere we come, I hear some halloo,
And yet it is our haps to meet with none.

MR BAR. I marvel where your Hodge is and my man.

MR GOUR. Ay, and our wives? we cannot meet with them,
Nor with the boy, nor Mall, nor Frank, nor Philip,
Nor yet with Coomes, and yet we ne'er stood still.
Well, I am very angry with my wife,
And she shall find I am not pleas'd with her,
If we meet ne'er so soon: but 'tis my hope[408]
She hath had as blind a journey on't as we;
Pray God, she have, and worse, if worse may be!

MR BAR. This is but short-liv'd envy[409], Master Goursey:
But, come, what say ye to my policy?

MR GOUR. I'faith, 'tis good, and we will practise it;

But, sir, it must be handled cunningly,
Or all is marr'd; our wives have subtle heads,
And they will soon perceive a drift device.

Enter SIR RALPH SMITH.

SIR RALPH. So ho!

MR GOUR. So ho!

SIR RALPH. Who there?

MR BAR. Here's one or two.

SIR RALPH. Is Will there?

MR BAR. No. Philip?

MR GOUR. Frank?

SIR RALPH. No, no.—
Was ever man deluded thus like me?
I think some spirit leads me thus amiss,
As I have often heard that some have been
Thus in the nights.
But yet this mazes me; where e'er I come,
Some asks me still for Frank or Philip,
And none of them can tell me where Will is. [*Aside.*

WILL. So ho! |

PHIL. So ho! | [*They hallo within.*

HOD. So ho! |

BOY. So ho! |

SIR RALPH. Zounds, now I hear four halloo at the least!
One had a little voice; then, that's the wench
My man hath lost: well, I will answer all. [*_Aside.*]
—So ho!

[*Enter* HODGE.]

HOD. Whoop, whoop!

SIR RALPH. Who's there? Will?

HOD. No, sir; honest Hodge: but, I pray ye, sir, did ye not meet with a boy with a torch? he is run away from me, a plague on him!

SIR RALPH. Heyday, from Frank and Philip to a torch,
And to a boy! nay, zounds, then, hap as 'twill. [*Aside.*

[*Exeunt* SIR RALPH and HODGE severally.]

MR GOUR. Who goes there?

[*Enter* WILL.]

WILL. Guess here.

MR BAR. Philip?

WILL. Philip! no, faith; my name's Will—ill-Will, for I was never worse: I was even now with him, and might have been still, but that I fell into a ditch and lost him, and now I am going up and down to seek him.

MR GOUR. What would'st thou do with him?

WILL. Why, I would have him go with me to my master's.

MR GOUR. Who's thy master?

WILL. Why, Sir Ralph Smith; and thither he promis'd me he would come; if he keep his word, so 'tis.

MR BAR. What was a[410] doing, when thou first found'st him?

WILL. Why, he halloo'd for one Francis, and Francis halloo'd for him; I halloo'd for my master, and my master for me; but we miss'd still, meeting contrary, Philip and Francis with me and my master, and I and my master with Philip and Frank.

MR GOUR. Why, wherefore is Sir Ralph so late abroad?

WILL. Why, he meant to kill a buck; I'll say so to save his honesty, but my Nan was his mark [*Aside*]. And he sent me for his bow, and when I came, I halloo'd for him; but I never saw such luck to miss him; it hath almost made me mad.

MR BAR. Well, stay with us; perhaps Sir Ralph and he will come anon: hark! I do hear one halloo.

Enter PHILIP.

PHIL. Is this broad waking in a winter's night?
I am broad walking in a winter's night—
Broad indeed, because I am abroad—
But these broad fields, methinks, are not so broad
That they may keep me forth of narrow ditches.
Here's a hard world!
For I can hardly keep myself upright in it:
I am marvellous dutiful—but, so ho!

WILL. So ho!

PHIL. Who's there?

WILL. Here's Will.

PHIL. What, Will! how 'scap'st thou?

WILL. What, sir?

PHIL. Nay, not hanging, but drowning: wert thou in a pond or a ditch?

WILL. A pestilence on it! is't you, Philip? no, faith, I was but dirty a little: but here's one or two ask'd for ye.

PHIL. Who be they, man?

MR BAR. Philip, 'tis I and Master Goursey.

PHIL. Father, O father, I have heard them say
The days of ignorance are pass'd and done;
But I am sure the nights of ignorance
Are not yet pass'd, for this is one of them.
But where's my sister?

MR BAR. Why, we cannot tell.

PHIL. Where's Francis?

MR GOUR. Neither saw we him.

PHIL. Why, this is fine.
What, neither he nor I, nor she nor you,
Nor I nor she, nor you and I, till[411] now,
Can meet, could meet, or e'er, I think, shall meet!
Call ye this wooing? no, 'tis Christmas sport
Of Hob-man-blind[412], all blind, all seek to catch,
All miss—but who comes here?

Enter FRANK and his BOY.

FRAN. O, have I catch'd ye, sir? It was your doing

That made me have this pretty dance to-night;
Had not you spoken, my mother had not scar'd me:
But I will swinge ye for it.

PHIL. Keep the king's peace!

FRAN. How! art thou become a constable?
Why, Philip, where hast thou been all this while?

PHIL. Why, where you were not: but, I pray [you], where's my sister?

FRAN. Why, man, I saw her not; but I have sought her,
As I should seek—

PHIL. A needle, have ye not?
Why you, man, are the needle that she seeks
To work withal! Well, Francis, do you hear?
You must not answer so, that you have sought her;
But have ye found her? faith, and if you have,
God give ye joy of that ye found with her!

FRAN[413]. I saw her not: how could I find her?

MR GOUR. Why, could ye miss from Master Barnes's house
Unto his coney-burrow?

FRAN. Whether I could or no, father, I did.

PHIL. Father, I did! Well, Frank, wilt thou believe me?
Thou dost not know how much this same doth grieve me:
Shall it be said thou miss'd so plain a way,
When as so fair a wench did for thee stay?

FRAN. Zounds, man!

PHIL. Zounds, man! and if thou hadst been blind,
The coney-burrow thou needest must find.
I tell, thee, Francis, had it been my case,
And I had been a wooer in thy place,
I would have laid my head unto the ground,
And scented out my wench's way, like a hound;
I would have crept upon my knees all night,
And have made the flintstones links to give me light;
Nay, man, I would.

FRAN. Good Lord, what you would do!
Well, we shall see one day, how you can woo.

MR GOUR. Come, come, we see that we have all been cross'd; Therefore, let's go, and seek them we
have lost. [*Exeunt*]

Enter MALL.

[MAL.] Am I alone? doth not my mother come?
Her torch I see not, which I well might see,
If any way she were coming toward me:
Why, then, belike she's gone some other way;
And may she go, till I bid her [to] turn!
Far shall her way be then, and little fair,
Foe she hath hindered me of my good turn;
God send her wet and weary, ere she turn!
I had been at Oxenford, and to-morrow
Have been releas'd from all my maiden's sorrow,
And tasted joy, had not my mother been;
God, I beseech thee, make it her worst sin!
How many maids this night lies in their beds,
And dream that they have lost their maidenheads!
Such dreams, such slumbers I had too enjoy'd,

If waking malice had not them destroy'd.
A starved man with double death doth die,
To have the meat might save him in his eye,
And may not have it: so am I tormented,
To starve for joy I see, yet am prevented.
Well, Frank, although thou wooedst and quickly won,
Yet shall my love to thee be never done;
I'll run through hedge and ditch, through brakes and briars,
To come to thee, sole lord of my desires:
Short wooing is the best, an hour, not years,
For long-debating love is full of fears.
But, hark! I hear one tread. O, were't my brother,
Or Frank, or any man, but not my mother!

[*Enter SIR RALPH SMITH.*]

SIR RALPH. O, when will this same year of night have end?
Long-look'd for day's sun, when wilt thou ascend?
Let not this thieve[414] friend, misty veil of night,
Encroach on day, and shadow thy fair light,
Whilst thou com'st tardy from thy Thetis' bed,
Blushing forth golden hair and glorious red;
O, stay not long, bright lanthorn of the day,
To light my miss'd-way feet to my right way!

MAL. It is a man, his big voice tells me so,
Much am I not acquainted with it, tho';
And yet mine ear, sound's true distinguisher,
Boys[415] that I have been more familiar
With it than now I am: well, I do judge,
It is no envious fellow, out[416] of grudge;
Therefore I'll plead acquaintance, hire his guiding,
And buy of him some place of close abiding,
Till that my mother's malice be expir'd,
And we may joy in that is long desired [*Aside*]
—Who's there?

SIR RALPH. Are ye a maid? No question, this is she
My man doth miss: faith, since she lights on me,
I do not mean till day to let her go;
For whe'er[417] she is my man's love, I will know [*Aside*]
Hark ye, maid, if [a] maid, are ye so light,
That you can see to wander in the night?

MAL. Hark ye, true man, if true, I tell ye, no;
I cannot see at all which way I go.

SIR RALPH. Fair maid, is't so? say, had ye ne'er a fall?

MAL. Fair man, not so; no, I had none at all.

SIR RALPH. Could you not stumble on one man, I pray?

MAL. No, no such block till now came in my way.

SIR RALPH. Am I that block, sweet tripe; then, fall and try.

MAL. The ground's too hard a feather-bed; not I.

SIR RALPH. Why, how, and you had met with such a stump?

MAL. Why, if he had been your height, I meant to jump.

SIR RALPH. Are ye so nimble?

MAL. Nimble as a doe.

SIR RALPH. Bak'd in a pie.

MAL. Of ye.

SIR RALPH. Good meat, ye know.

MAL. Ye hunt sometimes?

SIR RALPH. I do.

MAL. What take ye?

SIR RALPH. Deer.

MAL. You'll ne'er strike rascal[418]?

SIR RALPH. Yes, when ye are there.

MAL. Will ye strike me?

SIR RALPH. Yes: will ye strike again?

MAL. No, sir: it fits not maids to fight with men.

SIR RALPH. I wonder, wench, how I thy name might know.

MAL. Why, you may find it, sir, in th'Christcross row[419].

SIR RALPH. Be my schoolmistress, teach me how to spell it.

MAL. No, faith, I care not greatly, if I tell it;
My name is Mary Barnes.

SIR RALPH. How, wench? Mall Barnes!

MAL. The very same.

SIR RALPH. Why, this is strange.

MAL. I pray, sir, what's your name?

SIR RALPH. Why, Sir Ralph Smith doth wonder, wench, at this;
Why, what's the cause thou art abroad so late?

MAL. What, Sir Ralph Smith! nay, then, I will disclose
All the whole cause to him, in him repose
My hopes, my love: God him, I hope, did send
Our loves and both our mothers' hates to end. [*Aside.*]
—Gentle Sir Ralph, if you my blush might see,
You then would say I am ashamed to be
Found, like a wand'ring stray, by such a knight,
So far from home at such a time of night:
But my excuse is good; love first by fate
Is cross'd, controll'd, and sundered by fell hate.
Frank Goursey is my love, and he loves me;
But both our mothers hate and disagree;
Our fathers like the match and wish it done;
And so it had, had not our mothers come;
To Oxford we concluded both to go;
Going to meet, they came; we parted so;
My mother followed me, but I ran fast,
Thinking who went from hate had need make haste;
Take me she cannot, though she still pursue:
But now, sweet knight, I do repose on you;
Be you my orator and plead my right,
And get me one good day for this bad night.

SIR RALPH. Alas, good heart, I pity thy hard hap!
And I'll employ all that I may for thee.
Frank Goursey, wench! I do commend thy choice:
Now I remember I met one Francis,
As I did seek my man,—then, that was he,—

And Philip too,—belike that was thy brother:
Why, now I find how I did lose myself,
And wander[420] up and down, mistaking so.
Give me thy hand, Mall: I will never leave,
Till I have made your mothers friends again,
And purchas'd to ye both your hearts' delight,
And for this same one bad many a good night.
'Twill not be long, ere that Aurora will,
Deck'd in the glory of a golden sun,
Open the crystal windows of the east,
To make the earth enamour'd of her face,
When we shall have clear light to see our way:
Come; night being done, expect a happy day.

[_Exeunt.

Enter_ MISTRESS BARNES.

MRS BAR. O, what a race this peevish girl hath led me!
How fast I ran, and now how weary I am!
I am so out of breath I scarce can speak,—
What shall I do?—and cannot overtake her.
'Tis late and dark, and I am far from home:
May there not thieves lie watching hereabout,
Intending mischief unto them they meet?
There may; and I am much afraid of them,
Being alone without all company.
I do repent me of my coming forth;
And yet I do not,—they had else been married,
And that I would not for ten times more labour.
But what a winter of cold fear I thole[421],
Freezing my heart, lest danger should betide me!
What shall I do to purchase company?
I hear some halloo here about the fields:
Then here I'll set my torch upon this hill,
Whose light shall beacon-like conduct them to it;
They that have lost their way, seeing a light,
For it may be seen far off in the night,
Will come to it. Well, here I'll lie unseen,
And look who comes, and choose my company.
Perhaps my daughter may first come to it.

[Enter MISTRESS GOURSEY.]

MRS GOUR. Where am I now? nay, where was I even now?
Nor now, nor then, nor where I shall be, know I.
I think I am going home: I may as well
Be[422] going from home; 'tis[423] so very dark,
I cannot see how to direct a step.
I lost my man, pursuing of my son;
My son escap'd me too: now, all alone,
I am enforc'd[424] to wander up and down.
Barnes's wife's[425] abroad: pray God, that she
May have as good a dance, nay, ten times worse!
O, but I fear she hath not; she hath light
To see her way. O, that some[426] bridge would break,
That she might fall into some deep digg'd ditch,
And either break her bones or drown herself!
I would these mischiefs I could wish to her
Might light on her!—but, soft; I see a light:
I will go near; it is comfortable,
After this night's sad spirits-dulling darkness.
How now? what, is it set to keep itself?

MRS BAR. A plague on't, is she there? [*Aside.*]

MRS GOUR. O, how it cheers and quickens up my thoughts!

MRS BAR. O that it were the basilisk's fell eye,
To poison thee! [*Aside.*]

MRS GOUR. I care not, if I take it—
Sure none is here to hinder me—
And light me home.

MRS BAR. I had rather she were hang'd
Than I should set it there to do her good. [*Aside.*]

MRS GOUR. I'faith, I will.

MRS BAR. I'faith, you shall not, mistress;
I'll venture a burnt finger but I'll have it. [*Aside.*]

MRS GOUR. Yet Barnes's wife would chafe, if that she knew,
That I had this good luck to get a light.

MRS BAR. And so she doth; but praise your[427] luck at parting.
[*Aside.*]

MRS GOUR. O, that it were[428] her light, good faith, that she
Might darkling walk about as well as I!

MRS BAR. O, how this mads me, that she hath her wish! [*Aside.*]

MRS GOUR. How I would laugh to see her trot about!

MRS BAR. O, I could cry for anger and for rage! [*Aside.*]

MRS GOUR. But who should set it here, I marv'l, a God's name.

MRS BAR. One that will have't from you in the devil's name. [*Aside.*]

MRS GOUR. I'll lay my life that it was Barnes's son.

MRS BAR. No, forsooth, it was Barnes's wife.

MRS GOUR. A plague upon her, how she made me start! [*Aside.*]
Mistress, let go the torch.

MRS BAR. No, but I will not.

MRS GOUR. I'll thrust it in thy face, then.

MRS BAR. But you shall not.

MRS GOUR. Let go, I say.

MRS BAR. Let you go, for 'tis mine.

MRS GOUR. But my possession says, it is none of thine.

MRS BAR. Nay, I have hold too.

MRS GOUR. Well, let go thy hold,
Or I will spurn thee.

MRS BAR. Do; I can spurn thee too.

MRS GOUR. Canst thou?

MRS BAR. Ay, that I can.

Enter MASTER GOURSEY *and* MASTER BARNES,
[PHILIP, FRANK, &c.]

MR GOUR. Why, how now, women? how unlike to women
Are ye both now! come, part, come, part, I say.

MR BAR. Why, what immodesty is this in you!

Come, part, I say; fie, fie.

MRS BAR. Fie, fie? I say she shall not have my torch.—
Give me thy torch, boy:—I will run a-tilt,
And burn out both her eyes in my encounter.

MRS GOUR. Give room, and let us have this hot career[429].

MR GOUR. I say ye shall not: wife, go to, tame your thoughts,
That are so mad with fury.

MR BAR. And, sweet wife,
Temper your rage with patience; do not be
Subject so much to such misgovernment.

MRS BAR. Shall I not, sir, when such a strumpet wrongs me?

MR GOUR. How, strumpet, Mistress Barnes! nay, I pray, hark ye:
I oft indeed have heard ye call her so,
And I have thought upon it, why ye should
Twit her with name of strumpet; do you know
Any hurt by her, that you term her so?

MR BAR. No, on my life; rage only makes her say so.

MR GOUR. But I would know whence this same rage should come;
Where's smoke, there's fire; and my heart misgives
My wife's intemperance hath got that name;—
And, Mistress Barnes, I doubt and shrewdly[430] doubt,
And some great cause begets this doubt in me,
Your husband and my wife doth wrong us both.

MR BAR. How, think ye so? nay, Master Goursey, then,
You run in debt to my opinion,
Because you pay not such advised wisdom,
As I think due unto my good conceit.

MR GOUR. Then still I fear I shall your debtor prove.

[MR BAR.] Then I arrest you in the name of love;
Not bail, but present answer to my plea;
And in the court of reason we will try,
If that good thoughts should believe jealousy.

PHIL. Why, look ye, mother, this is 'long of you.—
For God's sake, father, hark? why, these effects
Come still from women's malice: part, I pray.—
Coomes, Will, and Hodge, come all, and help us part them!—
Father, but hear me speak one word—no more.

FRAN. Father, but hear him[431] speak, then use your will.

PHIL. Cry peace between ye for a little while.

MRS GOUR. Good husband, hear him speak

MRS BAR. Good husband, hear him.

COOMES. Master, hear him speak; he's a good wise young stripling for his years, I tell ye, and perhaps may speak wiser than an elder body; therefore hear him.

HOD. Master, hear; and make an end; you may kill one another in jest, and be hanged in earnest.

MR GOUR. Come, let us hear him. Then speak quickly, Philip.

MR BAR. Thou shouldst have done ere this; speak, Philip, speak.

MRS BAR. O Lord, what haste you make to hurt yourselves!—
Good Philip, use some good persuasions
To make them friends.

PHIL. Yes, I'll do what I can.—
Father and Master Goursey, both attend.
It is presumption in so young a man
To teach where he might learn, or to[432] direct,
Where he hath had direction; but in duty
He may persuade as long as his persuade
Is back'd with reason and a rightful suit.
Physic's first rule is this, as I have learned:
Kill the effect by cutting off the cause.
The same effects of ruffian outrages
Comes by the cause of malice in your wives;
Had not they two been foes, you had been friends,
And we had been at home, and this same war
In peaceful sleep had ne'er been dreamt upon.
Mother and Mistress Goursey, to make them friends,
Is to be friends yourselves: you are the cause,
And these effects proceed, you know, from you;
Your hates gives life unto these killing strifes,
But die, and if that envy[433] die in you.—
Fathers, yet stay.—O, speak!—O, stay a while!—
Francis, persuade thy mother.—Master Goursey,
If that my mother will resolve[434] your mind[435]
That 'tis but mere suspect, not common proof,
And if my father swear he's innocent,
As I durst pawn my soul with him he is,
And if your wife vow truth and constancy,
Will you be then persuaded?

MR GOUR. Philip, if thy father will remit
The wounds I gave him, and if these conditions
May be performed, I banish all my wrath.

MR BAR. And if thy mother will but clear me, Philip,
As I am ready to protest I am,
Then Master Goursey is my friend again.

PHIL. Hark, mother; now you hear that your desires
May be accomplished; they will both be friends,
If you'll perform these easy articles.

MRS BAR. Shall I be friends with such an enemy?

PHIL. What say you[436] unto my persuade?

MRS BAR. I say she's[437] my deadly enemy.

PHIL. Ay, but she will be your friend, if you revolt.

MRS BAR. The words I said! what, shall I eat a truth?

PHIL. Why, hark ye, mother.

FRAN. Mother, what say you?

MRS GOUR. Why, this I say, she slandered my good name.

FRAN. But if she now deny it, 'tis no defame.

MRS GOUR. What, shall I think her hate will yield so much?

FRAN. Why, doubt it not; her spirit may be such.

MR GOUR. Why, will it be?

PHIL. Yet stay, I have some hope.
Mother, why, mother, why, hear ye[438]:
Give me your hand; it is no more but thus;
'Tis easy labour to shake hands with her:
Little[439] breath is spent in speaking of fair words,

When wrath hath violent delivery.

MR BAR. What, shall we be resolv'd?

MRS BAR. O husband, stay!—
Stay, Master Goursey: though your wife doth hate me,
And bears unto me malice infinite
And endless, yet I will respect your safeties;
I would not have you perish by our means:
I must confess that only suspect,
And no proof else, hath fed my hate to her.

MRS GOUR. And, husband, I protest by heaven and earth
That her suspect is causeless and unjust,
And that I ne'er had such a vild[440] intent;
Harm she imagin'd, where as none was meant.

PHIL. Lo, sir, what would ye more?

MR BAR. Yes, Philip, this;
That I confirm him in my innocence
By this large universe.

MR GOUR. By that I swear,
I'll credit none of you, until I hear
Friendship concluded straight between them two:
If I see that they willingly will do,
Then I'll imagine all suspicion ends;
I may be then assured, they being friends.

PHIL. Mother, make full my wish, and be it so.

MRS BAR. What, shall I sue for friendship to my foe?

PHIL. No: if she yield, will you?

MRS BAR. It may be, ay.

PHIL. Why, this is well. The other I will try.—
Come, Mistress Goursey, do you first agree.

MRS GOUR. What, shall I yield unto mine enemy?

PHIL. Why, if she will, will you?

MRS GOUR. Perhaps I will

PHIL. Nay, then, I find this goes well forward still.
Mother, give me your hand [*to MRS G.*], give me yours too—
Be not so loth; some good thing I must do;
But lay your torches by, I like not them;
Come, come, deliver them unto your men:
Give me your hands. So, now, sir, here I stand,
Holding two angry women in my hand:
And I must please them both; I could please tone[441],
But it is hard when there is two to one,
Especially of women; but 'tis so,
They shall be pleas'd, whether they will or no.—
Which will come first? what, both give back! ha, neither!
Why, then, yond help that both may come together[442].
So, stand still, stand [*still*] but a little while,
And see, how I your angers will beguile.
Well, yet there is no hurt; why, then, let me
Join these two hands, and see how they'll agree:
Peace, peace! they cry; look how they friendly kiss!
Well, all this while there is no harm in this:
Are not these two twins? twins should be both alike,
If tone speaks fair, the tother should not strike:

Jesus, the warriors will not offer blows!
Why, then, 'tis strange that you two should be foes.
O yes, you'll say, your weapons are your tongues;
Touch lip with lip, and they are bound from wrongs:
Go to, embrace, and say, if you be friends,
That here the angry women's quarrels ends.

MRS GOUR. Then here it ends, if Mistress Barnes say so.

MRS BAR. If you say ay, I list not to say no.

MR GOUR. If they be friends, by promise we agree.

MR BAR. And may this league of friendship ever be!

PHIL. What say'st thou, Frank? doth not this fall out well?

FRAN. Yes, if my Mall were here, then all were well.

Enter SIR RALPH SMITH with MALL. [MALL stays behind.]

SIR RALPH. Yonder they be, Mall: stay, stand close, and stir not
Until I call. God save ye, gentlemen!

MR BAR. What, Sir Ralph Smith! you are welcome, man:
We wond'ered when we heard you were abroad.

SIR RALPH. Why, sir, how heard ye that I was abroad?

MR BAR. By your man.

SIR RALPH. My man! where is he?

WILL. Here.

SIR RALPH. O, ye are a trusty squire!

NICH. It had been better, and he had said, a sure card.

PHIL. Why, sir?

NICH. Because it is the proverb.

PHIL. Away, ye ass!

NICH. An ass goes a four legs; I go of two, Christ cross.

PHIL. Hold your tongue.

NICH. And make no more ado.

MR GOUR. Go to, no more ado. Gentle Sir Ralph,
Your man is not in fault for missing you,
For he mistook by us, and we by him.

SIR RALPH. And I by you, which now I well perceive.
But tell me, gentlemen, what made ye all
Be from your beds this night, and why thus late
Are your wives walking here about the fields[443]:
'Tis strange to see such women of accompt
Here; but I guess some great occasion [prompt.]

MR GOUR. Faith, this occasion, sir: women will jar;
And jar they did to-day, and so they parted;
We, knowing women's malice let alone
Will, canker-like, eat farther in their hearts,
Did seek a sudden cure, and thus it was:
A match between his daughter and my son;
No sooner motioned but 'twas agreed,
And they no sooner saw but wooed and lik'd:
They have it sought to cross, and cross['d] it thus.

SIR RALPH. Fie, Mistress Barnes and Mistress Goursey both;
The greatest sin wherein your souls may sin,
I think, is this, in crossing of true love:
Let me persuade ye.

MRS BAR. Sir, we are persuaded,
And I and Mistress Goursey are both friends;
And, if my daughter were but found again,
Who now is missing, she had my consent
To be dispos'd of to her own content.

SIR RALPH. I do rejoice that what I thought to do,
Ere I begin, I find already done:
Why, this will please your friends at Abington.
Frank, if thou seek'st that way, there thou shalt find
Her, whom I hold the comfort of thy mind.

MAL. He shall not seek me; I will seek him out,
Since of my mother's grant I need not doubt.

MR[S] BAR. Thy mother grants, my girl, and she doth pray
To send unto you both a joyful day!

HOD. Nay, Mistress Barnes, I wish her better: that those joyful days may be turn'd to joyful nights.

COOMES. Faith, 'tis a pretty wench, and 'tis pity but she should have him.

NICH. And, Mistress Mary, when ye go to bed, God send you good rest, and a peck of fleas in your nest, every one as big as Francis!

PHIL. Well said, wisdom! God send thee wise children!

NICH. And you more money.

PHIL. Ay, so wish I.

NICH. 'Twill be a good while, ere you wish your skin full of eyelet-holes.

PHIL. Frank, hark ye: brother, now your wooing's done,
The next thing now you do is for a son,
I prythee; for, i'faith, I should be glad
To have myself called nunkle[444], and thou dad.
Well, sister, if that Francis play the man,
My mother must be grandam and you mam.
To it, Francis—to it, sister!—God send ye joy!
'Tis fine to sing, dancey, my own sweet boy!

FRAN. Well, sir, jest on.

PHIL. Nay, sir[445], do you jest on.

MR BAR. Well, may she prove a happy wife to him!

MR GOUR. And may he prove as happy unto her!

SIR RALPH. Well, gentlemen, good hap betide them both!
Since 'twas my hap thus happily to meet,
To be a witness of this sweet contract,
I do rejoice; wherefore, to have this joy
Longer present with me, I do request
That all of you will be my promis'd guests:
This long night's labour doth desire some rest,
Besides this wished end; therefore, I pray,
Let me detain ye but a dinner time:
Tell me, I pray, shall I obtain so much?

MR BAR. Gentle Sir Ralph, your courtesy is such,
As may impose command unto us all;
We will be thankful bold at your request.

PHIL. I pray, Sir Ralph, what cheer shall we have?

SIR RALPH. I'faith, country fare, mutton and veal,
Perchance a duck or goose [upon the platter.]

MAL. O, I am sick!

ALL. How now, Mall? what's the matter?

MAL. Father and mother, if you needs would know,
He nam'd a goose, which is my stomach's foe.

PHIL. Come, come, she is with child of some odd jest,
And now she's sick, till that she bring[446] it forth.

MAL. A jest, quoth you! well, brother, if it be,
I fear 'twill prove an earnest unto me.
Goose, said ye, sir? O, that same very name
Hath in it much variety of shame!
Of all the birds that ever yet was seen,
I would not have them graze upon this green;
I hope they will not, for this crop is poor,
And they may pasture upon greater store:
But yet 'tis pity that they let them pass,
And like a common bite the Muse's grass.
Yet this I fear: if Frank and I should kiss,
Some creaking goose would chide us with a hiss;
I mean not that goose that
Sings it knows not what;
'Tis not that hiss, when one says, "hist, come hither,"
Nor that same hiss that setteth dogs together,
Nor that same hiss that by a fire doth stand,
And hisseth T. or F.[447] upon the hand;
But 'tis a hiss, and I'll unlace my coat,
For I should sound[448] sure, if I heard that note,
And then green ginger for the green goose cries,
Serves not the turn—I turn'd the white of eyes.
The *rosa-solis* yet that makes me live
Is favour[449] that these gentlemen may give;
But if they be displeas'd, then pleas'd am I
To yield myself a hissing death to die.
Yet I hope here is[450] none consents to kill,
But kindly take the favour of good-will.
If any thing be in the pen to blame,
Then here stand I to blush the writer's shame:
If this be bad, he promises a better;
Trust him, and he will prove a right true debtor.

[*Exeunt.*]

FINIS.

LOOK ABOUT YOU.

_EDITION.

A Pleasant Comedie called Looke About you. As it was lately played by the right honourable the Lord High Admirall his seruaunts. London, Printed for William Ferbrand, and are to be solde at his shop at the signe of the Crowne neere Guildhall gate_. 1600. 4°.

This drama is now first reprinted from the original edition, which has no division into acts and scenes. Mr Halliwell ("Dict. of Old Plays," 1860, p. 149) observes: "This is a diverting play, and the plot of it is founded on the English historians of the reign of Henry II." [451]

"Look About You" is not only a *pleasant* comedy, full of bustle and amusing episodes, and abundantly stored with illustrations of manners, but it is a piece which exhibits, on the part of the unknown writer, a considerable share of power and originality. The crazed Earl of Gloucester is not an ill-conceived character, and may have supplied a hint to Shakespeare; and the cross-purposes, stratagems, and deceptions, of which it is full, remind us of our great dramatist's own "Comedy of Errors," with which, however, it has nothing in common. It is by no means improbable, at the same time, that "Look About You," and not Shakespeare's play, was the piece performed at Gray's Inn in December 1594. [452]

Skink, who fills the part assigned to the vice in the earlier comedies, is a well-sustained and entertaining character, and the series of transformations which he and the rest undergo, even while they occasionally perplex us a little, as the plot thickens, and the figures on the stage multiply, can hardly fail to amuse.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE [453]

HENRY II., *King of England.*

PRINCE HENRY, *the young usurped King.*

PRINCE JOHN.

PRINCE RICHARD.

EARLS OF GLOUCESTER, LANCASTER, CHESTER, LEICESTER, *and* MORTON.

SIR RICHARD FAUCONBRIDGE.

ROBIN HOOD, *Earl of Huntington.*

SKINK, *disguised as a hermit.*

THE QUEEN.

LADY FAUCONBRIDGE.

BLOCK.

Warden of the Fleet.

REDCAP, *a messenger.*

Constable and Watch.

A Pursuivant.

A Drawer.

Music.

A PLEASANT COMEDY CALLED LOOK ABOUT YOU.

SCENE THE FIRST.

Enter ROBERT HOOD, *a young Nobleman, a Servant with him, with riding wands in their hands, as if they had been new-lighted.*

ROB. Go, walk the horses, wait me on the hill;
This is the hermit's cell; go out of sight.
My business with him must not be reveal'd
To any mortal creature but himself.

SERV. I'll wait your honour in the cross highway. [*Exit.*]

ROB. Do so. Hermit devout and reverend,
If drowsy age keep not thy stiffened joints
On thy unrestful bed, or if the hours

Of holy orisons detain thee not,
Come forth.

Enter SKINK, like an hermit.

SKINK. Good morrow, son,
Good morrow; and God bless thee, Huntington,
A brighter gleam of true nobility
Shines not in any youth more than in thee.
Thou shalt be rich in honour, full of speed;
Thou shalt win foes by fear, and friends by meed.

ROB. Father, I come not now to know my fate;
Important business urgeth princely Richard [*Deliver letters.*]
In these terms to salute thy reverent age.
Read and be brief; I know some cause of trust
Made him employ me for his messenger.

SKINK. A cause of trust indeed, true-honoured youth.
Princes had need, in matters of import,
To make nice choice. Fair earl, if I not err,
Thou art the prince's ward?

ROB. Father, I am
His ward, his chamberlain, and bed-fellow.

SKINK. Fair fall thee, honourable Robert Hood!
Wend to Prince Richard: say, though I am loth
To use my skill in conjuration,
Yet Skink, that poisoned red-cheek'd Rosamond,
Shall make appearance at the parliament;
He shall be there by noon, assure his grace.

ROB. Good-morrow, father, see you fail him not,
For though the villain did a horrible deed,
Yet hath the young king Richard, and Earl John,
Sworn to defend him from his greatest foes.

SKINK. God's benison be with thee, noble Earl!

ROB. Adieu, good father. Holla, there! my horse!
[Exit.

SKINK. Up, spur the kicking jade, while I make speed
To conjure Skink out of his hermit's weed;
Lie there, religion: keep thy master grave,
And on the fair trust of these princes' word
To court again, Skink. But, before I go,
Let mischief take advice of villainy,
Why to the hermit letters should be sent,
To post Skink to the court incontinent.
Is there no trick in this? ha! let me see!
Or do they know already I am he?
If they do so, faith, westward[454] then with Skink
But what an ass am I to be thus fond!
Here lies the hermit, whom I dying found
Some two months since, when I was hourly charg'd
With Hugh the crier and with constables.
I saw him in the ready way to heaven;
I help'd him forward: 'twas a holy deed;
And there he lies some six foot in the ground.
Since where, and since, I kept me in his weeds,
O, what a world of fools have fill'd my cells!
For fortunes, run-aways, stol'n goods, lost cattle!
Among the number, all the faction
That take the young king's part against the old,
Come to myself to hearken for myself.

So did the adverse party make inquire,
But either fall full of contrary desire:
The old king's part would kill me being stain'd;
The young king's keep me from their violence.
So then thou need'st not fear; go boldly on,
Brave Hal, Prince Dick, and my spruce hot-spur John,
Here's their safe-conduct. O, but for Rosamond!
A fig for Rosamond! to this hope I'll lean,
At a queen's bidding I did kill a quean.

SCENE THE SECOND.

Sound trumpets; enter with a Herald, on the one side, HENRY THE SECOND, crowned, after him LANCASTER, CHESTER, SIR RICHARD FAUCONBRIDGE: on the other part, KING HENRY the son, crowned, Herald after him; after him PRINCE RICHARD, JOHN, LEICESTER. Being set, enters fantastical ROBERT OF GLOSTER in a gown girt; walks up and down.

OLD KING. Why doth not Gloster take his honoured seat?

GLO. In faith, my liege, Gloster is in a land,
Where neither surety is to sit or stand.
I only do appear as I am summoned,
And will await without till I am call'd.

YOUNG K. Why, hear you, Gloster?

GLO. Henry, I do hear you.

YOUNG K. And why not *King*?

GLO. What's he that sits so near you?

RICH. King too.

GLO. Two kings? Ha, ha!

OLD K. Gloster, sit, we charge thee.

GLO. I will obey your charge; I will sit down,
But in this house on no seat but the ground.

JOHN. The seat's too good.

GLO. I know it, brother John.

JOHN. Thy brother?

OLD K. Silence there.

YOUNG KING. Pass to the bills, Sir Richard Fauconbridge.

FAU. My lieges both, old Fauconbridge is proud
Of your right honour'd charge. He that worst may
Will strain his old eyes: God send peace this day!
A bill for the releasement of the queen preferr'd,
By Henry the young King, Richard the Prince, John, Earl
Of Morton, Bohmine, Earl of Leicester, and the Commons.

OLD K. Did you prefer this bill?

ALL. We did.

CHES. and LAN. Ye did not well.

GLO. Why, this is good; now shall we have the hell.

THREE BRO. Chester and Lancaster, you wrong the king.

CHES. and LAN. Our king we do not.

YOUNG K. Do not you see me crown'd?

LAN. But whilst he lives, we to none else are bound.

LEI. Is it not wrong, think you, when all the world['s]
Troubled with rumour of a captive queen,
Imprisoned by her husband in a realm,
Where her own son doth wear a diadem?
Is like an head of people mutinous,
Still murmuring at the shame done her and us?
Is it not more wrong, when her mother zeal,
Sounded through Europe, Afric, Asia,
Tells in the hollow of news-thirsting ears,
Queen Elinor lives in a dungeon,
For pity and affection to her son?
But when the true cause, Clifford's daughter's death,
Shall be exposed to stranger nations,
What volumes will be writ, what libels spread,
And in each line our state dishonoured!

FAU. My lord speaks to the purpose; marry,
It may be so; pray God it prove not so.

LEI. Hear me conclude, and therewithal conclude;
It is an heinous and unheard-of sin:
Queen Elinor, daughter to kingly France,
King Henry's wife, and royal Henry's mother,
Is kept close prisoner for an act of justice,
Committed on an odious concubine.

KING. Thou wrong'st her, Leicester.

LEI. Lechers ever praise
The cause of their confusion; she was vile.

FAU. She was ill-spoken of, it's true, [too] true.

GLO. Yonder sits one would do as much for you,
Old fool; young Richard hath a gift, I know it,
And on your wife my sister would bestow it.
Here's a good world! men hate adulterous sin,
Count it a gulf, and yet they needs will in. [*Aside.*]

LEI. What answer for the queen?

LAN. The king replies,
Your words are foul slanderous forgeries.

JOHN. His highness says not so.

LAN. His highness doth,
Tells you it is a shame for such wild youth
To smother any impiety,
With shew to chastise loose adultery,
Say Rosamond was Henry's concubine.
Had never king a concubine but he?
Did Rosamond begin the fires in France?
Made she the northern borders reek with flames?
Unpeopled she the towns of Picardy?
Left she the wives of England husbandless?
O, no. She sinn'd, I grant; so do we all;
She fell herself, desiring none should fall.
But Elinor, whom you so much commend,
Hath been the bellows of seditious fire,
Either through jealous rage or mad desire.
Is't not a shame to think that she hath arm'd

Four sons' right hands against their father's head,
And not the children of a low-priz'd wretch,
But one, whom God on earth hath deified?
See, where he sits with sorrow in his eyes!
Three of his sons and hers tutor'd by her:
Smiles, whilst he weeps, and with a proud disdain
Embrace blithe mirth, while his sad heart complain.

FAU. Ha! laugh they? nay, by the rood, that is not well;
Now fie, young princes, fie!

HEN. Peace, doting fool.

JOHN. Be silent, ass.

FAU. With all my heart, my lords; my humble leave, my lords.
God's mother, ass and fool for speaking truth!
'Tis terrible; but fare ye well, my lords.

RICH. Nay, stay, good Fauconbridge; impute it rage,
That thus abuses your right reverend age.
My brothers are too hot.

FAU. Too hot indeed!
Fool, ass, for speaking truth! It's more than need.

RICH. Nay, good Sir Richard, at my kind intreat,
For all the love I bear your noble house,
Let not your absence kindle further wrath.
Each side's at council now; sit down, I pray.
I'll quit it with the kindest love I may.

GLOS. Ay, to his wife. [*Aside*.

FAU. Prince Richard, I'll sit down;
But by the faith I owe fair England's crown,
Had you not been, I would have left the place;
My service merits not so much disgrace.

RICH. Good Fauconbridge, I thank thee.

[*Go to their places*.

GLO. And you'll think of him,
If you can step into his bower at Stepney.

FAU. Prince Richard's very kind; I know his kindness.
He loves me, but he loves my lady better.
No more. I'll watch him; I'll prevent his game;
Young lad, it's ill to halt before the lame. [*Aside*.

[They break asunder, papers this while being
offered and subscribed between either_.

HEN. I'll not subscribe to this indignity;
I'll not be called a king, but be a king.
Allow me half the realm; give me the north,
The provinces that lie beyond the seas:
Wales and the Isles, that compass in the main.

GLO. Nay, give him all, and he will scant be pleased. [*Aside*.

RICH. Brother, you ask too much.

JOHN. Too much? too little!
He shall have that and more; I swear he shall.
I will have Nottingham and Salisbury,
Stafford and Darby, and some other earldom,
Or, by St John (whose blessed name I bear),

I'll make these places like a wilderness.
Is't not a plague, an horrible abuse,
A king, a King of England, should be father
To four such proper youths as Hal and Dick,
My brother Geoffrey, and my proper self,
And yet not give his sons such maintenance,
As he consumes among his minions?

RICH. Be more respective, John.

JOHN. Respective, Richard?
Are you turn'd pure? a changing weathercock! [*Aside.*
I say its reason Henry should be king,
Thou prince, I duke, as Geoffrey is a duke.

LAN. What shall your father do?

JOHN. Live at his prayers,
Have a sufficient pension by the year,
Repent his sins, because his end is near.

GLO. A gracious son, a very gracious son! [*Aside.*

KING. Will this content you? I that have sat still,
Amaz'd to see my sons devoid of shame;
To hear my subjects with rebellious tongues
Wound the kind bosom of their sovereign;
Can no more bear, but from a bleeding heart
Deliver all my love for all your hate:
Will this content ye?[455] Cruel Elinor,
Your savage mother, my uncivil queen:
The tigress, that hath drunk the purple blood
Of three times twenty thousand valiant men;
Washing her red chaps in the weeping tears
Of widows, virgins, nurses, sucking babes;
And lastly, sorted with her damn'd consorts,
Ent'red a labyrinth to murder love.
Will this content you? She shall be releas'd,
That she may next seize me she most envies!

HEN. Our mother's liberty is some content.

KING. What else would Henry have?

HEN. The kingdom.

KING. Peruse this bill; draw near; let us confer.

JOHN. Hal, be not answered but with sovereignty,
For glorious is the sway of majesty.

KING. What would content you, John?

JOHN. Five earldoms, sir.

KING. What you, son Richard?

RICH. Pardon, gracious father,
And th'furtherance for my vow of penance.
For I have sworn to God and all his saints,
These arms erected in rebellious brawls
Against my father and my sovereign,
Shall fight the battles of the Lord of Hosts,
In wrong'd Judaea and Palestina.
That shall be Richard's penance for his pride,
His blood a satisfaction for his sin,
His patrimony, men, munition,
And means to waft them into Syria.

KING. Thou shalt have thy desire, heroic son,
As soon as other home-bred brawls are done.

LAN. Why weeps old Fauconbridge?

FAU. I am almost blind,
To hear sons cruel and the fathers kind.
Now, well-a-year,[456] that e'er I liv'd to see
Such patience and so much impiety!

GLO. Brother, content thee; this is but the first:
Worse is a-brewing, and yet not the worst.

LEI. You shall not stand to this.

HEN. And why, my lord?

LEI. The lands of Morton doth belong to John.

HEN. What's that to me? by Act of Parliament
If they be mine confirm'd, he must be pleas'd.

JOHN. Be pleased, King-puppet! have I stood for thee,
Even in the mouth of death? open'd my arms
To circle in sedition's ugly shape?
Shook hands with duty, bad adieu to virtue,
Profan'd all majesty in heaven and earth;
Writ in black characters on my white brow
The name of *rebel John* against his father?
For thee, for thee, thou 'otomy[457] of honour,
Thou worm of majesty, thou froth, thou bubble![458]
And must I now be pleas'd in peace to stand,
While statutes make thee owner of my land?

GLO. Good pastime, good, now will the thieves fall out! [*Aside*].

JOHN. O, if I do, let me be never held
Royal King Henry's son; pardon me, father;
Pull down this rebel, that hath done thee wrong.
Dick, come and leave his side; assail him, lords;
Let's have no parley but with bills and swords.

KING. Peace, John, lay down thy arms; hear Henry speak.
He minds thee no such wrong.

JOHN. He were not best.

HEN. Why, hair-brain'd brother, can ye brook no jest?
I do confirm you Earl of Nottingham.

JOHN. And Morton too?

HEN. Ay, and Morton too.

JOHN. Why so? now once more I'll sit down by you.

GLO. Blow, wind! the youngest of King Henry's stock
Would fitly serve to make a weathercock.

JOHN. Gape, earth! challenge thine own, as Gloster lies;
Pity such muck is cover'd with the skies?

FAU. Be quiet, good my lords; ['tis] the King's command
You should be quiet, and 'tis very meet;
It's most convenient—how say you, Prince Richard?

RICH. It is indeed.

FAU. Why, that is wisely said;
You are a very kind, indifferent man,

Marry a' God, and by my halidom,
Were not I had a feeling in my head
Of some suspicion 'twixt my wife and him
I should affect him more than all the world. [*Aside*.

GLO. Take heed, old Richard, keep thee there, mad lad.
My sisters' fair, and beauty may turn bad. [*Aside*.

SCENE THE THIRD.

Enter ROBIN HOOD, *a paper in his hand*.

OFFICER. Room there, make room for young Huntington.

FAU. A gallant youth, a proper gentleman.

HEN. Richard, I have had wrong about his wardship.

RICH. You cannot right yourself.

JOHN. He can and shall.

RICH. Not with your help; but, honourable youth,
Have ye perform'd the business I enjoin'd?

ROB. I have, and Skink is come; here is his bill.

HEN. No matter for his bill; let him come in.

KING. Let him not enter; his infectious breath
Will poison the assembly.

GLO. Never doubt;[459]
There's more infectious breaths about your throne.
Leicester is there; your envious sons are there;
If them you can endure, no poison fear.

KING. Content thee, Gloster.

GLO. I must be content
When you, that should mend all, are patient.

Enter SKINK.

HEN. Welcome, good Skink, thou justly dost complain,
Thou stand'st in dread of death for Rosamond,
Whom thou didst poison at our dread command
And the appointment of our gracious mother.
See here my father's hand unto thy pardon.

SKINK. I receive it graciously, wishing his soul sweet peace in heaven for so meritorious a work, for I
fear me I have not his heart, though his hand.

KING. Be sure thou hast not, murderous bloodsucker,
To jealous envy executioner.

HEN. Besides, thou suest to have some maintenance;
We have bethought us how we will reward thee,
Thou shalt have Rowden lordship.

GLO. Shall he so?
Will you reward your murtherers with my lands?

HEN. Your lands? it is our gift; and he shall have it.

GLO. I'll give him seizure first with this and this. [*Strike him*.

JOHN. Lay hold on Gloster.

KING. Hold that murderous Skink.

GLO. Villains, hands off; I am a prince, a peer,
And I have borne disgrace, while I can bear.

FAU. Knaves, leave your rudeness; how now, brother
Gloster? nay, be appeas'd, be patient, brother.

RICH. Shift for thyself, good Skink; there's gold, away:
Here will be parts.[460]

SKINK. Swounds! I'll make one, and stay.

JOHN. I prythee, begone, since thus it falleth out,
Take water; hence, away; thy life I doubt.

SKINK. Well, farewell [then]; get I once out of door, Skink never will put trust in warrants more.
[Exit.

KING. Will Gloster not be bridled?

GLO. Yes, my liege;
And saddled too, and rid, and spurred, and rein'd,
Such misery (in your reign) 'falls your friends.
Let go my arms, you dunghills; let me speak.

KING. Where's that knave, Skink? I charge you see him stay'd.

FAU. The swift-heel'd knave is fled;
Body-a-me, here's rule; here's work indeed.

KING. Follow that Skink; let privy search be made;
Let not one pass, except he be well-known;
Let posts be every way sent speedily
For ten miles' compass round about the city.

HEN. Take Gloster to you, Lieutenant of the Tower.
Keep him aside, till we confer awhile.
Father, you must subscribe to his committing.

LAN. Why must he, Henry?

LEI. Marry, for this cause:
He hath broke peace, and violated laws.

GLO. So have you all done, rebels as you be.

FAU. Good words, good brother; hear me, gracious lords.

HEN. I prythee, Fauconbridge, be patient.
Gloster must of force answer this contempt.

KING. I will not yield; he shall unto the Tower,
Warden of th'Fleet, take you the charge of Gloster.

HEN. Why, be it so; yet stay with him awhile,
Till we take order for the company,
That shall attend him, and resort to him.

GLO. Warden of the Fleet, I see I am your charge,
Befriend me thus, lest by their command
I be prevented of what I intend.

KEEP. Command me any service in my power.

GLO. I pray you call some nimble-footed fellow
To do a message for me to my sister.

KEEP. Call in Redcap; he waiteth with a tipstaff, [Exit one for him. He stammers; but he's swift and
trusty, sir.

SCENE THE FOURTH.

Enter REDCAP.

GLO. No matter for the stammering; is this he?

RED. Ay, I am Re-Redcap, s-s-sir.

GLO. Run. Redcap, to Stepney.

RED. I'll be at Stepney p-p-presently.

GLO. Nay, stay; go to the Lady Fauconbridge, my sister.

RED. The La-La-Lady Fau-Fau-Fauconbreech?
I r-r-run, sir!

GLO. But take thy errand; tell her I am prisoner,
Committed to the Fleet.

RED. I am g-g-glad of th-th-that, my fa-fa-father the p-p-porter sha-shall ge-ge-get a f-f-fee by you.
[*Still runs.*]

GLO. Stand still a while—desire her to make means
Unto Prince Richard for my liberty;
At thy return (make speed) I will reward thee.

RED. I am g-g-gone, si-sir.

RICH. Commend me to her, gentle Huntington;
Tell her in these affairs I'll stand her friend,
Her brother shall not long be prisoner:
Say I will visit her immediately.
Begone, sweet boy, to Marion Fauconbridge,
Thou lookest like love: persuade her to be loving.

ROB. So far as honour will, I will persuade;
I'll lay love's battery to her modest ears;
Second my mild assault, you may chance win,
Fair parley at the least may hap pass in.
[*Exit.*]

HEN. Here, take your charge; let no man speak with him,
Except ourself, our brethren, or Earl Leicester.

FAU. Not I, my lord? may not I speak with him?

HEN. Yes, Fauconbridge, thou shalt.

JOHN. And why? he is his wife's brother.

FAU. Earl John, although I be,
I am true unto the state, and so is he.

GLO. What, shall I have no servant of my own?

HEN. No, but the household servants of the Fleet.

GLO. I thank you, kinsman King; your father knows,
Gloster may boldly give a base slave blows.

FAU. O, but not here; it was not well done here.

KING. Farewell, good Gloster, you shall hear from us.

GLO. Even what your sons will suffer you to send.
Is't not a misery to see you stand,
That sometime was the monarch of this land,
Intreating traitors for a subject's freedom?

LEI. Let him not speak; away with him to prison.

GLO. Here's like to be a well-stay'd commonwealth,
Wherein proud Leicester and licentious John
Are pillars for the king to lean upon.

JOHN. We'll hear your railing lecture in the Fleet.

GLO.[461] On thy displeasure—well ye have me here.
O, that I were within my fort of Bungay,
Whose walls are wash'd with the clear streams of Waveney,[462]
Then would not Gloster pass a halfpenny,
For all these rebels and their poor king too.[463]
Laughtst thou, King Henry? Thou know'st my words are true,
God help thee, good old man! adieu, adieu!

JOHN. That castle shall be mine, wherein stands[464] Fauconbridge.

FAU. Far from your reach, sure, under Feckhill-ridge,
Five hundred men (England hath few such wight)
Keep it for Gloster's use both day and night:
But you may easily win it. Wantons' words
Quickly can master men, tongues out-brawl swords!

JOHN. Ye are an idiot.

RICH. I prythee, John, forbear.

JOHN. What, shall old winter with his frosty jests
Cross flow'ry pleasures?

FAU. Ay, and nip you too!
God Mary mother,[465] I would tickle you,
Were there no more in place but I and you.

KING. Cease these contentions; forward to the Tower.
Release Queen Elinor, and leave me there.
Your prisoner I am, sure, if ye had power;
There's nothing let's you but the Commons' fear:
Keep your state, lords; we will by water go,
Making the fresh Thames salt with tears of woe.

HEN. And we'll by land thorough the City ride,
Making the people tremble at our pride.

[Exeunt with trumpets two ways.]

SCENE THE FIFTH.

Enter SKINK solus.

SKINK. Blackheath, quoth he! And I were king of all Kent, I would give it for a commodity of apron-strings, to be in my cottage again. Princes' warrants! marry, Skink finds them as sure as an obligation seal'd with batter. At King's-Bridge I durst not enter a boat. Through London the stones were fiery. I have had a good cool way through the fields, and in the highway to Ratcliffe stands a heater. Mile-end's covered with *who goes there?* 'Tis for me, sure. O Kent, O Kent, I would give my part of all Christendom[466] to feel thee, as I see thee. If I go forward, I am stayed; if I go backward, there's a rogue in a red cap, he's run from St John's after me. I were best stay here, lest if he come with hue and cry, he stop me yonder. I would slip the collar for fear of the halter; but here comes my runner, and if he run for me, his race dies, he is as sure as dead as if a Parliament of devils[467] had decreed it. *[Retires.]*

SCENE THE SIXTH.

Enter REDCAP.

RED. Ste-Ste-Stepney ch-church yonder; but I have forgot
The La-La-Lady Fau-Fau-Fau—plague on her,
I mu-must b-back to the Fle-Fle-Fleet to kn-kn-know it.
The La- the La-La-Lady Fau—plague on't; G-Gloster
Will go ne-near to st-stab me so for forgetting
My errand, he is such a ma-ma-mad lord, the
La-Lady Fau-Fau-Fau—

SKINK. Help me, device; upon my life, this fool is sent
From Gloster to his sister Marian.

RED. I m-must ne-needs go back, the La-Lady Fau-Fau-Fau—

SKINK. God speed, good fellow.

RED. Go-Go-God sp-sp-speed you, sir.

SKINK. Why runn'st thou from me?

RED. Ma-Marry, sir, I have lo-lost a la-lady's name, and I am running ba-back to se-se-seek it.

SKINK. What lady? I prythee, stay.

RED. Why, the La-Lady Fau-Fau-Fau—

SKINK. Fauconbridge?

RED. Ay, the s-s-same: farewell. I th-th-thank you h-heartily.

SKINK. If thou would'st speak with her, she is in Kent. I serve her; what's thy business with my lady?

RED. I sh-sh-should do an errand to her f-f-from my Lord of Gloucester; but, a-a-and she be in K-Kent,
I'll send it by you.

SKINK. Where is my lord?

RED. Marry, p-p-prisoner in the Fl-Fleet, a-a-and w-would have her speak to P-Prince R-Richard for
his re-re-release.

SKINK. I have much business; hold, there's thy fare by water, my Lady lies this night—

RED. Wh-wh-where, I pray?

SKINK. At Gravesend at the Angel.

RED. 'Tis devilish co-co-cold going by water.

SKINK. Why, there's my cloak and hat to keep thee warm;
Thy cap and jerkin will serve me to ride in
By the way; thou hast wind and tide; take oars;
My lady will reward thee royally.

RED. G-God-a-mercy, f-fa-faith; and ever th-thou co-co-come to the Fl-Fl-Fleet, I'll give the tu-tu-
turning of the ke-key f-for n-no-nothing.

SKINK. Hie thee; to-morrow morning at Gravesend I'll wash thy stammering throat with a mug of ale
merrily.

RED. God be w-with you till s-soo-soon. What call you the lady? O, now I re-remember: the La-Lady
Fa-Fauconbridge. At what s-sign?

SKINK. At the Angel.

RED. A-Angel, the La-La-Lady Fa-Fa-Fauconbridge, Fa-Fan-Fanconbridge.

SKINK. Farewell and be hang'd, good stammering ninny, I think I have set your Redcap's heels a-
running, would your pianot-chattering humour could as sa-safely se-set me fr-from the searchers'
walks. Yonder comes some one. 'Hem! Skink, to your tricks this titty titty. Ah, the tongue, I believe, will
fail me.[468]

SCENE THE SEVENTH.

Enter CONSTABLE *and* WATCH.

CON. Come, make up to this fellow, let th'other go, he seems a gentleman. [*Exit* REDCAP *dressed as* SKINK.] What are you, sir?

SKINK. Would I had kept my own suit, if the countenance carry it away.

CON. Stand, sirrah, what are you?

SKINK. The po-po-porter's son of the F-Fl-Fleet, going to Stepney about business to the La-La-Lady Fa-Fa-Fauconbridge.

CON. Well, bring him thither, some two or three of ye, honest neighbours, and so back to the Fleet; we'll show ourselves diligent above other officers.

SKINK. Wh-wh-why, le-le-let me run. I am Re-Redcap.

CON. Well, sure you shall now run no faster than I lead you, hear ye, neighbour Simmes, I leave my staff with ye; be vigilant, I pray you, search the suspicious houses at the town's end; this Skink's a trouncer. Come, will you be gone, sir?

SKINK. Yes, sir, and the devil go with you and them,
Well, yet have hope, mad ha-heart; co-co-come your way.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE THE EIGHTH.

Enter ROBIN HOOD *and* BLOCK.

BLO. Sweet nobility in reversion, Block, by the commission of his head, conjures you and withal binds you, by all the tricks that pages pass in time of Parliament, as swearing to the pantable,[469] crowning with custards, paper-whiffs to the sleepers' noses, cutting of tags, stealing of torches, *cum multis aliis*—tell, Block, what block you have cast in the way of my lady's content!

ROB. Block, by the antiquity of your ancestry, I have given your lady not so much as the least cause of dislike; if she be displeased at any news I bring, it's more than I must blab.

BLO. Zounds, these pages be so proud, they care not for an old servingman; you are a ward and so an earl, and no more: you disquiet our house—that's the most; and I may be even with thee—that's the least.

Enter the LADY FAUCONBRIDGE.

LADY F. What, Block, what, Block, I say! what do you there?

BLO. Making the young lord merry, madam.

LADY F. Go, attend the gate;
See if you can let in more grief thereat.

BLO. Zounds, and grief come in there; and I see
Him once, I'll conjure his gaberdine. [*Aside.*]

LADY F. Will you be gone, sir?

BLO. Hem! these women, these women!
And she be not in love either with Prince Richard or this lad, let
Block's head be made a chopping-block.

[*Exit* BLOCK.

ROB. Fair madam, what reply you to my suit?
The prince expects[470] smiles, welcomes, loving looks.

LADY F. The prince, if he give heed to Marian's suit,

Must hear heart-sighs, see sorrow in my eyes,
And find cold welcome to calamities.

ROB. And why, for God's sake?

LADY F. Even for Gloster's sake.

ROB. Why, by mine honour, and Prince Richard saith,
Your brother Gloster shall have liberty,
Upon condition you release a prisoner,
That you have long held in captivity.

LADY F. I have no prisoner.

ROB. Yes, a world of eyes
Your beauty in a willing bondage ties.

LADY F. Go to, you are dispos'd to jest, my lord.

ROB. In earnest, I must be an earnest suitor
To you for love; yet you must be my tutor.

LADY F. Are you in love?

ROB. I dearly love Prince Richard.

LADY F. Then do you love the loveliest man alive,
The princeliest person of King Henry's sons.

ROB. I like this well. [*Aside*.

LADY F. He is virtuous in his mind, his body fair;
His deeds are just, his speeches debonair.

ROB. Better and better still. [*Aside*.

LADY F. Indeed he is, what nobody can deny,
All lovely, beauty all, all majesty.

ROB. I'll tell his excellence what you report;
No doubt he will be very thankful for't.

LADY F. Nay, hear you, young lord! [for] God's pity, stay.

ROB. What, have you more in Richard's praise to say?

LADY F. I have said too much, if you misconstrue me.
Duty bids praise him, not unchastity.

ROB. Unchastity? holy heavens forfend it,
That he or I, or you should once intend it!

SCENE THE NINTH.

Enter BLOCK *and* RICHARD.

BLO. They are there, sir, close at it, I leave you, sir; the more room the less company.

RICH. Drink that; farewell. [*Gives him money*.

BLO. If that Sir Richard comes; this ties, this binds; O gold, thy power converteth servants' minds.
[*Exit*.

RICH. How now, fair madam, who hath anger'd you?

LADY F. Grief at my brother's durance angers me.

RICH. I had thought my ward, young Huntington, had vex'd you.

LADY F. Who? he? alas, good gentleman, he wrong'd me not;
No matter, for all this I'll tell your tale.

A noise within, enter SKINK, BLOCK, CONSTABLE.

BLO. Sir, there comes no more of you in with him than the constable.
Zounds, here's a beadroll of bills at the gate indeed; back, ye base!

LADY F. Now, sirrah, what's the matter?

BLO. Marry, here's a stammerer taken clipping the king's English, and the constable and his watch hath brought him to you to be examin'd.

CON. No, madam, we are commanded by the king to watch; and meeting this fellow at Mile-end, he tells us he is the porter's son of the Fleet, [and] that the Earl of Gloster sent him to you.

SKINK. Ay, f-forsooth he desire[d] you to speak to the p-prince for him.

LADY F. O, I conceive thee; bid him blithely fare,
Bear him this ring in token of my care.

SKINK. If I be rid of this evil angel that haunts me, many rings, much
Fleet, will Skink come unto. [*Aside.*]

CON. Madam, if you know this fellow, we'll discharge him.

BLO. Madam, and you be wise, trust your honest neighbours here; let them bring this ca-ca-ca-ca-to the Fleet, and s-see your ring delivered.

SKINK. A plague upon you for a damned rogue!
The porter of the Fleet will surely know me. [*Aside.*]

LADY F. Good neighbours, bring this honest fellow thither;
There's for his pains a crown, if he say true,
And for your labour there's as much for you.

SKINK. Why, ma-ma-madam, I am Re-Re-Redcap, the porter's son.

LADY F. Thou hast no wrong in this; farewell, good fellow.

SKINK. Best speaking to Prince Richard? no, I'll try
And face out Redcap, if the slave were by.

LADY F. Make them drink, Block.

BLO. Come to the buttery-bar, stitty-stitty stammerer; come, honest
Constable, hey! the watch of our town; we'll drink, try-lill, i'faith.

SCENE THE TENTH.

*As they go out, enters SIR RICHARD FAUCONBRIDGE,
stealing forward, PRINCE and LADY talking.[471]*

ROB. *Lupus in fabula*, my noble Lord;
See the old fox, Sir Richard Fauconbridge.

RICH. We'll fit him well enough; second us, Robin.

LADY F. I'll fit you well enough for all your hope.

[FAUC. *beckons to* BLOCK.

FAU. Leave quaffing, sirrah, listen to their talk.

BLO. O, while you live, beware, two are sooner seen than one; besides, bear a brain, master, if Block should be now spied, my madam would not trust this sponce neither in time nor tide.

FAU. Well, leave me, now it buds; see, see, they kiss.

BLO. Adieu, good old sinner, you may recover it with a sallet of parsley and the herb patience; if not, sir, you know the worst. It's but even this.

RICH. Madam, what you desire, I not deny,
But promise Gloster life and liberty.
I beg but love.

FAU. When doth she give her alms? [*Aside*.

LADY F. Fair, honourable prince.

FAU. Nay, then, they speed. [*Aside*.

LADY F. My soul hath your deserts in good esteem.

FAU. Witness these goodly tines[472], that grace my head. [*Aside*.

LADY F. But were you the sole monarch of the earth,
Your power were insufficient to invade
My never-yielding heart of chastity.

FAU. Sayst thou so, Mall? I promise thee for this,
I'll owe thy cherry lips an old man's kiss;
Look, how my cockerell droops; 'tis no matter,
I like it best, when women will not flatter. [*Aside*.

RICH. Nay, but sweet lady—

ROB. Nay, but gracious lord,
Do not so much forget your princely worth
As to tempt[473] virtue t' unchastity.

FAU. O noble youth! [*Aside*.

ROB. Let not the lady's dead grief for her brother
Give life to shameless and detested sin.

FAU. Sweet child. [*Aside*.

ROB. Consider that she is of high descent.

FAU. Most virtuous earl. [*Aside*.

ROB. Wife to the noblest knight that ever breath'd.

FAU. Now, blessing on thee, blessed Huntington! [*Aside*.

ROB. And would you then first stain your princely stock,
Wrong beauty, virtue, honour, chastity,
And blemish Fauconbridge's untainted arms?

FAU. By adding horns unto our falcon's head?
Well thought on, noble youth: 'twas well put in. [*Aside*.

LADY F. Besides, my gracious lord,—

FAU. Tickle him, Mall,
Plague him on that side for his hot desire.

LADY F.—however secretly great princes sin.

FAU. O, now the spring! she'll do it secretly. [*Aside*.

LADY F. The King of all hearts will have all sins known.

FAU. Ah, then she yields not! [*Aside*.

RICH. Lady, here's my hand.
I did but try your honourable faith.

FAU. He did but try her! would she have been tried,
It had gone hard on this and on this side. [*Aside*.

RICH. And since I see your virtue so confirm'd,
As vice can have no entrance in your heart,
I vow, in sight of heaven, never again,
To move like question but for love.

FAU. My heart is eased; hold, Block, take up my cloak.

BLO. And your cap, too, sir?[474]

[*Sir RICH. FAUC. comes forward.*

RICH. Sir Richard!

FAU. What, sweet Prince, welcome, i'faith,
I see youth quickly gets the start of age;
But welcome, welcome; and, young Huntington,
Sweet Robin Hood, honour's best flow'ring bloom,
Welcome to Fauconbridge with all my heart!
How cheers my love, how fares my Marian, ha?
Be merry, chuck, and, Prince Richard, welcome.
Let it go, Mall; I know thy grievances.
Away, away; tut, let it pass, sweet girl.
We needs must have his help about the earls. [*Aside.*

LADY F. Let it not be delay'd, dear Fauconbridge.

RICH. Sir Richard, first make suit unto my father,
I'll follow you to Court, and second you.

FAU. Follow to court, ha? then I smell a rat,
It's probable he'll have a bout again;
Long siege makes entrance to the strongest fort.
It must not be; I must not leave him here. [*Aside.*
Prince Richard, if you love my brother's good,
Let's ride back to the court: I'll wait on you.

RICH. He's jealous; but I must observe the time. [*Aside.*
We'll ride unto the court; I'll leave my boy
Till we return; are you agreed to this?

FAU. O, ay, he is an honourable youth,
Virtuous and modest, Huntington's right heir,
His father Gilbert was the smoothest-fac'd lord
That e'er bare arms in England or in France.

RICH. Solicit,[475] Robin: Lady, give good ear,
And of your brother's freedom never fear. [*Aside.*

FAU. Marian, farewell; where's Block? open the gate;
Come, Prince, God send us to prove fortunate.

[*Exeunt.*

LADY F. Why do you stay,[476] sir?

ROB. Madam, as a lieger to solicit for your absent love.

LADY F. Walk in the garden; I will follow you,
I'faith, i'faith, you are a noble wag.

ROB. An honourable wag and waggish earl,
Even what you will, sweet lady, I must bear,
Hoping of patience profit will ensue,
That you will bear the Prince as I bear you.

LADY F. Well said, well said, I'll have these toys amended,
Go, will you walk into the garden, sir?

ROB. But will you promise me to bring no maids,
To set upon my little manship there?

You threat'ned whipping, and I am in fear.

LADY F. Upon my word, I'll bring none but myself.

ROB. You see I am weapon'd, do not, I beseech thee.[477] I'll stab them, come there twenty, ere they breech me. [*Exit.*]

LADY F. This youth and Richard think me easily won;
But Marian rather will embrace
The bony carcase of dismaying death,
Than prove unchaste to noble Fauconbridge.
Richard,[478] King Henry's son, is light,
Wanton, and loves not humble modesty,
Which makes me (much contrary to my thoughts)
Flatter his humour for my brother's safety,
But I protest I'll dwell among the dead,
Ere I pollute my sacred nuptial bed.
[*Exit.*]

SCENE THE ELEVENTH.

Enter GLOSTER in his gown, calling.

GLO. Porter, what, porter, where's this drowsy ass?

Enter PORTER.

POR. Who calls? my Lord of Gloucester all alone?

GLO. Alone, and have your wisdom's company!
Pray, where's the stammering chatterer, your son?
He's ever running; but he makes small haste.
I'll bring his lither legs in better frame,
And if he serve me thus another time—

[*Knock within.*]

Hark, sir, your clients knock; and't be your pye,
Let him[479] vouchsafe to chatter us some news,
Tell him we dance attendance in our chamber.

[*Exit PORTER.*]

This John and Henry are so full of hate,
That they will have my head by some device,
Gloster hath plotted means for an escape,
And if it fadge,[480] why so; if not, then well.
The way to heaven is death, this life's a hell.

SCENE THE TWELFTH.

Enter PORTER and SKINK.

POR. Why should the watchman come along with thee?

SKINK. There's such, a que-question for yon s-same r-rogue; Skink, p-plague keep [me] far enough from him, that a-an-honest f-fellow ca-can-not w-w-walk the streets.

POR. Well, sir, dispatch your business with the earl; He's angry at your stay, I tell ye that. [*Exit.*]

SKINK. 'Sblood, what a frown this Gloster casts at me;
I hope he means to lend me no more cuffs,
Such as he paid me at the Parliament. [*Aside.*]

GLO. What mutter you? what tidings from my sister?

SKINK. Co-commendations, and s-she hath s-sent ye this r-ring.

GLO. Hold, there's two angels; shut the chamber-door,
You must about some business for me straight;
Come nearer, man.

SKINK. I fear I am too near. [*Aside.*]

GLO. Hast thou no tidings for my liberty?

SKINK. No, b-but ye sh-shall he-hear f-from her p-p-presently.

GLO. And p-presently, sir, off with your coat.
Nay, quick, uncase, I am bold to borrow it,
I'll leave my gown; change is no robbery.
Stutterer, it's so, ne'er flinch, ye cannot pass:
Cry, and by heaven I'll cut thy coward's throat,
Quickly cashier yourself: you see me stay.

SKINK. N-n-nay, b-b-but wh-wh-what m-mean ye?

GLO. To 'scape, I hope, sir, with your privilege—
[*He takes his coat off.*]
How now, who's this? my fine familiar Skink,
Queen Beldam's minion?

SKINK. Zounds, ye see 'tis I.

GLO. Time sorts not now to know these mysteries.
How thou cam'st by this ring, or stol'st this coat,
They are mine now in possession, for which kindness,
If I escape, I'll get thee liberty,
Or fire the Fleet about the warden's ears.
Mumbudget, not a word, as thou lovest thy life.

SKINK. Ay mum, mum fair, pray God may chance it,
My lord, but that my case is desperate,
I'd see your eyes out, ere I would be cheated.

GLO. Walk like an earl, villain; some are coming.

SCENE THE THIRTEENTH.

Enter PRINCE JOHN and PORTER.

JOHN. Where is this Gloster?

GLO. Y-y-yonder he walks. Fa-fa-father, l-let me out.

POR. Why, whither must you now?

GLO. To Je-Jericho, I th-think; 'tis such a h-h-humorous earl.

POR. Well, sir, will't please you hasten home again.

GLO. I-I-I'll be h-here in a trice; b-but p-pray have a care of th-this madcap; if he g-give us the s-s-slip,
s-s-some of us a-are like to m-make a sl-sl-slippery occupation on't.

[*This while JOHN walks and stalks by SKINK [disguised as GLO'STER], never a word between them.*]

POR. Look to your business, sir; let me alone.

GLO. Alone; never trust me, if I trouble thee.

JOHN. Mad Gloster mute, all mirth turn'd to despair?
Why, now you see what 'tis to cross a king,
Deal against princes of the royal blood,
You'll snarl and rail, but now your tongue is bedrid,
Come, caperhay[481], set all at six and seven;

What, musest thou with thought of hell or heaven?

SKINK. Of neither, John; I muse at my disgrace,
That I am thus kept prisoner in this place.

JOHN. O, sir, a number are here prisoners:
My cousin Morton, whom I came to visit.
But he (good man) is at his morrow mass;
But I, that neither care to say nor sing,
Come to seek that preaching hate and prayer,
And while they mumble up their orisons,
We'll play a game at bowls. What say'st thou, Gloster?

SKINK. I care not, if I do.

JOHN. You do not care,
Let old men care for graves, we for our sports;
Off with your gown, there lies my hat and cloak,
The bowls there quickly, ho?

SKINK. No, my gown stirs not; it keeps sorrow warm,
And she and I am not to be divorced.

Enter PORTER with bowls.

JOHN. Yes, there's an axe must part your head and you,
And with your head sorrow will leave your heart.
But come, shall I begin? a pound a game?

SKINK. More pounds, and we thus heavy? well, begin.

JOHN. Rub, rub, rub, rub.

SKINK. Amen, God send it short enough, and me
A safe running with these[482] clothes from thee.

JOHN. Play, Robin; run, run, run.

SKINK. Far enough and well: fly one foot more;
Would I were half so far without the door.

JOHN. Now, Porter, what's the news?

POR. Your cousin Morton humbly craves,
Leaving your game, you would come visit him.

JOHN. Bowl, Gloster; I'll come presently.
So near, mad Robin? then have after you.

[*Ex. PORT.*

SKINK. Would I were gone, make after as you may.

JOHN. Well, sir, 'tis yours, one all; throw but the jack,
While I go talk with Morton. I'll not stay,
Keep coat and hat in pawn, I'll hold out play.

[*Ex. JOHN.*

SKINK. I would be sorry, John, but you should stay,
Until my bias run another way.
Now pass and hey-pass, Skink, unto your tricks:
'Tis but a chance at hazard. There lies Gloster,
And here stands Skink; now, John, play thou thy part,
And if I 'scape I'll love thee with my heart.

[*Puts on PRINCE JOHN'S cloak, sword, and hat.*
So, porter! let me forth.

Enter PORTER.

POR. God bless your grace, spoke ye[483] with the Lord Morton?

SKINK. I have, and must about his business to the Court.
It grieves me to break my sport with Gloster:
The melancholy earl is comfortless.

POR. I would your grace would comfort him from hence,
The Fleet is weary of his company.

[REDCAP *knocks*.

SKINK. Drink that, some knocks; I prythee, let me out,
His head shall off ere long, never make doubt.

[*Exeunt*.

Enter JOHN *at the other door*.

JOHN. Now, madcap, thou winn'st all; where art thou, Robin?
Uncased? nay, then, he means to play in earnest.
But where's my cloak, my rapier, and my hat?
I hold my birthright to a beggar's scrip,
The bastard is escaped in my clothes.
'Tis well he left me his to walk the streets;
I'll fire the city, but I'll find him out.
Perchance he hides himself to try my spleen.
I'll to his chamber. Gloster! hallo! Gloster!

[*Exit*.

Enter REDCAP.

POR. I wonder how thou cam'st so strangely chang'd!
'Tis not an hour since thou went'st from hence.

RED. By my Ch-Ch-Christendom, I ha-have not b-been h-here this three nights; a p-p-plague of him,
that made me such a ch-chanting, and s-sent me such a ja-ja-jaunt! blood, I was st-stayed for Skink, that
ill-fa-fa-fac'd rogue.

POR. I pray God there be no practice in this change.
Now I remember these are Skink's clothes,
That he wore last day at the Parl'ament.

Knock; Enter at another door JOHN *in GLOSTER'S gown*.

JOHN. Porter? you Porter?

POR. Do you not hear them knock? you must stay, sir.

JOHN. Blood, I could eat these rogues.

RED. Wh-wh-what, raw?
'Tis a very harsh mo-morsel,
Ne-next your he-heart.

JOHN. A plague upon your jaunts! what, porter, slave?

RED. I have been at G-Gravesend, sir.

JOHN. What's that to me?

RED. And at Ca-Ca-Canterbury.

JOHN. And at the gallows! zounds, this frets my soul.

RED. But I c-could not f-find your s-s-sister the La-Lady
Fau-Fauconbridge.

JOHN. You stammering slave, hence! chat among your daws.
Come ye to mad me? while the rogue your father—

Enter PORTER.

RED. My f-fa-father?

JOHN. Porter, you damned slave.

POR. Is't midsummer: do you begin to rave?

JOHN. Hark, how the traitor flouts me to my teeth!
I would entreat your knaveship, let me forth,
For fear I dash your brains out with the keys.
What is become of Gloster and my garments?

POR. Alas, in your apparel Gloster's gone,
I let him out even now; I am undone.

JOHN. It was your practice, and to keep me back,
You sent Jack Daw your son with ka-ka-ka,
To tell a sleeveless tale! lay hold on him,
To Newgate with him and your tut-a-tut!
Run, Redcap, and trudge about,
Or bid your father's portership farewell.

[*Exeunt with PORTER.*]

RED. Eh! here's a go-good je-je-jest, by the L-Lord, to mo-mock an ape withal! my fa-fa-father has brought his ho-ho-hogs to a fa-fa-fair m-m-market. Po-po-porter, quoth you? p-po-porter that will for me; and I po-po-porter it, let them po-po-post me to heaven in this qua-quarter. But I must s-s-see this Gl-Gl-Gloster and Sk-Sk-Skink that co-coney-catching ra-ra-rascal, a pa-pa-plague co-co-confound him. Re-Re-Redcap must ru-run, he cannot tell whi-whither. [*Exit.*]

SCENE THE FOURTEENTH.

Sound trumpets, enter HENRY the younger, on one hand of him QUEEN ELINOR, on the other LEICESTER.

HEN. Mother and Leicester, add not oil to fire;
Wrath's kindled with a word, and cannot hear
The numberless persuasions you insort.

QUEEN. O, but, my son, thy father favours him.
Richard, that vile abortive changeling brat,
And Fauconbridge, are fallen at Henry's feet.
They woo for him, but entreat my son
Gloster may die for this, that he hath done.

LEI. If Gloster live, thou wilt be overthrown.

QUEEN. If Gloster live, thy mother dies in moan.

LEI. If Gloster live, Leicester will fly the realm.

QUEEN. If Gloster live, thy kingdom's but a dream.

HEN. Have I not sworn by that eternal arm,
That puts just vengeance' sword in monarchs' hands,
Gloster shall die for his presumption!
What needs more conjuration, gracious mother?
And, honourable Leicester, mark my words.
I have a bead-roll of some threescore lords
Of Gloster's faction.

QUEEN. Nay, of Henry's faction,
Of thy false father's faction; speak the truth,
He is the head of factions; were he down,
Peace, plenty, glory, will impale thy crown.

LEI. Ay, there's the *But*, whose heart-white if we hit,
The game is ours. Well, we may rage and rave[484]
At Gloster, Lancaster, Chester, Fauconbridge;

But his the upshot.

QUEEN. Yet begin with Gloster.

HEN. The destinies run to the Book of Fates,
And read in never-changing characters
Robert of Gloster's end; he dies to-day:
So fate, so heaven, so doth King Henry say.

QUEEN. Imperially resolv'd. [*Trumpets far off.*]

LEI. The old King comes.

QUEEN. Then comes luxurious lust;
The King of concubines; the King that scorns
The undefiled, chaste, and nuptial bed;
The King that hath his queen imprisoned:
For my sake, scorn him; son, call him not father;
Give him the style of a competitor.

HEN. Pride, seize upon my heart: wrath, fill mine eyes!
Sit, lawful majesty, upon my front,
Duty, fly from me; pity, be exil'd:
Senses, forget that I am Henry's child.

QUEEN. I kiss thee, and I bless thee for this thought.

SCENE THE FIFTEENTH.

Enter KING, LANCASTER, RICHARD, FAUCONBRIDGE.

KING. O Lancaster, bid Henry yield some reason,
Why he desires so much the death of Gloster.

HEN. I hear thee, Henry, and I thus reply:
I do desire the death of bastard Gloster,
For that he spends the Treasure of the Crown;
I do desire the death of bastard Gloster,
For that he doth desire to pull me down.
Or were this false (I purpose to be plain),
He loves thee, and for that I him disdain.

HEN. Therein thou shewest a hate-corrupted mind;
To him the more unjust, to me unkind.

QUEEN. He loves you, as his father lov'd his mother.

KING. Fie, fie upon thee, hateful Elinor;
I thought thou hadst been long since scarlet-dyed.

HEN. She is, and therefore cannot change her colour.

RICH. You are too strict; Earl Gloster's fault
Merits not death.

FAU. By the rood, the Prince says true;
Here is a statute from the Confessor[485].

HEN. The Confessor was but a simple fool.
Away with books; my word shall be a law,
Gloster shall die.

LEI. Let Gloster die the death.

LAN. Leicester, he shall not;
He shall have law, despite of him and thee.

HEN. What law? will you be traitors? what's the law?

RICH. His right hand's loss; and that is such a loss,
As England may lament, all Christians weep.
That hand hath been advanc'd against the Moors,
Driven out the Saracens from Gad's[486] and Sicily,
Fought fifteen battles under Christ's red cross;
And is it not, think you, a grievous loss,
That for a slave (and for no other harm)
It should be sundred from his princely arm?

FAU. More for example, noble Lancaster;
But 'tis great pity too—too great a pity.

HEN. I'll have his hand and head.

RICH. Thou shalt have mine, then.

QUEEN. Well said, stubborn Dick, Jack would not
Serve me so, were the boy here.

RICH. Both John and I have serv'd your will too long;
Mother, repent your cruelty and wrong:
Gloster, you know, is full of mirth and glee,
And never else did your grace injury.

QUEEN. Gloster shall die.

HEN. Fetch him here, I'll see him dead.

RICH. He that stirs for him shall lay down his head.

FAU. O quiet, good my lords; patience, I pray,
I think he comes unsent for, by my fay.

Enter JOHN in GLOSTER'S gown.

RICH. What mean'st thou, Gloster?

HEN. Who brought Gloster hither?

JOHN. Let Gloster hang and them that ... [487] There lies his case[488], a mischief on his carcass!
[*Throws off GLOSTER'S gown.*]

QUEEN. My dear son Jack!

JOHN. Your dear son Jack-an-apes;
Your monkey, your baboon, your ass, your gull!

LEI. What ails Earl John?

JOHN. Hence, further from my sight!
My fiery thoughts and wrath have work in hand;
I'll curse ye blacker than th'Avernian[489] Lake,
If you stand wond'ring at my sorrow thus.
I am with child, big, hugely swoll'n with rage,
Who'll play the midwife, and my throbs assuage?

KING. I will, my son.

HEN. I will, high-hearted brother.

JOHN. You will? and you? tut, tut, all you are nothing!
'Twill out, 'twill out, myself myself can ease:
You chafe, you swell: ye are commanding King.
My father is your footstool, when ye please.
Your word's a law; these lords dare never speak.
Gloster must die; your enemies must fall!

HEN. What means our brother?

JOHN. He means that thou art mad:
She frantic: Leicester foolish: I the babe—
Thou grind us, bite us, vex us, charge and discharge.
Gloster, O Gloster!

QUEEN. Where is Gloster, son?

HEN. Where is Gloster, brother?

KING. I hope he be escaped.

JOHN. O, I could tear my hair, and, falling thus
Upon the solid earth,
Dig into Gloster's grave,
So he were dead, and gone into the depth
Of under-world—
Or get sedition's hundreth thousand hand,
And, like Briareus, battle with the stars,
To pull him down from heaven, if he were there!

FAU. Look to Earl John; the gentleman is mad.

JOHN. O, who would not be mad at this disgrace?
Gloster the fox is fled; there lies his case.

[Points to the gown.]

He cozen'd me of mine; the porter helped him.

HEN. The porter shall be hang'd; let's part and seek him:
Gloster shall die; all Europe shall not save him.

JOHN. He is wise, too wise for us; yet I'll go with you
To get more fools into my company.

QUEEN. This is your father's plot; revenge it, son.

HEN. Father, by heaven, if this were your advice,
Your head or heart shall pay the bitter price.
Come, mother, brother, Leicester; let's away.

JOHN. Ay, I'll be one, in hope to meet the bastard,
And then no more: myself will be his headsman.

[Exeunt.]

KING. Richard and Fauconbridge, follow the search;
You may prevent mischance by meeting Gloster.
If ye find Skink, see that you apprehend him.
I hear there is a wizard at Blackheath;
Let some inquire of him, where Skink remains.
Although I trust not to those fallacies,
Yet now and then such men prove soothsayers.
Will you be gone?

FAU. With all my heart, with all my heart, my lord.
Come, princely Richard, we are ever yok'd.
Pray God, there be no mystery in this.

RICH. Be not suspicious, where there is no cause.

FAU. Nay, nothing, nothing; I am but in jest.

[Exeunt.]

KING. Call in a pursuivant.

LAN. Here's one, my liege.

Enter PURSUIVANT.

KING. There is a porter likely to be hang'd

For letting Gloster 'scape; sirrah, attend.
You shall have a reprieve to bring him us.
These boys are too-too stubborn, Lancaster;
But 'tis their mother's fault. If thus she move me,
I'll have her head, though all the world reprove me.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE THE SIXTEENTH.

Enter ROBIN HOOD *and* LADY FAUCONBRIDGE.

LADY F. Do not deny me, gentle Huntington.

ROB. My lord will miss me.

LADY F. Tut, let me excuse thee.

ROB. Turn, woman? O, it is intolerable!
Except you promise me to play the page.
Do that, try one night, and you'll laugh for ever
To hear the orisons that lovers use:
Their ceremonies, sighs, their idle oaths!
To hear how you are prais'd and pray'd unto.
For you are Richard's saint. They talk of Mary
The blessed Virgin; but upon his beads
He only prays to Marian Fauconbridge.

LADY F. The more his error; but will you agree
To be the Lady Fauconbridge one day?

ROB. When is't?

LADY. F. On Monday.

ROB. Wherefore is't?

LADY F. Nay, then, you do me wrong with inquisition,
And yet I care not greatly if I tell thee.
Thou seest my husband full of jealousy:
Prince Richard in his suit importunate,
My brother Gloster threat'ned by young Henry,
To clear these doubts, I will in some disguise
Go to Blackheath, unto the holy hermit,
Whose wisdom, in foretelling things to come,
Will let me see the issue of my cares.
If destinies ordain me happiness,
I'll chase these mists of sorrow from my heart
With the bright sun of mirth; if fate agree
To't[490], and my friends must suffer misery,
Yet I'll be merry too, till mischief come.
Only I long to know the worst of ill.

ROB. I'll once put on a scarlet countenance.

LADY F. Be wary, lest ye be discovered, Robin.

ROB. Best paint me, then be sure I shall not blush.

Enter BLOCK *bleeding*, GLOSTER *with him*.

BLO. Beat an officer, Redcap? I'll have ye talk'd withal!
Beat Sir Richard's porter? help, madam, help!

GLO. Peace, you damned rogue.

LADY F. Brother, I pray you forbear.

GLO. Zwounds! an hundred's at my heels almost,
And yet the villain stands on compliment.

BLO. A bots on[491] you, is't you?

GLO. Will you to the door, you fool, and bar the gate?
Hold, there's an angel for your broken pate:
If any knock, let them not in in haste.

BLO. Well, I will do, as I see cause;
Blood, thou art dear to me.
But here's a sovereign plaister for the sore:
Gold healeth wounds, gold easeth hearts!
What can a man have more? [*Exit.*

LADY F. Dear brother, tell us how you made escape?

GLO. You see I am here, but if you would know how,
I cannot 'scape, and tell the manner too,
By this I know your house is compassed
With hell-hound search[492].

LADY F. Brother, I'll furnish you with beard and hair,
And garment like my husband's.
How like you that?

GLO. Well, when I have them:
Quickly, then, dispatch. [*Exit LADY.*] S'blood! turn
Grey beard and hair.
Robin, conceal; this dieteth my mind.
Mirth is the object of my humorous spleen.
Thou high, commanding fury, further device!
Jests are conceited. I long to see their birth.

Re-enter LADY FAUCONBRIDGE.

What, come ye, sister? Robin, a thief's hand!
But, prythee, where hadst thou this beard and hair?

LADY F. Prince Richard wore them hither in a masque.

GLO. Say'st thou me so? faith, [I] love the princely youth;
Tut, you must taste stolen pleasure now and then.

ROB. But if she steal, and jealous eyes espy,
She will be sure condemn'd of burglary.

GLO. Ha! crake! can your low stumps venture so deep
Into affection's stream? go to, you wanton!
What want we now? my nightcap! O, 'tis here.
So now no Gloster, but old Fauconbridge.
Hark, the search knocks; I'll let them in myself:
Welcome, good fellows; ha! what is't you lack?

Enter REDCAP, with two others[493].

RED. Ma-master Co-Constable, se-se-search you th-that way; a-and, you ho-honest man, th-that way.
I'll ru-run th-this way m-my own se-self.

[*They disperse themselves.*

GLO. What search you for? what is it you would have?

Enter BLOCK.

BLO. Madam, what shall I do to these brown-bill fellows? some run into the wine cellar; some here,
some there.

GLO. Let them alone; let them search their fills.

BLO. I'll look to their fingers for all that.

GLO. Do so, good Block; be careful, honest Block.

BLO. Sir stammerer and your wa-watch, y'are pa-past, i'faith. [*Exit.*]

GLO, Will you not speak, knaves? tell me who you seek.

RED. Ma-marry, sir, we s-seek a va-va-vacabond, a fu-fugative, my la-lady's own b-brother; but, and he were the po-po-pope's own b-brother, I would s-search f-f-for him; for I have a p-poor father r-ready to be ha-ha-hang'd f-f-for him.

GLO. O, 'tis for Gloster? marry, search, a' God's name,
Seek, peace[494]; will he break prison too?
It's a pity he should live; nay, I defy him.
Come, look about, search every little corner,
Myself will lead the way; pray you, come.
Seek, seek, and spare not, though it be labour lost:
He comes not under my roof; hear ye, wife?
He comes not hither, take it for a warning.

RED. You sp-sp-speak like an honest ge-ge-gentleman, re-re-rest you me-me-merry! co-co-come, my f-friends, I be-believe h-h-he r-ran by the g-g-garden w-wall toward the wa-water side.

[*Exeunt running.*]

GLO. This fellow is of the humour I would choose my wife:
Few words and many paces; a word and away; and so
Must I. Sister, adieu; pray you for me; I'll do the like for you.
Robin, farewell; commend me to the Prince.

LADY F. Can ye not stay here safe?

GLO. No, I'll not trust the changing humours of old Fauconbridge.
Adieu, young earl; sister, let's kiss and part.
Tush, never mourn, I have a merry heart.
[*Exit.*]

LADY F. Farewell all comfort.

ROB. What, weeping, lady?
Then I perceive you have forgot Blackheath!

LADY F. No, there I'll learn both of his life and death.

ROB. Till Monday, madam, I must take my leave.

LADY F. You will not miss then?

ROB. Nay, if Robin fail ye,
Let him have never favour of fair lady!

LADY F. Meanwhile, I'll spend my time in prayers and tears, That Gloster may escape these threat'ned fears. [*Exit*]

SCENE THE SEVENTEENTH.

Enter SKINK, *like* PRINCE[495] JOHN.

SKINK. Thus jets my noble Skink along the streets,
To whom each bonnet vails, and all knees bend;
And yet my noble humour is too light
By the six shillings. Here are two crack'd groats
To helter-skelter at some vaulting-house[496].
But who comes yonder? ha! old Fauconbridge?
Hath a brave chain; were John and he good friends,
That chain were mine, and should unto Blackheath.

I'll venture; it's but trial: luck may fall.
Good morrow, good Sir Richard Fauconbridge.

FAU. Good morrow, my sweet Prince, hearty good morrow;
This greeting well becomes us, marry does it,
Better, i'wis, than strife and jangling.
Now can I love ye; will ye to the sheriffs?
Your brother Richard hath been there this hour.

SKINK. Yes, I am plodding forward, as you do;
What cost your chain? it's passing strongly wrought,
I would my goldsmith had a pattern of it.

FAU. 'Tis at your grace's service: show it him.

SKINK. Then dare ye trust me?

FAU. Who? the princely John!
My sovereign's son: why, what a question's that.
I'll leave you; ye may know I dare trust you.

SKINK. I'll bring it ye to the sheriff's, excuse my absence.

FAU. I will, my noble lord; adieu, sweet prince.
[Exit.

SKINK. Why so; this breakfast was well fed upon.
When Skink's devices on Blackheath do fail,
This and such cheats would set me under sail,
I'll to the water-side, would it were later [on];
For still I am afraid to meet Prince John.

SCENE THE EIGHTEENTH.

Enter GLOSTER like FAUCONBRIDGE.

[SKINK.] But what a mischief meant Fauconbridge
To come again so soon? that way he went,
And now comes peaking. Upon my life,
The buzzard hath me in suspicion,
But whatsoever chance, I'll filch a share.

GLO. Yonder's Prince John; I hope he cannot know me,
There's nought but Gloster, Gloster in their mouths;
I am half-strangled with the garlic-breath
Of rascals that exclaim, as I pass by,
Gloster is fled; once taken, he must die.
But I'll to John—how does my gracious lord?
What babbles rumour now? What news of Gloster?

SKINK. What news could I hear, since you left me last?
Were you not here even now? lent me your chain?
I think you dote.

GLO. Sweet prince, age aye[497] forgets.
My brother's chain? a pretty accident!
But I'll have't, and be in the spite of John. [*Aside.*

SKINK. There's more and more; I'll geld it, ere it go.
[*He breaks the chain.*
This same shall keep me in some tavern merry,
Till night's black hand curtain this too clear sky.

GLO.[498] My sweet prince, I have some cause to use my chain;
Another time (whene'er your lordship please)
'Tis at your service, O marry God, it is.

SKINK. Here, palsy, take your chain; stoop and be hang'd, [*Casts it down.* Yet the fish nibbled, when she might not swallow: Go'ut[499] I have curtail'd, what I could not borrow. [*Exit.*

GLO. He's gone away in frets; would he might meet
My brother Fauconbridge in this mad mood,
There would be rare ado. Why, this fits me;
My brain flows with fresh wit and policy.
But, Gloster, look about, who have we yonder?
Another John, Prince Richard, and the sheriff?
Upon my life, the slave, that had the chain,
Was Skink, escap'd the Fleet by some mad sleight.
Well, farewell he, better and better still,
These seek for me; yet I will have my will.

SCENE THE NINETEENTH.

Enter PRINCE JOHN, PRINCE RICHARD, *and the* SHERIFF.

JOHN. Sheriff, in any case be diligent.
Who's yonder? Fauconbridge?

GLO. How now, sweet chuck; how fares my lovely prince?

JOHN. What carest thou? or well or ill, we crave
No help of thee.

GLO. God's mother, do ye scorn me?

JOHN. Go'ut! what then?

RICH. Fie, leave these idle brawls, I prythee, John;
Let's follow that we are enjoin'd unto.

GLO. Ay, marry, prince, if now you slip the time,
Gloster will slip away; but, though he hate me,
I have done service; I have found him out.

RICH. A shame confound thee for thy treachery,
Inconstant dotard, timorous old ass,
That shakes with cowardice, not with years.

GLO. Go, I have found him, I have winded him.

JOHN. O, let me hug thee, gentle Fauconbridge;
Forgive my oft ill-using of thine age.
I'll call thee father; I'll be penitent;
Bring me where Gloster is; I'll be thy slave,
All that is mine thou in reward shalt have.

GLO. Soft; not too hasty; I would not be seen in't;
Marry a' God, my wife would chide me dead,
If Gloster by my means should lose his head.
Princely Richard, at this corner make your stand:
And for I know you love my sister well,
Know I am Gloster, and not Fauconbridge.

RICH. Heaven prosper thee, sweet prince, in thy escape!

GLO. Sheriff, make this your quarter, make good guard;
John, stay you here; this way he means to turn,
By Thomas, I lack a sword, body a' me!

JOHN. What wouldst thou with a sword, old Fauconbridge?

GLO. O sir, to make show in his defence,
For I have left him yonder at a house,
A friend's of mine, an honest citizen.

JOHN. We'll fetch him thence.

GLO. Nay, then, you injure me. Stay, till he come; he's in a russet cloak,
And must attend me like a serving-man.

JOHN. Hold, there's my sword, and with my sword my heart.
Bring him, for God's sake, and for thy desert
My brother king and mother queen shall love thee.

GLO. Mark me, good prince; yonder away we come,
I go afore, and Gloster follows me;
Let not the sheriff nor Richard meddle with us.
Begin you first; seize Gloster, and arrest him.
I'll draw and lay about me here and here;
Be heedful that your watchmen hurt me not.

JOHN. I'll hang him that doth hurt thee; prythee, away,
I love thee; but thou kill'st me with delay.

GLO. Well, keep close watch; I'll bring him presently.

JOHN, Away then quickly.

GLO. Gloster, close, master sheriff, Prince Richard.

RICH. Gloster, adieu.

GLO. I trust you.

RICH. By my knighthood, I'll prove true.

[*Exit* GLOSTER.

JOHN. Revenge, I'll build a temple to your name;
And the first offering shall be Gloster's head,
Thy altars shall be sprinkled with the blood,
Whose wanton current his mad humour fed;
He was a rhymer and a riddler,
A scoffer at my mother, prais'd my father:
I'll fit him now for all—escape and all.

RICH. Take heed spite burst not in his proper gall.

SCENE THE TWENTIETH.

Enter FAUCONBRIDGE *and* BLOCK.

JOHN. How now, what way took Fauconbridge, I wonder?
That is not Gloster, sure, that attends on him?

FAU. He came not at the sheriff's by the morrow-mass,
I sought the Goldsmiths' row, and found him not;
Sirrah, y'are sure he sent not home my chain?

BLO. Who should send [home] your chain, sir?

FAU. The prince, Prince John; I lent it him to-day.

JOHN. What's this they talk?

BLO. By my truth, sir, and ye lent it him, I think you may go look it: for one of the drawers of the Salutation told me even now, that he had took up a chamber there till evening, and then he will away to Kent.

FAU. Body of me, he means to spend my chain.
Come, Block; I'll to him.

JOHN. Hear you, Fauconbridge;

FAU. Why, what a knave art thou? yonder's Prince John.

BLO. Then the drawer's a knave; he told me Prince John was at the Salutation.

JOHN. Where's Gloster, Fauconbridge?

FAU. Sweet prince, I know not.

JOHN. Come, jest not with me: tell me where he is?

FAU. I never saw him since the Parl'ament.

JOHN. Impudent liar, didst thou not even now
Say thou wouldst fetch him? Hadst thou not my sword?

FAU. Wert thou a king, I will not bear the lie.
Thy sword? no, boy; thou seest this sword is mine.

BLO. My master a liar? Zounds, wert thou a potentate!

FAU. I scorn to wear thy arms, untutor'd child,
I fetch thee, Gloster, shameless did I see thee,
Since as I went this morning to the Sheriffs,
Thou borrow'dst my gold chain!

JOHN. Thy chain?

FAU. I hope thou wilt not cheat me, princocks John!

JOHN. I'll cheat thee of thy life, if thou charge me
With any chain.

FAU. Come, let him come, I pray,
I'll whip ye, boy, I'll teach you to out-face.

BLO. Come, come, come! but one at once; ye dastards, come.

RICH. Keep the king's peace, I see you are both deceiv'd,
He that was last here was not Fauconbridge.

FAU. They slander me; who says that I was here?

RICH. We do believe ye, sir; nor do you think
My brother John deceiv'd you of a chain.

FAU. He did; I did deliver it with this hand.

JOHN. I'll die upon the slanderer.

FAU. Let the boy come.

BLO. Aye, let him come, let him come.

RICH. Fellow, thou speak'st even now, as if Prince John
Had been at some old tavern in the town!

BLO. Aye, sir, I came up now but from the Salutation,
And a drawer, that doth not use to lie, told me
Prince John hath been there all this afternoon.

JOHN. The devil in my likeness then is there.

FAU. The devil in thy likeness or thyself
Had my gold chain.

JOHN. Thou art the devil; for thou
Hadst my good sword, all these can witness it.

FAU. God's mother, thou beliest me.

JOHN. Give me the lie?

RICH. Nay, calm this fury; let's down to the tavern;
Or one or both: these counterfeits are there.

FAU. I know him well enough, that had my chain,
And there be two Johns, if I find one there.
By'r Lady, I will lay him fast.

RICH. It is this Skink that mocks us, I believe.

JOHN. Alas, poor Skink; it is the devil Gloster,
Who if I be so happy once to find,
I'll give contentment to his troubled mind.

RICH. I hope he's far enough, and free enough,
Yet these conceits, I know, delight his soul. [*Aside.*]
Follow me, Blocker, follow me, honest Blocker.

BLO. Much follow you! I have another piece of work in hand; I hear say Redcap's father shall be hanged this afternoon, I'll see him slip a string, though I give my service the slip; besides, my lady bad me hear his examination at his death. I'll get a good place, and pen it word for word, and as I like it, let out a mournful ditty to the tune of "Labandalashot," or "Row Well, ye Mariners," or somewhat as my muse shall me invoke. [*Exit.*]

SCENE THE TWENTY-FIRST.

*Enter GLOSTER like FAUCONBRIDGE, with a PURSUIVANT;
GLOSTER having a paper in his hand, the PURSUIVANT bare.*

GLO. A charitable deed, God bless the king;
He shall be then reprieved.

PUR. Ay, sir, some day or two,
Till the young king and Prince John change it—
Especially if the good earl be not found,
Which God forbid!

GLO. What house is this,
That we are stepp'd into, to read this warrant in?

PUR. A tavern, sir, the Salutation.

GLO. A tavern?
Then I will turn prodigal; call for a pint
Of sack, good fellow.

PUR. Drawer!

DRA. [*Within.*] Anon, sir.

Enter DRAWER.

GLO. A pint of thy best sack, my pretty youth.

DRA. God bless your worship, sir;
Ye shall have the best in London, sir.

GLO. What, know'st thou me I know'st thou old Fauconbridge?
I am no tavern-h[a]unter, I can tell thee.

DRA. But my master hath taken many a fair pound
Of your man Block; he was here to-day, sir,
And emptied[500] two bottles of nippitate[501] sack.

GLO. Well, fill us of your nippitate, sir;
This is well chanced. But hear[502] ye, boy!
Bring sugar in white paper, not in brown;
For in white paper I have here a trick,

Shall make the pursuivant first swoon, then sick. [*Aside.*]
Thou honest fellow, what's thy name?

PUR. My name is Winterborne, sir.

GLO. What countryman, I prythee?

PUR. Barkshire, and please ye.

GLO. How long hast thou been sworn a messenger?

PUR. But yesterday, and please your worship,
This is the first employment I have had.

Enter DRAWER, *with wine and sugar.*

GLO. A good beginning; here, have to thee, fellow;
Thou art my fellow, now thou servest the king,
Nay, take sugar too, God's Lady dear!
I put it in my pocket; but it's here:
Drink a good draught, I prythee, Winterborne.

[*He drinks and falls over the stool.*]

DRA. O Lord, Sir Richard, the man, the man!

GLO. What a forgetful beast am I! Peace, boy,
It is his fashion ever, when he drinks.
Fellow, he hath the falling sickness;
Run, fetch two cushions to raise up his head,
And bring a little key to ope his teeth. [*Exit* DRAWER.
Pursuivant, your warrant and your box—
These must with me; the shape of Fauconbridge
Will hold no longer water hereabout.
Gloster will be a Proteus every hour,
That Elinor and Leicester, Henry, John,
And all that rabble of hate-loving curs,
May minister me more mirth to play upon.

Re-enter DRAWER, *with an ASSISTANT.*

DRA. Here's a key, sir, and one of our folk to help.

GLO. No matter for a key; help him but in,
And lay him by the fire a little while,
He'll wake immediately; but be [not] heart-sick.
There's money for a candle and thy wine,
I'll go but up unto your alderman's,
And come down presently to comfort him.

[*Exeunt.*]

SKINK. [*Within.*] Drawer! what Drawer? with a vengeance, Drawer!

DRA. [*Within.*] Speak in the Crown[503] there.

SCENE THE TWENTY-SECOND.

Enter SKINK, *like* PRINCE JOHN.

SKINK. They be come; the devil crown ye one by one.
Skink, thou'rt betray'd, that Master Fauconbridge,
Missing some of his chain has got thee dogg'd.
Drawer! what Drawer?

DRA. Anon, anon, sir.

SKINK. Was not Sir Richard Fauconbridge below?

DRA. Yes, and please ye.

SKINK. It does not please me well. Knows he that I am here?

DRA. No, I protest.

SKINK. Come hither, sirrah. I have little money;
But there's some few links of a chain of gold.
Upon your honesty, knows not Sir Richard
That I am here?

DRA. No, by my holy-dam.

SKINK. Who's that was with him?

DRA. Why, a pursuivant.

SKINK. Where is Sir Richard?

DRA. At the alderman's.

SKINK. A pursuivant, and at the alderman's?
What pig, or goose, or capon, have you kill'd
Within your kitchen new?

DRA. A pig new-stick'd.

SKINK. Fetch me a saucer of the blood; quick, run; [*Exit* DRAWER.
I'll fit the pursuivant, and alderman,
And Fauconbridge, if Skink have any wit.
Well, Gloster, I did never love thee yet;
But thou'st the maddest lord that e'er I met.
If I 'scape this, and meet thee once again,
Curse Skink, if he die penny in thy debt.

Re-enter DRAWER.

DRA. O my lord, the house is full of halberts, and a great many gentlemen ask for the room where Prince John is.

SKINK. Lend me thy apron; run and fetch a pot from the next room.
Betray'd, swounds, betray'd by gout, by palsy, by dropsy—

Re-enter DRAWER *with a pot.*

O brave boy, excellent blood! up, take my cloak
And my hat to thy share; when I come from Kent, I'll pay
Thee like a king.

DRA. I thank you, my lord.

[*Exit* DRAWER.

SCENE THE TWENTY-THIRD.

Enter JOHN, RICHARD, FAUCONBRIDGE, SHERIFFS, *and* OFFICERS.

SKINK. Now, fortune, help or never. They come—and ye were a prince, as ye say ye are, ye would be ashamed to abuse a poor servant thus; but and if ye were not of the blood royal, I'd break the neck of ye down the stairs, so would I, I'd teach you to hurt 'prentices.

RICH. Who hurt thee, fellow?

SKINK. Prince devil or his dam; Prince John they call him.

JOHN. Gloster, I hope.

RICH. I doubt not but 'tis Skink.

JOHN. Where is he?

SKINK. Up them stairs; take heed of him,
He's in the Crown.

FAU. Alas, poor fellow, he hath crown'd thee shrewdly.

JOHN. In recompence, if it be him I seek,
I'll give thee his whole head to tread upon.
Follow me, brother; come, old Fauconbridge;
Keep the stairs, sheriff. You see, it waxeth dark;
Take heed he slip not by you.

[Exeunt.]

SKINK. Hang yourselves, this darkness shall convey me out of doors,
I'll swim the Thames, but I'll attain Blackheath.
London, farewell; curse, John, rave, Fauconbridge!
Skink 'scapes you all by twilight's privilege.

[Exit.]

WITHIN. Where is he? lights, bring lights; drag out that boy.

Enter all with the BOY.

JOHN. This is my cloak, my hat, my rapier;
And either it was Skink or Gloster.

DRA. I know not who 'twas, sir; he said he was Prince John; he took away my apron and a pottle-pot
with him, and all-to blooded his head and face.

FAU. We met him, by St Anthony, we met him!

JOHN. The fire of St Anthony confound
This changing counterfeit, whatsoever he be.

RICH. It makes me laugh at envious greediness,
Who feeds upon her own heart's bitterness.

JOHN. Sirrah, you that were born to cry anon,
What other copes-mates have you in the house?

DRA. Sir, my master's gues's[504] be none of my copesmates.

JOHN. Well, your gues's! can you guess who they be?

DRA. Marry, here's a pursuivant, that this gentleman, sir, Richard
Fauconbridge, left sick even now.

FAU. Marry of God, did I, thou lying knave?

DRA. I am a poor boy, sir; your worship may say your pleasure; our maids have had a foul hand with
him. You said he would be sick; so he is, with a witness.

JOHN. Look about, Fauconbridge, here's work for you!
You have some evil angel in your shape.
Go, sirrah, bring us forth that Pursuivant.

Enter two, leading the PURSUIVANT, sick.

RICH. Gloster, thou wilt be too-too venturous;
Thou dost delight in those odd humours so,
That much I fear they'll be thy overthrow. *[Aside.]*

PUR. O, O, O, not too fast; O, I am sick, O, very sick.

JOHN. What picture of the pestilence is this?

PUR. A poor man, sir, a poor man, sir: down, I pray ye; I pray, let me sit down. Ah, Sir Richard, Sir
Richard! Ah, good Sir Richard! what, have I deserv'd to be thus dealt withal at your worship's hands?
Ah! ah! ah!

FAU. At my hands, knave? at my hands, paltry knave?

DRA. And I should be brought to my book-oath, sir.

WITHIN. What, Jeffrey?

DRA. Anon, anon.

JOHN. A plague upon your Jeffring; is your name Jeffrey?

DRA. Ay, and't please you, sir.

RICH. Why, gentle Jeffrey, then stay you awhile,
What can you say, if you come to your book?

DRA. If I be pos'd upon a book, sir, though I be a poor 'prentice,
I must speak the truth, and nothing but the truth, sir.

JOHN. And what's your truth, sir?

PUR. O, O my heart.

DRA. Marry, sir, this knight, this man of worship—

FAU. Well, what of me? what did my worship do?

DRA. Marry, ye came into the Bell—our room next the bar—with this honest man, as I take it.

FAU. As thou tak'st it?

PUR. O, sir, 'tis too true, too true, too true. O Lord.

DRA. And there he call'd for a pint of sack, as good sack (I'll be pos'd upon all the books that ever
opened and shut), as any in all Christendom.

FAU. Body of me, I come and call for sack?

PUR. O, ye did, ye did, ye did. O, O.

JOHN. Well, forward, sirrah.

RICH. Gloster hath done this jest. [*Aside*.

DRA. And you call'd then for sugar, sir, as good sugar and as wholesome, as ever came in any cup of
sack: you drank to this man, and you do well, God be thanked—but he no sooner drank—

PUR. But I, but I, but I—O my head! O my heart!

RICH. I cannot choose but smile at these conceits.

JOHN. I am mad; and yet I must laugh at Fauconbridge:
Brother, look how Sir Richard acts his rage!

FAU. I came? I call? the man is like to die,
Practice, by the mass; practice, by the marry God!
I shall be charg'd here for a poison'd knave,
Practice, by th'Lord, practice!—I see it clear.

PUR. And more, Sir Richard. O Lord, O Sir Richard!

FAU. What more? what hast thou more? what practice more?

PUR. O my box, my box, with the king's arms! O my box,
O my box! it cost me, O Lord, every penny; O my box!

RICH. And what of your box, sir?

DRA. Marry, sir, it's lost; and 'tis well known my master keeps no thieves in his house; O, there was
none but you and he.

FAU. O, then belike thou thinkest I had his box.

PUR. O Sir Richard, I will not; O Lord, I will not charge you for all the world; but—but—but for the

warrant the old King sign'd to reprieve the porter of the Fleet! O God, O God!

JOHN. The porter of the Fleet? the old King sign'd?—

PUR. Ay, my good lord, ay, ay.

JOHN. Is he reprieved then?

PUR. No, my lord; O, Sir Richard took it from me with his own hand, O!

FAU. Here's a device to bring me in contempt
With the old King, that I ever lov'd.
Princes and Sheriff, you can witness with me,
That I have been with you this afternoon—
Only with you, with nobody but you—
And now a fellow, whom the King would save
By a reprieve, this fellow says, is hang'd.

JOHN. If thou hadst done it, I'd have justified it;
But, Richard, I conceit this jest already:
This mad-mate Skink, this honest merry knave,
Meeting this Pursuivant, and hearing tell
He had a warrant to reprieve a slave
Whom we would hang, stole it away from him.
This is sure the jest; upon my life, it is!

PUR. O, but my warrant, how shall I do? O!

RICH. But look about you, hot-brain'd brother John,
And I believe you'll find it otherwise;
Gloster hath got the warrant in disguise,
And sav'd the fellow you so fain would hang.

JOHN. No, no; how say you, master Sheriff, is he not hang'd?

SHER. My lord, the gibbet was set up by noon
In the Old Bailey, and I charg'd my men,
If I return not, though it were by torchlight,
To see him executed, ere they come.

JOHN. I am greedy to hear news.

FAU. Robb'd of my chain, out-faced I had a sword,
Accused of poisoning, cozenage, seeking blood!
Not to be borne! it is intolerable!

RICH. Sir Richard, I prythee, have some patience.

FAU. I'll to Blackheath, talk not of patience;
It is intolerable, not to be borne.

JOHN. It is intolerable, not to be borne;
A warrant, brother; Fauconbridge, a warrant!

FAU. I saw no warrant; I defy you all.

JOHN. A slave, a pursuivant, one Winterborn.

FAU. I care not for thee that, Winterborn.

PUR. O, it is I, sir; that's my warrant.

JOHN. Is't you? you rogue, you drunkard; ye are cheated,
And we are cheated of the prisoner.
Out, dog, dog.

PUR. O, O, O, O my lord.

[*Exit with* DRAWER.

SHER. Have patience, and we will have a privy search.

JOHN. Go hang, ye blockheads, get ye from my sight!
O, would I were a basilisk, to kill
These glear-ey'd villains.

SHER. Come away; let's leave him.
We have a warrant; let him do his worst.

[*Exeunt* SHERIFF *and* OFFICERS.]

FAU. I'll to Blackheath, I'll to the holy hermit;
There shall I know not only these deceivers,
But how my wife plays fast and loose with Richard.
Ha! I shall fit them, I shall tickle them;
I'll do it, I'll hence, I'll to the heath amain.

[*Exit.*]

JOHN. There shall I know where this damned Gloster is,
I'll have the devils rous'd to find that devil,
O[r] else I'll conjure the old conjuror.
I'll to Blackheath, and there with friends conspire,
But I'll have Gloster's head, my heart's desire.

RICH. Would mad Earl Robin saw these humourists:
'Twould feed him fit with laughter! O, 'twould fit him.
Wherever he is, I know the bare conceit
Is better to him than his daintiest food.
Well, and it fits me well, now I have time,
To court my Lady Fauconbridge at leisure.
Love, I implore thy aid; fair Cipria,
Thou sea-born mother at affection's ring,
Shine brightly in thy sphere, that art[505] my star,
My planet, thou of all lights most beauteous,
Be thou to my desires auspicious.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE THE TWENTY-FOURTH.

Enter ROBIN HOOD *in the* LADY FAUCONBRIDGE'S *gown, night attire on his head.*

ROB. O, for this lady! Was never poor gentleman troubled with gentlewoman as I am with myself! My Lady Fauconbridge hath fitted me a turn. Here I am, visited with sleeveless errands and with asking for *This thing, Madam, and That thing, Madam*, that they make me almost mad in earnest. Whoop, here's another client.

Enter a SERVING-MAN.

SER. Here's my Lady Rawford's page attends to speak with your ladyship.

ROB. I pray ye bid her lordship's page come into my Ladyship.

[*Exit.* SERVINGMAN.]

Well, Robin Hood, part with these petticoats,
And cast these loose devices from thy back,
I'll ne'er go more untruss'd, never be kerchief'd,
Never have this ado with *what do you lack?*

Enter PAGE.

PAGE. Madam, my lady greets your honour kindly,
And sends you the first grapes of her young vine.

ROB. I am much indebted to her honour, there's an angel for you to drink; set them up till after supper. Humphrey, pray look about for Block. Humphrey! trust me, I think the fool be lost.

PAGE. No, forsooth, madam, he's upon the green, jesting with a stammerer, one Redcap.

ROB. It is a lewd fellow; pray, bid him come in, youth; I'll give him his welcome at the door. Commend

me to your lady, I pray ye, heartily. [*Exit* PAGE. Humphrey, I marvel where Sir Richard is so late! Truly, truly, he does not as beseems a gentleman of his calling; pray, let some go forth to meet him on the green, and send in that blockhead Block. [*Exit* HUMPHREY.

Enter REDCAP, and BLOCK *after* him.

BLO. Will ye tell tales, ye ass, will ye?

RED. I'll te-te-tell your la-la-lady, or I would to G-God we were ha-hang'd else, as my fa-father should have been.

ROB. Now, what's the matter there, I pray you? What company have you there, a-God's name? where spend you the day, I pray?

BLO. Why, where you gave me leave; at the gallows I was—no farther.

RED. A-a-and you be his la-lady, you are the La-Lady Fau-Fauconbridge, the Earl of Glo-Gloster's sister.

ROB. I am so, fellow.

RED. Y-y-your man B-B-Blocke here does no—nothing but f-f-flout m-me, a-and cr-cries *r-run Redcap and s-s-see you f-f-father ha-ha-hang'd*. I sh-shall g-go-near to m-make m-murder, and he u-use it.

ROB. Well, sirrah, leave your mocking, you were best, I'll bob your beetle head, and if you mock him.

BLO. He's *run Redcap*.

RED. La-la-law, ma-madam.

ROB. Away, ye saucy fool; go, wait within.

BLO. *Run, Redcap; run, Redcap. [Exit.*

ROB. Art thou the porter's son, that was condemned about my brother Gloster?

RED. Ay, G-G-God be with you, I am the p-p-porter's son, I m-must r-run to s-s-see your b-br-brother.

ROB. Well, drink that, fellow; if thou find my brother, be not too violent, and I'll reward thee.

RED. I th-th-thank ye h-heartily; and I had not been cozened with Sk-Skink, I had no nee-need of these ja-jaunts, for Gl-Gloster was s-safe enough.

Enter BLOCK and the PORTER *with his cloak muffled*.

BLO. Ah, farewell, Redcap.

RED. Fa-fare we-well, and be ha-hang'd. [*Exit.*

ROB. You'll never leave your knavery. Who's there more.

BLO. One, madam, that hath commendations to you from your brother.

ROB. Comest thou from Gloster? thou art welcome, friend.

BLO. O, it's one of the kindest ladies (though she will now and then have a bout with Block) that ever breath'd, and she had been in her mood now, Redcap would have made her such sp-sp-sport as 't a' pa-pa-pass'd.

ROB. Will you make sport, and see who knocks again?

BLO. Our gates are like an anvil; from four to ten, nothing but knick-a-knock upon't.

ROB. Will you be gone, sir? [*Exit* BLOCK.]
Honest friend, I am glad
My brother Gloster got thy liberty,
Whose flight was cause of thy captivity:
Nor shall there be in us such negligence,
Though thou have lost thy office and thy house,
But we will see thee better far provided

Than when thou wert [the] Porter in the Fleet.

Re-enter BLOCK.

BLO. Madam, your old friend, Prince Richard,
All alone,
Making moan,
Fetching many a grievous groan.

ROB. Prince Richard come so late? lights to his chamber;
Sirrah, in any case, say I am sick.

BLO. Very sick, sick, and like to die! I'll sing it, and you will.

ROB. Away, ye knave; tell him, in the morning
I'll humbly wait upon his excellence.

BLO. That's all his desire to have ye lowly and humble, and 'tis a courteous thing in a lady. [*Exit.*]

ROB. Hence, or else I'll set you hence. Go in, good friend.
Come, Lady Fauconbridge; it's time to come;
Robin can hold out no longer, I see:
Hot wooers will be tempters presently.
[*Exit.*]

SCENE THE TWENTY-FIFTH.

Enter SKINK *like a Hermit.*

SKINK. Now, holy Skink, in thy religious weed,
Look out for purchase or thy wonted clients.
Warrants, quoth you? I was fairly warranted;
Young Robin Hood, the Earl of Huntington,
Shall never fetch me more unto his prince.

Enter LADY FAUCONBRIDGE, *in Merchant's Wife's attire.*

But, *pauca verba*, Skink! a prize, a prize;
By th'mass, a pretty girl; close, hermit, close.
Overhear, if thou canst, what she desires,
For so my cunning and my credit spreads.

LADY F. See, how affection arms my feeble strength,
To this so desperate journeying all alone,
While Robin Hood, young Earl of Huntington,
Plays Lady Fauconbridge for me at home.

SKINK. What mystery is this? The Lady Fauconbridge!
It's she? Sweet fortune, thou hast sent her well;
I will entice this morsel to my cell.
Her husband's jealous; I will give him cause.
As he believes, I hope it shall succeed.
Nay, swounds, it shall; she's mine in scorn of speed.

LADY F. By this broad beaten path, it should appear,
The holy hermit's cave cannot be far,
And if I err not, this is he himself.

SKINK. What honour'd tongue enquireth for the hermit?

LADY F. What honour'd tongue?

SKINK. Ay, Lady Fauconbridge,
I know ye, and I know for what ye come,
For Gloster and your husband's jealousy.

LADY F. O thou, whose eye of contemplation

Looks through the windows of the highest heavens,
Resolve thy handmaid, where Earl Gloster lives:
And whether he shall live, and 'scape the hate
Of proud young Henry and his brother John?

SKINK. I'll have you first in; I'll tell you more anon.
Madam, they say bushes have ears and eyes;
And these are matters of great secrecy;
And you'll vouchsafe enter my holy cell,
There what you long to know I'll quickly tell.

Enter JOHN and FAUCONBRIDGE.

LADY F. Stay, here are strangers.

SKINK. A plague upon them, come they in the nick,
To hinder Reynard[506] of his fox's trick?

[LADY FAUCONBRIDGE *retires a little.*

JOHN. Good day, old hermit.

FAU. So to you, fair dame.

JOHN. By Elinor's grey eye, she's fair indeed.
Sweet heart, come ye for holy benisons?
Hermit, hast thou good custom with such clients?
I cannot blame your feats, your juggling tricks,
Plague juggle you!

LADY F. Why curse ye sacred worth?

FAU. Ill done, in sooth, my Lord, very ill done,
Wrong holiness! a very pretty woman! [*aside.*]
Mock gravity! by the mass a cherry lip! [*aside.*]
Ah, it's not well done [to] deride a holy hermit!

JOHN. I have it in my purse shall make amends.

SKINK. His purse and yours shall make me some amends
For hind'ring me this morning from the lady;
For scaring me at tavern yesternight:
For having back your chain, I'll fit you both. [*Aside.*

JOHN. Hermit, a word.

FAU. A word with you, fair mistress.

JOHN. Where lie your devils, that tell all your news?
Would you would trouble them for half an hour,
To know what is become of traitor Gloster,
That in my clothes broke prison in the Fleet?

SKINK. No, it was Skink.

JOHN. Come, old fool, ye dote.

SKINK. But hear me.

FAU. Hear him, Prince.

JOHN. 'Swounds, who hears you?
I'll make your lady graft ye for this work.— [*Aside.*]
—But to your tale, sir.

SKINK. Know, thrice-honoured Prince,
That Skink did cosen Redcap of his clothes,
Gloster did cosen Skink, and so escap'd.

JOHN. Well done, Fauconbridge!

FAU. My lord, he tells you true.

JOHN. You find it on her lips: but, forward, sir.

SKINK. 'Twas Skink in Gloster's gown, whom you did visit,
That play'd at bowls, and after stole your clothes,
While you went into the Lord Morton's chamber.

JOHN. This savours of some truth.

FAU. 'Tis very like.

JOHN. Well, Fauconbridge, by heaven, I'll tell your wife.

FAU. She'll much believe you! you will? Come,
Tell me not of my wife[507]: this evening fail me not.
My wife, quoth you: I'll send my wife from home.
Do tell my wife, Prince John, by my dear mother,
I love her too-too well to like another.

LADY F. It seems so, fox; O, what a world is this!
There most sin reigns, where least suspicion is.

FAU. You'll come?

LADY F. I will not fail, I warrant you.

JOHN. Hermit, is all this true?

SKINK. Himself,
[If he] deliver not so much, before ye sleep,
Root me from out the borders of this realm.

[JOHN *and* FAUC. *retire a little.*

JOHN. Well, by your leave, Sir Richard Fauconbridge,
Hence, free from fear; you'll melt, you'll melt, old man.

FAU. Nay, take her to you; she's a shrew, I warrant.
I'll to the holy hermit, and inquire
About my chain, your sword, the pursuivant,
And other matters, that I have to ask.

[*He returns; JOHN addresses the LADY.*

SKINK. You're welcome, good Sir Richard.

JOHN. Nay, do not stand on terms; I am fire, all life,
Nor never tell me, that I have a wife.
I do not mean to marry; ye think so!
But to be merry you the manner know.
And you will have me, have me—'ppoint a meeting;
I'll be your true love, you shall be my sweeting.
If you deny to promise, this is plain
I'll have my will, ere you get home again.

LADY F. Most gracious lord.

JOHN. Tut, tell not me of grace:
I like no goodness but a beauteous face.
Be therefore brief; give me your hand and swear,
Or I'll away with you into the heath:
Neither shall Fauconbridge nor hermit help,
And what I do I'll answer well enough.

LADY F. Why, then, my lord.

JOHN. Nay, do not stand on them:[508]
But tell me, when my lord shall have you, Lady;
It's presently I venture for a baby.

LADY F. This night at Stepney, by my summer-house,
There is a tavern which I sometimes use,
When we from London come a-gossiping;
It is the Hind.

JOHN. Give me thy pretty hand:
Thou'lt meet me at the Hind? I'll be thy roe.

LADY F. One word's enough.

JOHN. Suffice; then be it so.

LADY F. I'll fit my old adulterer and your grace,
I'll send the Princess thither in my place. [*Aside.*]

FAU. Prince John, Prince John, the hermit tells me wonders;
He says it was Skink that 'scap'd us at the tavern:
Skink had my chain—nay, sure, that Skink did all.

SKINK. I say, go but to yonder corner,
And ere the sun be half an hour higher,
There will the thief attempt a robbery.

JOHN. Who? Skink?

FAU. Will Skink?

SKINK. Ay, Skink, upon my word.

FAU. Shall we go seize upon him, good Prince John?

JOHN. Nay, we will have him, that's no question.
And yet not hurt the honest rogue.
He'll help us well in quest of changing Gloster.
Hermit, farewell; Lady, keep your hour.

FAU. Adieu, old hermit: soon in the evening, lass.

LADY F. I'll meet you both, and meet with[509] both of you.
Father, what answer do you give to me?

SKINK. Lady, start down; I must into my cell,
Where I am curing of a man late hurt;
He dress'd, I must unto my orisons;
In half an hour all will be despatch'd,
And then I will attend your ladyship.

[*Exit.*]

LADY F. At your best leisure, father. O, the life,
That this thrice-reverend hermit leadeth here.
How far remote from mortal vanities,
Baits to the soul, enticements to the eye!
How far is he unlike my lustful lord?
Who being given himself to be unchaste,
Thinks all men like himself in their effects,
And injures me, that never had a thought
To wrong the sacred rights of spotless faith.

Enter SKINK with a patch on his face, and a falconer's lure in his hand.[510]

SKINK. Hermit, farewell, I'll pay ye or speak with ye next time I see ye. Sweet mouse, the hermit bids you stay here; he'll visit you anon. Now, John and Fauconbridge, I'll match ye, and I do not say Skink's a wretch, a wren, a worm. When I have trick'd them, madam, I will trim you. Commodity is to be preferr'd before pleasure. About profit, Skink; for crowns, for crowns, that make the kingly thoughts! [*Exit.*]

LADY F. (*to the hermit supposed within.*)
I am assur'd that man's some murderer.
Good Father Hermit, speak and comfort me;
Are ye at prayers, good old man? I pray ye, speak.

[*Enters.*

What's here? a beard? a counterfeited hair?
The hermit's portesse,[511] garments, and his beads?
Jesus defend me! I will fly this den;
It's some thief's cave, no haunt for holy men.
What, if the murderer (as I guess him one)
Set on my husband! Tush, Prince John and he
Are able to defend their[512] noble selves.
Howe'er, I will not tarry, I'll away,
Lest unto theft and rape I prove a prey.

[*Exit.*

SCENE THE TWENTY-SIXTH.

Enter SKINK solus.

SKINK. Yonder they are; I'll fit them; here's my ground.
Wa-ha-how, wa-ha-how, wa-ha-how!

Enter FAUCONBRIDGE [and JOHN.]

FAU. I warrant ye, my lord, some man's distress'd.

JOHN. Why, man, 'tis a falconer.

FAU, Marry of me, good fellow, I did think thou had'st been robb'd.

SKINK. Robb'd, sir? No, he that comes to rob me shall have a hard match on't, yet two good fellows had like to have been robb'd by one tall thief, had not I stepped in. A bots on him! I lost a hawk by him, and yet I car'd not to send another after him, so I could find the thief; and hereabout he is; I know he is squatted.

FAU. Say'st thou me so? we'll find him, by St Mary,
An honest fellow, a good commonwealth's man.

JOHN. There are caves hereabout, good fellow, are there not?

SKINK. Yes, sir; tread the ground, sir, and you shall hear their hollowness; this way, sir, this way.

JOHN. Help, Fauconbridge.

FAU. O, help me, good Prince John.

SKINK. I'll help you both; deliver, sir, deliver! Swounds, linger not. Prince John, put up your purse, or I'll throw poniards down upon your pate. Quickly! when? I am Skink, that 'scap'd ye yesternight, and fled the Fleet in your cloak, carrying me clean out of wind and rain. I broke the bonds and links that fettered your chain amity; this cheat is mine. Farewell, I cannot stay, Sweet Prince, old Knight, I thank ye for this prey. [*Exit.*

FAU. God's marry mother, here's a jest indeed.
We came to take: a thief takes us!
Where are ye, good my lord?

JOHN. No matter where;
I think I was fore-spoken at the teat,
This damn'd rogue serv'd me thus! Gloster and he,
Upon my life, conclude in villany.
He was not wont to plot these stratagems.
Lend me your hand a little; come away,
Let's to the cell again; perchance the hermit
Is Skink and thief, and hermit, all in one.

FAU. Marry a God, then ten to one it's so;
Well thought on, Princely John;
He had my chain, no doubt he had your sword.

JOHN. If there be now no hermit at the cell,

I'll swear by all the saints it's none but he.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE THE TWENTY-SEVENTH.

Enter GLOSTER in the Hermit's gown, putting on the beard.

GLO. This accident hath hit thy humour, Gloster;
From pursuivant I'll turn a hermit now.
Sure, he that keeps this cell's a counterfeit,
Else what does he here with false hair and beard?
Well, howsoe'er it be, I'll seem to be
The holy hermit; for such fame there is,
Of one accounted reverend on this heath.

Enter SKINK.

[SKINK.] I'll fain unto my cell, to my fair lady;
But John and Fauconbridge are at my heels; [*Sees John.*]
And some odd mate is got into my gown,
And walks devoutly like my counterfeit.
I cannot stay to question with you now,
I have another gown and all things fit,
These guests once rid, new mate, I'll bum,[513] I'll mark you.
[*Exit.*]

GLOS. What's he, a God's name? he is quickly gone.
I am for him, were he Robin Goodfellow.
Who's yonder, the Prince John and Fauconbridge?
I think they haunt me like my genii,
One good, the other ill; by the mass, they pry,
And look upon me but suspiciously.

JOHN. This is not Skink; the hermit is not Skink.
He is a learned, reverend, holy man;

FAU. He is, he is a very godly man;
I warrant ye, he's at his book at's prayers.
We should have took you, by my halidom,
Even for a very thief.

GLO. Now God forfend
Such noblemen as you should guess me so!
I never gave such cause, for ought I know.

JOHN. Yet thou did'st tell us Skink should do a robbery,
Appointed us the place, and there we found him.

FAU. And he felt us, for he hath robb'd us both.

GLO. He's a lewd fellow; but he shall be taken.

JOHN. I had rather hear of Gloster than of him.

GLO. Gloster did cheat him of the same gold chain,
That deceiv'd Sir Richard Fauconbridge.
He got your sword, Prince John: 'twas he that sav'd
The porter, and beguil'd the pursuivant.

JOHN. A vengeance on him!

GLO. Do not curse, good prince;
He's bad enough, 'twere better pray for him.

JOHN. I'll kill thee, and thou bid us pray for him,
I'll fell [the] woods, and ring thee round with fire,

Make thee an offering unto fierce revenge,
If thou have but a thought to pray for him.

GLO. I am bound to pray for[514] all men, chiefly Christians.

JOHN. Ha, ha, for Christians? think'st thou he is one?
For men? hast thou opinion he is a man?
He that changes himself to sundry shapes,
Is he a Christian? can he be a man?
O irreligious thoughts!

GLO. Why, worthy prince,
I saw him christened, dipp'd into the font.

JOHN. Then nine times, like the northern Laplanders,
He backward circled the sacred font,
And nine times backward said his orisons:
As often curs'd the glorious host of heaven,
As many times invok'd the fiends of hell,
And so turn'd witch; for Gloster is a witch.

GLO. Have patience, gentle prince; he shall appear
Before your kingly father speedily.

JOHN. Shall he indeed? sweet comfort, kiss thy cheek;
Peace circle in thy aged honoured head.
When he is taken, hermit, I protest
I'll build thee up a chapel and a shrine:
I'll have thee worshipp'd as a man divine,
Assure [ye] he shall come, and Skink shall come.

FAU.[515] Aye, that same Skink; I prythee, send that Skink.

JOHN. Send both; and both, as prisoners criminate.
Shall forfeit their lost[516] lives to England's state,
Which way will Fauconbridge?

FAU. Over the water, and
So with all speed I may to Stepney.

JOHN. I must to Stepney too, and revel, and be blithe,
Old [Knight], wink at my mirth; 't may make amends,
So thou and I, and our friends, may be friends.

FAU. With all my heart, with all my heart, Prince [John],
Old Fauconbridge will wait upon your grace.
Be good to Gloster, for my Marian's sake,
And me and mine you shall your servants make.

GLO. Of that anon: my pleasure being serv'd,
Gloster shall have what Gloster hath deserv'd.

FAU. Why, that's well said; adieu, good honest hermit.
[Exit.

JOHN. Hermit, farewell, if I had my desire, I'll make the world thy wondrous deeds admire. [Exit.

GLO. Still good, still passing good; Gloster is still
Henry's true hate, foe to John's froward will,
No more of that: for them in better time.
If this same hermit be an honest man,
He will protect me by his[517] simple life;
If not, I care not; I'll be ever Gloster,
Make him my footstool, if he be a slave,
For baseness over worth can have no power.
Robin, bethink thee, thou art come from kings,
Then scorn to be [a] slave to underlings,
Look well about thee, lad, and thou shalt see

Them burst in envy, that would injure thee.
Hermit, I'll meet you in your hermit's gown,
Honest, I'll love you: worse, I'll knock you down.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE THE TWENTY-EIGHTH.

Enter PRINCE RICHARD, *with music.*

P. RICH. Kind friends, we have troubled Lady Fauconbridge,
And either she's not willing to be seen,
Or else not well, or with our boldness griev'd,
To ease these, I have brought you to this window,
Knowing you are in music excellent.
I have penn'd a ditty here, and I desire
You would sing it for her love and my content.

MUS. With all my heart, my lord.

Enter ROBIN HOOD, *like the* LADY [FAUCONBRIDGE].

ROB. Your excellence forgets your princely worth;
If I may humbly crave it at your hands,
Let me desire this music be dismiss'd.

RICH. Forbear, I pray, and withdraw yourselves;
Be not offended, gracious Marian. [*Exeunt music.*]
Under the upper heaven nine goodly spheres
Turn with a motion ever, musical;
In palaces of kings melodious sounds
Offer pleasures to their sovereigns ears.
In temples, milk-white-clothed quiristers
Sing sacred anthems, bowing to the shrine;
And in the fields whole quires of winged clerks
Salute the^[518] morning bright and crystalline.
Then blame not me; you are my heaven, my queen:
My saint, my comfort, brighter than the morn.
To you all music and all praise is due;
For your delight, for you,^[519] delight was born.
The world would have no mirth, no joy, no day,
If from the world your beauty were away.

ROB. Fie on love's blasphemy and forgery,
To call that joy^[520] that's only misery!
I, that am wedded to suspicious age,
Solicited by your lascivious youth;
I, that have [only] one poor comfort living—
Gloster my brother, my high-hearted brother—
He flies for fear, lest he should faint, and fall
Into the hands of hate tyrannical.

RICH. What would you I should do?

ROB. I would full fain
My brother Gloster had his peace again.

RICH. Shall love be my reward, if I do bring
A certain token of his good estate,
And after pacify my brother's wrath?
Say you will love, he^[521] will be fortunate!

ROB. I will.

RICH. No more; I vow to die unblest
If I perform not this imposed quest.

But one word, madam; pray, can you tell
Where Huntington my ward is?

ROB. I was bold
To send young Robin Hood, your noble ward,
Upon some business of import for me.

RICH. I am glad he is employed in your affairs;
Farewell, kind fair; let [not] one cloudy frown
Shadow the bright sun of thy beauty's light:
Be confident in this—I'll find thy brother,
Raise power but he'll[522] have peace: only perform
Your gracious promise at my back-return.

ROB. Well, here's my hand, Prince Richard; that same night,
Which secondeth the day of your return,
I'll be your bed-fellow, and from that hour
Forswear the loathed bed of Fauconbridge:
Be speedy, therefore, as you hope to speed.

RICH. O that I were as large-winged as the wind,
Then should you see my expeditious will.
My most desire, adieu! guess by my haste
Of your sweet promise the delicious taste.
[Exit.

ROB. Why so: I am rid of him by this device,
He would else have tired me with his songs and sighs.[523]

Enter BLOCK.

But now I shall have ease; here comes the saint,
To whom such suit was made.

BLO. My lady gentlewoman is even here in her privy-walk. Madam, here's the merchant's wife was
here yesterday would speak with ye. O, I was somewhat bold to bring her in.

Enter LADY FAUCONBRIDGE, *disguised as a merchant's wife.*

ROB. Well, leave us, sir; y'are welcome, gentlewoman.

BLO. These women have no liberality in the world in them; I never let in man to my lady, but I am
rewarded.

ROB. Please ye to walk, sir! wherefore mumble ye?

[Exit BLOCK.

LADY F. Robin, what news? how hast thou done this night?

ROB. My ladyship hath done my part, my task,
Lain all alone for lack of company,
I might have had Prince Richard.

LADY F. Was he here!

ROB. He went away but now;
I have been lov'd and woo'd too simply,
God rid me of the woman once again;
I'll not be tempted so for all the world.
Come, will you to your chamber, and uncase?

LADY F. Nay, keep my habit yet a little while,
Old Fauconbridge is almost at the gate,
I met him at Blackheath just at the hermit's,
And, taking me to be a merchant's wife,
Fell mightily in love, gave me his ring,
Made me protest that I would meet him here.
I told him of his lady—O, tut, quoth he,

I'll shake her up, I'll pack her out of sight.
He comes; kind Robin Hood, hold up the jest.

Enter SIR RICHARD FAUCONBRIDGE and BLOCK, talking together.

FAU. God's marry, knave, how long hath she been here?

BLO. Sir, she came but even in afore you.

FAU. A cunning quean, a very cunning quean,
Go to your business, Block; I'll meet with her.

BLO. Ah, old muttonmonger, I believe here's work towards.

[Exit.

FAU. *[seeing the merchant's wife].*

Do not believe her. Moll, do not believe her,
I only spake a word or two in jest,
But would not for the world have been so mad;
Do not believe her, Moll, do not believe her.

ROB. What should I not believe? what do you mean?

LADY F. Why, good Sir Richard, let me speak with you.
Alas, will you undo me? will you shame me?
Is this your promise? came I here for this?
To be a laughing-stock unto your lady?

ROB. How now, Sir Richard, what's the matter there?

FAU. I'll talk with you anon; come hither, woman.
Did'st [thou] not tell my wife what match we made?

LADY F. I tell your wife? think ye I am such a beast?
Now God forgive ye; I am quite undone.

FAU. Peace, duck; peace, duck; I warrant all is well. *[Aside.*

Rob. What's the matter? I pray ye, Sir Richard, tell me!

FAU. Marry, Moll, thus—about some twelve month since,
Your brother Gloster, that mad prodigal,
Caus'd me to pass my word unto her husband
For some two thousand pounds, or more perchance—
No matter what it is, you shall not know,
Nay, ye shall never ask to know.

ROB. And what of this?

FAU. Many, the man's decayed,
And I believe a little thing would please her;
A very little thing, a thing of nothing.
Go in, good Moll, and leave us two alone,
I'll deal with ye as simply as I can.

LADY F. Fox, look about ye, ye are caught, i'faith.

ROB. Deal with her simply! O, O, what kind of dealing?
Can ye not deal with her, and I be by?

FAU. Marry a God, what, are ye jealous?
Ye teach me what to do? in, get you in.
O, I have heard Prince Richard was your guest,
How dwelt you then? In, get you in, I say.
Must I take care about your brother's debts,
And you stand crossing me? In, or I'll send you in. *[Exit ROBIN.*
Ha, sirrah; you'll be master, you'll wear the yellow,^[524]
You'll be an over-seer? marry, shall ye!

LADY F. Ye are too curst (methinks, sir) to your lady.

FAU. Ah, wench, content thee, I must bear her hard,
Else she'll be prying[525] into my dalliance.
I am an old man, sweet girl; I must be merry:
All steel, all spright: keep in health by change;
Men may be wanton, women must not range.

LADY F. You have given good counsel, sir; I'll repent me.
Here is your ring; I'll only love my husband.

FAU. I mean not so, I think to-day thou told'st me
Thy husband was an unthrift and a bankrupt.
And he be so, tut, thou hast favour store;
Let the knave beg, beauty cannot be poor.

LADY F. Indeed my husband is a bankrupt—
Of faith, of love, of shame, of chastity,
Dotes upon other women more than me.

FAU. Ha! do he so? then give him tit for tat,
Have one so young and fair, and loves another?
He's worthy to be cuckolded, by the mass!
What is he, old or young?

LADY F. About your age.

FAU. An old knave,
And cannot be content with such a peat!
Come to my closet, girl, make much of me;
We'll appoint a meeting-place some twice a week,
And I'll maintain thee like a lady, ha!

LADY F. O, but you will forget me presently,
When you look well upon your lady's beauty.

FAU. Who? upon her? why, she is a very dowdy,
A dishclout, a foul gipsy unto thee.
Come to my closet, lass, there take thy earnest
Of love, of pleasure, and good maintenance.

LADY F. I am very fearful.

FAU. Come, fool, never fear.
I am lord here, who shall disturb us then?
Nay, come, or, by the rood, I'll make you come.

LADY F. Help, Madam Fauconbridge, for God's sake.

Enter ROBIN HOOD *as* LADY FAUCONBRIDGE, *and* BLOCK.

FAU. How now, what mean'st?

LADY F. Help, gentle madam, help!

ROB. How now, what ail'st thou?

BLOCK. Nay, and't be a woman: ne'er fear my master, madam.

ROB[526]. Why speak'st thou not, what ail'st thou?

FAU. Why, nothing, by the rood, nothing she ails.

LADY F. O madam, this vile man would have abused me,
And forc'd me to his closet.

ROB. Ah, old Cole,[527] now look about: you are catcht!

LADY F. Call in your fellows, Block.

FAU. Do not, thou knave.

LADY F. Do, or I'll crack your crown.

BLO. Nay, I'll do't: I know she means to shame you.

[*Exit.*]

FAU. Why, Moll, wilt thou believe this paltry woman?
Huswife, I'll have you whipp'd for sland'ring me.

ROB. What, lecher? no, she is an honest woman:
Her husband's well known; all the household knows.

BLO. Here's some now to tell all the town your mind.

LADY F. Before ye all I must [now] sure complain.
You see this wicked man, and ye all know
How oft he hath been jealous of my life:
Suspecting falsehood, being false himself.

BLO. O master, O master.

FAU. She slanders me; she is a cozening quean.
Fetch me the constable: I'll have her punish'd.

LADY F. The constable for me? fie, fie upon ye.
Madam, do you know this ring?

ROB. It is Sir Richard's.

BLO. O, aye, that's my master's, too [—too] sure.

FAU. Ay, marry, I did lend it to the false drab
To fetch some money for that bankrupt knave,
Her husband, that lies prisoner in the Fleet.

LADY F. My husband bankrupt? my husband in the Fleet prisoner?
No, no, he is as good a man as you.

ROB. Ay, that he is, and can spend pound for pound
With thee, i'faith, wert richer than thou art.
I know the gentleman.

LADY F. Nay, madam, he is
Hard by: there must be revels at the Hind tonight;
Your copesmate's there—Prince John.

ROB. There's a hot youth!

BLO. O, a fierce gentleman!

LADY F. He was fierce as you; but I have match'd him:
The princess shall be there in my attire.

FAU. A plaguy, crafty quean, marry a God,
I see Prince John courted as well as I;
And since he shall be mock'd as well as I,
It's some contentment.

BLO. Mass, he droops.
Fellow Humphrey, he is almost taken,
Look about ye, old Richard. [*Aside.*]

FAU. Hence, knaves; get in a little. Prythee, Moll,
Let thou and I, and she, shut up this matter.

ROB. Away, sirs; get in.

BLO. Come, come, Let's go; he will be baited now. Farewell. [*Exit* BLOCK.]

FAU. Marry, sweet Moll, I say, I met this woman;
Lik'd her, lov'd her;
For she is worthy love, I promise thee.
I say, I courted her: tut, make no brawl,

'Twixt thou and I we'll have amends for all.

ROB. Had I done such a trick, what then? what then?

FAU. Ah prythee, Moll, tut, bear with men.

ROB. Aye, we must bear with you; you'll be excus'd,
When women undeserved are abus'd.

FAU. Nay, do not weep: pardon me, gentle lady;
I know thee virtuous, and I do protest
Never to have an evil thought of thee.

ROB. Aye, aye, ye swear; who's that that will believe ye?

FAU. Now, by my halidom and honest faith,
This gentlewoman shall witness what I swear.
Sweet duck, a little help me.

LADY F. Trust him, madam.

FAU. I will be kind, credulous, constant ever,
Do what thou wilt, I'll be suspicious never.

ROB. For which I thank [the] noble Fauconbridge.
[Discovers himself.]

FAU. Body of me, who's this? young Huntington?

LADY F. And I your lady, whom you courted last,
[Discovers herself.]
Ye looked about you ill, fox; we have caught ye;
I met ye at Blackheath, and ye were hot.

FAU. I knew thee, Moll; now, by my sword, I knew thee.
I wink'd at all; I laughed at every jest.

ROB. Aye, he did wink; the blind man had an eye.[528]

FAU. Peace, Robin, thou't once be a man as I.

LADY F. Well, I must bear it all.

FAU. Come, and ye bear,
It's but your office; come, forget, sweet Moll.

LADY. F. I do forgive it, and forget it, sir.

FAU. Why, that's well said; that's done like a good girl.
Ha, sirrah, ha, you match'd me, pretty earl.

ROB. I have, ye see, sir; I must unto Blackheath
In quest of Richard, whom I sent to seek
Earl Gloster out. I know he's at the hermit's.
Lend me your coach; I'll shift me, as I ride;
Farewell, Sir Richard.
[Exit.]

FAU. Farewell, England's pride.
By the matins, Moll, it is a pretty child;
Shall we go meet John? shall we go mock the prince?

LADY F. We will.

FAU. O, then we shall have sport anon.
Never wear yellow, Moll; 'twas but a trick;
Old Fauconbridge will still be a mad Dick.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE THE TWENTY-NINTH.

Enter REDCAP and GLOSTER.

RED. Do ye s-s-say, fa-fa-father hermit, th-that Gl-Gloster is about this heath?

GLO. He is upon this heath, son; look about it.
Run but the compass, thou shalt find him out.

RED. R-r-run? I'll r-run the co-compass of all K-Kent but I'll f-find him out; my f-f-father (where'er he lays his head) dare ne-never come home, I know, t-t-till he be fo-fo-found.

GLO. Well, thou shalt find him. Know'st thou who's a-hunting?

RED. M-m-marry, 'tis the Earls of La-La-Lancaster and Le-Leicester, Fa-fa-farewell, f-father; and I find Skink or Glo-Gloster, I'll g-g-give thee the pr-price of a penny p-p-pudding for thy p-pains. [*Exit.*]

GLO. Adieu, good friend: this is sure the fellow
I sent on message from the Parl'ament—
The porter's son—he's still in quest of me,
And Skink, that cosen'd him of his red cap!

Enter RICHARD, like a Serving-man.

But look about thee, Gloster; who comes yonder?
O, a plain serving-man, and yet perhaps
His bags are lin'd,
And my purse now grows thin:
If he have any, I must share with him.

Enter SKINK, like a Hermit.

And who's on yond side? O, it is my hermit;
Hath got his other suit, since I went forth.

SKINK. Sblood, yonder's company; I'll back again,
Else I would be with you counterfeit;
I'll leave the rogue till opportunity,
But never eat, till I have quit my wrong. [*Exit.*]

RICH. I saw two men attend like holy hermits;
One's slipp'd away, the other's at his beads.
Now, Richard, for the love of Marian,
Make thy inquire, where mad Gloster lives.
If England or the verge of Scotland hold him,
I'll seek him thus disguis'd. If he be pass'd
To any foreign part, I'll follow him.
Love, thou art Lord of hearts; thy laws are sweet;
In every troubled way thou guid'st our feet.
Lovers, enjoin'd to pass the dangerous sea
Of big-swoll'n sorrow in the bark Affection,
The winds and waves of woe need never fear,
While Love the helm doth, like a pilot, steer.

GLO. Here's some lover come, a mischief on him!
I know not how to answer these mad fools;
But I'll be brief; I'll mar the hermit's tale.
Off, gown; hold, buckler; slice it, Bilbo' blade.

RICH. What's this? what should this mean? old man, good friend.

GLO. Young fool, deliver; else see your end.

RICH. I thought thou hadst been holy and a hermit.

GLO. Whate'er you thought, your purse! come, quickly, sir;
Cast that upon the ground, and then confer.

RICH. There it is.

GLO. Falls it so heavy? then my heart is light.

RICH. Thou'lt have a heavy heart before thou touch it.
Theft shrin'd in holy weeds, stand to't, y'are best.

GLO. And if I do not, seeing such a prey,
Let this be to me a disaster day.

RICH. Art thou content to breathe?

[Fight and part once or twice.]

GLO. With all my heart.
Take half thy money, and we'll friendly part.

RICH. I will not cherish theft.

GLO. Then I defy thee.

[Fight again and breathe.]

RICH. Alas for pity, that so stout a man,
So reverend in aspect, should take this course.

GLO. This is no common man with whom I fight,
And if he be, he is of wond'rous spright. *[Aside.]*
Shall we part stakes?

RICH. Fellow, take
The purse upon condition thou wilt follow me.

GLO. What, wait on you? wear a turn'd livery,
Whose man's your master? If I be your man,
My man's man's office will be excellent!
There lies your purse again; win it and wear it.

[Fight.]

Enter ROBIN HOOD. They breathe, offer again.

ROB. Clashing of weapons at my welcome hither?
Bick'ring upon Blackheath. Well-said, old man;
I'll take thy side, the younger hath the odds.
Stay, end your quarrel, or I promise ye
I'll take the old man's part.

RICH. You were not wont.
Young Huntington; [be] still on Richard's side.

ROB. Pardon, gracious prince; I knew ye not.

GLO. Prince Richard? then lie, envy, at his foot.
Pardon thy cousin Gloster, valiant lord.
I knew no common force confronted mine.

RICH[529]. O heaven, I had the like conceit of thine,
I tell thee, Robin, Gloster, thou art met,
Bringing such comfort unto Richard's heart:
As in the foil of war, when dust and sweat,
The thirst of wreak[530], and the sun's fiery heat,
Have seized upon the soul of valiance,
And he must faint, except he be refresh'd.
To me thou com'st, as if to him should come
A perry[531] from the north, whose frosty breath
Might fan him coolness in that doubt[532] of death.
With me then meet'st, as he a spring might meet,
Cooling the earth under his toil-parch'd feet,
Whose crystal moisture, in his helmet ta'en,
Comforts his spirits, makes him strong again.

GLO. Prince, in short terms, if you have brought me comfort,

Know, if I had my pardon in this hand,
That smit base Skink in open Parl'ament,
I would not come to Court, till the high feast
Of your proud brother's birthday be expired,
For as the old king—as he made a vow
At his unlucky coronation, [that I]
Must wait upon the boy and fill his cup,
And all the peers must kneel, while Henry kneels,
Unto his cradle—he shall hang me up,
Ere I commit that vile idolatry.
But when the feast is pass'd, if you'll befriend me,
I'll come and brave my proud foes to their teeth.

RICH. Come, Robin; and if my brother's grace deny,
I'll take thy part, them and their threats defy.

GLO. Gramercy, princely Dick.

ROB. I have some pow'r:
I can raise two thousand soldiers in an hour.

GLO. Gramercy, Robin; gramercy, little wag,
Prince Richard, pray let Huntington
Carry my sister Fauconbridge this ring.

RICH. I'll carry it myself; but I had rather
Had thy kind company; thou might'st have mov'd
Thy sister, whom I long have vainly lov'd.

GLO. I like her that she shuns temptation,
Prince Richard; but I bear with doting lovers.
I should not take it well, that you urge me
To such an office: but I bear with you.
Love's blind and mad. Hie to her boldly: try her;
But if I know she yield, faith, I'll defy her.

RICH. I like thy honourable resolution;
Gloster, I pray thee pardon my intreat.

GLO. It is men's custom: part, part, gentle prince,
Farewell, good Robin, this gold I will borrow;
Meet you at Stepney, pay you all to-morrow.

ROB. Adieu, Gloster.

[*Exit* ROBIN.]

GLO. Farewell, be short.
You gone, I hope to have a little sport.

RICH. Take heed, mad coz.

GLO. Tut, tell not me of heed: [*Exit* RICHARD].
He that's too wary[533] never hath good speed.

SCENE THE THIRTIETH.

Hollooing within; enter LANCASTER with a broken staff in his hand.

[GLO.] Who's this? old Lancaster, my honour'd friend?

LAN. These knaves have serv'd me well, left me alone,
I have hunted fairly, lost my purse, my chain,
My jewels, and been bang'd by a bold knave,
Clad in a hermit's gown, like an old man—
O what a world is this?

GLO. It's ill, my lord.

LAN. He's come again! O knave, 'tis the worse for thee:

[Mistakes GLOSTER for the HERMIT.

Keep from me: be content with that thou hast,
And see thou fly this heath, for, if I take thee,
I'll make thee to all thieves a spectacle.
Had my staff held, thou hadst not 'scap'd me so.
But come not near me, fellow, thou art not^[534] best,
Holla, Earl Leicester! holla, huntsmen, ho!

GLO. Upon my life, old Lancaster, a-hunting,
Hath met my fellow-hermit. Could I meet him,
I'd play *[at]* rob-thief, at least part stakes with him.

Enter SKINK as a hermit.

SKINK. Zounds, he is yonder alone.

Enter REDCAP with a cudgel.

SKINK. Now revenge thyself on yonder slave^[535],
'Snails, still prevented? this same Redcap rogue
Runs like hob goblin up and down the heath.

RED. Wh-wh-wh-whoop, he-hermit, ye ha-ha-ma-ma-made Re-Redcap run a fine co-co-compass, ha-have you not?

SKINK. I made thee run?

GLO. Yonder's my evil angel.
Were Redcap gone, Gloster would conjure him.

RED. Je-Je-Jesus bl-bless me, whoop! t-t-two hermits? I'll ca-ca-caperclaw t-t-t'one of ye, for mo-mo-mocking me, and I d-d-do not ha-ha-hang me. Wh-wh-which is the fa-fa-false k-k-k-knave? for I am s-s-sure the old he-he-hermit wo-would never mo-mock an honest man.

GLO. He is the counterfeit; he mock'd thee, fellow.
I did not see thee in my life before,
He wears my garments, and has cosened me.

RED. Have you co-co-cosened the he-he-hermit and m-made Redcap run to no pu-pu-purpose?

SKINK. No, he's *[a]* counterfeit; I will tell no lies,
As sure as Skink deceiv'd thee of thy clothes,
Sent thee to Kent, gave thee thy fare by water,
So sure, he's false, and I the perfect hermit.

GLO. This villain is a conjuror, I doubt,
Were he the devil, yet I would not budge.

RED. Si-si-sirrah, you are the co-counterfeit. O, this is the tr-tr-true he-hermit. Sta-sta-stand still, g-good man, at that, I'll bu-bumbast you i'faith, I'll make you g-give the old m-m-man his gown.

[Offers to strike; GLOSTER trips up his heels; shifts SKINK into his place.

G-G-God's lid, are ye go-good at that? I'll cu-cudgel ye f-f-for the tr-tr-trick.

SKINK. It was not I; 'twas he, that cast thee down.

RED. You li-li-li-lie, you ra-ra-rascal, you; I le-left ye st-standing he-here.

SKINK. Zounds, hold, you stammerer, or I'll cut your stumps.

GLO. He is for me; he's weapon'd—I like that!

RED. O, here's a ro-ro-rogue in-ca-ca-carnate, help, mu-murder, murder.

Enter LANCASTER and HUNTSMEN at one door, LEICESTER and HUNTSMEN at another.

LAN. Lay hold upon that thievish counterfeit.

LEI. Why, here's another hermit, Lancaster:

GLO. I am the hermit, sir; that wretched man
Doth many a robbery in my disguise:

SKINK. It's he that robs; he slanders me; he lies.

LAN. Which set on thee?

RED. Th-this f-f-fellow has a s-s-sword and a buckler.

LAN. Search him; this is the thief; O, here's my purse,
My chain, my jewels! O thou wicked wretch,
How dar'st thou, under show of holiness,
Commit such actions of impiety?
Bind him, I'll have him made a public scorn.

SKINK. Lay hold upon that other hermit;
He is a counterfeit as well as I.
He stole those clothes from me; for I am Skink.
Search him, I know him not, he is some slave.

GLO. Thou liest, base varlet.

RED. O G-God, he has a sword too. Skink, are you ca-catcht?

LAN. Villain, thou shalt with me unto the Court.

LEI. And this with me; this is the traitor Gloster.

GLO. Thou liest, proud Leicester; I am no traitor,

RED. G-Gloster? O b-brave, now m-my father sh-shall be f-free.

LAN. Earl Gloster, I am sorry thou art taken.

GLO. I am not taken yet, nor will I yield
To any here but noble Lancaster.
Let Skink be Leicester's prisoner; I'll be thine.

LEI. Thou shalt be mine.

GLO. First, through a crimson sluice,
I'll send thy hated soul to those black fiends,
That long have hovered gaping for their part,
When tyrant life should leave thy traitor heart!
Come, Lancaster, keep Skink; I'll go with thee.
Let loose the mad knave, for I praise his shifts.
He shall not start away; I'll be his guide,
And with proud looks outface young Henry's pride.

LEI. Look to them, Lancaster, upon thy life.

RED. Well, I'll r-run and get a p-pardon of the k-k-k-king, Gl-Gloster and Skink ta-ta-taken! O b-b-brave, r-r-r-run, Re-Re-Redca-cap, a-and ca-ca-carry the first n-n-news to Co-Co-Court.

LEI. Lancaster, I'll help to guard them to the Court.

LAN. Do as you please.

GLO. Leicester, do not come near me;
For, if thou do, thou shalt buy it dearly.

LEI. I'll have thy hand for this.

GLO. Not for thy heart.

SKINK. Brave Earl, had Skink known thou hadst been the noble Gloster (whose mad tricks have made me love thee), I would have dyed Blackheath red with the blood of millions, ere we would have been taken; but what remedy? we are fast, and must answer it like gentlemen, like soldiers, like resolute.

GLO. Aye, ye are a gallant. Come, old Lancaster.
For thy sake will I go, or else, by heaven,
I'd send some dozen of these slaves to hell.

SCENE THE THIRTY-FIRST.

Enter PRINCE RICHARD, ROBIN HOOD, *and* LADY FAUCONBRIDGE.

LADY F. Your travail and your comfortable news:
This ring, the certain sign you met with him:
Binds me in duteous love unto your grace;
But on my knees I fall, and humbly crave
Importune that no more you ne'er can have.

RICH. Nay, then, ye wrong me, Lady Fauconbridge,
Did you not join your fair white hands,
Swore that ye would forswear your husband's bed,
[And] if I could but find out Gloster?

LADY F. I swear so!

RICH. [Yes,] by heaven.

ROB. Take heed; it's an high oath, my lord.

RICH. What meanest thou, Huntington?

ROB. To save your soul;
I do not love to have my friends forsworn,
She never promis'd, that you urge her with.

RICH. Go to; provoke me not.

ROB. I tell you true;
'Twas I in her attire that promis'd you.
She was gone unto the wizard at Blackheath,
And there had suitors more than a good many.

RICH. Was I deluded then?

LADY F. No, not deluded;
But hind'red from desire unchaste and rude.
O, let me woo ye with the tongue of ruth,
Dewing your princely hand with pity's tears,
That you would leave this most unlawful suit,
If e'er we live, till Fauconbridge be dead,
(As God defend his death I should desire).
Then, if your highness deign so base a match,
And holy laws admit a marriage,
Considering our affinity in blood,
I will become your handmaid, not your harlot—
That shame shall never dwell upon my brow.

ROB. I'faith, my lord, she's honourably resolv'd,
For shame, no more; importune her no more.

RICH. Marian, I see thy virtue, and commend it;
I know my error, seeking thy dishonour,
But the respectless, reasonless command
Of my inflamed love, bids me still try,
And trample under foot all piety;
Yet, for I will not seem too impious,
Too inconsiderate of thy seeming grief,
Vouchsafe to be my mistress: use me kindly.
And I protest I'll strive with all my power,
That lust himself may in his heat devour.

LADY F. You are my servant, then.

RICH. Thanks, sacred mistress.

ROB. What am I?

LADY F. You are my fellow Robert.

Enter FAUCONBRIDGE in his hose and doublet.

FAU. What, Prince Richard? noble Huntington?
Welcome, i'faith, welcome! by the morrow mass!
You are come as fitly as my heart can wish.
Prince John this night will be a reveller,
He hath invited me and Marian,
God's marry mother, go along with us,
It's but hard by, close by—at our town-tavern.

RICH. Your tavern?

FAU. O, aye, aye, aye; 'tis his own made match,
I'll make you laugh, I'll make you laugh, i'faith;
Come, come; he's ready. O, come, come away.

LADY F. But where's the princess?

FAU. She is^[536] ready too;
Block, Block, my man, must be her waiting-man.
Nay, will ye go? for God's sake, let us go.

RICH. Is the jest so? nay, then, let us away.

ROB. O, 'twill allay his heat, make dead his fire.

FAU. Ye bobbed me first; ye first gave me my hire,
But come, a God's name, Prince John stays for us.

[Exeunt.]

ROB. This is the word ever at spendthrifts' feasts,
They are gull'd themselves, and scoff'd at by their guests.

[Exit.]

SCENE THE THIRTY-SECOND.

A tavern. Enter JOHN, FAUCONBRIDGE, ROBIN HOOD, RICHARD, and the others^[537].

JOHN. Baffled and scoff'd! Skink, Gloster, women,
Fools and boys abuse me. I'll be reveng'd.

RICH. Reveng'd? and why, good child?
Old Fauconbridge hath had a worsen basting.

FAU. Aye, they have banded [me] from chase to chase;
I have been their tennis-ball, since I did court.

RICH. Come, John, take hand with virtuous Isabel,
And let's unto the court, like loving friends.
Our kingly brother's birth-day's festival
Is forthwith to be kept; thither we'll hie,
And grace with pomp that great solemnity.

JOHN. Whither ye will; I care not, where I go.
If grief will grace it, I'll adorn the show.

FAU. Come, madam; we must thither; we are bound.

LADY.[538] I'm loth to see the court, Gloster being from thence,
Or kneel to him that gave us this offence.

FAU. Body of me, peace, woman, I prythee, peace.

Enter REDCAP.

RED. Go-Go-God [speed] ye, Go-God s-speed ye!

JOHN. Whither run you, sir knave?

RED. R-r-run ye, sir knave? why, I r-run to my La-Lady Fa-Fauconbridge, to te-te-tell her Sk-Skink and Gl-Gloster is taken, and are g-g-gone to the c-c-court with L-Lord Leicester and L-Lord La-La-Lancaster.

JOHN. Is Gloster taken? thither will I fly
Upon wrath's wings; not quiet till he die.

[Exit with PRINCESS.

RICH. Is Gloster taken?

RED. Aye, he is ta-taken, I wa-warrant ye, with a wi-witness.

RICH. Then will I to court,
And either set him free, or die the death.
Follow me, Fauconbridge; fear not, fair madam:
You said you had the porter in your house?
Some of your servants bring him; on my life,
One hair shall not be taken from his head,
Nor he, nor you, nor Gloster, injured.

FAU. Come, Moll, and Richard say the word, ne'er fear.

ROB. Madam, we have twenty thousand at our call,
The most young Henry dares is but to brawl.

LADY F. Pray God, it prove so.

RICH. Follow, Huntington:
Sir Richard, do not fail to send the porter.

FAU. Block, bring the porter of the Fleet to court.

BLO. I will, sir.

RED. The p-p-porter of the Fl-Fl-Fleet to court?
What p-p-porter of the Fl-Fl-Fleet?

BLO. What, Redcap? Run, Redcap, wilt thou see thy father?

RED. My fa-father? Aye, that I w-would s-see my f-father, and there be
A p-p-porter in your ho-house, it is my fa-father.

BLO. Follow me, Redcap, then.

[Exit.

RED. And you were tw-tw-twenty B-Blocks, I'd f-f-follow ye, s-so I would, and r-run to the co-co-court too, and k-kneel before the k-k-king f-f-for his pa-pardon.

BLO. [Within.] Come away, Redcap; run, Redcap.

RED. I-I-I r-r-run as f-f-fast as I-I ca-ca-can run, I wa-warrant ye.

SCENE THE THIRTY-THIRD.

Enter a Signet,[539] first two Heralds, after them LEICESTER, with a sceptre, LANCASTER, with a crown imperial on a cushion: after them HENRY THE ELDER, bare-headed, bearing a sword and a globe: after him YOUNG HENRY, crowned: ELINOR, the Mother-Queen,

crowned: YOUNG QUEEN crowned: HENRY THE ELDER places his son, the two Queens on either hand, himself at his feet, LEICESTER and LANCASTER below him.

HEN. Herald, fetch Lancaster and Leicester coronets,
Suffer no marquis, earl, nor countess enter,
Except their temples circled are in gold.

[He delivers coronets to LEICESTER and LANCASTER.

Shew them our viceroys: by our will controll'd,
As at a coronation, every peer
Appears in all his pomp; so at this feast,
Held for our birthright, let them be adorn'd,
Let Gloster be brought in, crowned like an earl. *[Exit HERALD.*
This day we'll have no parley of his death,
But talk of jouissance and gleeful mirth.
Let Skink come in; give him a baron's seat.
High is his spirit, his deserts are great.

KING. You wrong the honour of nobility
To place a robber in a baron's stead.

QUEEN. It's well ye term him not a murderer.

KING. Had I misterm'd him?

QUEEN. Ay, that had you, Henry.
He did a piece of justice at my bidding.

KING. Who made you a justice?

HEN. I, that had the power.

KING. You had none then.

Enter GLOSTER and SKINK.

LEI. Yes, he was crown'd before.

HEN. Why does not Gloster wear a coronet?

GLO. Because his sovereign doth not wear a crown.

HEN. By heaven, put on thy coronet, or that heaven,
Which now with a clear [arch] lends us this light,
Shall not be curtain'd with the veil of night,
Ere on thy head I clap a burning crown
Of red-hot iron, that shall sear thy brains.

RICH. Good Gloster, crown thee with thy coronet.

LAN. Do, gentle earl.

SKINK. Swounds, do; would I had one. *[Aside.*

QUEEN. Do not, I prythee, keep thy proud heart still.

GLO. I'll wear it but to cross thy froward will.

HEN. Sit down, and take thy place.

GLO. It's the low earth;
To her I must, from her I had my birth.[540]

HEN. We are pleas'd thou shalt sit there.
Skink, take thy place among my nobles.

Enter JOHN and ISABEL, with coronets.

SKINK. Thanks to King Henry's grace.

JOHN. John, Earl of Morton and of Nottingham,
With Isabel his countess, bow themselves

Before their brother Henry's royal throne!

HEN. Ascend your seats; live in our daily love.

Enter RICHARD and ROBERT, with coronets.

RICH. Richard, the Prince of England, with his ward,
The noble Robert Hood, Earl Huntington,
Present their service to your majesty.

HEN. Y'are welcome, too, though little be your love. [*Aside.*]

Enter FAUCONBRIDGE with his LADY, she a coronet.

FAU. Old Richard Fauconbridge, Knight of the Cross,
Lord of the Cinque Ports, with his noble wife,
Dame Marian, Countess of West-Hereford,[541]
Offer their duties at this royal meeting.

HEN. Sit down, thou art a neuter, she a foe.
Thy love we doubt; her heart too well we know. [*Aside.*]
What suitors are without? let them come in.

GLO. And have no justice, where contempt is king.

HEN. Madman, I give no ear to thy loose words.

JOHN. O sir, y'are welcome; you have your old seat.

GLO. Though thou sit higher, yet my heart's as great.

QUEEN. Great heart, we'll make you lesser by the head.

GLO. Ill comes not ever to the threatened[542].

Enter BLOCK and REDCAP.

HEN. What are you two?

RED. M-ma-marry, and't please you, I am Re-Re-Redcap.

HEN. And what's your mate?

BLO. A poor porter, sir.

JOHN. The porter of the Fleet, that was condemned?

BLO. No, truly, sir; I was porter last, when I left the door open at the tavern.

JOHN. O, is't you, sir?

LEI. And what would you two have?

RED. I co-co-come to re-re-re-qui-quire the young k-k-king of his go-goo-goodness, since Glo-Gloster is t-taken, that he wo-wo-would let my fa-fa-father have his pa-pa-pardon.

HEN. Sirrah, your father has his pardon sign'd.
Go to the office, it shall be delivered.

RED. And shall he be p-p-porter a-ga-gain?

HEN. Aye, that he shall; but let him be advis'd,
Hereafter how [he] lets out prisoners.

RED. I wa-warrant ye, my lord.

HEN. What hast thou more to say?

RED. Marry, I wo-would have Skink pu-punish'd
For co-co-coney-catching me.

LEI. Is that your business?

RED, Aye, by my t-t-troth is it.

HEN. Then get away.

GLO. Against Skink (poor knave) thou gett'st no right this day.

BLO. O, but run back, Redcap, for the pursuivant!
O L-Lord, s-sir, I have another s-suit for the p-p-pursuivant,
That has l-l-lost his b-b-box and his wa-wa-warrant.

HEN. What means the fellow?

RED. Why, the pu-pu-pursuivant, sir, and the po-po-porter.

GLO. The box, that I had from him—there it is.

FAU. Marry a me, and I was charg'd with it.
Had you it, brother Gloster? God's good mercy!

HEN. And what have you to say?

BLO. Nothing, sir,
But God bless you! you are a goodly company!
Except Sir Richard[543] or my lady will command me
Any more service.

FAU. Away, you prating knave! hence, varlet, hence.

[*Exit* BLOCK.

LEI. Put forth them fellows there.

RED. Af-fo-fore I g-go,
I b-b-be-s-s-seech you, let Sk-Skink and Gl-Gloster be lo-lo-looked to;
For they have p-p-play'd the k-k-knaves too-too-too b-b-bad.

HEN. Take hence that stuttering fellow; shut him[544] forth.

RED. Nay, I'll ru-ru-run; faith, you shall not n-n-need to b-b-b-bid him ta-t-take m-me away; for Re-Re-Redcap will r-ru-run rarely. [*Exit* REDCAP.

HEN. The sundry misdemeanors late committed,
As thefts and shifts in other men's disguise,
We now must (knave Skink) freely tell thy faults.

SKINK. Sweet king, by these two terrors[545] to mine enemies, that lend light to my body's darkness: Cavilero Skink being beleaguer'd with an host of leaden heels, arm'd in ring Irish[546]: cheated my hammerer of his *red cap* and coat; was surpris'd, brought to the Fleet as a person suspected, pass'd current, till Gloster stripped me from my counterfeit, clad my back in silk and my heart in sorrow, and so left me to the mercy of my mother-wit. How Prince John released me, he knows; how I got Fauconbridge's chain, I know. But how he will get it again, I know not.

FAU. Where is it, sirrah? tell me where it is?

GLO. I got it from him, and I got John's sword.

JOHN. I would 'twere to the hilt up in thy heart.

RICH. O, be more charitable, brother John.

LEI. My liege, you need not by particulars
Examine, what the world knows too plain;
If you will pardon Skink, his life is sav'd;
If not, he is convicted by the law.
For Gloster, as you worthily resolv'd,
First take his hand, and afterward his head.

HEN. Skink, thou hast life, our pardon and our love.

SKINK [*to* JOHN.] And your forgiveness for my robbery?

JOHN. Tut, never trouble me with such a toy;
Thou hind'rest me from hearing of my joy.

HEN. Bring forth a block, wine, water, and towel;
Knives, and a surgeon to bind up the veins
Of Gloster's arm, when his right hand is off—
His hand that struck Skink at the Parl'ament.

SKINK. I shall bear his blows to my grave, my lord.

KING. Son Henry, see thy father's palsy hands,
Join'd like two suppliants, pressing to thy throne.
Look, how the furrows of his aged cheek,
Fill'd with the rivulets of wet-ey'd moan,
Begs mercy for Earl Gloster? weigh his guilt.
Why for a slave should royal blood be spilt?

SKINK. You wrong mine honour: Skink must[547] be reveng'd.

HEN. Father, I do commend your humble course;
But quite dislike the project of your suit.
Good words in an ill cause makes the fact worse:
Of blood or baseness justice will dispute.
The greater man, the greater his transgression:
Where strength wrongs weakness, it is mere oppression.

LADY F. O, but, King Henry, hear a sister speak.
Gloster was wrong'd, his lands were given away,
They are not justly said just laws to break,
That keep their own right with what power they may.
Think, then, thy royal self began the wrong,
In giving Skink what did to him[548] belong.

QUEEN. Hear me, son Henry, while thou art a king,
Give, take, prison: thy subjects are thy slaves.
Life, need, thrones[549], proud hearts in dungeons fling,
Grace men to day, to-morrow give them graves.
A king must be, like Fortune, ever turning,
The world his football, all her glory spurning.

GLO. Still your own counsel, beldam policy!
You're a fit tutress in a monarchy.

RICH. Mother, you are unjust, savage, too cruel,
Unlike a woman. Gentleness guides their sex;
But you to fury's fire add more fuel.
The vexed spirit will you delight to vex?
O God, when I conceit what you have done,
I am asham'd to be esteem'd your son.

JOHN. Base Richard, I disdain to call thee brother,
Tak'st thou a traitor's part in our disgrace?
For Gloster wilt thou wrong our sacred mother?
I scorn thee, and defy thee to thy face.
O, that we were in field! then should'st thou try.

ROB. How fast Earl John would from Prince Richard fly!
Thou meet a lion in field? poor mouse,
All thy careers are in a brothel house.

JOHN. 'Zounds, boy!

RICH. Now, man!

LEI. Richard, you wrong Prince John.

RICH. Leicester, 'twere good you prov'd his champion.

JOHN. Hasten the execution, royal lord[s],

Let deeds make answer for their worthless words.

GLO. I know, if I respected hand or head,
I am encompassed with a world of friends,
And could from fury be delivered.
But then my freedom hazards many lives.
Henry, perform the utmost of thy hate,
Let my[550] hard-hearted mother have her will.
Give frantic John no longer cause to prate:
I am prepared for the worst of ill.
You see my knees kiss the cold pavement's face,
They are not bent to Henry nor his friends,
But to all you whose blood, fled to your hearts,
Shows your true sorrow in your ashy cheeks:
To you I bend my knees: you I entreat
To smile on Gloster's resolution.
Whoever loves me, will not shed a tear,
Nor breathe a sigh, nor show a cloudy frown.
Look, Henry, here's my hand; I lay it down,
And swear, as I have knighthood, here't shall lie
Till thou have used all thy tyranny.

LADY F. Has no man heart to speak?

GLO. Let all that love me keep silence, or, by heaven,
I'll hate them dying.

QUEEN. Harry, off with his hand, then with his head.

FAU. By the red rood, I cannot choose but weep,
Come love or hate, my tears I cannot keep.

QUEEN. When comes this ling'ring executioner?

JOHN. An executioner, an executioner!

HEN. Call none, till we have drunk: father, fill wine;
To-day your office is to bear our cup.

RICH. I'll fill it, Henry. [RICH. *kneels down*.

HEN. Dick, you are too mean
To bow unto your sovereign.

GLO. Kneel to his child?
O hell! O torture! Gloster, learn:
Who would love life to see this huge dishonour?

HEN. Saturn kneeled to his son; the god was fain
To call young Jove his age's sovereign.
Take now your seat again, and wear your crown;
Now shineth Henry like the mid-day's sun,
Through his horizon darting all his beams,
Blinding with his bright splendour every eye,
That stares against his face of majesty.
The comets, whose malicious gleams
Threatened the ruin of our royalty,
Stand at our mercy, yet our wrath denies
All favour, but extreme extremities:
Gloster, have to thy sorrow, chafe thy arm,
That I may see thy blood (I long'd for oft)
Gush from thy veins, and stain this palace-roof.

JOHN. 'Twould exceed gilding.

QUEEN. Aye, as gold doth ochre.

GLO. It's well ye count my blood so precious.

HEN. Leicester, reach Gloster wine.

LEI. I reach it him?

HEN. Proud earl, I'll spurn thee; quickly go and bear it.

GLO. I'll count it poison, if his hand come near it.

HEN. Give it him, Leicester, upon our displeasure.

GLO. Thus Gloster takes it: thus again he flings it,
In scorn of him that sent it, and of him that brought it.

SKINK. O brave spirit!

LADY F. Bravely resolv'd, brother; I honour thee.

QUEEN. Hark, how his sister joys in his abuse.
Wilt thou endure it, Hal?

FAU. Peace, good Marian.

HEN. Avoid there every under-officer:
Leave but [with] us our peers and ladies here.
Richard, you love Earl Gloster: look about,
If you can spy one in this company
That hath but[551] done as great a sin as Gloster;
Choose him, let him be the executioner.

RICH. Thou hast done worse then, like, rebellious head,
Hast arm'd ten thousand arms against his life,
That lov'd thee so, as thou wert made a king,
Being his child; now he's thy underling!
I have done worse: thrice I drew my sword,
In three set battles for thy false defence!
John hath done worse; he still hath took thy part.
All of us three have smit our father's heart,
Which made proud Leicester bold to strike his face,
To his eternal shame and our disgrace!

HEN. Silence, I see thou mean'st to find none fit.
I am sure, nor Lancaster, nor Huntington,
Nor Fauconbridge, will lay a hand on him.
Mother, wife, brother, let's descend the throne,
Where Henry, as[552] the monarch of the west.
Hath sat[553] amongst his princes dignified.
Father, take you the place: see justice [done].

KING. It's unjust justice, I must tell thee, son.

HEN. Mother, hold you the basin, you the towel:
I know your French hearts thirst for English blood;
John, take the mallet; I will hold the knife,
And when I bid thee smite, strike for thy life:
Make a mark, surgeon. Gloster, now prepare thee.

GLO. Tut. I am ready; to thy worst I dare thee.

HEN. Then have I done my worst, thrice-honour'd earl,
I do embrace thee in affection's arms.

QUEEN. What mean'st thou, Henry? O, what means my son?

HEN. I mean no longer to be lullabi'd
In your seditious arms.

HEN. WIFE. *Mordieu*[554] Henry.

HEN. *Mordieu* nor devil, little tit of France,
I know your heart leaps at our heart's mischance.

JOHN. 'Swounds, Henry, thou art mad!

HEN. I have been mad:
What, stamp'st thou, John? know'st thou not who I am?
Come, stamp the devil out, suck'd from thy dam?

QUEEN. I'll curse thee, Henry.

HEN. You're best be quiet;
Lest, where we find you, to the Tower we bear you;
For, being abroad, England hath cause to fear you.[555]

KING. I am struck dumb with wonder.

GLO. I amaz'd, imagine that I see a vision.

HEN. Gloster, I gave thee first this Skink, this slave;
It's in thy power his life to spill or save.

SKINK. He's a noble gentleman, I do not doubt his usage.

HEN. Stand not thus wond'ring; princes, kneel all down,
And cast your coronets before his crown.
Down, stubborn Queen, kneel to your wronged king,
Down, mammet! Leicester, I'll cut off thy legs,
If thou delay thy duty! when, proud John?

JOHN. Nay, if all kneel of force, I must be one.

FAU. Now, by my halidom, a virtuous deed!

HEN. Father, you see your most rebellious son,
Stricken with horror of his horrid guilt,
Requesting sentence fitting his desert:
O, tread upon his head, that trod [upon]
Your heart: I do deliver up all dignity,
Crown, sceptre, sword, unto your majesty.

KING. My heart surfeits with joy in hearing this,
And, dear[est] son, I'll bless thee with a kiss.

HEN. I will not rise; I will not leave this ground
Till all these voices, joined in one sound,
Cry: God save Henry, second of that name,
Let his friends live, his foes see death with shame!

ALL. God save Henry, second of that name,
Let his friends live, his foes see death with shame!

HEN. Amen, amen, amen!

JOHN. Hark! mother, hark!
My brother is already turned clerk.

QUEEN. He is a recreant; I am mad with rage.

HEN. Be angry at your envy, gracious mother,
Learn patience and true humility
Of your worst-tutor'd son; for I am he.
Hence, hence that Frenchwoman; give her her dowry,
Let her not speak, to trouble my mild soul,
Which of this world hath taken her last leave:
And by her power will my proud flesh control.
Off with these silks; my garments shall be grey,
My shirt hard hair; my bed the ashy dust;
My pillow but a lump of hard'ned clay:
For clay I am, and with clay I must.
O, I beseech ye, let me go alone,
To live, where my loose life I may bemoan.

KING. Son!

QUEEN. Son!

RICH. Brother!

JOHN. Brother!

HEN. Let none call me their son; I'm no man's brother,
My kindred is in heav'n, I know no other.
Farewell, farewell; the world is your's; pray take it,
I'll leave vexation, and with joy forsake it.

[Exit.]

LADY F. Wondrous conversion!

FAU. Admirable good:
Now, by my halidom, Moll, passing good.

RICH. H'hath fir'd my soul; I will to Palestine.
And pay my vows before the Sepulchre.
Among the multitude of misbelief,
I'll show myself the soldier of Christ:
Spend blood, sweat tears, for satisfaction
Of many—many sins, which I lament;
And never think to have them pardoned,
Till I have part of Syria conquered.

GLO. He makes me wonder, and inflames my spirits,
With an exceeding zeal to Portingale,
Which kingdom the unchris'ned Saracens[556],
The black-fac'd Africans, and tawny Moors,
Have got unjustly in possession:
Whence I will fire them with the help of heaven.

SKINK. Skink will scorch them, brave Gloster;
Make carbonadoes of their bacon-flitches;
Deserve to be counted valiant by his valour,
And Rivo[557] will he cry, and Castile too,
And wonders in the land of Seville do.

ROB. O, that I were a man to see these fights:
To spend my blood amongst these worthy knights.

FAU. Marry, aye me, were I a boy again,
I'd either to Jerusalem or Spain.

JOHN. Faith, I'll keep England; mother, you and I
Will live from[558] all this fight and foolery.

KING. Peace to us all, let's all for peace give praise,
Unlook'd-for peace, unlook'd-for happy days!
Love Henry's birth-day; he hath been new-born;
I am new-crowned, new-settled in my seat.
Let's all to th'chapel, there give thanks and praise,
Beseeching grace from Heaven's eternal throne,
That England never know more prince than one.

[Exeunt.]

FINIS.

FOOTNOTES:

[1] He is mentioned by Webbe, in his "Discourse of English Poetrie," 1586, Sign. C 4, with other poets of that time, as Whetstone, Munday, Grange, Knight, *Wilmot*, Darrell, F.C. F.K., G.B., and others, whose names he could not remember.

[2] Robert Wilmot, A.M., was presented to the rectory of North Okenham, in Essex, the 28th of November 1582, by Gabriel Poyntz: and to the vicarage of Horndon on the Hill, in the same county, the 2d December 1585, by the Dean and Chapter of St Paul's.—Newcourt's "Repertorium." —*Steevens*.

[3] The same person, who was the author of "A Discourse of English Poetrie: together with the Authors judgment, touching the reformation of our English Verse." B.L. 4to, 1586. [This "Discourse" is reprinted in Haslewood's "Ancient Critical Essays," 1811-15.]

[4] [An English translation was published in 1577.]

[5] These three sonnets following occur both in Lansdowne MS. (786) and Hargrave MS. (205), but the first was not included in the printed copy of 1591.

[6] *Pheer* signifies a husband, a friend, or a companion, and in all these senses it is used in our ancient writers. It here means *a husband*. So in Lyly's "Euphues," 1581, p. 29: "If he be young, he is the more fitter to be thy *pheere*. If he bee olde, the lyker to thine aged father." It occurs again in act ii. sc. 3, and act iv. sc. 3.

[7] *Prevent*, or *forbid*. So in "Euphues and his England," 1582, p. 40: "For never shall it be said that Iffida was false to Thirsus, though Thirsus be faithlesse (which the gods *forefend*) unto Iffida."

[8] *Command*. So in Lyly's "Euphues and his England," p. 78: "For this I sweare by her whose lightes canne never die, Vesta, and by her *whose heasts* are not to be broken, Diana," &c.

Again, in Shakespeare's "Tempest," act iii. sc. 1—

"O my father,
I have broke *your hest* to say so!"

And in the prologue to [Peele's] "Araygnement of Paris," 1584—

"Done by the pleasure of the powers above,
Whose *hestes* men must obey."

The word occurs again in act iv. sc. 2, act iv. sc. 4, and act v. sc. 1.

[9] The second and third sonnets are now given (*verbatim et literatim*) in a note, as they stand in Lansdowne MS. 786. They will serve to show how slight were Wilmot's improvements, and will leave it perhaps open to doubt whether the changes made in 1591 were always changes for the better.

An other to the same.

Flowers of prime, pearles couched in gold, sonne of our day that gladdeneth the hart of them that shall yo'r shining beames behold, salue of eche sore, recure of euery smart, in whome vertue and beautie striueth soe that neither yeldes: loe here for you againe Gismond's vn lucky loue, her fault, her woe, and death at last, here fére and father slayen through her missehap. And though ye could not see, yet rede and rue their woefull destinie. So Joue, as your hye vertues doen deserue, geue you such féres as may yo'r vertues serue w'th like vertues: and blissfull Venus send Vnto your happy loue an happy end.

An other to the same.

Gismond, that whilom liued her fathers ioy, and dyed his death, now dead doeth (as she may) by vs pray you to pitie her anoye; and, to reacquite the same, doeth humbly pray Joue shield yo'r vertuous loues from like decay. The faithfull earle, byside the like request, doeth wish those wealfull wightes, whom ye embrace. the constant truthe that liued within his brest; his hearty loue, not his unhappy case to fall to such as standen in your grace. The king, prayes pardon of his cruel hest: and for amendes desireth it may suffise, that w'th his blood he teacheth now the rest of fond fathers, that they in kinder wise entreat the iewelless where their comfort lyes. And we their messagers beseche ye all on their behalves, to pitie all their smartes: and on our own, although the worth be small, we pray ye to accept our simple hartes auowed to serue, w'th prayer and w'th praise your honors, as vn able otherwayes.

[10] The play, as written in 1568, and as altered by Wilmot in 1591, differs so much throughout, that it has been found impracticable, without giving the earlier production entire, to notice all the changes.

Certain of the variations, however, and specialities in the Lansdowne MS., as far as the first and second scenes of the first act, will be printed (as a specimen) in the notes.

[11] In the Lansdowne MS. another person of the drama is mentioned: "Claudia, a woman of Gismunda's privie chamber;" and for *Choruses* we have: "Chorus, four gentlewomen of Salerne."

[12] Not in the MSS.

[13] The County Palurin, a few lines lower, is called Earl. Mr Tyrwhitt says that *County* signified *noblemen* in general; and the examples which might be quoted from this play would sufficiently prove the truth of the observation. See "Shakespeare," vol. x., p. 39. [*County* for *Count* is not very unusual; but it may be doubted if, as Tyrwhitt thought, *County* signified *noblemen in general*.]

[14] This is in the two MSS., but varies in many verbal particulars.

[15] Not in the copy of 1591.

[16] Presented to Gismond. She filled up the cup wherein the heart was brought with her tears and with certain poisonous water, by her distilled for that purpose, and drank out this deadly drink. —Copy of 1568.

[17] The story of this tragedy is taken from Boccaccio's "Decameron," day 4th, novel first. [It was turned into verse] by William Walter, a retainer to Sir Henry Marney, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, [and printed by Wynkyn de Worde in 1532. A different version appeared in] 1597, under the title of "The Statly Tragedy of Guistard and Sismond, in two Bookes," in a volume entitled, "Certaine Worthye Manuscript Poems of great Antiquitie, reserved long in the Studie of a Northfolke Gent., and now first published by J.S." Mr Dryden also versified it a second time. See his works, vol. iii., 8vo edition, p. 245. Oldys, in his MSS. Notes on Langbaine, says the same story is in Painter's Palace of Pleasure, vol. i., and a French novel called "Guiscard et Sigismonde fille de Tancredus Prince de Salerne mis en Latin. Par Leon Arretin, et traduit in vers François, par Jean Fleury." [See Brunet, dern. edit. v. *Aretinus*, Hazlitt's edit. of Warton, 1871, and "Popular Poetry," ii. 66.]

[18] [This line is not in the MSS.]

[19] [Lo I in shape that seem unto your sight.—*Lansdowne MS.*]

[20] [Do rule the world, and every living thing.—*Ibid.*]

[21] This word seems anciently to have been pronounced as two syllables. See "Cornelia," act iv., Chorus.

[22] [And eat the living heart.—*Lansdowne MS.*]

[23] An epithet adopted from Virgil's "Aeneid," lib. vi, line 729—

"Et quae *marmoreo* fert monstra sub aequore pontus."

Ibid. lib. vii. v. 28—

"Lento luctantur *marmore* tonsae."

Again, "Georg. I.," v. 254—

"Infidum remis impellere *marmor*."

—*Steevens*.

[24] [What secret hollow doth the huge seas hide, When blasting fame mine acts hath not forth blown.] —*Lansdowne MS.*

[25] Io.

[26] [Grazing in.—*Lansdowne MS.*]

[27] Like to Amphytrio [when he presented himself] to Alcmena.

[28] [Me.—*Lansdowne MS.*]

[29] [The bloody Mars hath felt my.—*Do.*]

[30] [Evened.—*Do.*]

[31] Hercules.

[32] Alexander.

[33] [Won the famous golden fleece.—*M.S.*]

[34] [What nature's bond or law's restraint avails, To conquer and deface me every hour.—*MS.*]

[35] Myrrha.

[36] i.e., For pity. So, act ii. sc. 2—

"As easily befalls that age which asketh *ruth*."

Act v. sc. 1—

"That hath the tyrant king
Withouten *ruth* commanded us to do."

Again, in Milton's "Lycidas," i. 163—

"Look homeward, angel, now and melt with *ruth*,
And, O ye Dolphins, waft the helpless youth."

And in Churchyard's "Worthiness of Wales," 1587—

"Great *ruth*, to let so trim a seate goe downe,
The countries strength, and beautie of the towne."

[37] [Mine almighty.—*MS.*]

[38] [This, and the three following lines, are not in the *MSS.*]

[39] [In creeping thorough all her veins within, That she thereby shall raise much *ruth* and woe.—*MS.*]

[40] [This, and the five preceding lines, are not in the *MSS.*]

[41] [Lo, this before your eyes so will I show,
That ye shall justly say with one accord
We must relent and yield; for now we know
Love rules the world, love only is the lord.—*MS.*]

[42] [Hath taught me plain to know our state's unrest.—*MS.*]

[43] [O mighty Jove, O heavens and heavenly powers.—*MS.*]

[44] [This, and the next line, do not occur in the *MSS.*]

[45] [Thy sprite, I know, doth linger hereabout
And looks that I, poor wretch, should after come;
I would, God wot, my lord, if so I mought:
But yet abide, I may perhaps devise
Some way to be unburdened of my life,
And with my ghost approach thee in some wise
To do therein the duty of a wife.—*MS.*]

[46] These omissions are frequent in our old plays. See note on "Love's Labour Lost," edit. of Shakspeare, 1778, vol. ii. p. 410.—*Steevens*.

[47] In this manner the word was formerly accented. See Dr Farmer's "Essay on the Learning of Shakspeare."

[48] Go. So in Epilogue—

"With violent hands he that his life doth end,
His damned soul to endless night doth *wend*."

Again, in the "Return from Parnassus," 1600, act v. sc. 4—

"These my companions still with me must *wend*."

In "George a Green Pinner of Wakefield," [Dyce's "Greene and Peele," 1861, p. 259, &c.]—

"Wilt thou leave Wakefield and *wend* with me ...
So will I *wend* with Robin all along ...
For you are wrong, and may not *wend* this way."

And in Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales," Prologue, line 19—

"Byfel, that, on that sesoun on a day,
In Southwerk at the Tabbard as I lay,
Redy to *wenden* on my pilgrimage,
To Canturbury with ful devout corage."

[49] Alexander.

[50] Hector.

[51] *Euripus Euboicus*, or *Chalcidicus*, is a narrow passage of sea dividing *Attica* and the Island of *Euboea*, now called the *Gulf of Negropont*. It ebbs and flows seven times every day: the reason of which, it is said, when Aristotle could not find, he threw himself into the sea with these words: *Quia ego non capio te, tu capias me*. Sir Thomas Brown, in his "Enquiries into Vulgar Errors," b. vii. c. 14, appears to have been not satisfied with this account of Aristotle's death, which he has taken some pains to render doubtful.

[52] [Go]. So act ii. sc. 3—

"Therefore my counsel is you shall not stir,
Nor farther *wade* in such a case as this,"

And in Turbervile's "Tragical Tales," 1587—

"Eare thou doe *wade* so farre, revoke to minde the bedlam boy.
That in his forged wings of waxe reposed too great a joy."

[53] *Sadly*, in most of our ancient writers, is used as here for *seriously*. So in Nash's "Lenten Stuff," 1599: "Nay, I will lay no wagers, for, now I perponder more *sadly* upon it, I think I am out indeed."

Again, in Hall's "Chronicle," 1550, fo. 2: "His cosyn germaine was nowe brought to that trade of livynge, that he litle or nothyng regarded the counsaill of his uncles, nor of other grave and *sadde* persones, but did all thyng at his pleasure."

In Ascham's "Toxophilus," 1571: "And when I sawe not you amonges them, but at the last espyed you lookinge on your booke here so *sadlye*, I thought to come and hold you with some communication."

And in Warton's "Life of Sir Thomas Pope," p. 30: "Wherein is an abbes namyd Dame Alice Fitzherbert, of the age LX yeares, a very *sadde*, discreate, and releygious woman."

[54] Formerly this diversion was as much followed in the evening, as it was at an earlier hour in the day. In "Laneham's Account of the Entertainment at Kenelworth Castle," we find that Queen Elizabeth always, while there, hunted in the afternoon. "Monday was hot, and therefore her highness kept in till five a clok in the eeveing; what time it pleaz'd to ryde forth into the chase too hunt the hart of fors: which found anon, and after sore chased," &c. Again, "Munday the 18 of this July, the weather being hot, her highness kept the castle for coolness, till about *five a clok*, her majesty in the chase, hunted the hart (as before) of forz" &c.

[55] That is, *proceed no further*.

[56] i.e., Of nature.

[57] Acquaint her with my resolution. *To resolve*, however, was sometimes used for *convince*, or *satisfy*. It may therefore mean, *convince her of the propriety of my command*. So in Middleton's "More Dissemblers besides Women," act i. sc. 3—

"The blessing of perfection to your thoughts, lady,
For I'm *resolv'd* they are good ones."

Reed is right in his first explanation; it is so used in Chapman's "May Day," act i. sc. 1.

"Tell her such a man will *resolve* her naming me."

—"Anc. Dram.," vol. vi. p. 6.—*Gilchrist*.

[A few lines further on in the text, however,] *resolve* has the same meaning as *dissolve*; and so in Lyly's "Euphues and his England," p. 38: "I could be content to *resolve* myselfe into teares to rid thee of trouble."

Marlowe, as quoted in "England's Parnassus," 1600, p. 480 [see Dyce's "Marlowe," iii., 301], uses it in the same way—

"No molten Christall but a Richer mine,
Euen natures rarest alchumie ran there,
Diamonds *resolu'd*, and substance more diuine.
Through whose bright gliding current might appeare
A thousand naked Nymphes, whose yuorie shine,
Enameling the bankes, made them more deare
Then euer was that glorious Pallas gate.
Where the day-shining sunne in triumph sate."

See also Shakespeare's "Hamlet," act i. sc. 2, and Mr Steevens's note on it.

[58] *To quail*, is to *languish*, to *sink into dejection*. So in Churchyard's "Challenge," 24—

"Where malice sowes, the seedes of wicked waies,
Both honor *quails*, and credit crackes with all:
Of noblest men, and such as fears no fall."

See also Mr Steevens's notes on the "First Part of Henry IV.," act iv. sc. 2, and "Cymbeline," act v. sc. 5.

[Had the writer this passage in his mind when he wrote the well-known lines on Shakespeare, "What need my Shakespeare," &c., which occur in the folio of 1632?]

[59] [The second Chorus to leave off abruptly with this word, the third Chorus taking up the narrative.]

[60] A compliment to Queen Elizabeth.—*S.P.*

It was, as Mr Steevens observes, no uncommon thing to introduce a compliment to Queen Elizabeth in the body of a play. See "Midsummer's Night's Dream," act ii. sc. 2. See also "Lochrine," act v. sc. last.

[61] Probably Henry Noel, younger brother to Sir Andrew Noel, and one of the gentlemen pensioners to Queen Elizabeth; a man, says Wood, of excellent parts, and well skilled in music. See "Fasti," p. 145. A poem, entitled, "Of disdainful Daphne," by M[aster] H. Nowell, is printed in "England's Helicon," 1600, 4to. The name of Mr Henry Nowell also appears in the list of those lords and gentlemen that ran at a tilting before Queen Elizabeth. See Peele's "Polyhymnia," 1590.

"I cannot here let pass unremembered a worthy gentleman, Master Henry Noel, brother to the said Sir Andrew Noel, one of the gentlemen pensioners [see Peck's "Life of Milton," p. 225, for the Gentlemen Pensioners.] to Queen Elizabeth; a man for personage, parentage, grace, gesture, valour, and many excellent parts, inferior to none of his rank in the court; who, though his lands and livelihoods were but small, having nothing known certain but his annuity and his pension, yet in state, pomp, magnificence and expenses, did equalise barons of great worth. If any shall demand whence this proceeded, I must make answer with that Spanish proverb—

'*Aquello qual vienne de arriba ninguno lo pregunta.*' 'That which cometh from above let no one question.'

"This is the man of whom Queen Elizabeth made this enigmatical distich—

'The word of denial, and letter of fifty,
Is that gentleman's name that will never be thrifty.'

He, being challenged (as I have heard) by an Italian gentleman at the *baloune* (a kind of play with a great ball tossed with wooden braces upon the arm), used therein such violent motion, and did so overheat his blood, that he fell into a calenture, or burning fever, and thereof died, Feb. 26, 1596, and was by her majesty's appointment buried in the abbey church of Westminster, in the chapel of St Andrew.—*Benton in Nichols's "Leicestershire,"* vol. iii. p. 249.

Henry Noel was the second son of Sir Edward Noel, of Dalby, by his second wife, Elizabeth, daughter

and heir of William Hopton, of —, Shropshire, relict of Sir John Peryent, Knt.—Ibid. 254.—*Gilchrist*.

[62] In the former edition, the word *denay'd* was altered to the more modern one of *deny'd*. *Denay'd*, however, was the ancient manner of spelling it. So in the "Second Part of Henry VI.," act i. sc. 3—

"Then let him be *denay'd* the regentship."

Again, in the "First Part of Jeronimo," 1605—

"And let not wonted fealty be *denayed*."

And in "Gammer Gurton's Needle"—

"Loke, as I have promised, I will not *denay* it."

—*Collier*.

[63] *Prease* signifies a crowd or multitude, or any assemblage of a number of persons. So in "Damon and Pithias," vol. iv., pp. 49, 53—

"The King is at hand, stand close in *the prease*, beware," &c.

And *ibid.*—

"Away from the prisoner, what a *prease* have we here!"

Again, in the "History of Euordanus Prince of Denmark," 1605, sig. H: "The Prince passing forwards sorely shaken, having lost both his stirrups: at length recovering himselfe, entred *the prease*, where on all sides he beate downe knights, and unbarred helms."

[It must be repeated, once for all, that such totally unnecessary notes as this have been retained only from a reluctance to impart to these volumes the character of an abridged or mutilated republication.]

[64] [Draweth.]

[65] *Raught* is the ancient preterite of the word *reach*. It is frequently used by Spenser, Shakespeare, and other ancient writers.

[66] [Old copy, *where her*.]

[67] [Reward.]

[68] Alluding to the vulture that gnawed the liver of Titius. In "Ferrex and Porrex," act ii. sc. 1, is this line—

"Or cruell gripe to gnaw my groaning hart."

—*Reed*. The allusion is rather to the vulture of Prometheus. —*Steevens*.

[69] *Vipeream inspirans animam*. The image is from Virgil. Rowe likewise adopts it in his "Ambitious Stepmother"—

"And send a *snake* to every vulgar breast."—*Steevens*.

[70] i.e., The wretch. The word *miser* was anciently used without comprehending any idea of avarice. See note on "King Henry VI, Part I.," edit. of Shakespeare, 1778, vol. vi. p. 279.—*Steevens*.

[71] "A *stoop*, or *stowp*; a post fastened in the earth, from the Latin *stupa*."—Ray's "North Country Words," p. 58, edit. 1742.

[72] Not that she is careful or anxious about, or regrets the loss of this life. So in Milton's "Paradise Lost," Bk. ix. line 171—

"Revenge at first though sweet,
Bitter ere long back on itself recoils;
Let it; *I reckon* not, so it light well aim'd."

And again, in the "History of Sir John Oldcastle," 1600—

"*I reckon* of death the less in that I die,
Not by the sentence of that envious priest."

[73] Petrarch and Laura.

[74] These initials were almost unquestionably intended for Christopher Hatton, afterwards knighted and created Lord Chancellor of England. In the fourth year of Queen Elizabeth, 1562, about six years before this play is supposed to have been written, we learn from Dugdale's "Origines Juridiciales," p. 150, a magnificent Christmas was kept in the Inner Temple, at which her majesty was present, and Mr Hatton was appointed Master of the Game. Historians say he owed his rise, not so much to his mental abilities, as to the graces of his person and his excellence in dancing, which captivated the Queen to such a degree, that he arose gradually from one of her Gentlemen Pensioners to the highest employment in the law, which he, however, filled without censure, supplying his own defects by the assistance of the ablest men in the profession. *The grave Lord Keeper*, after his promotion, still retained his fondness for that accomplishment to which he was indebted for his rise, *and led the Brawls* almost until his death. In 1589, on the marriage of his heir with Judge Gawdy's daughter, "the Lord Chancellor danced the measures at the solemnity, and left his gown on the chair, saying *Lie there, Chancellor*." His death, which happened two years after, was hastened by an unexpected demand of money from the Queen, urged in so severe a manner, that all the kindness she afterwards showed to him was insufficient to remove the impression it had made on him. See Birch's "Memoirs of Queen Elizabeth." vol. i. pp. 8, 56, [and Nicolas's "Life of Hatton," p. 478.]

[75] Dryden's translation of Boccaccio's "Description of the Cave" is as follows:—

"Next the proud palace of Salerno stood
A Mount of rough ascent, and thick with wood.
Through this a cave was dug with vast expence:
The work it seem'd of some suspicious prince,
Who, when abusing power with lawless might,
From public justice would secure his flight.
The passage made by many a winding way,
Reach'd even the room in which the tyrant lay.
Fit for his purpose on a lower floor,
He lodged, whose issue was an iron door;
From whence by stairs descending to the ground.
In the blind grot a safe retreat he found.
Its outlet ended in a brake o'ergrown
With brambles, choak'd by time, and now unknown.
A rift there was, which from the mountain's height
Convey'd a glimm'ring and malignant light,
A breathing place to draw the damps away,
A twilight of an intercepted day."

—"Sigismonda and Guiscardo." Dryden's Works, vol. iii. p. 251.

[76] See Milton's "Paradise Lost," Bk. i. l. 60.

[77] *Fetters* or *chains*. So in Beaumont and Fletcher's "Beggar's Bush," act iii. sc. 4—

"*Gyves* I must wear, and cold must be my comfort."

Marston's "What You Will," act ii. sc. 1—

"Think'st thou a libertine, *an ungiv'd* beast,
Scornes not the shackles of thy envious clogs?"

Milton's "Samson Agonistes," l. 1092—

"Dost thou already single me? I thought
Gyves and the mill had tam'd thee."

See Dr Newton's note on the last passage; and Mr Steevens's note on "First Part of Henry IV.," act iv. sc. 3.

[78] *Amate* is to daunt or confound. Skinner, in his "Etymologicon," explains it thus: "Perterrefacere, Attonitum reddere, Obstupefacere, mente consternare, Consilii inopem reddere." So in "Thule or Vertue's Historic," by Francis Rous, 1598, sig. B—

"At last with violence and open force.
They brake the posternes of the Castle gate,
And entred spoyling all without remorse,

Nor could old Sobrin now resist his fate,
But stiffe with feare ev'n like a senceles corse
Whom grisly terror doth so much *amate*,
He lyes supine upon his fatall bed.
Expecting ev'ry minute to be dead."

Again, *Ibid.*, sig. D—

"He would forsake his choyse, and change his fate,
And leave her quite, and so procure her woe,
Faines that a sudden grief doth her *amate*,
Wounded with piercing sicknes' Ebon bow."

[79] Astonished. So in "Euphues and his England," p. 102—"Philautus, *astonied* at this speech," &c. And again, in the "Fable of Jeronimi," by G. Gascoigne, p. 209: "When Ferdinando (somewhat *astonied* with hir strange speech) thus answered." And in "Thieves Falling Out," &c., 1615, by Rob. Greene: "The gentleman, *astonied* at this strange metamorphosis of his mistress."

[80] *Sprent* is sprinkled. So in Spenser's "Shepherd's Calendar," December—

"My head *besprent* with hoary frost I find."

And Fairfax's "Tasso," cant. xii. st. 101—

"His silver locks with dust he foul *besprent*."

Again in Milton's "Comus," l. 542—

"Of knot grass dew *besprent*."

[81] Harbour.

[82] Old copy, *hasteth*.

[83] Habiliments, *S.P.*

[84] Unrevenged. [The more correct form would be *unwroken*.] So in Ben Jonson's "Every Man out of his Humour," act ii. sc. 4—

"Would to heaven,
In *wreak* of my misfortunes, I were turn'd
To some fair water nymph."

In "Sejanus his Fall," act iv.—

"Made to speak
What they will have to fit their tyrannous *wreak*."

In Massinger's "Fatal Dowry," act iv. sc. 4—

"But there's a heaven above, from whose just *wreak*
No mists of policy can hide offenders."

In his "Very Woman," act i.

"And our just *wreak*, by force or cunning practice
With scorn prevented."

See also Mr Steevens's note on "Coriolanus," act iv. sc. 5. "Moriatur *in ultae*?"—Virgil's "Aeneid," lib. iv.—*Steevens*.

[85] Sorrow. Again, act v. sc. 3—

"His death, her woe, and her avenging *teen*."

And in Shakespeare's "Venus and Adonis"—

"More I could tell, but more I dare not say,
The text is old, the orator too green.
Therefore in sadness now I will away,
My face is full of shame, my heart of *teen*."

[86] Old copy, *but hell*.

[87] *Untrimmed locks* are locks dishevelled or undressed. *Trim*, in the language of the times, was frequently used for dress. So in Massinger's "Emperor of the East," act ii. sc. 1—

"Our Eastern queens, at their full height bow to thee,
And are, in their best *trim*, thy foils and shadows."

See also Mr Steevens's note on "King John," act iii. sc. 3.

[88] Alluding to a custom of which mention is made in Genesis, chap. xxiv. 9—"And the servant put his *hand* under the *thigh* of Abraham his master, and *sware* to him concerning that matter." The same form was likewise observed by Jacob and Joseph when they were dying. Some mystery is supposed to be couched under this practice. The most probable, at least the most decent, supposition is, that it was a token of subjection or homage from a servant to his lord, when the former solemnly promised to perform whatever should be commanded by the latter.—*Steevens*.

[89] The following account of Lodge and his works is very imperfect. See the Shakespeare Society volume, 1853, containing much fuller particulars.

[90] In the "Epistle of England to her Three Daughters," in Clarke's "Polimanteia," 1595, Lodge is spoken of as belonging to Oxford. —*Collier*.

[91] Mr Malone ("Shakespeare," by Boswell, iii. 40, note 9) says that it was printed about 1580; but Lodge himself, writing in 1584, speaks of Gosson's "Plays Confuted," as written "about two years since."

[92] "Scilla's Metamorphosis," 1589; "Diogenes in his Singularity," 1591; and "A Fig for Momus," 1595, are all stated to be by T.L., or Thomas Lodge, of Lincoln's Inn, Gentleman.

[93] A French sonnet by Thomas Lodge is prefixed to Robert Greene's "Spanish Masquerado." He has also some French verses in "Rosalynde."

[94] The lines upon Lodge in "The Return from Parnassus," 1606, would show that it did occur:—

"He that turns over Galen every day,
To sit and simper 'Euphues' Legacy,'" &c.

—*Collier*.

[95] Afterwards purchased by Mr Collier.

[96] [This does not appear quite to follow. In a poem, "Upon London Physicians," written about 1620, and quoted in "Inedited Poetical Miscellanies," edit. Hazlitt, 1870, sig. Ff 5, he is mentioned in the same way, without any reference to his literary repute or performances.] It is to be observed in the list of Lodge's productions, that there is an interval between 1596, when "Wit's Misery and the World's Madness" appeared, and 1603, when the "Treatise of the Plague" was published.

[97] Others have been attributed to him in conjunction with Greene, but on no sufficient evidence—viz., "Lady Alimony," not printed until 1659; "The Laws of Nature," and "The Contention between Liberality and Prodigality," 1602.

[98] [Reprinted in Mr Dyce's editions of Greene's Works, 1831 and 1861.] Henslowe probably alludes to this play in his MSS., and if so, it was acted as early as 1591. The following is the entry: "R. (i.e., received) at *the Looking Glasse*, the 8th of Marche, 1591, vij s." [See Mr Collier's edit. 1845, pp. 23-8.]

[99] [Here follows in the former edition a list of Lodge's works, which will be found more fully and correctly given in Hazlitt's "Handbook," in *v*.]

[100] In the course of the incidents of this historical tragedy, Lodge has very much followed the lives of Marius and Sylla, as given by Plutarch: he was a scholar, and it was not necessary therefore for him to resort to Sir Thomaa North's translation from the French, of which Shakespeare availed himself, and of which there were many editions subsequent to its first appearance in 1579. It is pretty evident, however, from a comparison of a few passages quoted in the notes in the progress of the play, that Lodge did employ this popular work, although he has varied some of the events, and especially the death of Sylla.

It is not, perhaps, possible now to settle the point when this tragedy was first represented on the stage, but it was most likely some time before its publication in 1594. We know that Lodge had written in defence of the stage before 1582, and it is not unlikely that he did so, because he had already written

for it. Robert Greene, in his "Groat's worth of Wit," speaks of Lodge as a dramatic poet in 1592; and the comedy which they wrote together, it is ascertained, was acted in March 1591, if not earlier, although it was not printed until three years afterwards. The versification of "The Wounds of Civil War" certainly affords evidence that it was penned even before Marlowe had improved the measure of dramatic blank verse, which Shakespeare perfected: it is heavy, monotonous, and without the pauses subsequently introduced; if therefore Lodge produced it after Marlowe's "Edward II." was brought out, he did not at least profit by the example. All the unities are set at defiance.

[101] The "consul's pall" is the consul's robe. Thus Milton in "Il Penseroso"—

"Let gorgeous Tragedy
In scepter'd *pall* come sweeping by."

Purple *pall* is very commonly met with in our old writers.

[102] "Sylla *nill* brook" is "Sylla *ne will*, or will not brook." Shakespeare uses the word. See Mr Steevens's note, "Taming of the Shrew," act ii. sc. 1.

[103] "But specially one day above the rest, having made him sup with him at his table, some one after supper falling in talke of Captaines that were in Rome at that time, one that stood by Scipio asked him (either because he stood in doubt, or else for that he would curry favour with Scipio), what other Captaine the Romanes should have after his death, like unto him? Scipio having Marius by him, gently clapped him upon the shoulders and said, Peradventure this shall be he." —*North's Plutarch, "Life of Caius Marius."*

[104] [Old copy, *into*.]

[105] [Old copy, *shall*, and so in the next line.]

[106] It is doubtful whether we ought to read *impale* or *impall*. If the latter, it means to enfold with a *pall*; but Cleveland uses *impale* in the same sense—

"I now *impale* her in my arms."

This, however, is rather a forced construction.

[107] [Old copy, *spence*.] This may mean "the *expense* of years that Marius hath o'erpast," or it may be an easy misprint for "space of years." Either may be right.

[108] [Old copy, *mate*.]

[109] [Old copy, *conservatives*.]

[110] "To *bandy* a ball" Coles defines *clava pilam torquere*; "to bandy at tennis," "Dict." 1679. See Mr Malone's note on "Lear," act i. sc. 4.

[111] *Prest* for Asia, is ready for Asia. It is almost unnecessary to multiply instances, but the following is very apposite:—

"Dispisde, disdainde, starvde, whipt and scornd,
Prest through dispaire myself to quell."

—R. Wilson's "Cobbler's Prophecy," 1594, sig. C4.

[112] Lodge and other writers not unfrequently use the adjective for the substantive: thus, in "The Discontented Satyre:"—

"Blush, daies eternal lampe, to see thy lot,
Since that thy *cleere* with cloudy *darkes* is scar'd."

[113] The quarto has the passage thus—

"These peers of Rome have mark'd
A rash revenging *hammer* in thy brain;"

which seemed so decidedly wrong as to warrant the change that, without much violence, has been made.

[114] *Guerdon* is synonymous with *reward*. It is scarcely yet obsolete.

[115] Old copy, *hammer*.

[116] Vengeance.

[117] Scarce. It is found in Spenser. Robert Greene also uses it—

"It was frosty winter season,
And fair Flora's wealth was *geason*."

—"Philomela," 1592. Again, we find it in the tragical comedy of "Appius and Virginia," 1575—"Let my counsel at no time lie with you *geason*," sig. D. [vol. iv. p. 138].

[118] Open them.

[119] Old copy, *what*.

[120] The meaning of "would *amate* me so," is, would daunt or confound me so. See note to "Tancred and Gismunda" [*suprà*, p. 79], where instances are given.

[121] Mr Steevens, in a note on the "Comedy of Errors," act ii. sc. 1, has collected a number of quotations to show the meaning of the word *stale*, and to them the reader is referred. In this place it signifies a false allurements, bait, or deception on the part of fortune.

[122] The barbarous jargon put into the mouth of this Frenchman is given in the orthography of the old copy, since it was vain to attempt correction.

[123] "Now when they were agreed upon it, they could not find a man in the city that durst take upon him to kill him; but a man of armes of the Gaules, or one of the Cimbres (for we find both the one and the other in writing) that went thither with his sword drawn in his hand. Now that place of the chamber where Marius lay was very dark, and, as it is reported, the man of armes thought he saw two burning flames come out of Marius's eyes, and heard a voice out of that dark corner, saying unto him: O fellow, thou, darest thou come to kill Caius Marius? The barbarous Gaule, hearing these words, ran out of the chamber presently." —*North's Plutarch, "Life of Caius Marius."*

[124] "For when he was but very young, and dwelling in the country, he gathered up in the lap of his gowne the ayrie of an eagle, in the which were seven young eagles; whereat his father and mother much wondering, asked the soothsayers what that meant? They answered that their sonne should one day be one of the greatest men in the world, and that out of doubt he should obtain seven times in his life the chiefest office of dignity in his country." —*North's Plutarch, "Life of Caius Marius."*

[125] The old quarto divides the play very irregularly; for according to it there are two Acts iii. and two Acts iv. One of the Acts iii. was made to commence here.

[126] Necessarily or unavoidably.

[127] Old copy, *Picaeo*.

[128] Old copy, *metals*.

[129] An early instance of an echo of this kind upon the stage is to be found in Peele's "Arraignement of Paris," 1584. Mr D'Israeli has an entertaining essay upon them in his "Curiosities of Literature," second series. They were carried to a most ridiculous excess afterwards.

[130] The old spelling of *than* was *then*, and this must be observed here. The echo is supposed to encourage Marius again to take up arms—

"Nought better fits old Marius' mind than war."

And the reply of the echo is, "Then war," or then go to war.

[131] This passage is quoted by Mr Steevens in a note on "Hamlet," act v. sc. 1, to show that "the winter's *flaw*" there spoken of means "the winter's *blast*."

[132] Old copy, *Distia*.

[133] *Dreariment* is not so frequently met in any of our old writers as Spenser: I do not recollect it in any play before. It requires no explanation.

[134] Old copy, *coffer*.

[135] Old copy, *Marius live*.

[136] *Lozel* is always used as a term of contempt, and means a worthless fellow.

[137] Old copy, *have*.

[138] Old copy, *And*.

[139] Old copy, *consist*.

[140] We have before had Pedro the Frenchman, or rather the *Gaul*, according to Plutarch (though why he is called by the Spanish name of Pedro, we know not), employed to murder Marius, swearing *Par le sang de Dieu, Notre Dame, and Jesu*: and towards the close of the play, where a couple of ludicrous characters are introduced, "to mollify the vulgar," the "*Paul's steeple* of honour" is talked of. Such anachronisms, however gross, are common to all the dramatists of that day. Shakespeare is notoriously full of them; and all must remember the discussion between Hamlet and his friend regarding the children of Paul's and of the Queen's chapel.

[141] Shakespeare and many other writers of the time use this form of *fetch*: thus in "Henry V." act iii. sc. 1—

"On, on, you noble English,
Whose blood is *fet* from fathers of war-proof."

[142] *Glozing* and *flattering* are synonymous: perhaps to *gloze*, or, as it is sometimes spelt, to *glose*, is the same word as to *gloss*. It is common in Milton in the sense that it bears in the text.

[143] [i.e., Pinky eyne or pink (small) eyes.] See Mr Steevens's note on the song in "Anthony and Cleopatra," beginning—

"Come, thou monarch of the vine,
Plumpy Bacchus, with *pink* eyne."

[144] This incident is founded upon a passage in Plutarch's "Life of Caius Marius," only in that author the man with the wine discloses where Anthony is concealed to the drawer, of whom he gets the wine, and not to the soldiers.

[145] The meaning of to *assoil* is to absolve (see note 4 to "The Adventurers of Five Hours"), from the Latin *absolvere*; but here it signifies to *resolve* or *remove* doubts. Thus in a passage quoted by Mr Todd—

"For the *assailing* of this difficulty, I lay down these three propositions."—Mede, *Rev. of God's House*.

The word is frequently to be met with in Spenser in the sense of to discharge, or set free.

[146] In *doly* season is in melancholy or wintry season: an adjective formed from *dole*, and with the same meaning as *doleful*.

[147] The death of Anthony is thus related in North's Plutarch, "Life of Marius"—

"But he (Marius) sent Annius one of his captaines thither ... and when they were come to the house which the drawer had brought them to, Annius taried beneath at the doore, and the souldiers went up the staiers into the chamber, and finding Anthonie there, they began to encourage one another to kill him, not one of them having the heart to lay hands upon him. For Anthonies tongue was as sweet as a Syrene, and had such an excellent grace in speaking, that when he began to speake unto the souldiers and to pray them to save his life, there was not one of them so hard-hearted as once to touch him, no not onely to looke him in the face, but looking downwards fell a weeping. Annius perceiving they taried long and came not downe, went himself up into the chamber and found Anthonie talking to his souldiers, and them weeping, his sweete eloquent tongue had so melted their hearts: but he, rating them, ran furiously upon him and strake off his head with his owne hands."

[148] Shakespeare's commentators might have added this passage to the long list of others they have brought forward (see note on "Othello," act i. sc. 3), to show that *intention* and *attention*, and *intensive* and *attentive*, were once, synonymous.

[149] This expression is also introduced by Lodge into his "Rosalynde," 1590, though probably this play was written first—

"With sad and sorry cheer
About her wond'ring stood
The *citizens of the wood*."

Shakespeare calls deer in "As You Like It" citizens, and elsewhere, "native burghers of this desert city."

The author of "Fuimus Troes" goes farther, and calls the blessed souls in heaven *citizens*—

"Then shall I
Envy no more those *citizens* above
The ambrosian juncates of the Olympian hall."

[150] Old copy, *arm*.

[151] The name of *Carbo* is accidentally omitted before this reply in the quarto.

[152] Old copy misplaces the words *break* and *bend*; the alteration here made was suggested by Mr Collier.

[153] i.e., With a *withy*, or twig of willow.

[154] Old copy, *the ravens*.

[155] The quarto reads: "Enter Scipio and Norbanus, Publius Lentulus," but the latter has nothing to do with the scene, while Carinna is omitted.

[156] Old copy, *heedless*.

[157] It is very common for Shakespeare and his contemporaries to use the word *pretend* for intend. See notes to "The Two Gentlemen of Verona," act ii. sc. 6.

[158] In his "Life of Marius," Plutarch states that this event occurred at Perugia, and that Young Marius was besieged there by Sylla; but in his "Life of Sylla" he corrects the error, and informs us that Young Marius was besieged by Lucretius, and that he slew himself at Praeneste.

[159] *Jest* was used by our ancestors in various senses, but here it means a deed or action only; thus Sir T. Elyot, as Mr Todd notes, speaks of "the *jest*s or acts of princes and captains." In fact, this is the general signification of the term, though it has sometimes a more particular application. *Gest* and *jest* are the same word, though now and then distinguished.

[160] Old copy, *floats*.

[161] Old copy, *lo*.

[162] Old copy, *yea*. By *She* Sylla must be understood to refer to Fate, whom he has just mentioned.

[163] [Old copy, *while*.]

[164] i.e., *Verse*.

[165] See vol. iv. p. 80, respecting the *razors of Palermo*.—*Collier*. [Mr Collier's suggested retention of *shave*, the reading of the old copy, I cannot support.]

[166] "*Phlegon's* hot breath" is mentioned in "Fuimus Troes;" one of the horses of the sun was so named.

[167] [Old copy, *fairs*.]

[168] From the edition of 1610. It is not in the first 4°.

[169] In the edition of 1610 the number of performers is raised to ten. The two additional characters are the *King of Valentia* and *Anselmo*.

[170] Perhaps the earliest instance of the use of this expression, as to which see "Old English Jest-Books," 1864, iii.; "Pleasant Conceits of Old Hobson," Introd.

[171] [The 4° of 1610 makes Tremelio enter here; but he does not appear to come on till afterwards.]

[172] [Old copies, *Catalone, a*.]

[173] [Old copies, *Oh*.]

[174] Old copies, hardly I did oft.

[175] Old copies, *on*.

[176] Edit. 1598, *Therefore to*. Edit. 1610, *There for to*.

[177] Edit. 1598 and 1610, *hath forget*.

[178] Edits, transpose the two commencing words of this line, and the first word of the preceding one.

[179] Edits., *say*.

[180] Anticipated. Old copies read *we* for *me*.

[181] Old copy, *are*

[182] Old copies, *her*.

[183] Edit. 1610, *attend*.

[184] Edit. 1610, *axe*.

[185] Old copies, *his*.

[186] Edit. 1598, *Wily*; edit. 1610, *wilde*.

[187] Old copies, *his Bremo*.

[188] Edits., *ah, hermit!*

[189] Edits., *fair lady*.

[190] Edits., *this is*.

[191] In the old copies there is here a direction, *He disguiseth himself*, which appears wrong, as Mucedorus is already disguised, and what he next does is, in fact, to discover himself.

[192] Edits., *none, none, no*.

[193] Edit. 1620, *sacred*.

[194] Old copies, *look*.

[195] Edit. 1598, *paled*; 1106, *pallade*.

[196] Edit. 1610, *strike*.

[197] After this line, in the edition of 1610, occurs the following substitution for the lines in edit. 1598, beginning "Ho, lords," and concluding with "Exeunt omnes:"—

Were but thy father, the Valentia lord,
Present in view of this combining knot.

A shout within. Enter a MESSENGER.

What shout was that?

MESSENGER. My lord, the great Valentia king,
Newly arrived, entreats your presence.

MUCEDORUS. My father?

KING OF ARRAGON. Prepared welcomes; give him entertainment.
A happier planet never reigned than that,
Which governs at this hour.

[*Sound.*

Enter the KING OF VALENTIA, ANSELMO, RODRIGO, BARCHEUS, with others; the KING runs and embraces his son.

KING OF VALENTIA. Rise, honour of my age, food to my rest:
Condemn not (mighty King of Arragon)
My rude behaviour, so compell'd by Nature,
That manner stood unknowledged.

KING OF ARRAGON. What we have to recite would tedious prove
By declaration; therefore in and feast.

To-morrow the performance shall explain,
What words conceal; till then, drums, speak, bells, ring:
Give plausive welcomes to our brother king.

[*Sound drums and trumpets. Exeunt omnes.*]

[198] [In the edition of 1610, the conclusion, from this line, is so different, that the best mode appeared to be to give it at the foot of the page:—

COMEDY. Envy, spit thy gall;
Plot, work, contrive; create new fallacies;
Team from thy womb each minute a black traitor,
Whose blood and thoughts have twin conception:
Study to act deeds yet unchronicled;
Cast native monsters in the moulds of men;
Case vicious devils under sancted rochets;
Unhasp the wicket, where all perjureds roost,
And swarm this ball with treasons. Do thy worst;
Thou canst not (hell-hound) cross my star[A] to-night.

[A] [Old copy, *steare.*]

Nor blind that glory, where I wish delight.

ENVY. I can. I will.

COMEDY. Nefarious hag, begin;
And let us tug, till one the mast'ry win.

ENVY. Comedy, thou art a shallow goose;
I'll overthrow thee in thine own intent,
And make thy fall my comic merriment.

COMEDY. Thy policy wants gravity; thou art too weak.
Speak, fiend. As how?

ENVY. Why thus;
From my foul study will I hoist a wretch,
A lean and hungry negro [Old copy, *neagre.*] cannibal:
Whose jaws swell to his eyes with chawing malice,
And him I'll make a poet.

COMEDY. What's that to th'purpose?

ENVY. This scrambling raven, with his needy beard,
Will I whet on to write a comedy,
Wherein shall be compos'd dark sentences,
Pleasing to factious brains:
And every other where place me a jest.
Whose high abuse shall more torment than blows.
Then I myself (quicker than lightning),
Will fly me to a puissant magistrate,
And waiting with a trencher at his back,
In midst of jollity rehearse those galls [Old copy, *gauls.*]
(With some additions) so lately vented in your theatre:
He upon this cannot but make complaint,
To your great danger, or at least restraint.

COMEDY. Ha, ha, ha! I laugh to hear thy folly;
This is a trap for boys, not men, nor such,
Especially desertful in their doings,
Whose staid discretion rules their purposes.
I and my faction do eschew those vices.
But see, O see, the weary sun for rest
Hath lain his golden compass to the west,
Where he perpetual bide and ever shine,
As David's offspring in his happy clime.
Stoop, Envy, stoop, bow to the earth with me,
Let's beg our pardons on our bended knee. [*They kneel.*]

ENVY. My power has lost her might; Envy's date's expired,
Yon splendant majesty hath fell'd my sting,
And I amazed am. [*Fall down and quake.*]

COMEDY. Glorious and wise Arch-Caesar on this earth,
At whose appearance Envy's stroken dumb,
And all bad things cease operation,
Vouchsafe to pardon our unwilling error,
So late presented to your gracious view,
And we'll endeavour with excess of pain
To please your senses in a choicer strain,
Thus we commit you to the arms of night,
Whose spangled carcase would (for your delight)
Strive to excel the day. Be blessed then:
Who other wishes, let him never speak.

ENVY. Amen!
To Fame and Honour we commend your rest;
Live still more happy, every hour more blest.

FINIS.]

[199] To the edition printed in the Percy Society's Series.

[200] The old spelling has now been abandoned.

[201] For these I am indebted to the kindness of Mr J.P. Collier, who is now editing "Henslowe's Diary" for the Shakespeare Society. The portions of it which were published by Malone are very incorrectly given.

[202] *Book* in these entries means play.

[203] This entry is struck through, the money having been repaid.

[204] This entry is in Porter's own handwriting.

[205] "Spec. of Engl. Dram. Poets," ii. 185, edit. 1835.

[206] See Hazlitt's "Popular Poetry," iv, 38-40.

[207] Second edit., *Welcome then.*

[208] From the second edit. Not in first edit.

[209] Prospects, views, scenes in sight; a meaning of the word which is found in much later writers.

[210] So second edit. First edit. *he.*

[211] Absolute, perfect, [or rather, perhaps, pure.]

[212] Read, for the metre, *He will.*

[213] So second edit. First edit., *to.*

[214] The audience were to suppose that the stage now represented an orchard; for be it remembered that there was no movable painted scenery in the theatres at the time when this play was produced.

[215] Second edit., *rubber*, but the other form is common in our old writers.

[216] [So second edit.] Equivalent to be hanged.

[217] Second edit., *woman*, which is probably right; see two passages farther on, in one of which both editions have *woman*.

[218] Gold coins. The words give occasion to innumerable puns in our early dramas.

[219] Read, for the metre, *here is*

[220] Second edit., *woman*: see note [217].

[221] A term of the game.

[222] Edits., *better*,—the eye of the original compositor having caught the word above.

[223] A term of the game.

[224] i.e. *Hit*.

[225] Here, probably, Mistress Goursey should make her exit.

[226] i.e., We cannot help it.

[227] So second edit. First edit., *Afford*.

[228] The author probably wrote, "*I do impart*:" compare the next line.

[229] [Old copies, *tick*.]

[230] i.e., Taught her to tread the ring,—to perform various movements in different directions within a ring marked out on a piece of ground: see Markham's "Cheap and Good Husbandry," &c. p. 18, sqq. edit. 1631.

[231] [*Campagne*.] A form of *campaign* common in our early writers.

[232] i.e., Wilt thou wear, &c.: *point* means one of the tagged laces which were used in dress to attach the hose or breeches to the doublet, &c.

[233] So second edit. First edit., *th'art*.

[234] [Old copies read *when*.]

[235] So second edit. First edit., *in the*.

[236] So second edit. Not in first edit.

[237] [Meaning a tavern of that name.]

[238] Sheathe your sword.

[239] Edits., *me*.

[240] [Old copy, *He's*.] Read, for the metre, *He is*.

[241] i.e., Quality, disposition.

[242] [Old copies, *he'll*.] Read, for the metre, *he will*.

[243] [Fine worsted.]

[244] [Old copies, *his hat, and all green hat*.]

[245] [Old copies, *indirect*.]

[246] Edits., *vassailes*.

[247] So second edit. First edit., *women's*.

[248] Qy. *for an*?

[249] [Old copies, *She's*.] Read, for the metre, *She is*.

[250] A corruption of God's.

[251] [Old copies, *pale*.]

[252] Edits., *apprehend*, but certainly Mall had spoken with sufficient plainness.

[253] i.e., Nature.

[254] So second edit. First edit., *nay*.

[255] The common dress of a serving-man.

[256] Edits., *you*, which, perhaps, is the right reading, some word having dropp'd out after it. Qy. thus

'MRS BAR. Mistresse flurt, you *mean*,
Foule strumpet, light a loue, short heeles! Mistresse Goursey
Call her,' &c.

—*Dyce*. [But *yea* seems to be the more likely word.]

[257] So second edit. First edit., *tell*.

[258] i.e., Vile.

[259] Edits., *forlorn*.

[260] Qy., *Mother, he loves?*

[261] So second edit. First edit., *the*.

[262] So second edit. First edit., *Thaust*.

[263] i.e., Refuse.

[264] So second edit. First edit., *Gads*.

[265] Edits., *His*.

[266] Qy., *Franke* he is *young?* Compare the preceding line but one.

[267] i.e., By our lady.

[268] i.e., Miserly persons.

[269] The author probably wrote *neuer was*.

[270] i.e., Honest men.

[271] So second edit. First edit., *ma*.

[272] [See Hazlitt's "Proverbs," 1869, p. 128.]

[273] So second edit. First edit., *faith in*.

[274] Edits., *some*.

[275] Edits., *treason*.

[276] i.e., Vomits: a common pun in old dramas.

[277] i.e., Easily.

[278] Edits., *But*.

[279] So second edit., First edit., *cehape*.

[280] Read, for the metre, *He is*.

[281] Equivalent to—poor, contemptible fellow: but I must leave the reader to determine the exact meaning of this term of reproach. As *pingle* signifies a small croft, Nares (citing a passage from Lyly's "Euphues") says that *pingler* is "probably a labouring horse, kept by a farmer in his homestead." "Gloss." in v.—In Brockett's "Gloss, of North Country Words" is "*Pingle*, to work assiduously but inefficiently,—to labour until you are almost blind." In Forby's "Vocab. of East Anglia" we find, "*Pingle*, to pick one's food, to eat squeamishly:" and in Moor's "Suffolk Words" is a similar explanation. See also Jamieson's "Et. Dict. of Scott. Lang."

[282] So second edit. Not in first edit.

[283] So second edit. First edit., *drinke*.

[284] So second edit. First edit., *Nich*.

[285] [This is probably intended to run into verse—

"For when a man doth to Rome come,

He must do as there is done."]

[286] [Old copies, *crush*.]

[287] A form of *digest*, common in our early writers.

[288] [This emendation was suggested by Dyce.]

[289] [Old copies, *shape*.]

[290] So second edit. First edit., *fathers*.

[291] So second edit. First edit., *than*.

[292] Edits., *Franke*.

[293] [Old copies, *boye yee*.]

[294] [Old copies, *love capable to*.]

[295] So second edit. First edit., *Maister*.

[296] Some word most probably has dropped out from the line. [Perhaps *not*.]

[297] So second edit. First edit., *craft*.

[298] A familiar term for the old English broadsword.

[299] The sharp point in the centre of the buckler.

[300] So second edit. First edit., *and*.

[301] [Dyce proposed to read *ont*.]

[302] i.e., Brave.

[303] [Old copies, *strukt*.]

[304] i.e., Manlike, masculine.

[305] See note [218].

[306] i.e., The parson: *Sir* was a title applied to clergymen.

[307] See note [255].

[308] [A line appears to be lost here, probably ending with *selves*, as the whole dialogue is in rhyme.]

[309] i.e., Forester.

[310] Seems to be used here for herd; an unusual meaning of the word. [See Halliwell's "Diet." v. *Berry*, No. 3.]

[311] So second edit. First edit. *me*.

[312] So second edit. First edit. *th'*.

[313] Edits. *he*.

[314] So second edit. First edit. *thee*.

[315] So second edit. First edit. *thorowly*.

[316] See note [218].

[317] Swoon.

[318] Read, for the metre, *she is*.

[319] Edits., *wone*.

[320] i.e., An *I* of the Christ-cross row or alphabet.

[321] A term of endearment, formed, perhaps, from *pink*, to wink, to contract the eyelids.

[322] Edits., *sower*.

[323] i.e., A good whip (*whipstock* is properly the stock or handle of a whip).

[324] A term of endearment, which often occurs in our early dramatists.

[325] Edits., *patient*.

[326] [Old copies, *thy*.]

[327] So second edit. First edit., *cheesse*.

[328] So second edit. First edit., *to*.

[329] Read, for the metre, *Shee is*.

[330] A recollection perhaps of Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet," act iii. sc. 5—

"If I would the fool were married to her grave!"

[331] i.e., Honest.

[332] i.e., Deny.

[333] Read, for the metre, *is it*.

[334] So second edit. First edit., *mistrurst*.

[335] Qy., *now I swear*:

[336] Edits., *confederates*.

[337] Occurs somewhat earlier in edits. (to warn the actors to be in readiness for coming on the stage).

[338] A well-known part of Oxford. "The principal street is the High Street, running from Magdalen Bridge to Carfax Church," &c —New Oxford Guide, p. 3, 8th edit.

[339] i.e., Fine.

[340] A common proverbial expression: "Beggars'-bush being a tree notoriously known, on the left-hand of the London road, from Huntingdon to Caxton." [Hazlitt's "Proverbs," 1869, p. 401. See also pp. 82, 199.]

[341] i.e., Refuse.

[342] Is a common term for a small dagger, but here it seems to be used in contempt; see the next speech of Coomes.

[343] The origin of this corrupted oath is, I believe, unknown.

[344] i.e., Rabbit-burrow.

[345] i.e., Call me horse.

[346] A not uncommon proverbial expression. Nares ("Gloss." in *v*.) mentions three places which still retain the name—one between Oxford and Banbury, another close to Stafford, the third near Shrewsbury.

[347] i.e., Counsel, advice.

[348] i.e., Vile.

[349] So second edit. First edit., *upon*.

[350] i.e., Till.

[351] i.e., A kind of net for catching rabbits,—usually stretched before their holes.

[352] [The name of a popular game.]

[353] So second edit. First edit., *do*.

[354] i.e., A sucking, or young rabbit.

[355] Vile.

[356] So second edit. First edit., *you'r*.

[357] Second edit., *wilt not*.

[358] i.e., Honest.

[359] Edits. *glimpes* (the two last letters transposed by mistake.)

[360] i.e., Gave notice of, discovered.

[361] So second edit. First edit. *metamorphesie*.

[362] So second edit. First edit. *these*.

[363] So second edit. First edit. '*Sbloud*.

[364] i.e., Nearer.

[365] So second edit. Not in first edit.

[366] Qy. "*Sir Ralph Smith*, I know."

[367] So second edit. These words are wanting in first edit.

[368] This stage direction occurs somewhat earlier in edits.

[369] I am not sure that this stage direction, which I have added, is the right one. It would seem, however, that Sir Ralph Smith remains on the stage, and is supposed not to overhear the dialogue which ensues between Francis and Will.

[370] Edits., *Sbloud*.

[371] So second edit. First edit., *whench*.

[372] Edits., *ask't* and *aske*.

[373] Read, for the metre, *It is*.

[374] So second edit. Not in first edit.

[375] Qy., *order here?*

[376] i.e., Nearer.

[377] Perhaps he ought only to retire.

[378] So second edit. First edit., *asgoe*.

[379] [Old copies, *boye*.]

[380] It would seem that something is wanting after this speech, unless we are to suppose that here the Boy lies down and falls asleep, and that he awakens on the second entrance of Hodge,—where, however, the edits. distinctly mark "Enter Hodge *and Boy*"; see later: *Enter [severally] HODGE and BOY*.

[381] i.e., Excels.

[382] So second edit. First edit. *clowdes*.

[383] So second edit. Not in first edit.

[384] Second edit. *ye*.

[385] Qy. Is this a stage direction crept into the text?

[386] Second edit. *grope*.

[387] Second edit. *so*.

[388] [Old copies, *paint*.]

[389] So second edit. First edit. *buze*.

[390] Second edit. *lips*.

[391] So second edit. First edit. *I have had a Pumpe set up, as good*.

[392] i.e., (Perhaps) swore by our Lady of Walsingham, in Norfolk.

[393] [The name of a game, though here used as a bye-word. See "Popular Antiquities of Gr. Britain," ii. 341.]

[394] So second edit. First edit., *Tripe-cheeke*.

[395] i.e., Had I known the consequences; a common proverbial expression of repentance.

[396] See note [16].

[397] So second edit. First edit., *his*.

[398] [Edits., *me*.]

[399] Qy. a proverbial allusion to the famous Brazen-head?

[400] So second edit. First edit., *breath*.

[401] So second edit. Not in first edit.

[402] The hero of a popular German jest-book ("Eulenspiegel,") which was translated into English at a very early period: see Gifford's note on Jonson's "Works," iv. 60, and Nares' Gloss. in v.

[403] [First 4^o, *silly*.]

[404] So second edit. First edit., *shew*.

[405] i.e., Bauble.

[406] Random.

[407] [i.e., Coomes and Nicholas both retire to the back of the stage.]

[408] Edits., *hap*.

[409] i.e., Ill-will.

[410] Second edit., *he a*; but *a* is a common contraction for *he*.

[411] So second edit. First edit., *tell*,

[412] i.e., Blind-man's-buff.

[413] So second edit. Not in first edit.

[414] [Old copy, *thief*.]

[415] i.e., (I suppose) Buoy.

[416] [Old copy, *not envies fellow, not*.]

[417] [Old copies, *what*.]

[418] i.e., A dear lean and out of season.

[419] i.e., The alphabet.

[420] So second edit. First edit. *wandring*.

[421] i.e., suffer, endure. Edits. *stole*.

[422] So second edit. First edit. *Being*.

[423] Read, for the metre, *it is*.

[424] So second edit. First edit. *enforc'st*.

[425] Read, for the metre, *wife is*.

[426] So second edit. First edit. *same*.

[427] Second edit. *you*.

[428] So second edit. First edit. *weere*.

[429] [Old edits., *carerie*.]

[430] So second edit. First edit., *shrowdly*.

[431] Second edit., *me*—wrongly, as appears from what follows.

[432] Edits., *be*.

[433] i.e., Ill-will.

[434] i.e., Satisfy, convince.

[435] Edits., *mindes*.

[436] Qy., *you, mother?*

[437] Read, for the metre, *she is*.

[438] Something has dropt out here.

[439] [Edits., *A little*.]

[440] i.e., Vile.

[441] i.e., The one.

[442] [Old copies, *yond may help that come both together*.]

[443] So second edit. First edit., *fileds*.

[444] A common, familiar contraction of *mine uncle*.

[445] Second edit., *fie*.

[446] So second edit. First edit., *brings*.

[447] i.e., *Traitor* or *felon*.

[448] i.e., Swoon.

[449] Second edit., *fauours*.

[450] So read for the metre. Old copies, *here's*.

[451] See also Collier's "Hist. of Eng. Dramatic Poetry," i. 3.

[452] See Dyce's "Shakespeare," 1868, ii. 2.

[453] Not in the old copy.

[454] [i.e., to Tyburn.]

[455] [Old copy, *thee*.]

[456] Old copy, *well a neere*. Well-a-year is an unusual phrase, *well* being corrupted from *wail*. "Well-a-day" in the same sense is common enough.

[457] Old copy, *otimie*, I conjecture *otomy* for anatomy, a common form of *anatomy*.

[458] Halliwell mentions the words *pubble* and *puble* in different senses, and the old copy reads *puble*; but here the context seems to require *bubble*. He has immediately before used the term *froth*.

[459] Fear.

[460] Divisions, conflicts.

[461] Old copy, *Henry*.

[462] Old copy, *Aveney*.

[463] But see Hazlitt's "Proverbs," 1869, p. 23.

[464] Old copy, *where stands in*.

[465] i.e., Mary, God's mother.

[466] See Hazlitt's "Proverbs," 1869, p. 289.

[467] Possibly in reference to a tract, so called, printed by Wynkyn de Worde, and (after him) by others.

[468] He means the stammer of Redcap, which he intends to imitate.

[469] Compare "Damon and Pithias," vol. iv., pp. 67-8.

[470] Old copy, *excepts*.

[471] He does not appear, however, to make himself visible, but stands aside, listening.

[472] Old copy, *times*. See Halliwell, v. *tine*, where the word is said to mean "the prong of a fork (second explanation)," thence, as in the text, a horn.

[473] [Old copy, *attempt*.]

[474] Block seems to refer jocularly to Sir Richard's long aside, under a sort of invisible cap.

[475] Old copy, *solicitie*.

[476] Old copy, *say*.

[477] Old copy, *you*.

[478] Old copy, *Richard's*.

[479] [Old copy, *us*.]

[480] Succeed.

[481] Perhaps the dance so called is meant.

[482] [Old copy, *them*.]

[483] [Old. copy, *ye spoke*.]

[484] Old copy, *rove*.

[485] i.e., From the time of the Confessor.

[486] i.e., Spain; old copy, *Gads*.

[487] A word or words left blank in the old copy.

[488] His gown.

[489] Old copy, *Levarnian*.

[490] Old copy, *It*.

[491] Old copy, *ane*.

[492] The word *search* is here, and again a little further on used in the sense of *searchers*.

[493] Old copy, *another*; but Redcap is evidently accompanied by two assistants.

[494] This appears to stand for officers of the peace, as the *watch* and the *search*.

[495] Old copy, *King*.

[496] A brothel.

[497] [Old copy, *age*.]

[498] [Old copy, *Fau*, for *Fauconbridge*.]

[499] [This might appear to be a corruption of *go out*, or of *God's gut* (*God's guts* is an ejaculation found elsewhere); but from a subsequent passage we can but conclude that the disease so called is intended.]

[500] Old copy, *fill'd*, the compositor's eye, perhaps, having strayed to the next line.

[501] Strong. See a long note in Nares, edit. 1859, p. 606.

[502] Old copy; *here*.

[503] A room in the Salutation so called.

[504] Guests.

[505] Old copy, *at*.

[506] Old copy, *Raynald*.

[507] [Old copy, *me of*.]

[508] i.e., Terms, as mentioned before. Old copy, *then*.

[509] To *meet with* is a very common phrase for to *serve out*, *requite*.

[510] Skink issues from the hermit's house in the disguise of the man whom he is supposed to have cured, and as he leaves, addresses parting words to the hermit within.

[511] Breviary.

[512] Old copy, *them*.

[513] Brand.

[514] Old copy, *of*.

[515] Old copy, *Glo*.

[516] [Old copy, *last*.]

[517] [Old copy, *this*.]

[518] Old copy, *salutes he*.

[519] Old copy, *you for*.

[520] Old copy, *in*.

[521] [Old copy, *we*.]

[522] [Old copy, *we'll*.]

[523] [Old copy, *sighs and songs*.]

[524] In this passage the phrase, *to wear the yellow*, seems hardly to bear the ordinary construction of, *to be jealous*.

[525] Old copy, *pinning*.

[526] Old copy gives this line to the lady, i.e., the merchant's wife.

[527] This seems to be some popular and well-understood allusion—well understood then, but now obscure enough; nor does Steevens's explanation help us much. See "Pop. Antiq. of Gr. Britain," 1870, iii. 322.

[528] An allusion to an old proverb.

[529] Old copy gives this line to Gloster.

[530] Old copy, *weak*.

[531] Halliwell says, "a squall."

[532] Fear.

[533] Old copy, *wray*.

[534] Old copy, *not thou art*.

[535] i.e., Gloster, disguised also as a hermit.

[536] Old copy, *he's*.

[537] Old copy gives as the stage-direction here merely, *Enter John*.

[538] Old copy, *Lan*.

[539] Compare "First Part of Jeronimo," vol. iv., p. 349, and the note.

[540] [Old copy, *breath*.]

[541] [Compare Courthope's "Historic Peerage," 1857, v. Hereford.]

[542] [In allusion to the proverb, *Threatened men live long*.]

[543] [Old copy, *William*.]

[544] Old copy, *them*.

[545] Something seems to have dropped out of the text.

[546] I do not find this phrase anywhere.

[547] Old copy, *may*.

[548] i.e., Gloster.

[549] There is an evident corruption here. Query, *Life kneels to thrones*.

[550] Old copy, *thy*.

[551] Old copy, *not*.

[552] Old copy, *is*.

[553] Old copy, *set*.

[554] i.e., *Mort de Dieu*.

[555] Old copy, *ye*.

[556] Old copy, *Sarasons*.

[557] An exclamation of doubtful meaning and origin. See a long note in Nares, edit. 1859, v. *Rivo*.

[558] Old copy, *for*.

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